

St Francis Weekly News for The Festival of St Luke 18th October 2020



This bulletin may have come to you by email or through your letterbox, if you received it on paper but are happy to receive an email in future please email deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com If you know anybody else who would like this delivered or emailed please contact Deborah or Revd Janet: revdjanetwyer@outlook.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

ST FRANCIS STUFF HUB

Following on from some very productive negotiations with Dan Harris our Community currency project officer I am delighted to share the great news that St Francis will soon have our very own 'Stuffhub'.

This is basically a lock-up garage that we can use as a base to store items that we are either prepared to either lend out to organisations or individuals or indeed give away!

Initially the stuffhub will be home to our 'CycleUK' bicycles [more on those and the cycling project very soon] but the plan is that it won't be too long before we will be able to accept donated items to pass on to folk who can make use of them.



Why Buy When You Can Borrow!

In the meantime, if you might be interested in getting involved in the stuffhub either from the CycleUK project point of view or helping out with donated goods – please do let us know.

WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT...



Having rescued Revd Winnie from the peril of pollution and climate change – Brother Eeyore is discovering that helping out in a crisis is very hard work. As the intrepid two make their way back to dry land and safety, we offer our thanks to them for pointing out

the fact that being in the same boat can sometimes feel a little pressured!

PRAYER MINISTRY IN ST FRANCIS

Over the past six months or so, we have had to very quickly adapt to a new way of meeting together as a worshipping community and in how we share the good news about Jesus and his message of God's love and care for us.

Having adapted our services to meet the stringent Covid restrictions imposed upon us – one of the sadly missed casualties of the pared down services was our cherished prayer ministry that used to happen every Sunday morning as part of Holy Communion.

The usual practice was that any individual [or couple] who wanted prayers for healing or any other matter of concern would be able to receive counsel and prayer from two members of the St Francis family directly after receiving communion.

This used to happen in the little set aside space to the North side of the Altar.

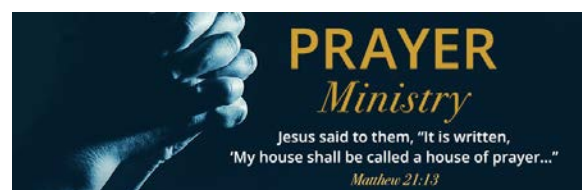
Unfortunately, up until now we had not been in a position to think about how best to reinstate this much missed loving ministry.

However, circumstances have somewhat changed in that after much prayerful deliberation and planning, we are now in a position to offer this ministry once more to those who have missed the opportunity to receive prayer.

We are hoping that as from the 1st November, prayer ministry will be available in the lounge area as an integral part of our Sunday morning worship.

The lounge will be an ideal space to allow not only the appropriate social distancing but also privacy for those wishing to receive prayer.

Those involved will be using the appropriate PPE and as always confidentiality will be strictly observed. We look forward to November 1st!



As a part of our prayer ministry we are also hoping to form a prayer chain group; this is basically a number of people who agree to pray for individuals or situation upon request – a wonderful source of comfort for those who find themselves in sudden or acute need of prayerful support.

A prayer chain works by having a coordinator who receives the prayer request and then contacts two other members via a phone call – who then in turn contact other members of the prayer chain. This means a number of people can be contacted and asked to pray in a very short space of time.

I have had experience of such chains of prayer and I know that those who have received prayer have found it to be a great source of comfort and strength.

The beauty of this form of prayer group is that even folk who cannot get out much can be involved in this incredibly important ministry.

If you would like to know more or feel you could be a part of the St Francis prayer chain please let me know. Revd Janet: 07990 576118

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

World Mental Health Day is a global event and this year it fell on 10th October. Although we missed the day itself, good mental health is so important we felt it would be good to catch up with what's happening in this week's newsletter.

The goal of the day is to help raise mental health awareness and to get the message across that each of us can make a contribution to ensure that people living with mental illness can live better lives with dignity.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Supporting Good Mental Health

Written by **Professor Chris Cook** and accompanied by "have a go" habits developed by **Ruth Rice**

The effects of mental health problems are huge. Nearly nine out of ten people with mental health problems have been affected by stigma and discrimination. Given the challenging times we are living in with coronavirus, the reflections in this booklet were updated and new resources written in March 2020. They seek to provide hope, reassurance and comfort.

