



Section News

02 JUNE 2021

Reflection

Notices

Pastoral News

Superintendent's Thoughts

BIBLE MONTH – WEEK 1 – MARK 1:1 – 3:35 (IDENTITY & MISSION)



As in previous years, many churches will be marking June as Bible Month during which period there is an opportunity to look together at some of the themes of Mark's gospel. For this purpose, the authors of the study notes have divided the book into four quite large chunks. The suggestion is that, in reading a larger section each week than might usually be the case in church, one can follow more of the context and wider picture that Jesus is demonstrating in word and action.

There will be a regular gathering on Zoom every Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. to share in different ways of exploring scripture as well as our insights and thoughts. The Zoom link is given in the Notices section below, but it is also possible (and really easy) to join the conversation by telephone as well. If you would like to give that a go, please contact me on 01256 895878 and I can guide you through the process.

Those two words – identity and mission – hold great significance for members of the Christian community as we discover that, however our identity is defined by the world, we have a unique identity as a child of God. Secondly, we discover that being in relationship with God, we are stirred up to be part of God's mission, which can be defined as "finding out what God is doing and then joining in". Other definitions of mission have perhaps carried with them the connotation of being sent (or called) somewhere to convert people to Christianity (e.g. the commissioning of the disciples by Jesus at the end of Matthew's gospel). As we begin to contemplate a further relaxation of lockdown rules in the coming weeks, what is the bigger picture about the identity and mission of God's church that we should be sharing with our respective communities, families and friends? What is the big theme of the gospel that will be relevant as we move forward?

Much has been written and said about returning to "normal..." but is that actually what will be good for the Kingdom and those we are here to serve? Whilst there has been a huge amount of enforced isolation, ill-health and death during the past 18 months, there has equally been an upsurge in neighbourliness, in trying different forms of communication to stay in touch with families and friends. Communities have set up spontaneous assistance groups which have joined together statutory and voluntary groups with a minimum of bureaucracy.

So, I invite you to think of your context... Are you already out and about? Are you cautiously testing the increasing freedoms so weigh up how things are for you? Are you still remaining at home until social distancing is at an end or because your circumstances have changed during this extensive lockdown period such that you need assistance to go out? Each of us have our own living space which will differ greatly from anyone else's. In the same way, the gifts and skills that God has given us naturally or through learning and training are greatly varied. As we move forward, what contribution will you bring to the kingdom's agenda? What have you found to be a positive experience recently? What would you like to see continuing? What elements of community/church/kingdom life have been missing and could be started up, by stopping something else that has perhaps run its course?

Let's dare to see the big picture, not just our personal preferences, and seek the identity and the mission of the Kingdom and join in...

Notices

Dates for the Diary

Week beginning	6 th June	13 th June	20 th June	27 th June
Sunday 4.00 pm <i>Reflection – a short 30-minute gathering using images, music and words led by Revd Rachel Borgars.</i> https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84235746908	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monday 7:30 pm <i>Discussion Group – originally called the ‘Hot Potatoes’ group, this is an opportunity to discuss current issues with some theology as part of the mix.</i> https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84961411119	✓		✓	
Thursday 7:30pm <i>Circuit Bible Study – a more formal Bible study which usually meets monthly on the last Thursday in the month. During June we shall meet weekly following the Bible Month material.</i> https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88651459988	✓ Bible Month	✓ Bible Month	✓ Bible Month	✓ Bible Month
Friday 9:15 am <i>Prayer Group – an opportunity to pray together, bringing both joys and concerns in prayer.</i> https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82103846709	✓	✓	✓	✓

If you would like to join in with any of these gatherings via telephone, please do ring me on 01256 895878 and I will give you the details to dial in via any telephone. I do hope you will join us, even if you haven't felt Zoom is for you up until now!!



Thank you!

Your food donations are absolutely vital to the Foodbank's ability to give everyone referred to them a balanced and nutritious three-day supply of food.

They have a need for the following:

FOOD ITEMS: - Healthy Lunchbox Snacks, Fruit Squash, Pasta Sauce

NON-FOOD ITEMS: - Adult Toothpaste, Deodorant - Female And Male, Toilet Roll

Pastoral News

Please remember the following people and circumstances:



For the parts of our world where the roll-out of the vaccine is being hampered for political or economic reasons. Be our encouragement to use our influence through all available channels to ensure an equitable distribution of the vaccine for all.

For the fragile ceasefire in Israel/Palestine that it may be extended one day at a time. For all those living and working in countries which are still war zones – may we not add to the lack of “shalom” in the world by the way we live alongside others in our communities and families.

For all of us, as we seek to understand the latest guidance about the pandemic and the situation that seems to change so frequently. May we be cautious so as to protect others and ourselves, but not so fearful as to deny the privilege of free vaccinations and the national gift that is the NHS.

A prayer from the Methodist website

God of all hope we call on you today.
We pray for those who are living in fear:
Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other's reactions to them.
May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty.
For those people who are worried about attending worship.
For those needing to make decisions in order to care for other
For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend.
Grant us your wisdom.

Holy God, we remember that you have promised that
Nothing will separate us from your love – demonstrated to us in Jesus Christ.
Help us turn our eyes, hearts and minds to you.

Amen

“Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10)