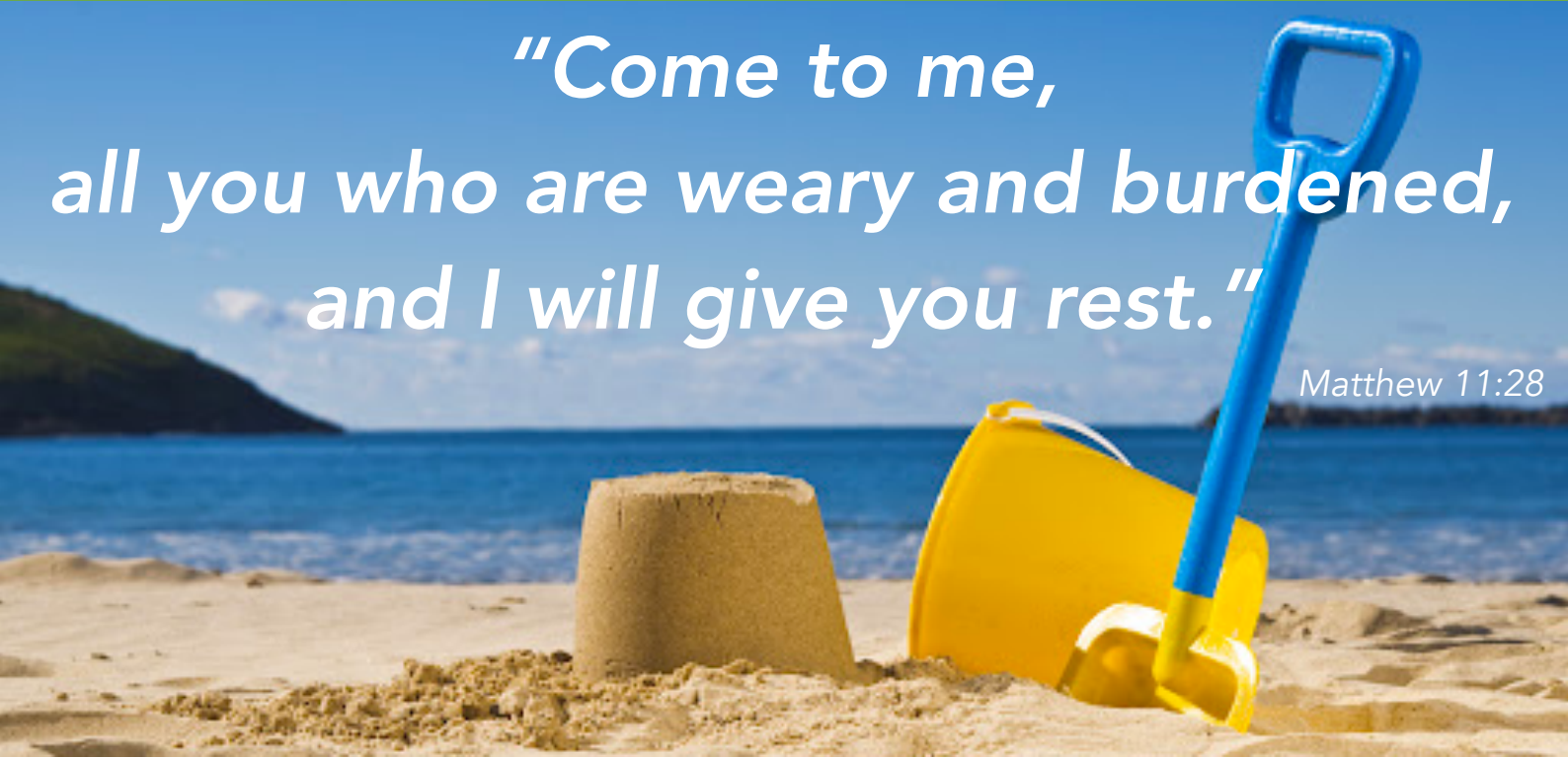


# Outlook

News & Information in the Life of Eastleigh Parish Church



*"Come to me,  
all you who are weary and burdened,  
and I will give you rest."*

Matthew 11:28

For many people today, August is a time for rest. And yet, not so long ago in our nation's history, August was one of the busiest months of the year. Before most of us moved to live in towns & cities, this was a month in which every able-bodied member of the community of every age would have been involved in gathering, sorting, and storing crops. Imagine the joy then of the Harvest Festival in those rural communities. Months of hard work would have been finished, and the time of celebration and rest could begin!

