

# Con+ac+

The Magazine of  
South Essex Methodist Circuit

*Lent & Easter 2023*



Sharing the 'good news' that is happening across  
the circuit and in our local communities.

# Contact

## Discipleship Pathways

The **Methodist** Church 

Discipleship Pathways call us as individuals and as a family of faith to...

**Be a place of welcome to all**

**Worship Together**

**Pray daily**

**Care for self**

**Care for others**

**Care for God's creation**

**Search for God in scripture**

**Search for God in the real world**

**Learn more about God, our faith, each other, and ourselves**

**Serve our community and beyond**

**Practice Hospitality and generosity**

**Share our faith**

**Speak of God's love to the world**

*Where will you get on board?*

# Contact

Hello everyone,

Welcome to our Lent and Easter edition of circuit magazine, 'contact'! It comes with our renewed resolve to connect more effectively with one another across the circuit – to make the Circuit 'smaller' when it comes to communication.

Contact is one way for us to stay connected. Its purpose is to communicate, connect, and share the good news of what God is already doing through us across the circuit and in our local communities.

God is always at work. Sometimes it is easy to miss or take for granted what God is doing in our lives and our contexts. It is when we pause and pay attention that we can spot signs of the Spirit's workings and movements in the world.

Attuning to God's ways of working and happenings in our lives and contexts goes right into our Methodist DNA. It has been said that when John Wesley met regularly with his class leaders, his first question was to ask them individually to share what God has been doing in their lives ('what is the state of the work of God in your life?' he would ask).

So, the hope is that all churches across the circuit would be able to share 'their good news' or testimonies so that we can all celebrate the amazing work and efforts taking place in the Circuit.

The success of the magazine will largely depend on the churches contributing materials. This could include stories and articles on mission or outreach, news, celebrations, activities or upcoming church events, personal reflections, creative writings, prayers, testimonies, photos etc.

The hope is that the magazine will come out four times a year and will focus on the major liturgical seasons: Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. It will be good if each church could have a designated person who will act as a contact person to collect materials for their church and then send them to me once they are ready.

If you have any comments or queries about improving the magazine or contributing to it, do get in touch with me.

**Lenten Blessings,  
Rev Moses**

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## *Circuit Updates from the Superintendent*

Hello Everyone,

A lot of events have taken place in our Circuit since Autumn.

The celebrations of Advent, Christmas and entry into the New Year were much anticipated occasions joyfully celebrated in church congregations throughout the Circuit.

We said goodbye to Daphne as Circuit Administrator. Daphne has served the Circuit very well indeed in this role for approximately 13 years and felt the time had come to retire. We will continue to see Daphne in Circuit as she remains a member of Trinity Methodist Church.

Then at the end of April we will sadly be saying 'Thank you' and 'Farewell' to Revd Yemi who will be starting his 3-month sabbatical and then retiring in August. A farewell service will be held at 3pm on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at Grays MC. All are invited. You can read a splendid article which Revd. Yemi shares some thoughts and experiences of his ministry elsewhere in this edition.

We have welcomed Hannah Harris as our new Circuit Administrator. Hannah is a Methodist who lives and worships in the Southend-on-Sea Circuit.

In September we will be joined in Circuit by Revd. Fiona Smith who will replace Revd. Yemi as Minister with oversight for Grays, Stanford-le-Hope, Linford and Horndon-on-the-Hill in the Thurrock section of our Circuit.

Revd. Fiona is a probationer Minister. This will be her first ministerial appointment. I hope that we will warmly welcome Revd. Fiona not only on 'her patch' but right around the Circuit in ways that will ensure a positive and pleasant beginning in what we pray will be a long and enriching time of ministry. A Welcome service for Revd. Fiona will be held on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August, 7.30pm, at Linford MC. All are invited.

In November, I had an experience of attending 3-Generate for the first time. 3-Gen is a wonderful, creative and fun discipleship opportunity for young people and ultimately for our churches too. I would strongly encourage all churches to consider how we might promote this with our young people

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and hopefully take a group from the Circuit to this event which this year will happen between 6th and 8th October at the NEC in Birmingham. Last year's event sold out and whilst they have increased capacity this year they are expecting to sell out once again. Ticket sales will open on 17th April and close on 21st July.

As I mentioned previously, there is funding for all who wish to attend – both for the young people and the adults accompanying. Please get in touch with your Minister, steward or myself, if you would like to explore this further.

As we begin this season of Lent, I hope that in whatever you give up or take up, as a way of expressing your journey through these 40 days, you may be inspired by the example of Jesus and enjoy a closer walk with him.

Jesus said: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." John 15: 1-5

With every best wish and prayer,  
**Revd. Felicity**

## *Prayer*

Wilderness God,  
as we begin this journey through Lent  
help us all to bring the whole of ourselves  
into the mystery of your presence.  
Your thoughts are not our thoughts,  
for you are beyond our imagination!  
Your ways are not our ways,  
for we have lost the path of love.  
We come to you in our weakness and vulnerability,  
to find in you our healing and wholeness.  
Meet us in our journey  
and be our guide as we find the path of your love again. **Amen.**

**Rev Moses**

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## *Fare Well in Christ from Rev Yemi*

Dear God help us not to be afraid of the unknown, but to embrace what it brings.

These words were part of the prayer said by Matt a sixth form student at Shebbear College during a Chapel service he led about ten years ago.

Matt was in his final year at the college and the prayer was a very appropriate one as he and his classmates proceeded into the unknown.

I had prepared Matt for confirmation much earlier when I was a chaplain at the College, and it was a joy and a heart full of gratitude to God to sit under his ministry.

My wife Moji and myself and indeed all of us prepare to go into the unknown. We seek to embrace what the unknown brings assured that God who knows the unknown is with us.

