

Parish Church of **St. Barnabas, Swanland** *Sharing Christ through friendship.*

Week beginning 3rd Sunday before Advent (6/11/11) - The King's Speech (7): "Responding to Divorce"  
 Group notes – Readings: Deuteronomy 24: 1 - 4; Matthew 5:31 – 32, 19: 3 – 12

<p><b>Welcome</b></p>	<p>MCHUMOR.com by T. McCracken</p> <p>© T. McCracken mchumor.com</p>	<p>Our attitude to divorce and its consequences can leave us distraught. This cartoon seeks to take away some of that pain. It also has a hint of Matthew 22: 23 – 33 about it. As gently as you can try to share some positive thoughts about how the subject of divorce has affected your life.</p>												
<p><b>Worship ideas</b></p>	<p><i>Songs about God's love for us and our response to that love e.g. 377 Love divine, all loves excelling, 596 When I survey (particularly the last two lines of the final verse), 463 May the mind of Christ(combined Mission Praise). Files of c.30 'newer' songs are available to borrow for groups)</i></p>													
<p><b>Word (refs.↓)</b></p>	<p><i>suggestions for discussion choose one or more of these questions:</i></p>													
	<p>The IVP Bible Dictionary defines marriage as “the state in which men and women can live together in sexual relationship with the approval of their social group”. Discuss the meaning of the words “approval of their social group” who would you include or exclude?</p> <p>In the context of that definition who would you consider to be “married” in our 21<sup>st</sup> century culture?</p> <p>How important is the marriage certificate or a Divorce certificate and why?</p> <p>Divorce is the final step in the irrevocable breakdown of marriage.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>UK no of divorces:</td> <td>1858 – 24</td> <td>1901 – 512</td> <td>1926 – 3000+</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1939 - 8000+</td> <td>1950 - 30000+</td> <td>1967 – 43000+</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1972 – 100000+</td> <td>1993 – 165000+</td> <td>2009 – 114000+</td> </tr> </table> <p>Figures published by the Guardian Newspaper 2010 in an article called “Are married couples more likely to stay together?” <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jan/28/divorce-rates-marriage">www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jan/28/divorce-rates-marriage</a> What reasons would you give for this dramatic climb in the UK divorce rate? Why do you think it has fallen since the peak in 1993?</p> <p>Does the breakdown in marriage/cohabitation have a detrimental affect on children or is it better to have a loving single parent family?</p>		UK no of divorces:	1858 – 24	1901 – 512	1926 – 3000+		1939 - 8000+	1950 - 30000+	1967 – 43000+		1972 – 100000+	1993 – 165000+	2009 – 114000+
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<p>Deuteronomy 24: 1 – 4 Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:3-12</p>	<p>How would you reconcile Leviticus 19:18 love your neighbour as yourself (words we say in our liturgy each week with Leviticus 20:10 where the penalty for adultery was the death of both parties?)</p> <p><b><u>Deut 24:1 and Matt 5:31ff.</u></b> In our culture what secondary reasons for divorce would you find acceptable?</p> <p><b><u>Matt 19:11.</u></b> In this verse does Jesus give our culture a signal that divorce in any circumstance is acceptable?</p>
<p><b>Witness</b></p>	<p><b><u>Pray / praise</u></b> <i>for one or two of the following</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ for your mission link person(s) or project</li> <li>❖ for those you know who have suffered or are currently suffering from a divorce trauma.</li> <li>❖ for Christian charities such as the Hull Lighthouse Project (based at Community Church Hull) reaching out to those caught in prostitution</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pray and plan</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ for opportunities as individuals, as a group, or with other groups, to reach out in the weeks ahead to people who are not yet Christians (e.g. as you make plans for Christmas).</li> </ul>