



# TOGETHER

NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk

## Partnering in Mission, Supporting One Another, Journeying Together

The report from the Circuit Vision Team written by Rev Peter Hibberts

**Y**ou may be aware that the Circuit Meeting asked for a Circuit Vision Team be set up to look at the vision for the Circuit moving beyond Covid times. I have to say that it has been a joy to chair this team and has been a really exciting journey where we have prayerfully and carefully waited on God for direction and I feel convinced that we have heard God's voice.

The team consisted of three circuit stewards (Ann Lyne, Jill Meakin and Stephen Dando), the three ministers (Nathan Falla, Peter Bates and Peter Hibberts) and three church members from around the circuit (Jenny Everett, Jan Wright and David Watson). The Vision Team have been supported by Nigel Pimlott from the Eastern Learning Network Region.

The two page report would be too big to include in its entirety here but you can find it on the Circuit website (see below) or receive it by request - I think it's worth a read! In particular we imagined a circuit that aimed to **encourage**, **excite** and **enable** the churches in their mission and was particularly focussed on '**Partnering in Mission**', '**Supporting one another**' and '**Journeying in Discipleship**'. This may sound like nothing new but some of the ideas for the shape of this (which would come in at a more strategic planning stage) are certainly more radical. We felt that at a time when all of our churches are vulnerable we are stronger together. We are imagining a circuit experience that is more of a family, better connected, more supportive and more focussed on our mission; a circuit that gathers to do what is done best when gathered and scatters to do what is best done in our localities. A circuit which could help us to better reach out in certain specified geographical locations; where some of the benefits might include high quality different forms of worship, systematic teaching, a concentration of resources, a reduction of our carbon footprint, and a joyous celebration of God's enabling Spirit to the encouragement of us all.

The next step is for the full report to be received by the Circuit Meeting on June 21st and for this report to be made available to all, across our churches for prayerful testing and discussion before further discussions in the Autumn Circuit Meeting (in September). I commend the report to all (available from the circuit website: <https://www.newarkandsouthwellmethodist.org.uk/newsroom/circuit-vision-team-report.html>) and ask that we all surround this in prayer in the coming weeks and months. If you have thoughts or questions, do please get in touch - we'd love to hear from you. My thanks to Jan, David, Jenny, Ann, Stephen, Jill, Peter and Nathan for their prayer-full hope-filled and creative work



# Mark's Gospel - Bible Month Part 3

## THE TRANSFIGURATION

Online Circuit Service Sermon | Mark 9:2-9 | Rev Peter Bates

### 1. Online Service

Join us from 10:30am on Sunday for our online Circuit Service which this week led by Rev Peter Bates.

Find it on the 'Newark and Southwell Methodist Circuit' YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit>)

why not invite a friend to watch it with you and share the link with them on your social media or by email!

### 2. Circuit 'Zoom' Coffee Time

Join folk from across the circuit from 11:30am each Sunday morning - you provide the coffee - we'll provide the fellowship! pop in for 5 minutes or half an hour - we'd love to see you!

If you'd like help to 'Zoom', please get in touch!

#### Please join us afterwards

Come with a drink and a biscuit to share in conversation after the service.

[www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)

Meeting ID: 885 3100 7185

Password: Tog3ther

Phone: 0131 460 1196

Meeting ID: 885 3100 7185

Password: 48647472



### 3. Radio Services

**BBC Radio 4** (Also [online](#).)

08:10am - 13th June 2021

#### The world's favourite psalm

In the 1,500th anniversary year of St Columba's birth, John Bell of the Iona Community ponders how Psalm 23, brought from Ireland by the saint, still has universal significance.

### 4. Radio Nottingham

Listen every Sunday, at 8am, to a live church service on BBC Radio Nottingham. (Online or on 95.1-103.8 MHz FM for free.)

If all this baffles you and you'd like to find new ways to engage with church in these times, please contact your minister.

The section of Mark's gospel that we have been asked to look at, includes blind people being given their sight, a boy being restored to health and Jesus welcoming children to him to be blessed. Jesus also gives the disciples an insight into the Scriptures and what they will face into the future. And in the middle of all this is the story of the transfiguration. In a sense it encapsulates the three chapters we are looking at – people having their eyes opened by Jesus. The transfiguration is about the three disciples accompanying Jesus up the mountain, and then seeing Jesus in a completely new way.

The first part of this section we are looking at is struggle. It wasn't easy for the disciples to follow Jesus up the mountain, there would have been rough patches along the way to navigate, there would have been steep inclines. For the blind men It would have been a tough life before they were healed by Jesus, and what about the boy and his father. The father would have been desperate for his son to be healed, and the boy must have feared for his life, as the fits he had threw him into all kinds of danger. Jesus' disciples had to wrestle with the thought that their teacher may be taken away from them, as well as their confusion as to whether Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.

