

# DERRIFORD URC NEWS LETTER

THE LIGHT, LIFE AND LOVE OF JESUS IN OUR COMMUNITY



6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2021

We have some exciting times ahead with the plans for our building. I don't know what these will look like; I am sure that over the weeks and months ahead it will become clearer and clearer. The one thing that is for certain is whatever those plans are they will glorify our Lord and Saviour – if they don't there is no point in doing anything. What a privilege it is to think, pray and plan to see how best we can serve God, our fellowship and the community with the resources that God has given us.



You know, I am not worried about the size of the plans and ideas – the larger and more impossible the easier it is to see God at work in it! Just like the Gideon and his 300 soldiers that we looked at the other week (Judges 6-8). What is important is to hear from God, to know that it is HIS plans and ideas! So, let's keep praying and listening (which of course is part of prayer) and let's not let finance restrict us from hearing God!

I am also praying that the process in building, designing and planning will be a blessing to both church and community. I want to see this as a real opportunity to engage with Derriford and the surrounding areas. You up for this?

## Summary of Sunday's Sermon/Service

### Feeding the 5000....

Apart from the miracle of the Lord's resurrection, the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 is the only other miracle that is recorded in all four Gospels. The story can be found in Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13). We will focus today on the version that John tells us in chapter 6.

This miracle tells us at least three things when we follow Jesus... 1. He will stretch our faith (vs. 1-7). 2. He will show us great things (vs. 8-11). 3. He will supply us (vs. 11-13).

1. He will stretch our faith. Jesus asked Philip a question in verse 5 for one reason. Jesus wanted to "test" or "examine" Philip, and the Lord will do the same thing to us. Why does the Lord do that? It's not to condemn us or to fail us. The Lord tests us to help us see where we are, so we can move ahead and grow. Jesus wasn't trying to trick or embarrass Philip. He was testing Philip to stretch his faith. Notice also that the tests can be hard. Jesus asked Philip to do a hard thing. He wasn't asking Philip to go buy some fish and chips! No. This was a huge crowd of people: 5,000 men and possibly another 10,000 women and children. Matthew's Gospel makes it clear that Jesus was asking the disciples to provide food for all of those people. Read Matthew 14:13-17. Jesus was asking them to do an incredibly hard

thing, really, an impossible thing. A denarius was the main silver coin of the Roman Empire, and it was roughly equal to the pay for a day's work. So, 200 denarii equated to the pay for 200 days of work. In other words: More than six months' wages weren't enough to feed that crowd, with even a little bit of food! Why did Jesus ask Philip to do such a hard thing? Why does He ask us to do hard things? Life is hard and the main reason is because we live in a lost world. God is asking us to do hard things because He is making something beautiful and wonderful out of our lives. It's a little bit like cooking. We can make a simple sandwich. That's straight forward. But there's nothing really special about that. Then, what about Christmas Dinner for example with all the trimmings. That's a feast but so complicated with all the timings involved! It's hard to get right. Well, God's not making a sandwich out of our lives. He is turning us into something beyond our wildest dreams! That's hard. And so, we will be tested, just like Philip. Also notice that the hardest tests can come when you take on responsibility for other people. Ask any parent, and they will tell you that's true. Jesus wasn't just asking Philip to feed himself. He was asking him to take on the responsibility for others. The Lord wants us to do the same kind of thing. It probably won't be 5,000 but it could easily be 5. Do you think the Lord wants you just looking out for yourself? -- No way! But one of the blessings of helping other people is that it also helps us. It helps turn us into the people God wants us to be.

2. When we follow Jesus, He also shows us great things. Jesus took a little boy's lunch and multiplied it to bless thousands of people in verses 8-11. Andrew saw an opportunity. He wasn't sure it could work, but his eyes were opening up to the possibility. We need to open up to the possibilities of what God can do in our lives, our families, and our church. Then we will see more miracles of God's multiplication. This amazing miracle of feeding thousands all flowed out of a little boy's willingness to give up his lunch! The little boy gave what he could, and that's all God asks of us. Give what we can of our time, our talent, and our money. Give what we can. And just a little bit can make a huge difference, just as it did here. God can do a lot with a little! Having got this far, it also needs organisation. Mark's Gospel recalls that they sat down in groups.



