

# scattered

LIVING AS A COMMUNITY OF HOPE AT A TIME OF DISPERSAL

HOLY TRINITY  
JESMOND



11.00am **Sundays** in May **2020**

## **SMALL GROUP NOTES: Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May – Week 1 ‘Scattered and Blessed’**

Read together Genesis 11.1-9

**What strikes you about this passage?** Spend a few minutes talking together about first impressions.

Notice the motivation of the people for building the tower and city was twofold – to make a name for themselves and to avoid being scattered over the face of the Earth. There is very much a sense of fear in this passage of being isolated, vulnerable and alone – so they come together to build.

**To what extent do you think ‘building out of a place of fear’ is problematic?  
Can you recall times in your life, or from history where fear has shaped the structures we build – whether literally or metaphorically?**

Tim suggested in his sermon on Sunday that at this ‘fearful’ time we need to pay attention to what we are building out of places of fear and asked:

**As a country, what are the policies and structures being put in place now that need greater scrutiny?**

**As an individual, what things are we building in our own lives shaped by fear – that actually are not helpful in the longer term?**

Spend some time reflecting together on these questions.

In Genesis 1.28 God’s invitation to humanity was to spread out in confidence and enjoy the abundance. Steward the land and manage creation well. His intention was not that they should huddle together in fear and build towers to make themselves feel powerful, so he scatters them.

**So what sort of things did God want his people to build?**

**Where did he want their self identity to be rooted?**

**Why was he so concerned about humanity building walls and towers and living behind them?**

These are really interesting questions and take this story from a place of grumpy God not wanting his human neighbours to get too close to his heavenly abode with their tall tower, to a story of God pushing his people outside the walls of narrow, fearful selfishness into something more.

Today we find ourselves scattered – it's a totally different context, **but in what ways can you relate to this story?**

Tim encouraged us not just to acknowledge the difficulties, loss and tragedy of our current situation, but also to look at what fresh opportunities we have *because* of it. He asked us to think about **where is God at work in this current scattering?**

**What is God asking the church to do and be at this time that might change us even when we can gather together physically again?**

**How is God at work because his church has been pushed outside its walls?**

Spend some time thinking about these questions – be practical in your answers if you have seen God at work, but also be ready to acknowledge that for some the overwhelming sense of isolation has meant it is difficult to see anything positive about the current situation.

John 1:1, “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.”

**Is that what is happening now?**

**In this time of scattering, is Jesus working in fresh ways, moving into your neighbourhood in a deeper sense?**

Spend a few moments praying for one another as you finish.