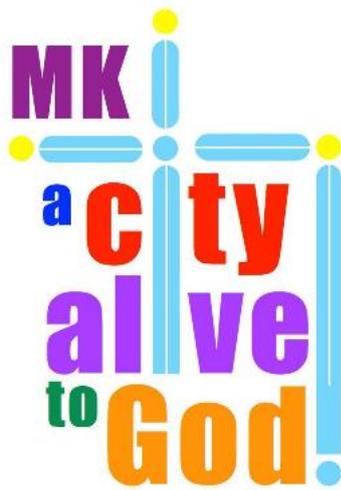




*Mission Partnership Newsletter*  
*November 2018 - issue 2*

Dear Friends,

“I am Ashurbanipal” arrives as an exhibition at the British Museum this winter. I, for one, can’t wait to go and see it. Why? Well, Ashurbanipal was the most powerful man on the planet in his day. He governed the vast and ancient empire of Assyria (centred in what is now northern Iraq) for nearly forty years through a combination of a ruthless war machine and organisational genius. In his spare time, he built up the very first systematically collected and catalogued library in the world, with the intention of having a copy of every book worth



having. This enormous library of hundreds and thousands of clay tablets remained hidden for 2000 years underneath Ashurbanipal’s “palace without a rival” after the destruction of his capital city, Nineveh, in a civil war. It gives us an extraordinary access to the life of the Assyrian empire. But what really sparks my own interest is that the Assyrian empire was one of the major powers in the region around ancient Israel and features prominently in the Old Testament. The Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and laid siege to Jerusalem itself: the books of Hosea, Micah, Nahum and the early chapters of Isaiah are all dealing with the problem and threat of Assyria. The little story of Jonah describes Jonah’s reluctant response to God’s call to go and speak to the people of

Nineveh, the great Assyrian capital and demand their repentance. Not an easy gig!

In many ways, Nineveh was a cutting edge city not unlike Milton Keynes, and I’ve started to wonder what a modern day Jonah might try and do to make God known in our own cutting edge city.... Calls to repentance might not go down a storm, but what would be effective? Why not come to our Assembly and explore the possibilities?

Every Blessing,  
John

***Jonah Goes to Town!***  
***Mission Partnership Assembly***  
***7.30pm, Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November***  
***Holy Cross, Two Mile Ash***