



Serving, Growing, Living

Brockenhurst Parish Mission Action Plan

2021 Year of the Bible

Our *Vision Day* in September 2019 helped us to define our aims and mission for the Parish. To equip us to fulfil this vision, we have decided that there will be three years of activities to help us grow closer to God: 2020 was the year of prayer, 2022 will be the year of vocations and this year will be the year of the Bible.

Our aim is that through our activities this year, each individual will understand more of how we are individually called, inspired and nourished by God's word. This leaflet describes a wide variety of talks, sermons, courses, Lent activities, services and workshops that will take place throughout 2021 to help individuals achieve that aim.

Everything described here will also help us collectively as we seek to live the mission of Jesus as outlined in our *Mission Action Plan*: please take this opportunity to prepare for the exciting journey of faith we are taking together.

You are encouraged to consider how each offering might meet your needs and strengthen your discipleship. Help is available if you would like to talk through the options available or discuss what might be right for you: please talk to me or any member of the Ministry Team.

Rev'd Simon Newham



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WINCHESTER

EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

A really strong foundation for life is to regularly spend time with God's word. Often individuals choose to read a passage and then pray about whatever thoughts that reading has inspired. All that's needed is to open the Bible and engage with it. However, many people prefer a more structured approach, this section highlights some ideas that may help you.

AIDS TO DAILY STUDY

In the past, many people used a booklet to provide scripture references, prayers and reflections. These are still available and a good first step is *Knowing God in the Everyday: Reflections from Our Daily Bread* which is available free of charge from Our Daily Bread Ministries, PO Box 1, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 9ES (015395 64149). Alternatively, you may like to use a study guide to focus on a particular Bible book, such as the "... For Everyone" series by Tom Wright.

There are many good online resources (For example, Scripture Union's *WordLive* (www.wordlive.org) and The Bible Society's Daily Lyfe (<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/lyfe/daily-lyfe/>)). For a challenge, try reading the Bible in a year with the Bible Society Daily Reflections – visit www.biblesociety.org.uk for more information.

If you prefer to select your own plan, there's the free Bible App from YouVersion.com. This can be added to your tablet or smartphone and has the added advantages of always ensuring you have a Bible in your pocket, a wide choice of Reading Plans and the option to have your passage read to you by David Suchet! Other recommended apps include Lectio 365 from the 24/7 prayer movement and SacredSpace from the Jesuit movement.

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham or John Pearson.

HOME GROUPS

There are ten Bible Study Groups in the parish that provide a wonderful opportunity to explore what the Bible has to say to us today in a safe, friendly and rewarding way. If you do not currently participate in one of our groups, why not join one of them?

If you have questions or want to get involved, talk to Diane Webster or Simon Newham

SPOTLIGHT BIBLE READING PLAN

ONGOING

Throughout the year there will be passages highlighted on Spotlight to provide regular Bible reading that help you better understand the Bible's 'big picture'. The readings for the whole year are also shown on our website

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham.

YEAR OF THE BIBLE EVENTS

Throughout the year, there will be lots of opportunity to learn about, experience and engage with the Bible so that it can become an even stronger foundation for our lives.

LAUNCH EVENT

SUNDAY 17 JANUARY

Our renewed focus on the Bible starts with a special service when we will be joined by our guest preacher Gareth Davies from the Bible Society.

THE BIBLE SERIES

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

As part of our Sunday services, we will be adding short videos produced by the Bible Society that explore the 'big picture' of the Bible. Each week there will be a range of supporting resources available on our website, including a full sermon and Bible testimonies. The focus for each week is shown below:

- 24 January – Introducing the Bible
- 31 January – Origins and Meanings
- 7 February – Exodus and Freedom
- 14 February – Exile and Peace
- 21 February – Messiah and Love
- 28 February – Spirit and Community

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham.

THE BIBLE COURSE

ST SAVIOUR'S: 7:30PM TUESDAYS: 20 APRIL UNTIL 8 JUNE

An eight-session course helping you explore the world's bestselling book – The Bible. The Bible is a big and complicated book to read and for many it can be difficult to know where to start. Maybe you've been part of a Bible study group and want to build your confidence so you can study the Bible on your own, or maybe you need help connecting together the bits you've been reading. The Bible Course is a great resource, whether you are familiar with the Bible or just starting out.

