Opening Prayer

God of each day and each moment,

you call us to make choices:

choices about how we will live,

how we will use our time and resources.

You call us to make decisions:

who we will look out for,

what we will commit to,

who we will follow.

As we come before you now,

bless us with wise discernment and loving compassion,

that we may serve you – and one another –

after the example of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen.

Read Isaiah 56. 1-8

The later prophet prepares the way for the Jews to live when they return from Exile back to Jerusalem.

Questions for discussion: -

1. What must a person do to be blessed by God?
2. Which groups, currently marginalised by the Jews, will be welcomed by God?
3. Which persons/groups would be least welcome in the church today?

Read Isaiah 60. 1-6

An oracle/poem looking forward to the people returning to Jerusalem from Exile but also from further afield, a time of great joy and well being.

Questions for discussion: -

1. What are the key aspects of this homecoming listed here?
2. What are the aspects of a perfect society that we would look for today?

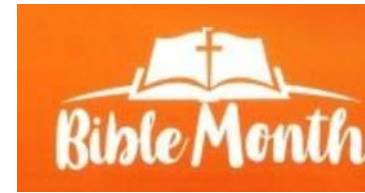*Questions for personal reflection: -*

Our readings tell how God wants a society that is inclusive and welcoming.

1. Are there times when you are someone you know has felt excluded by the church?
2. How do you think the church should be more welcoming?
3. In what ways can we as Christians be a light to the world beyond the church?

A personal prayer

Choose kindness over cruelty,

generosity over greed,

patience over retaliation,

peace over conflict,

willingness over reluctance,

conviction over complacency;

and be blessed in the name of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, this week and always.

Amen.

Bible Month

Mid-week

Session 2

Isaiah – Light of the World

The second theme in our study of the book of Isaiah is "Light of the World". Here we meet God's promise to the Jews that they would be a light to the world, attracting the nations to Jerusalem if they lived as God wanted them to when they returned from Exile.