“The Way Forward”

**Praying for the Away Day**

On the 21st May we will spend a day together to consider what God is calling us to do as a church and to make plans for the future.

We will get much more out of the day if we have prayed and reflected upon the issues beforehand. We hope you will find the enclosed prayer suggestions and Bible reading guide helpful to you during the week before the Away Day. We have printed the Bible readings, but you may want to look them up yourself and read a bit more.

**Saturday 14th May: Prayer**

God always listens to our prayers and answers them in whatever way is best. Prayer is a two-way process – we need to be quiet and listen as well as to speak. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. Spend some time quietly enjoying God’s presence. Become aware of His presence with you, around you and within you. Open your heart and mind to be attentive to Him.

**Readings for today:**

#### **Matthew 7: 7 – 11**

7“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

9“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

#### **Romans 8: 26 – 27**

26In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

**Sunday 15th May: Strengths**

Today let’s think and pray about our strengths. What do you think are our strengths as a church?

**Reading for today: 2 Corinthians 13: 5 – 6**

5Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realise that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test? 6And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.

**Monday 16th May: Challenges**

There are challenges for us as a church. Today, let’s think and pray about them. Pray through what you think may be the reasons why we face these challenges.

##### **Reading for today: Luke 9: 1 – 6**

1When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 3He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. 4Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them.” 6So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.

**Tuesday 17th May: Faith central to our lives.**

How can we enable faith to become more central to our lives? Think and pray about how we can ensure that God is at the centre of all that we do, as individuals and as a church.

**Readings for today:**

##### **Proverbs 3: 5 - 6**

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart

 and lean not on your own understanding;

6 in all your ways acknowledge him,

 and he will make your paths straight.

##### **Deuteronomy 6: 4 – 6**

4Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.

**Wednesday 18th May: Worship**

Worship is essential to us as Christians. Today think of all the people who lead worship and how God has spoken to you through what they have said or done. Pray about the ways in which you best worship God.

##### **Reading for today: John 4: 23 - 24**

23Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

**Thursday 19th May: Gifts**

God is calling you to make a special contribution to his work at this church. Pray about what gifts he has given you and how he wants you to use them.

##### **Reading for today; 1 Corinthians 12: 4 - 6**

4There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all people.

**Friday 20th May: Prayer for the Away Day**

Today pray for the Away Day: those who are preparing, those who will lead, those who will speak. Pray that everyone will feel that they can share their thoughts. Pray that the day will be a time of fun, fellowship and worship.

**Reading for today: Hebrews 12: 1 – 2**

1Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.