

**ESGOBAETH LLANDAF  
LLE MAE FFYDD  
YN CYFRIF**



**DIOCESE OF LLANDAFF  
WHERE FAITH  
MATTERS**



**A Home Pilgrimage**





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*“They were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”*

*Hebrews 11:16*

# Introduction

It is hoped that this resource will enable you to go on your own spiritual pilgrimage without ever leaving your home. It will get you to engage with the Bible, it should challenge you, and hopefully help you grow in your own faith. There will be a repeating weekly pattern of worship, reflection, meditating on God's Word, digging deeper, journaling, more reflection, and prayer. Start each session with the liturgy on the next page and try to spend at least twenty minutes on the reading and response for each day.

You should aim to begin this pilgrimage on a Saturday. However, since the first two days are meant as a time of preparation, if you are desperate to get started you could jump in on a Monday with day 3 which is where the journey really gets going. If you jump ahead make sure to read the introduction to that section.



There are a few items you will need before you set out. You will need a Bible, a personal journal, a candle, and some seeds. Each of these items will be explained in due course.

There is also additional content designed to go with this home pilgrimage which can be found on the DVD available with this guide or from the website below.

[llandaff.churchinwales.org.uk/en/faith-and-ministry/home-church-resources/](http://llandaff.churchinwales.org.uk/en/faith-and-ministry/home-church-resources/)



# Liturgy

You O Lord are the God of my pilgrimage.  
You go before me and guide me in your way.

I praise you for your love, for your power, and for your faithfulness.

So in knowledge of this I bring to you those things for which I need your help.

You may want to spend some time praying around each of the following or you could just pray the following.

I pray for those for whom I am close, for my family, friends, and neighbours. Support and sustain them and may I be as Christ to them.

For your church Lord give us life, give us zeal, give us faith that we may serve you and do your work in this word.

For governments and rulers of this world, give them a heart for justice, peace, and a concern for all humankind.

For myself I bring to you my needs, my wants, and my dreams, and I lay them down at your feet trusting you with them all.

And Now O Lord as I read your Word and make my response use it to grow my faith, to increase my knowledge of you, and to grow my love for you, that through it I may tell my joyful story, grow your kingdom and do good in this world. Amen.

Now turn to the daily reading before going onto the response for the day.

# The Preparation

So, you are just about ready to set out on your own pilgrimage, it is an exciting time, what will happen along the road? Who will you encounter? More importantly, where will God lead you? When the diocese of Llandaff set out on its year of pilgrimage, we had no idea that we would find ourselves in the middle of a global pandemic, no one could have predicted it. People keep saying that the world will never be the same again, and it will certainly be true for the church. We are having to learn new ways of being the church, new ways of reaching out to people, but this is not where we thought our pilgrimage would take us. We must always be ready to follow God's lead, to go where he wants to take us. However, before you set out on your pilgrimage there is something you must do first in preparation.

## Day 1

**Reading:** Psalm 23

**Response:** This is possibly the best-known Psalm, perhaps it is a Psalm you've clung to at hard times during your life, perhaps it's one you associate with funerals, or perhaps to one of the great hymns or songs created around it. The Psalm speaks about the Lord guiding our path in the way of righteousness, going with us and sustaining us, and leading us to our destination. As we set out on our own spiritual pilgrimage we are setting out with the Lord, to grow in him, to be challenged, to be changed and therefore we must start with prayer. Prayer focuses us on God,



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it reminds us of our dependency upon him, it encourages us to open our hearts to him, and prayer gets things done.

If it is safe to do so light a candle and dim the lights. The candle should be a reminder to you of the LORDS presence with you, leading you, going before you in everything that you do, and it should be a reminder of the light we have through Jesus our Saviour. As you sit with the candle lit, read the above psalm again, then try and pray about this 40-day pilgrimage you are about to begin. You can do this quietly, but if you're willing try and do it out loud. For some people this will feel very natural, for others it may feel awkward at first. Don't worry about using elaborate words, speaking piously, or even being theologically perfect while you pray. Simply speak to God from your heart. Spend about 20 minutes doing this, and if you run out of words that is okay, just sit in God's presence and let him minister to you.

If you're not sure what to pray here are a few ideas to get you started;

- speak to God about your thoughts and feelings about working through this material
- tell God what you would like to get out of it
- is there a specific issue you want God to speak to you about during this period of time, perhaps something you want clarity on?
- perhaps you could prayerfully bring each line of the Psalm to God in prayer, making it your own.

## Day 2

When we set out on a pilgrimage, we inevitably have to leave behind familiar things.

For many people church on Sunday is a familiar part of our lives, but more than that it can serve as an anchor preventing us from drifting as we journey in Faith. Yet for some of you due to personal circumstances you had to leave behind the familiarity of church and that anchor has been cut loose. Certainly, since Covid-19 struck we have all been cut loose from that anchor and things will never be the same again. But that's the reality of pilgrimage. Whether an actual physical pilgrimage where we go somewhere, or one where we are journeying in faith, inevitably there comes a time where we must leave familiar things behind. Someone once said, "the only constant in the universe is change", I can't agree entirely with that statement for God is constant! but apart from him this statement stands. One way or another things have to change, and familiar things must be left behind, things won't be the same, but they can still be good, perhaps even better.

So today we're going to embrace change, and let it set the tone of this pilgrimage. Today engage with an online service (below you'll find web addresses to churches hosting online services). If you know a local church is running online services, then join that. Alternatively, if you don't have Internet access some have been included with the digital content available with this guide. Failing that, why not listen to Songs of Praise today. During the service reflect on what you miss about doing church the way you were used to it and reflect on the benefits of this new way of doing things.



# The Journey Begins

As you set out on a pilgrimage and get away from the hustle and bustle of our villages, towns, and cities, very often one of the first thing that strikes you is the beauty of the world around us.

## Day 3

**Reading:** Job 12:7-15

**Response:** Play content for day 2 from the digital content available with this guide. Listen to the music and look at the photos. As you do, consider the beauty, detail, and magnitude of God's creation. If a photo speaks to you then pause on it for a while. As you look remember that each and every bit, every single detail of it has been created and ordained by God!



Alternatively, or alongside the above, get some flowers or sit in the garden if appropriate and pay attention to the grass waving in the wind, the ants scurrying along the floor, the shape of the clouds, and the smell of the air.

## Day 4

**Reading:** Genesis 1

**Response:** For this activity we are going to use our imaginations. Reread Genesis chapter one again, but as you read it step back from questions about reliability, textual criticism, methods of interpretation and just take it as it comes for the sake of this reflection. Read each line and dwell on it for a few moments. Picture the void and the hovering gases, imagine what it must have meant for the only life in existence to have been God as his spirit hovered over the waters. Think about every detail as you work it into the vision in your mind's eye. Don't rush this, allow yourself a good twenty minutes at least to work through the passage in this way.

Once you have finished give yourself a few more minutes to reflect upon it.

- What struck you as you read?
- What does it show you about God?
- How do you think God views you?