If you want to speak to someone, please visit the Mental Health Foundation website, which has lots of helpful resources and contacts. Visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk

In response to this world action day the Church of England have updated their Mental Health Reflections Booklet as an improved source of hope, reassurance, and comfort.

The link below will take you straight to the booklet – or if you would like a printed copy please contact any member of the team who will be pleased to assist.

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/10961•Mental%20Health%20Reflections_WEB.pdf

REMEMBERED WITH LOVE



On Sunday November 1st at 3pm we are holding a memorial service for the feast of All Souls, 'Remembered with Love'.

We are inviting all those who have been recently bereaved, and the service is welcome to all. Perhaps you too would like to come along and commend to God the memory of someone you miss. That's Sunday November 1st at 3pm.

PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

As a community leader I have received the following information with the request that I pass this on to as many people as possible.

CORONAVIRUS CASES ARE INCREASING IN NORWICH

WE MUST SLOW THE SPREAD NOW AND PROTECT EACH OTHER

- Wash your hands more often
- Carry and use hand sanitiser when you can't wash your hands
- Wear a face covering in public indoor spaces
- Keep your distance from others
- Stick to the rule of six

IF WE ALL PLAY OUR PART NOW, TOGETHER WE CAN KEEP NORWICH SAFE
PROTECT OURSELVES. PROTECT OTHERS. PROTECT NORWICH.

Norfolk County Council | Norwich City Council | NHS

The reality is that Covid 19 is a real threat to the wellbeing of many people and as the winter months draw closer so does the need for vigilance in keeping it at bay.

With the increase in the concerns about the spread of the virus and the accompanying hardships that many people are living with never has it been more necessary for us all to treat one another with kindness.

And never before has it been so vital for us to look and listen out for folk who might be struggling.

Please, if you would like the opportunity to have a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

Please do not feel that you are alone - help and support is always available, whatever may be troubling you.

Revd Janet [07990 576118]
Father Tracy [07704 328319]
Eleanor [07840 206716]

Also, there is always someone available in the church building weekdays 10.00am – 12.00pm; please feel free to knock at the door, it will open to you.



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

Following on from discussions with the Bishop's office, we are now about to relaunch our confirmation preparation sessions.

If you have ever thought about being confirmed; or would like to know what it means to make a commitment to Jesus by being confirmed into the Church of England please contact Revd Janet or Fr Tracy. We will be very pleased to hear from you.



THE CURATE'S CORNER

This last week, I was asked to explain what 'church' is. It's a very big and interesting question of course, but I thought I would share with you some of the things I had to say.

I suppose that for most people, 'church' is identified with a building. I expect also that some people's mental image of such a building will likely be a very old one with a steeple. It might also involve bells, and possibly a churchyard with graves. For people who live here on the Heartsease, it may well be that they may think of St Francis, or Witard Road Baptist, or Heartsease Lane Methodist, all of which are relatively recent buildings and do not have graveyards. There aren't too many bells about either, although St Francis' bell was heard ringing regularly during lockdown to signal that the community was being held in prayer.

Of course these places are all buildings; they are places where people meet. It is these people that are the 'church', not the buildings. The 'church', then, is the people who belong to Jesus and follow Him. In other words, the Church is the family of God.

It began as only a few members, but then, with the help of the power of the Holy Spirit, the apostles (those who were *sent* by Christ) spread the Good News far and wide. Wherever they went, more and more people decided to follow Jesus and effectively became members of His family. It continued to grow, rather like an acorn can produce a mighty oak. This 'church' has spread all over the world, just as Jesus said it would. As well as telling the good news of Jesus, these people of God's family try to care for the sick, the poor and all those who have no-one else to look after them.

Every Sunday, all over the world, this special family, the Church, meets together to worship. We praise God, we pray together and we listen to the Word of God as delivered to us in the Bible, and we might become joined to Jesus in a special way by

receiving Holy Communion. It is striking that, despite many different denominations, people of all races and cultures meet together. We may not be biologically related at all, but we think of all fellow members of God's family as sisters and brothers. Through baptism, we have the same heavenly Father, and we are following Jesus together, and we help and encourage each other along the way.

