

Creative Lent 2023

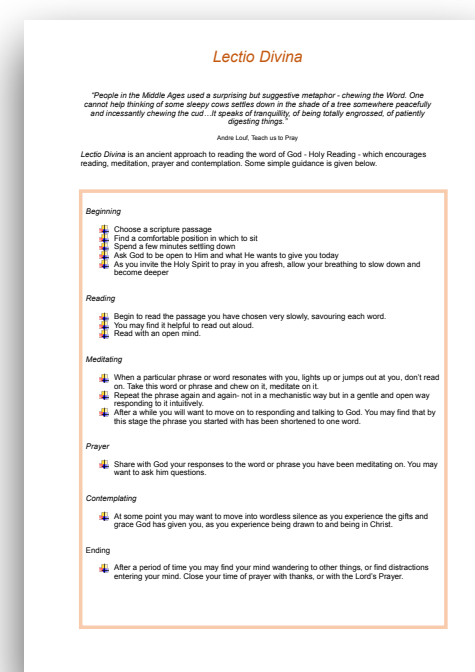
A Creative Journey through Lent



February 22nd : Praying with the Word

Lectio Divina is an ancient approach to reading the word of God - Holy Reading - which encourages reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. Some simple guidance is given to the right and a link to a PDF that can be downloaded can be found by clicking on the image below.

Over Lent you might like to choose a scripture passage each day to read and pray with this way.



People in the Middle Ages used a surprising but suggestive metaphor - chewing the Word. One cannot help thinking of some sleepy cows settled down in the shade of a tree somewhere peacefully and incessantly chewing the cud...It speaks of tranquillity, of being totally engrossed, of patiently digesting things.

Andre Louf, Teach us to Pray

Beginning

- Choose a scripture passage
- Find a comfortable position in which to sit
- Spend a few minutes settling down
- Ask God to be open to Him and what He wants to give you today
- As you invite the Holy Spirit to pray in you afresh, allow your breathing to slow down and become deeper

Reading

- Begin to read the passage you have chosen very slowly, savouring each word.
- You may find it helpful to read out aloud.
- Read with an open mind.

Meditating

- When a particular phrase or word resonates with you, lights up or jumps out at you, don't read on. Take this word or phrase and chew on it, meditate on it.
- Repeat the phrase again and again- not in a mechanistic way but in a gentle and open way responding to it intuitively.
- After a while you will want to move on to responding and talking to God. You may find that by this stage the phrase you started with has been shortened to one word.

Prayer

- Share with God your responses to the word or phrase you have been meditating on. You may want to ask him questions.

Contemplating

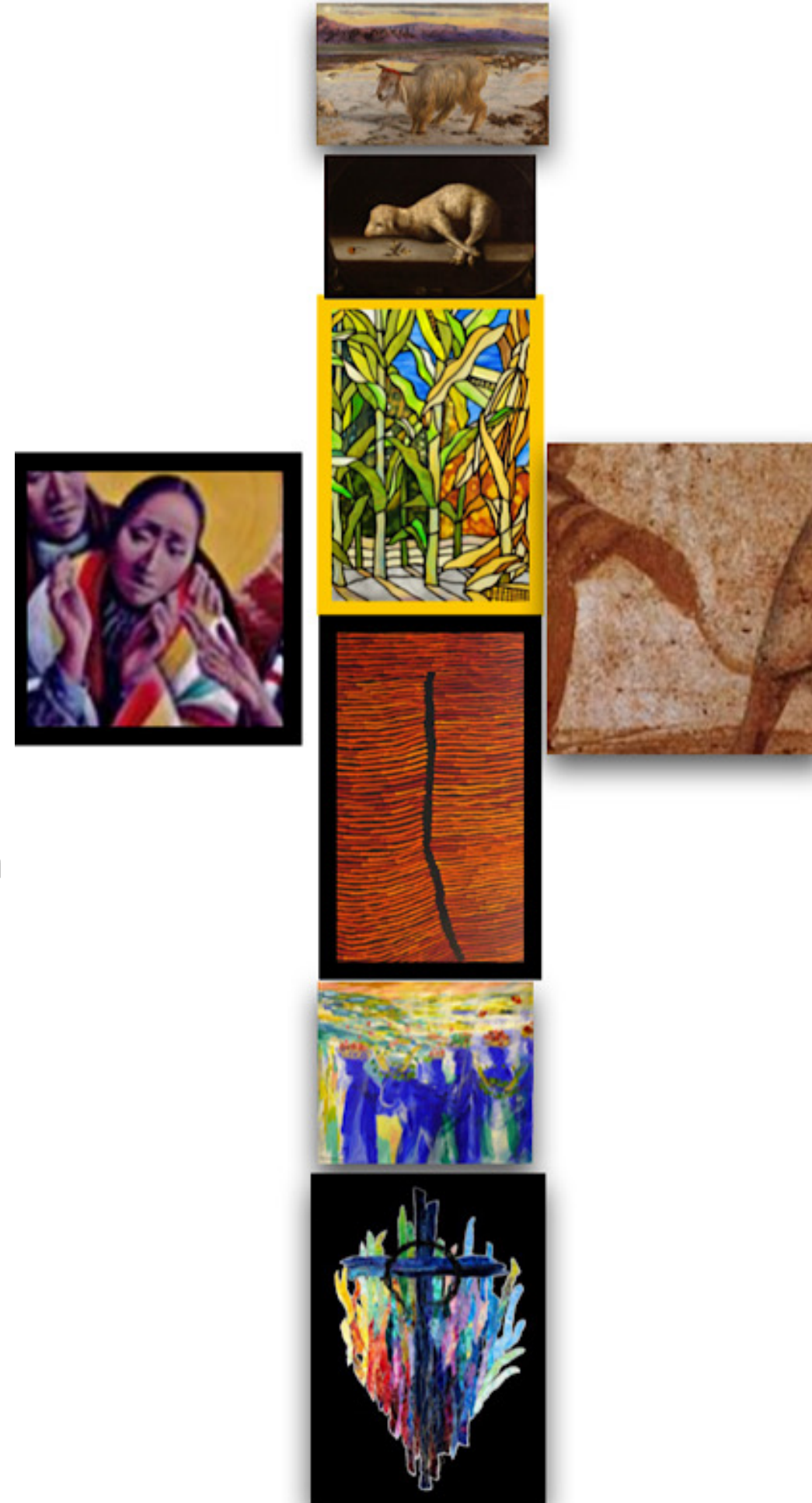
- At some point you may want to move into wordless silence as you experience the gifts and grace God has given you, as you experience being drawn to and being in Christ.

Ending

- After a period of time you may find your mind wandering to other things, or find distractions entering your mind. Close your time of prayer with thanks, or with the Lord's Prayer.

February 23rd: Praying with Images

- While the bible is written with words it contains many detailed descriptions that we see as pictures.
- In the same way we can look at images and be led to the word of God and to a deeper understanding of his presence and call in our lives.
- Images are also ways of helping us take the teaching of God deep into our being and when we see that image again we are reminded of what God has shown us.
- You might like to chose an image to pray with today.
- You might like this link to 2 hours of instrumental hymns played on guitar.
- You might like to gather an image each day over Lent to pray with. You can purchase 40 images by Karen Herrick to pray with over Lent here.



Praying with Images

Chris Cook and Brenda Clift Heales in *Seeding the Spirit: the Applesseed workbook* developed a process of 'lectio divina' for use with images. This was adapted by Neil Thorogood the Principal of Westminster Theological College below.

Response to a Picture (Allow yourself 20 minutes in total)

First 5 minutes

- ✚ Position the picture so you can see it easily.
- ✚ Position yourself so that you are comfortable but mindful.
- ✚ Satisfy yourself with the name of the painter, picture title, date, etc. if you can.
- ✚ Identify what is in the picture if you can and need to.

Next 5 minutes (LOOKING AT THE PICTURE)

- ✚ Write, without censoring your words or worrying about spelling and grammar, responses to your picture. Let words and phrases come. Write lines or lists, whatever is comfortable
- ✚ It may help to respond to:
 - Colours
 - Shapes
 - Lines and marks
 - Patterns
 - Objects (if any)
 - People (if any)
 - Tones (darks and lights)
 - Mood and atmosphere

Next 5 minutes (LOOKING WITHIN)

- ✚ How do you feel about this picture?
- ✚ What thoughts is it bringing to your mind?
- ✚ What associations does the picture have for you?
- ✚ How does it connect to your life in the past?
- ✚ How does it connect to your life now?
- ✚ Why did you choose it (or why did it choose you)?

Last 5 minutes (LOOKING AROUND)



- ✚ Which biblical passages resonate with or challenge your reflections so far?
- ✚ Which aspects of the realm of God does your picture open up?
- ✚ Which aspects of the Church's mission does your picture open up?
- ✚ Which aspects of your ministry (ordained or lay) does your picture open up?

Write something (a word, phrase, short sentence) to round off the activity – something important that time with this picture has given you

February 24th: Walking with God

- The Israelites walked from place to place as God led them.
- This creative prayer encourages us to walk with God and to record the stages of the journey.
- By clicking on the right you can access a PDF of different ways of walking with God.
- For those of you for whom physical walking is not easy there are ideas for virtual prayer walking.
- You might even like to take a 70 day virtual walk from Lands End to John of Groats with Mark Moxon who has recorded the different stages of his journey. As you do you could pray for the different parts of the UK he walks through.



 Walking with God 

Walking as praise
There is so much to give thanks for in the world God has created. Things we can see. Things we can smell and touch. Sounds we can hear. Sensations we can feel. The quietness of just being with God in the moment appreciating him Father, Son and Spirit in the beauty of his creation.
O Lord our God, how majestic is your name on all the earth. Psalm 8

Walking as blessing
As we walk we can pray God's blessing into the area we are walking in, and in to the lives of the people we meet. We can ask God to bring light out of darkness; joy out of sorrow. We may wish to pray through the beatitudes as we do so.
May the Lord bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth. Amen. Psalm 134.

Walking in humility
As you walk, spend some time looking at God, who He is and all He has done for you. Also spend some time considering how the God who loves and created you sees you- unique, loved and made in his image.
Lord God, we ask for your grace. Help us to submit to you alone. Help us to draw near to you alone. Cleanse our hands and purify our hearts. May we mourn. May we be humble before you our God and Saviour.

Walking in awareness of our sin and of God's forgiveness
As you walk spend some time reflecting on how you have fallen short of the glory of God. The things you have done against the will of God. The things you have left undone. Confess these things to God. As you walk you may like to recite the Jesus prayer: *Jesus Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on me a sinner.*
As you end this prayer walk, become fully aware of God's forgiveness. Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Common Worship

Walking as intercession
We can use the time walking to pray for others. Our friends our family. Our work colleagues. Others we are in contact with. Those we have committed to pray for, for example link missionaries. We might find it helpful to pick up some small stones or leaves as we walk placing them in a pocket, and one by one use them to symbolise someone we are praying for. We can be open to how God may be asking us to be involved. As we complete our time of prayer we can symbolic throw the stone or leaf into the grass or a stream as we leave them in God's hands. God who loves them more than we could possibly love them.
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen. Galatians 6:18

Walking as identification
As you walk imagine yourself in someone else's shoes- maybe someone you know personally, or someone suffering as a result of war, need or natural disaster. Ask God to show you the areas you need to pray into, and talk to God about these areas. Ask for his healing, restoration and hope in dark places.
Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Walking and listening to God
As you walk in silence, seek God and ask him to speak to you. Ask Him to open the eyes of your heart. Ask Him to open the ears of your spirit. Be open to His voice as you walk.
Speak God, I am your servant, ready to listen. 1 Samuel 3:10

Virtual prayer walking
If physically walking is a challenge, you can always take a virtual prayer walk. Get a map of the town or area in which you live 'walk' as you pray. You could also use a photo gallery on your phone or computerto take you to different places as you walk.

Based on a source whose authorship is unknown June 2020.

February 25th: Layers of Life

➤ This video is just beautiful. Just watching it becomes worship as we are drawn close to God and see the refining work he has done in our lives. The layers and textures, the beauty, the joy and the sorrows... and as we look back at his faithfulness we can trust for tomorrow. This very much reminds us of the story of God's people in the first five books of the bible - the Torah. By looking back at God's faithfulness the Israelites could trust God for the future. **Click on the image on the right to watch the video on YouTube.**



➤ You might like to create your own layered image of your life or the life of your church or family , and the faithfulness of God.

- You might like to try Gelli Printing. A YouTube clip introducing it can be found [here](#). Supplies can be bought [here](#).
- You might like to work with paper and make a layered collage.
- You might like to use paint layers, as Kate Austin has done, to the right.



February 26th: Ebenezer – stone of help

- The use of rocks and stones are well embedded in scripture. They are often used as memory stones - to remind people of the words and actions of God.
 - Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far the LORD has helped us.” 1 Samuel 7:12
 - Jacob who put a stone under his head at Bethel and after his dream set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it (Genesis 28).
 - Moses who came down from Sinai with two tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18) and who also placed 12 stone pillars at the foot of mount Sinai representing the twelve tribes of Israel (Exodus 28).
- For this creative prayer look back over your life and pick one particular event where God spoke or acted for you. Remember that event in detail and give thanks. You might like then to represent this memory in a rock painting. There are two approaches to this that can be found by **clicking on the images to the right**. One is painting on a rock, and the other is a watercolour painting of rocks.

