

# Faith & Life



*A journey of discovery &  
encounter*

## *Getting Started*

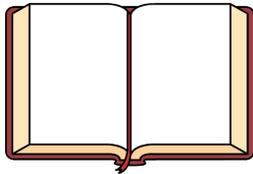
Through the sessions we will be exploring ways to make sense of the Bible and, – more importantly – how the Bible helps us to make sense of life.

In this first group of meetings the spotlight will be on Mark's Gospel. This is the shortest and probably the earliest of the four gospels.

It is written in a way that is easy to digest and provides a brief and straightforward account of the events surrounding Jesus' ministry without offering much by way of 'editorial comment' or of the 'back story' as can sometimes be detected in the other gospels.

To get the most out of **Faith & Life** it might be helpful to refresh your acquaintance with Mark by taking some time to read it through before coming to the sessions.

Read



For the most part we read/hear the gospels in short passages often linked to a particular theme or Church season and certainly *not* in strict order of the chapters!

How about reading it from beginning to end in one go?

You could do this in a number of ways:

You might do this using a different version than you would normally read.

Get a recorded version and **listen.**



Audio versions can be found on the internet for little or no cost from

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) or

[www.youversion.com](http://www.youversion.com)

Read aloud – reading silently was something very strange to most people at the time when the gospels were first written.

Take turns reading it with a friend(s)

Things happen at a fast pace in Mark's gospel and you might try to approach it as if it were a novel you have not read before and are looking forward to reading.

Choose whatever approach appeals to you.

The **important** thing is to *give your attention* to the remarkable events that Mark records – and most of all enjoy the experience!

# Pray



Try to pray regularly for everyone taking part and for yourself. Pray that you will all be helped to know God in fresh ways and that Mark's gospel will make Jesus more real to you.

You might like to use this prayer.

*Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scripture to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*

(Collect for the last Sunday after Trinity)

# Think



When you have reached the end of Mark's gospel try to imagine it as a drama; a series of encounters in which individuals and groups meet Jesus.

Draw up a 'cast list': Is there anyone in particular with whom you identify?

Do you have a favourite scene or one that particularly 'speaks' to you?

What questions do you have?



It can be helpful to make a note of some of the things you discovered or which puzzled you – as you work through the sessions there

may also be other things to add or questions you would like to ask.

The point here is to keep a note of the **way** you have encountered Jesus while taking part in the sessions.

You can do this in whatever way you like, some people might keep a diary (written or recorded), others find sketching helpful.

What you put down is between you and God, no one else needs to see it but you may wish to share some of the things you have learned.

## *And finally.....*

We hope that you found these notes helpful and enable you to enjoy and learn through the group sessions.

If, during the sessions a personal issue is raised which you would like to discuss in confidence please ask to speak with one of our Authorised Ministers who will be happy to help.