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# Day 5

**Reading:** Colossians 1:15-23

**Response:** Devotion

Do you know that the Lord is sovereign? Consider the following passages for a few moments, how do these fit into your understanding of whom God is?

Lamentations 3:37-38 says

*“Who can speak and have it happen, if the Lord has not decreed it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and good things come?”*

Ephesians 1:4

*“Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”*

Job 42:2-3b

*“I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’”*

Matthew 10:29–31 says

*“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So, don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

## A Home Pilgrimage

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Revelation 21:6 says

*“It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.”*

I have always enjoyed science; science enables us to appreciate the incredible complexity and magnitude of creation around us.

An atom is one the tiniest particles that make up almost everything, and inside each one of these there are 3 quarks held together by forces we still don't fully understand. There are about 100,000,000,000,000 atoms in a single human cell, and the cell is something we can only see with the help of a microscope! There are around 30,000,000,000,000 cells in the human body, around 7,800,000,000 billion people in this world and **God knows and made every single one!**

But that's not all, there are 133,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 atoms making up this planet, you could get approximately 1,300,000 planet Earths inside our sun which is actually a fairly small and seemingly insignificant star for our galaxy, which has approximately 300,000,000,000 stars in it. According to our best guess, there are 100, 000,000,000 galaxies in the universe with around 100,000,000, 000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,





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000,000,000,000 atoms in the universe!

### **And God made every single one!**



All of this has been created through our Lord Jesus Christ. In him all things were created, every quark, atom, planet and Galaxy! Every part was created and have their being through him. But they were not just created, for we are also told that in him all things have their being, they are sustained by him, held together by him and they keep on going only through him. The Lord is sovereign!

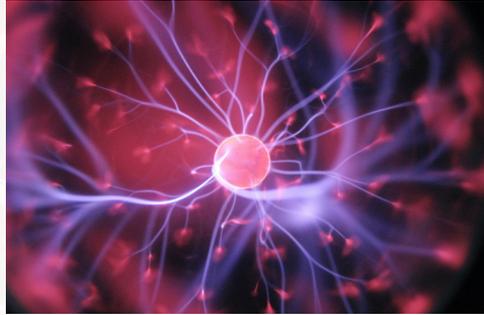
When we were children it was easy to imagine a God who was sovereign, who ruled over all creation, but when we grew up, we can easily begin to struggle to conceive of a God who is truly sovereign.

J.B.Phillips said

*“Many men and women today are living, often with inner dissatisfaction, without any faith in God at all. This is not because they are particularly wicked or selfish or, as the old-fashioned would say, “godless” but because they have not found with their adult minds God big enough to “account for” life, big enough to “fit in with” in the new scientific age, big enough to command the highest admirations and respect, and consequently they’re willing cooperation”*

Is your understanding in God big enough?

Passages that speak of God's Sovereignty are so numerous we could devote this entire booklet to this purpose and would still have hardly scratched the surface. But whatever image of God we have in our mind, it is almost certainly not big enough!



We have a God who is in control of what he has made, nothing happens without his knowledge, every person, every hair on their head is known to him, he sees all and knows all, and no power, or ruler, or authority have power apart from him. Our Lord is sovereign!

But it is important that we note that while we are speaking about God, and we believe in a God who is one, he is also triune (three in unity) and the passage from our reading today is speaking specifically of our Lord Jesus Christ! In him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and being fully God, he is fully Sovereign. Jesus is the Word of God incarnate, the father spoke, and his Word went forth! He was before creation and is over it all! So, having asked you about your picture of God, is your understanding of Jesus big enough?



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## Day 6

**Reading:** Psalm 139:1-18

**Response:** reflect on this passage for a few minutes, paying special attention to v14. Do you know that YOU are fearfully and wonderfully made? Can you, like the psalmist say with all confidence “your works are wonderful, I know that full well”? The God who has all that is in his hands, is the same God who has created you, who has formed you while you were still inside your mother’s womb, YOU are the work of HIS hands.

Once you have spent some time reflecting on the passage, take your journal out. Then take some time to write down 10 things about the way you are made, or who he has made you to be, which you are grateful for. Some people may find it harder to do than others but give it a real go. Then write down 5 things you wish you could change. Now try and write a short prayer, thanking God for all 15 things. Some people may find that a challenge to do but it is important that we acknowledge that we are who God has made us and ordained us to be, and we trust him enough to thank him for it.

Finally write down a few thoughts about what has stood out to you the most since you started this journey. What have you learned or come to appreciate about God, and then again about yourself?

## Day 7

**Reading:** Jeremiah 18:1-17

**Response:** get yourself a small amount of clay, plasticine, or mouldable dough and make something beautiful like a flower, or something that is meaningful to you. It doesn't have to be perfect but as you make it feel the clay in your hands and remember that God made you and just as you have power over



the sculpture you are creating so God has power over the works of his hands, and there is no safer, no more skilled, no more tender, and powerful hands we could be in than his.



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# Day 8

**Reading:** Psalm 96

**Response:** If it is safe to do so light a candle and dim the lights again. As you sit with the candle lit, read the above psalm and then try and speak words of praise to God. Again, you can do this quietly, but if you are willing then try and do it out loud. Remember, don't worry about using elaborate words, speaking piously, or even being theologically perfect while you pray. Simply speak to God from your heart. Once again try and sit in this attitude of prayer for at least 20 minutes before you move on. Perhaps you could offer him thanks and praise for;

- For creations complexities
- For how perfectly creation holds together
- For the various parts of creation, animals, flowers, funny shaped clouds
- For the life he has given you
- Why not thank him for other things that come to your mind as well.

Just speak to God from the bottom of your heart, thank him, praise him, and see where it takes you.

If you really struggle with the silence, then try using the reflective music included.

## Day 9

Rest! Every pilgrimage needs time of rest.

Go to church, join an online service again, watch one from the digital content available with this guide, or listen to Songs of Praise.

This is the day which the Lord has made, and he commanded us to rest and keep it holy! Christians down the centuries have kept Sundays as a day devoted to resting in God's presence and being with the people of God. So why not reach out to phone someone from your church, ask them how they are doing, what's encouraging them, and ask them what you can pray for! Even when housebound we can all have a ministry, and the most important ministry any of us can do is that of prayer!





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# Human Impact

You have spent time marvelling at the beauty of God's creation but often as you progress on a physical pilgrimage you begin to notice other things. You become increasingly aware of the disruption caused by human beings, and the impact we are having on all sorts of living things. You see the sheep with markings, the litter along the side of the path plus masts, cables, and wind turbines cluttering the natural landscapes.

Humans affect almost every part of this world and although at times it is for good, too often that is not the case and the natural world is having to adapt to our constant interference.

## Day 10

**Reading:** Leviticus 25:1-13

This is a passage where God commands the people of Israel to not over burden the land, to give it a year of rest, just as we are told to keep a day of rest.

**Response:** Play content for day 10.

Listen to the music and look at the photos. As you do consider the impact of human life on the world around, consider what impact you yourself are having, and reflect on the feelings these images provoke inside of you. If a photo speaks to you then pause on it for a short while.

What can you change to take better care of the world?

