

Preaching Series January 2023

We have a new vision statement as a benefice / SWCD Churches which we are adopting from the beginning of this new year. Over three consecutive weeks, the sermons will be unpacking the statement in a bit more detail exploring what this means for us as the local church.

“At SWCD Churches we are a church family who aims to: Worship God, Love our Communities, Grow in faith”

Going into February when we use the ‘everyone everywhere growing in faith’ Diocesan material, there will be links with this and particularly with the last of our vision statement weeks.

Date & Readings	Theme	Questions for house groups
Sunday 15 th Jan Exodus 3. 1 – 15 John 1. 29 - 42	‘Worship God’	<i>Read Exodus Chapter 3 verses 1 – 15</i> What does Moses’ encounter at the burning bush teach us about the ways in which we approach God in worship? If God knows us and loves us, why should we worship him? How would you describe ‘worship’ to a non-Christian? What might worshipping God in our church community look like? What stops us worshipping? Can you recall / describe an occasion when you encountered God in an unexpected and surprising way? Re-read verse 5 and move into a time of prayer.
Sunday 22 nd Jan Psalm 27. 1, 4 – 12 John 15. 9 – 17	‘Love our communities’	<i>Read John Chapter 15 verses 9 – 17</i> Why are we called to love each other? What is distinctive about Christian love? In the John Bible reading, which aspect of Jesus’ teaching do you find the most challenging? What might it mean and look like for SWCD Churches to be loving our communities? Please be practical with real examples and ideas. Reflect on and consider those who may be feeling unloved. How can we as Christians seek to bring God’s love? Re-read verse 12 and move into a time of prayer.
Sunday 29 th Jan Acts 20. 7 – 12 John 2. 1 - 11	‘Grow in faith’	<i>Read Acts Chapter 20 verses 7 – 12</i> You may be struggling to see the connection between the reading and growing in faith – but have you ever been tempted to nod off, zone out or switch off during a sermon! What helps us & what hinders us to keep our focus on God and our faith growing? Describe some of the ways in which you have grown in your faith over the past year. Are there particular people in your life to whom you can give thanks for the ways in which they have helped you to grow in faith. What might growing in faith as a church look like? What signs might you see? Please be practical & specific.