

Methodist Centenary Church

Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin 6

Superintendent Minister: Rev Andrew Kingston, Tel. 01-668 0833; 083-152 0171



Announcements on 11th February 2026

Our Mission Statement

Our Mission is to receive God's love and to share it with others through our Welcome, our Worship, our Community and our Service.

Sunday 15th February

Service of worship with Rev Dr Stephen Skuce

Congratulations

We are delighted to announce the birth of Milo Epstein, the third child of Morris and Samantha (née Johnston) Epstein., who was born on the 21st January. 'He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.' Isaiah 40:11

Monthly Morning Holy Communion

There is a monthly morning Holy Communion Service on the second Wednesday of each month from 10.00–10.30am in Room 1 followed by the Friendly Room.

Friendly Room

The Friendly Room meets on Wednesdays in Room 1, Wesley House. If you are free, do drop in for a cuppa and a chat between 10.30 and 12 noon. All are welcome—it's a great spot to catch up, enjoy good company, and share a bit of banter.

Safeguarding training and Garda vetting.

Room 1, Wesley House Tuesday 31st March 7-9.15pm with Nicky Blair, Connexional Safeguarding Officer

Thought for the week

It feels like a long month since I last wrote for this space which is intended to be an occasional reflection on Eco-Congregation matters. From the Creation Care Conference in Newry on 17th January through Storm Chandra on 26th January, there has been much to reflect on, and a growing sense of unease.

The Conference “Let Justice Flow Like Rivers” was hosted by the Irish Council of Churches (ICC), the Inter-Church Meeting, and the Church leaders. It was the first formal occasion on which all member denominations met to consider their environmental responsibilities, and there was a good representation from MCI. In the rich mix of science, theology and liturgy, this quote from Gus Speth, former dean of the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies at Yale, resonated with many:

I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, and climate change. But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed, and apathyto deal with those issues we need a spiritual and cultural transformation – and we scientists do not know how to do that.

Apathy is a harsh term to apply to the underlying causes of the destruction of homes and livelihoods by Storm Chandra. Government ministers admit, however, that the pace of delivery of flood relief schemes has been too slow and that the systems underpinning them are far too complex. A greater sense of urgency among politicians and administrators is needed not just for flood relief, but for all aspects of human-caused climate change from the burning of fossil fuels. It is not too late to prevent further catastrophic, irreversible consequences, but drastic action is needed.

At Methodist Centenary we are continuing efforts to reduce our fossil use in our church buildings and in our homes, but we must also be active in making our voices heard publicly. In her address at service on Sunday morning Gillie Hinds urged us to ‘wake up and get moving’ in response to Mathew 5:14-16

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.



It was heartening this week to see Janet Horner, who attended Methodist Centenary in her childhood and teenage years, let her light shine before others and secure a nomination to run in the upcoming Dublin Central by-election. Janet is dedicating herself bravely to, in her own words, “prioritising community, care and culture as we take on the crises of climate change and the chaos of the world around us, focusing on solutions and co-operation over problems and division”. Not many of us will have votes in Dublin Central, but we can pray for Janet in her campaign, and for the success of her vital work.

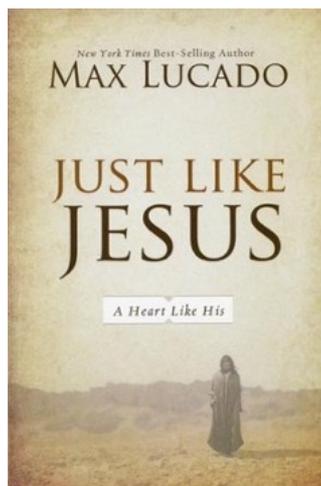
Maureen Rowan Harvey

Prayer

As we consider the transfiguration of Jesus on a high mountain, we thank you for places where Heaven’s light breaks into earth. Yet we are aware of how we misuse the earth, exploit and not sustain the resources you give us, and unfairly distribute food, minerals and wealth. Teach us, O Most High, how to live sustainably in ways that reflect your glory, Amen

Rev Andrew Kingston

Lenten Bible studies



Just Like Jesus Lenten Bible Studies, commencing 7.30pm, Ash Wednesday, (18th Feb.) for six weeks. These short studies from Max Lucado's book, 'Just Like Jesus' should help us draw nearer to our Saviour as we approach Holy Week.

Jesus felt no guilt; God wants you to feel no guilt. Jesus had no bad habits; God wants to do away with yours. Jesus had no fears; God wants the same for you. Jesus had no anxiety about death; you needn't either. God's desire, his plan, his ultimate goal is to make you into the image of Christ. But how does this change occur? And why does the change seem so slow? If God wants me to be just like Jesus, why do I still seem just like me? In *Just Like Jesus*, Max Lucado helps you answer these questions. He helps you understand God's wonderful ways of transformation. Would you like to know more? Then read on. And remember: God loves you just way you are, but he refuses to leave you there. He wants you to be just like Jesus.

Wesley Pilgrimage

Wesley Pilgrimage

Tuesday 30 June – Sunday 5 July 2026

Travel: by boat (Dublin – Holyhead) and coach

Accommodation: Cliff College (Peak District), Travelodge (Bath, Windsor) and Premier Inn (Lichfield)

Guide: Dr Stephen Skuce

Leaders: Gillian Kingston (Tipperary), Rev Andrew Kingston (Dublin)

This pilgrimage will involve guided walking tours in Epworth Old Rectory, Oxford, Bristol, London, and more – exploring the places that shaped John and Charles Wesley and the Methodist movement. Along the way, you'll grow in spiritual formation, connect with the roots of our Wesleyan faith, and share in community.

Cost: €850 (single supplement + €115). Concessions available if required. Deposit of €100 secures.

For a booking form and full itinerary email
andrew.kingston@irishmethodist.org

40 places, closing date for bookings, 15 May 2026

When booking, please put your name in the payee section of the bank transfer, insert 'Wesley Pilgrimage' as payee message and send the completed application form to Andrew.kingston@irishmethodist.org

'Compelled' - A Daily Devotional for Lent:

'For the love of Christ compels us.' – 2 Corinthians 5:14



Dear All,

Lent is a season for thought and reflection as we journey towards Easter; a time when we can examine ourselves and invite God to bring transformation afresh to our lives.

This Lent, we are inviting everyone to join us daily on a 46-day journey (Wednesday 18 February – Sunday 5 April, 2026). In the Scripture passages and reflections prepared, we want to explore the nature of Jesus and how he transformed the lives of all those he encountered; taking to heart the challenge of how we are to live well for Christ in this world.

To aid us, **we've invited voices and thoughts from people across our Connexion and beyond** to dwell in the Gospel stories of Jesus.

A [pdf of the booklet](#) is attached – this can be printed out or used on your digital device, whichever you find more accessible.

As an alternative, but with the same content, [a daily audio podcast](#) will also be available (through our 'Living Wholeheartedly' Podcast channel) – Listen out for some familiar voices!

For full details visit: irishmethodist.org/lent

As we dwell on these passages throughout Lent, our prayer is that we might become even more engrossed by the person and love of Christ, that it compels us to share him with others, and invites them, and us, into a deeper and richer relationship with God.

In Christ,

Discipleship Development Group
The Methodist Church in Ireland
Heather Bailie, IMYC
Tim Dunwoody, World Development & Relief
Kathryn Harte, Home Mission Team
Grace McGurk, Ministries Team
Stephen Mayes, Communications Team

PIANO CONCERT

 Friday 20th February, 7pm, Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin 6

PIANO CONCERT

Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin
7pm Friday 20th Feb 2026



Órán
Halligan



Soo-Jung
Ann



Sin-seock
Kim

Adults €12 / Children €5

“Music is the art which is
most nigh to tears and memory.”

- Oscar Wilde

Exodus Summer Fun Week 12th - 19th July 2026

Fun • Faith • Friendship A week of activities for children, teens & all ages

We have accepted a generous offer of an Exodus Team (4 adult leaders and approximately 8 young people) who will lead a summer scheme with us from the 12th – 19th July 2026. We are asking that all involved in youth work within the congregation attend the training, even if you have done the course before. It is a requirement that it is refreshed every three years. Come early to fill in your Garda vetting forms. The Exodus Week will involve the whole Circuit. Please speak to Andrew if you are willing to help with any aspect of the programme, be that involvement in activities, or the dropping off of meals to Wesley House for our guests. They will be living in our student accommodation for the week.

Welcome Day

Sunday 12th July Wesley House, Leeson Park Hall, D06 N5P0

10.30am – Commissioning of the Exodus Team

12 noon – Welcome BBQ / congregational lunch

2.00pm – Team participates in Dublin Korean Church (preacher: Sharon Parker)

7-9pm: Informal drop-in / coffee & connection time

Morning Sessions (Age 4 – 12)

10am – 12pm Monday 13th – Friday 17th (40 places)

 Rathgar Methodist Church Hall, Brighton Road/Brighton Square, D06 Y497

Monday: Art & Craft / Messy Play 🎨

Tuesday: Music & Dance 🎵

Wednesday: Sports & Activities ⚽

Thursday: Lego & Construction 🧱

Friday: Games Day 🎮

Songs, prayers & Bible stories included each day

Afternoon Sessions (Intergenerational)

2.30pm – 4.30pm

 Wesley House, Leeson Park Hall, D06 N5P0

Monday: Coffee & chat

Wednesday: Board games

Friday: Quiz

Discussion, reflection & Bible readings included

Evening Sessions (Secondary School)

7-9pm Monday 13th – Friday 17th July (40 places)

 An Solas, Fortunestown Road, Tallaght, D24 XT7N

Activities will include: Active games & challenges, Creative sessions, Sports & social activities, Watch a world cup semi-final on a large screen, Discussion, reflection & Bible readings

Sunday 19th July, 10.30am – Morning worship & farewell to the Exodus Team

✅ ALL EVENTS ARE FREE

 Online sign-up and €5 deposit required

 Register at least 2 weeks in advance

For more information contact:  Andrew.kingston@irishmethodist.org  [0831520171]

G.I.G.G.L.E.S

17 Saturday 14th February, 9.30am - 1.15pm, Thomas Street Methodist Church, Portadown

AN ALL IRELAND EVENT



G.I.G.G.L.E.S

Girls In God, Growing,
Learning, Eating &
Sharing

SATURDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2026

JOY IN THE *Conference Programme* JOURNEY

A morning filled with laughter, creativity,
and encouragement, growing together in
faith and friendship.