# Day 11

It isn't just the world that is struggling and being ruined by the way we treat it; people are hurt everyday by the behaviours and choices of others.

**Reading:** Genesis 37:12-36

**Response:** For this activity we are going to use our imaginations again and work through the reading of Genesis again. This time read through it slowly, imagining yourself as Joseph, placing yourself in his shoes; as you approach your brothers you know nothing of what is to come and how it will change your life, imagine how he must have felt as the brothers ripped his cloths from him, the sense of helplessness as he sat alone in the pit, the spark of hope as the pit is opened back up but to only to have them dashed by the sight of them exchanging money for him as they sold him like property, how would he feel as he was carried off?

What drove his brothers to behave in the way they did? Have the same motivations ever been at work in your own heart? These were his brothers who were supposed to love and protect him. Instead, out of fear, out of jealousy, out of weakness, out of selfishness they treated him in this way.

Once you have done the above exercise spend a few minutes considering the following.

- We have all been in the bottom of the pit at various times in our life or been left feeling like Joseph as he was carried away. More often than not we are in that place because of the sin of others and it can sting!



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- When were you last hurt by the behaviour of others?
  - What might have caused them to behave in the way they did?
  - Do you recognise the sin inside them?
  - Have you been able to forgive them?

It is not always easy, but why not finish today's session by praying for those who have hurt you through their sinfulness. Paul says in Romans 12 *'Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them'*



## Day 12

**Reading:** Genesis 3

**Response:** Devotion

This is the story we all know well and whether we believe it literally or not, this passage is of huge importance for us. Adam and Eve are in the garden made by God and all is well with only one rule, they must not eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, an instruction given directly by God. But then the serpent comes and gets them to start questioning God's instructions "did God really say?" and so they eat, surely just a bit won't hurt?

While writing this my wife who is allergic to cheese came into my study with a swollen eye. She had been in the kitchen making cheese sauce for my dinner and ate just a tiny piece of cheese, saying to herself one little piece won't hurt! Yeh... but that is the way it goes, we know better, yet we do otherwise. Now consider how much we must surely do by accident or through ignorance. For Adam and Eve their disobedience resulted in exile from the garden, they were cut off from the source of life, death enters into the world, and there develops a separation between God and people. God will not ignore disobedience and rightly so. We have seen the devastation done by people to this world around us, and we have seen the pain people cause others when we considered the suffering of Joseph at the hands of those who should have loved him.

Sin causes the breakdown of God's created order, and a breakdown in relationships. Roman 8:23 tells us that all of



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creation is groaning as in labour pains because of sin. When God created the world, it was good, but sin caused it to become contorted. Sin breaks down relationships; our relationship with the world around us causing it to work against us and not for us; our relationships with other people, as trust breaks down and sin is held against the sinner, and our relationship with God breaks down, the source of life, of all that is good, right, loving, honourable, and perfect for sin gets in the way.

Sin isn't a popular word in today's society and yet the word is still so relevant. We tell ourselves just a little bit won't hurt and we justify our actions "is it really sin?", "did God really say?", "surely I am good where it counts!", but sin remains sin and its effects



are the same. Paul tells us in Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." One way or another we have all taken a bite from that fruit. Therefore, none of us are truly innocent.

Thankfully we have a God who works to deliver his people even when they stray far from him. That is why it is so important that we forgive those who hurt us, those who have caused this pain, or anguish. For each of us have in different ways, at one time or another, caused the same pain to others and are in need of forgiveness, a fresh start. All of us have disobeyed God and gone our own way. Forgiveness enables sin's effects to be undone, and relationships to heal. I wonder if there's anyone you need to forgive? If so, I urge you to take your first steps today so your journey may continue.

## Day 13

**Reading:** Philippians 3:1-14

**Response:** None of us are without sin and we have all struggled with different things within our lives, but as Christians we are called to live lives of repentance to strive towards Jesus, to know him more fully and follow him more truly, forsaking all else. Spend a few minutes reflecting on this passage, especially on v10-14.

Now we are going back to our journals for today's response and I want you to write down the areas in your life you have struggled the most to live faithfully for God. Many of us will have certain areas where we struggle more than others, so think of those things for a few minutes and jot them down. Then alongside each one make notes reflecting on;

- Why do you think these things may have a hold in your life?
- Have you grown in these areas throughout your life?
- What can you put in place to make a change? To break former patterns and move forward from these things?



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# Day 14

**Reading:** Lamentations 5

**Response:** This text is not an easy passage to read. It speaks of the suffering of the Israelites during their exile from the promised land where everything has gone to pot. The exile was a result of the sin of the previous generations when they rejected the Lord and rejected his ways, but the stark truth is that the sin of the present generation is no different. The Book of Lamentations speaks of detestable things done by the people even in their exile. Fortunately, despite the people abandoning the Lord and his ways, the Lord had not abandoned them, nor had he forgotten them as the lamenter enquires. Instead he was at work to deliver them and to restore them to something far better than they had ever known even in Israel.

The suffering of Israel was extreme, Lamentations speaks of that, and perhaps it is far removed from our own experience. Yet we still have problems of plenty in the world today with climate change, with many lacking access to clean water, with poverty in our own country and far more extreme elsewhere, with millions of refugees, ongoing wars, genocides, famine, starvation, slavery, and even a global epidemic.

So, for our response today take some paper and draw two globes representing the Earth on it. On the first globe write some ideas about what behaviours and practices have caused the world to get to this point. Then once you have about a dozen or so ideas down move on to the next globe and write some of the qualities we will need, and our leaders will need, to overcome these issues. Why not finish by praying for these issues and asking God to give us these qualities.

# Day 15

**Reading:** Psalm 116

**Response:** If it is safe to do so light a candle and dim the lights. The candle should be a reminder to you of the LORDS presence with you, going before you in everything that you do and the light we have through Jesus our Saviour. So, as you sit with the candle lit, read the above psalm and spend some time praying to God, bringing to him;

- our failure as people to treat this world in the way we ought to treat it
- for what the world was made to be, and where it now is
- for those who we know and see living far from God
- for our own suffering caused by others sin
- for our own sins, list them, talk to God about them (draw on your journal if necessary)
- ask for his strength to overcome them
- and praise him that there is hope, that he is our deliverer!

Again, you can do this quietly, but if you're willing try and pray out loud. For some people this will feel very natural, for others it may feel awkward at first. Remember don't worry about using elaborate words, speaking piously, or even being theologically perfect while you pray. Simply speak to God from your heart and see where it takes you.



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Once you have spent some quality time praying for these things finish by using the following confession.

*Almighty, and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, We have followed too much the devices, and desires of our own hearts, We have offended against thy holy laws, We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, And we have done those things which we ought not to have done, And there is no health in us, But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders; Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults, Restore thou them that are penitent, According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord; And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.*

Proverbs 28:13 says “Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy” and find it we do in Jesus!

## Day 16

Today is a day of rest once again. Again, watch a digital service or listen to Songs of Praise on the radio. However, having spent some time this week considering the separation caused by human sinfulness, and how important it is for us to forgive, perhaps there is someone who has been on your heart this week who has hurt you, or who you have hurt. If appropriate why not reach out to them today? Doing so humbly and in an attitude of forgiveness to allow the separation between you to begin to heal.