We too, have our own troubles. We have just endured eighteen months of fear and uncertainty. For some people, this may not have caused them too much stress, but for others, it has been a terrible time to endure. We can think of those who have lost loved ones, and those who are suffering from long-term Covid. We also think of those who have suffered from fear, anxiety and depression. Those who have suffered financially, and those who have lost their businesses and their careers. And I am sure there are others who I have not mentioned. Now we have to climb the mountain to get to the 'new normal', to find a place where we can settle and reflect on what has happened to ourselves, our family and our friends. And we can be assured that God has been with us, and will continue to be with us in all the uncertainty that we face.

I hope that as we come through this experience, we can see our world in a new way. We have missed so many things that we have taken for granted, let us value and appreciate these things, and see them in a new light. Sometimes we have to climb the mountain, we have to go through troubled times, so that we can see God in a fresh light. In the struggle, God is able to work within us to bring us to the place he wants us to be. The disciples struggled up the mountain, and then they were able to take a

breath and relax. But before they knew it, Jesus was transfigured before their eyes. They were stunned. Peter broke the silence with what he thought was a practical suggestion. He could visibly see Elijah and Moses in front of him, they were real, and Peter decided that they should make three shelters for Jesus and his guests.

Have we been stunned in our Christian life, when God has done something amazing? Whether we have been healed or witnessed someone else being healed. Has God done something profound in our life or our church? Perhaps God has transformed a person or a situation in a way that we never thought would be possible.

Just think what it must have been like for blind Bartimaeus to receive his sight, not just physically but also spiritually. Bartimaeus had faith, otherwise, he wouldn't have been shouting at the top of his voice to try and get Jesus' attention. But just imagine what it was like for Bartimaeus to see, and to see Jesus. The father whose son suffered from fits, brought his son to Jesus' disciples, but they couldn't heal him. Just as the father was beginning to lose faith, Jesus appears, and restores the boy to full health. Not only has the father got his son back but his own faith has been restored as well.

Peter, James and John saw Jesus transfigured before them on the mountain top. It had a profound affect on them. This experience would be a tremendous help to them in the weeks and months ahead. These three disciples would be the ones to lead the early church through uncertain times.

What has God got in store for us? We may have to climb the mountain to get to where God wants us to be. Are we willing to struggle? To face the disappointments in life, to face the fear of failure, to face the feelings of inadequacy. To put our faith in God, and in despair ask for help to believe. Are we willing to shout at the top of our voices, so that God can see that we mean business with him? And are we willing to receive our sight, to want with all our heart to see Jesus?

Are we willing to face heartache and pain, so that we can trust God with everything we have? And are we humble enough to take a back seat when praise is being lavished on others? God wants to reveal himself afresh to you. Will you open your spiritual eyes and hearts so that you can see Jesus and receive him into your hearts?

Blind Bartimaeus struggled through life and received his sight and so much more. The father whose son had an evil spirit was shown the power of restoration, of his boy and of his own faith. The disciples struggled up the mountain and were overwhelmed by the vision they saw. Their lives were changed because of an encounter with the Lord. How would you like your life to be changed today by the living God? **Amen**

## Prayer Space

### Prayer of adoration:

Lord, we come to worship you today. You are a God of wonder and awesome power. The more we find out about our universe, the more we marvel at your incredible creation. That you care about our planet and lavish your love on humanity, that you know each one of us by name. Lord, you are a great and mighty God, and we worship you. Your beauty surpasses your creation and we adore you. Awaken us afresh to your presence in our lives.

We offer you our hopes and our fears, our time and energy and our possessions. Forgive us Lord, when we hold on to all that we have. When we are selfish, when we want to go our own way. Forgive us for the times we have done something or said something which has hurt other people. Lord we pray that you will forgive us and restore us to a right relationship with you.

**Amen**

### Intercessory Prayers:

Thank you, Lord, that the G7 conference has been in our country, and that important issues were discussed. We pray for peace throughout our world. We know that this is not always possible but we thank you for the organisations that are in place which will work for peace. We also pray about the Climate Change discussions that have taken place. We ask that there will be decisive actions that will be taken to alleviate the effects of the pollution we cause.

We thank you for the promises which were made at the conference to send out the Covid-19 vaccines to the poorer countries. We pray that we will come together as nations to combat poverty and disease. We pray for our own country that you will guide the government in the decisions they make to lift the restrictions of lockdown.

