

Church at home

East Leake Methodist Church 2021

Sit comfortably in a quiet place and prepare, start with a brief period of silence, turning your mind and spirit towards God. You may want to have a cross or candle in view as a focus.

Call To Worship

Come, all of you, just as you are, to worship.
Whether today you feel strong or weak, full or empty,
God welcomes you all into God's in-crowd.
Come just as you are to worship
Loving Lord, you look us in the eye
and remind us that we are already part of your family.
Help us to let go of anything that gets in the way,
that we may worship you with all our hearts,
and wholeheartedly love all our neighbours. **Amen.**

Introduction to Bible Month- St. Mark's Gospel

For the past few years during the month of June we have concentrated on a particular book of the Bible. It gives the opportunity to delve a little deeper into a particular book. This year we have the gospel of Mark a much bigger book than previously and also one which is part of the standard lectionary. So today we begin looking at the first three Chapters of Marks Gospel.
Our first hymn an old favourite.

Hymn StF 495 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEZvQ8iLOig>

Prayers

God of all,
as one family we worship you.
We are mothers and fathers,
we are sisters and brothers,
and we worship you.
We are sons and daughters,
aunts and uncles, grannies, granddads,

and we worship you.

We are cousins and neighbours, friends and colleagues,
and we worship you.

As your family, as your church, as your community,
we worship you. **Amen.**

God of all the world,
we praise you for calling us into your family,
for choosing us even though we are imperfect,
for trusting us even though we make mistakes,
for not giving up on us even when we give up on ourselves,
for offering so much more – even when we would settle for less.

God of all the world,
for drawing us into a deeper relationship with you and with one another, we
praise you –
individually and together, we praise you. **Amen.**

Loving God,

in Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit you show us that
there is always room at your table for one more. **Alleluia!**

There is always enough time for everyone to be listened to. **Alleluia!**

There is always enough respect for everyone to be valued. **Alleluia!**

There is always enough truth for everyone to grow and learn. **Alleluia!**

There is always a second chance for those who once turned away. **Alleluia!**

For the in-you crowd is always growing and always welcoming. **Alleluia!**

Amen.

Lord Jesus, when our in-crowd is not your crowd:
forgive us, and help us to build community.

When our words are harsh and our actions unkind:
forgive us, and help us to build community.

When we judge others rather than join with others:
forgive us, and help us to build community.

When we are set in our ways and not open to change:
forgive us and help us to build community.

To the glory of your name. Amen.

God of truth and mercy,
where we break down – you build up;
where we damage – you repair;
where we blaspheme – you bless;
where we isolate – you include;

where we go wrong – you put us right;
where we confess – you forgive;
where we begin again – you are with us.

In Jesus' name. **Amen**

Mother and Father God,
you invite all of us to be part of your family,
unique members of your in-crowd.

Help us to let you deal with the pains that cause destructive behaviour and
destroy communities.

Nurture in us your healing that releases in us qualities of love and makes your
community attractive, healing, open and welcoming to all. **Amen.**

Lords Prayer

Who is St. Mark?

As with all these things we have some conflicting information but the majority of suggestions favour the writer of this gospel, the oldest manuscript to have survived as John Mark, nephew of Barnabas and the young man who is said to have fled from the scene of Jesus' arrest and also left Paul abruptly on his first missionary journey. This did not go down well with Paul and when Barnabas suggested John Mark joined them for the second mission journey it led to Barnabas and John Mark not going with Paul. John Mark was however reunited with Paul and became a trusted disciple. The gospel was, remember, hand written between AD60-70. The Jewish people lived in an occupied land, pacified by the Romans, few had citizenship, many were slaves, living in poverty. Religious cults predominated and religion and politics were inseparable.

John Mark spent much of his time with Barnabas, Paul and also Peter. It is suggested that the source for the majority of his gospel stories was Peter. In our Bible today the Gospel of St. Mark has 16 Chapters although it is also suggested that the end was not written by John Mark.

It is a very precise, chronological, pacey, well written piece. Written by a committed Christian, who assumed that not all his readership were going to be Jews.

The other Synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Luke use between them all but 31 verses of Mark in their own gospel writing. Which suggests they had Mark's gospel as a reference for their own writings.

Mark is particularly interested in telling us about Jesus, and his ministry and recalls more miracle than the other gospels.

John Mark begins his gospel at the time of John the Baptist, Jesus leaves Nazareth and visits John –but before we look at the first Chapter let us sing/listen to

Hymn StF 182 On Jordan Bank

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8POKmbK5lF4>

St. Mark's Gospel -Chapter One-

It was the Roman tradition to herald the arrival of someone important by proclamation. And so John the Baptist was sent to proclaim the coming of Jesus the Messiah. John invited people who wanted to change their lives, repent and seek forgiveness for their sins and be baptised and John engaged large crowds in the River Jordan and to this place Jesus came. Fulfilling ancient /Old testament writing in Malachi and Isaiah.

Jesus came to be baptised in order to begin his ministry and bring his message of salvation. He also showed his support for John, while identifying himself with us and our sin. And giving us an example to follow.

Jesus was affirmed by God at the beginning of his ministry by bring together the Holy Trinity, Father,[voice from heaven,] Son-Jesus and Holy Spirit [the dove descending]

Very quickly Jesus is whisked into the wilderness to be tempted for 40 days while being supported by angels. Again this gives us an example to follow- how to avoid temptation. And also gives the knowledge of a helper who went through a similar experience of temptation which still calls us today.

Jesus leaves Satan and begins his ministry moving into Galilee- recalled in all four gospels. Here he calls the first four disciple Simon[later called Peter], Andrew, James and John the fishermen to follow him.