## Lost on the Endless Road

On a pilgrimage we can come to a point where we are just too tired, and the road seems to just go on, with no indication that our destination is getting any closer. It can feel as if we will never arrive at our journey's end. The road is just too hard and too long. At other times we are going along, and we realise we have taken a wrong turn somewhere and are lost, and despite our best efforts we just can't find our way back on track to where we need to be. At times like this we just want to slump down and give up.

We have reflected on the magnitude of God's creation, and how perfectly he knows each and every one of us, but we have also been weighed down by an awareness of sin, that of others, and of our own. The burdens we face here and now can seem just too great and God just feels so far out of our reach that there is no hope and the end is just too far away. At times like this it is as if we are lost in the wilderness.



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# Day 17

**Reading:** Psalm 13

**Response:** Today we're going to make use of the figure labyrinth on the next page, working through it slowly and reflectively.

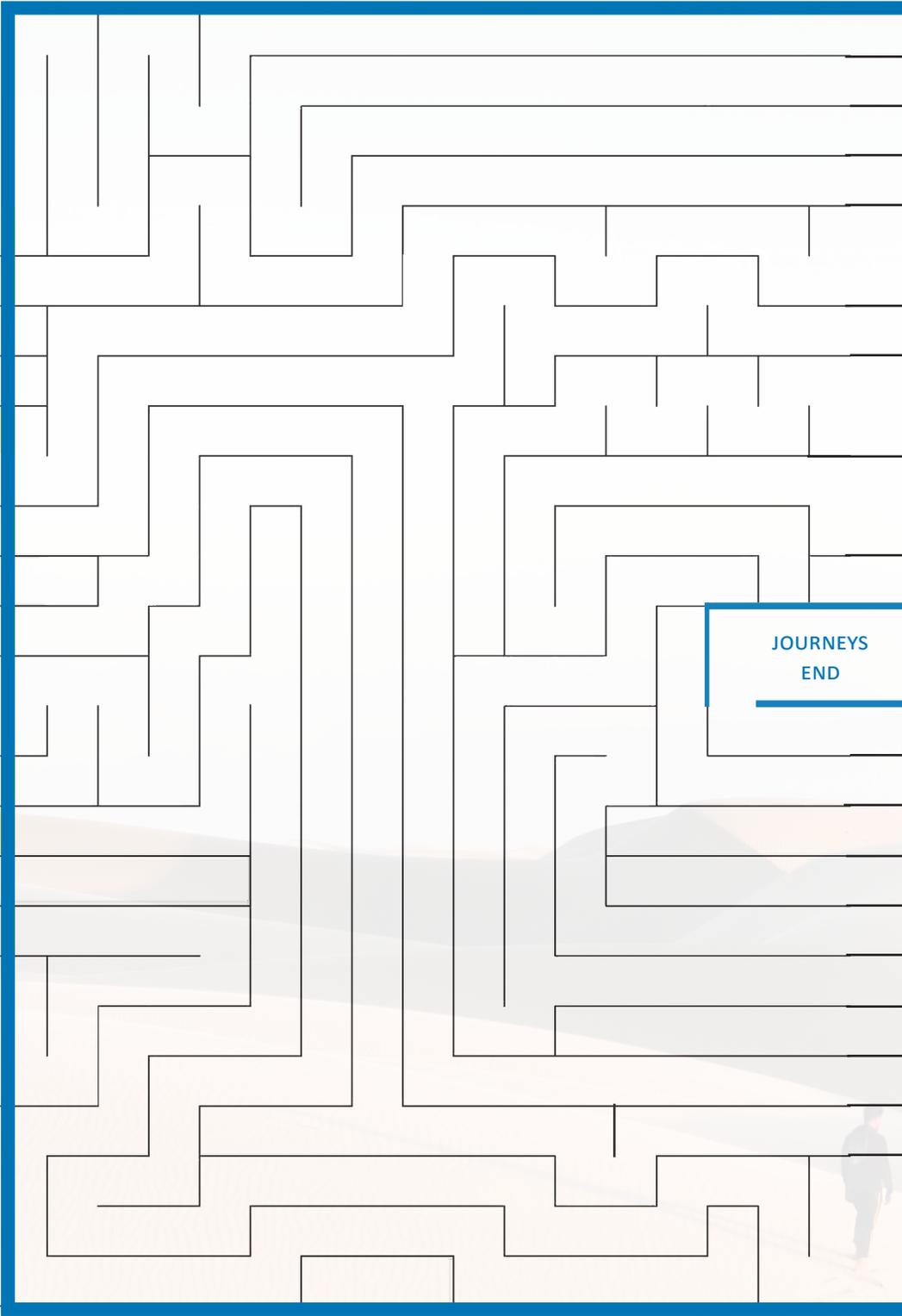
As you make your way through the labyrinth you may find yourself encountering dead ends. When this happens, pause and consider the times when you have felt like you've reached a dead end in your life, times when you have felt hopeless and just wanted to give up. Know that God was with you at these times, were you aware of him?

In the labyrinth you will encounter crossroads. When you do, pause and reflect there. We all face crossroads in life where we can feel unsure of what to do, perhaps we even feel conflicted; yet the Lord was with you at every crossroad you have ever encountered. Were you aware of his guidance at these times?

You may come to a place in the labyrinth when you come close to arriving but realise you have gone the wrong way. When you reach these places use it to reflect on the times in life when you have felt lost and felt you've gone the wrong way, times when you may have felt tired, disappointment, or even despondent because life's journey is just too much for you. Even at those times the Lord was with you. Were you aware of him supporting, sustaining, and strengthening you?

