



Bulletin 33

Dear Church!

6th May 2021

We're getting there!

Praise God, our nation's numbers being infected by the virus, hospitalised by it and dying from it continue to fall and remain low – especially low in the West Country and Plymouth. Let's pray for our brothers and sisters upon other shores that the same may be true for them. Especially Brazil, India and others in crisis.

As fresh opportunities open up for the restoration of church life, it's very exciting to see the collective thrust of our ministries gaining traction and momentum once more. It would be wonderful to think that every member of the congregation might use the opportunity of sharing Mark's Gospel **121** with a friend to show their gratitude to the Lord for how he has sustained them through the past year. Have you accepted the challenge to ask someone yet?!

My hope is that although some may start straight away – perhaps in the garden, an outdoor café or pub garden, most of us are likely to issue the invitation and get going after May 17th when we can legally invite someone into our home or inside a café. This also means home groups (6 or less) can meet in homes again. And in any number, we hope, from 21st June.

Finally, on **121**, let's set ourselves a deadline of 21st of June by which we aim to have asked and started reading with someone. The 21st of June is supposed to be the date restrictions are all lifted so it would be a great way to give thanks to the Lord! Overleaf you will find more practical suggestions on how to go about it!

As regards other aspects of church life, as second vaccinations come into effect, more people are beginning to feel confident in returning to the socially distanced church building. The suggested distancing for churches is 1 metre + mask. Up to now we have been keeping it at 2 metres+. We are now intending to have Sunday church at Emmanuel at 1 metre+ for one side of the building and 2 metre+ for the other side for those who feel they would still like to keep that distance as a precaution for now. We will, of course, remain online too.

The big game changer for church life will be singing inside. Oh to raise the roof again! As soon as we receive any further directives on that we will reinstate our evening service. We also hope to reinstate the Sunday 8.00am communion as soon as vulnerable age groups will be enjoying the immunisation of second vaccines.

So, life is looking ever upwards, but please remember those little acts of care and compassion which mean so much for those still under restriction due to vulnerability.

Every blessing in Christ, Rev Karl

Might I suggest your response to the challenge might look something like?

As you prepare...

1. **Pray** ...every day about who you might ask and for the right moment to ask them!
2. **Read** ...Mark's Gospel in one sitting so you learn to read it as a cohesive story.
3. **Listen** ...to our 9.00am Facebook Live (or the recordings).
4. **Collect** ...*two* copies of Mark's Gospel from back of church. ([Email](#) to order by post)
5. **Ask** ...someone to meet with you to read! Probably read in chunks of one chapter or so before you meet. Get them to scribble questions and/or /discussion points for later as they read.
6. **Attend** ...[7.30pm Zoom Prayers](#) (Click above or go to meeting ID: Meeting ID: 141 678 796 with usual password) on the **3rd Wednesday of the month** for one hour which is henceforth rededicated to praying for all aspects of **121**, and having an open discussion on how people are getting on and dealing with questions your reading companion may be asking you.
7. **Maybe Buy** Dig Deeper into the 'Gospels' IVP as a background reading companion.

When you meet

1. **Meet in a comfortable, enjoyable environment** – sitting room, garden, pub, café etc.. but make sure you can have enough privacy and peace to share openly & audibly. Aim to have fun and enjoy it!
2. **Be prepared** on the half chapter or so or chapter you will share together but not over-prepared – it's supposed to be a discovery for *both* of you!
3. **Don't preach!** Discuss the passage by picking up things which are curious or significant. Things which excite or speak to you. Ask them how they feel too.
4. **Encourage them to ask questions.** If they don't, ask them questions! "What do you think Mark means by...." "How do you understand...."
5. **Cultivate** the excitement and ongoing nature of the story and their response to it.