*Times change, but our need for rest doesn't.* The way that the Genesis story tells it, even before Adam went into the garden for his first day of work (day 8 of creation), and immediately after he had been made in God's image (day 6 of creation), God called him to rest (day 7 of creation).

| Day 6 of Creation          | Day 7 of Creation | Day 8 of Creation      |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| God made Adam in his image | Day of rest       | Adam's 1st day of work |



*"On the seventh day, God rested from all his work."*

Genesis 2:2b



Within God's pattern and design for his creation, the very first thing God called humankind to do was to rest. Or to put it another way, having been made in his image, we were immediately introduced the concept of Grace (undeserved kindness).

As his disciples, there are lots of things that we're called to do. Jesus modelled all of these disciplines perfectly, and they include:

- Making other disciples
- Being committed to fellowship
- Bible reading & prayer
- Being hospitable
- Giving generously
- Forgiving others
- Loving our enemies
- Seeking justice
- Proclaiming the Good News
- Setting the oppressed free
- Blessing the poor
- Obeying the 10 Commandments
- Fasting
- & many other key points...

At first, it may seem like there's a lot of 'work' to do in order to be a disciple of Jesus. But listen carefully to how Jesus described discipleship:

*'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.'*

Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus was speaking to a community that was filled with rules & expectations. When Jesus talked about a 'yoke' and a 'burden', he was describing his way of life; what he invites us to 'take up' when we follow him. And just as he invites us to 'take up' his way of life, he instructs us to 'lay down' our old way of life. Here's just a few old ways of life that Jesus calls us to lay down:

- Worrying about tomorrow
- Fearing the judgment of others
- Trying to be good enough for God
- Comparing ourselves to others
- Feeling judged by others
- Trusting in our own efforts to be saved



*"Truly my soul finds rest in God;  
my salvation comes from him."*

Psalms 62:1

The Bible teaches us that as we come to know Jesus and his way of life ('discipleship'), there is a special sort of rest that can be found. It is a rest that doesn't simply recharge our physical batteries, but a rest that is for our souls. Jesus invites us to take up life-giving activities, and to lay down energy-sapping ones.

***"Jesus invites us to take up life-giving activities, and to lay down energy-sapping ones."***

This is the only edition of Outlook that we'll be publishing in August. One reason for this is that I (Ian) am going to try a very different working/resting routine for the next month before the business of September comes around again. During this time, I'd love to encourage you to make use of the plans we have for August, especially the invitation to read/listen-to/watch Pilgrim's Progress (details are below). All the discussion groups will be held outside St Francis' and will be preceded or followed by a time of prayer.



In **September**, we are going to take a special look at the theme of creation, both in our DGs and on Sunday mornings. On this occasion, we're not going to think so much about 'how' the world was made, but what it means for disciples to live within God's creation as he would like us to. Perhaps we could imagine Adam on day 8 of the Genesis story, fresh from his rest, and then ask **"What work shall I do within God's garden that would most glorify him and be most fruitful?... How shall I care for his creation?"** But before we get into that series of studies (and work!), I sincerely hope that August would be full of God-given rest for you.

Our Sunday gatherings throughout August are going to continue focusing on what we can learn from the life story of Abraham. Like us, he had his successes and failures. His life was full of ups and downs.

In Hebrews 12, we learn that Abraham is one of, "a great cloud of witnesses," whose lives are for us examples of discipleship in action. Abraham was far from perfect - but he lived a life full of faith. There is much for us to be inspired and challenged by in the next 5 episodes of his journey that we'll be reading together week by week this August.



