

New World 新世界

Acts 11:19 - 13:3 使徒行传 11:19 - 13:3

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This church's first ministry into the Chatswood area began just over 119 years ago with a Sunday school scheduled on the 1st September 1901.

在大约119年前，1901年9月1日的主日，这个教会以主日学来开始了在车士活地区的第一个事工。

No one turned up due to bad weather.

由于天气不好，当日没有人出席。

Three children turned up the next week, and the first official church service was a couple of months later on the 8th December 1901.

有三个孩子在之后的星期日出席，在几个月后的1901年12月8日，有第一次正式的崇拜。

The official opening of St Paul's was conducted the following Sunday by the Archdeacon of Cumberland, The Venerable John Langley, to whom my wife Natalie is related.

圣保罗堂在接着的星期天由坎伯兰大主教和尊贵的约翰·兰利正式启立，我的妻子 Natalie 与后者是亲戚。

There were different **motives** and **agendas** behind starting St Paul's. Some lacked any gospel vision.

圣保罗堂的启动背后有着不同的**动机**和**议程**。有些是因缺乏福音的远见。

There were those dissatisfied with ministry at St Stephen's Willoughby.

有些人因对邻市的威洛比圣司提反堂的事工不满意。

There were those who felt that a church was a place for good social activities.

有些人觉得一个教堂是进行良好的社会活动的地方。

For others it was a place for mutual support, friendships, family interaction, cultural pursuits.

对另一些人来说，这是一个相互支持、友谊、家庭交往、文化追求的地方。

For others a church is a healthy place for young people of *marriageable* age - St Paul's dating service!

对另一些人来说，教会是一个可为适婚年龄的年轻人提供的一个好地方...圣保罗约会招亲服务!

On the other hand some had a real gospel vision for the word of God to increase and spread.

另一方面，有些人有真正的福音远象去兴旺和广传神的话语。

Evangelism on steam trains, a boy riding the district on **horseback** to break the news of the Sunday school commencing.

在蒸汽火车上的**传福音**，一个男孩**骑马**在区里公告主日学校开学的消息。

There were the four young men who in the summer of 1901-1902 met weekly for prayer before dawn out in the bush, and spent time walking around potential sites to plant a church...finally settling on the site we occupy to this day.

还有 1901-1902 年夏天，每周在黎明前在灌木丛中见面祈祷的四个年轻人，花时间为种植教堂探究有潜力的地点…终于在我们今天所在的地点定下来。

My question is what is it about our beginning that will most define our future?

我的问题是，有什么是关于我们的开始，将最定义我们的未来？

We are drawing to a close Vision 2020, so what is next? But also, the church world in the west is dramatically changing.

我们正接近「远象 2020」的结束，那么下一步是什么？但同时，在西方的教会世界也正在发生着巨大的变化。

Once we existed in the era of Christendom where church and state were in general agreement about what was good.

我们以前是存在于基督教时代，教会和政府对什么是好的有普遍的一致性。

With the rise of secularism and materialism those days are long gone. In this country there is rising opposition to religion generally, and Christianity in particular.

随着世俗主义和唯物主义的兴起，那些日子早已一去不复返了。在这个国家，普遍反对宗教，特别是对基督教的反对情绪日益高涨。

Covid-19 has changed the way we do mission and discipleship. The church used to have a heavy reliance upon the gathering of people for programs.

新冠肺炎 19 改变了我们的使命和门徒训练的方式。教会过去严重依赖人们聚会来参加活动课程。

With restrictions that is not easily achieved. The longer the restrictions the more our psyches and habits change so that when they are no longer there we still may choose to socially distance.

因着限制令这不再是容易实现的。限制的时间越长，我们的心理和习惯变化得越久，这样当它们不再存在时，我们可能仍然选择保持社交距离。

What's does the new world look like? What does our future look like?

新世界会是什么样？我们的未来会怎么样？

THE CHURCH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD 改变世界的教会

In thinking about our future I want to take us back to our past.

在思考我们的未来，我想带我们回到过去。

Back past 119 years ago in Chatswood. Back past the ANGLICAN CHURCH starting in Australia...back past *The Act of Supremacy of November 1534* that saw the Church of England established.

