

The Journey Back Home (*Pilgrimage Part 2*) - July 2018

(01 - 28 July)

Over June and July we are exploring the idea of pilgrimage.

This month we look at aspects of leadership required by all of us when making a journey that involves others. Scripture often suggests that all of our lives are lived alongside a parallel spiritual journey. The spiritual and moral decisions we make not only affect our lives but the lives of others.

We will invite our writers to reflect upon 4 key stories in the life of King David, at the beginning of each week, to help us understand our duties and responsibilities within community as God's people journeying together.

At the end of each week we will look at passages from Mark's Gospel and see how Mark reveals Jesus as the ultimate leader, sent by God to live out a very different kind of Kingship based not on power but on service. The overall theme of the month is an understanding of our mission. We are people who follow the one sent by the Father who has now returned to the Father and invites us to follow in his footsteps. We have become a community inviting a lost generation to return with us as we journey back home.

This is Part 2 of our pilgrimage theme series and it may be that over this time you feel inspired to go on a pilgrimage of some kind yourself, taking advantage of the warmer weather to step into the unknown. We will be encouraging our Daily Worship writers to weave their own experiences of travelling, journey, and pilgrimage into their reflections.

Each week of the theme runs Sunday-Saturday and has its own subtheme, which contains daily Bible readings.

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
01 July	Don't look back In anger	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Samuel 1: 1, 17-27 2. Psalm 130 3. Lamentations 3: 22-33 4. Psalm 30 5. 2 Corinthians 8: 7-15 6. Mark 5: 21-34 7. Mark 5: 22-24, 35-43 	<p>We begin the study by looking at the emotions surrounding the death and demise of King Saul the first King of Israel. We will our ask our Daily Worship writer to work on 7 prayers and reflections around the futility of an authority that bases its power around violence and the threat of violence, as opposed to the power of love.</p> <p>Using passages from the lectionary we listen to the voices of prophets, poets, and the people of God themselves as they seek to understand the journey of faith.</p>

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
08 July	Love draws us unconditionally	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Samuel 5: 1-5, 9-10 2. Psalm 48 3. Ezekiel 2: 1-5 4. Psalm 123 5. 2 Corinthians 12: 2-10 6. Mark 6: 1-6 7. Mark 6: 7-13 	<p>We move to the second story which highlights the importance of unity and suggests that power is given to the leader by the people and the authority to create the King is given to the community by God. So power to lead is the people's choice. The authority for the people to choose comes from God. Power that lasts is the power of Love to redeem.</p> <p>We will ask our Daily Worship writer to work on 7 prayers and reflections based around the leadership of Jesus. Perhaps asking: what is the difference between power and authority? Obedience out of fear or obedience out of love? Does love ask for obedience? Jesus makes a journey from the Father into our world in order that we might make a journey like he made back to the Father. Perhaps take time to think upon what Jesus meant when he said, "As the Father has sent me so send I you."</p> <p>Using passages from the lectionary we listen to the voices of prophets, poets, and the people of God themselves as they seek to understand the journey of faith.</p>
15 July	Would you dance before the church this Sunday?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Samuel 6: 1-5, 12b-19 2. Psalm 24 3. Amos 7: 7-15 4. Psalm 85: 8-13 5. Ephesians 1: 3-14 6. Mark 1: 21-28 7. Mark 2: 18-22 	<p>Here is an interesting story surrounding the Ark of the Covenant being brought to Jerusalem by the King. We will ask our Daily Worship writer to work on 7 reflections and prayers around the idea of leadership that challenges the 'status quo' when it comes to worship. How easy it is to fall into the predictable cycle of the expected. How much more challenging to allow emotion and self expression to become part of our worship?</p> <p>Using passages from the lectionary we listen to the voices of prophets, poets, and the people of God themselves as they seek to understand the journey of faith we must take in worship.</p>
22 July	God doesn't need our charity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Samuel 7: 1-14a 2. Psalm 89: 20-37 3. Jeremiah 23: 1-16 4. Psalm 23 5. Ephesians 2: 11-22 6. Mark 6: 30-44 7. Mark: 6: 47-56 	<p>The final story centres around King David seeking to make a home for God on earth. It's an interesting story that reflects the tradition of the prophets and the poets, counteracting the power of a king. God reminds David that he is the God of the journeys. From Egypt to the wilderness.</p> <p>Perhaps there is a hint that God's home has no walls? Perhaps we need to be careful how we view the power and authority of buildings? God will choose where and when and how his presence will be felt and recognised and worshipped.</p> <p>We will ask our Daily Worship writer to work on 7 reflections and prayers that enable us to see that God doesn't need our stamp of approval or the right postal code to be the one who calls the most unexpected of people to join the journey back home.</p> <p>Using passages from the lectionary we listen to the voices of prophets, poets, and the people of God themselves as they seek to understand the journey of faith.</p>