

Road to Emmaus

AVON STOUR PASTORAL AREA

Fordingbridge Ringwood Highcliffe,
Southbourne Christchurch Iford



Update from Richard Martin, Discipleship & Evangelisation Coordinator

January 2019



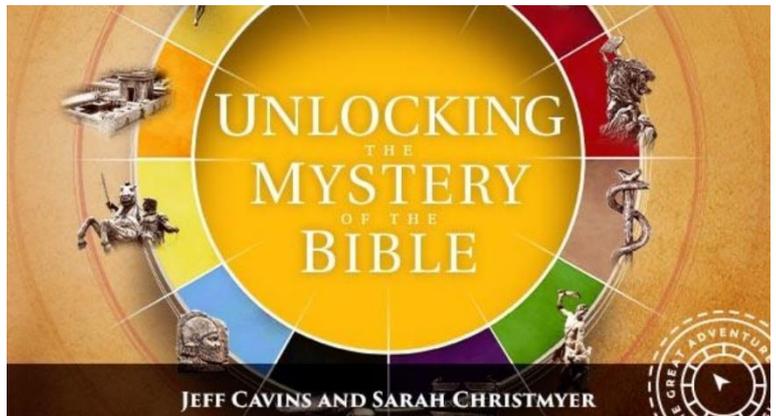
Happy New Year! Welcome to the first "Road to Emmaus" of 2019, letting you know about some of the opportunities available to help you and all of us grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

If you'd like to register your interest or have any questions, comments or queries, or would like to offer any help, please do get in touch! (contact info overleaf)

Do you wish you knew more about the Bible...?

Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible is a series of eight sessions that will help you uncover the story woven throughout Scripture, allowing you to get the "big picture" of the Bible and understand what it is all about! Each session includes a 30-minute film, after which refreshments will be available. Then those who wish to stay and discuss in small groups may do so, but anyone who prefers is free to leave at that point.

To begin with, why not come to one of our no-commitment **Taster Sessions** to find out more and to get a good idea of what it will be like? Only then do you need to decide whether or not to sign up for the rest of the course.



Taster Sessions* (February 2019):

Either **Tue 12th 7.30-9.00pm** (St Joseph's, 67 Purewell, Christchurch BH23 1EH)

Or **Thu 14th 12.45-2.15pm** (Our Lady Queen of Peace, Douglas Rd, Southbourne BH6 3ER)
(You are invited to bring your own lunch to eat with us from 12.15pm)

***Note:** the Taster Session includes the first of the 8 films, so you should come to the Taster Session even if you already know you would like to do the course. Please contact me if you can't make the Taster.

Remaining course dates for those who choose to carry on:

Either **Tuesday evenings 7.30pm** St Joseph's, Christchurch: Mar 12, 19, 26; Apr 2, 23, 30; May 7

Or **Thursday lunchtimes 12.45pm** OLQP, Southbourne: Mar 7, 14, 21, 28; Apr 4, 25; May 2

You are all invited to our next

Welcome to Worship event

Tuesday 26th February 2019 7.00-8.30pm

St Joseph's Church, Purewell, Christchurch BH23 1EH

The Lord said to me, 'Get up, go on your journey...' (Deuteronomy 10:11)

A wonderfully refreshing evening of song, scripture and silence



Alpha update

Our second Pastoral Area **Alpha** ran from September to December 2018, with 94 people (68 guests and 26 small-group team members) taking part, plus many more helping behind the scenes with admin, catering, welcoming, etc. This time we also tried two new approaches:

- As well as our large **Alpha** gathering (56 people) at St Joseph's on a Tuesday evening, we also ran **Alpha** in four house-groups held in people's homes on different days and at different times, with about ten people in each group. These proved a great success, creating a homely, welcoming environment.
- Parents of children about to begin preparation for First Holy Communion in two of our churches were strongly encouraged to come to **Alpha**, since the best way for a family to help the children grow in faith is to lead by example. Ten of these young parents came to **Alpha**, unsure what to expect or how it would work, but they loved it – they were always the last to leave on a Tuesday evening!

Everyone has their own story to tell of how **Alpha** has helped them move forward in their spiritual journey: some became open for the first time to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; others deepened and strengthened their existing faith; some found new hope or a sense of peace; most made new friends or felt a greater sense of community and belonging; many now wish to explore their faith further.



We will run **Alpha** again later this year and also next year. If you are interested in finding out more, please get in touch. Why not think and pray about whom you could invite to **Alpha**, especially family, friends or work colleagues who do not yet know the love of Jesus?



Do you know that we have our own private Facebook Group?

You are invited to join our Avon Stour Pastoral Area Facebook Group – it's a great place to keep up to date with what is happening and you can join in the conversation with others from our Area (we have 120 members so far). It is a 'closed group' - anyone wishing to join has to be accepted by the group administrator, so it is not available to the general public. In *Facebook*, search for "**Avon Stour Pastoral Area**" and click "**Join**"

Accompanying Others

Have you ever felt that you'd like to help someone come to know Jesus Christ, but not known how best to do it? Maybe a family member, friend or work colleague? One of the most important things we need to know if we are to become "missionary disciples" is how to accompany someone else on their spiritual journey - how to listen, when to speak and when to be silent, what we should share of our own journey at any particular time, etc. This does not come naturally to the vast majority of us!

There is an excellent new resource to help us, called "Ananias Training", and over the next few months and years, we hope that as many as possible in our communities will do this training. Watch this space for details later in the year...

New contract, new title, same role...

My 3-year contract as *Director of Lay Formation* for the Avon Stour Pastoral Area ended in October 2018, but I am delighted, humbled and privileged that this contract has been renewed! My title has changed to *Discipleship & Evangelisation Coordinator*, which describes more accurately what I do, but the role remains the same. I would like to thank all of you for your encouragement, help and support over the past 3 years and I look forward with great excitement to what the Holy Spirit has in store for us all over the coming years. Here is a reminder of what I shared as my understanding of our Mission and Vision when I started in 2015, with just a few very minor 'tweaks' in light of my experience. I invite you to think and pray about what role you might be being called to play in living out this mission and making this vision a reality...

Our Mission: "Love God - Love Others - Make Disciples"

My Vision: That our Pastoral Area will be a community of welcoming, vibrant, growing Catholic parish communities of intentional and missionary disciples, rooted in the Father's love, focused on and in relationship with Jesus, and on fire with the Holy Spirit, united in bringing the love of God to our neighbourhoods through prayer, service and witness.