**Summer 2020 Journey Through Acts**

We are spending the the summer of 2020 whilst we are seeing together to find out what it means to be a kingdom community in a time of dislocation and lockdown looking at the Book of Acts as a model of how the followers of Jesus decided to be, to live and to act in the very beginnings of the ‘church’ of Jesus Christ. There are similarities and differences between the circumstances they found themselves in and where we are now, but if there has ever been an opportunity to imagine and re-imagine what it means for us to be followers of Jesus, that time is arguably now.

This document is designed as an outline for you to work through, either individually or as part of a group. All feedback and suggestions for modification is most welcome.

**A Session Outline - 40 mins total, but can be longer or flexible if you wish**

**Introduction - 10 mins (longer if you’re in a group I suspect!)**

1. How are you?
2. What notable things have happened recently?
3. Is there anything distracting you from focusing on God today? If yes, think or talk about that and then pray and give it to God as you begin.

**Time With the Bible - 15-20 mins**

*What does this passage tell me abbot God?* To answer this question, you might want to think about whether the passage speaks about God directly or indirectly. Is there a prophecy quoted, or does the passage remind you of another part of scripture? If so, spend some time following the leads. How does the passage remind you of what you’ve known about God before? Does it make you think differently about God than you have done before?

*What does this passage tell me about myself?* To answer this question you might want to ask how you felt as you read the passage and how you feel as you reflect on it now. Do you identify with a particular character? Does it make you feel happy or sad, hopeful, excited, confused or any other emotions?

If you feel challenged, or as if something in the passage is really speaking to your or feels personal to you today, spend a few minutes thinking: what is it? What about it feels important to you?

*What is this passage inviting me to do differently?*

As Christians we are meant to live according to the truth that is in Jesus and to not be the same as before we knew him (Ephesians 4:20-24). As we learn the good news of Jesus and the truth about his love we are bound to change.

Spend time thinking about things in your life you might want to be or to do differently as a result of today’s study and pray about those things.

For each session, we will also provide a few questions to pick out the key elements of the passage and try and help you to be guided through the study.

**Time in Prayer - 10 mins**

Each time you meet or spend time reflecting alone, make sure you leave plenty of time to pray. You could pray about:

The Church and its leaders, both ours, Churches nearby and the worldwide Church

Situations locally or in the world around us

Things shared by people during your time together

Those who are afraid, sick or those who are bereaved

Committing to God that you will follow through on what you’ve been invited to do by today’s study.

Your neighbours and the street you live in.

Those who govern us locally, nationally and internationally.

**Week 2: Acts 22-41**

1. Peter makes it clear that God knew what was going to happen to Jesus - that the miracles, signs and wonders of the coming of the kingdom wouldn’t be enough to turn people to him and that Jesus had to die. Does this sense of God’s control of the situation make you feel comfortable, confused or something else? Think and talk about how it feels to you to for God to be in control.

2. and again, ‘it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him’. How does this make you feel about Jesus? and yourself?

3. What do you think it means for Jesus to be both Lord and Messiah? Think about the similarities between those two words, what it means for the power and authority of Jesus and what having a Lord and Messiah might mean for us.

4. If you have done, when did you realise that you needed to give God authority in your life? When did you realise you needed saving? If you haven’t come to the point of thinking either of those things yet, or you’re at a point of crossroads in life, what is holding you back from trusting God?

5. Lastly, is there anything you need to turn away from and live in a new direction today? (‘repent and be baptised, every one of you’)

**Something To Do this Week**

1. As Peter continues his great sermon, he challenges the people listening to remember that they had seen and heard of Jesus’s miracles, wonders and signs ‘which God did among you through him’. Can you think of a time when you have seen a miracle, or a wonder or sign of God’s love done in the name of Jesus? Talk about it if you’re in a group and comfortable to. If you are on your own, write, draw or create in some other way a sense of the memory of that moment.