- You might like to listen again to Chris Tomlin sing [Come Thy Fount of Every Blessing](#).



February 27th: Praying with Gideon

- Gideon wasn't the most trusting or courageous character and the story of the fleece seems more about the patience and generosity of God than the faith of Gideon.
- You might like to read the passage on Gideon and the fleece in Judges 6:36-40.
 - Take a facecloth or tea towel and place it on the grass or windowsill tonight.
 - As you get up in the morning go and feel the facecloth - how wet is it? How does it compare to the surrounding ground or window sill?
 - Squeeze out the facecloth or tea towel. How much water is there?
 - How much of this is rain water and how much dew?
 - How does what you find compare to the story of Gideon?
 - What does this say to you about God?



February 28th: I have called you by name

Like Rahab the Canaanite, Ruth the Moabite chooses to follow Yahweh, and both their names are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew. In the book of Ruth names are significant

- **Yahweh** is the Hebrew name of God.
- **Bethlehem** means house of bread.
- **Elimelech** means My God is King.
- **Naomi** means pleasant, lovely, delightful.
- **Mara** means bitter.
- Mahlon and Chilion are likely to be old Canaanite names.
 - **Mahlon** is probably rooted in the word to be sick.
 - **Chilion** is probably rooted in a word meaning failing or pining.
 - The meanings of Ruth and Orpah, Moabite names, are less clear.
- Isaiah 43:1 tells us we are called by name.
- Revelation 2:17 says 'To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.'

- What is your name? Who gave it to you? What does it mean to you?
- What name does God call you?
- What does it mean to you for God to call you by that name?

- You might like to make some straw hearts and write on the names of five people you want to pray will choose, like, Ruth, to follow Yahweh. You might like to pray this musical version of **Psalm 16** over them



Click on image above to go to YouTube instructions of how to make these straw hearts.

March 1st: In the hands of the master craftsman

- In this creative prayer we pray with paper cutting.
- A simple YouTube guide to paper cutting can be found [here](#) .
- Written instructions can be found [here](#).
- As you do this, give thanks, that your life that is in the hands of the master craftsman. “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11



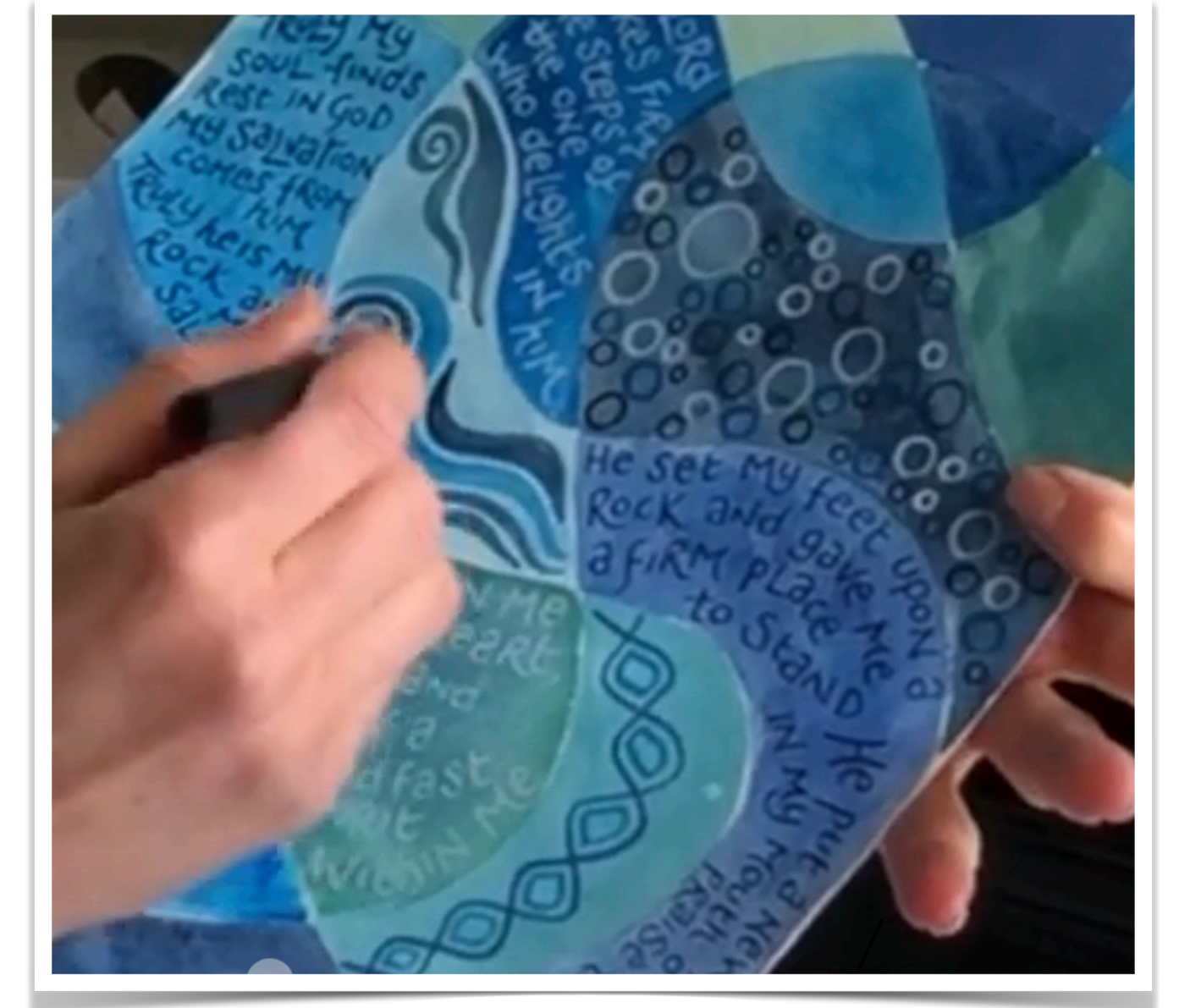
Click on image above to go to YouTube instructions of how to make this paper cross with scissors and paper.

March 2nd: Deep calls to deep

At times our lives can seem like a bit of a patchwork. Some patches are adorned beautifully with rich and bold colours. Other patches are plain and quiet. Some patches speak of joy. Others of pain.

The creative prayer for today is to paint a patchwork. Hannah Dunnet, shows us how to paint a patchwork and to embellish it with words from scripture. You might like to pray with or listen to Psalm 42 [here](#) as you do this.

Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.



Click on image above to go to YouTube to see how to do this.
All you need is paint, paper, a brush and some pens.

March 3rd: Stitch and Pray

- The image by Marilyn Belford of Ruth and Mordecai is quilted. This [YouTube](#) clip teaches you the basics of quilting. This may be something that you might like to use as prayer.
- One way might be to use old material from family clothing, and as you stitch make it a time of intercession for those family members. Old torn children's clothing and bedding is a good source of recycling material.
- Another possible way it to take some time each day to stitch and pray. Sometimes being active with our hands can keep us more focussed on God, particularly if life has been a bit chaotic and busy.



March 4th: The goodness of God

- You might like to get a bowl.
 - In it place items to illustrate the tragedies and traumas of life.
 - Then, write on a piece of card or paper a passage from scripture that helps you place your trust in God.
 - Place this in the bowl as well.
 - As you do know his goodness and that he holds the bigger picture.
- You might like to make your own paper bowl using the instructions [here](#).
 - You might like to do this using newspaper or an old prayer calendar.
 - As you do pray about the different people and situations on the print, committing them all to God.
- You might like to listen to the worship song The Goodness of God [here](#).



March 5th: A sweet perfume

- Smell is a sense that is associated with memories. What does the presence of God smell like to you?
- Your presence releases a fragrance so pleasing —over and over poured out. For your lovely name is “Flowing Oil.” (Song of Songs 1:3)
- In John 12 we read that Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with nard, also known as spikenard. This is a very expensive perfume that comes from the roots of a plant of the Valerian family. It grows in the Himalayan mountains. The smell of nard spreads and lingers. It would have remained on Jesus’ body for some time.
- Today you might like to create something with a smell that will linger. Every time you smell it remember the story of the anointing of Jesus’ feet. You might like to:
 - Gather some flowers and place in a vase.
 - Make a lavender bag.
 - Make some Bessamen. This is a mixture of sugar and spices that Jewish families use to celebrate the end of Sabbath.
- You might like to listen to this beautiful Celtic Blessing: **Now may the fragrance of his peace .**



March 6th: Hymn writing

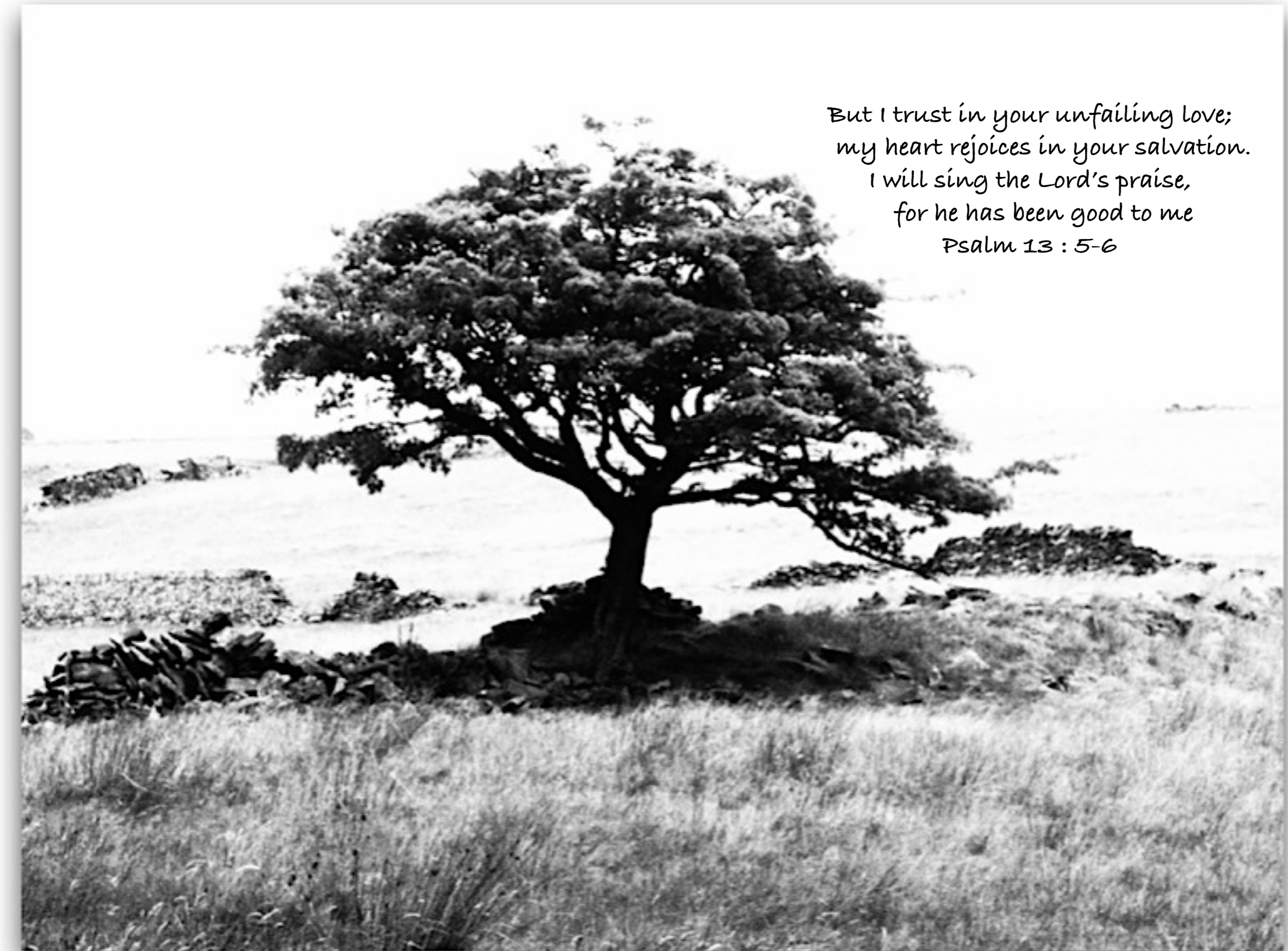
- Charles Jennens wrote the words for Handel's Messiah. The Old Testament book he quoted most was Isaiah.
- You might like to look at and listen to [this electronically generated sound track](#) and video, which shows Handel's autographed manuscript and the Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls. It brings together the story of God as it is told by different people of different generations. You might instead like to watch this modern staged version of [Messiah](#).
- As you do you might like to ponder how the good news of Jesus is told and heard by different generations today.
- You might also like to take a passage of Isaiah and write a worship song or hymn to God. You might like to look at [Ally Barrett's website](#) where she explains the background to some of her hymn writing to help you.