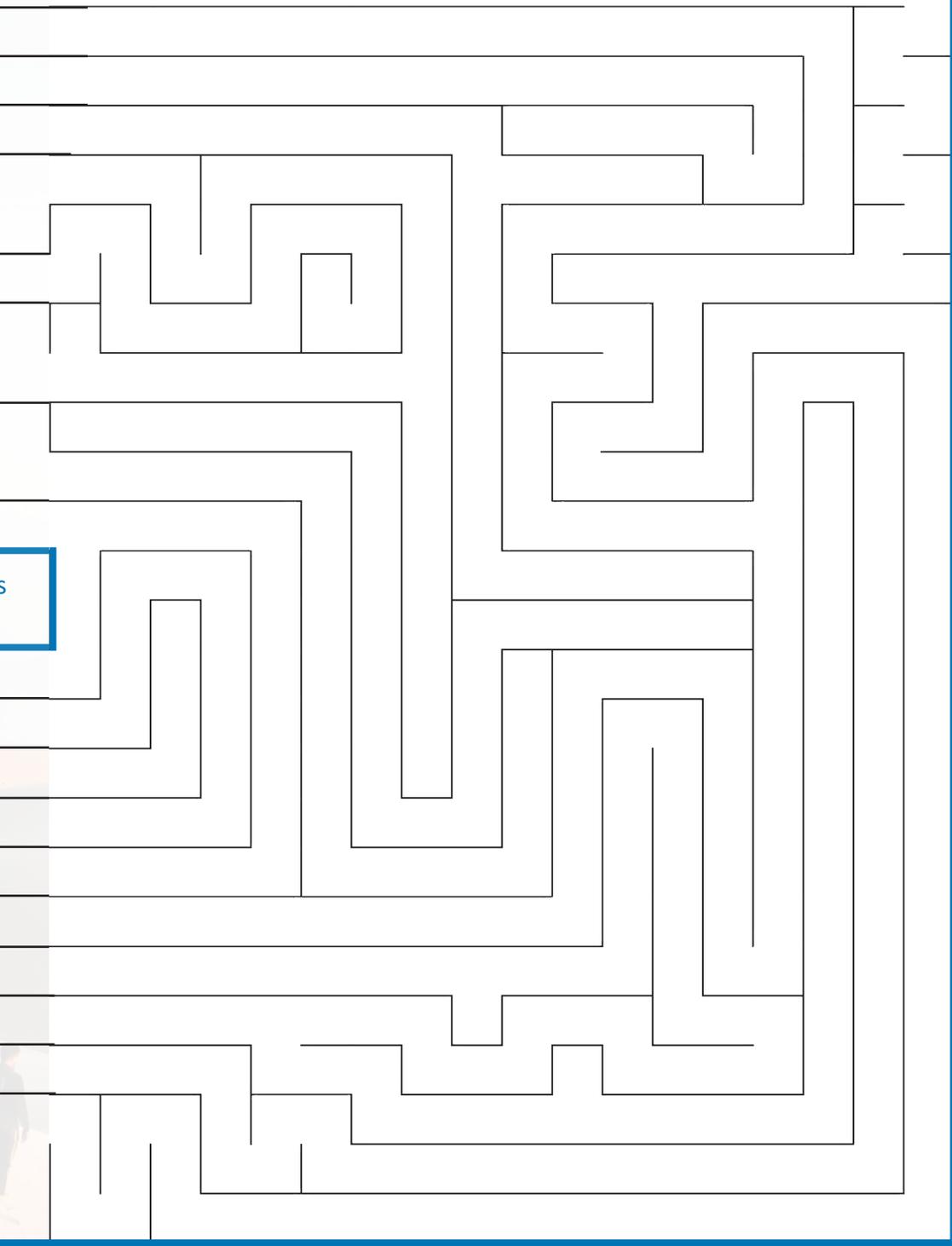
As you work through the Labyrinth you may want to play some music in the background to help you reflect. Once you have finished turn to page 30, for the end of the session.

START AT ONE OF THE YELLOW POINTS



JOURNEYS  
END

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There are many times in this life where the way ahead seems too impossible. Thankfully Lord is there making the way for you to follow. In life you are faced with so many choices, still the Lord is there with you and he will show you the way. There are times when you can feel lost and alone, where you feel as if you will never make it through to your journey's end. At those hard times where you just feel too tired to carry on, know that the Lord is there with you, carrying you safely through!

# Day 18

**Reading:** John 5:1-15

**Response:** For this response we're going to imagine ourselves as the paralysed man in this gospel reading. Spend some time picturing the scene imagining yourself as the man lying there alone yet surrounded by so many people, imagine how he must have felt, see the pool being stirred up in your mind's eye, the desperate struggle to get there before anyone else, and then imagine Jesus coming to you, speaking to you as Jesus speaks to this man. Go through the whole passage like this picturing the scene, imagining the smells the sounds and your feelings at every point.

You may at times feel lost and helpless, unable to continue on, yet just as Jesus came to this man, so Jesus comes to each one of us.



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# Day 19

**Reading:** Isaiah 41:1-20

**Response:** Devotion

We have all had Wilderness like experiences. Wildernesses come in all sorts of different forms. These may be times of ill health, suffering at the hands of others, loneliness, hopelessness. It is never an easy place to be. Often it is made so much harder when God seems so far from us, when we feel alone in the wilderness, after all didn't we consider just last week how because of sin we were separated from God?

Indeed, while sin remains, we cannot draw near to God, for there is a separation between us which we cannot overcome by ourselves, and while that separation remains, we cannot see the full glory of God, or enter into his kingdom.

Thankfully, when we are far off, the Lord comes to find us. After Adam and Eve have been cast out of the garden, who do their children encounter in the wilderness? Who is it that comes to them? When the Israelites are in the wilderness with no place to call their home, who is it that remains with them throughout the forty years going before them as a pillar of fire by night and cloud by day? Who makes their home with them in the tabernacle? When the Israelites go into exile having lost their kingdom because of their disobedience, who goes with Shadrach, Meshack, Abednego, Nehemiah, Esther and so many others into exile? It is none other than the Lord himself!

Whenever we feel lost, or whenever we feel we are drowning

## A Home Pilgrimage

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under the weight of life, when we feel we've been forgotten by the world around us, when we feel lost, lonely, or helpless, the Lord is near to his people!

Even when his people are far from him the Lord does not abandon them, he goes with them into those barren places, where he will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and if we let him, will take the burden of our responsibility for the pain we have caused to those around us by our own sin. He promises to deliver his people.

'But wait we do not see him!' you may say 'how may I know that the Lord is near?' Jesus says "I will not leave you as orphans" instead, Jesus gives us his spirit to go with his people, to dwell in us, to be the comforter, counsellor, our companion on our journey.

So if you are in the wilderness, whatever form that may take, know that the Lord is near to you and he will not leave you alone, nor will he forsake you, he is at work in ways that are unseen, and he will in time deliver you!  
Amen.





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# Day 20

**Reading:** Deuteronomy 31:1-8

**Response:** The Lord goes with us as well. Therefore *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”* Today we are going to go back to our journals and think about these questions;

1. When have you been in the wilderness? (Metaphorically speaking)
2. Now write down how the Lord made himself known to you during those times, working in the situation, comforting you, caring for you.
3. How did you feel at those times?
4. What other ways have you seen the Lord at work during your life?

## Day 21

**Reading:** Psalm 86

**Response:** Today we are going to read through a hymn written by Horatio Spafford, and it is in my opinion one of the greatest hymns ever written. Horatio was a successful lawyer in Chicago and had invested heavily in property. In 1870 his only son died aged 4. Within months the great Chicago fire broke out destroying all of his investments.

Aware that things had taken its toll on the family he sent his wife and 4 daughters to Britain to join a mission trip for a holiday with the intention of joining them a few days later. However, during the crossing, the ship carrying his family sank killing his 4 daughters. As he made the voyage to join his grieving wife, as he passed over the place where their ship had sunk Horatio began to write;



When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,  
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!—



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My sin, not in part but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:  
If Jordan above me shall roll,  
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life  
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,  
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;  
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord!  
Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;  
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,  
Even so, it is well with my soul."



If you have access to the internet, I would strongly encourage you to listen to it on YouTube once you have read through the words. When you are feeling lost in the wilderness, are you able to make this hymn your own, and say like Horatio "it is well with my soul".