[Click here for helpful resources for discipling the little ones in your life](#)

A photograph of three children, two boys and one girl, sitting on the floor and playing with colorful wooden blocks. The boy on the left is wearing a blue shirt, the girl in the middle is wearing a pink shirt, and the boy on the right is wearing a red shirt. They are all looking down at the blocks with concentration.

**"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."**

Matthew 19:14

# EPC Events in August

Please take a look at the days/times/events below. There are a few tweaks to our regular schedule during August.

## Every Sunday

8:45am Telephone Service (contact 07809 668 118 for details)  
9:30am Holy Communion inside All Saints' **and** online  
11:00am 11o'clock Service outside St Francis'

## Sunday 29th August

Whole-church picnic outside St Francis' from 12noon (invite your friends & neighbours!)

## Every Wednesday

9:15am Midweek Communion inside All Saints'

## Every Thursday (n.b. no regular Tuesday prayers during August)

9:00am Morning Prayer **outside** St Francis' (followed by discussion group on 5th/19th)

## Book Club / Pilgrim's Progress Discussion Groups

Discussion #1: 7pm Weds 4th Aug (followed by Night Prayer)  
9:30am Thurs 5th Aug (preceded by Morning Prayer)

Discussion #2: 7pm Weds 18th Aug (followed by Night Prayer)  
9:30am Thurs 19th Aug (preceded by Morning Prayer)



## Bible Reading for Sunday 1st August

### Genesis 14:8-16

(you may find it helpful to also read Genesis 19)

8 Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboyim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim  
9 against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar – four kings against five. 10 Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. 11 The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. 12 They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

13 A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshkol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. 14 When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. 15 During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. 16 He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

## Bible Reading for Sunday 8th August

### Genesis 14:17-24

17 After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying,

'Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
20 And praise be to God Most High,  
who delivered your enemies into your hand.'  
Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, 'Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.'

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the Lord, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, 23 that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, "I made Abram rich." 24 I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me – to Aner, Eshkol and Mamre. Let them have their share.'

## Bible Reading for Sunday 15th August

### Genesis 15:1-21

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

'Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield,  
your very great reward.'

2 But Abram said, 'Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?' 3 And Abram said, 'You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.'

4 Then the word of the Lord came to him: 'This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.' 5 He took him outside and said, 'Look up at the sky and count the stars – if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.'

6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

7 He also said to him, 'I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.'

8 But Abram said, 'Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I shall gain possession of it?'

9 So the Lord said to him, 'Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.'

10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. 11 Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

12 As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. 13 Then the Lord said to him, 'Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and ill-treated there. 14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterwards they will come out with great possessions. 15 You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.'

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking brazier with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. 18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates – 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.'



## Bible Reading for Sunday 22nd August

### Genesis 16:1-16

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 2 so she said to Abram, 'The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.'

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. 3 So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. 4 He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, 'You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.'

6 'Your slave is in your hands,' Abram said. 'Do with her whatever you think best.' Then Sarai ill-treated Hagar; so she fled from her.

7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8 And he said, 'Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?'

'I'm running away from my mistress Sarai,' she answered.

9 Then the angel of the Lord told her, 'Go back to your mistress and submit to her.' 10 The angel added, 'I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.'

11 The angel of the Lord also said to her:

'You are now pregnant  
and you will give birth to a son.  
You shall name him Ishmael,  
for the Lord has heard of your misery.  
12 He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
his hand will be against everyone  
and everyone's hand against him,  
and he will live in hostility  
towards all his brothers.'

13 She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: 'You are the God who sees me,' for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me.' 14 That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

