**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 12: Acts 6:1-7**

**Servant Leaders**

**6**During those days the number of Jesus’ followers kept multiplying greatly. But a complaint was brought against those who spoke Aramaic by the Greek-speaking Jews, who felt their widows were being overlooked during the daily distribution of food.

**2**The twelve apostles called a meeting of all the believers and told them, “It is not advantageous for us to be pulled away from the word of God to wait on tables. **3**We want you to carefully select from among yourselves seven godly men. Make sure they are honorable, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will give them the responsibility of this crucial ministry of serving. **4**That will enable us to give our full attention to prayer and preaching the word of God.”

**5**Everyone in the church loved this idea. So they chose seven men. One of them was Stephen, who was known as a man full of faith and overflowing with the Holy Spirit. Along with him they chose Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas from Antioch, who had converted to Judaism. **6**All seven stood before the apostles, who laid their hands on them and prayed for them, *commissioning them to this ministry*.

**7**God’s word reigned supreme and kept spreading. The number of Jesus’ followers in Jerusalem quickly grew and increased by the day. Even a great number of Jewish priests became believers and were obedient to the faith!

1. This passage begins with a complaint of injustice. What do you think of how the apostles respond in vv2-4?
2. The ministry of serving is described as ‘crucial’ here. Have you ever played a serving role in Church? Were you made to feel a crucial part of things?
3. What does this passage tell us are the main qualifications of people who lead and serve in churches?
4. What do you think we might need to keep doing or change in the life of our Churches in order for God’s word to ‘reign supreme and keep spreading?’

**Something To Do This Week**

Is there anyone or any group of people within our Church family who you think are treated unfairly? What can you do to improve things?