Thanks ever so much for the care and prayers from all of you in the Circuit in the past three years. I still remember the folk who had come over from the Basildon section of the Circuit to help put the garden in shape before our arrival in 2020. Thanks also to the meticulous attention to detail of Suzanne, the practical, support of Roger at the very start of our stay here among other things putting in place a study desk for Moji, the graciousness of people offering car lifts now and then and offering help with the computer etc. May the LORD richly bless you all.

I am grateful to Felicity for her encouragement and reflective supervision in ministry and thanks to Moses, his uplifting insights and companionship and thanks in particular to all the faithful people working selflessly in the Thurrock Churches facilitating worship and mission.

I have not been able to get around the Circuit as much as I had done in previous appointments, but it has been a joy to be at a few Churches to lead services and also to have been able to get to know some of you at various meetings and at the Trinity Methodist Church community Cafe. Thanks to Daphne for her understanding as Circuit administrator and Hannah too for the same.

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Thanks once again to everyone for your love and care in my last appointment as I prepare to sit down as we say in Methodism.

I hope in the future to continue to walk with the LORD in lowly paths of service free. Moji will continue her ministry in the Church of England, and I am getting used to being introduced as the husband of Moji.

So as we face the unknown and as you in the circuit face the unknown let us be encouraged by the words of the following poem.

I SAID TO THE MAN who stood at the gate of the year,  
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,  
And he replied, Go out into the darkness  
and put your hand into the hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than a light  
and safer than a known way.

As the new Church year begins with the arrival of Rev Fiona Smith I trust she will be a breath of fresh air and I pray the Circuit will move from strength to strength as you travel on with Jesus who has said I will never leave you nor forsake you. (Hebrews 13:5).

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. **Amen.**

**Love from Rev Oluyemisi Jaiyesimi.**

## *Prayer by Rev Yemi*

<b><u>Resting</u></b> in the love of the father -	Our Father
<b><u>Reaching</u></b> Him with praise -	Hallowed be Thy Name
<b><u>Recognising</u></b> Him as supreme commander-	Your kingdom come
<b><u>Receiving</u></b> from Him daily -	Give us our daily bread
<b><u>Reconciled</u></b> to Him, ourselves and other -	Forgive us as we forgive
<b><u>Relying</u></b> on him for protection and direction-	Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."	

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## *Thanksgiving At Stanford-le-Hope*



At the end of September, we had a Thanksgiving Service at Stanford-le-Hope before the Church closed for worship. Here is a bit of historical memory of the church.

It is interesting that the population of the village in 1801 was 249, rising steadily to 1,715 in 1901 and 5,000 in 1945. Today in 2022 it is 29,000.

Although the followers of Wesley were undoubtedly at work in SLH there was nothing on record until a missionary crossed the river Thames from Gravesend to Tilbury and onto Leigh. Our village was on the main coach route, so the missionary frequently visited SLH and stayed with Mr. Jeremiah Butler, the father of Methodism in the village.

In 1835 morning and evening services were held in a cottage which stood on the Corringham Road at the junction with Billet Lane. The Society class met in the cottage next door every Sunday afternoon. Those who gathered there over the next sixteen years had an ambition to build a chapel in the village. They asked Mr. Allen, the baker who was erecting a cart shed if they could hire it for preaching the Gospel. To their amazement he built them a little brick chapel. After a Wednesday evening prayer meeting, Mr. Butler led the members to building which was in the process of being built so they consecrate the chapel which was opened in 1851. The Sandpits chapel church family was increasing rapidly so the soon required a larger building. The site where our church now stands was given by David Beckworth and on

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the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1869, a foundation stone was laid with the new church being opened in the following year.

In 1920 funds were started for an extension and for an organ. Over the next two years fundraising brought in £529 so in 1923 the extension was added and the organ was installed in 1928 and in 1928 the oil lamps were replaced by electric lighting. There was a close relationship between the local Parish Church, St Margaret's and the SLH Methodist church so when the Parish Church re-cast their bells the Methodist Church added a new bell with the inscription "To the glory of God and an expression of the Unity in Devotion to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ from the Methodist Church in this Parish".

During WW2 young people from the Church family were called to the armed forces. Unfortunately, Mr. Evelyn Key and RAF Pilot made the supreme sacrifice whilst others became prisoners of war. In 1940 an air raid shelter was added to the church building. Which provided shelter for around 50 people. During the war many services people stationed nearby were welcomed to SLH services and church parades.

After the war it was hoped that there would be a new church building but instead the church was again extended to provide indoor toilets. The Youth Hall was built from an old wooden hut bought from Aveley Methodist church and transported to SLH on Charlie Key's coal lorry. This was replaced in 1976 by the present structure which provides storage as well as a lot of community use.

In the church building pews were replaced with chairs including the choir area and a new glass organ screen was fitted along with a modern staircase and a new gas boiler was installed.

Today, the church family has said 'Goodbye' to the church building and moved to Hassenbrook Academy where we have the use of their school hall for our worship. So, another chapter in the mission of the Stanford le Hope Methodist church has begun.

**Maureen McPherson**

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## *Reflection on Horndon The Hill Methodist Church*

Hello, my name is Ian and I thought I'd contribute an article to the Circuit newsletter. It was suggested that I might like to write on some ways in which members of Methodist Churches in the Circuit are sharing with another church in the area.

In 2013 Zion Hall Mission, an Interdenominational Church in neighbouring village of Bulphan, was unable to continue holding services twice on a Sunday and decided to meet only in the evening. Two members of that church decided to come along to Horndon Methodist in the morning and later became members. Some five years later at Horndon it was decided that evening services would be discontinued and as a result there are now three members who each Sunday attend Horndon Methodist in the morning and Zion Hall Mission in the evening.

Over the years other members from Horndon and Stanford Le Hope Methodist churches have attended and led services at Zion Hall Mission. These include Maureen McPherson, our current Minister Rev Yemi who regularly preaches there and our former Minister Rev Brenda. The Mission looks forward to having Rev Brenda take the Carol Service on 18<sup>th</sup> December at 6:30pm (all are welcome to that service).