THOMAS STREET METHODIST CHURCH, PORTADOWN
9.30AM TO 1.15PM

CREATIVE HEARTS. JOYFUL SOULS. ONE AMAZING JOURNEY.



METHODIST MODERN ART COLLECTION

EXHIBITION IN WESLEY COLLEGE
FEBRUARY 25TH, 2026
5-8 P.M.

THIS EXHIBITION IS OF TEN PRINTS OF THE ORIGINALS HELD BY THE MMAC.
ANY QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT RUTH.MATHEWS@IRISHMETHODIST.ORG

Book Club

Our book choice for February was *What we Left Unsaid* by Winnie M Li and proved to be a popular choice. Our choice for March is *None of this is Serious* by Catherine Prasifka.

We meet on the second Tuesday of the month from 12.30-2.00pm in Room 1, Wesley House. Each month we choose a book from a wide range of genres including biography, crime fiction, historical novels, humour and children's novels. We always have a lively discussion, with very varied opinions. We currently have 14 members and would be delighted to increase our numbers. If you would be interested in joining us, please contact Sylvia on sylviahroddie@gmail.com

Sky's the Limit

Sky's the Limit continues on 3rd March 2026, and 5th May 2026 (no session on the Tuesday after Easter). Please save the dates.

God's Storehouse in Tallaght

 Please put donations of non-perishable food in the basket in the Coffee Bar at Wesley House



MEET 2026
THE GAMBIA
METHODIST - EXPERIENCE - EXCHANGE - TELL

IRISH METHODIST
WORLD MISSION
PARTNERSHIP

Experience the vibrant life and ministry of the Methodist Church in The Gambia, witnessing first-hand how God's people are growing His church and reaching out to their Muslim neighbours.

- Visit schools, clinics and an agricultural project
- Share in worship, bible study and outreach with local Christians
- Learn and be inspired by God's work in The Gambia
- Build lasting relationships with our world church family
- Provisional dates 24th October - 1st November

Register your interest by speaking to your minister.

Connect ... through English

 Every Thursday, 10:30am - 12:00pm

 Room 1, Wesley House



Connect? Yes – the purpose of the Thursday morning gathering is to meet and connect with others who come to Ireland from all sorts of places, for all sorts of reasons. We chat, in English, over a cup of tea or coffee, with the facilitators taking it in turn to lead the conversation.

We never know who might come and, over the last ten years, people have come from countries on all the continents, except maybe Australia. It has been a privilege to meet everyone.

We gather on Thursday mornings in Room 1 between 10.30 and 12noon. If you might be interested in joining the facilitation team, please speak to one of us – Charles, Lesley, Liz, Lynne, Maureen, Roy and Sayjin.

If you are a relative newcomer to Ireland please come along – you will be most welcome. We can be contacted at: english@methodistcentenary.ie

Forthcoming Services at 10.30am

February 22	Service of worship with Fintan Lalor (Student Service)
March 1	Service of Holy Communion with Rev Andrew Kingston
March 8	Service of worship with Rev John Parkin
March 15	Service of worship with Rev Andrew Kingston
March 22	Service of worship with Rodney Goodwin, District Lay Leader

Local preachers

Our local preachers take services regularly on the circuit and sometimes outside it. The current preaching plan includes:

February 15	10.00 Tallaght Ms Mary Peters
February 22	10.00 Rathgar Mrs Jean Kingston
March 1	10.00 Tallaght Mr Moba Mwanzele

Giving to the church

Standing Order or Bank Transfer:

Bank: AIB Bank plc, 7/12 Dame Street, Dublin 2

Account Name: Methodist Centenary Church Council No. 3 Account

BIC: AIBKIE2D

IBAN: IE89AIBK93122526909346

Questions? Please contact Alan Perry.

Tax Back Tax Relief Scheme

A taxpayer who contributes €250 to the church in a year enables the church to recover €112.82 from the Revenue Commissioners thereby increasing the donation to €362.82, and pro rata for donations of over €250. This scheme brought in almost €20,000 last year. To register, you need a CHY3 form from Lynne Pasley. This latter is valid for 5 years and doesn't commit you to make any future donations.

Debit or credit card

A card reader is placed in the Coffee Bar each Sunday through which donations can be made using a debit or credit card.

Cheque

If you can not come to church and you contribute by cheque we ask you to post your cheque to Billy Given. You can contact him at billygiven115@gmail.com

Text for Announcements

Text for inclusion in the Announcements should be sent to news@methodistcentenary.ie. The deadline is 10.00am on Wednesday morning.

Stay Connected

 **Email:** news@methodistcentenary.ie

 **Website:** www.methodistcentenary.ie

 **Whatsapp:** [Centenary Updates](#)

THE METHODIST
CHURCH IN IRELAND

COMPELLED

A DAILY
DEVOTIONAL
FOR LENT 2026



INTRODUCTION

Lent is a season for thought and reflection as we journey towards Easter. It is a time when we can examine ourselves and invite God to bring transformation afresh to our lives. This Lent, we invite you to join with the voices and thoughts of those from across our Connexion and beyond in dwelling in the Gospel stories of Jesus.

These passages may often feel familiar, however, we trust that the living Word of God continues to speak to us afresh with every read.

In the Scripture passages and the reflections prepared, we want to explore the nature of Jesus and how he transformed the lives of all those he encountered. We will seek to notice the example that Jesus sets for us, and to take to heart the challenge of how we are to live well for Christ in this world. As we approach Holy Week, we will invite the passages of Scripture to silence us in awe and humility as we remember that this journey of Christ was for love of us.

As we dwell on these passages throughout Lent, our prayer is that we might become even more engrossed by the person and love of Christ, that it compels us to share him with others, and invites them, and us, into a deeper and richer relationship with God.

'For the love of Christ compels us.'
2 Corinthians 5:14



*Thanks are offered to all those who wrote or recorded these devotions.
We are thankful for your time, your heart, and your thoughts.*

01

WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ LUKE 2:8-20

JESUS & THE SHEPHERDS

How strange to begin Lent reading about the angels visiting the shepherds! You might think that this passage is more familiar with Advent, and you would be right. It is a story we are all very familiar with, however, this passage helps us to remember the beginning as we journey towards what seems like an end. It orientates us in a clear understanding of a promised Messiah and a God who is filled with majesty and wonder.

As we dig into this text, we can discover some important messages to take us into the forty day journey of Lent. So read the passage slowly and be brought into the wonder it teaches. As I looked at the text, here is what stood out to me: These shepherds were just doing what they always did, caring for the sheep under their care. Into the ordinariness of life, through the message of an angel, God breaks in and it becomes a holy, sacred and transformational moment in their lives. A wow moment! On this first day of Lent, whilst we go about our lives, whatever that might be, how might God break in and bring a holy, sacred or transformational moment for us? How might we see the presence of God? Maybe it will come in a text, a friendly encounter, a song, or a kindness that will touch our soul.

The Bible is full of stories of ordinary people for whom God's intervention radically changed their lives. For example, Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, the disciples, and indeed many more encountered God in ways that they least expected, yet that brought transformation and change. We must never forget that this awesome God of Scripture, is still our awesome God today.

One day, in a manse that I lived in, the door knocked and a parishioner was standing there in a bit of a state. I brought him in and listened to his story. He had been under conviction many years before by the Holy Spirit to give his life to Christ and he shrugged it off. All these years later the Spirit was moving him again and in the sitting room that day I led him to Christ and it was a wonderful moment for him and of course for me. An ordinary day became an extraordinary one and angels in heaven rejoiced. May today, and indeed this whole season of Lent, be for us more than just the ordinary, but be filled with the extraordinary, as we encounter God.



Father, on this first day of Lent we pray you will surprise us indeed, break into our lives again and remind us you are an awesome God. Amen.



Rev Alan Wardlow | President of the Methodist Church in Ireland

**READ MATTHEW 2:1-12***JESUS & THE MAGI*

Worship is a prominent feature which surfaces three times in this short passage. The first two instances correspond to worshipful desires, but only one is legitimate (cf. Matt. 2:13ff.). The third depicts an act of worship, as the Magi bow in reverence to pay homage to the Christ child, Jesus.

That worship should be the predominant note sounding forth from this early event in Matthew's Gospel is not surprising, especially when we remember the birth of Jesus occurs in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy bringing Immanuel, God-with-us, onto the human scene (Matt. 1:22-23). Worship is, of course, a fitting response to such a momentous work of God! What is surprising, however, is the identity of those who first worship Jesus here. Not those of the Levitical priestly line, nor those from the Jewish religious tradition, but eastern astrologers from beyond the boundaries of Israel. Surely this first worshipful scene, along with the great commission which closes Matthew's Gospel, reminds us that Jesus is worthy of worship on a global scale from every tribe and tongue (cf. Matt. 28:16-20).

But what of the nature of the Magi's worship? There is mystery here for sure, and possibly connections with the witness of Daniel and co. from times past. Exactly how the Magi came to associate miraculous events in the night sky with the coming of Christ is beyond us. What we do know is that they responded to what God had orchestrated among the constellations and their actions were characterised by joyful, worshipful recognition of Jesus as King. They bowed before him, child that he was, opening their treasures to honour him.

Deep joy is available for us today. God has graciously revealed his Son to us and we are invited to bow before the loving Lordship of Jesus, the King of Kings, just as the Magi did. In life we can treasure all manner of things. It may be our time, our resources, our reputation, our preferences and so on. Like the eastern Magi with their treasures, can we surrender such things for the honour and worship of King Jesus? The very opportunity to do so is a gift made available to us by our Great King, ours is the pleasure and privilege to respond.