Organisation isn't very glamorous, but here it turned a crowd into a miracle. And we've got to be organised as a church with volunteers willing to step in. Remember too that these miraculous blessings happened because the disciples and the people obeyed Jesus. The crowd obeyed by sitting in groups. The little boy obeyed by giving his lunch. And the disciples obeyed by serving the people. This great miracle would not have happened, if any of these three had refused to obey. What if the crowd refused to stay? What if the little boy refused to share his lunch? And what if the disciples refused to serve? The Lord's infinite power is then demonstrated in verse 11. A paintbrush in my hands might result in something that is recognisable. When a paintbrush is placed in the hands of someone from Art Club, it turns into something fabulous. In the hands of Renoir or Constable it becomes an incredible work of art. How is it that the same instruments and the same tools can bring about such different results? Quite simply, it depends upon who is holding them. When we put our lives in Jesus' Hands, He can do miraculous things through us!

3. When we follow Jesus, He will supply us. Jesus Christ will supply every need we ever have in life! The Lord took good care of these people, and He will take good care of us! In fact, He already is! Every breath we have is a gift from Him. This miracle grew out of Jesus' compassion for His people. Read Mark 6:34. Jesus Christ really loves us with all His heart. He proved it here, and He proved it forever when He died on the cross for our sins. The Lord gave these people everything they needed, and more – see verses 11-13.

This is a great testimony of God's bountiful supply! So put your trust in the Lord and begin to follow Jesus. Yes, He will stretch us, but Jesus will also show us great things, and He will supply us with every need we ever have in life!

Above, as always, is a just a summary of Phil's sermon from Sunday, if you would like to listen to the whole service including, the sermon, the hymns, and prayers you can find it on the link below. It really was a great time and great service well worth watching:

<http://www.derrifordchurch.co.uk/sunday-30th-may-2021-morning-service/>

This **coming Sunday morning's service** is being led by me and the theme is **The Lavishly Extravagant Father**, taking our reading from **Luke 15:11-32**. If you are able, please do try to read this before the service on Sunday and for an extra 'gold star' read the whole chapter 15!

## This Week's Notice slide

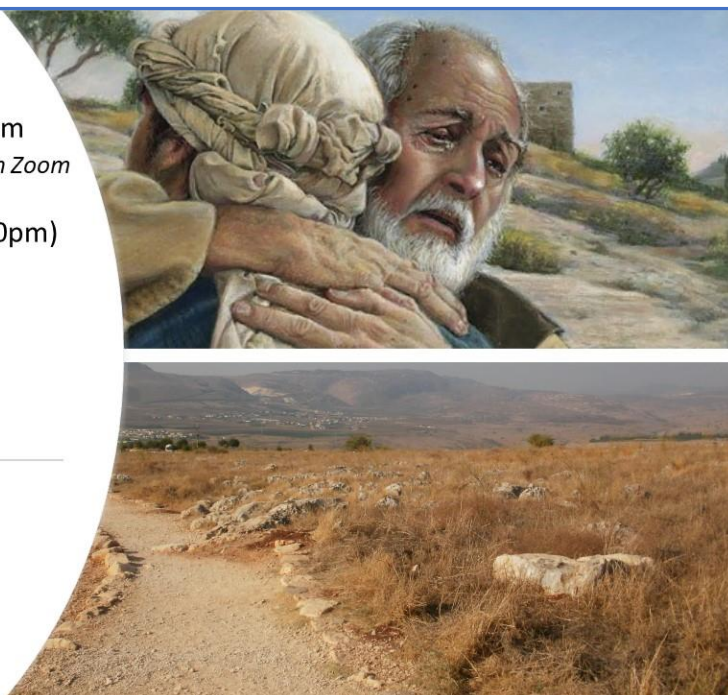
### Notices

- Tuesday Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- Sunday Service (10:30am) (*both on Zoom and in Person*)
- 15<sup>th</sup> June is our next Nooma (7:30pm)

#### Other Notices

Overseas mission partners  
Prayer and Reading lists

*Our theme is  
the lavishly extravagant  
father*



## Prayer Pointers...

**Praise:** at our prayer meeting this morning we read **1 Chronicles 16:29–34** – why not use it as an opening time to give God praise

**Church:** Pray for the church and the plans for our buildings. Pray that we find new and exciting ways to reach our communities. Pray also for a unity within the church within Plymouth that we can be seen to be loving people of God.

