

Imitators of God

2022 was a momentous year for CCSA. After losing two years of regular seasons due to the pandemic, we welcomed back churches, teams and players to CCSA's 40th season. As the world continues to recover from COVID-19, we hope that participants, old and new, will join our 41st season as we rebuild connections, remind ourselves of the purpose of our league, and review expectations of participation.

Looking back at our 2022 season, it was apparent that our lost seasons had a significant impact on our league. The CCSA was filled with new players and first-time coaches, governors, and umpires. Churches had employed new supervising pastors and new church leadership to support softball ministries and teams. Parents who had never been exposed to the CCSA ministry before were attending games to cheer on their children, playing for the first time. In light of this, our 2023 theme is a reminder that in all things, we are to be Imitators of God (Ephesians 5:1-2) and examples of His character (1 Timothy 4:12), especially in our actions and behaviour as league participants in any role.

Ephesians 5:1 - Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1 Timothy 4:12 - Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

We encourage everyone to take some time to reflect on what this means specifically for you in whatever role you will play in the upcoming season. Some questions that you may ask include: As coaches, how do we instill principles in our players to help them play softball with good sportsmanship and spirit? How do we ensure that serving the league as umpires, we are adequately preparing ourselves and showing responsibility for our assigned tasks? As governors, how do we inspire and support our team members and provide accountability to our leadership group? As parents, how can we best role model for our children when we support and cheer them on at games? As players, what is my role in creating a positive and supportive team environment? As supervisor pastors and youth leaders, how are we mentoring and supporting our softball leadership groups?

As a league run by volunteers, we all have ownership in this league and it is all of our responsibilities to ensure that the league can operate year after year to create positive environments for which pockets of community can flourish. So, as participants, you are not merely "helping" the league when you volunteer – you are in fact taking ownership and responsibility of our community. As you do so, it is our prayer and hope that each person participating in the CCSA in 2023 would grow in faith to become Imitators of God.