Father in Heaven, your Son, the Lord Jesus, is King of Kings and Lord of lords. He is worthy of worship from every tribe and tongue. Help me to honour him by bowing to his loving Lordship over me. Amen.



FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ LUKE 2:22-38

JESUS, SIMEON & ANNA

Simeon was a close follower of God. He was “righteous and devout”, a believer knowing the theology of the Messiah and waiting expectantly for God to be at work. Yet it was only when he saw and met Jesus personally that his belief and his prayer became joyful proclamation. The difference was “my eyes have seen”. Now the theology was personal. Meeting the Messiah generated an innate urge to tell out the news.

Again with Anna. Her whole life was one of prayer, fasting and worship – Wow! She was surely tuned in to what God was doing. Yet, similarly to Simeon, it was actually meeting with Jesus that provoked her to speak about him to everyone around.

In Simeon and Anna we catch a glimpse of the two-sided rhythm of following Jesus, namely seeking after him and then sharing him as we meet him. Both Simeon and Anna were faithful in studying Scripture, prayer and worship. They were constantly seeking after God. This seeking led to a personal encounter which compelled them to proclaim.

In our daily lives we need to seek regular personal 'meetings' with Jesus if we are to proclaim him authentically and effectively.

On City Road in London, beside Wesley Chapel, stands the last house that John Wesley lived in. Adjoining his bedroom there's a tiny little room sometimes described as the 'powerhouse of Methodism'. Wesley records that every morning he would rise at 4am and go into that little room where he would spend time in prayer and reading the Bible – meeting with Jesus.

When I first visited that room in 1989 there was a little quote on the table saying, “Here I come. I sit, I think, I read, I pray. And what I hear I preach.”

While not a direct quote, it encapsulates how Wesley's compulsion to preach was fuelled by his daily meeting with Jesus.



Lord, help me to make space every day to seek you so that as I meet you in my own life, I share you with others. Amen.





READ LUKE 2:41-52

JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

This passage gives us a glimpse of Jesus at age 12. Every year, Mary and Joseph would go to Jerusalem for the Passover; however, this would be unlike any of their journeys so far. They were unaware that Jesus had stayed behind in Jerusalem.

After frantically searching for three days, young Jesus is found in the temple courts, deep in conversation with teachers. The scripture tells us that everyone who heard him was amazed, not by his age but by his wisdom and understanding.

When Jesus is found, Mary responds like any parent, 'Why have you treated us like this?' Jesus responds, 'Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?' Jesus is stepping into his identity as the Son of God. This response is pointing us and his parents to something much deeper - in this moment their eyes are opened a little more to who Jesus is.

Mary was looking for her child, the boy she raised and loved. But that's just it, Mary was looking for a boy, not the young man in the temple, astounding religious leaders! Mary knew who Jesus was, and here we see that even his parents had more to grasp about Jesus' identity. Her eyes needed redirected to the things of God. Mary needed to stop seeing Jesus as her little boy and instead she needed to see Jesus as he was stepping into his identity as the Son of God.

This moment in the temple marks a shift. Jesus is already living out his divine purpose, even as a young boy. Meeting Jesus, even at such a young age, caused people to marvel and see differently. As we encounter Jesus, our eyes are opened to the things of God.

What is Jesus opening your eyes to in this season of Lent?



Gracious God, we pray that you would open our eyes and give us a fresh vision of who you are, and may your love compel us to share who you are with those around us. Amen.



LENT

1

SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY, 2026



As we have begun this journey into Lent we have focused on those who first encountered the young Jesus. Even in those early days, the miraculous and the majestic was evident to be seen. Shepherds, Magi, prophets and parents were all brought to a place of awe as they began to glimpse just what God was doing. God was with them. The Messiah had come.

Lent invites us to take space to reflect and journey. To intentionally dwell on the saving grace and truth of Christ, and to be transformed because of it.

This Sunday, as you reflect on the passages, ponder on how you have known and experienced the miraculous and majestic of God in your life. How can you testify of the impact and influence of Christ in your journey?

Invite God, in prayer, to renew your vision to see where he is at work, in and through you.



Majestic God, Lord of all, call us into a greater sense of your presence. Remind us of your majesty and wonder as we journey through our often busy days. May this Lent invite us to walk slowly with Christ, to be caught in the awe and wonder of majesty, and to be expectant of the miraculous each day. Amen.



05

MONDAY 23 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ MATTHEW 4:18-22

JESUS CALLS SIMON & ANDREW

Today's passage is very familiar, and that can be either good or bad! Good, because phrases within it can come easily to mind like, 'I will make you fishers of men' (this is the wording probably most often quoted); and bad, because it's easy to skim over it.

For many years I was troubled by the fact that the two sets of brothers 'dropped everything' and left with Jesus – leaving home and family life behind. Read on its own, it's almost as though they were mesmerised by Jesus and I found that uncomfortable. All four gospel writers include the story of Jesus calling the first disciples – each of the accounts is slightly different and that helps to give a fuller picture. In John's gospel, for example, we read that certainly Andrew had already met Jesus and spent a day with him, learning enough of Jesus in that time to go and tell his brother Simon Peter, 'We have found the Messiah'.

Whatever they saw in those first interactions was enough to convince them to become followers, and in their subsequent years together, they listened to his teaching and observed how he dealt with people: reaching out to the marginalised, offering forgiveness and healing and challenging the harmful religiosity of the Pharisees. In those early days of their decision, they could have had no idea of the journey that lay ahead, both difficult and joyous – but I'm sure as they looked back, they didn't regret their choice.

Take a moment to consider how you first encountered Jesus. In what ways have you followed him? In what ways have you changed? In what ways have you been blessed? And if you feel you've 'played it too safe' or haven't really stepped out in trust, it's not too late – because, like the disciples, as you look back, you won't regret drawing closer.



Loving God, we give you thanks that you continue to call men and women to follow and serve you; help us to play our part in introducing people to Jesus so that they too may become followers. Amen.



Ms Elaine Barnett | Connexional Lay Leader of the Methodist Church in Ireland

06

TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ MATTHEW 9:9-13

JESUS CALLS MATTHEW

Today's devotion is centred on Jesus calling Matthew, it's another of the passages that points to the lavish love of God for sinners. Jesus did not choose someone who was respected or righteous in the eyes of the society. Matthew was a tax collector, so was despised and considered a traitor as he worked for the Roman government. He was labelled a sinner as tax collectors were associated with corrupt tendencies (Luke 19: 8). Yet, Jesus saw beyond the stigma. In Matthew, he saw a man worthy of redeeming. When Jesus called him, his life was radically changed. He left behind his old ways and started a new journey with Jesus.

There are a few insights we can draw from this passage: First, Jesus does not wait for us to "fix ourselves". He meets us where we are, at our tax booth, in our own mess, in our sin, and invites us into a new life with him. The presence of Jesus in an individual's life, transforms shame into purpose, brokenness into testimony, and outcasts into beloved disciples. Matthew's story is a story for you and for me, we are invited into the commonwealth of God not because we're worthy, but because of Christ's love for us.

The second insight we can draw from this passage is that, as recipients of God's grace, we are duty bound to share the good news of Christ with sinners like us. We are called upon to resist the temptation of the Pharisees, who questioned Jesus's invitation and acceptance of sinners and outcasts. We are called upon to view people through the eyes of Jesus and never judge people based on their weaknesses. The church of God is a spiritual hospital where those who are spiritually sick will receive their healing. The impact of Jesus is this: he calls us, he heals us, and he gives us a new identity, not based on our past, but based on his grace.



Lord Jesus, thank you for seeing me when others may have overlooked me. Help me to see others through the same lens. Amen.



Rev Tawanda Sungai | Southern District Minister

07

WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ JOHN 1:43-51

JESUS CALLS PHILIP & NATHANAEAL

Have you ever had someone change your life with just a few words? That's what happened to Philip when Jesus found Him in Galilee. Before Philip even knew what he needed, Jesus said to him, "Come, follow Me." And immediately, Philip dropped everything and followed. There was something in Jesus' voice—authority, love, purpose— that compelled Philip to follow Him.

But it didn't stop there. The first thing Philip did was to go and find someone else. He looked for Nathanael and told him all about Jesus. Philip didn't wait until he had it all figured out. He didn't sit through weeks of sermons or Bible studies before sharing his faith. He had barely met Jesus, and already he was compelled to share the good news with someone else. When Nathanael put up an excuse—"Can anything good come from Nazareth?"—Philip didn't argue. He didn't try to win a debate or convince him with perfect answers. He just said, "Come and see for yourself" (v46b). That was it. No theological debate, no cajoling - just a simple invite to meet Jesus for himself. A few simple words that would change Nathanael's life.

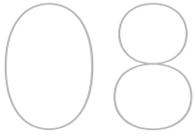
This is evangelism. It's not about having all the answers. It's not about being a polished speaker or expert on Scripture. It's about being real. About saying, "I met Jesus, and it changed me. Come see for yourself." We're not responsible for how people respond—we're just called to invite. If you have met Jesus - His love should compel you to tell others. Who do you know that needs to hear that simple, life-changing invitation today? Who can you invite to 'Come and see' for themselves?



Jesus, give me the courage today to simply invite someone to meet you and help me to trust you to do the rest. Amen.



Ms Nicky Hazley | North Eastern Lay Worker



THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ LUKE 6:12-19

JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE APOSTLES

I love walking up a mountain to its peak, but I also love walking down again to 'normality'. This account in Luke's Gospel tells us of something really important happening on the mountain top and also then about something really important when Jesus returned to flatter ground.

This all-nighter for Jesus in prayer was so crucial. It didn't happen every night, but was crucial for this point. Maybe it should challenge us that there may be an occasion when we should set aside a longer or other more significant time of prayer and devotion than normal. This all night prayer is obviously linked to what came after – the calling of the disciples – possibly teenagers. However, it may also be linked to what Luke recorded just before it – Jesus enraging the religious leaders with his non-conformity to their legalistic expectations.

The church today too easily leans towards conformity to the expectations of the influential people, the establishment who make the loudest threats, instead of seeing the opportunity in a young generation with all their unpredictability and questionable idealism. But what is happening with Jesus is not a leaning towards the radical over the traditional, or the rebellious over the establishment – it's a leaning into God. And it's from that place, that Jesus is led to those with whom he should most closely work with.