回到在 119 年之前的车士活。回到圣公会在澳大利亚开始之前...回到 1534 年 11 月定立英国圣公会的《至高无上法则》之前。

I want to go ALL the way back to Antioch - our mother church.

我想一直回到安提阿...我们的母教会。

In the first half of chapter 11 Peter is up in front of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem explaining why he, as a Jew, had gone into the house of a Gentile and eaten with them.

在第 11 章的前半部分，彼得在耶路撒冷教会领袖面前解释他为什么作为一个犹太人走进一个外邦人的家庭和他们一起吃饭。

He went to explain how the gentile, Roman soldier, Cornelius and his family had received the Holy Spirit and came to put their trust in the Lord Jesus.

他去解释外邦人、罗马士兵、哥尼流和他的家人是如何接受圣灵，并信任主耶稣。

In 11:18 we have the response of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem:

在 11:18，我们看耶路撒冷的教会领袖的回应：

When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, 'So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.'

众人听见这些话，就不说话了，只归荣耀给上帝，说：「这样看来，上帝也赐恩给外邦人，使他们悔改得生命了。」

Then in v19-21 the scene shifts to Antioch where a great work of God has been happening amongst Gentiles. News of it has spread.

然后在 19-21 节，场景转移到安提阿，在那里上帝的伟大工作已经发生在外邦人之间。这消息已开始广传。

This is the first recorded Gentile church. This is our MOTHER CHURCH. **This is the church that changed the world.**

这是第一个被记录的外邦人教会。这是我们的母教会。这就是那改变世界的教会。

These are a number of characteristics about our 'mother-church' we must commit to emulating as we look to the future of St Paul's.

以下是一些关于我们的[母教会]，在我们期待圣保罗堂的未来的同时，必须致力模仿的特征。

First, it's commitment to ADVANCING GOD'S GLOBAL PLAN

首先，是致力于推进上帝的全球计划。

11:19 says: *Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.* ²⁰*Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.* ²¹*The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.*

11:19 说: 那些因司提反的事遭患难而四处分散的门徒, 直走到腓尼基、塞浦路斯和安提阿。他们不向别人讲道, 只向犹太人讲。但内中有塞浦路斯和古利奈人, 他们到了安提阿也向希腊人传讲主耶稣的福音。主的手与他们同在, 信而归主的人数很多。

11:19 takes us back to 8:1 and the scattering of the believers as a result of the persecution related to Stephen's martyrdom.

11:19 把我们带回 8:1, 由于司提反殉难的迫害, 信徒们分散开了。

Some of these persecuted believers went as far as Antioch, the capital of the Roman province of Syria, and the third largest city in the empire.

其中一些受迫害的信徒甚至去到了安提阿, 罗马在叙利亚省的首都, 也是帝国中第三大城市。

As they went they simply talked about Jesus. What was in their hearts just came out.

他们一边走, 一边谈论耶稣。把在他们心中的都讲出来。

These unnamed Jews from the island of Cyprus and Cyrene – with no official direction, no human instruction, no precedent to follow, nothing but a burning love for Jesus – took ***the good news about the Lord Jesus*** to Antioch.

这些来自塞浦路斯和古利奈的无名犹太人…没有官方指示, 没有人的指令, 没有先例可循, 只有对耶稣的热爱…把**关于主耶稣的福音**告诉了安提阿。

They were probably not even aware they were doing anything radical. No clue about the revolutionary greatness of their act.

他们可能甚至不知道他们在做任何非凡的事情。不知道他们的行为的革命伟大。

They were the first believers to bring the explosive light of the gospel into the pitch black darkness of paganism.

他们是第一个把福音爆炸性的光辉带进异教徒的黑暗之中的人。

Antioch was evangelised, not by apostles, but by average members of Christ's body who just simply *bore witness to Jesus* in their daily lives.

安提阿不是由使徒传福音的, 而是由基督身体中的一般成员, 以他们简单的日常生活见证了耶稣。

Sharing Christ to them was as natural as tears to sorrow or a smile to happiness. Everyday believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, blew away the hold of paganism on needy souls.

