

*Connecting the Sunday Sparkle at Hearsall Baptist with the Daily Dust of Life*

## Welcome

Have you ever tried something new, enjoyed it and wondered why ever you took so long to come to it? Share stories.

## Worship

*Maybe have a central bowl of water on a table with a few candles floating on the water.*

- Invite everyone to take a few moments to centre themselves on the presence of God within and around them.
- Read John 5: 1 - 9 aloud, nice and slowly.
- Invite each person to imagine the scene from the point of view of the man who had been paralysed for 38 years.
- Consider what he is feeling, thinking and doing as Jesus approaches.
- Imagine the expression on his face and his tone of voice when he explains how he can't get down to the water in time.
- Imagine his feelings and thoughts and actions as Jesus tells him to pick up his mat and walk.
- To ponder: What is Jesus asking you to do in your life today? What is stopping you from responding?
- Close this meditation with a prayer such as, *“Lord Jesus, let me know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly. Amen.”*

## Word

### **Read John 5: 16 - 20**

- What are the two reasons why the religious leaders persecute Jesus?
- What seems to be important for the religion of these Jewish leaders?
- How does Jesus' approach to faith differ?

### **Read John 5: 21 - 23**

- Describe the relationship between the Son and the Father.

- What could it mean to say Father has entrusted all judgement to the Son? Is this simply business as usual with a new Chief Executive Officer - the Son instead of the Father? Or might Jesus be saying something more profound about judgement itself? If so, what could that be?

### **Read John 5: 24 -30**

- What do these verses say about judgement?
- What does it mean to have crossed over from death to life? How does this enable believers to escape judgement?

### **Read Romans 8: 1 - 4**

- What does it mean to be 'in Christ Jesus' or to live 'according to the Spirit'?
- According to these verses, why needn't believers fear judgement?
- What attitude should we as Christians have to those whose behaviour seems very wrong by general agreement? What sort of judgement should they face? What sort of forgiveness is possible? Consider some topical examples.

### Response

- Is there something in your life that you have been putting off for too long? Could now be the time to give it a go? If so, take some steps to make it happen!
- Use some form of artwork to explore what it means for you to have crossed from death to life. If you are keeping a journal, you could paste it in. As you reflect on the artwork, does it reveal anything? Is any part of you holding back from making the crossing from death to life?