Prayer is a leveller – fixing our eyes on Jesus should cause us to stop swooning over religious or political fame and cause us to see who God sees. The mountaintop is not merely for some religious high, but for us to be on our knees and be open to the Holy Spirit. And down on the plain, God will use ordinary disciples, like the first twelve he called, like you and me, in a world of need.



God, thank you that you see me – yes, even me – and somehow think that I'm worth being called to be a disciple. Amen.



Rev Steven Foster | Southern District Minister & Pioneer Mission Leader

09

FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ JOHN 3:1-21

JESUS TALKS WITH NICODEMUS

The starting point for mission is to accept people as human beings and relate to them as such. This position is clearly visible in the life and ministry of Jesus. He presents the love of God to all, demonstrating that in God, there is no discrimination.

The story of Nicodemus resonates with this. I appreciate this story, and especially verse 2, because I come from The Gambia where more than 90% of the population are non-Christian. With such a small number of Christians in the country, one could easily believe that our influence would be insignificant.

But the words of Nicodemus in verse 2 speak clearly to us in this regard: ‘... we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him’. Just as the power of God was clearly visible in the life of Jesus and His small group of disciples, people of other faiths are seeing grace in Gambian Christians today. We are delighted to show that the Gospel is truth, and that truth will set us free. We know that we have something that is relevant for our society and we must guard, share and maintain it.

However, we also recognise that accepting grace isn't always easy - especially for those coming from other faiths. Nicodemus came to Jesus in secret, but Jesus did not condemn him for coming at night or undercover. He received Nicodemus as a human in need of salvation, and related to him as such. In The Gambia, we have had similar experiences: high-ranking members of other faiths visiting us at night, seeking God. We aim to receive these visits just as Jesus did, without discrimination. In doing so, we demonstrate his grace in the mission and life of the Church.



Gracious and welcoming God, help us to appreciate human beings and share your grace with all who you allow to come across our path. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



The Most Rev **Bannie E F Manga** | Presiding Bishop, Methodist Church, The Gambia

10

SATURDAY 28 FEBRUARY, 2026



READ LUKE 19:1-10

JESUS CALLS ZACCHAEUS

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and they were the most disliked people in Israel, they were considered traitors working for unpleasant Romans and often taking more than they should. When Jesus entered Jericho, Zacchaeus was determined to see him. As he was too short to see over the crowd, he ran and climbed a sycamore fig. How courageous was Zacchaeus to climb the tree! He could have just stood back, hidden in the crowd of people but he did not.

The Jews were surprised with the reception Zacchaeus got from Jesus when he stopped and looked up and called him by name "Zacchaeus... Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." The people muttered and were displeased which demonstrates the broken relationship between Zacchaeus and the people but Jesus was not interested in the public opinion.

Do you ever feel like you're not "good enough" for Jesus? How often do we apply the same judgments on ourselves, or sometimes other people, because of political views, moral failures or simply life choices. We should not give into social pressure. Instead act on them, like Zacchaeus, who demonstrated inner change by outward action, doing the right thing not the popular thing and suggested giving back the people four times as much as he had cheated them out of.

Remember Zacchaeus climbing the tree. Jesus sees you. He calls you by name. Let him come into your life, you don't have to wait. Through faith, the lost can be forgiven and made new.



Thank You Jesus for seeing me, especially in the times when I feel unseen. Help me to be brave like Zacchaeus to open the door of my heart and let you in. Amen.



Ms Sarah Baker | Southern District Young Adult



Over the last week we have heard or read many passages where Jesus has called people to come and follow him. Each one has shown us that Jesus did not have a standard of perfection which was applied to those that were called, but rather it was the everyday ordinary people who were invited to respond. It was people with flaws, sometimes the overlooked, or even rejected. If you were to pull a team together, you would probably seek out the strongest, most equipped set of people. However, Jesus models that discipleship is a journey, and the best team are those who come with an openness to learn and an obedience to follow.

We have also discovered in the passages of the last week that the transformation of Christ was such in a person's life that they could not keep from sharing it. These early disciples model for us that discipleship is a journey that ought to be shared.

This Sunday, as you reflect on the call of those that are shared with us in Scripture, give thanks that this call of Christ is extended to you also.

Make some space today to pray, thanking God that he has called you by name and you are his.

Invite God to speak to you about the call he has placed on your life. How might he be calling you in this season, and who could you share this with?



Lord, give us the courage to follow as you call. Amen.



11

MONDAY 02 MARCH, 2026



READ JOHN 2:1-12

JESUS BLESSES A WEDDING

I love this story of Jesus at the wedding in Cana. In the year of my ordination, I had the privilege of visiting the Holy Land, and on that trip we visited Cana of Galilee where Jesus had performed his first miracle. The church there had an amazing mural of Jesus praying over the water pots at the wedding, and in a little souvenir shop, they had what looked like an egg timer, with clear liquid in it (which I still regret not buying). When you would turn this egg timer upside down the liquid somehow turned to red – it was a fitting reminder of this story.

What strikes me in this passage is that Jesus, in verse 4, does not want to get involved in this unfolding situation, 'My time has not yet come' he says. However, his mother Mary does not give up coaxing him to help and instructs the servers to, 'do whatever he tells you'. Despite Jesus' earlier pronouncement of his time having not yet come, he becomes fully involved and does the miraculous by turning a huge quantity of water into the finest of wine. This saved the family from public embarrassment and allowed the festivities and joy of the moment to continue. This was the first of the signs through which Jesus revealed his glory to others. In what he did, he displayed the miraculous, whilst also showing compassion and care to the hosting family.

Never believe the untruth that the Lord is not interested in you or me - the opposite is the truth. All of us matter, our concerns, our worries, our troubles and joys make us who we are as people. We are loved and cared for by Jesus, at times more than we can ever know or appreciate. As the gospel song says: 'His eye is on the sparrow and he watches over you'.

Let us pray today for any we know, or even ourselves, for the miracle which may be so desperately needed. Let us use the old chorus, '*I do not know what lies ahead*', as our prayer.



Dear Lord

*I know who holds the future
and he'll guide me with his hand
with God things don't just happen
everything by Him is planned.
So as I face tomorrow, with its problems large and small
I'll trust the God of miracles
give to Him my all. Amen.*



Rev Alan Wardlow | President of the Methodist Church in Ireland

12

TUESDAY 03 MARCH, 2026



READ MATTHEW 14:13-21

JESUS FEEDS 5,000

This passage is rich in showing us who Jesus is. After hearing about the death of John the Baptist, Jesus withdraws on a boat to a deserted place by himself. We can imagine his sense of loss in this moment and his need to be with his Father in prayer. However, the people still follow him, and when Jesus went ashore and sees the great crowd that awaits he is filled with compassion for them. Where the disciples want to send the crowd away, Jesus chooses to respond to the need in front of him. The sick were healed, the crowd were fed, and Jesus was with them.

Do we have this heart of Jesus to be moved with compassion for those we are faced with? To set self aside, and respond to the needs of others?

Who do we choose to have compassion for? Sometimes we keep our circle small, only welcoming those who we decide we should have compassion for. However, Jesus compels us to have compassion on all his people. The outsiders, those we disagree with, the prisoners, the refugees, the other. Jesus met the immediate needs of the people! He was not selective. This is the example he sets for us.

Do the blessings we receive from God compel us to touch the lives of others? Do we hold our hands tightly? Or are they free and open? Notice how Jesus asked the disciples to give the crowd something to eat. Why did he say this? Could it be Jesus wanted the disciples to work in partnership with him? Jesus was also testing their faith. As a result, we see Jesus' power and the participation of the disciples.

We might think we don't have much to offer, but God can use what we have. God calls us into partnership with Him. As we observe Jesus' interactions in this passage, surely our actions should point people to Jesus. Love is action.



Heavenly Father, help us to show your compassion and seek to work for your Kingdom and glory. Amen.



Ms Carolyn Hall | North Eastern District Local Preacher

**READ MATTHEW 14:22-33***JESUS WALKS ON WATER*

This story follows the disciples through an experience many of us can unknowingly relate to. We must understand that Jesus' ability to walk on water is because he is above all things including death. He did not NEED the storm to be still. The disciples however are solely human beings and were consumed with fear.

Fear and doubt can mess with our perception, so when Jesus reached the disciples they mistook the Lord for a ghost. Their fear withheld them from being able to seek refuge in the Lord and instead caused them to test him. "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

The memorable moment of Peter's opportunity to walk on water can be symbolised as many things, but we can all agree it had nothing to do with Peter and everything to do with who he believed in, for there is strength in where your faith lies. A brief moment of doubt caused Peter to sink.

Jesus says to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt." Though even when the Lord answered Peter's plea to be saved, the waves and winds were just as strong as before. But in verse 32, we read that only when Jesus entered the SAME boat alongside the disciples did the wind cease, ending the storm.

The "storm" can be a season in our lives where we are consumed with fear and doubt. But in those moments we must remember that there is refuge in the Lord. This story reminds us that we can do many things scared, but our faith should be greater than our doubt. Peter walked scared, but sunk because of his doubt.

Invite the Lord into your situation, for his presence will help you rise above the waves and his timing will calm the storm.



Lord, help us to remember that you are our refuge. May our faith in you grow stronger each day. Amen.



14

THURSDAY 05 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 5:1-20

JESUS HEALS THE GERASENE DEMONIAK

In August 2025 KPop Demon Hunters became Netflix's most viewed film ever. The premise of the film revolves around mythical demon hunters whose power comes from their music. KPop demon hunters protect their fans from ever present supernatural danger. Jesus was never called a 'demon hunter' but he certainly had the ability to recognise and deal with the presence of evil spirits.

Jesus had spoken to the demon and said 'come out of the man, you evil spirit' (v8) after the man had made his way to Jesus. A man who lived in burial caves, self-harmed, couldn't be restrained, an outcast from the rest of society. Yet, when he had an encounter with Jesus, he was set free. Visibly set free as verse 15 shows 'he was sitting there fully clothed and perfectly sane'. What a transformation! News spread, both of the man's transformation and the drowning of the pigs and with that news, the crowd pleaded with Jesus to leave them alone not recognising the good news that this was.

