

Kingston URC and All Saints Church: Lent course 2020

We have had a tradition over several years of Lent Groups with people meeting once a week during the five weeks of Lent to consider and discuss some aspect of our faith and its relation to the world. We usually do this ecumenically.

This year we are suggesting something different: a course of personal meditation, of disciplined reflection on some passages taken from the Gospels. The point is not to generate argument or discussion, but to deepen our intimacy with the figure of Jesus as he is presented in those texts.

The passages have been chosen because often they convey a Jesus rather different from his churchy stereotype; there is often a sense of strangeness with which we have to struggle. So there are challenges here.

Though this course is offered primarily for personal use, there will be points when we can gather to share our experience of living with those passages; not Bible study in a traditional analytic way, but a communicating, as far as we wish, the experience of living with those texts over a period of time.

There are some suggestions below as to how you might approach this course. But don't take those as instructions; use the material in any way that works for you. The discovery of different ways of drawing these passages into your life will be one of the most interesting points of sharing.

HOW YOU MIGHT USE WHAT IS HERE...

There are five passages, of varying length, one for each of the weeks of Lent, taken from the four Gospels.

The idea of this course is to live with each of these passages in a sustained way over a period of a week. This would be one way of doing that:

- Read the passage (slowly) at the beginning of the day.
- When you have a gap in your routine (sitting on a train, drinking a coffee) go back to the passage in your mind and imaginatively recover it.
- Read it again at the end of the day.

Do this each day through the week. Notice if the impact of the passage changes, if you see new things; notice, too, how your response changes (puzzle, boredom, insight, etc.). You may find it helpful to make some notes, but that isn't important.

The important point is to live with the text. Analysis, interpretation, may be part of what you do. But it shouldn't be the whole. Acquaintance and response are the main point. If you find that nothing comes, that you don't respond, don't give up. Continue with the practice. Non-response is also a response.

There are chances to reflect in a group on Tuesday 25th February at 7pm, and Thursday 2nd April at 6pm, in the Choir Vestry at All Saints Church. Everyone is very welcome.

Week 1: Wineskins ([Matthew 9, 14-17](#))

Week 2: The labourers ([Matthew 20, 1-16](#))

Week3: The man by the pool ([John 5, 2-9](#))

Week 4: The manager ([Luke 16, 1-13](#))

Week 5: The anointing ([Mark 14, 3-9](#))