What we know about families is also true of this special family, the family of God, which is the Church. The main thing that we know about and see in families, is love. It is no different with the Church. God, our heavenly father, loves us; His son Jesus came to bring us back to the Father, and to make us His own. It is in the family which is the Church that we can discover how real His love is for us. Why do we call God our 'heavenly father'? Because Jesus told us to call Him that. He loves us, we are His children, we love Him, and we love one another as brothers and sisters.

In this family, we learn to think of others; to accept others, even if they are very different to us; forgive others when we quarrel; care for each other when bad things happen; strengthen and encourage each other; and share our things together so that others may get happiness from what God has given us – and that includes our talents, our energy and our time, not just material belongings.

We were all of us born of a woman; we were all born into a physical family of some sort on earth. We are not, however, all born equal – some are born into wealth and privilege, others into poverty, and there is nothing we can do to change who we physically are. We can, however, become the people God intended us to be.

We become part of God's family when we are baptised; this is why baptism, or Christening (to use the old English term) is sometimes called being 'born again'. In baptism, everyone is equal. We are all loved equally by God regardless of our physical birth. It does not cost us anything to say yes to Jesus. God's love is free – and this is called 'grace' – and it is still amazing. If you want to know more about being part of God's family, feel free to contact either me or Revd Janet – we would love to talk to you.

Every blessing,

Fr Tracy

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

Those who pay close attention to the contents of this newsletter may well have noticed that the Vicar has been remarkably quiet over the past couple of weeks – not many words have come from this quarter at all...

Very sadly, there have been some very difficult family circumstances that have called me away and so I have leaned very heavily on my St Francis family to do what has needed to be done and to hold me and my family in prayer.

I would very much like to thank them all for all their loving support and to share with you all how much I have appreciated the very tangible prayer that has been offered up on our behalf.

At this current time one of my close family is living through a serious mental health crisis and is very, very unwell – it was totally unexpected and the very last thing I ever thought we would be coping with.

But this is indeed life, and no one is immune or exempt from hurt, suffering or having to live through the most difficult and saddest of times.

It has also brought home to me that very often when we pray we are asking for cures, healings – for life to be happy and joy filled, or at least bearable.

Sometimes, though, no matter how much we pray – or however many people are praying for us, the things we would like to happen don't and the things we fear still carry on; life is still as bleak as it was and the future looks dark.

However, for me, in the midst of the fear and the pain a small flicker of warmth and light has shone – and even though that horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach still there, I've felt that I am being held by hands of love and that no matter what, no matter how awful things might get – I will not be facing them alone.

I have been held and enfolded by a love that will not let me go.

So, again, I thank my St Francis family for their prayers and their love. I continue to lean on them for strength, because there is still a long road ahead for me and my loved ones.

And with this expression of thankfulness comes a little nudge to those who are also living through sad, difficult times – please do not disregard the power of prayer. It may not bring about a longed for miracle – but it will bring hope, strength and the

comfort of knowing that you are not alone and that you are a much loved member of God's family.

If you would like us to pray for you or a loved one – we will do so with love. Just call into the church or contact us through one of the numbers you will find sprinkled throughout this newsletter.

We are here for you.

May God's blessing be upon you and yours – and may you know God's love is with you always and through everything.

Revd Janet

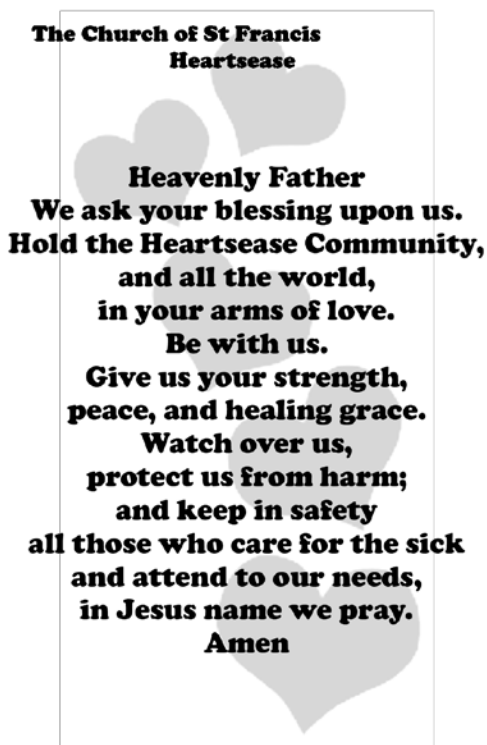
FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: Margaret T; David & Cynthia S; Darren L; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; Hazel; Ben; Frazer.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Doreen; Rosemary; Sheila; John; Joy; Shirley.