Walking through water and fire by Ally Barrett
Used with permission

March 7th: Creative lament

- Lent is often a time where we lament.
- Jeremiah is often called the weeping prophet. In Jeremiah 13:17 we read
 - But if you will not listen,
 - my soul will weep in secret for your pride;
 - my eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears,
 - because the Lord's flock has been taken captive.
- Psalm 12 is a psalm of communal lament - and is hard to read - as are most prayers of lament.
- We can often find it difficult to come to God in times of pain. We can feel that we cannot be angry with God. It takes a short look at the books of Jeremiah, Psalms, Lamentations, Job and Habakkuk to realise that this is not the case. These are full of laments - prayers and psalms of: complaint and protest; anger and questioning; despair and doubt.
- The psalms of lament begin in the pain and desolation. In all of the psalms, except Psalm 88, a turning point is reached with a realisation of the greatness of God. The prayer ends with declarations of trust and expressions of hope.
- Choose one of the psalms of lament for example psalms 3, 6, 10, 12, 13, 22, 25, 44, 57, 60, 79, 80 or 88.
 - Pray through it aloud - and as you do let it give voice to your pain.
 - Let God comfort you, and let an awareness of who He is fill you.

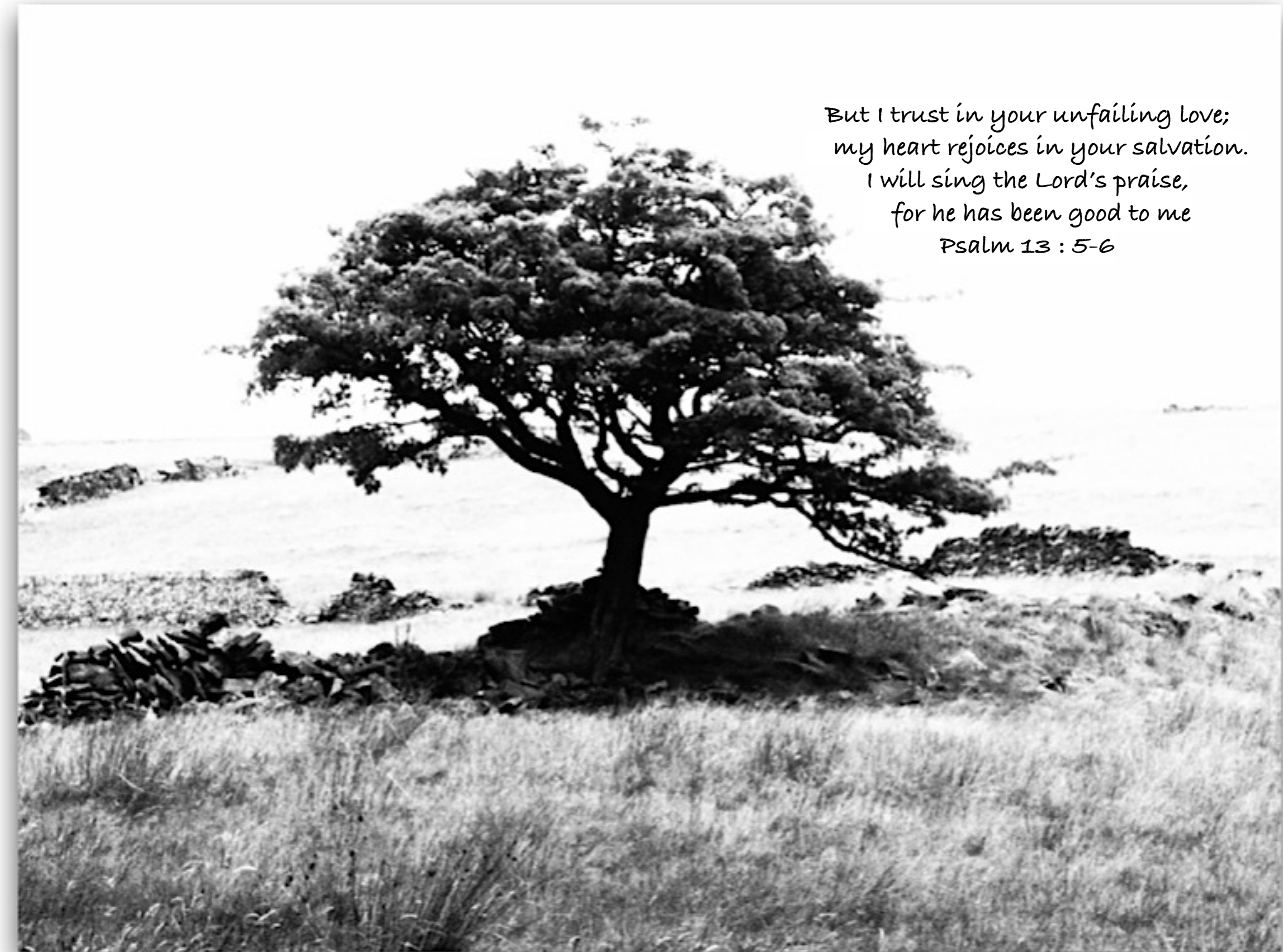


But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me
Psalm 13 : 5-6

Photograph by Sally Wallace Jones
Used with permission

March 8th: My lament

- Prayer is a time to be honest with God. It is not a time to pretend. Psalm 13 is an example of this kind of honesty. It is a Psalm of Lament as the psalmist cries out 'How Long?'
- The psalms of lament begin in pain and desolation. A turning point is reached with a realisation of the greatness of God. The prayer ends with declarations of trust and expressions of hope and praise.
- For this creative prayer you might like to write and pray your own psalm of lament as you
 - take to God your questions, your pain, your doubts, your fears, your disappointment and your confusion.
 - make your declaration of trust.
 - turn to praise.



But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me
Psalm 13 : 5-6

Photograph by Sally Wallace Jones
Used with permission

March 9th: These dry bones shall live

- God often asked Ezekiel to demonstrate his message in street theatre and with illustrations.
- You might like to watch this performance of the story of Ezekiel and the valley of the dry bones performed by Amanda Hays [here](#).
- You might like to look at this video clip of a Godly Play telling of the book of Ezekiel.
- You might like to consider how you might tell the story of Holy Week and Easter in a creative way. You could write a script for this, and even try to perform and record this.



March 10th: Promises

Rainbows are signs of God's promises - the roots of this going back to the story of Noah in Genesis. For many, rainbows are also a sign of hope.

As you think and pray about the hope we have in God you might like to:

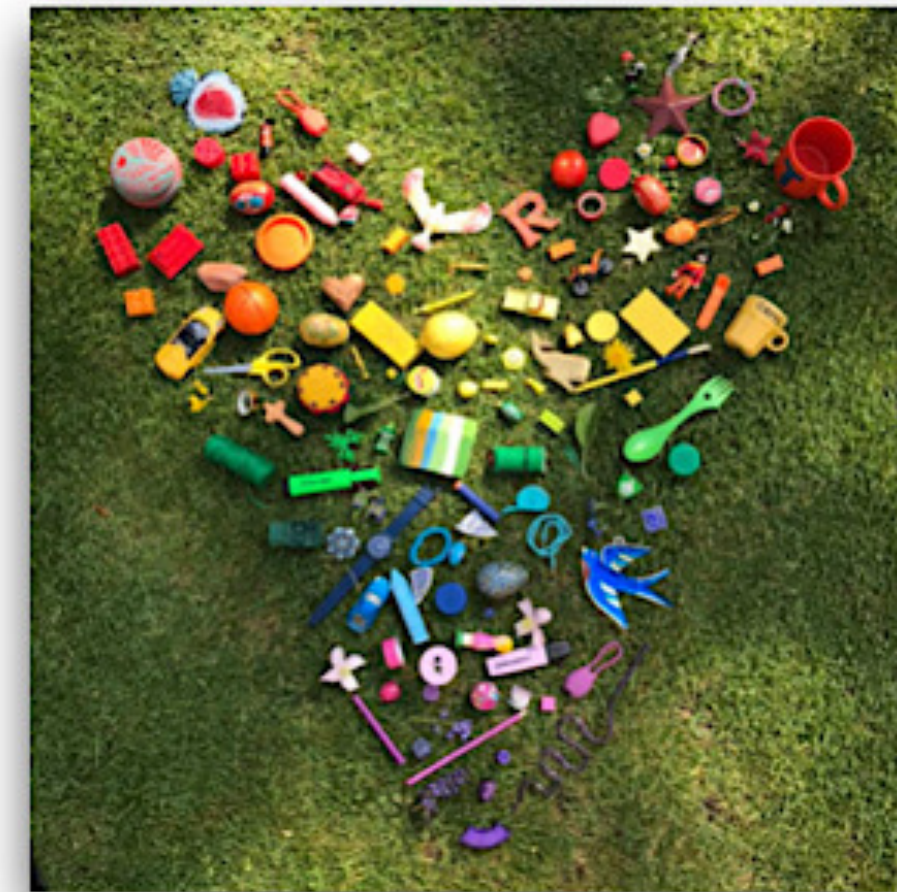
- Look at [this you tube clip](#) about how to make a rainbow stamp by Sarah Anderson.
- To do this yourself you will need an eraser, carving tools, and an inking stamp.

You might instead like to:

- Create a rainbow from coloured objects in the house as Rachel Volland illustrates.
- Then take a photograph of this as a reminder of the hope we have in God.
- You might like to use this rainbow as a screensaver on your phone, or print it out as a bookmark.

You might also like to:

- Watch for rainbows in the sky after storms. As you do, remember the message of hope we have in Christ.



March 11th: Restoration

Sometimes we can not be very good at looking after ourselves - yet as Bernard of Clairvaux wrote, we can love ourselves for the sake of loving God.

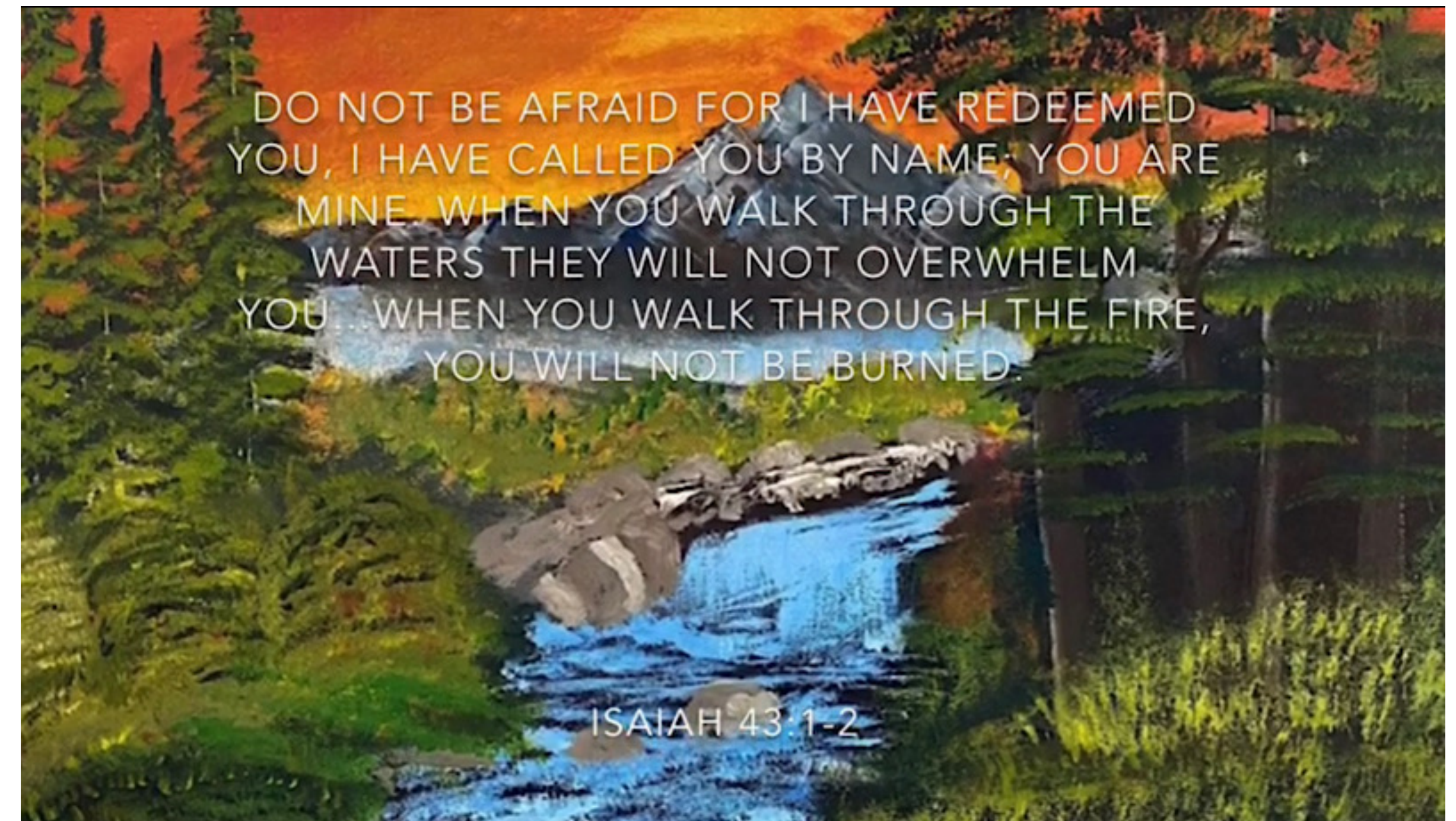
- What draws you close to God?
- What sustains your relationship with God?
- What do you love to do?
- What do you give thanks for?
- What do you do and where do you go for restoration?
- What do your still waters and green pastures look like?
- What resources do you have in place for rest and restoration?
- You might like to consider wellbeing in a wider way using the wellbeing wheel [here](#).

