

## SESSION 3

# Making room ... for what really matters

Luke 10.38-42 tells the story of Jesus' visit to the home of Mary and Martha. Mary sits and listens to Jesus while Martha gets on with the housework and preparing a meal. Eventually, annoyed that her sister isn't helping her, Martha comes and says to Jesus, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself. Tell her then to help me.' Jesus replies, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.' Jesus praises Mary for making room for what really matters.

It's a well-known story and not that simple to understand. Who would get anything to eat if Martha didn't get on and prepare something? If Mary had helped her, surely the food would have been ready quicker and they could both then have benefited from listening to Jesus? But the words of Jesus to Martha are a good pointer to the importance to us of making room for the things that really matter, while for many of us much of our life is full of what might be seen as 'clutter'.

It is Luke who reminds us of Jesus' teaching to his disciples that they should not *worry about life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you*

*will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.... Strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.* (Luke 12.22, 31.) Earlier in the same chapter in Luke's gospel there is one of Jesus' stories, with a very unhappy ending. It is the story of the man who had a good harvest and had to think what he would do with all these extra crops. So he decided to knock down his barns and build bigger ones, so he could keep the harvest for himself. (Luke 12.16-21). And Jesus is clearly saying that this was a man who was making room for the wrong things.

### Moving home

My wife, Liz, and I recently moved from the home we had lived in for over 27 years. It was the home in which our three children had grown up and reached adulthood. And now that its five occupants were reduced to two (plus cat), we were downsizing and moving into a smaller house. But what a difficult process it was. Clearly there wouldn't be room for us to take everything with us so we had to decide which things really mattered (and which would fit). There were some things we used every day and obviously needed to keep. But we also had boxes we hadn't actually