In July this year the two churches were able to work together to host a speaker from Arab World Ministries at both the morning and evening services. This arrangement allowed him to commit to travelling from the south coast and meant that folk in South Essex to be able to hear first-hand the news of this Christian work.

Members from Horndon have been able to help in other ways too. These have included giving advice and sharing experience particularly during the early days of the Covid 19 pandemic and more recently on experience with banking arrangements. In addition, help has been given on such practical matters as contacts for electrical testing.

Finally, as Stanford Methodist church starts in its new worship home and seeks to use its former assets to the greatest advantage, Horndon has been able to replace its Church chairs and some tables and Zion Hall Mission has been the grateful recipient of a set of Bibles.

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In all this we remind ourselves that 'church' is the people of God, not the building nor the denomination. We worship God wherever we are both in our services and our deeds and we are united in God's love, mercy and forgiveness.

## **Ian Blackburn**

On Good Friday at Horndon-on-the-Hill we will be holding our usual Good Friday service at 6.30p.m. to be taken by Rev Yemi. It will be preceded by a tea at 5.00 p.m.



## *Lent and Easter at Trinity*

### **Bible Study for Lent**

Anna Williams will be leading a series of studies for Lent based on "Be transformed" an All We Can resource for all three Basildon Methodist churches. They will be held in the church at Trinity on Thursday evenings at 7.45pm from 2nd March onwards and are open to all.

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## Easter Services

Ash Wednesday Service with Holy Communion, 22nd February, 7.30pm at  
Langdon Hills

Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion, 6th April, 7.30pm at  
Trinity

Good Friday Walk of Witness with other churches of Churches Together in  
Basildon (CTB), 7th April, starting from Holy Trinity, Wickhay at 11.00am to  
St. Martin's belltower,  
Basildon Town Centre

Good Friday Service of Reflection, 7th April at 4.00pm  
at St. Paul's

Easter Day Family Service with Holy Communion, 9th April at 11.00am at  
Trinity. This service will be streamed live on Zoom or YouTube.

**Steve Nice**

## *Lent And Easter at Linford*

As I write it is nearly Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday heralding the beginning of the Lent Period.

At Linford (and East Tilbury) Methodist Church we are preparing for this special time of year.

From the first Sunday in Lent we will have a five minute Lent Liturgy before the morning service. We have a large wooden cross that is shaped from a tree and each week we display images or objects that are pertinent to this period. For example, on the first Sunday of



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Lent a picture of a desert will be hung on the tree/cross reminding us of the beginning of Christ's period of temptation in the Wilderness. Every week we will sing, or say, the old hymn, given a new life by the musical Godspell, 'Day by Day'.

On Mothering Sunday, we will again be having a Cafe Church. This a relaxed service with some songs, reflections and prayers about this Special Day. We will try to make it an Outreach service by publicising it as a Treat Your Mum to Breakfast event to the Toddler's and Karate groups who use the church during the week.

On Passion Sunday we welcome Anna Williams and Colleen Weedon to lead our Worship.

On Palm Sunday our preacher is Mark Smith. Palm crosses will be distributed to the congregation.

On the first Monday of the School Easter Holidays, April 3rd, we will be having our Easter Yippee Club for children of any age from anywhere and everywhere, as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

There will be art and craft activities, music and refreshments.

There may be some Hot Cross buns! If possible, please come in an Easter Bonnet as there will be an Easter Bonnet parade. There may be prizes! No charge but donations for refreshments welcome.

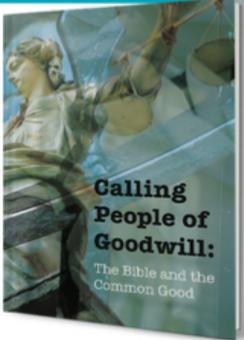
Ian Brown will be taking our celebratory service on Easter Sunday. There may be cake involved!

On Good Friday we remove the objects from the Cross. On Easter Sunday, for the first time, we 'festooned' the Cross with flowers, some from our own gardens. Some of the flowers were taken to people who could not attend because of illness, or taken home to put on display over Easter.

***Catherine Beckwith***

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## LENT STUDY COURSE AT CHRIST CHURCH, WICKFORD



**B** Bible Society  
**Calling People of Goodwill:  
The Bible and the Common Good**

Helping thoughtful Christians understand the Common Good in the Bible and respond to God's calling to transform the world.

- Contains six short passages from the Old and New Testaments, with insightful commentary, prayers and prompts for discussion and action.
- Uses passages from the New Revised Standard Version.

In partnership with  
**TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD**

In a me-focused, high-consumer society, the Common Good could transform our lives if we were to live it out. This little book will help you do just that!  
**Ruth Valerio**

'This little book is a wonderful introduction... a reminder that we are called as the church to seek the Common Good of all in our communities, whether local, national or global.'  
**Justin Welby,  
Archbishop of Canterbury**

'A great resource. "Calling People of Goodwill" is a real treasure! It can truly help us all to get to grips with faith in action today.'  
**Cardinal Vincent Nichols**

To find out more and to order your copies today for just **£3.99** (plus P&P) visit [biblesociety.org.uk/commongood](http://biblesociety.org.uk/commongood)

We are running a Lent course at Christ Church on Monday mornings and Wednesday evening, using the material *'Calling the People of Goodwill: The Bible and the Common God'* led by Rev Moses and Janette. This is an informal space to share fellowship and study the Bible together.

All are welcome to join.