We remember with love Barbara Ferries; Maureen Websdale; Joan Tyrrell; Terry and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends.

PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES



God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Almighty God,
you called Luke the physician,
whose praise is in the gospel,
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:
by the grace of the Spirit
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,
give your Church the same love and power to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Lord God, the source of truth and love,
keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
united in prayer and the breaking of bread,
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

READINGS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ISAIAH 35: 3 – 6



Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

ACTS 16: 6 – 12



They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.

PSALM 147: 1 – 7

1 Alleluia.

How good it is to make music for our God,
how joyful to honour him with praise.

2 The Lord builds up Jerusalem
and gathers together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up all their wounds.

*He heals the brokenhearted and
binds up their wounds.*

Psalms 147:3



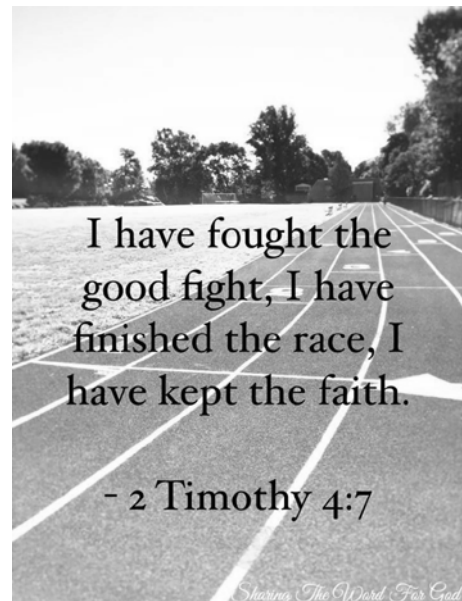
4 He counts the number of the stars
and calls them all by their names.

5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power;
his wisdom is beyond all telling.

6 The Lord lifts up the poor,
but casts down the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
make music to our God upon the lyre;

2 TIMOTHY 4: 5 – 17



As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Do your best to come to me soon, for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

At my first defence no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

LUKE 10: 1 - 9



After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go.

He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.

Go on your way.

See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves.

Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road.

Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!"

And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you.

Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid.

Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

REFLECTION FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Looking at Luke

Evangelist, Historian, Healer, Companion

Today our church calendar celebrates St. Luke the Evangelist. The word evangelist simply means someone who announces Good News and Luke gets the title because he wrote one of the four gospels. In fact it is almost certain that he was responsible for one-quarter of the New Testament so let's explore who he was and what was special about him.

As with most of those who are mentioned in the Bible we can't be absolutely certain of every last detail. The best we can do is look at the evidence that is available and to make reasonable deductions from that.

It's generally believed that Luke was a Gentile, in other words he was not a Jew although he may have been a sympathiser with the Jewish religion. He was possibly a resident of the city of Troas which is on the Western edge of Turkey.

Luke writes good literary Greek and this tends to reinforce the idea that he was a Gentile rather than a Jew and actually makes him the only non-Jewish writer in the whole New Testament.

He accompanied the apostle Paul on at least parts of Paul's second and third missionary journeys and also travelled with Paul to Rome. We can be fairly certain that he was a doctor by profession and one of the characteristics of Luke's Gospel is an emphasis on the healings that Jesus carried out.

Luke clearly took great care over his work. He was not an eye-witness but he has spoken to those who were eye-witnesses, and there is a strong tradition that he met Mary and that she was the source for the birth narrative.

He was meticulous in his dating and historical accuracy. While he was interested in the healing ministry of Jesus, he also gives special emphasis to those who were normally ignored by Jewish

society. It is Luke who gives us most of the stories regarding the place of women in Jesus' ministry. It is Luke who puts an emphasis on Jesus' dealings with the poor and the outcasts of society.

It is Luke who, having written his "orderly account" of Jesus, birth, life, death and resurrection writes a second volume – the Acts of the Apostles. Without this book our knowledge of the early church would be virtually non-existent. Acts gives us the framework within which the travels of Paul can be mapped and without it, it would be impossible to work out the pattern of Paul's ministry.