Jesus appears to base himself at Capernaum- a busy bustling town with a large Roman garrison and a synagogue and here he begins his ministry, teaching and performing many miracles including healing Peters mother in law and the man with leprosy. He also encounters the man possessed by demons and extinguishes them. He travels all over Galilee proclaiming the Good news.

Before we move to Chapter two let us sing /listen to

StF 250 Jesus calls us

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVJ3G7L_yjU

St Mark's Gospel -Chapter Two

Chapter Two tells of the healing of the Paralysed man, the determination of his friends to bring him to Jesus by lowering him through the roof and the beginning of Jesus' confrontation with the religious authorities. They did not agree that Jesus could forgive sins [the paralysed man]. This act of healing shows Jesus' authority.

Jesus was willing to be with everyone, share their hospitality even those who the religious authorities believed to be sinners. Another example for us to follow. He called Levi [Matthew] the tax collector to be one of his disciples joining him and his companions to share a meal and share his message with them .

His ministry continued but there was further confrontation with the religious leaders, over fasting and eating on the Sabbath. Both of which are answered by Jesus with comments about his own ministry and death and recollections from the Old Testament about David. Highlighting the importance of love and rules need to be purposeful, show God's love, purpose and inviting people to seek the good news

So let us think about our calling as we sing/listen to

Hymn StF 673 Will you come and follow me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-Bq1YtpQL8>

St. Mark's Gospel -Chapter Three

Chapter three goes on to show further confrontation between the religious authorities and Jesus and highlights their lack of compassion and the authorities' jealousy over the knowledge, power and understanding of Jesus. The Religious authorities begin to plot against Jesus.

Jesus goes on to call a further eight who had previously called the four fisherman **Simon** [later called] Peter, an impulsive man who became the leader of the church in Jerusalem and wrote the New Testament books Peter 1&2 and thought to be the source of the writing for the Gospel of Mark.

Andrew, who had informed his brother Simon about Jesus and was always encouraging others to follow Jesus

James and John the sons of Zebedee [nicknamed the Sons of Thunder]

James- a deeply committed follower, with a short temper, devoted to his death as the first Martyr

John- An Ambitious follower who was known as the disciple that Jesus loved. Wrote the Gospel of John, 1,2,3, John and the book of Revelation. Believed that the transforming power of the love of Christ was for everyone.

He then added to there number:

Phillip,- who told Nathanel about Jesus and his belief that Jesus was God through his miracles and teaching.

Nathanel-an honest man who was unsure about Jesus initially as he came from Nazareth- a town with trading routes and a poor reputation. When they met he changed his mind and followed Jesus.

Matthew- a tax collector who changed his ways and continued to invite those to follow who needed help and support. Wrote the Gospel of Matthew

Thomas – a couragous man who doubted but then believed Jesus had risen
Little is known about

James son of Alphaeus-

Thaddaeus-

Simon [the zealot- a jewish nationalist]

Judas Iscariot- was a dishonest man who betrayed Jesus and committed suicide.

The faithful disciples grew in knowledge and understanding especially after the death of Jesus when they were transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and go on through the New Testament to proclaim the Good news of Jesus Christ to the whole World.

The Lectionary for this week is these last verses of **Mark Chapter 3 v 20-35**

Further confrontation from the authorities, accusing Jesus of getting his knowledge and powers from Satan. Jesus goes on to answer them by offering a variety of reasons why it is not possible for his power to come from Satan but all his knowledge and power come from God. For he is the Son of God.

The last few verses highlight the concerns of his family due to the exhausting schedule and a lack of understanding. Jesus goes on to describe everyone as his brothers and sisters an invitation to be part of his family. We can all appreciate at this time the importance of family - they can be supportive or they can destroy us depending on our experiences. Our church, our community are our family too.

As we make mistakes, we grow, our understanding, our feeling of security we flourish, knowing that, as we come closer to God we are being shaped to do his work that he has assigned us.

May we all follow our Lord Jesus Christ, encouraging everyone to join us and share in the love of Christ. Going out into the community to share our love and understanding with all whom we meet, as a representative, a disciple of Christ.

Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Loving and eternal God, our prayers for others challenge us and move us and bring us ever closer to your presence.

We pray for those so overburdened with wealth and belongings that their lives are a constant worry...

We pray for those so starved of food and deprived of comfort and even basic amenities that their lives are a constant worry...

We pray for those near to us who need our prayer because of illness, death, neglect or trauma...

Thinking especially of :-

Eternal God, you hear our prayers, you know our yearnings and desires and you know those for whom we pray. Time of Silence for those known to us
We commit them and ourselves, our living and our dying,
into your hands.

Amen.

Comments Perhaps you would like to read these first three chapters and may be go on to look at next week [Chapters 4-8v21]and beyond. We will be looking at Marks Gospel in more detail than before over the next few weeks. Week three takes us to the end of Chapter 10 and the final week to the end of the gospel..

We are invited to look at the Methodist Way of life in respect of Bible month and the details are attached. Looking at the four headings, Worship, Service, Learning and Caring and Evangelism and a series of questions to encourage us to grow as we increase our knowledge and understanding of the Gospel.. Let us end with

Hymn StF 404 God's spirit is in my heart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VTQvYG-bl4>

Blessing

Loving God,
you sent your Son into your world
to gather us all up into your kingdom.
Be with us, as we hear and respond to your call to do the same.

Amen.

The Grace

Final Music -Hymn 594 Lord Jesus Christ you have come to us - fade out

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wZoZM6LEeE>

This service has been compiled by Chris Watkins, Local Pastor.
Prayers from Roots on the web