

# 'SAINTS ON THE MOVE' Homegroup Notes

## *Week 1 - September 2016*

### Freedom from Disappointment

**Note to Homegroup Leaders:** *Please feel free to use these notes and suggestions flexibly. You know what will work best with your group. The most important thing is to be enabling everyone to be open to God and to receive the freedom he is wanting to give. You will find it makes more sense if you've heard the sermon from Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September! Thank you!*

## WELCOME

Something to chat about as you settle in together:

What's the most surprising thing that's happened to you this week or this summer?

Do you like surprises? What about disappointment? What effect does disappointment have on you?

## INTRODUCTION

Our focus this week at the beginning of our series on Freedom, is on finding freedom from the effects of disappointment in our lives as individuals and as a church, and finding fresh hope in Jesus.

*(Please ensure that everyone has a 'Saints on the Move' leaflet for September and encourage them to listen again to the sermon from Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>, which you can find on the new church website at [www.allsaintsripley.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsripley.org.uk))*

## WORSHIP

Spend some time focusing on God and praising him - either quietly or in words or song - whatever suits your group.

Some ideas:

- You could light a candle and spend some time thinking quietly about Jesus saying, 'I am the Light of the World', or have a cross to look at and spend some time thinking quietly about Jesus saying, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life'. Then a few people could express praise and thankfulness in words.
- You could use some verses from a Psalm as a starting point eg Psalm 145:1-9 or Psalm 139:1-14 - and then use your own words.
- You could write the word 'GOD' in the middle of a large piece of paper and then, within a time limit (no more than a few minutes), come up with as many names or characteristics of God as possible and write them around it. If you are a large or competitive group, you could divide into 2 and see who can come up with the most! When you have finished, spend some time in quiet giving people time to look at all the names and characteristics. Then pray inspired by the name or characteristic that speaks most to you at the time.

## WORD - Looking at the Bible together

Before listening to the passage, set the context:

Jesus' friend Lazarus had fallen ill. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, sent a message to Jesus to tell him. Instead of rushing to go to them straightaway, Jesus waited for 2 days before setting off to go to them, in which time Lazarus died.

Reading: **John 11:17-44**

Spend some time quietly thinking about the reading and looking back though it. What strikes you particularly?

Share your thoughts and then listen to the passage again, perhaps with a different person reading.

Look at the different people and talk about what's going on for them (*you don't have to do them all!!*):

- Martha
- Mary
- Lazarus (!)
- Jesus
- The Disciples
- The other people mourning.

Can you identify with any of them? Maybe you have your own reasons for saying to Jesus, "If you had been here..." like Martha and Mary? Maybe you feel like God has disappointed you or let you down? Or maybe you identify with Lazarus - not that you're dead(!), but that the experiences you've had and the disappointments you've faced have caused hope and faith to die in you. Jesus responded differently to each of them. What might Jesus be saying to you? Is there anything to share from Sunday? (*Give some time to explore this sensitively, as appropriate within your group*)

When Lazarus emerged from the tomb he was still wrapped in his grave clothes. Jesus said to the people, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go!" Jesus is the one who can set us free and restore us to new life and hope, but we have a part to play as well in helping each other. What might it mean to 'take off the grave clothes' and let each other go? How can we help each other receive and live in freedom?

## PRAYER

Spend some time praying for each other and for the church as we seek God's freedom through this month.

*If you are aware of anyone who would like to spend an hour talking and praying with either John, Rachel or Marian about anything that comes up through this September, please encourage them to get in touch. Details are on the 'September - Freedom' leaflet.*

**\* DON'T FORGET \***

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October from 10am to 3pm**  
**'Saints on the Move' Church Day Together**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 10am - Harvest Thanksgiving**  
**& Freedom Celebration followed by lunch together**

*Pick up your  
 invitations now!*

*Rev'd Rachel Wigram  
 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2016*