

**Bible Study for Anglican Lutheran Society Conference
Durham**

25th August 2018
9.30am

Gentle Jesus Meek and Mild? Maybe Not? Led by Judi Hattaway

In this Bible Study we will wonder together about the conflict scenarios in our own lives, and examine how we can learn from the way Jesus handled difficult situations.

Bible passages that will help us to do this are:

Hebrews 2.18
1 Peter 2. 23
2. Timothy 1.7
Matthew 3. 13-15
Luke 2. 41-52
Luke 10. 38-42
John 2. 1-11

In this study we will wonder about the conflict scenarios in our own lives, Judi said, and she invited us to quietly ponder the following issues in the light of these passages and to ask ourselves how we respond when confronted by them:

- Tight lipped arguments?
- Shouting matches?
- Awkward silences?
- Trying to work out what others are thinking and feeling?
- Hard negotiations?
- Worrying what is happening behind your back?

She then asked us to think about and write down some awkward conflict situations that have happened to us in our own lives and how we handled them.

What is our default way of dealing with conflict? Is it always the best way?

Next she asked us, in the different Bible texts what do we notice about Jesus' handling of these situations? What in Jesus' style would we rather ignore? What sorts of situation do we find most perplexing and difficult? She encouraged us to share our thoughts with our immediate neighbours, remembering that all was to be done in the strictest confidence.

We were then asked to reflect on an incident where we may have jumped too quickly to conclusions – or to the rescue, and to ask ourselves what was motivating us?

After that she invited us to reflect on an incident where someone tried to get us on 'their side' against another person, and on how we responded. Again, we shared this with our neighbours.

Calling us back to order she asked us to consider if we need to respond immediately, or whether there were situations in which no answers were actually required, and whether we need to accept the role or terms that others are thrusting upon us?

When is it necessary to manage conflict so as to prevent un-necessary escalation? When is it appropriate to bring it to a head? What might be the price of doing so? More animated discussion!

Judi then asked us to consider what it was like to embrace, purposefully, the role of the scapegoat? She explained the meaning of the term; someone who is unjustly blamed for the faults of others. Then she invited us to consider how all these things affect our sense of well-being and finally gave us work to do in our own time. Ask yourself, she said, 'What is the present "work in progress" for you as you seek to model yourself on Christ?'