- The Bible Course helps you see how the books of the Bible are part of one big story.
- Using a unique storyline, *The Bible Course* will show you how key events, books and characters fit together.
- The video teaching, course guide and daily readings will help you grow in confidence as you read the Bible for yourself.

The whole series is valuable for all: whether you are looking for the next step after an introductory course like *Alpha* and *Christianity Explored*, or have explored these materials before, it will bring new insights and awareness into your life.

NIGHT PRAYER/THE BIBLE AND MY LIFE

ST. SAVIOURS: 7PM WEDNESDAYS DURING LENT STARTING 24 FEBRUARY

The short service of Night Prayer, often known as Compline, provides the perfect night-cap for any day. During Lent, we will offer Night Prayer each Wednesday starting at 7pm. This will be combined with a short talk from either a visitor or a member of our Church family on *The Bible and my Life*, offered with the hope that understanding how the Bible has supported and guided others will inspire you to pray approach life's ultimate guidebook in a new way.

Duration: About 45 minutes

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham.

LENT SERMON SERIES

Our understanding of the nature of God is foundational to how we live a life of faith. So many of us can hold on to unhealthy pictures of what God is like. We can see Him as a demanding parent, or teacher, or authority figure who is impossible to please. We may see Him as an unreasonable, demanding and jealous lover, a joy-kill, a legalist, a pedant, a 'him'.

Through this Lent we will be exploring images of God in scripture that will help to give us a picture of the God we can believe in, trust in, and give our life to.

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham.

POP-UP' BIBLE WORKSHOPS

ST SAVIOUR'S: 7:30PM JUNE-NOVEMBER

Interpreting a book written over hundreds of years in a variety of languages by lots of different authors where the newest elements are nearly 2000 years old can be challenging! These 90-minute workshops provide us with the perspectives, tools and insights that enable us to better engage with the Bible. Each session provides a different viewpoint:

15 June	How to Study the Bible
13 July	How to Read the Bible Devotionally
14 September	Is the Bible Literally True? Recognising and interpreting the Bible's many styles.
12 October	The Bible and Art
9 November	The Bible and Archaeology

If you have questions, talk to Simon Newham.

Spending time with God in prayer is the ultimate way of understanding how Scripture impacts our life. The Prayer Gym is formed of up to 12 people who meet for five sessions each lasting, 1½-2 hours (refreshments and breaks included). Each session provides a relaxed environment that offers the opportunity to learn about and try a wide range of approaches to prayer, especially those related to scripture. These approaches can then be incorporated into your daily life.

The Prayer Gym is suitable for all: every group has a different experience since the content is specific to the needs and practices of the individuals participating. Each session has the aim of balancing background knowledge about the approaches introduced with guided practical experience. Past participants have shared that they have met with God each session, developed greater confidence in praying and set the foundation for a new pattern of prayer in their life.

If you have questions, talk to John Pearson.

To book, please contact the Church Office.

A morning of combining craft activities with the study of scripture offering us a different way of exploring what the Bible has to say to us as we allow ourselves the space to explore our creativity alongside others as we seek to draw closer to God.

If you have questions, please talk to John Pearson.

What's the Bible got to do with me? How do all of its different bits fit together to tell an over-arching story that helps us to better understand if there really is a God, what might He be like and how might He be relevant to our lives today?

The day presents a fast-paced, big picture of the Bible led by Revd Canon Dr Frog Orr-Ewing (Teaching Fellow in Mission at Winchester University) and aimed at helping us to explore the Bible's major narratives and themes that we might better understand how we are still very much part of the Bible story today.

To book, please contact the Church Office.

USEFUL BOOKS

Here are some books that others have found useful in getting to grips with the Bible:

THE DRAMA OF SCRIPTURE: FINDING OUR PLACE IN THE BIBLICAL STORY

CRAIG BARTHOLOMEW AND MICHAEL GOHEEN

This is a great book to help you understand how the Bible story hangs together. It presents the Bible story as a drama with six acts: creation; sin; Israel; Jesus; mission; and new creation. Each act of the drama offers reflections and questions to help us find our particular place in the story

INTRODUCING THE OLD TESTAMENT

INTRODUCING THE NEW TESTAMENT

JOHN DRANE

When you glance at these two books, the pictures and layout might suggest a magazine but this is not a simplistic presentation of the Bible. Instead it is lots of digestible material presented in clear English. These are books to browse and dip into, rather than read cover-to-cover. They are also great sources of background information that helps the Bible come alive.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE (WITHOUT SWITCHING OFF YOUR BRAIN)

SIMON J TAYLOR

This book's clear and practical approach will enable anyone to read the Bible better. It will speak to those who already read the Bible but find themselves asking why; and to those who don't read the Bible, but would like to if only it weren't so strange. It explains what the Bible is, offers an overview of what is found in it, and addresses questions people ask, such as: Does science disprove the Bible? Why is there so much violence in the Bible? What does the Bible say about sex? The author also presents an account of reading the Bible in the context of a life of faith and suggests how the Bible might be integrated with a life of prayer.

