

St Andrew's Church

Mothing Sunday

Newsletter for 14th March 2021

10.00am Mass on Zoom

Celebrant - Father John; Preacher - Carole.

Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Reading

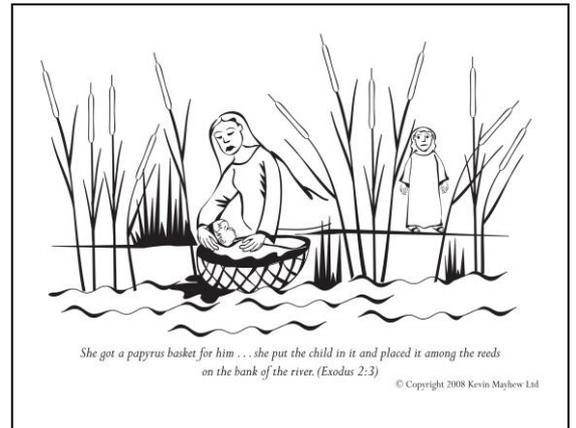
Exodus 2;1-10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said.

Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it.

When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."



Gospel

Luke 2; 33-35

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Post Communion Prayer

Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please pray for people who are sick or in need of prayer: Kirsty, Florin Dimitri, Steve Fox, McKenzie, Margaret Hendricks, Gloria Booth, Rupinder, Raj, Deb Jones.

For those who have recently died: Paul Morcom, Mrs Hawkes.

Anniversary of death: Kyrah Cian Brady, Margaret Ebbitt.

Birthdays: Thomas Bairstow, Carl Hart, Penny Fleming

Notices

- Midweek services – Evening Prayer Wednesday at 7pm, Morning Prayer Friday at 10am.
- The Lent Course continues Thursday at 7pm. Notes below. Feel free to join us, even if you have not been able to come to other sessions. Come and welcome!
- There will be a fund raising coffee morning the Thursday after Easter, 8th April. Virtual coffee, virtual cake, real conversation, real donations please. (£10 suggested).

Prayer

Caring and compassionate God, speak to us today through the love shown by mothers of your love for us and all the love that brought us into being, that has nurtured us across the years, that welcomes us here and that will go on reaching out, come what may, for all eternity. Help us, as we honour what motherhood means, to honour you also, recognising that you show the same devotion and more, an unswerving commitment to your children's welfare, and teach us, as part of your family, to respond accordingly, loving you in return, expressing our gratitude, and living as you have taught us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Nick Fawcett)

Loving Father, we thank you for the love and dedication of our doctors and nurses in this time of Covid. We thank you for the work of all hospital staff, health care workers, care home workers, scientists and laboratory technicians, as well as transport workers, police, and those who work in the electricity, gas and water industries. We give thanks for all those whose vital work keeps our country functioning. We pray for all our exhausted workers, and ask that you will continue to support and sustain them. We ask you to protect all those who take risks with their health for our sakes. We ask God to bless and protect all those we love and care about, in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour, Amen.

Lent Course Notes

Session 5: Passing on the story of Jesus.

Thursday 18th March 2021 – 7.00pm

Featured Bible Passages

- Acts 2:4
- Matthew 10:19-20
- Acts: 8:26-40

Summary

This session attempts to scratch the surface on the many ways that the holy spirit enables us to share the good news, from miracles, to dreams, to giving us the words to say. By the end of the session, you will have explored some of the ways the holy spirit inspires and releases our evangelism and will be encouraged to step out in faith. The session also features a video interview.

This session is based around Chapter 5 of Hannah Steel's book *Living His Story*. A featured passage is below, but you are encouraged to read the whole chapter as the questions often reference the book.

Featured Passage

One individual who follows where the Spirit leads is Philip. When persecution broke out, we learn that while the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem, many of the early followers of Jesus were scattered but that 'those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word' (Acts 8.4). This is one of those examples where God is mysteriously still at work even through a terrible situation or crisis. I was interested to hear at an online event during the lockdown of one girl who had tuned into an online church service. She commented that she didn't go to church, but her brother was involved in the service, and because she was missing him, she tuned in to watch. This experience had her interested in the Christian faith, which she then wanted to explore. It is incredible how often God works through extraordinary or difficult situations, or times when our plans go awry, to bring new opportunities.

One of those who found themselves unintentionally scattered to Samaria was Philip, one of the seven who had been chosen to wait upon tables as the church started to grow. The Spirit prompts

Philip to go to the desert road to Gaza where he meets the Ethiopian eunuch. Luke tells us that this individual was a person of great influence, 'a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury' (Acts 8.27). As Philip is told by the Spirit to travel alongside this man's chariot, he heard him reading out loud (as would have been normal practice) a passage of Scripture from Isaiah. I suppose having a conversation with a stranger on public transport is the modern-day equivalent, although I have to say that in many years of such conversations, I have never met someone who 'just happened' to be reading Isaiah 53! Philip finds that the Spirit is at work in him enabling him to explain the Scriptures so that that this Ethiopian Chancellor of the Exchequer can hear and understand the good news of the risen Jesus. In fact, the response is so immediate that the Ethiopian eunuch commands the chariot to be stopped so that he can be instantly baptized in a nearby pool of water. We don't hear of this man again, but Luke tells us that he 'went on his way rejoicing' (Acts 8.39) and we presume he then returned to Ethiopia as the first Christian disciple in that great continent of Africa. When we stumble across a chance conversation with someone on the train or the bus, we cannot know the impact our words may have, or the seeds sown that will bear fruit in places and locations other than our own. Stories like Philip's should encourage us to seize every opportunity that comes our way and trust the Spirit to be at work.

Video

For this session, there will be a video interview. This video will be available from **8th February 2021**.

Discussion Questions

1. This session encourages us to think globally. How can you perceive the Holy Spirit at work during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. The Spirit often 'propels us out of our comfort zones'. Have you ever surprised yourself by speaking boldly, or can you think of someone else doing this with remarkable results?
3. The work of the Holy Spirit is mysterious . . . Can you think of a situation which has been transformed beyond imagining by the work of the Holy Spirit?