**Local:** Pray for the local police and other services and for the councillors. Ask God to give the wisdom in all they do. Pray for the wonderful community spaces and coastlines we have in and around Plymouth as the temperature rises and people use them, that they are respected and enjoyed by all.

**National:** Pray for the continued rollout of the vaccine around the county and the world. Pray particularly for those effected in poorer countries without the resources (such as India). Also pray that the current ceasefire between Israel and Hamas (Palestine) continues and they find a real way forward.

Any prayer requests please text / email Lucy on:  
[lucyparker59@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lucyparker59@yahoo.co.uk) / 07503 003250

## Future Events...

**Feast of Fun.** What a special time on Tuesday – big thank you to everyone who helped and especially Helen who pulled it all together. We are trying to plan what we do with Feast of Fun in the summer. We would like to have some form of event with children and families (similar to 2019) but not sure what or how. Obviously we have to keep an eye on what the Government advice is and also the fact that we don't have a hall which will make things 'interesting'.

**Derriford Film Club** We have had three of these now and I don't know about anyone else but I have enjoyed watching the films with all you folk. Our next film will be on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July (7pm) and will be War Room. This is a wonderful Christian film about the power of prayer. Have a look at the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yx5kpJ5mkeE>

**Nooma** will start again this month – **Tuesday 15th June**. Hope the date is in your diary? We will be looking at number 6 called Kickball.

## Other Church stuff...

### Our Building.



We have now had information from our Quantity Surveyor about the costs for rebuild vs repair. The Elders and Deacons are currently reviewing these figures and looking at the best way to share it in a meaningful way and how we need to inform the whole church so we can have an informed discussion and start to make decisions. Obviously, there will be plenty of decisions needing to be made over the weeks and months ahead. Do keep an eye on the newsletters.

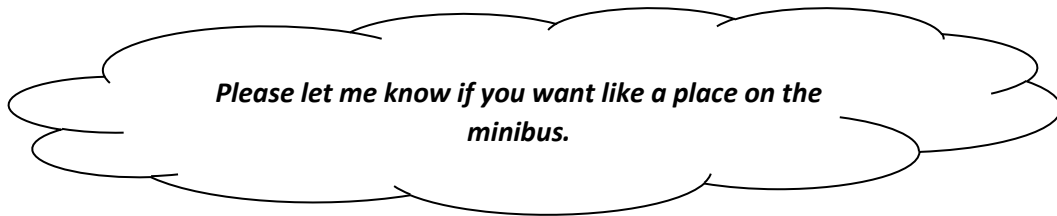
We also need to take advice from the URC on the best and right way forward.

So, please, please, please keep all of this in your prayers – exciting times ahead!

### Mayflower Celebration, Worship event on the Hoe (11<sup>th</sup> July 10:30am).

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July there is a Plymouth wide service on the Hoe to celebrate the 400 years since the Mayflower. It starts at 10:30am and we have been loaned a minibus by Plymouth College which will enable us to take people to the Hoe for the service! ***Won't it be great to celebrate this very special event with other churches in Plymouth?***





Don't forget, in the afternoon there are all sorts of things going on, again to celebrate the Mayflower. More details on:

<https://www.mayflower400uk.org/news/2021/april/book-now-to-see-plymouths-spectacular-international-mayflower-commemoration-event-this-july/>

Please note, if you want to go in the afternoon you will need to book a place (see website above).

**Prayer and reading list updating.** This is really important – I have only had one person come forward. Please do think about it!! We are looking to build up our lists of people within the fellowship who would be prepared to read the scriptures or lead us with our prayers of intercession in church. Please let me know which, or both, you'd like to do! We are going to be looking at some simple (and fun) training to help if you have not done it before. Also, it doesn't matter if you are generally on Zoom or in person, we are trying to enable both to be engaged.

**Overseas Mission.** Have you read Matthew 24:14 recently?

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

One of the areas that is so important is reaching all the nationals. In the passage above we can see that all nations will be reached before Jesus returns. Part of our responsibility here is for the church, as well as local mission, is to reach out to those further away. We are trying to look at how we do this by supporting overseas missions. We would like your help. Who should we support? I have had a few (3) suggestions but would like more. Please, is there an organisation (preferably smallish, so we can see that we make a difference) that we could support overseas together?

Lots of blessing to you all over the coming week. Enjoy the sunshine and hope to see you all on Sunday.

God bless you all.

Mark