15 So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

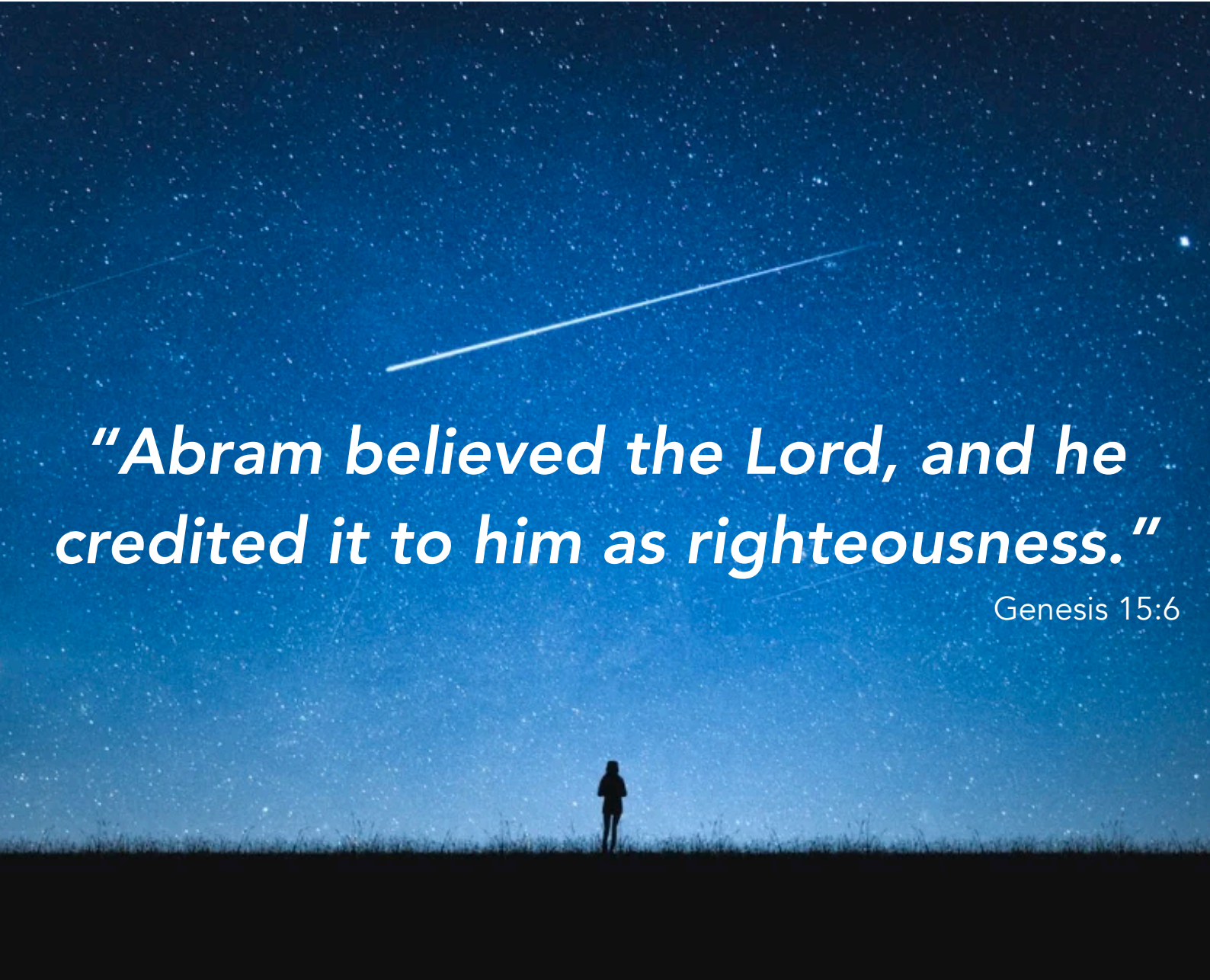
## Bible Reading for Sunday 29th August

### Genesis 17:1-8 & 15-16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. 2 Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.'

3 Abram fell face down, and God said to him, 4 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: you will be the father of many nations. 5 No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. 7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. 8 The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.'

15 God also said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. 16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.'



***"Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness."***

Genesis 15:6



**Ian** (Vicar): 07809 668 118 & **Sue**: 07502 427 693

**Phil Watson** (Church Warden): 07966 159 684

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**Michael Weatherall** (Youth/Children's Min): 07311 820 975

**Darryl Yeates** (Church Warden - St Francis'): 07810 400 896



### Summer Book Club

Many of our DGs are going to be pausing their regular meetings during August - at which time we're going to offer something different to help one another become disciple-making disciples.

