

- 6 *2 Chronicles 19*
We are not called to be a holy huddle but ‘salt’ and ‘light’ in the world (*Matthew 5:13-16*). How do we avoid being sucked in by the values of the prevailing culture, as king Jehoshaphat seems to have been?
- 7 *2 Chronicles 23*
God’s purposes so often seem to rest on a small, vulnerable individual as they do here with the infant Joash.
What other examples of this in the scriptures can you recall?

Do we listen to the voices of the small and vulnerable in our churches, or those of the largest and loudest?
- 8 *2 Chronicles 24*
After such a good start, what went wrong with Joash?
Are there parallel dangers facing our churches today?
- 9 *2 Chronicles 29*
Hezekiah’s purification ceremony. Is there a place in the church for a congregation-wide, spiritual spring-clean?
Do Lent practices go far enough in terms of genuinely encouraging a re-commitment to the things of God?
- 10 *2 Chronicles 30*
There’s a call to the wider community to come and celebrate.
Should Christian mission be focused on encouraging the wider community to come to events at church, or on going out to where the people are? Or both?

SACRED

Group Resources

Month 36

Closing Prayer

*As usual, light a candle and silently reflect on your discussion.
Finish by repeating together the Opening Prayer.*

Opening Prayer

Eternal light, shine into our hearts,
eternal goodness, deliver us from evil,
eternal power, be our support,
eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance,
eternal pity, have mercy upon us;
that with all our heart and mind and soul and strength
we may seek your face
and be brought by your infinite mercy to your holy presence;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

(Alcuin of York, 804)

General Question

- 1 As we return for the final time to the history of the early kings of Israel and Judah, did anything especially stand out for you from the readings?

Activity

The notes to day 3 reproduce the Michel Quoist's prayer of life entitled *The Brick*. Have someone read out the prayer.

Contemplate quietly the words of the prayer as you listen and then, after a while, consider together the following:
Is it helpful to think of yourself (and others) in your local church as part of a 'building' that God is constructing?
And do you feel that you have a distinct part to play in its life?

Further Ideas

As with previous months, browse through these ten further ideas and select just some of them to discuss further.

- 1 *2 Chronicles 2,4*
The temple buildings and furnishings clearly matter a great deal regarding their specification and, presumably, their maintenance. What about our church today?
Do buildings and furniture really matter all that much?
Why (or why not)?
- 2 *2 Chronicles 5,7*
Do you think there is an appropriate balance in your own church's worship between pre-selected readings and prayers, and well rehearsed musical leadership, and a flexibility of approach to allow the spontaneous movement of the Spirit?
In practice, what stands in the way of such a balance?
- 3 *2 Chronicles 10*
With matters of national unity sitting precariously on a knife-edge, how does Rehoboam decide what to do?
From whom did he take counsel, and why do you think he acted in the way he did? What was the outcome?
Thinking more widely, (a) is church unity *always* desirable, and (b) how can churches ensure 'good' decision-making?
- 4 *2 Chronicles 11*
'Any true priest would flee from (such) idolatry' (see the day's notes) - hence the exodus of priests and Levites from the northern kingdom's false gods.
But what about today? Can some of the established traditions and 'ways of doing things' in our churches themselves ever become 'idols' - that is, man-made focuses for our worship that might lead us away from God? Should a 'true' priest stand against this, even at the risk of becoming unpopular?
- 5 *2 Chronicles 14*
The notes offer 5 suggestions to help us in our struggles against persistent sources of temptation.
Have you found any of these helpful personally?