## Day 22

**Reading:** John 14

**Response:** Some of you will be very conscious of being in the wilderness at the moment, but the truth is that we are all in some sense in the wilderness until the Lord brings us home. So today we are going back to our candles as we spend some time waiting on the Lord. You may want to use this time to simply sit in silence listening to what the Lord may say to you, allowing him to speak to your heart. You may want to bring to him various things on your heart, your own feelings of your wilderness experiences, and situations you are struggling with. If you are struggling with the silence and with what to pray about then go back to your journal and pray around those things you wrote about two days ago.

The Lord is never far from his people, he never abandons us, and longs for us to come and wait in his presence.





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## Day 23

Well it is Sunday again, doesn't it come around quickly! You may feel alone on the seemingly endless road at times and the same is true for others.

So, join another virtual service as usual, and again reach out to someone. However, as you reach out to someone today, don't just reach out to someone you know well and are good friends with, reach out to someone you know might need a friend. The wonderful thing about the church is that we are not in it alone, not only does God go with us, but we have other believers around us to support us and that support should work both ways. Who can you minister to today?

## The Way Is Found



After you've spent time lost in the wilderness, there comes that moment when you see a signpost pointing to your destination, or you reach the checkpoint which tells you the end is nearing, those moments that restore hope. There are many times in life when we are lost in the wilderness when there is no end in sight, but there is always hope.

# Day 24

**Reading:** Luke 19:1-10

**Response:** People who have children will often find their desks and shelves cluttered with various pen holders, picture frames, paper weights etc made by their children, often made using other people's rubbish! Today you are going to get creative. Dig through your recycling or rummage around your home for something that you can bring new life to. This doesn't have to be a messy project and it doesn't have to look tacky either. Below are a few ideas to get you started. We are so quick to discard in today's world, yet so many things can be saved and given a new purpose, just as the Lord does with us.





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# Day 25

**Reading:** Luke 15:1-32

**Response:** In a moment we are going to re-read verses 11-32 slowly, but first look at verse 1. Ask yourself whether you can at times be like the Pharisees, believing Jesus is only for those who are good enough. Most of us are guilty of it at times but we must change this. Next move on and read verses 11-32 which is part of the same dialogue. Imagine yourself as the prodigal son as the parable plays out. Consider how this might find parallels in your own life and consider what you might have felt as the son being welcomed back by his father and shown such amazing grace and know that this is how God receives you! Spend about 20 minutes working through this passage.



## Day 26

**Reading:** John 3:16-21

**Response:** Devotion

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.’ On almost every list of the most quoted or most popular Bible passages this appears as number one.

We have seen already how far we were from the Lord because of our sin. We were lost and unable to come to God. Our hearts refused to incline towards him and would not follow, instead we keep doing those things we know we shouldn’t do. Jesus says in verse 18 that the world stands condemned already. On day 15 we acknowledge this and turned back to him as we confessed our sin and our part in adding to the pain and suffering in this fallen world.

But God’s heart is always inclined towards his people, the work of his hands. The Bible tells us God created us in his image and likeness, revealing to us his investment in us. We have already considered how intimately he knows each and every one of us, how he tells his servant Jeremiah that he knitted him together when he was still in his mother’s womb. And how despite humanity falling away from him, God’s heart has not stopped going out after us. Now we read in verse 16 that “God so loved the world that he gave his only son” who has entered into the wilderness with us, even entering into our flesh, so that the world might be saved through him verse 17 “I have not come into the world to condemn it, but to save it.” Save it he did!



When Jesus died on the cross, he didn't just die an ordinary death but died the worst of all deaths, he went down into the darkness and further out than anyone ever had or could ever go.

As Athanasius put it, how could he who is the life die? Only by borrowing our death, to overcome death by a mighty struggle.

Jesus didn't sink down under the weight of his own sins, for he had never done anything wrong, but rather had sunk down into death on

the cross under the weight of the sins of all the world, with all the evil and sin of the world all focused and loaded upon Him. Then he rose triumphant not merely having come back out of death to one day die again like Lazarus but having gone through death out the other side into immortal, indestructible, bodily resurrected human life.

Now if anyone were to try to hurt him, to infect him with the Coronavirus, to kill him- it would be an utterly meaningless act. He had overcome death in a mighty struggle, having entered in, sunk down, he had swallowed it up from inside out and triumphed. As he stood triumphant, the victor in the mighty struggle which had cost him everything, against death, sin, evil, fear, guilt, shame, and hell, all lay fallen at his feet. He was risen and alive just as he had said; 'behold I am the living one I was dead but now I am alive forever and ever!'

## A Home Pilgrimage

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He had been declared with power to be the Son of God. On the cross just days before his identity had publicly been questioned and now before all the world God the Father had declared 'this is my Son' as he said to him 'arise oh death of death and hell's destruction'.

Jesus did not come to just make our lives better, he came to do far more he came down to destroy death and Satan, to take away our sin and to lift us up to make us sons and daughters of his own almighty Father, his brothers and sisters and into the life of the eternal God forever .

He is ours and we are his! We belong to him he belongs to us; he is one with us, we are one with him he is our bridegroom or husband we are his bride his church, he is our head, we are his body.



We were lost but now we are found, we had fallen but now we have been restored! Our God is a God who works in weakness, in humility, in loss and through them his power is revealed. When Jesus died it had seemed all was lost and his identity was questioned, but through the resurrection the cross is turned into the means of glory, Jesus' royal ascension and the means to our salvation.



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In our own lives we will inevitably find ourselves in the wilderness, times when things seem lost or hopeless and the destination just too far. But through Jesus we will arrive. More, he takes our wilderness experiences and breathes new life into them, he gives them purpose, he redeems them for good.

## Day 27

**Reading:** Ezekiel 36:22-28

**Response:** In our reading the Lord says that he will give to his people a new heart and a new spirit as he brings about their redemption, where he will be their God and they will be his people. So, we're heading back to our journals today to reflect on the change our redemption has had on our lives. For if we are walking in the Lord, if we are on a real Christian pilgrimage, then we should see a change in our lives as we grow in the Lord. For some people that may be a dramatic transformation, for some it may be slow progression throughout our lifetime, but with our redemption comes a new heart and a new spirit that should change the way we live. More than that, we are also called to intentionally change the way we live. The first words of Jesus's public ministry in the gospel of Matthew 4:17 was *'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'*. When Jesus speaks to the woman at the well and shows her the most incredible love and acceptance where most people would have treated her with scorn, he tells her before they part ways to 'go and sin no more'. If we are on a Christian pilgrimage – there should be a change in our lives as we grow day by day, so that we are seeking the Lord

and seeking to go the Lord's way more throughout our lives and become more pleasing to him.

So, in your journal;

- What ways has your heart changed throughout your life?
- Have you become more Christ like? More compassionate, gentle, generous, desiring of the Lord?
- Next when was the last time you intentionally changed the way you were living, the types of choices you were making, the way you were speaking, the way you were treating others, for the sake of living a life pleasing to God?
- Now reflect and jot down five things that you know you need to change in your life, and alongside each one jot down how you could actively change those things,
- What steps can you put in place now to break the pattern of this behaviour?