**Amen**

### EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN

*If you would like to join a prayer chain and receive prayer requests or to submit a prayer request (with permission of the recipient) please get in touch with Colin Beckett [colin1244@gmail.com](mailto:colin1244@gmail.com).  
It is for those of any church or none!*

## Volunteers Needed

We need help putting sticky-backed printed labels and stamps onto envelopes. We currently send out about 115 TOGETHER leaflets each week. If you could help with this task Nick (Circuit Administrator) would be very grateful. To offer your services he can be contacted on:

07305 057946

[nsmcircuit@outlook.com](mailto:nsmcircuit@outlook.com)

## Songs...

Holy, Holy, Holy. (StF 11) [LINK](#)

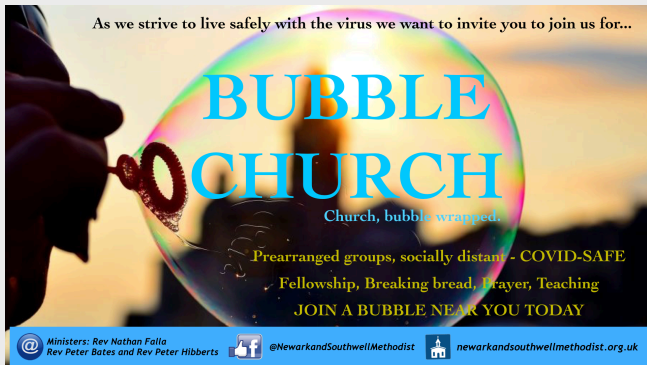
Be still for the presence of the Lord (StF 20) [LINK](#)

The Splendour of the king (How Great is our GOD) (StF 15) [LINK](#)

Love Divine all Love's Excelling (StF 503) [LINK](#)

*Click 'LINK's to access YouTube clips of each song.*

## Bubble Church Questions



**Would you like to be part of Covid-Safe face-to-face church?  
Join a bubble today by getting in touch with your minister.**

1. Have you ever lost your sight? Perhaps you've had to move around in darkness, what was it like? What do you think it is like for a blind person today, what do you think the struggles are?
2. What have been the biggest struggles in your COVID journey?
3. How might god be calling us to see the world in a new way Post-COVID? How might we be called to see our lives and our church experience in a new way?
4. What do you think it was like for the disciples to see Jesus transfigured? How do you think they saw Jesus differently afterwards? How were their eyes opened?
5. How has God stunned or amazed you?
6. How might we 'see' God in a new way?
7. How would you like your life, today, to be changed by the living God?

For more information checkout the Bubble Church guide with risk assessment on the Circuit Website: <https://www.newarkandsouthwellmethodist.org.uk/newsroom/bubble-church.html>

## Newark Christian Aid Week Success!

Well.....having got all the returns in, I am delighted to tell you that we have raised a grand total of £5470.65, made up of £3980.65 in envelopes plus £1490 from online donations. Brilliant! Well done everybody. Interestingly it's not very different from what we would normally raise from House to House plus church collections.

Andrew Ayre

16-6-21

## Families activities...

### Family Activity 1: Transfiguration

We often call this story in the Bible the 'transfiguration' which means a complete change of form of appearance.

Play a "what's changed" game together. Everybody should close their eyes while one person changes something in the room. It could be closing the curtains or swapping two pictures over or putting on a hat! They should tell everybody when they can open their eyes. Who can spot what has changed the fastest?

### Family Activity 2: "Let's build a tent!"

When Peter saw Jesus transfigured, he panicked and didn't know what to do. I wonder what the other disciples thought of his idea that they set up tents! Why not build your own tent to hang out in as a family. You could use sheets or blankets combined with furniture or anything you have handy.

While you are in your tent, why not read and explore some of these stories from the lives of Moses and Elijah. You might like to look for similarities and differences between the stories and the story we explored today.

Exodus 33 v 7-23: Moses sets up a tent where he can meet with God and has an amazing encounter when he asks to see God's glory.

1 Kings 19 v 1-18: Elijah encounters an angel who gives him breakfast and then meets with God on a mountain.

### Active Transformation

What are some of the things that we can do in our own lives to grow in knowledge of God and relationship with Him? Here are some ideas for you to try:

### Active Study

Find today's story (Mark 9:2-9) in your own Bible and read it again, ask God to help you find something new that you didn't think about the first time you read the story.

Find one thing from the story that you can apply to your own life and the way you live for God.

### Active Prayer

Take some time to pray and ask God to help you change you life to be even more like him. Why not try these keep fit, active prayers.

- Do 10 star jumps – as you jump ask God to help you reach out to others and share his love.
- Stretch your arms up as high as you can – ask God to help you connect with him more this week.
- Do ten push ups – ask God to help you build and strengthen your faith

## TOGETHER contributions needed!

As Nathan is on his sabbatical in the next few months, we need your input into TOGETHER more than ever. Could you write a front page article (around 500 words) for one of our editions? Perhaps you could contribute a prayer, an encouraging or even a challenging piece. **Perhaps you can share an experience of God the Holy Spirit that you've had in your life!**

If you would like to join the team or make a one-off contribution, please get in touch with Revd. Peter Hibberts by email ([peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk](mailto:peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk)) or telephone (01636812166).

Contributions must be received by Monday of each week for Tuesday editorial and Wednesday distribution.