The power of Jesus was displayed, as was his compassion for the man. The transformed man wanted to go, follow and be with Jesus but Jesus wouldn't allow it. Instead, Jesus gave the man a mission to 'go home....and tell them everything...' The man was obedient and went. I imagine that his transformed appearance alone, as he showed up among family, spoke volumes, never mind the impact of his eye witness account of how Jesus had set him free and healed him.

I wonder who are the people we know who need the power and compassion of Jesus to do for them what only Jesus can do, transform their lives. We're not 'demon hunters' but we can share the power and compassion of Jesus and watch what Jesus does.



Holy God, give us strength and courage and fill us with your enabling Spirit to share Jesus with those who need Jesus to do what only Jesus can do for them. Amen.



Rev Karen Spence | North Eastern District Minister

15

FRIDAY 06 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 4:35-41

JESUS STILLS THE STORM

We might know this story quite well and have heard it read and taught many times. But maybe read it over a few times or listen to it on the Bible app or read it with someone. Place yourself in each part - the disciples, the crowd, Jesus, the other boats in the sea, in the boat, etc. The different angles give different perspectives and great insight into the relational dynamics in this story.

Jesus had been teaching, sharing, and explaining alongside the disciples for days and then they got in a boat to travel away from the crowds. Jesus slept...on a cushion, at that...sure, he was tired. And the disciples were startled by this great storm which is upon them and naturally they gave out to Jesus for sleeping through it. They felt he didn't care.

But what does Jesus do? Does He freak out or yell or even laugh at them? No, he calmly calms the storm, he opens their eyes to his power and status as the Almighty God. He had, for days, been revealing to them the secrets of the parables and stories but now, he's revealing to them before their eyes his strength and majesty. He nudges them about their (very realistic) fear and questions, their forgetful minds about who they are in the boat with. He compels them to see and try to comprehend his powerful presence. The last verse tells us that they are still fearful...this fear seems different than the fear of the storm. This is a sort of awe and overwhelming wonder for what they have just witnessed.

I wonder what we would have done if we had been in that boat with Jesus? How would you have responded? How might you bring this to the Lord today?



Father God, help us hear from you today through this passage. Jesus our Saviour and Friend, help us to see your presence in our lives as the disciples did on that boat. Holy Spirit, comfort us with your care and help us marvel at your power. May we have the courage to trust you, Triune God, in our (sometimes stormy) ordinary lives as we seek your Kingdom here on earth. Amen.



Ms Anne Baenziger | Southern District Pioneer Mission Leader

16

SATURDAY 07 MARCH, 2026



READ JOHN 11:28-44

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS

A familiar story in the Bible that symbolises our relationships with life and death, family and faith, society and the spiritual. Our Lord took on the human form to understand, to appreciate and to love the humanity that he had come to save. This scripture reminds us of the vulnerability of Jesus, and it tells us several times that he is moved and troubled. In verse 35, it simply notes 'Jesus wept.' A profound and moving image of the Christ, weeping for the loss of Lazarus, who was like family to Jesus; weeping for the people who simply did not understand who he was; and weeping for the authorities who would challenge and criticise, yet to love was all that was required.

Within the story of death, life is brought forward. The key verse highlights what Jesus must be feeling when "Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

Martha, ever practical, reminded Jesus of the awful smell on removing the stone; the rabble had seen Jesus perform other miracles and seemed to feel that he could not raise the dead, hence his delay in coming to the family. Mary, on the other hand, runs to meet Jesus, happy to just be where he is. But her grief and that of the Jews who were mourning with the family prompted Jesus to move. Clearly moved by the sadness, for Lazarus sounded like a wonderful man, devoted brother to sisters who deeply mourned his passing.

In his prayer to his Father, Jesus wanted to show that he was the Son of God, so called on the resurrection of Lazarus. This miracle destroyed the detractors, increased faith in the family and presented Jesus' power. All relationships impacted for the good, despite the preceding sadness, the time of celebration would have been immense. A template for us too. Trouble, grief, sadness, heartache comes to us all, but our belief and faith will show the glory of God and love of Jesus.



Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that when all around seems lost and there appears no hope, you will honour our faith and belief in answered prayers. Amen.



Ms Beverley Barbour | Southern District Lay Worker

LENT

3

SUNDAY 08 MARCH, 2026



In this last week the passages have all focused on the miraculous power of Jesus. We have seen his power over nature in stilling raging storms, we have seen his power over the supernatural restoring and transforming a man's life. We have heard of loaves and fishes multiplied to feed 5,000 and water turned into wine. We also have testimony of a man raised from death to life.

There is a wealth we can draw from these stories. However, for today, as you reflect on the passages, remain in the miraculous.

Here you have a God, revealed to us in Christ, who is powerful and amazing and able to do all things.

Take a walk, or go and sit somewhere that you can see outside. In the quiet, observe the skill of the Creator God that nature reveals to us. Be reminded that he is Lord over all things. Our God is able.

Give thanks, over and over and over again, that the God of all things is the God who has such great love for you.

Read Psalm 95:1-7 as a way into worship and prayer.



Almighty God, you are so great and so very good. We are so thankful for you. Grant us a sense of awe and expectation as we wait on you. Come and be the miraculous in our lives and the lives of those around us. Amen.



17

MONDAY 09 MARCH, 2026



READ MATTHEW 8:5-13

JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT

Reading this passage through the lens of the 21st century, we might not notice how remarkable this story is. First, we have the fact that the centurion came to Jesus. In the earlier chapters of Matthew we read of how crowds were following Jesus. His fame had certainly spread, and many people had been healed, including 'those suffering severe pain .. and the paralysed' (Matt 4:24). This is perhaps the same condition that was affecting the Centurion's servant and therefore what prompted him to seek out Jesus. But in doing so, he crossed racial, social, and political barriers to make the approach. The Jews of the time hated the Romans for their oppressive rule and, as Gentiles, considered them 'unclean'. This man, as a centurion, was a career military officer in that despised regime and many in the crowd would have been surprised at the interaction.

The second remarkable aspect, for that time and place, was Jesus' response. Of all the gospel writers, Matthew is the one who writes primarily for a Jewish audience, and chapter 8 contains the healing of three people the Jews typically avoided: in addition to the Centurion's servant, a Gentile, Jesus touches a leper to heal him; and Peter's mother-in-law is sick and he heals her – a woman. The Centurion says there's no need for Jesus to come – just say it – and we read that Jesus is astonished at his faith.

Verses 11-12 give a very clear indication that the coming Kingdom of Heaven is not going to be all the Jews had anticipated.

The Centurion came with compassionate concern for someone else, but didn't tell Jesus what he wanted; he simply presented the need to Jesus and then, in trust, left the response to him.



Loving God, we bring before you those known to us who are in need or suffering, trusting in your power, your compassion, and your wisdom. Amen.



Ms Elaine Barnett | Connexional Lay Leader of the Methodist Church in Ireland

18

TUESDAY 10 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 1:29-34

JESUS HEALS AT SIMON'S HOUSE

In this passage Jesus' healing power is in full display both communal and individually. Jesus is taken to the house of Simon and Andrew, where he is told of Simon's poorly mother-in-law. Jesus goes to her and helps her up, ridding the fever from her immediately. Then "she began to wait on them." She tends to Jesus without any request, she feels compelled to serve after being saved by Jesus.

It shows that when Christ lifts us up, he restores us not only to full health but also to purpose. This is her first action after being restored to full health, this inward work of grace compels her into showing an outward expression of gratitude and love. The woman's willingness and want to serve after she has been saved can be used as an example of the way we as Christians should live our lives. In Mark 10:45 Jesus states that "even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve".

The story in this passage doesn't just end in the home of Simon and Andrew. "The whole town gathered at the door," People had brought the sick and the weary to be saved having heard the news of how the woman was saved. The personal grace that restored one woman overflows into a community-wide witness. They were faithful to Jesus and were compelled to bring others to be saved by him. What began as a touch in a home, grew into a movement at the doorstep.

This is what this verse does, it restores us personally and compels us outwardly. Like Simon's mother-in-law we shall rise to serve. We shall carry others to Jesus to be saved, and the grace we have received will become grace that we have shared.

When has Jesus "taken you by the hand" and lifted you up? How can gratitude from his restoring touch compel you into acts of service today? Is there a way your personal story may draw others to Christ, just as Simon's house became a doorway for others?



Lord Jesus, thank you that you see us, reach for us and lift us up. Restore us to wholeness and compel us to serve in love. May our lives bear witness to your healing so that others, too, may be drawn to you. Amen.



Mr Simon Doherty | North Western District Youth Leader

19

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 2:1-12

JESUS HEALS A PARALYZED MAN

In verse 1 we see Jesus returning to Capernaum (it appears he was living there). In Chapter 1 we see the reaction to Jesus, “Everyone was incredulous, buzzing with curiosity” (The Message). Jesus had already healed in Capernaum, and the word was out, so everybody gathered, till there was no room in the house.

Can you imagine, you are in the crowd – here is the scene – hot, sweaty, smelly, not an inch of room to move, you are straining to hear the words of Jesus. Probably most of the people there are looking for a healing. Then, the roof starts to fall in on you, dirt and dust everywhere. When you look up you see the 3 or 4 men peering in and it looks like they have a man on a stretcher. You have a moment’s thought for the owner of the house (it is one thing to open your home to Jesus, but to have your roof opened up!) Then the stretcher is lowered down, and everybody moves back somehow, and the stretcher with the man on it is beside Jesus. Am I going to see the healing I had come for? But Jesus says to the man “Your sins are forgiven” - Nobody was expecting it, especially the Teachers of the Law, from the look on their faces! Then Jesus says to the man “Take up your mat and go home” and do you know what, he did – he absolutely strode out, head held high, going to tell his friends and family.

