**WOODLANDS CHURCH**

**November 19th 2017. Shame shifting.**

**Discussion notes: Food and sex. Genesis 3:6-13. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

Intended for pleasure? That is the title of a Christian book about sex. Food and Sex are intended for and vital for the continuation of life. They also give pleasure, and in our affluent western culture food and sex have been intensively marketed as pleasures we all deserve; ‘naughty but nice’. In reality, food and sex create crisis points in our culture with problems ranging from obesity to anorexia. The sexual abuse of women and children, and the revelations of politicians and celebrities as sexual predators are every day news.

1. How much should food and sex be seen as essential functions for life, (e.g. Catholic Church view on procreation) and how much is it valid to see them as pleasures for the sake of pleasure?
2. Why do these two areas seem to make people feel deeply ashamed? How open are we to talk about our obsessions around food or sex?
3. C.S. Lewis said that Satan can’t create things, he can only pervert and distort things. Why might food or sex be targets for a demonic strategy?
4. How much does our self-image around our ‘secret history,’ the private thoughts and habits of our life, help or hinder our Christian faith?
5. Often eating disorders have been associated more strongly with women than men, and sexual obsession more strongly with men than women? Do you think this is true and if so why? Is this changing and if so why?
6. Is it possible to master (c.f. 1 Corinthians 6) our appetites? How does God help us do this?

The power of a negative secret history can be broken by sharing with others. How can we create a culture in our groups where it is safe to talk about our most intimate struggles with someone?