



21-27 March 2021 • Faith 24/7

All are welcome

 **John 12.20-33**

Some Greeks have asked to speak to Jesus, aware of the buzz surrounding him. Their request is passed through several people before it gets to Jesus; but it does – no one is too much trouble for Jesus. Jesus then speaks about his death, using the image of a seed which must die in order to produce the fruit for which it is designed. He finishes by saying that all will be drawn to him – Greeks included!

Now read **John 12.20-33** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The message – that Jesus (God) is not just for Jews or any other particular nation or religious group: all are welcome! – is radical enough. What makes it more so is that to make this possible, Jesus must die and rise again. Only after he is 'lifted up' on the cross are all people drawn to him. What might we need to give up so that others may feel welcome?



If you are to welcome others, what are you carrying that may need to be put down?

SIL_NCE

Silence can be a very helpful way to connect with God. One way to do it is by looking at a picture. As you look, really notice all the details and think about what's going on. What questions does it give you? What feelings come up? What might God be saying to you through it? We call this meditation. If your mind wanders, when you notice, just bring it back to the picture! Take five minutes of silence each day to look at a picture of Jesus on the cross (do an internet search) and meditate on it.



BAKE

To make fruit flapjacks, melt together $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, 1 cup brown sugar and 4 tablespoons golden syrup. Stir in 2 cups rolled oats, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped dried blackcurrants, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sunflower seeds, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pumpkin seeds and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sesame seeds. Stir well until all combined. Press the mixture into a greased baking tray and bake on 150 C/gas mark 2, for 20-30 minutes until golden brown. Allow to cool before cutting into pieces.

As you bake, talk or reflect about seeds and how their seeming death in the soil leads to huge multiplication.

PEOPLE WATCH

Take a walk round your local area and 'people watch' as you go; notice all the different ways that people are busy with their day. Ask God for fresh eyes to see them as he does, and pray that God would draw them in.

LET go

The disciples had to let go of a lot of their ideas about how things should be, in order to fully embrace Jesus' ideas about God's kingdom and those whom it fully embraces. All of us hold onto things that reinforce how we think things should be. Is there anything you can let go of as a symbol of being open to embrace all that God has for you? For example, maybe you could give away some money or sell a possession – probably the people whom Jesus would choose to hang out with, if he were physically among us today.

LENT GARDEN OF RESPONSES

Look at a picture of a sunflower. The head of a sunflower is absolutely jam packed with seeds. Each one potentially another plant that can grow until it too has a head full of seeds. Sunflowers can produce up to 1400 seeds per head! Think about how quickly you could multiply sunflowers! Now think about your impact on the world around you. If you were to positively impact two people, and they in turn another two each, how quickly would the world become a more positive place? This week, make it your daily mission to encourage someone in something they are doing. Create or draw a sunflower to represent each person you encouraged, and place the flowers in your garden tray or on your garden page (that you've been progressing throughout Lent).



Good News!

As things begin to return to normal (we hope!) I'm pleased to say that we are returning to public worship at the Ronkswood Community Centre on Easter Day 4th April at our usual time of 10.00 and 10.45 a.m. The risk assessment for the centre remains as before and we will be limited to a maximum of 15 people at any one service so you will need to book in with me if you want to attend.

Thank you...

for all the kind messages and offers of help. We're all on the mend now, although talking does make me cough so I won't be calling anyone while I'm still choking down your ear! Love and prayers,
 Rob

100 Club Results!

January Draw - 1st : Pauline Price (43)
 2nd : Carole Price (48)
 February Draw - 1st : Rob Farmer (1)
 2nd : William Keyes (50)

Good news! Because of an increase in membership, we can raise the prize money from March: £15 - 1st prize and £10 - 2nd prize. Numbers still available for new members; contact Julia (353192) or Penny (351468) for details.

Thought for the week

Do you have a tattoo – or know someone who does? What do you make of it? Do you love or hate it – it's hard to be indifferent! But there is no doubting that a tattoo can express a deep emotion or devotion. And it is virtually impossible to remove.

The covenant or agreement that God makes with us resembles a tattoo. God's covenant expresses his love for us, and is indelible, because he writes it on our hearts. God's love is present with us for ever.

The Greeks ask to see Jesus, something about him makes them wish to be included. Jesus responds by talking about his impending death on the cross and this might seem strange at first. Jesus does this to point to God's indelible love for humankind, assuring us that we won't just see Jesus but we will all be drawn to him and welcomed by him. Jesus wants God's covenant love, his 'tattoo', to be extended to every human being.

We are marked by God's covenant to be a blessing to the whole world. How do I show this mark to others in order to include them in God's indelible love? Can I love as Jesus loved?

Daily Readings for week commencing 22 nd March 2021		
Monday	Jeremiah 21: 1-10	John 11: 28-44
Tuesday	Jeremiah 22: 1-5, 13-19	John 11: 45-end
Wednesday	Jeremiah 22: 20-23:8	John 12: 1-11
Thursday	1 Samuel 2: 10-10	Romans 5: 12-end <i>The Annunciation</i>
Friday	Jeremiah 24	John 12: 20-36a
Saturday	Jeremiah 25: 1-14	John 12: 36b-end

Pray for those in need...Sally, Zena, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy, Mandy, Joyce, Pete, Ian, June and Juliette. **Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...especially Jayne and Dick.**