Session 4 30.10.22	Love Mercy, Act Justly, Walk Humbly with your God. Studies in the minor prophets. HOSEA. **Speaker: Liz How**
Verses from passage	ch 1.1-3; ch 2. 1-3; ch 11. 1, 3-4, 8-9; ch 2. 14-23; ch 5. 3-4, 7; ch 7. 1-11; ch8. 7; ch 6. 1-3, 6; ch 10. 12; ch 14. 1-2, 8-9
Key passages	Luke 13. 34
Main points	Hosea is mainly a series of poems with ch.14 being a postscript by an unnamed compiler who is urging us to respond to Hosea's message by confessing sin and turning back to God. God loves his people with an outrageous, utterly faithful, covenant love. He is angry and saddened by our inability to return his love but he will never give up on us. His love is like a husband's love for a wayward wife. This love took Jesus to the cross. The world is not getting worse morally – human beings have always been capable of depraved behaviour which brings its own chaos and disaster, but there is always hope of restoration. Idolatry is putting anything in God's place – it is mankind's fundamental sin together with our inability to KNOW God and therefore to return love to him Our calling is to live out who God is, to press on to know him better, and to reflect who God is to those around us.
Discussion questions	Read ch 1. 1-3 and then ch 2.1-3 and discuss why God called Hosea to do such a hard thing. Ch. 2. 14-23 How do you respond to the poetic expression here of God as a husband loving his wife? Hosea's poetry is waking people up to the sexual promiscuity in their society and the fact that it is destructive. Do you think there are aspects of our society to do with sexual promiscuity that are we should be shocked by but that have become normalised? What attitude should we take as God's people given that we're being called to outrageous love not being judgemental. How do we live as God's people in our world in this particular regard.
This week	Each day pray this 13th century prayer: *O most merciful Redeemer,* *Friend and Brother,* *may I know thee more clearly,* *love thee more dearly,* *and follow thee more nearly.* Expect some answers!