I love the determination of the paralyzed man’s friends in this story. We are not told how long this man had been paralyzed, but I like to think, they had been friends for a long while, and they probably had heard Jesus the last time he was in Capernaum, and thought we must bring our friend to see Jesus, and Jesus rewarded their faith and tenacity. They weren’t put off by a big crowd and full house – they were not going to be thwarted!

Who are our friends, that we would love to introduce to Jesus? Keep those friendships going, keep praying and when the right opportunity arises, take it, with gusto and gentleness (don’t drop the stretcher!)



Lord, help me to be a determined, gentle, prayerful friend to those of my friends who have not yet met you. Amen.



Mr Bruce Mullen | Southern District Local Preacher

20

THURSDAY 12 MARCH, 2026



READ LUKE 7:11-17

JESUS HEALS THE WIDOW'S SON

Jesus is walking into a small town called Nain. He reaches the entrance and a funeral procession passes by. People are out in the streets supporting a woman whose world has just fallen apart. She's not just grieving her son, she's a widow; she has already buried her husband and now she's walking behind her son.

What I love about this story is that Jesus sees her, not just the crowd, not just the situation but he sees her.

It's funny, the first thing I thought of when I read this passage was my granny. It would have been her common phrase, "Ach my heart goes out 'til her". (Her idea of having compassion and sympathy towards someone.) Luke writes "His heart went out to her." Jesus feels her pain and before he even utters a word, before he acts, he is moved by compassion.

I don't know about you but I often believe the lie that Jesus only shows up when we are doing well in our walk with him, when we're in a good place and when we're doing those Christian things we do. But this woman isn't doing any of that. She's broken and that's what moves him towards her. Jesus moves towards her and says "Don't cry." Then he reaches out and places his hand on the coffin doing something no one was expecting and her son is brought back to life.

Jesus doesn't just fix a problem. He restores hope. He gives her, her future back. The message I pull from this passage every time I read it is simple! The love of Jesus always moves towards pain not away from it. I think of times here in Braniel, families walking behind a coffin, the quiet wait for news on someone who's had a stroke, someone sitting at the table after getting bad news, knowing life will never be the same. But Jesus meets us there! As we journey through Lent, my prayer is that we don't just admire what Jesus did but to be so encouraged and motivated by his compassion that his love compels us to approach the hurting, the outcasts and the invisible just like he did.



Lord, thank you that you see us in our pain. Fill us with Your compassion so we can carry your love to others. Amen.



Mr Neil Curran | North Eastern District Pioneer Mission Leader

21

FRIDAY 13 MARCH, 2026



READ LUKE 17:11-19

JESUS HEALS TEN LEPERS

As Jesus continued His journey toward Jerusalem and the cross, he encountered ten lepers who cried out for mercy. Jesus sent them to show themselves to the priests, and along the way they were healed. Yet only one—a Samaritan—returned, praising God and falling at Jesus' feet in gratitude. To him, Jesus declared, "Your faith has made you well."

The Samaritan's faith was not shown merely in his cry for help but in his thankful response. All ten received physical healing, but only this one received the deeper gift of salvation. The nine got what they wanted; the one who returned received far more—complete restoration by God.

This story reminds us how easily we can take God's blessings for granted. We have so much to be thankful for: shelter, food, education for our children, health care, and the love of family and friends. We live in a country where, even in times of need, support is available. Compared to millions who go hungry daily, or Christians who cannot worship freely, we are richly blessed.

Yet the greatest gift of all is Jesus Christ himself. In this Lenten season, we remember that God sent his Son to the cross in our place, offering us forgiveness, new life, and salvation. Nothing demonstrates God's love more clearly.

Still, like the nine lepers, we often forget to return in gratitude. Lent calls us to turn back—to the cross, to Christ, to thanksgiving. Gratitude is more than polite words; it is the posture of a heart that recognizes God as the giver of every good gift.

May we be like the Samaritan: praising God with joy, giving thanks daily, and living lives shaped by gratitude for all God has done.



Lord, open my eyes to your blessings, like the Samaritan, and teach me to give thanks always. Amen.



Rev Paul Maxwell | Convenor of World Development & Relief



READ MARK 10:46-52

JESUS HEALS BARTIMAEUS

Most of us will be familiar with the story of the blind beggar Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus means 'son of honour', however he is in anything but an honourable position. As a blind beggar, he had a precarious and vulnerable existence, reliant on being seen by others and aided by their generosity. Existing on the margins of society.

His actions on this day were also frowned upon. As he called out to Jesus, others rebuked him and tried to silence him. Yet despite this he knew he needed Jesus and shouted louder; he would not be silenced. He persisted, calling out despite opposition and obstacles, because his need of Jesus was greater than both. Are we persistent in our pursuit of Jesus? Or do we get distracted and discouraged by circumstances and those around us?

Jesus noticed. Jesus heard his cry. Jesus stopped and called for him to come and the crowds' attitude changed towards Bartimaeus.

We don't always see the world through Jesus' eyes, but we also don't want to be the voice of distraction and discouragement that hinders those in need of an encounter with him. As we go through today, could we take our lead from Jesus? To notice and hear the cry of others, and to stop and invite the encounter.

As Bartimaeus stood before Jesus, his request was simple, "Rabbi, I want to see." He needed to be restored. Restored physically but also from the margins of society. Moreover, he had a spiritual encounter, for it was his faith that healed him. The blind man on the side of the road, calling Jesus the "Son of David", seemed to have more insight into the identity of the Messiah than those Jesus had been predicting his death to. His faith healed him, and his faith caused him to leave behind everything and follow Jesus towards the cross.



Father, give me the faith today to seek you with persistence despite obstacles and opposition; and to follow you, responding with your eyes and ears to the world around me. Rabbi, I want to see. Amen.



LENT

4

SUNDAY 15 MARCH, 2026



In these last six days we have read stories in which people have encountered Jesus and been healed. Each encounter has witnessed to Jesus meeting people at their point of need and bringing restoration in body, mind and soul. An encounter with Jesus is truly transformational.

It would be true to also say that the work of Jesus in healing an individual also impacted on those around them too, whether that be their community, their friends or their family. The impact of Jesus was widely felt. The power of Jesus was evidently on display.

Today, think on this healing power of Jesus. Who are the people that come to mind?

Why not write the names of those who come to mind on a piece of paper, and place it somewhere that you will see it regularly and commit to pray for those mentioned, that God would bring healing.

Perhaps, today, it is you that needs to receive healing from Jesus. Spend some time in silence and invite God to make himself known to you today.



Healing Lord, give us an expectation of great hope as we invite you to bring your healing power into the lives of those we know and love. Amen.



23

MONDAY 16 MARCH, 2026



READ MATTHEW 9:18-26

JESUS HEALS JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

I once heard this passage described as a miracle on the way to a miracle. What a wonderful day for two women! One older, it would seem, and one younger. Whilst we could delve into the background of this passage, what strikes me, is the compassion of Jesus which crosses the social norms of his day, and the spotlight of this passage falls on women who really had little status, and whom for the Jews, more often were seen and not heard.

The world is full of people who suffer for one reason or another: class, colour, creed, gender, religion, the list is endless. The fact that Jesus broke barriers and engaged with everyone, is a challenge to us all and not something I particularly picked up on, when I have preached from this passage. However, it is wonderful that the Bible is so full of riches and the more we dig, the more we discover. So apart from the obvious, the wonderful miracles that took place as these women reached out to Jesus, I think of Jesus crossing barriers. I reflect on our Wesleyan heritage and the message for which we stand – the glorious gospel that all, or whosoever reaches out, can come to Christ and find in him new life, peace and hope.

Regardless of the barriers we erect – THANK GOD there are no barriers to the transforming love and grace of Christ.

This Lent let us, with God's help, break a few barriers reaching out to those especially who may be different to us with that love. Let us be ones who share the Gospel of Christ with all we meet.

As we pray, we turn to a hymn penned by Charles Wesley.



*Come, sinners to the gospel feast;
Let every soul be Jesus' guest.
Ye need not one be left behind,
for Christ hath bid all human-kind.*

May it be so Lord, Amen.





READ MARK 5:21-43

JESUS HEALS THE WOMAN WITH BLEEDING

The woman with “the issue of blood” in Mark’s gospel may have had ovarian or cervical cancer, uterine fibroids, polyps, or a hormone disorder—conditions that can cause chronic bleeding, which she experienced for 12 years. Modern medicine could possibly treat her condition. Persistent bleeding often leads to anaemia. I am not a medical professional; rather, I am a woman who has experienced this difficult symptom. After medical investigations I had a hysterectomy. An option not available to the woman described here. I understand her exhaustion, embarrassment, and desperation for answers. She has been to many doctors. She is drained of money and energy. Jewish customs view her as unclean, isolating her.

She is compelled to interrupt Jesus. She bravely defies the law and, in desperation, touches Jesus' clothes. And her life is changed. She is healed.

After surgery, I received blood test results indicating that my haemoglobin and iron levels were finally within the normal range. No more heavy bleeding, no more iron tablets, I was elated.

Discussions about women’s health remain limited in contemporary society. And are rarely something shared as a public testimony. Yet this is what Jesus called this woman to do.

Jairus, a leader of the synagogue listens to her story. A large crowd listens to her story. Jesus listens to her story. He restored her body, but he also restored her voice. Look at His response: ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well, Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction’. Jesus did not side line women's health. He was not embarrassed. He did not avoid the issue. He celebrated the freedom this woman now had. Freedom from chronic, excessive menstrual bleeding. How many topics are avoided in discussion or prayer because they make us feel uncomfortable? Women’s health issues are important. Jesus continues to listen to our stories.



*The hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" encourages us to bring all matters, including sensitive ones, to God in prayer. At this time, we pray together, as a loving community, for women's health and those affected. Especially remembering those without access to good medical care.
Lord, hear our prayers. Amen.*



25

WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH, 2026



READ JOHN 4:1-30

JESUS SPEAKS WITH A SAMARITAN WOMAN

Two people, one whose name we know, the other we don't. Two lives transformed. Two devoted Christ-followers, compelled to share his love, and used by God to bring many to His great love. We don't know the name of the woman at the well, but the people of Sychar knew her... and her reputation. They knew the five husbands who'd rejected her and the lowlife she lived with. They knew why she went alone to the well at midday instead of with other women at dawn. She was an outcast amongst people the Jews hated. But Jesus loved her. He gave her the Living Water he spoke of, transforming her life so she was compelled to share him with everyone she knew... the other women who'd gossiped about her, the men who'd mistreated her... everyone. Through her witness, many Samaritans experienced the transformative love of Christ.