THE BIBLE JESUS READ

PHILIP YANCEY

The Old Testament is God's biography, the story of his passionate encounters with people. It is also a prequel to the story of Jesus, who came to answer the questions that troubled the ancient writers and still trouble us today. For expressing our deepest longings and voicing the full range of our lives and emotions, the Old Testament has no equal. Join Philip Yancey as he explores these sometimes shocking, often cryptic divine writings. You will come to know God more intimately, anticipate Jesus more fervently, and find a wonderful, wise companion for your faith journey.

THE BIBLE: A STORY THAT MAKES SENSE OF LIFE

ANDREW OLLERTON

When we make sense of the Bible, the Bible makes sense of us. Join Andrew Ollerton as he explores the storyline of Scripture, connecting six major biblical events with six definitive human needs: for meaning, freedom, peace, community, love and for an ultimate home. In short, digestible chapters, Andrew reveals how the Bible story makes sense of our human story. Underpinned by a depth of scholarship, the book is non-technical in style, making it accessible for the widest possible readership - including Christians and seekers interested in the Bible.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE FOR ALL IT'S WORTH

GORDON D. FEE

Understanding the Bible isn't for the few, the gifted, the scholarly. The Bible is accessible. It's meant to be read and comprehended by everyone from armchair readers to seminary students. A few essential insights into the Bible can clear up a lot of misconceptions and help you grasp the meaning of Scripture and its application to your twenty-first-century life.

Covering everything from translational concerns to different genres of biblical writing, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* is used all around the world. In clear, simple language, it helps you accurately understand the different parts of the Bible—their meaning for ancient audiences and their implications for you today—so you can uncover the inexhaustible worth that is in God's Word.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE BOOK BY BOOK

GORDON D. FEE AND DOUGLAS STUART

Reading the Bible need not be a haphazard journey through strange and bewildering territory. Like an experienced tour guide, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* takes you by the hand and walks you through the Scriptures. For each book of the Bible, the authors start with a quick snapshot, then expand the view to help you better understand its message and how it fits into the grand narrative of the Bible. Written by two top evangelical scholars, this survey is designed to get you reading the Bible knowledgeably and understanding it accurately.

CONCISE TOPICAL CONCORDANCE

HOLMAN PUBLISHERS

If you have ever struggled to find Bible passages to guide you, this book can help: it provides a selection of passages on more than 1700 different subjects

FAVOURITE BIBLE TRANSLATION AND BIBLE PASSAGE

John Pearson: My first-stop bible translation these days in the NIVUK: it is accessible without compromising the message - and has the added benefit that a reading of this version by David Suchet is available free of charge using several apps and websites so I can read and listen at the same time (a great way for the text to sink in).

Ben Myers, an Australian writer and Theologian, started summarising each book of the Bible. What emerged was the World's smallest Bible commentary - The Bible in Tweets. It's very thought-provoking and can be found at <https://www.faith-theology.com/2014/01/canonfodder-shortest-ever-commentary-on.html>

My favourite passage is Ephesians 3:16-19 which reminds me that there is so much more God can offer me than I currently understand.

Diane Webster: I am quite boring with the bible version – I prefer to stay with the NRSV. On the whole I find it clear and familiar and therefore I'm more likely to remember it. For further study I go to NIV and even The Message or one of the other modern ones on the Bible Society website. It is quite useful being able to flit from one to another.

With regards to a favourite bible passage there are so many and it depends on my mood - but I always come back to 1John 4:14-19 especially verse 16b "God is love ...". It sends shivers down my back when I read it at the beginning of the marriage service.

Simon Newham: I tend to mostly use the NRSV for study and prayer, but I do also like more informal translations such as *The Message* and John Henson's *Good As New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures* which help me to see things from a very different perspective.

My favourite passage is Luke 15:11-end – it's the whole story of God and His people in a nutshell!