Talk to Jesus about these things.

What practices might he encourage you to put in place?

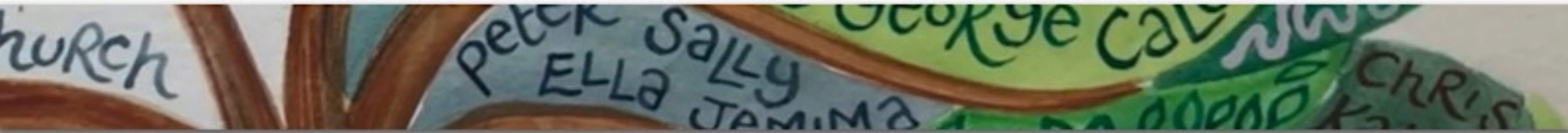
How are you going to make sure that you make this happen?

As you do you might like to look at this [meditation](#) that assures us of God's presence with us in it all.



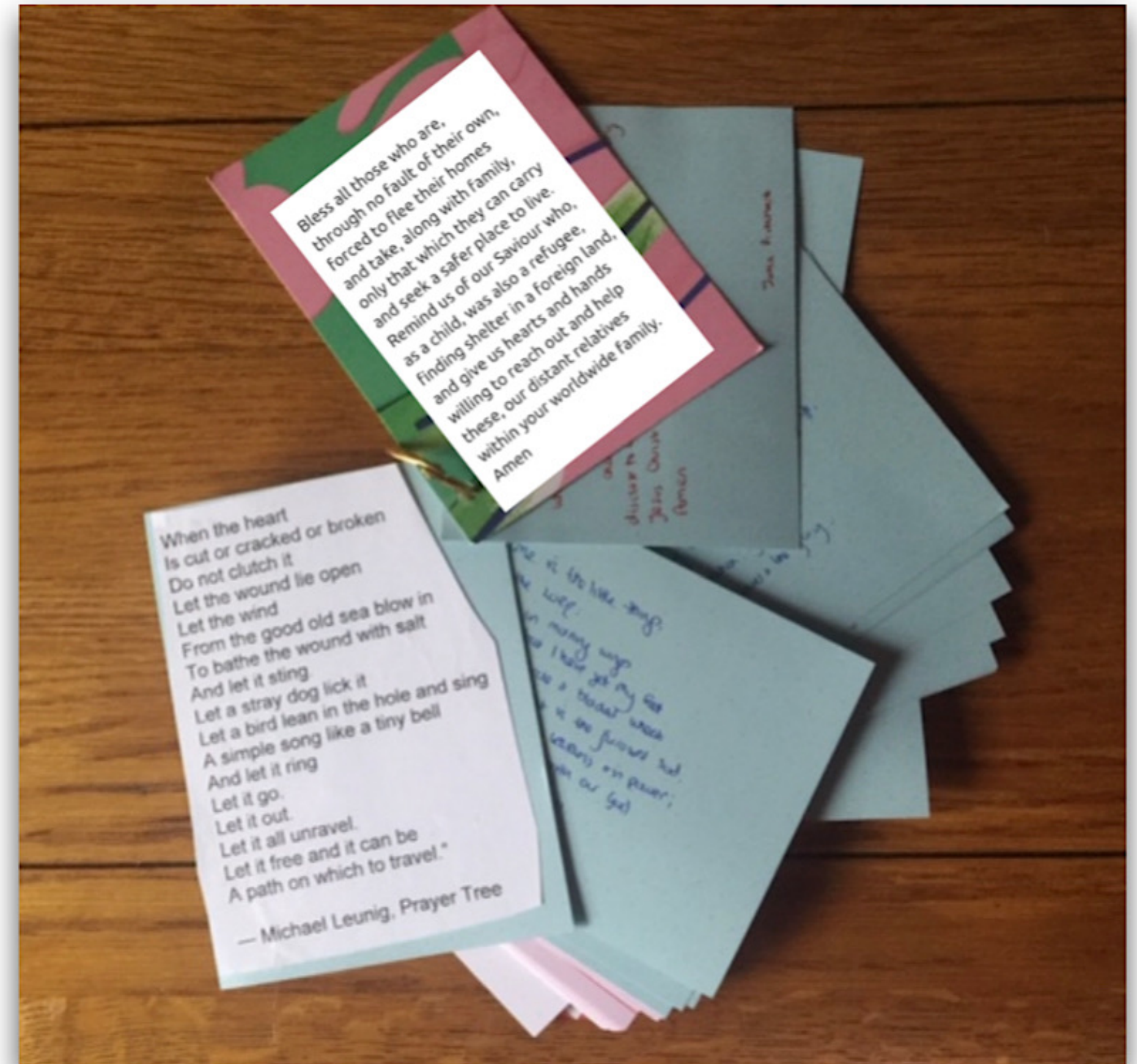
March 12th: An inheritance

- The Bible contains many lists of people, their history and their communities. In the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew Luke we find examples of this.
- This creative prayer is making a prayer tree.
- The two ways illustrated here are by Hannah Dunnett.
- Her guide to how to create them can be found [here](#).
- As you write in the names of people and communities you want to pray for, commit each one into God's hands.
- Place the prayer tree in a place that you will see it each day.
- As you do stop and pause and pray specifically once more.



March 13th: Praying for the refugee

- Jesus and his family fled to Egypt for refuge.
- The number of refugees in the world is increasing.
- A number of prayers for the refugee can be found [here](#).
- You might like to print or write these out and make your own prayer book where you gather written prayers to use when you cannot find the words you want to say.
- You might like instead to get a set of revision cards and place the prayers in there and add to these.



March 14th: Baptism

- You might like to get a bowl of water.
 - Sit down with it in front of you.
 - Place your hands in it and feel it run over and drip.
 - Reflect on your prayer time today.
- Now, or when you take your next shower or bath and feel the water wash over you, you might like to pray a prayer of renewal of your baptismal vows.
- An example of such a prayer is this:

Gracious God, through water and the Spirit you claimed me as your own servant and priest to bring the world to you.

Deliver me, O God from the way of sin and death. Cleanse me from sin and give me new life. Open my heart to grace and truth and bind me to your service.

Renew me in the covenant you made with me in baptism. Keep me in the faith and communion of your church. Fill me with the power of your Holy Spirit. Send me into my daily tasks to be a witness to your love.

Empower me to strive for peace and justice in all the earth. Enable me to serve you with joy, and bring me at last to your kingdom beyond the final river.

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptised into the death of Jesus Christ the Son may live in the power of his resurrection, and look for him to come in glory, who lives and reigns, now and forever. Amen.

<https://bit.ly/2V3cYk9>



The Jordan River

March 15th: Praying a shawl

We are told in Luke that the woman touched the fringes of Jesus' cloak. She possibly touched the tassels of his prayer shawl (the Tzitzit of his Tallit).

- You might like to knit a prayer shawl for someone else.
 - As you knit, you pray for them and hold them before God.
- You might like to knit a prayer shawl for yourself.
 - Each row you knit becomes a year of your life.
 - As you knit notice where God was present in your life that year.
 - As you continue to knit after you reach the number of rows equivalent to your age, commit your future into God's hands.
 - Ask to grow in greater freedom in him.
 - As you cast off give thanks to God for his love and faithfulness.

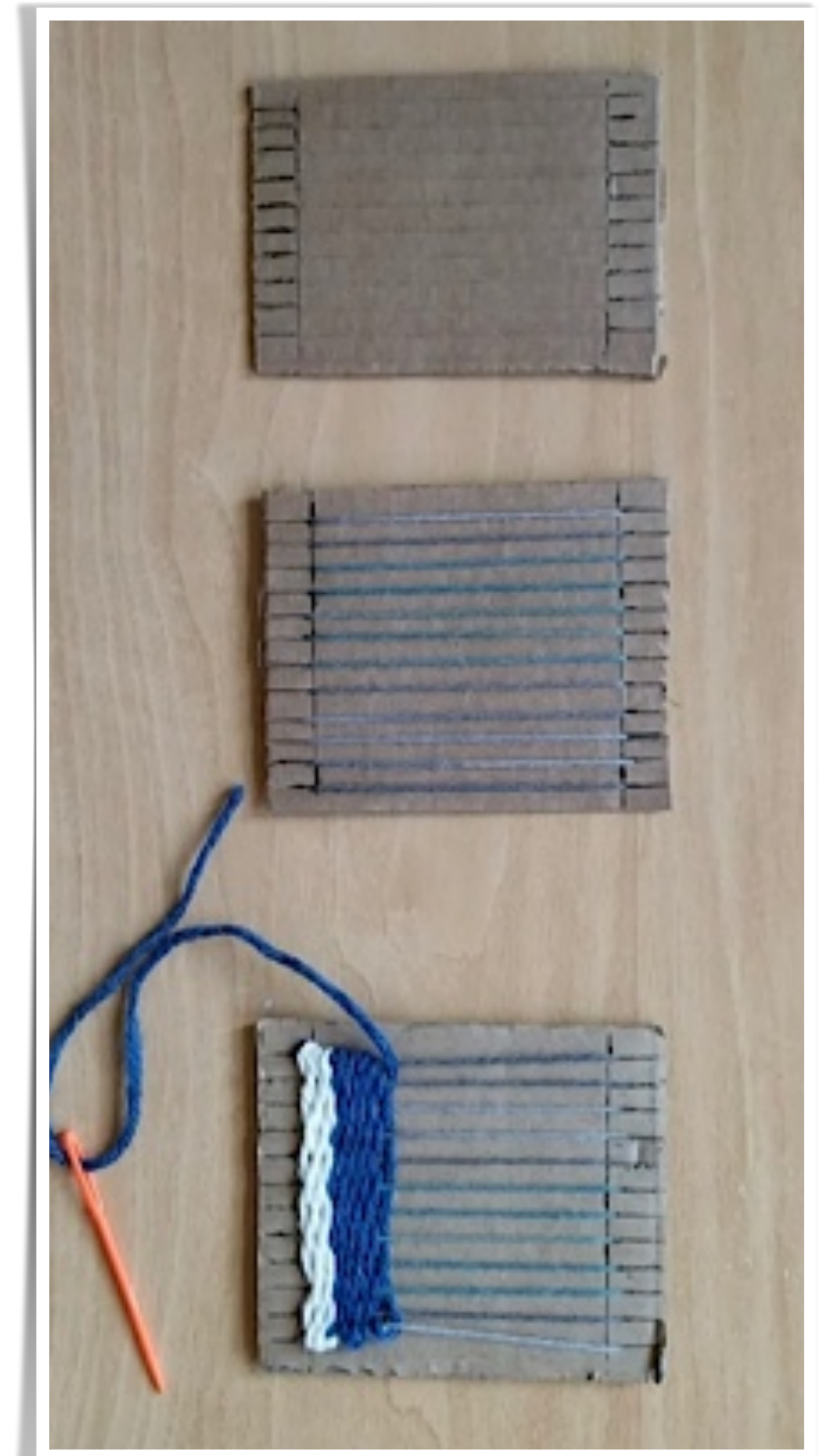
- A guide to making a shawl can be found [here](#).



March 16th: Weaving a prayer

As we look at the lives of people in the Bible, we see just glimpses of their unfolding stories that are being woven over time and in community. In this creative prayer you are being invited to pray as you make and use a cardboard loom.

- Ask God the master weaver to be with you as you pray.
- Then, choosing your colours and threads to represent different people, or different strands of your life, or different parts of the world, or different places in your community, weave them into a wordless prayer.
- When you have finished look at your woven prayer.
 - What do you notice?
 - Talk about this to God.
- Instructions for making a cardboard loom can be found [here](#).