We know the narrator, John, so transformed by Christ's love he called himself "the disciple Jesus loved." But that day when he stayed behind while the others went to look for food, he didn't understand why Jesus asked a strange woman for a drink. Jews didn't talk to Samaritans or drink from their vessels. John didn't realise this woman was the reason Jesus had to go through Samaria. But years later, as an old man who'd witnessed the death and resurrection of his Lord and the martyrdom of many of his friends, John understood: the love of Christ is greater and more important than cultural norms. Then, John wrote it all down so people two millennia later could still be transformed by the love of Christ and, like the woman at the well, be compelled to share that love.

How has the love of Christ transformed you? How does His love compel you? How will you respond?



Heavenly Father, may we be like that woman at the well, so greatly impacted by Your transformative love that we are compelled to tell everyone we know about the difference You've made in our lives. Amen.



Ms Pam Dzunu | World Mission Partnership Committee Member

26

THURSDAY 19 MARCH, 2026



READ LUKE 7:36-50

JESUS AND A WOMAN OF FAITH

Very few words in this passage are spoken directly to the woman but I am sure she overheard at least some of what Jesus and Simon (the Pharisee) were saying. When she heard the words of verse 47, did her tears fall faster, tears of regret because her many sins flashed again through her mind, or tears of joy because her many sins have been forgiven? Maybe both!

When have we last wept at the feet of Jesus because of our sinful nature, because of our sins? Because if we are truthful with ourselves we have sinned and we continue to sin. And our sins have been many: we have been selfish with the gifts God has given us; we have been careless with the feelings of others; we have not gone out of our way to love the stranger as ourselves; we have allowed prejudice and distrust to excuse our behaviour towards others; and so much more.

This woman was compelled by her conscience and her knowledge of Jesus to go to him. She didn't confess her sins in words, but her actions spoke loudly of her regret, her remorse, her repentance. She did not come to have her sins forgiven, but she received that gift through her actions and her heart of confession.

Let us turn to Christ this Lent to confess through tears our weaknesses, our shortcomings, our sins. And let us go repentant and forgiven to live lives of love which reflect Christ in everything we say and everything we do.



Lord, I have sinned in thought and word and deed. I have also sinned with a lack of thoughts, words and deeds too, when I have chosen to ignore or forget others. As I repent, forgive me Lord, and help me to walk in Your ways. Amen.



Rev Ruth Watt | North Western District Minister



READ JOHN 8:1-11

JESUS AND A WOMAN CONDEMNED

In John 8:1–11, we encounter a moment of divine grace amid human condemnation. A woman is dragged before Jesus, accused of adultery. The law demands punishment, and the crowd thirsts for justice. Yet instead of responding with judgment, Jesus stoops to be with the woman, a sacred encounter between a woman and her Saviour.

“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

With those words, Jesus turns the gaze inward. Stones fall, and the accusers walk away, one by one. Only Jesus and the woman remain. Challenged to consider their own shortcomings, the accusers realise that they too have made mistakes.

Jesus doesn't ignore the woman's sin; He acknowledges it and offers something radically different... mercy. Shame does not remain, only mercy and love. “Neither do I condemn you,” He says. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” How often do we judge others and ourselves harshly without acknowledging that only Jesus can truly speak into each situation? That He sees our shortcomings but offers forgiveness, mercy and life in all its fullness?

This story teaches us to examine our own lives before God and to seek his guidance and light. It teaches us about the life-changing impact mercy can have on ourselves and others. It reminds us that Jesus sees past public judgement and private shame. In the stories we read of Jesus, he consistently lifts people into dignity and hope. He is tender, truthful and inclusive and through this story we can be inspired to be the same.

Today, reflect on the stones you may be holding. Are there judgments, on yourself or others, you're ready to lay down? In their place, what grace might you extend? Jesus doesn't push away the hurting and broken, He meets them where they are at and invites us to do the same.



Dear God, may we have the courage to let go of the stones we are holding today and extend Your mercy to ourselves and others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



28

SATURDAY 21 MARCH, 2026



READ LUKE 8:1-3

JESUS AND THE WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED

In Jesus' ministry, the Bible has various records of the roles the disciples (men) played. Our Bible reading today, introduces us to some women who played active roles in supporting Jesus' ministry. Their participation was relevant for it to have been recorded in the Bible.

The second verse makes us aware of the flaws that these women had when they met Jesus by stating that "some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases". However, they were healed of their flaws (diseases or evil spirits) when they encountered Jesus. Their past did not hinder them from supporting Jesus' ministry. This is a display of the transformative impact Jesus had on their lives. When we encounter Jesus, we also experience a transformation.

The willingness of the women to support Jesus out of their own resources shows deep gratitude and transformed hearts. They were grateful recipients and contributors who were actively involved in mission. As Christians, we are called to contribute to the work of God and to continue to spread the Good news of Jesus.

Finally, in a strictly patriarchal society, Jesus broke tradition and gave women the dignity and opportunity due them. He gave them active roles in his mission. Indeed, the word inclusiveness is not a new concept. Jesus applied it in practice. In the Kingdom of God, no one is excluded. Our Bible should give us a food for thought by asking ourselves: How are women considered in our community, in our country, in our Church?

As a Church and as Christians, let us embrace the example that Jesus showed by encouraging the participation of women (if not already being practiced) or more women in Ministry. Women, it's time to ask: What can I do for Jesus? Start to do it because Jesus needs you.



May each one of us continue to contribute to the work of God and spread the Good News of Jesus. Amen.



Ms Elizabeth Osagie-Alli | Southern District Local Preacher

LENT

5

SUNDAY 22 MARCH, 2026



Over this last week we have read stories of women whose lives were changed in an encounter with Jesus. For some this involved healing, for others it was restoration, for many it was about faith and faithfulness to Christ.

In all of these stories, there is welcome.

It is known that Jesus interacting with women always caused a stir, and this is because the status of women at that time was low. Their identity was linked to men, they were considered lesser and often were vulnerable and outcast. Jesus broke the 'norms' of society bringing a value and worth to women and allowing others to see their value as followers of Jesus. Their presence in the pages of scripture may be small, but their inclusion is significant.

Today we focus our thoughts on those who may be considered outcasts in our community, those who are often over looked or made to feel less. Spend some time in prayer, asking God to bring equity to all in society. Pray for provision and welcome for all who are seeking to live in the same community. Invite God to challenge you as to how he might use you to welcome others.



Welcoming God, your love is for all. Help us to be people who live this out in word and deed. Amen.





READ MARK 10:13-16

JESUS TEACHES ALL ARE WELCOME

This is another very familiar Bible passage – and one that might bring to mind a ‘typical’ Sunday School picture from years gone by of a blue-eyed Jesus surrounded by angelic looking children!

As with all well-known passages, it warrants a closer look. In the previous chapter we read that Jesus and the disciples have been travelling through Galilee. Along the way crowds have been following Jesus and he has been healing people, and teaching them.

At times Jesus spends time with the disciples on their own, at other times the crowds press in on Jesus– a picture we see in today’s passage with ‘little children’ being brought to Jesus for him to bless them. And, not for the first time, or the last, the disciples get it wrong! We’re not told why they rebuked the people. It could have been with the very best of intentions – to give Jesus a bit of space. Or it could have been a reflection of the common view of the time that children were insignificant, so Jesus would be better ministering among the adults.

Whatever their motive, we read that Jesus was ‘indignant’ – and commentaries tell us the word in the Greek meant to ‘arouse to anger’. He tells the disciples “let them come / do not hinder them” – and then he tells why: “the kingdom of God belongs to such as these”.

Sometimes this is viewed as the innocence of children, but perhaps a better interpretation is their insignificance in society – then, as now. Jesus is telling them, and us, that the only way to God is through our helplessness and dependence on him; and that those who think they ‘have it all together’ have missed the point. The opposite is true, that God’s heart is for the vulnerable in society – and so should ours be.



Loving God, we give you thanks for the gift of your Son and his invitation to all, and ask for your help to follow his example in caring for those considered small or insignificant by the world. Amen.



30

TUESDAY 24 MARCH, 2026



READ MATTHEW 22:34-40

A Higher Standard of Love.

The Teachers of the Law emphasized strict adherence to over 600 commandments. Jesus, however, often challenged their interpretations. When asked which commandment was the greatest, He gave a profound answer: 'love God and love others'. This wasn't just a summary; it was a new way of living. As He said in John 15:12-13:

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." (NIV)

In our modern walk with Christ, we can fall into the trap of being rule followers, avoiding offenses, keeping moral codes, and meeting obligations while forgetting the heart of the Gospel. Jesus calls us to something deeper: to love with our whole being and to extend that love to others, even those who are difficult to love.

This is a daily challenge. I often find myself needing to check the posture of my heart. When the Pharisees tested Jesus, perhaps He was lovingly inviting them to rise to a higher calling. If so, that same invitation is extended to us.

Loving like Jesus isn't always easy. It may cost us comfort, pride, or convenience. But through His love, we've received mercy, grace, and restoration. And we're called to extend that same love to others so they too might be led to him.



Dear Lord Jesus, teach me to love You fully and to love others as You have loved me. Help me to see people through Your eyes and to reflect Your mercy, grace, and sacrifice in every relationship. Amen.



JJ Subramoney | World Development & Relief Partner |
Open Schools Worldwide, Africa

31

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH, 2026



READ LUKE 10:38-42

JESUS TEACHES PRESENCE

Pots and pans clattered as Martha juggled food preparation with her hands and an equally hectic 'to- do-list' with her head. Jesus had come to call. Everything needed to be just right. But where was her sister Mary?

