

## Day one

Expect the unexpected

(YHQ LI ZH KDYH GRQH D FOXE EHIRUH WKH ¿UVW GD\ LV DOZ show up? What will the children be like? Are we up to doing this? But, perhaps more importantly, FDQ ZH PHHW HYHU\RQH¶V LQFOXGLQJ RXU RZQ H[SHFWDWL \RXU ¿UVW WLPH GRLQJ WKLV

The two readings today are about defying expectations.

7 K H ¿ U V W L V D E R X W W K H E R \ - H V X V Z K R Z H HR SW H W XVLHQ JK IRR D the most perfect, obedient child ever. This story shows him as anything but matching these imaginings. He has run off from his parents and is holding his own with the best theologians of his day as a child prodigy. When his parents discover him, he gives them a snotty comment that must have been rather annoying after scaring them half to death.

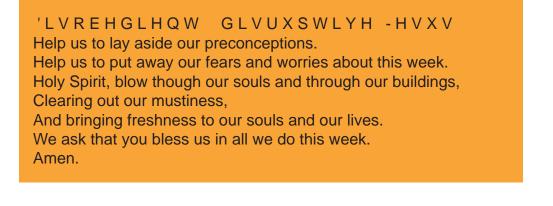
6 L P L O D U O \ W K H P X V W D U G V H H G S D U D E O H L V Q R W Z H H [SHFW was talking about, but they are normally small, smelly shrubs that attract vermin, not the stately trees of our fond imagination.

The point is that we often feel less open to new experiences and want to remain in our comfort ]RQHV :  $HPD \ EHXQXVHGWRKDYLQJVWUDQJHSHRSOHLQRZ$  of past events or even long past events when people behaved differently. We may hate to admit things have changed radically.

We urge you to park these feelings and expectations. Be open to something new. The new people who may be attracted to our holiday offering can help us learn and be blessed through our time WRJHWKHU, I ZH GR WKLQJV LQ SDUWQHUVKLS ZH ERWK EHO

%H RSHQ WR PXWXDOLW\ DQG VXUSULVHV \*RG FDQ EH VXUSU

What are the opinions and expectations you need to park in order to be open to the new experiences that this week offers?







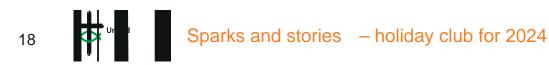
3XWWWAVHUHDWWRHWAUZHHWDFOHDUFIVVDHWW2.WRIHHODVRMHOEXWHYHURQ WZW&WFUFOHRIFRQHUCARVWDQQDUHWRUFRZRUNHU2UW&WFWCWBWDOZDV VHHFWREHZAUHWAVR&WR,RQH&OF6WCWWFOPH&DSROHD&Q EDOFRQDO&&DQHHN&VSWHPHVWHIIRUWVWRNHHSWUDFNRIZMQ&ER&V can be annoying. But that doesn't mean we don't care about and for them.

Continue - you're doing great!

RZBZHFRWWWRZRUNWRHWWUQIUBQUHWWDVWWZHHNSURUHVVHV"

/RUGVXHYHQQVNHQAVWRQQQDVSHUDWRQ :RQUQQSHRSOHFRQQMMXWGZQWRQHGQ/MP/RG YHXWHUVVRIWHVSUWORYHMRSHDFHSDWHQHNQVV&RQVVIDWKQQVVDQHOI control. Use us beautifully. We are yours. Amen.

**Day four** 



/RUBVXZHDUHVBODWDSRI2/RMVWRU /HWXVWDDGHVWDODQDYRMW /HWXEHI2/HRRIQ/ Acknowledging our realities and our complexities. HOSXWRQEOHVVI2HUHYHUZHDUH In this bubble of time. Amen.

## Day fve

## The ongoing invitation

You've got there! Well done!

This week you've been doing the great commission – trying to make disciples and friends. If you haven't already, pat yourself on your backs!

The great banquet parable tells us that it isn't always the obvious, or even the people we ask, who UHVSRQWRRWQQUDWRCQQRIZROVEHHQUHWWZHHN1RWMXWWHEUWDQQQ children but the shy, the quiet, those who might have struggled; the loud, noisy ones who have perhaps driven you to distraction. Think of the parents and carers, the people who have perhaps ORRNHQQHRIWHUZHOFRFISHUQSVORRNHQNHWHIHOWMBGHUQSVDOWWOHHEDUUDVVHG about dropping their kids off and running.

If we look at the parable, these are people who need a special invitation. They are most likely to IHHOROWHORDORZEWHVXDVNVX BROOKDOWROWROWROWHOWNVX BROOKDOWROWROWROWROWROWNVX BROOKDOWROWNVX

Yes, this isn't always easy or comfortable but you've probably been doing it all week.