Then perhaps you may want to finish with a prayer offering up these things to the Lord asking him to continue the change and give you the strength to change those things you have just jotted down.





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# Day 28

**Readings:** Ephesians 2:1-10

**Response:** Today we have another hymn, one you will already know. Spend some time today reading through the words. God doesn't ask what we can do for him, he doesn't ask what we can give him, or what merit there is in any of us. Even when we have made him an enemy, he comes to us and will save anyone who turns to him. He delights to pour out his grace upon us. Do you know this grace in your life?

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch; like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

The Lord hath promised good to me,  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.

## Day 29

**Reading:** 1 Timothy 1:12-16

**Response:** In our reading the apostle Paul expresses his gratitude towards the Lord. Despite his unworthiness, his past faithlessness, and action against the Lord, in his mercy he has saved him and given him full acceptance and allows him to be one of his people and to serve him! And we ought to do the same. For through Jesus our sins are taken away from us, we are made acceptable to God and free to serve him. So, we're going to light a candle again and we're going to sit and thank the Lord for his redemption. For the mercy that has been shown to us, to thank him for Jesus who died for us and in so doing set us free from sin and made us acceptable to God. Thank him for his patience, thank him for the strength he gives us, thank him for coming to save the lost like us thanking him for the love that has been shown to us in rescuing us.

## Day 30

It is our rest day once again! Just like other Sundays, today is a day to join the worship of the Lord with others, by joining a digital or broadcasted service. Then use this time to reach out to someone again. Remember, as you do, ask that person what they would like you to pray for. Perhaps while you're talking, you might try praying for them over the phone, if not pray by yourself after the chat.



# The End is in Sight

Well our pilgrimage is back on track and just over the horizon you see your destination atop a distant hill, and it lifts your spirit, there is hope for the journey has almost come to an end. As Christians we are people of the hope. In the days of Israel, they hoped for the coming Messiah, now we wait in hope of his return when he will usher in his kingdom. What an amazing hope we have!

## Day 31

**Reading:** Hebrew 12:22-29 & Isaiah 11:1-10

**Response:** Open the content for day 31. You'll find another set of pictures and accompanying music. These are pictures of what people imagine the coming kingdom to be like. Spend some time looking at these pictures and if one speaks to you pause on it for a while. As you look at the pictures remember that all the challenges you now face in life will pass away and be replaced by something far greater than any of these images could possibly illustrate.



## Day 32

**Reading:** Revelation 21:1-22:5

**Response:** We are going to spend some time working through this passage. This is a vision given to John where he is given a glimpse of the end times. As you read it simply try to imagine the scene, try and see it as John saw it in his vision. Spend 20 minutes or so doing this. It may be that we should take this vision literally, it may be that it is just an image of what is to come, but what incredible wonders it points us towards. This is our inheritance as God's people. As Christians we need to continually remind ourselves that we have this waiting for us. When we keep our eyes fixed on the destination it will spur us on to endure now and to push on to our journey's end!

## Day 33

**Reading:** Romans 13

**Response:** Devotion



What time is it? Imagine that you wake up and are confused and don't know what day it is! You think- where am I? What day is it? Now how the day goes from that point depends a lot on the answer to that question! Normally, if the answer comes back- it's Saturday, you think great, back to bed! If on the other hand it comes back Monday, a slight tingle goes down your spine, you



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look again at the clock, and you are already running late, there is so much to do, 'oh dear!'

What did you want to be when you were a child? All kinds of things no doubt- and always things that made your parents shudder- my friend who was a doctor's son wanted to own a sweet shop, his father had perhaps slightly more in mind for him! It doesn't take too long in life to rid us of our childish optimism. As we get older, we gradually become more realistic! We see how GCSE's and A levels and degree classifications limit our choices and reduce our options. Gradually we scale back our dreams and what we ever thought life could have in store for us.

As we go on in life and become more aware of our own limitations- the world we live in becomes smaller and our part in it more restricted, until in the end when we are older what consumes our time and attention, what we dream about is where to shop- Sainsbury's or Morrison's and we give ourselves a lot to the decision, a lot does ride on it after all! We become obsessed with the most trivial of things and these are things that we spend all our time talking and thinking about.

There is a subtle shift that has taken place in our thinking and mind-set. For us life is no longer in front, it is behind, it has already been lived, it's not really very much about what we could or are going to do anymore, those days are gone, anything we are really going to do, we have done already, and we even start to fear the future and what it holds for us. Are we really all steadily and relentlessly drawing to a close? No!!

In Romans 13, Paul the mouthpiece of Jesus Christ paints a very different picture, as he speaks of an utterly different and infinitely more wonderful understanding of history and our place in it. Because for those who have entrusted themselves to Jesus,

everything has forever changed, the greatest, the most and the best is always still ahead.

*'The night is nearly over, the day is almost here', or as the King James Version puts it, 'the night is far spent, the day is at hand'*

With Jesus, the worst is behind; the best is in front and still to come. **Right now, we are in the night** and the time in which we live is one of darkness, we have never known anything else. **But** we are all with the whole world in the last few minutes of darkness before the dawn begins to break, the shadows flee, and the new day begins. The day is at hand! For Jesus the Saviour is coming to set all things right and bring about his renewed creation! To eradicate all that does not belong, all that is evil, to remove and purge his creation of sin, death, suffering, crying and pain forever and transform it into a place of glorious and wonderful and unending life and possibility and future forever. In other words, if anything the coming day which is almost here is the real day, the best of days.

This new day is so close that it is not 10pm the night before, no! The night is far spent, it is 5am, the day is at hand, it is still dark outside but the birds are beginning to stir, the sky is beginning to turn orange- red and the light is starting to break in the east with the rising sun. The day is at hand.

For Jesus our Saviour has truly turned everything around. He will share his wonderful future with us, with all who take him as their own, whether he takes us to be with him first or comes with the dawn to usher in his new creation, we will live and be with him and with one another forever, real life here in the wonderful renewed creation that will always go on, and never end, of infinite possibility and opportunity.



This means that the Christian never needs to have the so called 'bucket list' because they have infinite time to enjoy everything that creation has to offer. We are all really young, with so much more ahead than behind, with life not drawing to an end, but simply approaching its real beginning!

If you have toned down and conceded your expectations about the future after disappointments and hardships, really given up on life, you can begin through the power Jesus to raise them again, to not wind down but to carry on doing more and more for him!

## Day 34

**Reading:** John 11:17-44

**Response:** Through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross we have life, for death is overcome. By his blood our sin is washed away, and we have become God's people and inheritors of his kingdom. So, believing that Jesus is the means by which this is ours, what do you look forward to the most? Take your journal out and write down 10 things you look forward to about being in his kingdom.

When I was a child, I used to be very inquisitive and would always ask my dad how one thing or another worked. My dad was very good at answering these questions but there were of course questions he just couldn't give me an answer to or at least not in a way that I could understand and so when he came to these sorts of questions he would tell me to write it down so that when I am in God's kingdom I could ask him those questions then. We all have questions, things which we do not understand about God, but one day through Jesus we will be with God and we will have an eternity to learn about him. So, spend some time now writing down questions you have about God, for God. For these are questions you will one day have answered!