In the next room, Mary's heart and soul sang with comfort and reassurance as she sat at the feet of her Master. Listening intently, enthralled by every word, she wasn't going to pass up this opportunity to deepen her relationship with Jesus.

"Lord, don't You care?" came Martha's enquiry.

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

When we bring a query or concern to the Lord he will answer us honestly, just as he did to Martha. She was called to self-examination, just as we are now in this moment.

In this fast-paced, noisy and demanding world in which we are living have we left Jesus sitting in the next room? Is he eagerly and patiently waiting for us to join him, at his feet, with our ears and hearts open?

Spiralling 'to-do-lists', busy social calendars, the latest trends beckoning us, our phones constantly pinging notifications, and the demands continue. All the while, Jesus is saying: "I'm still here, waiting. Are you ready to sit down with me yet?" Can we hear him? Jesus is not just a part of life to take and leave as we please. He is not just someone to fit in around our other commitments, schedules, and circumstances. Rather – Jesus is life. He is life itself. In the midst of our busyness, are we missing the one true point of life?



Lord, lead me in your wisdom as I place you first, above all else, as the number one priority in my life. Amen.



Ms Rhona Alcorn | North Western District Local Preacher



READ MARK 12:41-44

JESUS TEACHES ON WORSHIP

This passage reminds me of an experience I had this summer. In June I had the privilege of being part of a group that visited the Methodist Church of Southern Africa with World Mission Partnership. Many moments and memories will stay with me from that trip; one memory was the experience of the Sunday morning service at Machibisa Methodist Church in Pietermaritzburg. Amongst the joyful worship, the harmonies of the choir, the dancing, the passionate preaching, the welcome, the diversity of ages; something else stood out.

The generosity of the people was evident to see. During the service there were three different offerings, the freewill offering, an offering for the Benevolent Fund and a third offering towards a youth camp which would enable young people from the congregation to attend. What struck me was the generosity of giving from a congregation that on the face of things were materially poor, who were giving out of a place of poverty not unlike the widow that Jesus points out to his disciples.

The generosity of giving was astounding, as person after person at each point in the service came forward to give. There was no push to give or pressure - simply an announcement of what it was for. They gave out of the little they had, and they also gave their whole selves to the worship of God, through the movement, the singing, the prayers of the people spoken out. While they were worshipping in Zulu, I could still feel and see the authenticity of their worship.

Lent is a time in which we can reassess how our journey of discipleship and worship is going. We can ask questions such as 'Are we seeking to grow?', 'Is the Spirit of God evident in my life with others?', 'Is the fruit of the Spirit visible in how I live?' This Lent, let's ask ourselves how are we giving ourselves to God in worship, and how is our worship moving us to be generous to others? Do we have a spirit of generosity, whether it be monetary offerings or our time. Are we compelled to truly give our whole selves in worship or are we held back by how we are perceived by others? Do we believe we don't have enough to give? It's not always about what you give, it's about the heart and spirit you bring to your offering of worship.



Lord, as I bring my offering of worship whatever it may be, would it be from a heart and a spirit of generosity, compelled by the depth of love I have for you. A love that I can't help but share with my neighbour. Amen.



FRIDAY 27 MARCH, 2026



READ MATTHEW 16:24-28

JESUS TEACHES ON DISCIPLESHIP

Just before these verses, Jesus has turned to his followers and predicted his death to them for the first time. Presumably gripped by panic, Simon Peter insists this won't happen (v22, "that's never going to happen to you!").

I think it's important to consider this when we look at our passage today; when Jesus talks about us "losing our life in order to save it" (v25), what sticks out to me is this human instinct to be in control. Peter and the other disciples had been following Jesus around, delighted by his miracles, his gentle touch and his refreshing words. When Jesus turns around and starts talking about his death however, you can see why Peter would be panicked; his human expectations for Jesus did not include suffering and death on a cross.

Peter is not intentionally challenging Jesus' prediction of his death, he is merely trying to prevent suffering coming his way. However, in doing so, he is allowing his human plans to get in the way of God's.

So when Jesus says to him and the other disciples, "If anyone wants to come after me, they must give themselves up... and follow me" and "if someone wants to save their life, they must lose it; and if anyone loses their life for my sake they will find it", you can imagine how these words would ring out to Peter. He would be reminded that, although God's plan might seem to only bring more pain and suffering, it is ultimately more important than his own.

I love how Jesus addresses Peter here; he doesn't make him feel guilty for having this idea, but rather reminds him of God's plan dwelling above it all.



God, thank you that your way is so much better. Please continue to show us ways to keep following you, even though it's difficult. Thank you for your patience with us as we do this. Amen.



34

SATURDAY 28 MARCH, 2026



READ JOHN 13:1-20

JESUS TEACHES ON SERVICE

In John 13, Jesus does something unexpected—He gets down on his knees and washes his disciples' feet. It's a quiet, powerful moment. The Son of God, doing the job of a servant. Why? Because He was compelled by love.

Verse 1 says, "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." That kind of love doesn't sit still. It moves. It serves. It stoops low. Jesus wasn't acting out of obligation—He was acting out of deep, relentless love.

When Peter resists, Jesus tells him, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." It's a reminder that we all need to be served by Jesus first. We can't give what we haven't received. Grace always starts with Him.

Then Jesus says, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." He's not just teaching a lesson—He's showing us a way of life. To follow Jesus is to be moved by His love. Not guilt. Not pressure. Love.

Being compelled means we don't wait for perfect conditions or recognition. We move toward others because Jesus moved toward us. We serve, even when it's uncomfortable, because that's what love does.

So today, let Jesus' love move you. Let it lead you to small acts of service, to humility, and to kindness that doesn't need to be seen.



Jesus, help me follow your example by loving and serving others with a heart shaped by your grace. Amen.



LENT



SUNDAY 29 MARCH, 2026



The passages from this week have invited us to dwell on some of the teachings of Jesus. Within them, we have been invited to understand what love looks like. In the words and actions of Jesus we are given an example of how to live and love both God and others.

As the Methodist Church in Ireland, we hold to the mission statement that as Methodist people we are to live wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world. Many of the recent passages have helped us to understand what that means.

Spend today reflecting on the mission statement above.
How might you, impacted by the scripture of this week, see this mission lived out in your life?

Invite God, through prayer, to lead you on in his ways.



Lord, teach us how to live wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world. Amen.



A HOLY WEEK

As we enter into this Holy Week, our devotions will take a slightly different approach.

As we walk the journey of Jesus to the cross, you are invited to really dwell in the verses of Scripture. To read, or listen to them slowly and intentionally, watching for details that strike you afresh. Placing yourself in the scene, and immersing yourself in the narrative is the aim for this Holy Week.

As you do, invite the Spirit of God to draw you deeper in your knowledge and love of Christ, that such love and knowledge would transform you from the inside out.

May the Spirit of God remind you that each step of this journey to the cross was taken because of love for us.



35

MONDAY 30 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 11:1-19

A TRIUMPHANT ENTRY AND A CLEANSED TEMPLE

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



Today's passage includes a sense of celebration and worship. How could you include celebration and worship in your attitude and actions today?



'Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Amen.



36

TUESDAY 31 MARCH, 2026



READ MARK 14:3-11

THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



Today's passage includes both blessing and betrayal. What strikes you most about both of these moments? What emotions do you sense?



Gracious God, may our story be more about blessings than betrayals.

May we pour out all we have as our offering to you. Seeking no personal gain, rather, being motivated by your compelling love. Amen.



37

WEDNESDAY 01 APRIL, 2026



READ MARK 14:32-42

JESUS PRAYS AT GETHSEMANE

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



Today's passage shows us prayer and pain. It illustrates to us obedience and surrender. What emotions do you sense in that garden? How does this passage leave you feeling?



Faithful Lord, as we hear your words spoken in the garden, we are humbled. As we sense your anguish, words do not feel enough. May we show such faithfulness this day, and everyday. Amen.



38

THURSDAY 02 APRIL, 2026



READ MARK 14:43-72

THE ARREST OF JESUS & THE DENIAL OF PETER

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



There is much activity taking place in these verses, much conversation, accusations, lies and fear. What details catch your attention the most? How do they prompt you to pray?



Innocent Lord, you faced accusations and betrayal, and walked obediently forward. You did not deserve to be condemned, yet you bore the conviction. In silence, may gratitude be our response. Amen.



39

FRIDAY 03 APRIL, 2026



READ MARK 15:1-41

A TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



On this Good Friday, as you walk in the final moments of Jesus' crucifixion, make some time to be still and quiet and to sense the grief of this day.



Crucified Lord, pierced for our wrongdoings, may we be silenced by your cry, 'It is finished.' Amen.



40

SATURDAY 04 APRIL, 2026



READ MARK 15:42-47

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

Read, or listen, to the passage two or three times.

Note down words or phrases that stand out to you.

Spend time in prayer inviting God to make himself known to you today.



As followers bury the body of Jesus, such sadness consumes them. Their Lord is dead, their hopes are crushed, their future feels uncertain. Today feels like a day to simply dwell in the loss. In fact, it may only be that when we sit in the discomfort of this day, that we can more fully grasp the celebration and victory that is yet to come. Today, pray for those for whom loss and grief impacts their everyday, and invite the comfort and strength of Christ into their lives.



*In our grief, and in our loss, be our refuge, O Lord, our God.
Renew our strength and restore our hope, we pray. Amen.*



SUNDAY 05 APRIL, 2026



READ MARK 16:1-7

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

As you read this passage in Mark's Gospel that declares that Jesus is alive, may you be filled with joy, praise and thankfulness!

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.*

Refrain:

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

*Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting: [Refrain]*

*No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above: [Refrain]*

Edmond Budry (1854-1932)

Translated by Richard Birch Hoyle (1875-1939)



*Gratitude, praise, worship; to you these belong.
Victorious Lord, your grace is abundantly given.
Our words of thanks fall short.
Receive our lives as an offering, take and use them for your Kingdom.*

*As we rejoice on this Easter Sunday, lead us on, Lord.
By your Spirit and compelled by your love, may we make you known in this world.
Amen.*





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