分享基督对于他们就像悲伤时的眼泪或幸福中的微笑一样自然。平凡的信徒, 在圣灵的感动下, 吹走了异教对有需要的灵魂的占据。

The result was a great harvest in Antioch; v21... *The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.* We see it again in v24; *a great number of people were brought to the Lord.*

结果是在安提阿有大丰收；21节...*主的手与他们同在，信而归主的人数很多。*我们在24节中再次看到；*于是有许多人归服了主。*

Luke is very careful to stress the sovereign providence of God behind the growth of the church here. It was *the Lord's hand* that was primarily responsible for the success.

路加非常小心地强调上帝在教会成长背后的主宰供应。*主的手*对成功负有主要责任。

No apostles...no parish council...no ecclesiastical structure! Just *the Lord's hand* and a tremendous number of new believers.

不是使徒...不是教区议会...不是教会架构！只是*主的手*和大量的新信徒。

But it doesn't negate the personal witness of the disciples he chose to use to accomplish his sovereign purpose.

但这并不是否定他选择用门徒的个人见证去实现他的主权目的。

This is his appointed means; Christians bearing witness to Jesus where he has put them.

这是他的指定工具；基督徒在耶稣把他们放在的地方为他作见证。

The commitment to local mission for this church at Antioch did in fact flow over to the rest of the world.

安提阿教会在当地传教的致力实际上真的流向了世界其他地方。

In Acts 13 Barnabas and Paul are sent from Antioch to the rest of the world. I love this church sent there best people away.

在《使徒行传》第13章中，巴拿巴和保罗从安提阿被差到世界其他地方。我很喜欢这个教会把他们最好的人派出去。

They were concerned for God's global kingdom not their own kingdom building.

他们关心的是建立上帝的全球王国，而不是他们自己的王国。

Antioch became the launching pad for global mission as it became the base for Paul's missionary journeys, which over the centuries would cause the good news to reach Australia...and Chatswood.

安提阿成为全球福音事工的发射台，因为它成为了保罗的传教之旅的基地，在几个世纪之后将导致福音到达澳大利亚...和车士活。

How are you emulating this church in your life? Are you bearing witness to Jesus where you are?

你在生活中是如何模仿这个教会的？你在你所在的前线见证了耶稣吗？

Did you respond to my call last week to give to the Khlentzos mission fund? What is your next step?

你响应了我上周为 Khlentzos 事工基金所给的呼召了吗？你的下一步是什么？

Secondly, we see here our *mother-church's* commitment to GROWING TOGETHER IN JESUS

其次，我们在这里看到我们的母教会致力于共同在耶稣中成长。

Discipling...growing each other into mature followers of Jesus...must be a core focus of our future.

门徒训练...互相帮助长成为耶稣的成熟追随者...必须是我们未来的核心焦点。

In v22 we see the church in Jerusalem gets wind of all that is happening in Antioch and sends one of its main men to check it out.

在 22 节中，我们看到在安提阿所发生的一一切的风声传到耶路撒冷的教会，所以派一个主要的人去看看。

Barnabas likes what he sees...v.23: *When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.*

巴拿巴也喜欢他所看到的...第 23 节: 他到了那里，看见上帝所赐的恩就欢喜，劝勉众人要立定心志，恒久靠主。

He liked what he saw but his concern was to nurture this young, multicultural church. In v25 we see he brings in extra help to make it happen effectively;

他喜欢他所看到的，但他关心的是培育这个年轻的，多元文化的，教会。在 25 节中，我们看到他带来了额外的帮助，去使其有效实现；

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul (that's about 160 kilometres), and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch.

他又往大数去找扫罗，(大约 160 公里以外)，找着了，就带他到安提阿去。

So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people.

他们足有一年和教会一同聚集，教导了許多人。

Great numbers of people were taught. What were they taught? Acts 20:27 leads me to believe they were taught the *whole will of God*.

许多人被教导了。他们被教导了什么？《使徒行传》20:27 使我相信它们被教导了神的全事工要愿。

The emphasis on establishment is seen again in 14:21-23, when the missionaries return, *'strengthening the disciples and encouraging them'* and appointing elders.