### When and Where

- Monday at Christ Church 11:30-12:30 pm from 27<sup>th</sup> February
- Wednesday Evening 7.30pm at Janette and Andy's home @ 22 Birch Green SS12 9AD, from Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March. \* *Parking is very limited, and may be easier in Radwinter Avenue.*

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## Lent Activities and Easter Services At Billericay Methodist Church



Wednesday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> February Ash Wednesday Service	7:30 pm	Western Road	Rev Moses Agyam/Mrs Julie Cristin
Sunday, 26 <sup>th</sup> February Morning Worship	10:30 am	Western Road	Guest Preacher Dr Conrad Gempf
Sunday, 26 <sup>th</sup> February Annual Lent Talk	6:00 pm	Western Road	Dr Conrad Gempf
Lent Reflections on Sundays 5 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> March, & 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	6:00 pm	Western Road	Revd Moses Agyam
Sunday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> April Palm Sunday & Parade Service	10:30 am	Western Road	Revd Moses Agyam
Thursday, 6 <sup>th</sup> April Maundy Thursday service	7:30 pm	Western Road	Revd Moses Agyam
Friday, 7 <sup>th</sup> April Good Friday Service	11:45 am	Queens Park	Revd Celia McDonald
Sunday, 9 <sup>th</sup> April Easter Sun Rise Service	6:00 am	Mill Meadows	Revd Moses Agyam
Sunday, 9 <sup>th</sup> April Easter day Communion Service	10:30 am	Western Road	Revd Moses Agyam

## NKY FINGERS



We are hoping to re- establish this Christian creative writing group in the Circuit.

If anyone is interested in joining the group- no experience needed- please email me with your details and preferred time of meeting which will be monthly. Choice of times Friday 7.30- 9.00 or Sunday afternoon at a time to suit participants. We will be meeting at Langdon Hills Methodist Church.

Rose Witteridge- [rbaround66@gmail.com](mailto:rbaround66@gmail.com)

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LENT RESOURCES

## GOD'S BIG EASTER STORY

A HOLY WEEK JOURNEY FOR FAMILIES



dwell<sup>®</sup> AT HOME

[dwellcurriculum.org/home](http://dwellcurriculum.org/home)

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## DEAR FAMILY

The stories of Jesus' death and resurrection can feel like heavy topics to talk about with your children. Unlike the joyous baby-in-a-manger stories you told at Christmas, the stories that are bookended by a Palm Sunday parade and an Easter Sunday resurrection include betrayal, death, confusion, and deep sadness. But they also show Jesus' character as the loving, humble, servant King who welcomes all to the table, and they help us realize the depth of Christ's sacrifice, preparing our hearts and minds to experience Easter awe.

*God's Big Easter Story: A Holy Week Journey for Families* is based on the Holy Week section in our popular *God's Big Story* cards boxed set (available from [FaithAliveResources.org](http://FaithAliveResources.org)). It is designed to provide your family with a simple, meaningful way to grow in faith together as you remember the events leading up to Jesus' death and celebrate the hope we have in Jesus' resurrection.

### What Is Holy Week?

Beginning on Palm Sunday and ending with the three days that mark Jesus' trial, death, and resurrection, Holy Week is a time to remember Jesus' journey to the cross—and beyond. A lot happens from Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem to his appearance outside his tomb. Reading these stories throughout Holy Week gives us a chance to walk with Jesus in the last moments of his life and to experience the miracle of his resurrection.

### Making the Symbols Set for *God's Big Easter Story*

Here's what you need:

- A printed copy of the **pathway** found on page 3 of this document
- A printed copy of the **story symbols** (if you don't have them already, download them from [DwellCurriculum.org/Home](http://DwellCurriculum.org/Home) in black and white or in color).
- *Tip:* You can print the symbols on **sticker paper** if you want to stick them directly on the pathway. Or to make them reusable year after year, stick them on wooden circles instead.

### How to Use the Devotions

There's no right or wrong way to use these devotions. For example, you could read one each day during Holy Week, adding a new symbol to the pathway each day to mark the progression toward Easter. Alternatively, you could combine some of the stories and read them over a few days. Or maybe this year you're only able to read a few of the stories together. That's OK.

We've provided NIV Scripture references for each story, but feel free to read the stories from a children's story Bible if that works best for your kids.

We invite you to use the four steps below as a framework for your time together.

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as together you slowly breathe in . . . and out. (Adjust the length of this quiet time according to your children's attention spans.)

**READ:** Spend time in God's story by reading the suggested passage from the Bible or from a children's story Bible. Some days the selections are longer than others. One way to keep kids of all ages engaged is by including them in the telling of the story. You can invite pre-readers to make up an action to do each time they hear a particular word or name. Assign readers a section of the story to read aloud, or have them read the lines of a character as you narrate the story.

**WONDER:** Use the questions to reflect on the story. We've provided you with "wondering questions" because they work well with all ages, they have no right or wrong answers, and they result in deeper thinking about God and about the lives of the people in the story. Encourage kids to use their imaginations as you wonder together about these stories. You might want to end this time by asking, "What do you wonder about this story?"