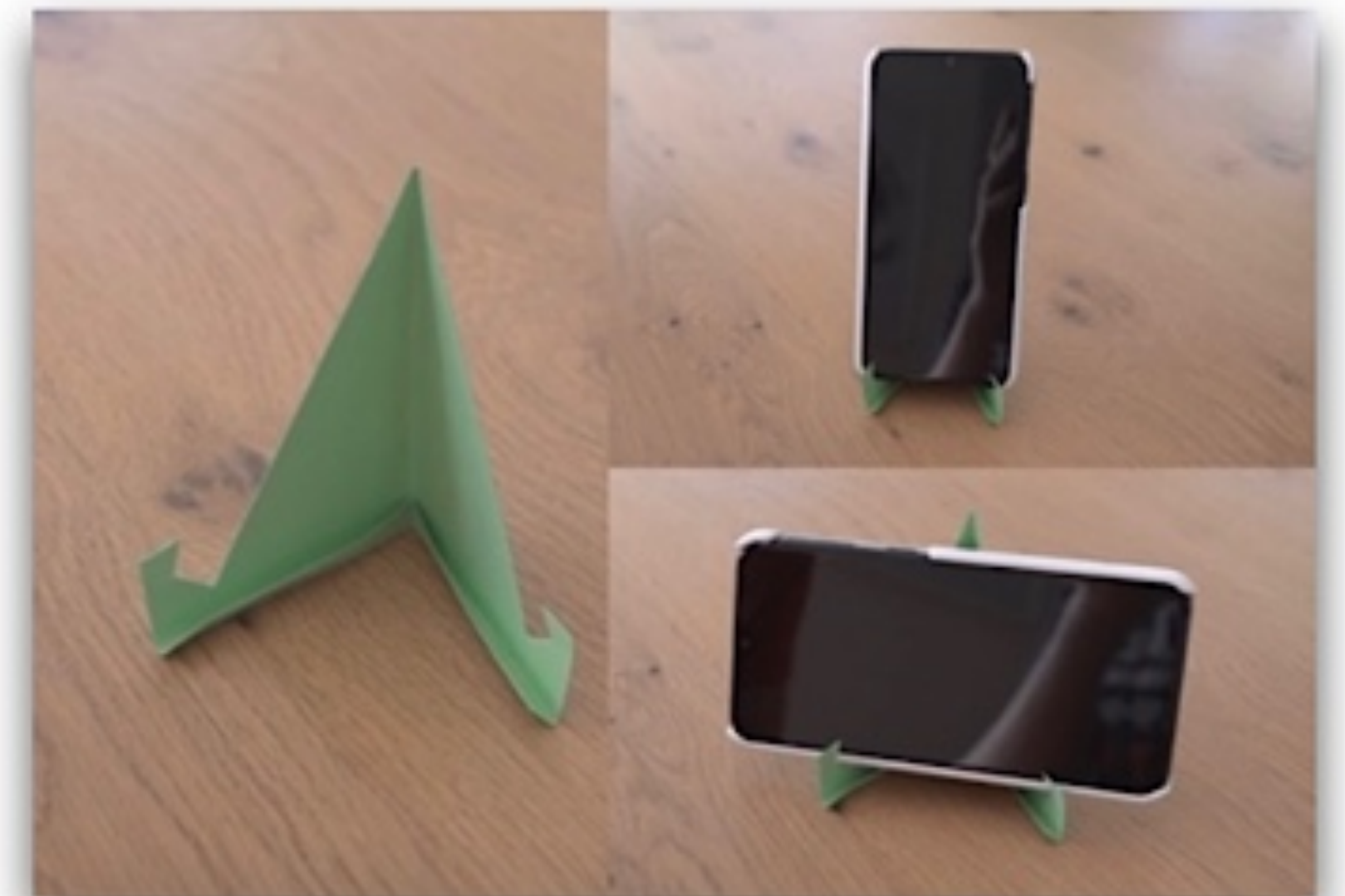
March 17th: Talking with God

Most of us have a mobile phone

- Some of us just use it to talk to people
- Others use it just for emergencies
- Some of us are attached to it most of the day using it for worship, prayer and work

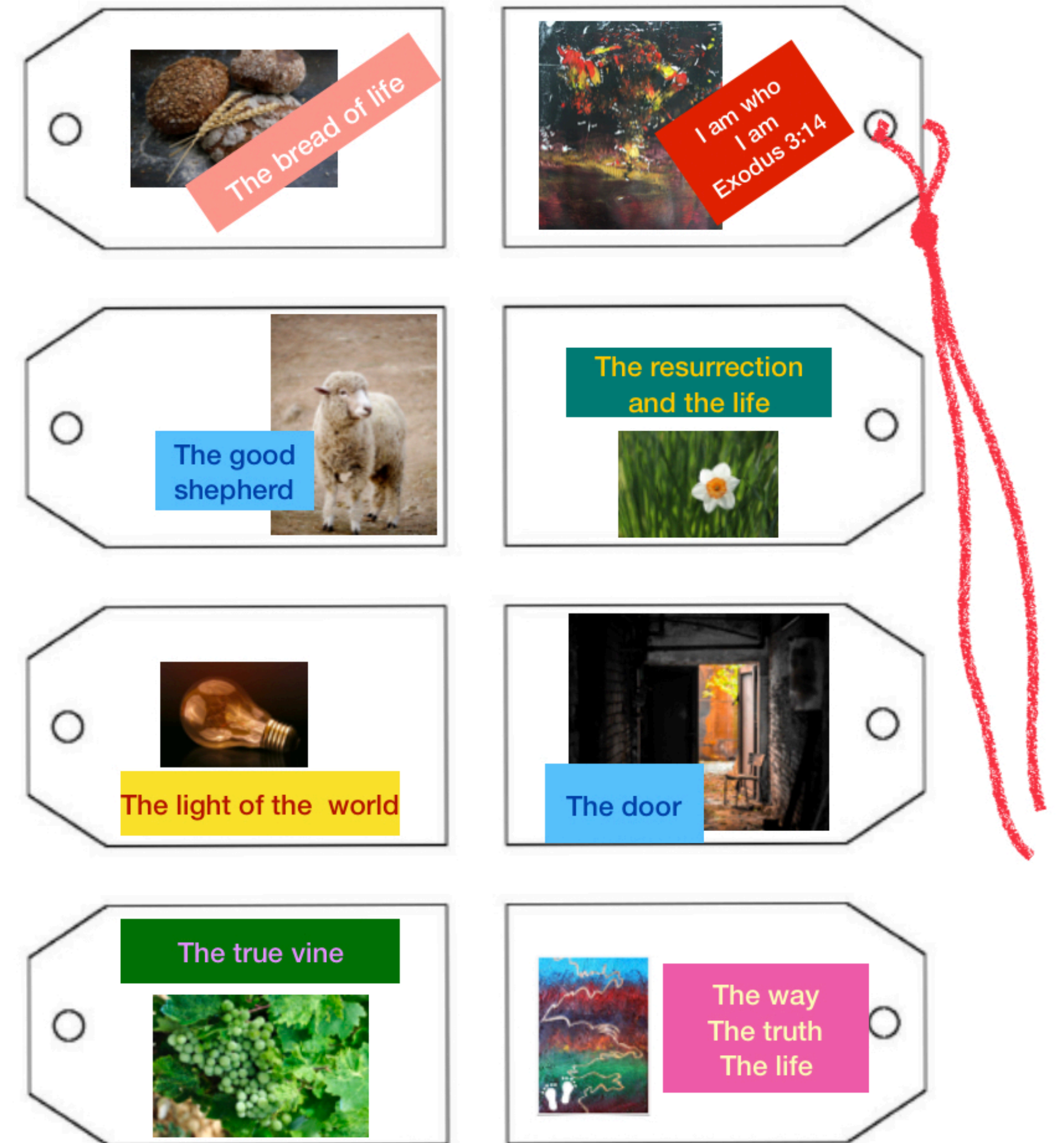
For this prayer station:

- Take a piece of card. Following the instructions [here](#) make a phone stand.
- After stage three in the instructions write the names of all the people you connect with over the phone on to the piece of card.
- As you do pray for each person, placing them into the loving arms of God.



March 18th: You are

- You might like to look out some old gift tags or cut some new ones out of old cardboard and make a hole with a hole punch. A template can be found at the end of this prayer station.
- Using paper, magazines, pens or paint you might like to focus on one or more of the 'I am' sayings of Jesus.
- As you do, pray again with the wider passage from which the saying is taken.
- You might then like to add a ribbon and use it to bookmark the passage in John - or in another book as a reminder of who Jesus is.
- You might like to read Exodus 3:3-15 where God reveals himself as 'I am who I am'.
- You might like to watch this music video based on Moses talking with God [here](#).



March 20th: Many parts

God has an amazing way of integrating the different parts of our lives - the people who have shaped us, the experiences we have had, the way we see God at work in all things.

- You might like to watch this video of a collage made of many different materials.
- What do you notice as you watch?
- How is God calling you to be both a fish and a fisher of people?

- You might like to make your own collage of a fish and as you do to pray for the mission and ministry of the church of God.

- You might like to ponder. The disciples were told they would be fishers of men. This Lent, what would you like to share about God, so that others might know him better for themselves?



March 21st: The light

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5: 14-16

- Take a tea light and hold it.
- Ponder the words from 1 John 1:7 and Matthew 5 : 14-16
 - What is it like to walk in darkness? What is it like to be dark within?
- Now light the candle.
- What is it like to walk in the light of Christ?
 - You might like to ask God for the grace to walk more fully in his light.
- What is it like to have the light of Christ within?
 - You might like ask God for the grace to have his light shine more brightly within you.



March 22nd: Stages

- You might like to take a walk to a local shop and buy a bunch of flowers
- As you walk back with the flowers consider the journey they have taken to reach you
 - How the bulb was purchased and planted
 - How the ground was watered and tended
 - How the flowers were cut and gathered
 - How the flowers were transported to your local shop
 - How you have been able to reap the fruit of other's labours
- You might like to keep the flowers in a vase in your own home as a reminder of this time of prayer
- You might like to add one other stage to the journey and give the bunch of flowers to a friend or neighbour.



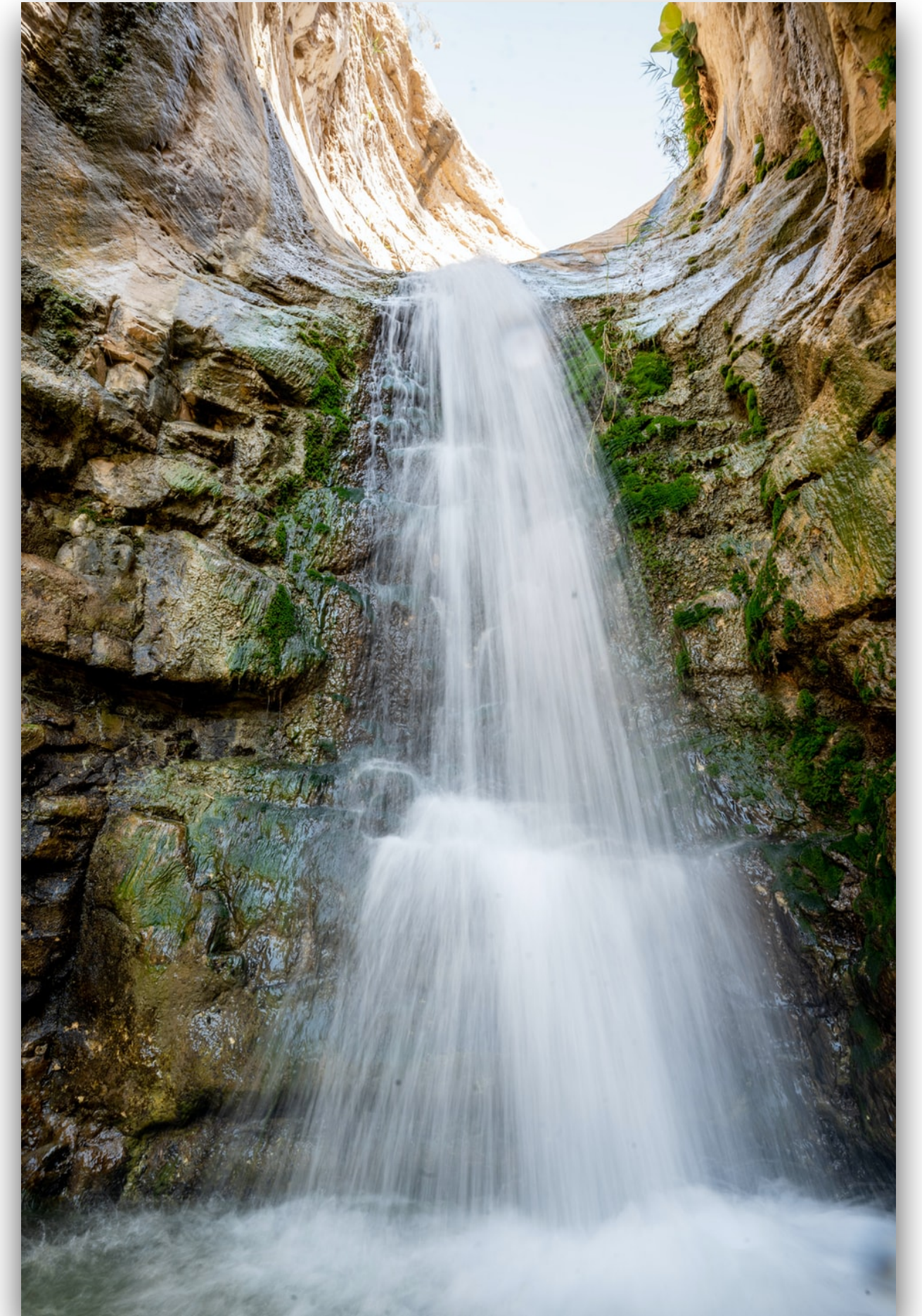
March 23rd: Taste and see

- Our sense of taste helps us enjoy the food we eat and the fluids we drink.
- Select a piece of fruit, salad or a favourite sweet.
- Slowly chew the fruit or suck the sweet.
- Notice the flavours.
- Notice how the saliva in your mouth increases as you taste the food.
- Think of all the good things in your life and give thanks.
- Ponder over the words from Psalm 34.
 - Taste and see that the Lord is good.
- You might like to listen to Psalm 34 [here](#)



March 24th: Living water

- In the time of Jesus in the Holy Land there were three main sources of water
 - Living water - water that came from rain falling through rocks and emerging as springs. Living water was cool and fresh and freely available
 - Water from wells - water in the ground which depends on the water table. Well water was warmer, less fresh and required work to get it
 - Water in cisterns - water gathered in the rainy season to provide for the dry season. By the end of the dry season the water was thick and not pleasant.
- You might like to visit a well near you and pray with the story of the woman by the well in John 4.
 - The British Geological Survey, for example, has mapped all the wells in Britain. If you live in or visit the UK you can go to this website, enter your post code and discover all the wells nearby [here](#).
- You might like to find out more about water and the Bible.
 - A free, enjoyable and accessible 16 hour course looking at the Geography of the Bible which shows the huge impact of water on the Bible narratives and how life was lived can be found [here](#).