It is Luke who tells us how Christianity started growing into a worldwide religion and it was Luke who faithfully stood by Paul at a time when others deserted him.

So what might we learn from Luke and the stories in today's readings?

I think the first thing is the importance of healing as part of the Christian ministry. Our reading from Isaiah promises that when God comes to his people eyes are opened, ears are unstopped, the lame will leap and the dumb will sing.

Luke's Gospel shows how important healing was in the ministry of Jesus and in the ministry of the early church. We need to remember today that God does have the power to heal and while some Christians have special gifts of healing we all have the ability to pray for those who are unwell and who are in need of God's healing touch.

The second thing is that the Good News is for everyone. Luke wrote his Gospel so it could be easily understood by those who did not have a Jewish background and he wrote it to encourage them that they were all included in God's plan of salvation.

While Matthew, Mark and Luke all tell of the sending out of the 12 disciples, it is only Luke who tells the story in today's Gospel of the sending out of the 70

or 72. They had a much wider brief and were clearly told to reach the parts that no-one else had reached.

This should encourage us to share the Good News as widely as possible. It's not just that everyone has a right to hear it, it's that everyone has a need to hear it. That's why so many are sent out. That's why they are told to get a move on!

There's one final point I want to make and it's about the importance of companionship. It stands out in the New Testament reading (v9-12). Paul says "all my companions have gone and only Luke is with me. You can almost hear the pain in his voice. By now he may well have been under sentence of death and he craves human companionship.

I'm sure that, particularly given the events of the last seven months, we can all relate to this. During lockdown all of us missed our usual human companionship.

Phones, Skype, Zoom are all poor substitutes for real face to face contact.

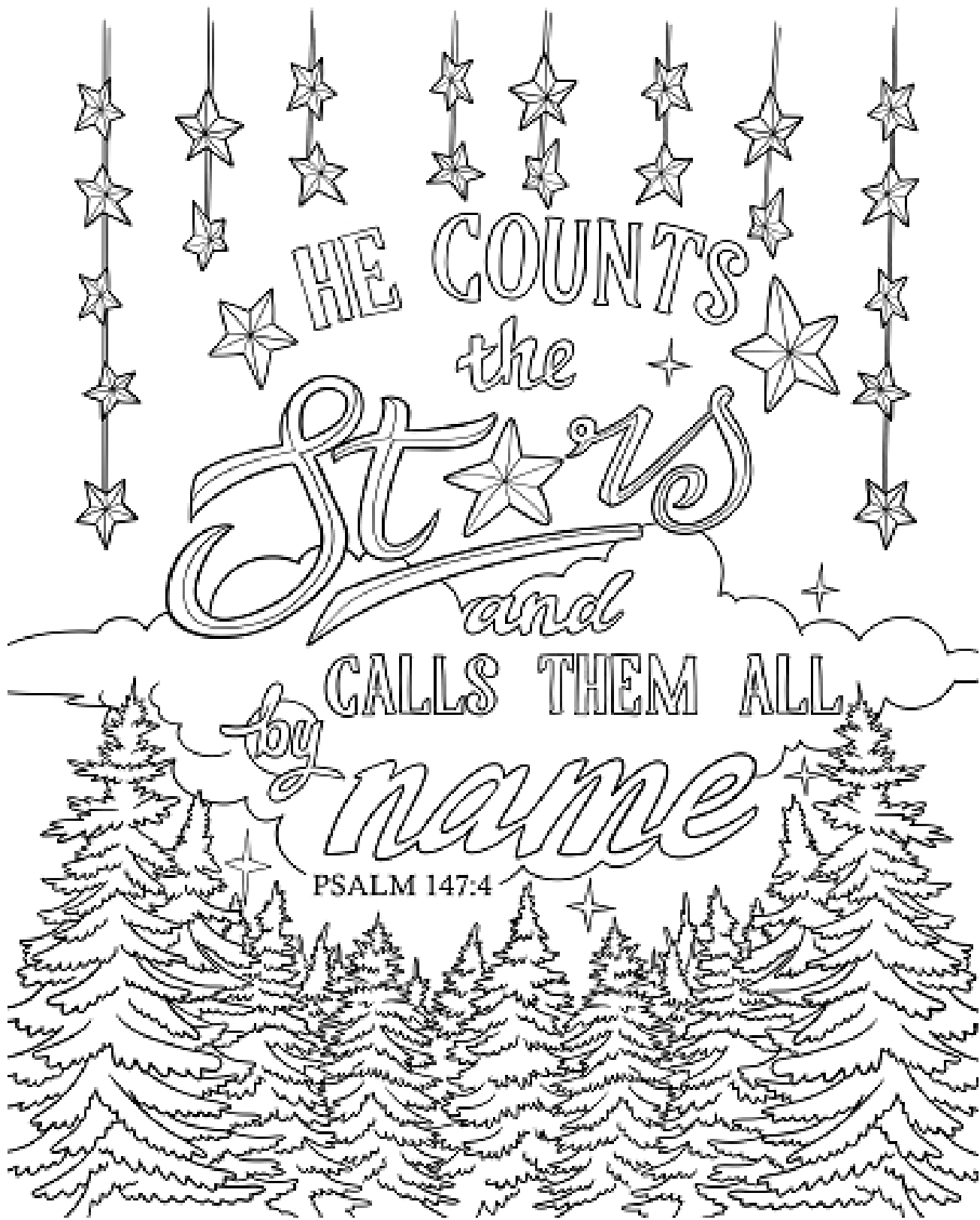
I noticed the first Sunday in July when we were able to hold a service again how pleased people were just to get out, meet together and exchange a few words even if they had to be socially distanced. It's why Parish Visiting and the Pastoral Ministry is such an important part of what we do. People need that human interaction and we always need to be conscious of that and be prepared to do something about it.