**PRAY:** Close your time with prayer using the provided suggestions or your own words and ideas.

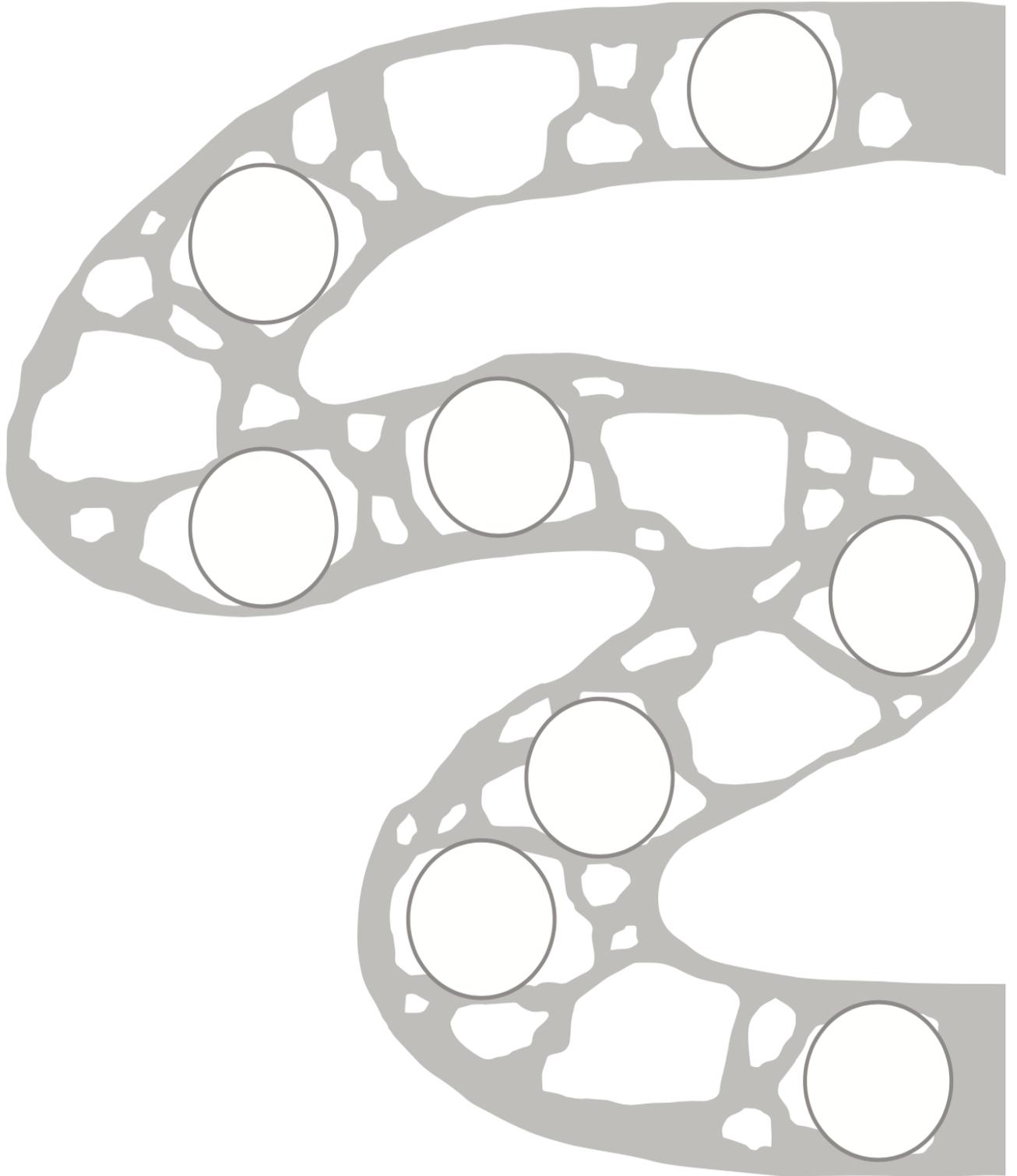
### Easy Extra Ideas

Looking for other ways to engage with the stories during Holy Week? Try one of these ideas:

- Use LEGO™ or other blocks to build something featured in each day's story.
- Create a resurrection garden like [this one](http://thisone.tinyurl.com/DwellatHomeGarden) (tinyurl.com/DwellatHomeGarden) from the blog *Confessions of a Homeschooler*.
- Make or purchase hot cross buns to eat on Good Friday.
- Make a colorful sign or banner with the words "Alleluia! Jesus Is Alive!" written on it. Hide it somewhere for your children to discover on Easter Sunday as part of your celebration. Or have your child make the banner and then hide it for *you* to find!
- Celebrate Jesus' resurrection by singing or listening to a favorite Easter song together.

We hope that *God's Big Easter Story* will become a beloved yearly ritual in your home. Let us know how it goes! You can reach us at [info@dwellcurriculum.org](mailto:info@dwellcurriculum.org) to share your experiences or ask questions.

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## GOD'S BIG EASTER STORY

### DAILY DEVOTIONS



## PALM SUNDAY PARADE

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** Matthew 21:1-11

**WONDER:** What would it be like to be in the crowd that welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem? What would you have said or done if you had been there?

**PRAY:** Dear Jesus, like the people on Palm Sunday, we praise you. Thank you for coming to be our King and establishing your kingdom. Help us to serve you in it. Amen.



## THROWING OUT THE MONEY CHANGERS

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** Matthew 21:12-17

**WONDER:** What does this story show you about Jesus? What words do you think the people Jesus healed would use to describe him? How do you think the children's faces looked as they shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

**PRAY:** The children ran and shouted "Hosanna!" Use this praise litany as your prayer today, responding with a loud "Hosanna!" after each phrase (run around and shout it if you like):

Jesus, you are the great and awesome King. *Hosanna!*

Jesus, all glory and honor belong to you. *Hosanna!*

Jesus, you are the King—then, now, and forever. *Hosanna!*

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## THE FOOT WASHING

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** John 13:1-17

**WONDER:** Imagine how the water would feel on your tired feet. What would it be like to have someone so important serve you by washing your smelly, dirty feet? Why do you think Jesus told the disciples to wash one another's feet? How do you serve others?

**PRAY:** Think of all the people who serve you—family members, coaches, teachers, and community helpers. Offer a popcorn prayer of thanks for these people, jumping in and naming them whenever you are ready. End your prayer by asking God to help you serve others too.



## THE LAST SUPPER

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** Luke 22:7-23

**WONDER:** Do you remember the words Jesus said about the bread and the cup? (If not, reread verses 19 and 20 together.) Wonder how the Lord's Supper celebration at your church is like the special meal Jesus had with his disciples. Why might Jesus have used food and drink to remind us how much he loves us? What do you wonder about the Lord's Supper?

**PRAY:** Dear Jesus, thank you for giving us a way to remember your sacrifice for us and to remind us how much you love us. We love you too, Lord! Amen.

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## A SAD NIGHT

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** Luke 22:39-62

**WONDER:** Wonder why the disciples fell asleep. How do you think Jesus felt when all his friends were too tired to support him? Imagine that you're Peter, a follower and friend of Jesus. After Jesus was arrested, what emotions would you be feeling? Why do you think Peter denied Jesus? Why do you think Peter cried?