Loving God,

Help us to see clearly in this time of fast-paced change,
To see our inter-dependence on one another,
To see one another's courage, resilience and creativity,
To see one another's sorrows, fragility and humanity.
Remind us that these reflect your image.

Help us to respond to suffering and poverty as they unfold,
To discern how to grieve, to comfort and to connect,
To discern in what ways to give, encourage or serve,
To discern where our task is to tell our story, to influence or to give
others space to play their parts.
Remind us that this reflects your wisdom.

Help us to acknowledge the injustices made manifest by this crisis,
To meet them with a thirst for justice,
To meet them with an awareness of grace,
To meet them with a commitment to change.
Remind us that this reflects your heart.

Help us to see the hope dawning even in the darkness,
To nurture empathy,
To reject greed,
To embrace compassion.
Remind us that this reflects your love.

Amen.

Scripture references: Genesis 1:27; Isaiah 53:4; Isaiah 58:6; Romans 12:15; 1 Peter 5:10; John 1:5.

A PRAYER IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS

March 25th: Those who are hungry

- You might like to pray the prayer to the left provided online by The Trussel Trust.
- You might like to look at their online prayer guide that can be found [here](#).
- You might also like to pray through the narrative of the feeding of the 5,000 in Mark chapter 6.
 - You might like to consider what God has given you to contribute at this complex time?
 - If you are unsure you might like to ask Jesus and listen for his response.
 - You might like to note these down in your journal.



March 26th: The Body

You might like to read 1 Corinthians 12.

Take a moment to look at the image to the right and copy it on to a piece of paper and cut it out.

What does it say to you about body of Christ? Note these thoughts down on one side of the paper.

Take a few moments to consider the body of Christ in the world today.

Where do you see injustice? Where do you see disadvantage? Where do you see privilege?

Note this down on the other other side of the paper.

Now take some time to look over your life..

Where have you experienced injustice?

How have you been privileged? How have you been disadvantaged?

By your economic circumstances?

By your education?

By your skin colour?

By your family background?

By your gender?

By your sexuality?

By your culture?

By your cultural history?

By your abilities?

By your age?

Bring your thoughts and feelings around these questions to God asking for his healing and restoration.

Consider how God might be calling you to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with him today.



March 27th: Hidden in the heart

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus - Philippians 4: 7

I have hidden your word in my heart - Psalm 119: 11

Philippians is a book about Jesus. It tells of who Jesus is, what he has done, what this means for the Philippians and what it means for us today. It is a book of joy, the word joy being used five times and rejoice eight times. It is also a book that encourages us to think differently.

You might like to read slowly through the whole book of Philippians.

What verses really strike you?

Write these verses each on a piece of card.

Place the cards into a small tin or match box.

Carry them around with you and memorise each of the verses in turn.

As you do this let the verse remind you of the book of Philippians.

Hide God's word in your heart.

Consider using this approach for some of the other books of the Bible.

You could even create a 66 tin library.



March 28th: Art journalling

- You might like to spend time looking at this YouTube clip on faith art journalling.
 - You might like to find a book to journal your journey with God, using some of the approaches Jenna describes in her YouTube clip.
- You might like to find some bits and pieces of ‘stuff’ that hold memories of who God is and has been to you, to decorate the outside of the journal.
- You might like to use a word, rather like Denise Weyhrich has on the word Provision, as illustrated by the image on this slide, to create a collage journal, or to embellish a book that you have read that God has spoken to you through.
- You might decide to pray with a word for the rest of the year. A guide as to how to do this can be found here.




March 29th: Praise


- What do you have to praise God for?
- Many of the psalms are songs of praise
- Take a moment to reflect on the times where you praise and worship God
- What do you notice:
 - In your heart
 - In your soul
 - In your mind
 - In your body
 - In relation to others
 - In relation to God
- Maybe take some time on your own and listen to one of the versions of Psalm 111
 - Psalm 111 sung by Jason Silver
 - Psalm 111 sung by Esther Mui
 - Psalm 111 sung by the choir of Westminster Abbey
 - Psalm 111 sung by Miqidem
- You might like to use your body more freely in prayer moving as the Spirit leads
 - You might like to dance
- How does praising God more freely in your body make you draw closer to God?





March 30th : Holding nothing back


We are asked to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind as strength (Mark 12:30). Romans 12:1 asks that we present our bodies as living sacrifices. We are asked to love God with our bodies. You might like to pray the words of Psalm 8 with your body using the ideas below. You might like to choose one of your favourite psalms and use your body to pray this as well.


Lord, our Lord,  *Breathe in slowly and focus on God - feel praise rising from your heart to your extremities*


how majestic is your name in all the earth!  *Breathe out slowly and contemplate the name of God filling the earth*


You have set your glory in the heavens.  *Breathe in and look and reach up as you ponder the glory of the skies*


Through the praise of children and infant you have established stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.  *Breathe out and bring your fingertips gently together as you ponder how small children praise*


When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,  *Breathe in slowly as you lift your arms up, palms to the floor as you ponder the creative hands of God*


what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels  *Breathe out slowly and bow forward in humility as you recognise the smallness of humanity*


and crowned them with glory and honour.  *Breathe in slowly as you realise the depth and breadth and width of God's love for you and all humanity*

You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:  *Breathe out slowly as you stand and step into the calling of God.*

all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,  *Breathe in slowly as you gather your arms together as it were to hold a lamb*

the birds in the sky,  *Breathe out slowly as you stretch out your arms feeling the breath of the Spirit lift your wings*

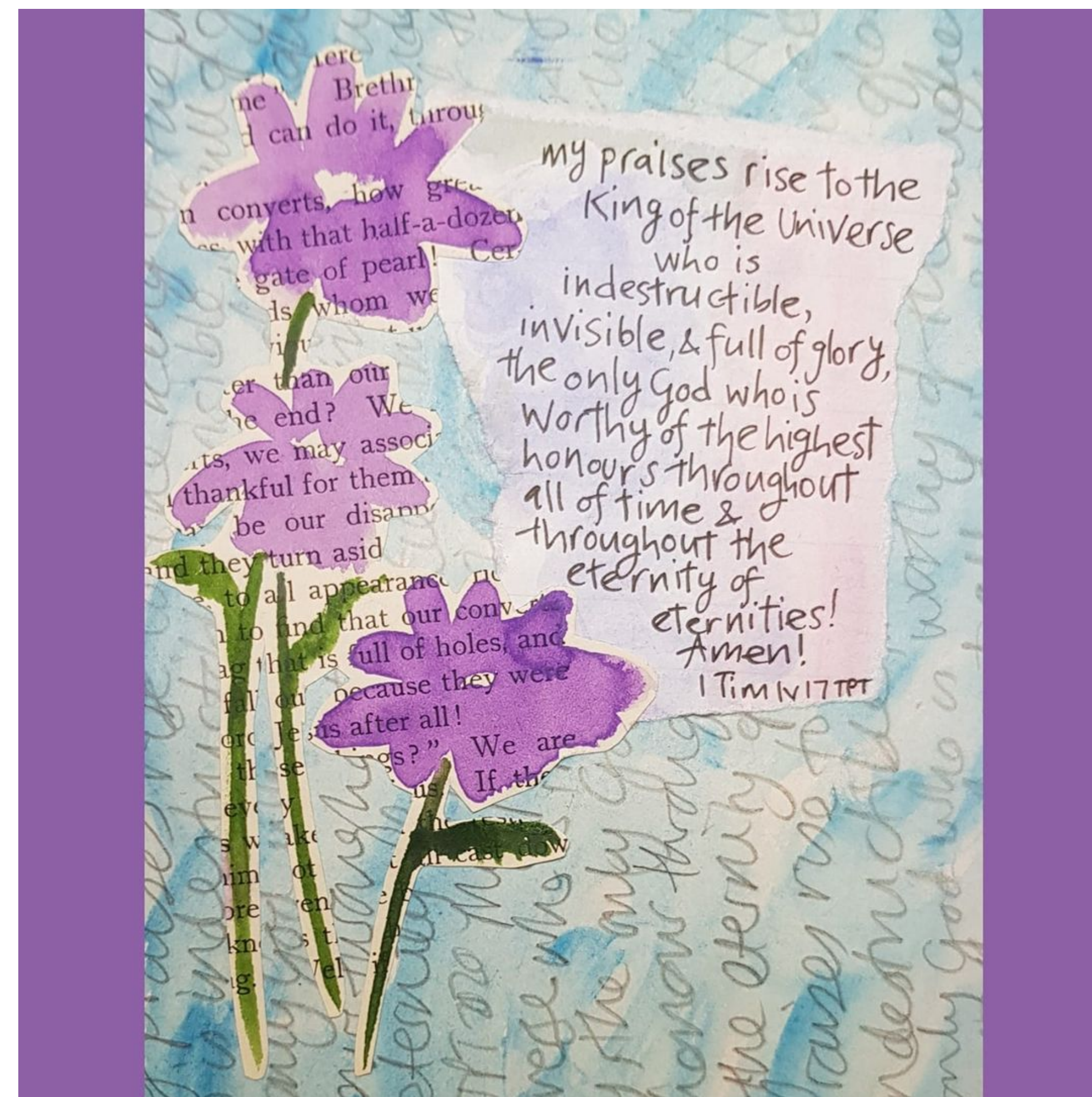
and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.  *Breathe in slowly as you form your arms into the shape of a swimming moving fish*

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!  *Breathe in slowly and focus on God - feel praise rising from your heart as you stretch from your core to your extremities.*

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March 31st: Scripture scribbles

- You might like to choose a verse from the Bible that has spoken to you over this Lent.
 - Scribble this verse a number of times on a page of paper or card to create a background.
 - Embellish the page with images or collage.
 - Then write the Bible verse out once more on a piece of small card or paper.
 - Carry this verse around with you and memorise it sealing it in your heart.
 - Then glue the verse onto the background...
- You can see a YouTube guide by Deborah Gregg [here](#).



April 1st: Examen

This is a form of prayer that comes from Ignatius of Loyola.

It encourages us to learn to notice the presence of God in everyday life.

It is ideally prayed at the end of the day.

1. Look at your hand

➤ Become aware of God's presence with you and of His love for you.

2. Index finger

➤ Spend some in gratitude to God for who He is, for all He has done and for the day.

3. Middle finger

➤ Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you through a review of your day.

4. Ring finger

➤ Reflect on your thoughts and emotions of the day.

➤ Where have you have noticed God or wandered away?

5. Small finger

➤ Say sorry to God for the times you have wandered away.

