



Park Life

January 2020

Above: Advent in Narnia! During our joint Christmas service

Happy New Year!

If you've just walked into our church for the first time then a special 'hello' to you!

We are a multinational church that holds services in English and Portuguese.

Our services are intentionally informal, so feel free to participate in as much or as little as feels comfortable.

Usually we spend time worshipping God through music, prayers and the collection of an offering, which sustains the work of the church and the organisations we support. Bible-focused teaching and sharing are also a key part of our services.

Junior Church is held downstairs in the hall. Volunteers are DBS checked and will accompany the children down at the appropriate time in the service.

We have a prayer team who are also available to pray with you should you wish. You can spot them wearing a yellow badge.

You are also invited to join us afterwards for free tea, coffee, biscuits (and sometimes cake!) as we get to know each other better.

For more information on who we are and what we do please check out our website:
www.parkbaptist.church

Coming up on Sundays @ Park

12th January

"20-20 Vision: Fearing God and Cultivating Wisdom" Proverbs 1:7 & 20-33

19th January

Christian Unity Week - Guest Preacher: Major David Lennox (*Communion*)

26th January

JOINT SERVICE IN ST. GEORGE'S THEATRE: See Page 4 for details

2nd February

Stories Worth Telling: Adam & Eve

9th February

Stories Worth Telling: Cain & Abel

16th February

Stories Worth Telling: Noah (*Communion*)

23rd February

Joint Service to be confirmed

Introducing Connect Groups

Something new for midweek at Park

A new year marks a new way of connecting outside of Sundays. 'Connect Groups' are replacing the existing House Group network in an effort to refocus our effectiveness in growing as disciples of Jesus. Here's all you need to know...

House groups have been dwindling over the past 12 months or so. There is a sense of drifting and lack of direction in what we are doing with our midweek programme. In January, several individuals will meet for some training to help them facilitate what we are calling 'Connect Groups.' These will be groups that will meet either weekly or fortnightly (we encourage each group first trials meeting weekly for a term to see the benefit of regularly connecting) and contain 5-10 people.

The key purpose of the groups is to seek God's presence together so that we may be renewed by the Spirit. It is hoped that these might become places of encounter with God so that we might be made more like Jesus and grow in our faith. It is also hoped that this will help deepen our relationships with each other so that we might help and support one another better as we face the ups and downs of life.

Meetings will entail a variety of things; from times of prayer and waiting on God, to Bible studies, social time and space to practice/develop the gifts of the Spirit. We will finish each term with a celebration evening in church to worship, pray together and share the highlights of what God has been doing in each group.

Once per term we will take one month out of Connect Groups to all meet together each week for a centralised Bible study. These are designed to help us 'go deeper' in our understanding and reading of Scripture. Peter will predominantly lead these with a rough outline being a 30 minute introduction from the front; 60 minutes discussion in groups; 30 minutes of feedback and sharing. These will begin on **Wednesday 5th February at 7pm** in church. The first block of four sessions will be an overview and introduction to the Old Testament and its key themes.

You are also encouraged to use February to consider joining a connect group, which will start meeting from March. The names of group leaders and venues will be advertised then so you can choose one that is conveniently located to you. They will all inevitably develop their own flavour and character, so feel free to try a few groups before settling with one. We hope to start initial groups in central Great Yarmouth (1x day and 1x evening); Caister; Ormesby; and some 'specialised' groups, including: adults with additional needs; men's group; seniors group.



Connect Groups continued...

Our first term's worth of material will have an emphasis on developing our understanding of the Holy Spirit, waiting on God and responding to God. This will draw on the book 'Everyday Supernatural' by Mike Pilavachi and Andy Croft, referencing the small group questions and prompts linked to each chapter.

This is an excellent, accessible book that will significantly enhance your Connect Group sessions. It is one of the few Christian books that I (*Peter*) have read cover-to-cover more than once. It is available from Amazon and most online Christian book retailers for around £8. If you would like a copy ordered for you then please speak to Peter.



Over time we would also like to develop the practice of growing new leaders and group facilitators, so that each group always has a leader 'in waiting'. When groups reach over 10, the leader would take 5 people and start a new group, with the new leader taking on the remaining 5-6 people in the existing group.

A key role in the success of Connect Groups is the role of hosting. Ideally the group leader or facilitator would not also be the host, so they can focus on the session. If you would like to host a group please speak to Peter.

Prayer Meetings

Our current weekly prayer meeting on a Thursday will also be changing to be a place for connect group leaders to come and be recharged/renewed, recognising they are giving out spiritually, and so need a place to stop and receive from God. A greater emphasis will therefore be put on our joint prayer times on the first Friday of the month at 7pm. These will be expanded to encourage broader expressions of speaking and listening to God than simply sitting in a circle taking turns to pray. Music/Video/Silence/Activities - maybe even food(!) the idea is this becomes a place to 'be'; with God and with each other, with space for the Spirit to move, to prompt and to speak as she sees fit.

The first one will begin on **Friday 7th February, 7pm.**



Photos by Sandra Pires

Church Christmas Card

Thanks to all who contributed to the church Christmas card this year. A very encouraging total of £174.40 was raised for the Building Fund.

Women's World Day of Prayer

On 6th March we will be hosting the Great Yarmouth prayer meeting to mark the Women's World Day of Prayer. The final details are still to be confirmed but it is expected to take place in the afternoon. If you'd like to help set up or serve refreshments please speak to Denise Jackson.

A message from Mia...



A big thank you to everyone from church who brought me some lovely presents and cards for my first Christmas. I'm having lots of fun playing with my new toys and being complimented on my new outfits!

Church Members' Meeting

Our next Church Meeting is on Wednesday 29th January at 7.30pm. Agendas will be emailed to all members, with paper copies provided for those not on email. If you are unable to attend please send your apologies in advance to Denise.

Becoming a CIO At the AGM in November the Leadership Team circulated a draft constitution for becoming a CIO. This included a number of questions and points that will be discussed at this meeting. If you'd like to discuss the CIO document with Peter please do so before the church meeting.

Joint Service 26th Jan

We will be holding our third joint service with the Portuguese congregation in St. George's Theatre and Cafe on the final Sunday of Jan.

We will be joined by Carlos Tique Jone, a missionary working for BMS World Mission in Mozambique, who will be sharing what God is doing in the Portuguese-speaking, East African country.

We will also be holding a light breakfast of croissants and other pastries along with tea and coffee from 10am, where Carlos will be available to speak with. This is a rare opportunity to discover more about the work of one of the key mission partners we support as a church, so please welcome Carlos.



The Living Room

The Living Room is continuing to provide overnight accommodation for those sleeping rough in Great Yarmouth through the winter months, but we need more help!

We are looking for people to volunteer to cook an evening meal. We cater for up to 13 (10 visitors + 3 volunteers) and provide a hot main meal plus a dessert. Numbers so far have been averaging around 5 each week. Food is served around 7.45-8pm.

If you would like to do this then please see the sign-up sheet on the Information Table at church. Why not ask your house group to do it as an act of service together?