



**A chance to watch films together.  
An opportunity to discuss the issues raised.  
A time of friendship, food and fun.**

<b>4th Sep</b>	<b>Lemon Tree</b>
<b>2nd Oct</b>	<b>Freedom Writers</b>
<b>6th Nov</b>	<b>Sophie Scholl</b>
<b>4th Dec</b>	<b>Nativity!</b>
<b>8th Jan</b>	<b><u>The Adjustment Bureau</u></b>
<b>4th Feb</b>	<b>Grace is Gone</b>

**Films start at 5:30pm  
Followed by food, coffee and conversation**

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## Some thoughts on watching films

Stories are the stuff of life. They allow us to reflect on all sorts of issues at a safe distance as we engage with the characters, cry with them, laugh with them, get cross with them and generally share their experience. How they deal with the issues they come across may frustrate us, or give us new insights; cause us to laugh or cry; result in us hurling abuse at the screen or willing there to be a happy ending. And through it all we can encounter God in all sorts of unexpected places if only we take time to look.

### **Questions to ask yourself**

- ▶ What did you think of the film? What do you like most? Least?
- ▶ Which incidents made you think or feel most strongly? How well did you think the film treated those incidents?
- ▶ What issues did the film raise for you?
- ▶ What character(s) do you most identify with and why?
- ▶ Does the film have any echoes of Christian beliefs or stories from the Bible? Does it support or challenge Christian values?

### **Some facts about the film**

- ▶ The phone number in the film is owned by Universal Studios and has appeared in other films distributed by the company. If called, it will ring indefinitely.
- ▶ One of the production companies for this film is Electric Shepherd Productions, so named for the novel "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep" by Philip K. Dick, who also wrote the short story, "The Adjustment Team", on which this film is based.
- ▶ If you Google "Elise" you actually get 91,500,000 hits.
- ▶ Some of Emily Blunt's dancing scenes were completed using a body double, dancer Acacia Schachte of the Cedar Lake Company, with the actress' face being digitally placed on the dancer's body.
- ▶ The names of the three main members of the Adjustment Bureau are Thompson, Richardson, and Harry: a play on the term Tom, Dick, and Harry, which is slang for any anonymous persons.<sup>2012</sup>.
- ▶ In early drafts, the character Norris was changed from a real estate salesman, as in the short story, to an up-and-coming politician.
- ▶ The final scene (on the rooftop) was filmed four months after the rest of the film had completed shooting and has a different ending than the original.

## Memorable Quotes

- David All I have are the choices I make, and I choose her, come what may.
- Mitchell Being earlier is just as bad as being late.
- Mitchell You're going to look for her, aren't you? You won't find her. They'll make sure of it. Even if they weren't trying to stop you, there are nine million people in this city. You'll never find her. Forget about her. Move on with your life.
- Richardson Very few humans have seen what you've seen today. And we're determined to keep it that way. So, if you ever reveal our existence, we'll erase your brain. The intervention team will be sent, your emotions, your memories, your entire personality, will be expunged. Your friends and family will think you've gone crazy. You, well, you won't think anything...
- David I don't care what you put in my way, I'm not giving up!
- David Whatever happened to Free Will?
- Thompson We actually tried Free Will before. After taking you from hunting and gathering to the height of the Roman Empire we stepped back to see how you'd do on your own. You gave us the Dark Ages for five centuries until finally we decided we should come back in. The Chairman thought maybe we just needed to do a better job of teaching you how to ride a bike before taking the training wheels off again. So we gave you the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Scientific Revolution. For six hundred years we taught you to control your impulses with reason, then in 1910 we stepped back. Within fifty years, you'd brought us World War I, the Depression, Fascism, the Holocaust and capped it off by bringing the entire planet to the brink of destruction in the Cuban Missile Crisis. At that point a decision was taken to step back in again before you did something that even we couldn't fix. You don't have free will, David. You have the appearance of free will.
- David I can go through this door alone. You'll never see me or the people chasing us again. Or you can come with me, and I don't know what's on the other side, but you'd be next to me and that's all I've wanted since the minute I met you.
- Mitchell Most people live life on the path we set for them, too afraid to explore any other. But once in a while people like you come along who knock down all the obstacles we put in your way. People who realise freewill is a gift that you'll never know how to use until you fight for it. I think that's the chairman's real plan. And maybe, one day, we won't write the plan. You will.

# The Adjustment Bureau

*The Adjustment Bureau* was made in 2011 and stars Matt Damon as an ambitious politician on the brink of winning a seat in the US Senate. In the process, he meets a beautiful contemporary ballet dancer, Elise Sellas (played by Emily Blunt), and begins to fall in love. However, at that point, mysterious men appear who conspire to keep them apart. It turns out that, according to “the plan”, David and Elise are not meant to get together and the mysterious men in hats - the men of The Adjustment Bureau - are there to make sure everything sticks to that plan. In the face of overwhelming odds, David must either let her go and accept his predetermined path or risk everything to defy Fate and be with Elise.

Do we control our destiny, or do unseen forces manipulate us?

## **Little white lies**

The truth is an occasional victim throughout the story (it is not only Paul who embellishes things). We all know how easy it is to bend the truth a little, to elaborate things so as to put them in a better light, or not give an honest answer so as to avoid hurt or conflict. And the results can make things even more difficult. It can result in us having to spin an ever-increasing complex web of half-truths, or end up with our opinion never being trusted, even on those occasions when we may be telling the truth. So why do we keep doing it?

## **There is nothing like experience**

Mr Poppy is very keen that the children have experience of the things they will be asked to portray in the play. As he says: “you can’t pretend something unless you’ve experienced it.” That message, of course, is at the heart of the Christmas story as God comes to earth to experience what it is like to be human. But what extra element do you think experience brings? Many actors do portray things they haven’t experienced. Is it possible to fake experience?

## **Having faith in people**

Mr Poppy has no prior teaching experience but he does have a natural flair with the children, something that comes from ultimately believing in them and having faith in their abilities, a gift that Mr Maddens has lost. We all thrive so much better when we are encouraged but all too often we lack confidence both in others and ourselves, so much so that we (as individuals or as a community) don’t even try to aim for things that, together, are within our grasp. What can you do to encourage and affirm those around you?

## **Retelling the story**

Thousands of children around the country will be involved in Christmas plays in the coming weeks. Some of them will be very traditional nativity plays. Some will not. Sadly, some of them will only vaguely refer to the true meaning of Christmas, if at all. What should we be doing to enable the story of Christmas to be told in ways that people can connect with, without losing the message that lies at the heart of the Christmas story?

## **Love came down**

In the end, love really does come down and transform those involved in the story. A new found confidence takes root, people can once more feel good about themselves, previous hurts are forgiven, relationships are restored and Christmas wishes come true. As we approach Christmas for another year, what do you hope for? And how can the love which is at the heart of the nativity story transform your life and that of our community this Christmas?