6. Thumb

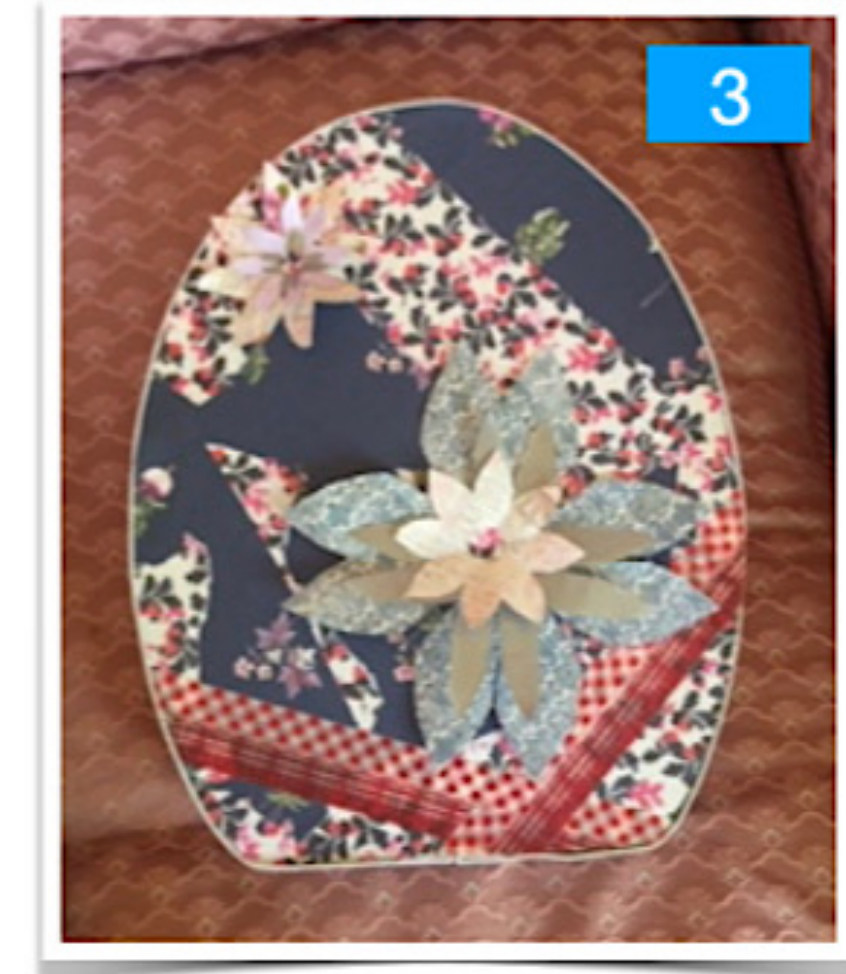
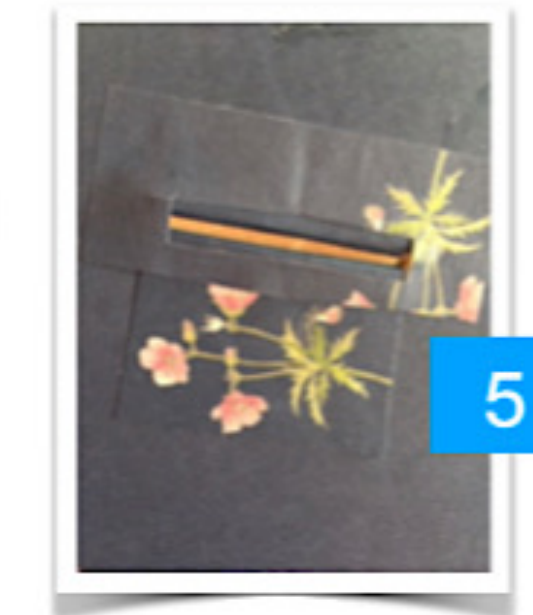
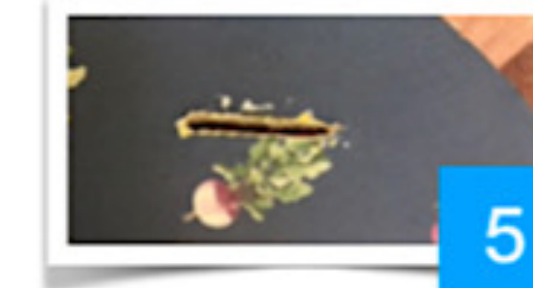
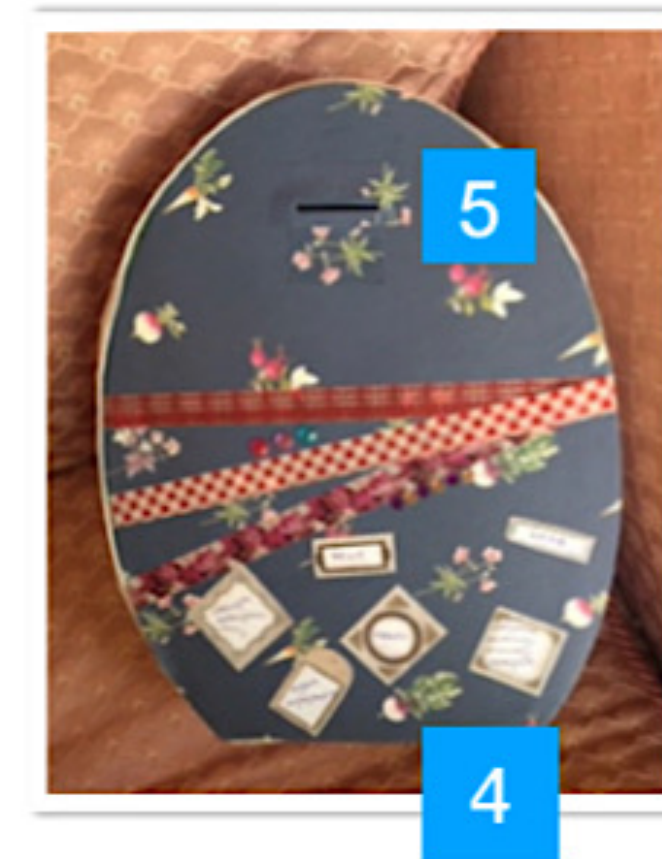
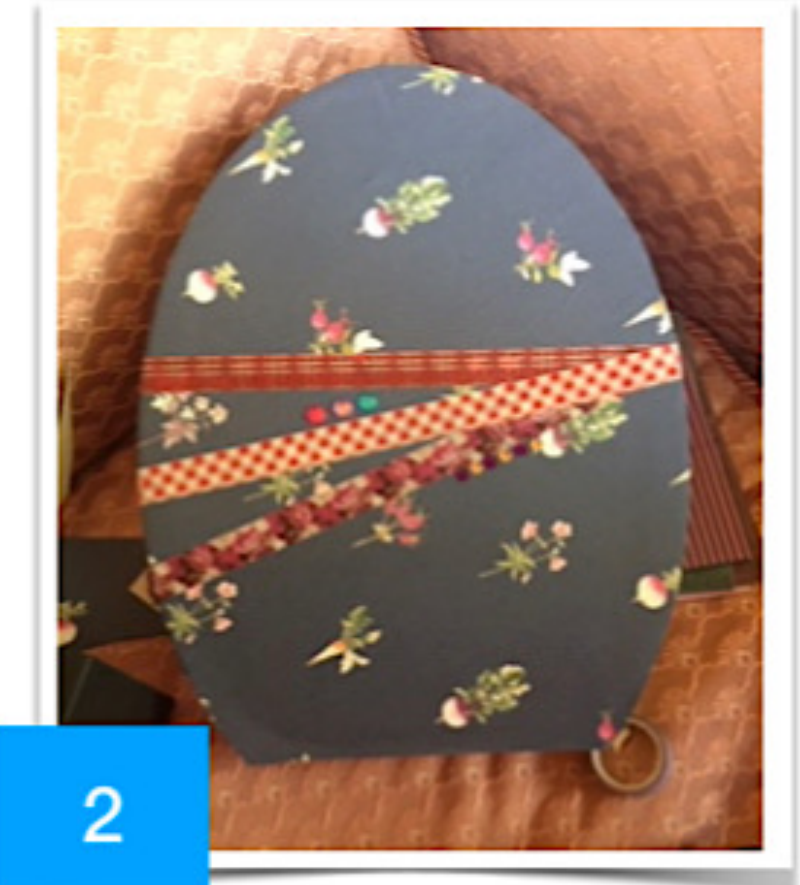
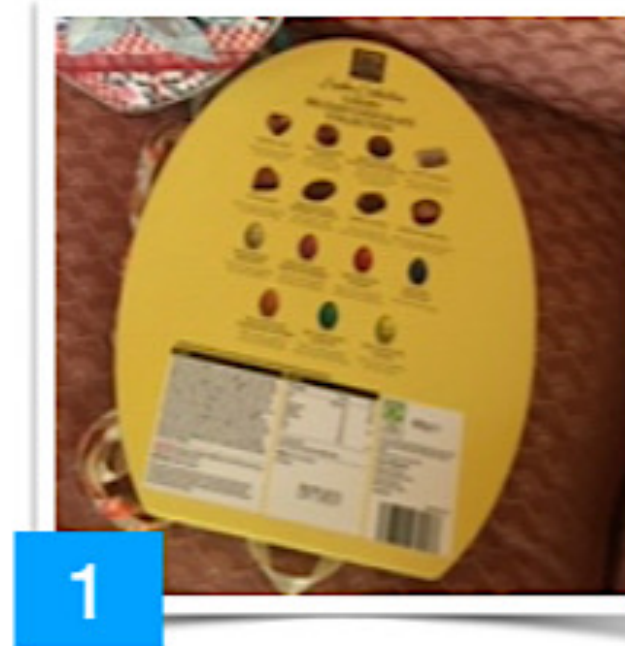
➤ Consider the next twenty-four hours.

➤ Ask God for His grace and guidance as you look towards the coming day.



April 2nd: Giving

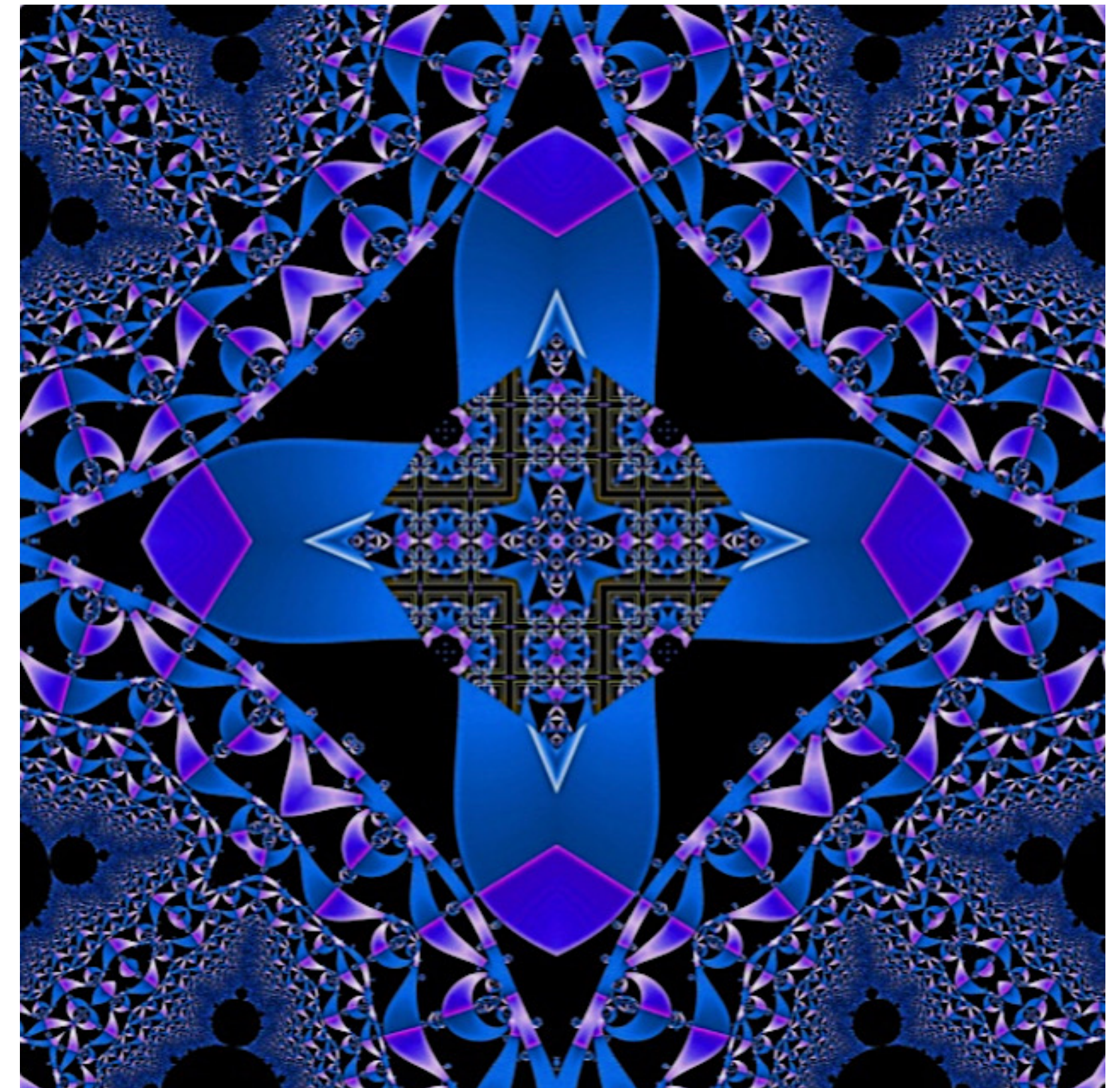
1. For this you will need
 - An old box
 - Some wrapping paper and glue and other scraps of paper
 - Washi tape and beads / sticky jewels / ribbons are optional
2. Take the box and cover it with different pieces of wrapping paper
3. Embellish with tape, sequins, pictures, paper flowers
4. Cut out some small pieces of paper
 - Write on these pieces all the gifts God has given you
 - Stick them on or inside the box and as you do give thanks
 - Step back and look
 - Ask God how he would like you to use all the gifts he has given you for his service
5. You might like to use this box as a collection box
 - If so you might like to place a slit in the box for money to be placed inside.



