

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly."

Romans 5:6

Welcome to another week of worship with Eastleigh Parish Church. As we go through Lent we're studying the Gospel of Mark and today our reading takes us to 3 of the parables that Jesus shared. As we said last week, Proverbs 25:2 tells us, *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings."* and with this in mind we approach the parables wanting to dig deep and search out the treasures that Jesus has offered us in his word.

Follow these links to [read](#) or [listen](#) to the whole of Mark. Do feedback to Ian or the wardens (Dot & Keith) anything you find to be particularly striking or helpful in your personal readings or our Sunday services.

A Collect for this Week

Eternal God, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up what harms us, and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Keep in Touch

 **Wardens:** Keith 07905 249 860 & Dot 07446 072 097
Vicar: ian@eastleighparish.com 07809 668 118
Naomi: naomi@eastleighparish.com (for Children's Ministry)
Sue: sue@eastleighparish.com 07502 427 693
Revd Oliver: oliver@eastleighparish.com 07940 851 612

Romans 5:6-11

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. **7** Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. **8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall

we be saved from God's wrath through him! **10** For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! **11** Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Mark 4:21-34

21 He said to them, 'Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on its stand?

22 For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. **23** If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.'

24 'Consider carefully what you hear,' he continued. 'With the measure you use, it will be measured to you – and even more. **25** Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.'

26 He also said, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. **27** Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. **28** All by itself the soil produces corn – first

the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. **29** As soon as the corn is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.'

30 Again he said, 'What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?

31 It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth.

32 Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.'

33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. **34** He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Basics Bank: Celebrating 15 Years of Service



Eastleigh Basics Bank are celebrating their 15th anniversary by holding a thanksgiving service here in All Saints' at 11am on Saturday 14th March, followed by a buffet meal. Everyone is invited to come and praise God for his faithfulness through the years.

Study Leave for Ian & Sabbatical for Sue



As you'll probably know, Ian and Sue are going to be away during May, June & July of this year. Here's some information that you may find helpful to know:

- The Churchwardens are responsible for most things during Ian's absence. Please speak to them in the first instance if you have any queries.
- Revd Oliver Bailey will be taking the lead on coordinating the 9:30 service. Dot, Keith & Geoff will be working with him to help with this.
- Mike Sarson & Elizabeth Douglas will have responsibility for leading the 11 o'clock service.
- Keith will be coordinating the midweek service (Weds 9:15am).
- Dot will be taking the lead on our regular care home services.
- Mike Sarson is the Vice Chair of PCC, and as such has responsibility to lead PCC in Ian's absence.
- We've already arranged for a fantastic group of preachers to come and teach during the services whilst Ian's away.



Please do pray that the whole church benefits from this different season. Pray that God speaks - and that we listen to him - during this season of 'refresh' and 'reset' for all of us!

Some Lent Events



- **Spring Clean for All Saints'**
 - ▶ All morning Saturday 28th March
- **Agapé/Passover Supper: 7:00pm Thursday 2nd April**
 - ▶ [Click here to reserve your seat](#) at this delicious meal
- **Holy Communion for Holy Week**
 - ▶ 9:15am every day Mon 30th March - Thurs 2nd April
- **Saturday Kids' Easter Special**
 - ▶ 2:00-3:30pm Saturday 4th April

Making the Most of Mark's Gospel



To get the most out of Mark's Gospel, why not make use of these study questions?

>>>Read [Mark 6:1 – 8:29](#)

1. In the earlier chapters (1 – 5) Mark has built up a picture of Jesus' power and authority. He's shown us various miracles: healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead, calming a storm.

- How does this passage (Mark 6:1 – 8:29) add to that picture? (See Mark 6:32-44, 47-48; 7:31-37; 8:1-10, 22-26.)

2. Jesus saw the large crowd in Mark 6:34 as "sheep without a shepherd".

- What did he do about it?
- If Jesus looked at the faces of people in a busy town today, do you think he would feel the same? Why / why not?
- Do you feel the need to have Jesus as your shepherd?

3. Write down the very different reactions to Jesus' preaching and miracles:

a) in his home synagogue (Mark 6:1-6)

b) among people generally (Mark 6:14-15, 53-56; 7:37)

c) from the disciples (Mark 6:51-52)

d) from the religious leaders (Mark 8:11).

- Why do you think people responded so differently in each of these cases?
- Do you identify particularly with one of those groups?

4. Read Jesus' question in Mark 8:29.

- How would you have answered if you had not read the Bible?
- Now that you're halfway through Mark's Gospel, and have read about the amazing things that Jesus said and did, how might your answer change?
- If you still have questions about the identity of Jesus, write them below.

5. Do you have any questions about Mark 6:1 – 8:29?

A Special Fast for Lent: Friday 13th March



Fasting is an important Christian discipline and Lent provides us with an encouragement to take it up. What follows is **an invitation** to join with others in **a day of fasting and focussed prayer**.

Preparation

- ▶ In the days before the fast take a moment to ask God to lead you.
- ▶ Ask him to show you what **you** should lay down / fast from - and for how long (*this is between you and God*).
- ▶ Communicate with any family members who may need to know if you will be missing certain meals.

Laying Down

- ▶ It is between you and the Lord what you fast from and for how long.
- ▶ It is important you make every effort to honour what you promise.
- ▶ Likewise, don't make a big deal of your fast to other people.
- ▶ A suggested fast: After your normal evening meal on Thursday 12th March, drink only water and abstain from all food until breakfast on Saturday 14th March.
- ▶ Please seek medical advice from your doctor if you have any concerns regarding fasting from food.

Prayers in the Morning (*ideally Friday 13th March - perhaps at breakfast time*)

- ▶ The theme for these prayers is **confession**.
- ▶ Read [2 Chronicles 7:11-22](#).
- ▶ Spend some time acknowledging before the Lord the ways in which you individually and we corporately have disobeyed God.
- ▶ Now read [Romans 5:6-11](#) and give thanks for God's offer of forgiveness.

Prayers During the Day (*perhaps during what would have been lunchtime?*)

- ▶ The theme for these prayers is **thanksgiving**.
- ▶ Read [Psalm 136](#).
- ▶ Write a list of many good things you can give thanks to God for - both personally and in the life of our church community.
- ▶ Spend a while thanking God for his blessings.

Prayers in the Evening

- ▶ The theme for these prayers is **supplication** (asking/requesting).
- ▶ Read [Philippians 4:6](#) - perhaps take an extra moment to copy this verse out in full and to **meditate** on all it contains.
- ▶ Bring your requests to God by praying each part of Philippians 4:6 in turn:
 - 1) Confess what you may be anxious about; 2) Name every situation that is in your heart / on your mind; 3) etc.
- ▶ It can be helpful to pray for these 4 topics:
 - 1. The needs of the wider world (including the persecuted and suffering church).
 - 2. The needs of this nation.
 - 3. The needs of the Church, especially here in Eastleigh.
 - 4. Your own personal walk with the Lord.
- ▶ Finish by reading [Luke 2:29-32](#).

Praying with Others

- ▶ Join us in All Saints' at 8:00am on Saturday 14th March for 30minutes of guided prayer.

Taking Up

- ▶ Break your fast with a slap-up meal or by enjoying whatever it is you may have laid down for the duration of the fast - giving thanks to God for all these good things he gives us to enjoy!

Feeding-Back

- ▶ If you sense the Lord has shown you something during your fast, please be sure to mention this to Ian or one of the wardens (Keith & Dot).