传教士归来后，在 14:21-23 再次看到对建立的重视，"坚固门徒的心，劝他们持守他们的信仰"，并选立了长老。

Everything this church is and does comes back to God's grace and the fact that they were well-established in the truth and growing into maturity in Christ.

这个教会所以和所做的一切都回到神的恩典和他们被好好的在真理中建立，并在基督里成长成熟的事实。

That is, there is a direct link between growth in faith, and living out the Christian life.

也就是说，信仰的成长和基督徒的生命之间是有直接的联系。

No one gives birth to a child and assumes the job is done. the goal is for that child to grow into full maturity and not be a delinquent.

没有人生了孩子，便假设工作已经完成。目标是让孩子完全成熟，而不是成为罪犯。

We must labour hard, sacrifice, love, teach, equip, discipline to see people standing firm and secure and mature and content in Jesus.

我们必须努力、牺牲、爱、教导、装备、训诫，才能看到人们在耶稣里坚定、安稳、成熟和满足。

What is your next step? What is your devotional life like? Do you need help with it?

你的下一步是什么？你在灵命成长方的进展如何？你需要帮助吗？

Maybe you need to join a community group today.

也许你今天需要加入一个小组。

Thirdly, we see a commitment to HUMBLE SERVICE

第三，我们看到致力于谦卑服务。

Barnabas is not an apostle but he is one of the main men in the Jerusalem church.

巴拿巴不是使徒，但他是耶路撒冷教会中的主要成员之一。

Barnabas' goodness was expressed in his generosity to the church in chapter 4:36-37. Also in him sticking his neck out to commend Paul to the apostles in chapter 9:27.

在 4:36-37 中表达了巴拿巴的好是在于他对教会的慷慨。他更为其他人出头，在 9:27 向使徒推荐保罗。

But here we find something even more beautiful because Barnabas would soon yield his preeminence to Paul.

但在这里，我们发现更美丽的东西，因为巴拿巴将很快把他的辉煌让给保罗。

Barnabas was older, more respected, and in many ways more experienced than Paul.

巴拿巴是年纪更大，更受人尊敬，在很多方面比保罗更有经验。

But when he asked Paul to help in Antioch in v. 25, and when they later commenced a missionary journey together in chapter 13, Paul began to play a greater role than Barnabas.

但是，当他在第 25 节要求保罗到安提阿时，和他们后来在第 13 章一起开始一个传教之旅时，保罗开始扮演比巴拿巴更大的角色。

It begins with “Barnabas and Saul,” but it soon became “Paul and Barnabas,” and it stayed that way to the end.

开始时是「巴拿巴和扫罗」，但它很快变成了「保罗和巴拿巴」，并且一直这样直到最后。

Barnabas to Paul was like John the Baptist to Christ — “he must become greater; I must become less”.

巴拿巴对保罗就像施洗约翰与基督…「他必兴旺；我必衰微」。

It wasn't because Barnabas has had his turn and now he is looking towards retirement. What I see is strategy and humility.

这不是因为巴拿巴曾风光过，现在他正期待着退休。我看到的是策略和谦逊。

In Acts 9 we read of the miraculous conversion of Paul. God then says this about Paul in v15: ***This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings...***

在《使徒行传》第 9 章中，我们读到了保罗神奇的归信。上帝然后在 15 节说了关于保罗：他是我所拣选的器皿，要在外邦人、君王和以色列人面前宣扬我的名…

At the end of chapter 9 Barnabas is the one who takes Paul to the apostles so he can tell them all about what God has done for him, and what he has been doing for God.

在第九章的结尾，巴拿巴带保罗去见使徒，这样他就可以告诉他们上帝为他做了什么，以及他为神所做的一切。

Barnabas must have known of Paul's calling to be apostle to the Gentiles.

巴拿巴一定知道保罗是被呼召去作外邦人的使徒。

Here is Barnabas now - some 7-8 years later - with all these Gentile conversions at Antioch, and he must have thought of Paul.

