

*These Bible reflections may be used singly or together. They could form the activity for a Branch meeting or be used in a wider context, particularly where future direction is being considered. If time allows, give everyone the opportunity to reflect silently for a while on the passage and then share what has stood out for them. Use these as a springboard to discuss the questions and thoughts below.*

## **Journeying with God**

<sup>17</sup>When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, 'If the people face war, they may change their minds and return to Egypt'. <sup>18</sup>So God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness towards the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt prepared for battle. .... <sup>20</sup>They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. <sup>21</sup>The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. <sup>22</sup>Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. Exodus 13: 17–18, 20–22

To consider:

Reflect on what God may be highlighting to us through this passage as we seek the way ahead for Mothers' Union in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The closer we stay to Christ the easier it is to see where he is leading. Consider how as members we all stay close to Christ so we can move forward together.

Share together any times when you have particularly experienced God's leading; or situations you're currently facing where you need God's guidance.

**We step into the future with Christ as our guide.**

**Where he leads we will follow; where he pauses we will wait; united together as pilgrims of God. Amen.**

## **Journeying Together**

<sup>1</sup>Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. <sup>2</sup>While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'. <sup>3</sup>Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. .... <sup>36</sup>After some days Paul said to Barnabas, 'Come, let us return and visit the believers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing'. <sup>37</sup>Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. <sup>38</sup>But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. <sup>39</sup>The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. <sup>40</sup>But Paul chose Silas and set out, the believers commending him to the grace of the Lord. <sup>41</sup>He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Acts 13: 1–3; 15: 36–41

To consider:

You may have experienced times when a course of action began well but then got into difficulties? Reflect on the passage and share together any encouragements we can take from it.

Consider how we may get the right balance between caring for our fellow members and reaching out to families and communities?

How do we deal with conflict and differing views amongst those with whom we work to ensure we remain friends and companions on the journey?

**Lord, be with us in all we do as we journey together along your path.**

**Unite us as one in vision and purpose to serve your world and glorify Christ. Amen.**