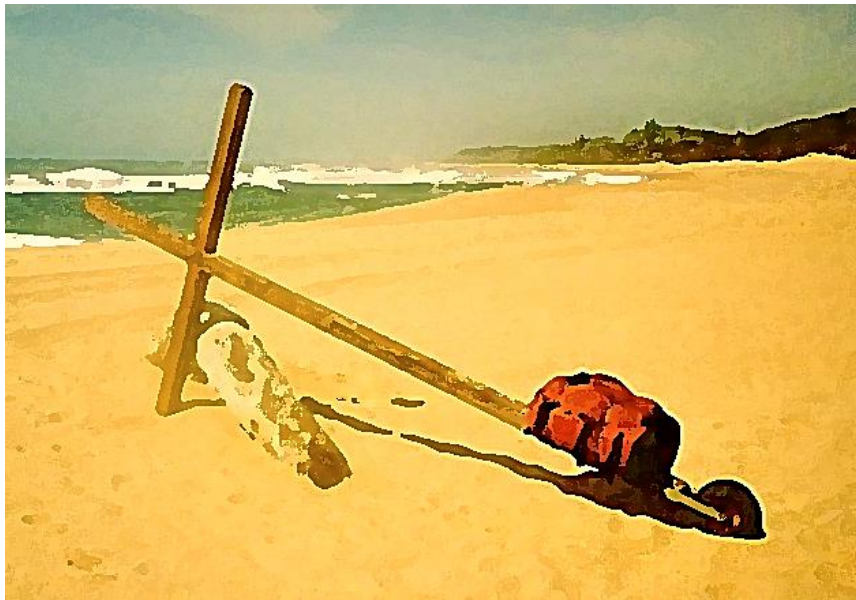




CHURCH OF CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE

Lent Meditations – Week Three

WILL YOU COME AND FOLLOW ME...



Through the weeks of Lent the invitation is there to take a journey with God and with others as we follow the steps that took Jesus to the cross and through the cross to resurrection life. The journey is from where we are now to where God is leading us. We don't always know where the journey will take us, so we can't get the tourist guide book out and pick and choose the sights we want to see. We may take the time to follow where others have led and look at what has been important for them, but more importantly we can take up the invitation to look again at what it means to take that journey as disciples, those who are learning from God and one another as we go.

Will you come and follow me in taking your place in the community?

Each one of us belongs to a number of different communities. Jesus' call to follow is about the whole of our lives. He calls us as individuals, but also as people together. The readings this week challenge us about how we respond to that call in a number of different ways.

The Community of the Way: Our response

No boxes to tick, no forms to complete,
No chips on the shoulder, no bargains to keep:
Live together in foolishness under the cross,
In the power of weakness, in life out of loss.
Lord, keep us as one – Your people in this place –
Passionate and single-minded to walk in Your Grace.

Micah 6: 6-8

What shall I bring when I come before the Lord, when I bow before God on high? Am I to come before him with whole offerings, with yearling calves? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my eldest son for my wrongdoing, my child for the sin I have committed? The Lord has told you mortals what is good, and what it is that the Lord requires of you: only to act justly, to love loyalty, to walk humbly with your God.

- **These words from the prophet Micah are part of God's complaint against the people that have been called to live God's love in the world. If you read on to the following verses you'll see some of the issues-: false weights and measures, fraud, cheating those who have little already. They misuse their power and look for everything for themselves. Does that sound at all familiar? Are there situations today that are like this? Are there ways in which we might be guilty of the same kinds of things? Not an easy question, but think about it if you can.**
- **How can this be put right? Micah tells the people that a great show of religion – in their case sacrifices of various kinds – is not what God wants. God wants people to act with justice and live their lives**

fairly. For us much of this is seen in the way Jesus lived his life and called others follow. We see it in the beginnings of the church, when people were ready to share everything with those in need. What are the ways in which we should be involved in issues of justice?

John 2: 13-22

As I was near the time of the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple precincts he found the dealers in cattle, sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers seated at their tables. He made a whip of cords and drove them out of the temple, sheep and cattle and all. He upset the tables of the money changers, scattering their coins. Then he turned to the dealers in pigeons: 'Take them out of here,' he said; 'do not turn my Father's house into a market.' His disciples recalled the words of scripture: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews challenged Jesus: 'What sign can you show to justify your action?' 'Destroy this Temple,' Jesus replied, 'and in three days I will raise it up again.' The Jews said, 'It has taken forty six years to build this temple. Are you going to raise it up again in three days?' But the temple he was speaking of was his body. After the resurrection his disciples recalled what he had said, and they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.'

- **If you are familiar with the other gospels, you'll remember that Matthew, Mark and Luke place this encounter after Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on what we have come to call Palm Sunday. In John's gospel, it is right at the beginning, after the miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana. Of course it could have happened twice, but clearly this encounter with the authorities is important for all the gospel writers. Why do you think this is?**
- **Jesus is concerned about how the temple is used. There may have been cheating and other unjust practices. More to the point, maybe, the commercial undertakings were stopping people, particularly those who were only able to use this part of the temple, from coming to pray and taking their place in God's community.**

Are there things that we do that prevent others from coming to God?

Take time to consider:

Both these readings are about justice. Both are about how communities work together for the good of everyone- or don't.

- **In a fairly short time now there will be a General Election. If you are entitled to vote, how will your understanding of what God requires of us affect your decision? And whether you have a vote or not- how does this affect how we engage with community groups such as Citizens MK?**
- **There are implications in both these passages about both others and our own attitude to money. This is one of the areas that is often most difficult to talk about. It can be a cause of many relationship breakdowns. At Cornerstone we have been challenged about how we use our money as a church and, if we are members of a church community, how we may respond to that. Think through, and, if you feel able, talk through what you think this means for you.**
- **The most important aspect of both these passages is our relationship with God and how we both respond to God in our world and help others to do so as well. Are there things that could better support you, or others who come into the church, to know God. Are there things that are done that make it difficult for people.**

Please take time to consider this: What resources would we need as a church to better support our engagement with our communities?

You may choose to consider these questions as a group, with friends or on your own. If you want to discuss any aspects further, please talk to your group leader or contact the ministers: ernesto@cornerstonemk.co.uk or brenda.mosedale@cornerstonemk.co.uk

For further reflection:

You may also like to read the following passages and reflect on them
Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Cor 1:18-25