MOOREBANK – HAMMONDVILLE ANGLICAN CHURCHES
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR REFLECTION
Passage: Matthew 4:17-5:12

Read Matthew 4:17-25.

1. Simon and Andrew (vv.18) and James and John (v.21) all had jobs and family ties. But they left everything to immediately follow Jesus (vv.20,22). In your own situation, when have you had to choose Jesus over close family ties? When have you got it right and/or wrong?

2. Why do the crowds follow Jesus (vv.23-25)? Is their following different from the two sets of brothers? What would be the evidence that a curious follower has become a committed one?

Read Matthew 5:1-12.

3. The beatitudes (literally "blessedness-es") described those who are approved by God, and they were very much in conflict with the culture of Jesus' day. Which ones do you find most counter-intuitive and opposite to our world's value system?

What's at stake? Read through Matthew 7:24-27 and remind yourselves of what is at stake in not just hearing but putting Jesus' words into practice.

Applying the beatitudes

Read Matthew 5:1-6:4.

[Salt and light - 5:13-16; Christ came to fulfill the law - 5:17-20; Murder begins in the heart - 5:21-26; Adultery in the Heart - 5:27-30; Divorce - 5:31-32; Tell the truth - 5:33-37; Retaliation - 5:38-42; Love your enemies - 5:43-48; How to give - 6:1-4]

4. Pick one (or two if time allows) of the issues Jesus addresses in this first half of the Sermon on the Mount and reflect on the following questions:

   a) What problem does Jesus address here?

   b) Is this a problem our neighbourhood has? Is this a problem our church has? Is this a problem you have?

   c) Why it is hard to swallow Jesus' teaching here?

   d) Which of the beatitudes (5:1-12) is needed to respond to Jesus' teaching? How come? (whilst they are all interrelated, please try to isolate one)

   e) Before Jesus preached this sermon, he called people to repent (4:17). What might repentance mean for someone who has this problem?

   f) Which of the beatitudes does our church need on display to help someone repent of this?