巴拿巴在这里…大约在 7-8 年后…在安提阿看见所有这些归信主的外邦人，他一定想到了保罗。

This is Paul's domain. This is what Paul has been commissioned to do.

这是保罗的领域。这就是保罗所受命要做的。

It would appear that Barnabas puts his ego to one side and allows Paul to rise over him...all for the sake of the WORD OF GOD INCREASING AND SPREADING.

看来巴拿巴把他的自我放在一边，让保罗站得比他更高…这一切都是为了上帝的话可兴旺和广传。

It is a glimpse of real partnership, and sacrificial leadership.

这是真正的伙伴关系的一瞥，也是无私愿意牺牲的领导的作为。

When Paul traveled with Barnabas to heathen Antioch, they were a dynamic duo!
当保罗与巴拿巴旅行到异教徒的安提阿，他们是一个充满活力的二人组合！

They complemented one another beautifully, thanks to the expert orchestration of the Spirit of God.

由于神的圣灵的专业编排，他们彼此互补得天衣无缝非常漂亮。

Barnabas was sensitive, empathetic, gracious. Paul had a brilliantly honed, razor-sharp lawyer's intellect.

巴拿巴是敏感，同情，亲切。保罗有一个聪明、锐利的律师的智慧。

Together, with the Spirit's power working through them, they were unconquerable.
一起，借着圣灵的力量通过他们工作，他们是无可匹敌。

Character is more important than gifting or experience. Our society values power, the church values humility.

品格比恩赐或经历更重要。我们的社会重视权力，教会重视谦卑。

The advance of God's kingdom will continue to be severely compromised if the church attempts to weird institutional, positional power, rather than taking a posture of humble service of all people.

如果教会试图以制度或位置的权力，而不是采取谦卑地为所有人服务的姿态，神的国度的进步将继续受到严重破坏。

Our core value of humble authenticity must define our character at St Paul's - from senior leadership down.

我们真诚谦卑的核心价值必须定义我们在圣保罗堂的品格...从主要领导开始往下。

Fourthly, our mother church's commitment to radical generosity.

第四，我们的母教会致力于非凡的慷慨。

Take a look at v.27: *During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world.*

看看第 27 节：*当那些日子，有几位先知从耶路撒冷下到安提阿。内中有一位，名叫亚迦布，站起来，借着圣灵指示普天下将有大饥荒；*

(This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

这事在克劳第年间果然实现了。于是门徒决定，照各人的力量捐钱，送去供给住在犹太的弟兄。他们就这样做了，托巴拿巴和扫罗的手送到众长老那里。

There was a need and they decided to help. They gave to the need *each according to his ability*. Generosity is a plain biblical principle.

当时有需要，他们决定帮忙。他们根据 **照各人的力量捐钱** 去供应那些有需要的。慷慨是圣经中一个简单明了的原则。

A life of generosity is so basic to the Christian life because God's generosity to us in Jesus is central to Christianity.

慷慨的生命是基督徒生命的基本，因为上帝在耶稣里对我们慷慨是基督教的核心。

2 Corinthians 8 put it like this: *you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*

哥林多后书 8 章说: **你们知道我们主耶稣基督的恩典: 他本是富足, 却为你们成了贫穷, 好使你们因他的贫穷而成为富足。**

Jesus took our sin and gave us his righteousness. From the very beginning of the church in Acts 2 we see a life of radical generosity is an instinctive response to the grace of the Lord Jesus.

耶稣拿走了我们的罪，并给了我们他的公义。从教会在《使徒行传》第 2 章的开头，我们看到非凡的慷慨生命是对主耶稣恩典的本能反应。

We need to see the opportunity that God has given us in the wealthy West to meet needs and demonstrate the character of our generous God.

我们需要看到上帝在富裕的西方给我们的机会，以满足需求，并展示我们慷慨的神的品格。

Even as we face economic uncertainty in the future as a society, and as a church, we get to show our world that we don't live for it by living lives of radical generosity.

即使我们作为一个社会，作为一个教会，正面临着未来经济的不确定性，我们可以通过积极慷慨的生命来向世界表明，我们不是为它而活。。

One of the most wonderful and heart warming and almost throw away statements in this passage serves as an overarching statement that describes our mother-church.

