

Ministers Monthly Message - April 2017



Welcome to this month's Ministers Monthly Message.

In this month's message, you will see some thoughts about Holy Week and Easter, an encouragement to pray for our Holiday Club, a reminder about the Up/in/out process, as well as some good news stories.

As always, my hope is that this message informs and inspires, as we seek to be a community who live like Jesus, reaching out with God's hope and love.

With love,

Gareth



Thought for Easter

In a matter of days we will go through the familiar customs of Palm Sunday, through Holy Week to Good Friday and on to Resurrection Sunday. Often I find Christians engaging with the celebration, worship, joy and hysteria of Palm Sunday, and next joining in even more celebrations again on Easter Sunday. To some degree I can understand this, after all, Jesus is still alive, He is not being 're-crucified' so why shouldn't we celebrate and live in the light of such joy. But I wonder if we leap from one joyous celebration to another, whether we miss something of the emotional and spiritual journey Jesus endured that actually leads to into deeper celebration and rejoicing. We should always keep in mind the truth of the resurrection, but I invite you to engage afresh with the passion of Christ, His suffering and vulnerability, His pain and rejection this year. The most common way we do this is through worship and this year there is ample opportunity in different settings to do so. On Palm Sunday (9th April) we will celebrate with a lively All Age Worship led by Jackie Berry and Tim Green. In the evening we will take time and space to reflect through silence, candle and Scripture in the Taize tradition. In Holy Week each night there is a short, reflective act of worship at 7:30pm in different churches in Littleover. I strongly encourage you to get to as many of these as you are able, in order to 'follow Jesus' through the experience of holy week, that cost Him his life and won for us our salvation. On Good Friday we follow the cross through the village with other Christians, and meet ourselves for reflective worship in the evening, before celebrating again on Easter Day with a lively, all age communion service. I encourage you to prioritise these acts of worship, not out of duty or obligation, not out of a desire to boost the numbers, but in order that you might engage again fully with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

SPACE ACADEMY

Our 'Out of this World' Space Academy Holiday Club runs this year, again in Holy Week. Running for the mornings Mon - Thurs (finishing with a BBQ on Thursday) this is one of our great outreach opportunities each year to share the Gospel with primary age children and their parents. So far there are around 35 children coming and over 25 people helping in different ways. There are still spaces for children to sign up if they want to come (for a small cost) and more details can be obtained from the church office. Please pray for this venture, and for Tim Green and the team as they deliver the material.



Gareth, Jackie, Tim & Jane recently attended the New Wine Leaders Conference in Leicester. As a church who link to New Wine it is always great to share in events where the focus is on encountering God in worship and being renewed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This year at the Conference, the focus was heavily on being 'disciples that make disciples', reminding us that we exist to make more followers of Jesus and that starts with us as individuals before finding an expression in church events. It's always a good opportunity to network with other leaders and people in ministry and to hear input from good speakers who bring God's wisdom and plenty of earthly experience of ministry too.



Encouraging Maturity

It was really good to hear at our recent Testimony evening of how God is speaking to people and bringing them on with Him in different ways. We heard stories of how God has been speaking to people, sometimes in quite extraordinary ways, and this has made a significant impact on them helping them to live like Jesus, and reach out with God's hope and love. Praise God!

Equipping for Ministry

We currently have 12 participants engaged on our piloted 'Gifting Course'. They have been learning about what the Bible tells us about gifting and talents (and putting them to use) as well as reflecting themselves from different angles on what God has to say to them. Please continue to pray for our course participants as they discover more and more of what God's purpose means for them in their lives.

Enabling Mission

It's been wonderful to hear of three or four different examples recently of how people at LMC have invited their friends to church and that invite has been received positively and people have enjoyed meeting us and hearing what we're about. A recent survey suggested that 82% of people were 'somewhat likely' to come to church if only someone asked them. We're seeing that outworked in our church at the moment. With Easter coming up, maybe there is someone you know who is waiting to be invited?



April 2017

1st - Messy Church 10:00am

2nd - Morning Worship led by Rob Collinson Preacher Rev Gareth Higgs (includes Communion) 10:30am, Celebration of Ruth Allen's Ministry, 6pm led by Jackie Berry & Rev Gareth Higgs

3rd - Church Planting Eve - 7:30pm with Michelle Sims

4th - Church Prayer Meeting - 7:45pm

6th - Marriage Course - 7:00pm

9th - Palm Sunday All Age Worship led by Jackie Berry and Tim Green 10:30am, Reflective Worship for Holy Week in Taize tradition, led by Rev Gareth Higgs 6pm

10th - Space Academy Holiday Club 9:30-12:30, Reflective Worship for Holy Week, Littleover Baptist Church, 7:30pm

11th - Space Academy Holiday Club 9:30-12:30, Reflective Worship for Holy Week, LMC, 7:30pm

12th - Space Academy Holiday Club 9:30-12:30, Reflective Worship for Holy Week, St Andrews, 7:30pm

13th - Space Academy Holiday Club 9:30am-2pm, Maundy Thursday Communion, 2:15pm, Maundy Thursday Communion, The Haven, 7:30pm

14th - All Age Worship & Walk of Witness, St Peter's, 10am, Reflective Worship, LMC, 7:30pm

16th - All Age Worship (with Communion) led by Rev Gareth Higgs, 10:30am, Easter Praise, with thanksgiving for Illuminate, Littleover Baptist, 6:30pm

23rd - Morning Worship led by Mike Williams, Preacher Walter Lowndes 10:30am, Encounter led by Hilary Disney, Preacher Graham Penny, 6pm

25th - Leadership Team - 7:30pm

26th - Small Group Leaders Training - 7:30pm

30th - Morning Worship led by Dave Bell, Preacher Chandra Morbey 10:30am, Church Family Treasure Hunt (after church)

May 2017

2nd -