**PRAY:** Think about a time when you did something that made Jesus sad. Begin a family prayer with "Jesus, I made you sad when. . ." Then give everyone a moment to silently talk to Jesus. End the prayer with "Thank you, Jesus, for forgiving us. Thank you for always loving us, no matter what. We're so glad you never leave us or get too tired for us! Amen."



## JESUS DIES

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

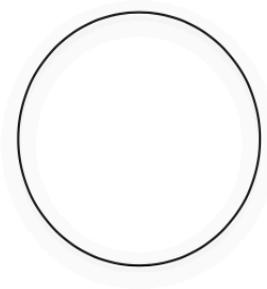
**READ:** John 19:14-30

**WONDER:** What do you wonder about Jesus dying on the cross? How does this story make you feel?

**PRAY:** Draw a simple cross. Practice holding up the cross and having everyone say, "Thank you, Jesus." Hold it up after each sentence in this prayer, saying the response together:

Dear Jesus, you are our Lord. *Thank you, Jesus!*  
You came to earth for us. *Thank you, Jesus!*  
You lived for us. *Thank you, Jesus!*  
You suffered for us. *Thank you, Jesus!*  
You died for us. *Thank you, Jesus!*  
You love us. *Thank you, Jesus! Amen.*

# Contact



## JESUS IS BURIED

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** John 19:38-42

**WONDER:** When Jesus was alive, Joseph of Arimathea was afraid to tell others he was a follower of Jesus. But after Jesus died, Joseph asked Pilate if he could bury Jesus' body. Wonder why Joseph wanted to do this for Jesus. What emotions do you think Joseph and Nicodemus were feeling as they buried Jesus? Where do you think the other disciples were on this day? How do you think they were feeling? How does this part of the story make you feel? Create your own symbol for this day in the blank circle above. (If each person would like to make their own symbol, trace the circle and make extras.)

**PRAY:** Practice making the signs for "Jesus" (with hands open, touch the tip of the middle finger of one hand to the palm of your other hand; repeat on the opposite hand) and for "Thank you" (touch the fingertips of your dominant hand to your chin; then extend your hand forward with the palm up). Sign "Jesus" and "Thank you" as you read the following prayer:

Dear *Jesus*, you taught us how to be servants to each other. *Thank you!*  
*Jesus*, you suffered in the garden when your friends weren't there for you. *Thank you!*  
*Jesus*, you let your enemies arrest you and hurt you. *Thank you!*  
*Jesus*, your friends ran away and even said they didn't know you. But you didn't complain. *Thank you!*  
We are sorry that your friends ran away.  
We are sorry that you felt so alone.  
We are sorry that your enemies hurt you.  
We are sorry that you suffered so much for us.  
*Jesus*, we love you.  
*Thank you* for loving us!  
Amen.

—prayer adapted from Kid Connection, Year 2, Quarter 2, p. 151

# Contact

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## JESUS IS ALIVE!

**BREATHE:** Calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.

**READ:** John 20:1-18

**WONDER:** What do you think Jesus' friends thought when they saw that his tomb was empty? Why do you think Jesus' friend Mary Magdalene didn't realize at first that she was talking to Jesus? What would you have done when you realized Jesus was alive again? Who would you run to tell?

**PRAY:** Celebrate Jesus' resurrection by echoing this prayer together (repeating each phrase as it's read):

Jesus, you are Lord.

Jesus, you are our hope.

Jesus, you won the victory over death.

Jesus, we jump for joy because you are alive! Amen.



# Confession

Your will be  
done

In the Garden of  
Gethsemane, Jesus  
prayed to God.



It was  
hard, but  
he prayed  
'Your will be done'

Which hard things  
could you ask  
God to help you  
face?

Use playdough  
to make leaves  
for the tree.

For each leaf,  
pray for  
someone you  
know.

Ask that 'God's will be done'  
in their lives.

# Con+act+

## EASTER SUNDAY

"HE ISN'T HERE!     Mark 16:6  
HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD!"

There is no bigger reason to celebrate than Resurrection Sunday!  
You can wear your best clothes, eat great food, dance, sing and be joyful,  
because Jesus has risen!

One way to celebrate this could be to make a huge banner or poster.  
You can use phrases from the selection below, add your own,  
and draw things which illustrate new life!

CHRIST IS ALIVE!

HALLELUJAH!

death is defeated!

glory to God!

new life has come!

ETERNAL PEACE IS OURS!

EVIL HAS LOST!

heaven is open!

JESUS HAS THE VICTORY!

love has won!

CREATION WILL BE RESTORED!

Another thing to do today is look back on your Lent journey.

Are there things you have learned? Did you try fasting, or giving, or new types of prayer?  
What creative things did you do? Are there things you want to continue through the year?

Talk about these together, and say a prayer of thanks for all God is doing in your family.



# Contact

## *Women in God's story*

There are 93 women who speak in the Bible, 49 of whom are named. These women speak a total of 14,056 words collectively; roughly 1.1 percent of the total words in scripture. Some of these biblical women are prominent and well-known, like Jesus' mother, Mary, who utters just 191 words. Mary Magdalene says 61 words, while Sarah, the wife of Abraham, says 141. Yet many of the female characters have largely been silenced over the centuries.

For every Eve, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, Mary, Lydia and Priscilla there are many simple referred to as the wife, daughter or mother of. Many are unnamed such as the woman at the well, the Syrophonecian women wanting crumbs from under the table, the woman caught in adultery (no mention of the man caught in the same act), the widow in the temple with her mite or the woman suffering with the issue of blood.

Many might seem insignificant, marginal figures and yet they are central to God's plans. Using this crossword let's reflect on some of these women.

