

Mustard Seed Stories



One of the best things about being away in the Autumn was the way I saw things growing so well here when I came back. God can use all of us, and sometimes we only discover the way he wants to use us when we are dropped in it!

But we're sometimes not very good at recognising our gifts, or finding the confidence to use them. That's where **Mustard Seed Stories** fits in. It's a great course based around ordinary people from Stoke telling how God has begun to use them in their community in little ways which might just grow.

There's Andy, a keen photographer who starts a group, and Keith and David, both involved with the Fire service, Kate and Margie who take up the challenge of working with homeless people and prostitutes, Liz who gets involved in her local community group & Marg who like me is drawn to spend more time down at the pub, only in her case, playing the violin.

As the course says, 'Mission, at its best, comes from the heart of who we are. From our personalities, experience, passion and enthusiasm.' In other words, don't just think about people who have church-shaped gifts - think about ways of living out who **we** are - our us-shaped loves and longings.

As we watch these ordinary Christians telling their stories, maybe we can be encouraged to take some new steps with God - or to share the new steps we are already taking. As it says, 'Sometimes small beginnings are catalysts for greater things... Sometimes we take a risk that doesn't work out. But you never know if you don't take that first step.'

We hope to have these groups, beginning from 24th, 25th or 26th February:

Tuesdays 7.45 - 9.15pm at 23, Station Road

Wednesdays 7.45 - 9.15pm at 11, Windsor Gardens

Thursdays 7.45 - 9.15pm at the Vicarage

and Thursdays 11.15am - 12.45pm at 1 Windsor Gardens

I'm also delighted that we have Revd Philip Swan, a founder of the Community of St Chad, coming to lead a **Quiet Morning** on Saturday 21st February from 10am - 1pm in church - an excellent introduction to Lent.

We will also have a pre Lent **Alternative Service** on Sunday 15th February at 5pm in church, with images, music and words to prepare us - and then our **Ash Wednesday Service** on Wednesday 18th February at 7.30pm.

As the first Spring sunshine begins to warm the soil, may this Lent be a time for all of us of growing with God, and letting him grow his love through us.

Simon Witcombe