这段经文中最美妙和窝心，但几乎错过了的声明，是一个形容我们的母教会的总体声明。

It is found at the end of v26: *the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*

它在 26 节的末尾被发现: **门徒称为「基督徒」是从安提阿开始的。**

In the first century Antioch was a melting pot for at least five different cultures. People came from as far away as China to live in the Las Vegas of the Roman empire.

在第一个世纪，安提阿是至少有五种不同文化的大熔炉。人们从遥远至中国的地方来到罗马帝国的拉斯韦加斯去生活。

It was known for its chariot races and its deliberate pursuit of pleasure. Antioch was most famous for its worship of Daphne.

在那里有著名的战车比赛和刻意追求快乐。安提阿是以崇拜达芙妮女神而著名。

Apollo's famous pursuit of Daphne was re-enacted each night by the men of the city pursuing the temple prostitutes.

著名的阿波罗追求达芙妮女神的故事，每晚都被城里人在他们追求庙妓时重新再现。

Throughout the world, *the morals of Daphne* was a euphemism for depravity. A depravity that had its centre at Antioch. A city of sensuality and depravity.

在全世界，「达芙妮的道德」是堕落委婉的说法。一种以安提阿作为中心的堕落。一个淫荡和堕落的城市。

The church at Antioch was like a flower growing in a putrid bog. A patch of lush grass in a desert.

安提阿的教会就像一朵生长在沼泽中的花。沙漠中的一片郁郁葱葱的草地。

A gospel vitality now burned in the sensual, depraved, materialistic spiritual darkness of Antioch.

福音的活力现在在安提阿的淫荡、堕落、唯物主义的属灵黑暗中燃烧。

This was so foreign to this **bleak environment** that it would alter the vocabulary of the city – and of the entire world.

对于这个**凄凉的环境**来说，这太异样以致改变了这个城市…和整个世界的词汇。

When God's people live for Christ in such **depth and power** that those around them have to strive for a new term to describe what they see – **that is truly awesome!**

当神的百姓在如此的**深度和力量**中为基督而活时，他们周围的人必须争取一个新的术语来描述他们所看到的…**这真是令人敬畏!**

Perhaps there was a *jesting* and *mocking* edge to the nickname, perhaps even a bit of *rage*, because these people were such a contradiction to the ethos of Antioch.

也许这是一个带有**开玩笑和嘲弄**的意思的绰号，甚至有点**愤怒**，因为这些人**与安提阿**的精神是如此矛盾。

The new term – part Greek and part Latin – was a **mongrel name**, but it said it all: *CHRISTIAN* – followers of Christ! Christ was so much on these believers' lips, they lived so like Christ that no other name would do.

这新术语…是希腊文和拉丁语的混合…是一个**杂种名称**，但它却说出了一切：**基督-人**…基督的追随者！这些信徒的嘴唇上是如此不断的讲论基督，他们活得如此像基督，没有其他名字会更合适。

Alexander the Great once learned that in his army was another Alexander who was a notorious coward. Alexander, who conquered the world as a 23year old, called the soldier before him and said, *Is your name Alexander, and are you named after me?*

亚历山大大帝曾经知道在他的军队中有另一个亚历山大是一名臭名昭著的懦夫。亚历山大在 23 岁时已征服了世界，他叫那士兵到他面前说：「你的名字是亚历山大吗，你是以我的名字命名吗？」

The trembling coward said, *Yes sir. My name is Alexander and I was named after you.* The great general said, *Then either be brave or change your name!*

颤抖着的懦夫回答说：「是的，先生。我叫亚历山大，是以你的名字命名的。」伟大的将军说：「那要么勇敢起来，要么把名字改了！」

Soon it will be 119 years since St Paul's began in this mission field as a young, newly founded, **north shore Antioch.**

不久，将是圣保罗堂在这地区的福音事工，作为一个年轻的，新成立的，北岸安提阿，开始以来的一百一十九年。

As we launch into the future my deep commitment is for us to emulate our mother-church's vision and passion and commitment to display the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ as we hold out the Christian gospel through lives captivated by Jesus.