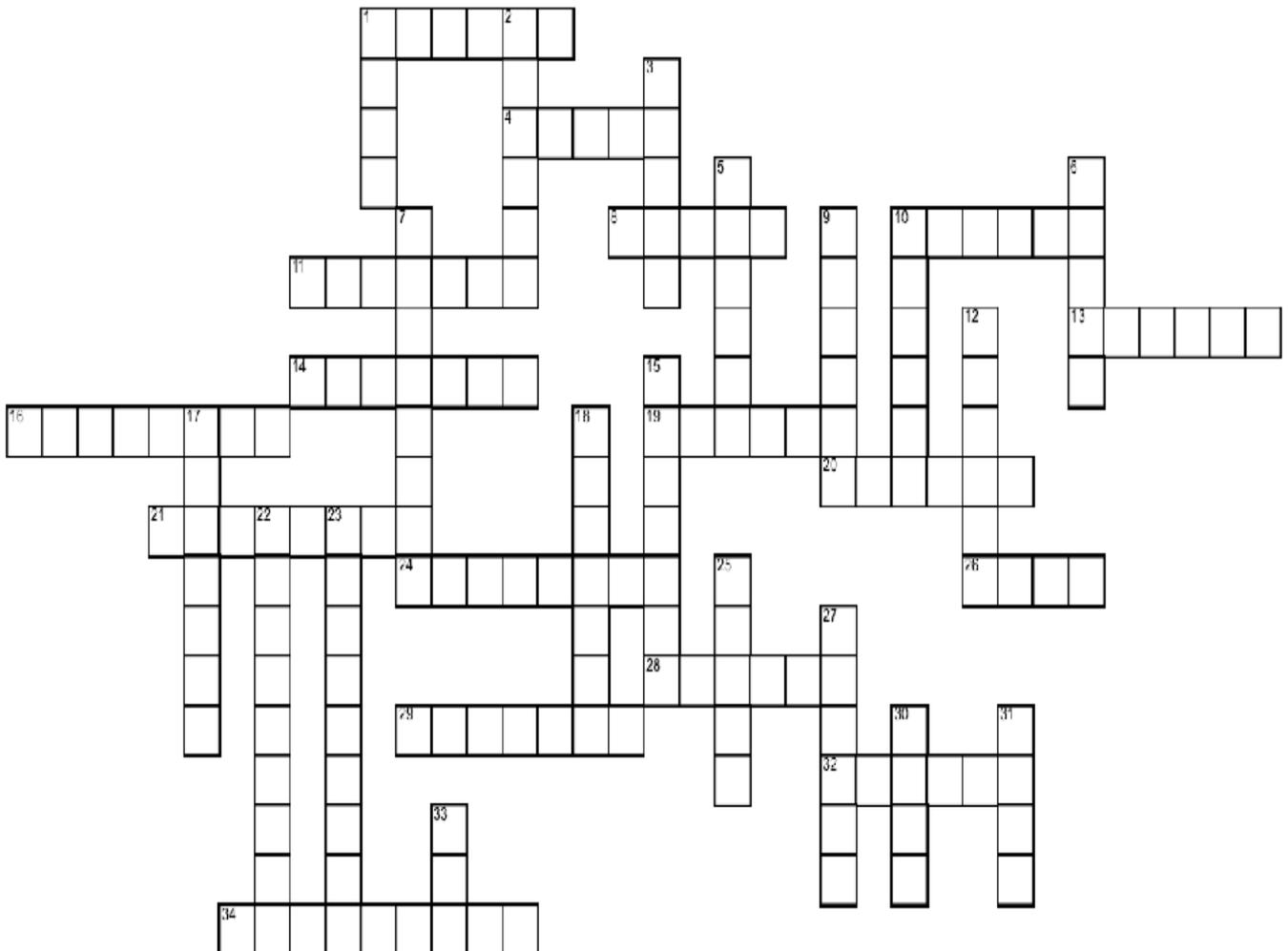
### **Across**

1. Mary's sister (John 12:2)
4. A dealer in purple cloth who hosted Paul and his missionary team when they were in Philippi (Acts 16:14, 40)
8. Sarah's servant and mother of Ishmael (Genesis 16:15)
10. Cuza's wife and supporter of Jesus (Luke 8:1-3)
11. This lady married Isaac and became the mother of Jacob and Esau (Genesis 24:67)
13. Sister and helper to Moses (Numbers 26:59)
14. Lady prophetess and judge (Judges 4:4)
16. Mother of Moses (Exodus 6:20)
19. One of those who cared for the needs of Jesus and His disciples (Mark 15:40-41)
20. Protected Israel's spies in Jericho (Joshua 2, 6:25)
21. One of three women whom Paul complimented saying they "work hard in the Lord" (Romans 16:12)
24. The wife of Ananias who sold a piece of property and lied about its sale price (Acts 5:1)
26. Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5)
28. Samuel's mother (1 Samuel 1:20)
29. God used Peter to raise her from the dead (Acts 9:36-41)

# Contact

32. Timothy's mother (2 Timothy 1:5)

34. Mother of King Solomon (2 Samuel 12:24)



## Down

1. An angel said to her, "You who are highly favoured" (Luke 1:27-28)
2. Prophetess in King Josiah's time (2 Kings 22:14)
3. Mother of Isaac (Genesis 21:3)
5. Younger daughter of Laban (Genesis 29:16)
6. Ruth's mother-in-law (Ruth 1:3-4)
7. Her daughter danced for Herod on his birthday (Matthew 14:6)
9. Queen who saved the Jews
10. Esau married her when he was 40 years old (Genesis 26:34)
12. Daughter of Saul and wife of David (2 Samuel 3:13-14)
15. The daughter of Potipher who became Joseph's wife (Genesis 41:45)
16. She was with King Agrippa when Paul pleaded his case (Acts 25:23)

# Con+fac+

- 18. Samson fell in love with this treacherous woman (Judges 16:4)
- 22. She and her husband Aquila helped spread the gospel (Acts 18:2, 18, 26)
- 23. Mother of John the Baptist (Luke 1:57-60)
- 25. Daughter of Leah (Genesis 30:19-21)
- 27. She was a deacon or servant in the church at Cenchrea (Romans 16:1)
- 30. Elderly prophetess who rejoiced at the sight of Baby Jesus (Luke 2:36-38)
- 31. The older daughter of Laban (Genesis 29:16)
  