April 3rd: The cost of discipleship

- Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
- For today's creative prayer you might like to make an origami cross.
- As you do, ask God to show you what you need to let go of and what you need to take up.

As you do, you might like to listen to Day 4 of Einaudi's seven days walking.



April 4th: All have sinned

Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered (Psalm 32).

For this you will need

- A big bowl of water
- Aluminium foil
- A felt tip pen

Spend some time with God reflecting back.

Ask him to bring to light the things you need to say sorry for.

- Write these in felt tip pen on the aluminium foil
- When you have finished, look at what you have written
- Place the aluminium foil in the water and as you do, say the words from Psalm 51:2
 - **'Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.'**
 - See the writing wash off the foil
- Give thanks for the forgiveness and infinite grace of God
- You might to listen to Sarah Hart sing [Infinite Grace](#).



April 5th: Pilgrimage

In French, scallops are called Coquilles Saint-Jacques, named after James the disciple of Jesus

- Legend tells that James went to Galicia, in the north of Spain, to share the good news of Jesus.
 - He returned to Jerusalem in AD 44 and was beheaded by Herod Agrippa.
 - Legend continues that his body was taken to Galicia, and in the 9th century Pelagius saw a light shining over a tomb in the middle of a forest. Soon the story spread and the tomb became associated with James, a cathedral being built upon the site and Santiago de Compostela becoming a destination for many pilgrims.
 - After reaching Santiago, many pilgrims would continue to journey to the sea at Finisterre, thought to be the end of the earth.
- March**
- Here they would collect a scallop shell as a reminder and as evidence of their journey.
 - The Camino de Santiago has once again become popular as a place of pilgrimage.

For this time of creative prayer you might like to take a scallop shell. You get these from fishmongers or from the freezer cabinets of many supermarkets where they are sold as Coquilles Saint-Jacques

As you look at and hold the clean and empty shell you might like to consider the journey of your life so far.

You might like to decorate it as shown to the right. Instructions can be found [here](#).

As you do, give thanks for the way God has led, walked with you and spoken to you in various times and various places.

As you do, you might like to listen to [The Path of Miracles](#) sung by Tenebrae.

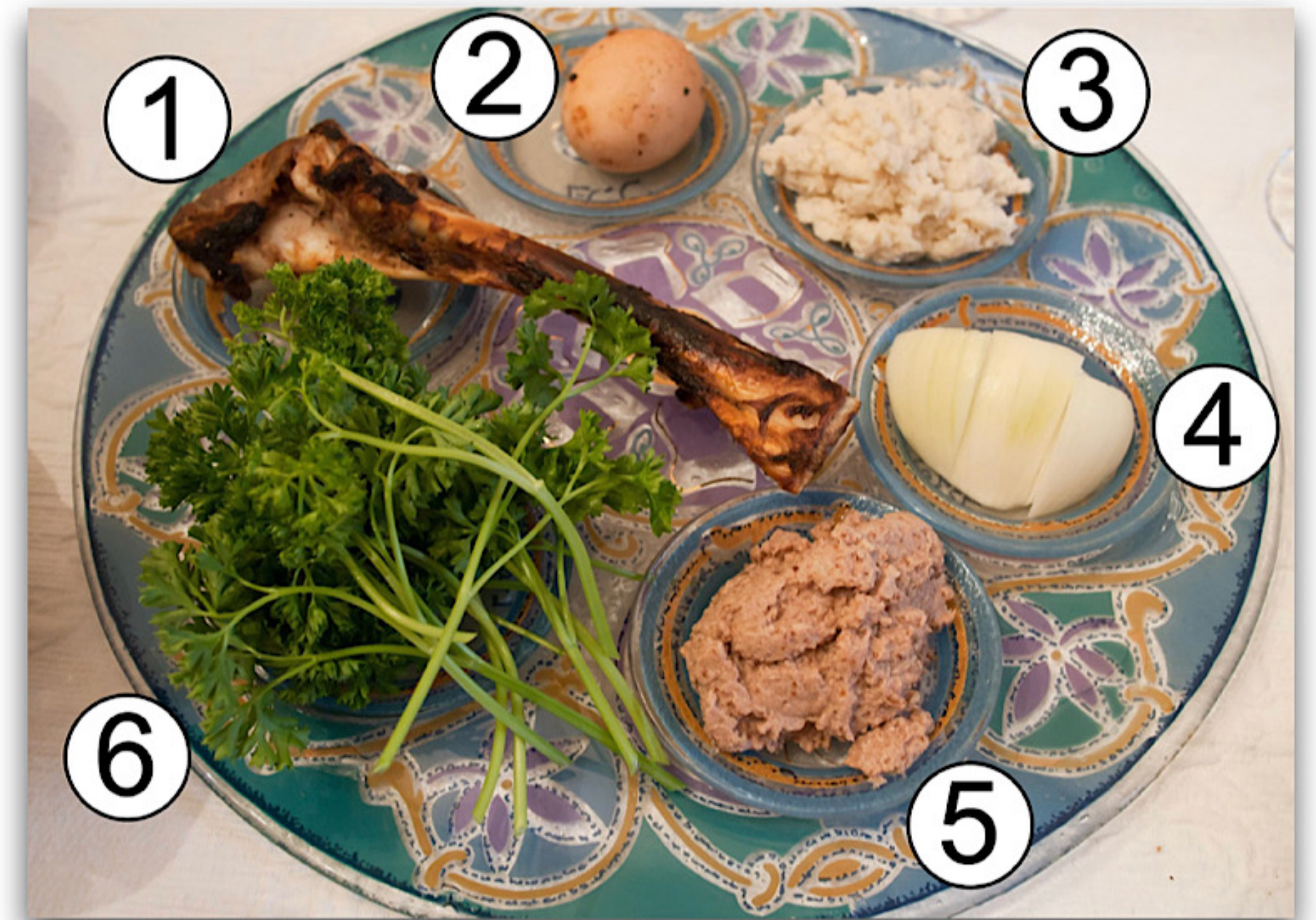


Maundy Thursday: Passover

- You might like to pray through the story of the Passover in [Exodus 12](#).
- You might like to read a liturgy for a [Passover Supper](#) for use in churches and homes.
- You may like to make up a Passover Seder plate with all the ingredients.
- You may like to make some Charoseth from one of the recipes [here](#).
- You might like to listen to all of Handel's Israel in Egypt [here](#).
- As you do, look back at your life and see where God has brought you out of exile or released you from bondage and give thanks.
- You might also like to start a [thanksgiving journal](#) where you give thanks each day for all God's providence and provision - like the manna and quail in the desert.

The ingredients on a Passover Seder plate include:

1. The shank-bone of a lamb representing the Passover lamb
2. A roasted egg as a symbol of the festival offering
3. Horseradish grated as bitter herbs representing the bitterness of slavery
4. Another bitter herb, for example onion, to use with the horseradish
5. Charoseth representing the mortar and bricks used by the Hebrew slaves
6. Parsley dipped in salt water representing hope and tears



Good Friday: At the foot of the cross

Close your eyes and imagine yourself at the foot of the cross.

- You might like to be a bystander.
- You might like to imagine yourself as Joseph, the secret believer.
- You might like to imagine yourself as Nicodemus, who visited Jesus at night.

Slowly let the scene unfold.

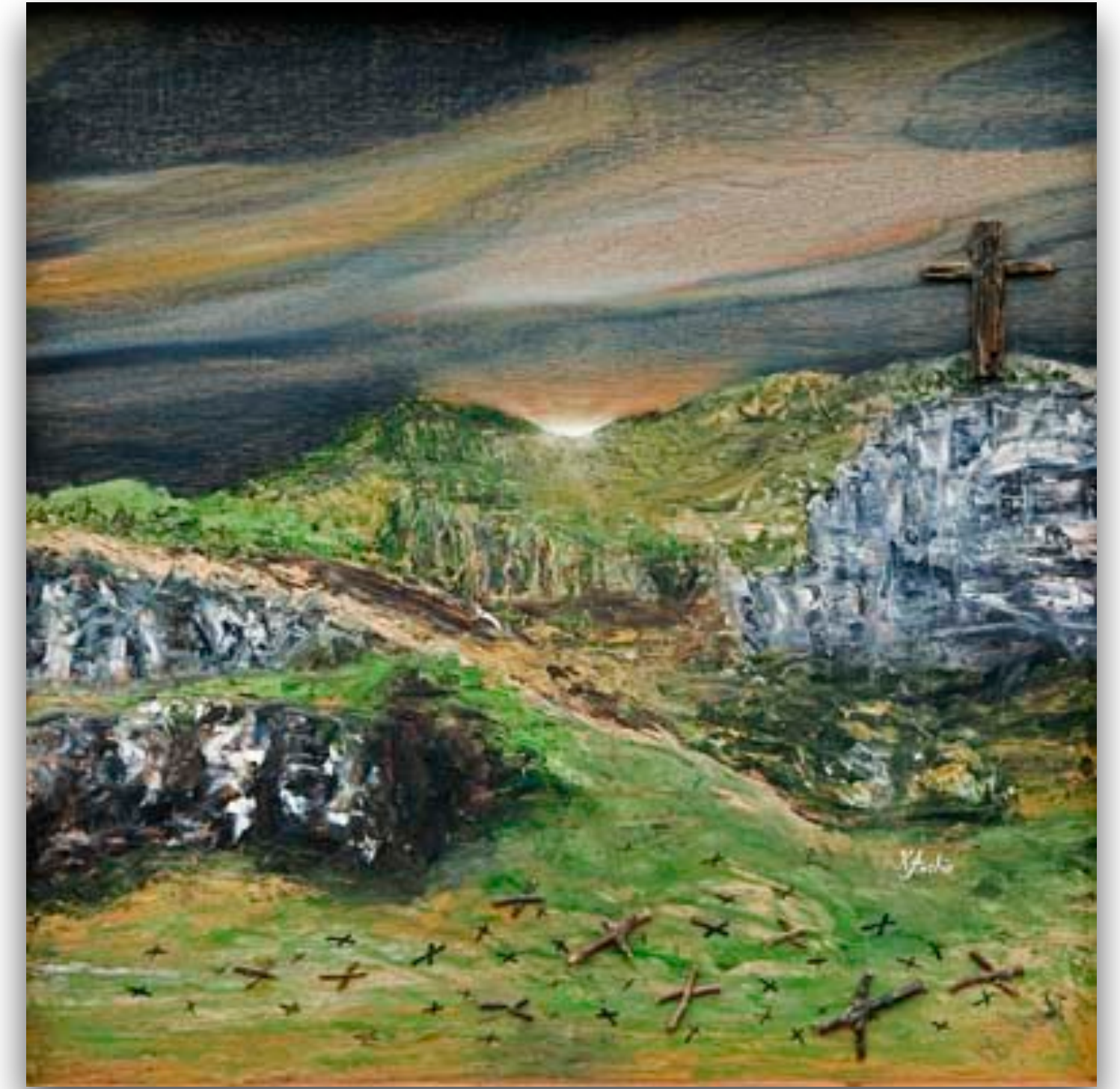
- What do you feel as Jesus' body is taken from the cross to the grave?
- What do you notice in the hands that touch Jesus' body and wrap it with spices and in strips of linen?
- What do you notice in your spirit as Jesus' body is laid in the tomb?

How do you respond to what has just happened to Jesus?

- What do you say to Him?
- Let those words become a prayer.

➤ You might like to look at this meditation on the stations of the cross using the words of Padraig O'Tuama [here](#).

➤ You might like to read Psalm 22 while looking at the images of the Stations of the Cross at Launde Abbey [here](#).



The Tree of Death
Kate Austin

Holy Saturday: As we wait

- As you look back over Lent this year
 - How has God touched you?
 - What is God's invitation to you?
 - How do you want to respond?
- You might like to watch [this musical meditation](#) on the journey of the cross and the embryonic hope of Holy Saturday using the images of Sieger Koder and the music of Ennio Morricone



Easter Day: The resurrection and the life

- The Jesus Prayer is a prayer that has been used for many years in the Orthodox Church.
 - **Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner**
- The prayer is repeated slowly as a way of stilling the body, mind and spirit to help us enter more deeply into the presence of God.
- Many people use a similar approach using other words from scripture.
 - **You are the resurrection and the life**
 - **You are the way, the truth and the life**
 - **You are the light of the world**
- Some people find using a prayer rope or prayer beads helpful in maintaining focus on God.
 - Instructions to make a prayer rope can be found [here](#)
 - Instructions for some 'anglican' prayer beads can be found [here](#)
 - Instructions for a bracelet rosary can be found [here](#)
- You might like to pause at different times this Easter Day and the prayer the words **You are the resurrection and the life** slowly and repetitively and let the truth of the words and what they mean sink and remains deep within you.
- You might also like to listen to this song for easter sing by Kelley Mooney - [Hallelujah](#).



Creative Lent 2023

A Creative Journey through Lent

This prayer station and other resources can be found at [**The Prayer Room**](#)