当我们向未来出发时，我深深的致力于我们仿效母教会的远见、激情和致力去展示主耶稣基督的荣耀，在通过我们被耶稣迷住了的生活，持守着耶稣基督的福音。

Imagine if there was a Christ centred spiritual dynamic operating amongst us that it caused our community to reach for a new word to describe us!

试想一下，如果有一个以基督为中心的灵性动态在我们中间运作，以致使我们的小区需要找一个新的词来形容我们！

POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD 改变世界的力量

Let's get realistic for a minute. Right now many churches and Christians are feeling quite powerless.

让我们现实一点。现在有许多教会和基督徒都感到很无力。

Many Christians are struggling to see any change in themselves...struggling with even the disciple to read the bible, get to church, or even deal with an habitual sin.

许多基督徒都在挣扎着去看到自己的任何变化...甚至挣扎于读圣经，去教堂，或处理一些惯性的罪。

How on earth will the church ever change the world when we are losing ground on so many fronts.

当我们在很多方面失去优势时，教会究竟如何改变世界。

This is where Acts 12 is helpful for us. It's not Antioch but it is the same world, and under the same empire.

这就是《使徒行传》第 12 章对我们有帮助的地方。那不是安提阿，但是同一个世界，在同一帝国下。

the church had already faced a number of setbacks and chapter 12 is another one.
教会已经面临了一些挫折，第 12 章是另一个。

James, one of the closest disciples of Jesus, and the leader of the church in Jerusalem, has been executed.

雅各布是耶稣最亲密的门徒之一，也是耶路撒冷教会的领袖。

The apostle Peter is imprisoned and awaiting execution. In v.5 we read the church was earnestly praying for Peter.

使徒彼得被监禁并等待处决。在第五节中，我们读到教会在为彼得祈祷。

This chapter is a contrast between Herod's political authority and God's sovereign control over all things.

本章是希律的政治权威和上帝对一切事物的主宰之间的对比。

James was powerless, Peter is powerless, the church felt powerless, but Herod felt powerful.
雅各布无能为力，彼得无能为力，教会感到无力，但希律感到强大。

The end of it is Peter is miraculously released from prison, but Herod is struck down dead.
最终是彼得奇迹般地被获救出监，但希律被击落死亡。

The angel came to Peter, struck him, and led him out. The angel came to Herod, struck him, and he died.

天使来到彼得，拍他，并带领他出去。主的使者临到希律，击打他，他死了。

Luke does not paint an idealistic picture of the church. He shows us their prayer was effective but it was imperfect.

路加没有把教会描绘为理想的画面。他向我们展示了他们的祈祷是有效的，但并不完美。

Peter is miraculously released from prison on the back of the church's prayers, and the church is surprised when he is released! Apparently, God has mercifully answered unbelieving prayer! God is not bound by our imperfections.

彼得在教会的祈祷后，奇迹般地从监狱里获救，教会却为他被释放而感到惊讶！显然，上帝仁慈地回答了没信心的祷告！上帝不受我们的不完美所束缚。

Chapter 12 ends with Peter released, Herod dead, and the wonderful last verse: *the word of God continued to spread and flourish.*

12 章以彼得被释放、希律的死和精彩的最后一节来结束：上帝的道日见兴旺，越发广传。

As we look to the future, I suspect some of us need to be reacquainted with our position and power in the Lord Jesus.

当我们展望未来时，我猜想我们当中可能有一些人需要重新认识我们在主耶稣中的地位和力量。

Maybe some once dear realities have faded. Maybe the false values and dreams of our society have caused us to ease our grasp of spiritual realities and the hope and passion and commitment we once had.

也许一些曾经亲爱的现实已经消退了。也许我们社会的虚假价值和梦想使我们放松了对属灵现实、希望、激情和承诺的把握。

We need to go back and rediscover our starting point in Jesus and realign our lives as CHRISTIANS - followers of Christ!

我们需要回去重新发现我们在耶稣里的起点，重新调整我们作为基督徒的生命…基督的追随者！