We'd like to invite you to read a real classic Christian book, *"The Pilgrim's Progress"* by John Bunyan; and then to attend a couple of discussions that will be stimulated by all that we've read.

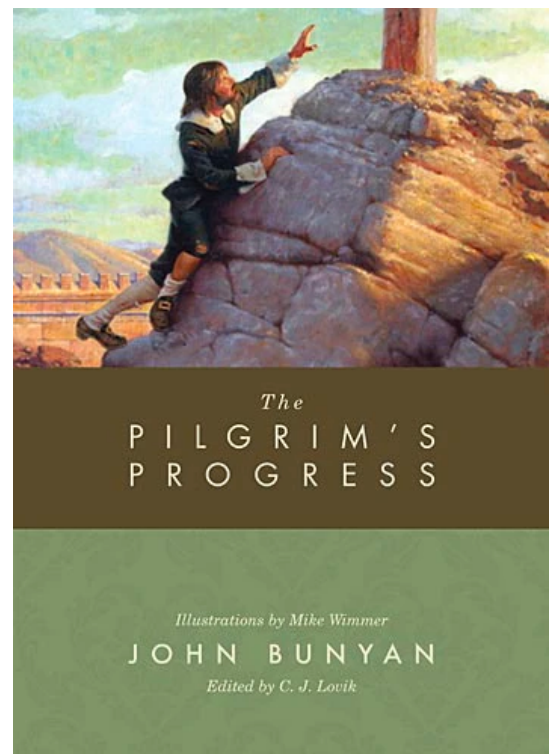
There are several different versions of this amazing book. You can join in by using any of the available options. Here are just 4 versions you might like to choose from:

1. The original version **in print** or **on kindle**.
2. A version in modern language **in print** or **on kindle**.
3. An **audio version** in modern language.
4. A version **especially for children**.

There are LOADS of different versions out there to be found. This truly brilliant book has been retold by many people over the years. And if you don't fancy reading or listening to the book, you can even watch one of numerous film versions **like this one** or **this one**.

### We will be holding discussion groups on the following dates:

- **Discussion #1:** 7pm Weds 4th & 9:30am Thurs 5th Aug
- **Discussion #2:** 7pm Weds 18th & 9:30am Thurs 19th Aug



The discussion groups will run outside St Francis' (unless inclement, in which case we'll be inside All Saints'), and will last approx 1hr. Everyone is welcome.

### Prayer Points for August

*Here are a few suggested items for prayer this month:*

- Ask God to use our communal reading of "Pilgrim's Progress" to help us grow as disciples.
- Ask God to heal those you know who are ill. Thank God for good news from Noah Aquino. Continue to pray for the Bradford family. Ask the Lord to bless those who struggle with mental health issues.
- Pray that we - as a whole church family - would be truly blessed and changed as we consider the theme of creation in September. Ask God to give Ian wisdom as he prepares to teach this theme.
- Thank God for the role of DGs in the life of EPC. Pray that we would become a community of disciple-making disciples.
- Ask God to bless all those taking time away on holiday - but also ask God to bring refreshment and revitalisation to those who are unable to go away at this time. That we would rest well.



### From Michael and the EPC Youth

Firstly, we as the EPC Youth team would love to thank everyone who has been praying for our trip away and for all who have contributed financially to support us. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, we have had to cancel our planned time away at Studland Bay.

However, we have instead had a one-day trip which included going to the New Forest Water Park!



We had a fantastic time and think this was an enriching time for our youth group as they gathered around each other in community and discipleship. The looong day with each other included swimming, basketball, a trip to Maccies, and ended with worship and Bible study around a firepit in the Vicarage garden - followed by marshmallow s'mores.

Please be praying for the continued spiritual growth for the youth, and also for

our team as we seek to disciple and lead our 12-18s.

If you're interested in finding out how you can get involved in EPC Youth, please call me on 07311 820 975. Perhaps we could meet up for a coffee and chat?

*EPC Youth meet for their weekly hangout on Wednesday afternoon & on Sundays for Bible study & prayer.*



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