Even someone like the Apostle Paul needed that human contact and Luke was the faithful friend who stayed with him through all his troubles.

So as we think of Luke, healer historian, evangelist, faithful companion, let's value all that he did and consider how best we can follow his example.

David Lechmere

Lay Reader



HE COUNTS

the

Stars

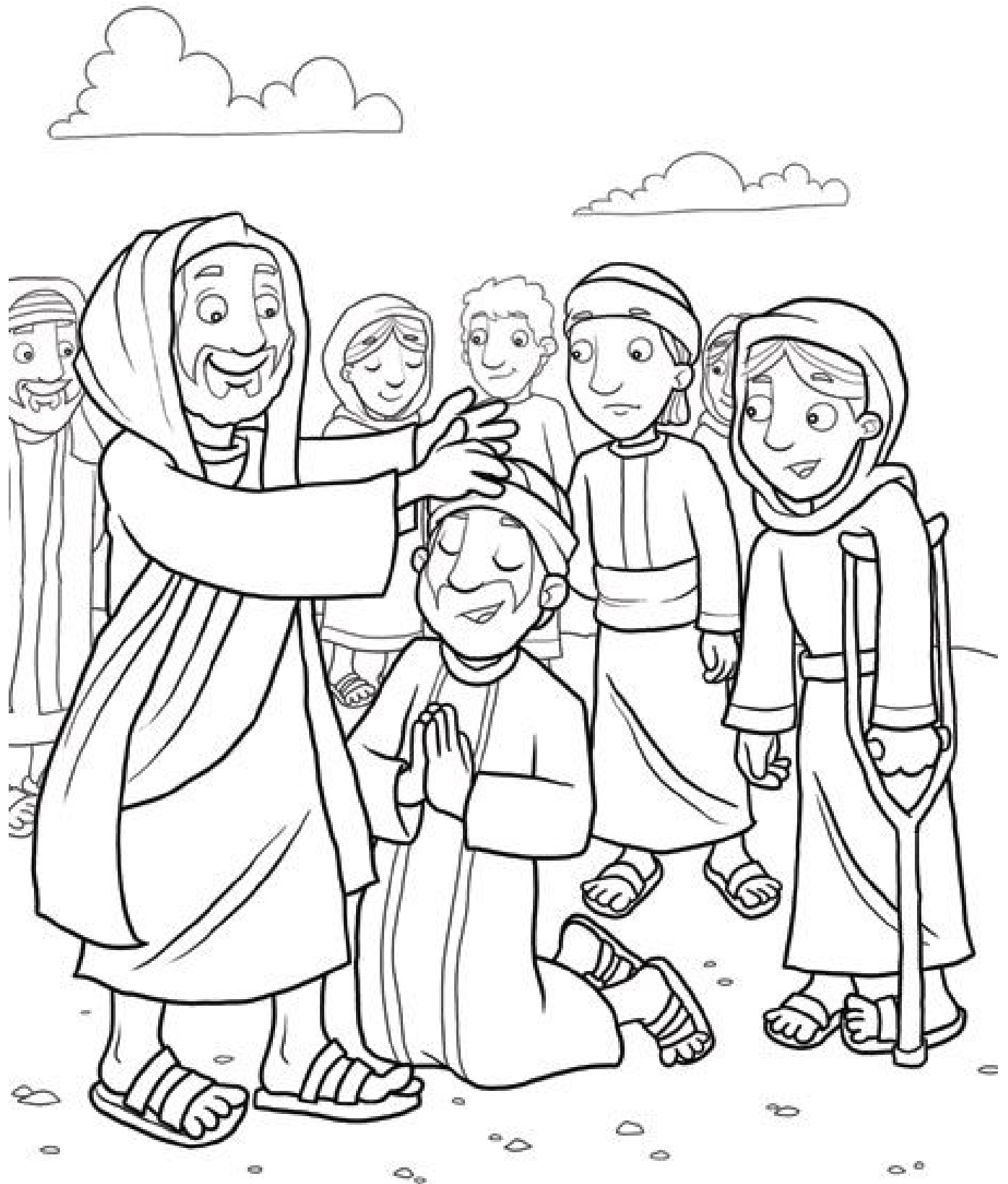
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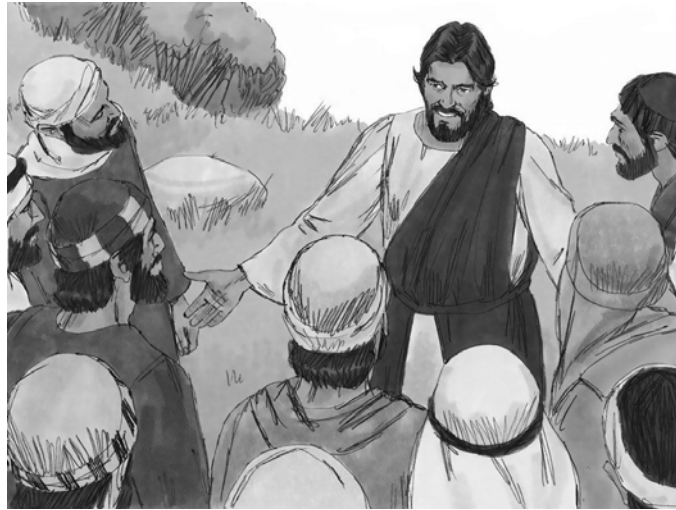
CALLS THEM ALL

by

name

PSALM 147:4





After this, the Lord chose 72 others. He sent them out in pairs. He sent them ahead of him into every town and place where he planned to go. He said to them, "There are a great many people to harvest. But there are only a few workers to harvest them. God owns the harvest. Pray to God that he will send more workers to help gather his harvest. You can go now. But listen! I am sending you, and you will be like sheep among wolves. Don't carry a purse, a bag, or sandals. Don't stop to talk with people on the road. Before you go into a house, say, 'Peace be with this house.' If a peaceful man lives there, your blessing of peace will stay with him. If the man is not peaceful, then your blessing of peace will come back to you. Stay in the same house. Eat and drink what the people there give you. A worker should be given his pay. Don't move from house to house. If you go into a town and the people welcome you, eat what they give you. Heal the sick who live there. Tell them, 'The kingdom of God is soon coming to you!'

C	K	A	S	T	O	W	S	N	S
O	C	W	O	L	V	E	S	S	A
P	A	A	R	S	U	P	R	E	D
E	S	R	U	P	A	S	E	V	N
A	R	S	V	E	N	L	R	E	A
I	E	O	S	W	T	A	U	N	L
R	V	W	O	B	Y	D	O	T	S
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L	V	O	W	O	V	S	L	E	S

SEVENTY	TWO	PAIRS
TOWNS	RICH	LABOURERS
LAMBS	WOLVES	PURSE
HAVERSACK	SANDALS	SALUTE