- 33. The mother of Cain, Abel, and Seth (Genesis 4:1-2)

*Rev Moses*

## **COFFEE CAKE AND A WARM SPACE**

**EVERY THURSDAY STARTING ON  
2<sup>nd</sup> February  
9.30 am – 2.00 pm**

**AT  
Billericay Methodist  
Church**

**Western Road, Billericay, CM12 9DT**

**A warm welcome awaits you, come for coffee and cake,  
read the paper, chat with friends, stay a while.**

**ALL ARE  
WELCOME**

**TODDLER  
AREA**

**FREE WIFI**

**SOUP AND A  
ROLL SERVED  
FROM 12.30  
PM**



# Contact

## Theology Reading Group



In his masterpiece, *Confessions*, St. Augustine tells of overhearing the words, *Tolle Lege*, meaning 'take up and read', sung by children playing in a garden. Picking the nearest book he could find, which happened to be the Bible, Augustine's eyes fall on Paul's words in Romans 13:14: 'Put on the Lord Jesus Christ'. The moment was critical in Augustine's conversion to Christianity. His life changed forever.

Taking inspiration from St Augustine maxim: to pursue the truth with our whole selves in the company of other learners and seekers, the 'Theological Reading Group' seeks to bring people together to join a community of reading and learning where discussion can take place freely and openly.

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## How it works

The reading group to meet on alternate Mondays evenings from 7.30pm to 9pm (initially, at least during autumn and spring months) at virtual Zoom.

Starting on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February. In the main, the group will decide what they want to study/read. But for our first book, I've suggested, *Borders & Belonging: The Book of Ruth: A Story for our Times* by Pádraig Ó Tuama and Glenn Jordan.

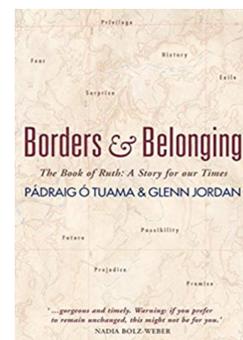
The contents of the book include are:

- Liturgical setting of Ruth
- The First Act of the Book of Ruth
- Addressing Stereotypes
- The Second Act of the Book of Ruth
- Counter-Narratives
- The Third Act of the Book of Ruth
- Compassion and the Law
- The Fourth Act of the Book of Ruth

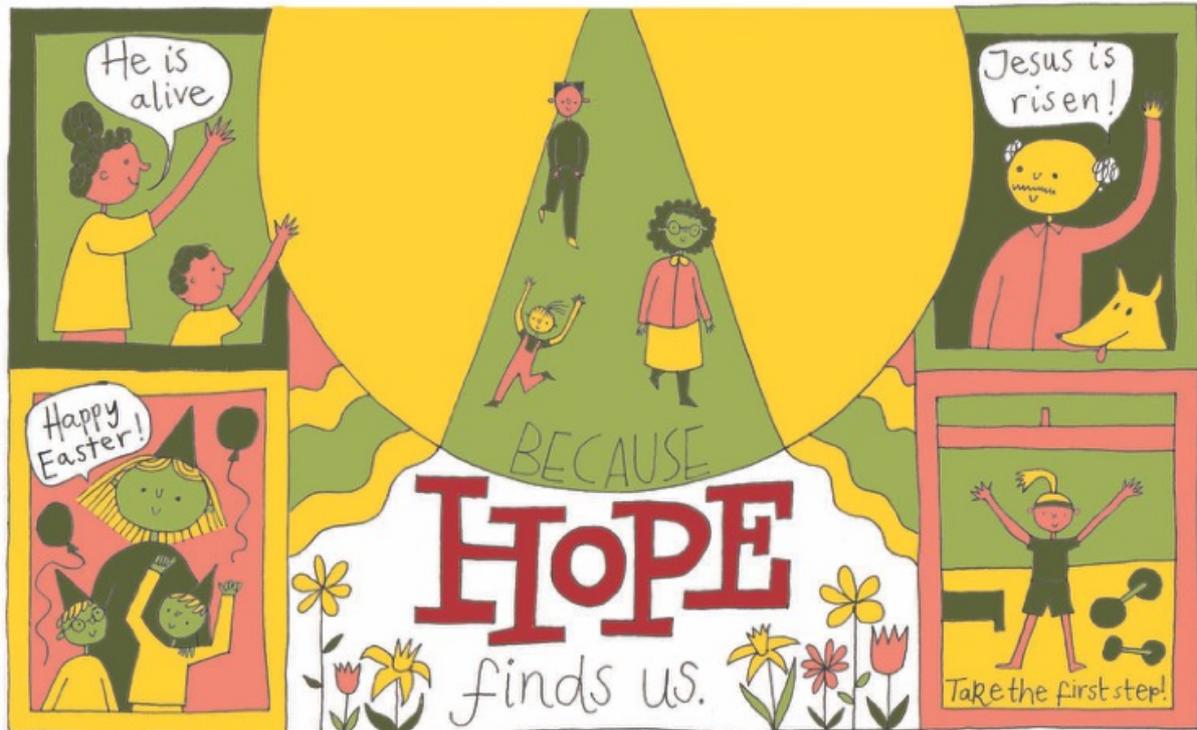
If this is something you would like to be part of, consider offering to facilitating a guided conversation (i.e., chairing/leading) one of the chapters of the book.

Feel free to share it with anyone who enjoys theological discussion and would benefit from this.

To book a place please email: [moses.agyam@methodist.org.uk](mailto:moses.agyam@methodist.org.uk).



# Con†ac†



#youarenotalone #spreadhope

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The next edition will be 'sometime' in the summer. Rev Moses will send out details of submission dates nearer the time.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition. I hope you enjoy it.