# Day 35

**Reading:** Psalm 16

**Response:** “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures for evermore.” These are words of such truth, and one day we will be in his presence where we will know a sort of joy. No wait... that’s not right, was it great joy? No that’s it, fullness of joy! That was it. In his presence there is fullness of joy! And pleasure, not for a short period of time until we get bored, but pleasure forever more!

So, for our response today we are going to write these words from verse eleven of this psalm. Not just once with a biro but in a way that will get you to spend time with this verse and something that will be a reminder to you of it in the weeks and months to come. You may want to write it over and over again if you miss the punishment of school, but perhaps you could get a little more creative. You may want to write it in large letters and decorate it, you could make a bookmark with it on or something to go on the fridge. If you have spare buttons and a spare picture frame you could write the verse out of buttons. Perhaps you could carve it into a piece of wood or put the verse on a canvas and create a painting around it. If you like photography, perhaps you could find stones in your garden and use them to make the verse and get clever with the shot.

The important thing is to do something that will get you to spend time with this verse, and last to remind you of it in time to come.

## Day 36

**Reading:** Romans 8:18-39

**Response:** Even now Jesus is in heaven seated at the right hand of God interceding for each one of his people claiming us for himself. For each and every one of us matters to him and we are constantly in his heart. So, through Jesus we can bring all our needs and concerns and not one of our prayers falls on deaf ears, each and every one of them is heard by God who is powerful to act. What a great hope, and confidence that should give us as we pray. So now we are going to light a candle again and we are going to sit in prayer and perhaps you might want to begin by just worshipping the Lord praising him for the life he has given to you for the hope that is to come through him and of his care for us as he intercedes for us even now. Bring to him those things which you are most looking forward to in the world to come, and then bring to him those things you're struggling with most in the here and now, for he hears each one of your prayers and will answer each one in the way that he knows is best.





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## Day 37

It is Sunday again, the day we celebrate week by week as recreation day! So, go and join the worship of the Lord with others by joining a digital or broadcasted service. Then use this time to reach out to someone. Today as you do, continue asking them what you can pray for but also offer them some encouragement. Tell them something (or several things) which you really appreciate about them. We all need encouragement along the way!

## With the End so Near; Give it all you have

With your destination in sight and oh it is so close! Now is not the time to give up, instead with your heart lifted, you quicken your pace as you give it everything you have!

## Day 38

**Reading:** Romans 6:1-23

**Response:** A seed is dry and lifeless until it is planted in the ground and watered. Then out from the seed a new life emerges. Very quickly roots develop and its first leaf opens, and the remains of the seed is discarded and decays back into the ground. Paul tells us that we have died with Christ and been buried with him. We are a new life, with a new purpose, and our old self needs to be let go, just as a new plant must get rid of the remains of the seed.

So today we want you to plant a seed. You will need to put a small amount of soil in a pot (if you don't have a pot perhaps you could recycle an old plastic bottle and cut the top off it), pop the seed in, water it often, nurture it, and watch it grow. Let this be a reminder to you of the pilgrimage you have been on. Our life as Christians is a journey of putting the old self to death, and growing into a new fuller, richer life in Christ where we will flourish (as hopefully these plants will).





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## Day 39

**Reading:** Daniel 6:1-28

**Response:** Today's response is to spend some good quality time in the above passage. Daniel remained faithful to God, even when the cost was high read the passage again slowly, picturing the events unfold in your mind's eye. Imagine Daniel's thought process when faced with the decision, faithfulness to God or his life. How must he have felt at the choice he had? How would he have felt being tuned in, and then sentenced to be thrown into the lion's den? Many of us would have given in and done what was easy but not Daniel. Living faithfully for God was his aim in life before anything else, even before his own life!

## Day 40

**Reading:** Romans 13

**Response:** Devotion

We considered last week that the new day, the beginning of the best days is close at hand, the night is far spent. It is still dark outside, but the birds are beginning to stir, the sky is beginning to turn orange-red and the light is starting to break in the east with the rising sun.

So, with that in mind, what are we to do while we wait? Should we just sleep and wait for the new day to dawn? No! We are to wake up!! As we wait for the new day to dawn, the best day is to begin in the final few minutes of darkness, before all is morning.

We are not to sleep blissfully unaware of all that is going on around us but to wake up from slumber.

But if we are awake in the last few moments of the night, what are we to do - it's all dark outside? There are lots of things that we could do, now that we are awake and that we are waiting! We could waste away the time. We could pursue the 'night life', which is all kinds of sinfulness, darkness, secretive and shameful things that people do in secret and shamefully conceal for fear of bringing out into the light, into the open.

Paul tells us in verse 13,

*'let us behave decently as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy...'*

We know how people behave at night; it is almost as if wrongdoing is acceptable in its natural environment in the darkness of the night. We throw up our hands in disbelief, 'that is daylight robbery' in other words if it had taken place at night, we would hardly have been surprised but the fact that it took place during the day is astonishing and somehow different. Or we see someone staggering down the road, at night we would think nothing of it, in the day we say, 'my goodness it is only 10 in the morning and look at that guy!'

Don't you think that if the lights were turned on full brightness all of a sudden in a night club everyone would be so embarrassed and almost everything that was going on would stop at once and people would all slink away and cower from the light for fear that their deeds would be exposed.

So we are awake, it is the last few moments of darkness and night before the dawn, we are not asleep anymore and nor are we to live the night life, instead we are as Paul tells us in verse 14



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'Rather clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature...'

We are awake, and are to get up, and get dressed, to clothe ourselves all ready for the coming day. Paul says put on Jesus Christ Himself, take him for yourself, cover yourself with Him, His righteousness, his Spirit, power, life, goodness and fellowship.

Such that you actually love those around you as Paul explains in verses 8-10;

*'Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. The commandments do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet and whatever other commandments there may be, are summed up in this one rule, love your neighbour as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilment of the law.'*

This is what it means to be awake now as you await in the darkness of night, the breaking dawn. It is to love and lay down our lives for one another in service, in care and it is as we do this that the world, still outside in the darkness of night is drawn into the church of Jesus Christ.



Let us enter into the new day on a high, such that we are always growing, doing more and maturing, for with Jesus the best is still to come. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.

## The Return Journey

Congratulations for coming to the end of this resource, hopefully it has been a beneficial forty days. However, the journey is not yet over we still have time left here on earth and there are still plenty more ways for us to grow in our faith.

Why not continue as you have been for a bit longer? Take this pattern of worship, reflection, meditation on God's Word, digging deeper, journaling, more reflection, and prayer making it a rule for your life. Make spiritual pilgrimage the way of your life. If parts of this resource didn't work for you then adapt it to something that would work. If you had something in place before starting this and it worked better for you then that is great too, go back to using that. The important thing is that you persevere continuing your spiritual journey growing in your faith. If you decide to use this rule of life moving forward, then here are a few ideas to help you do that.

Start each day as you have been using the liturgy.

### Readings

Work through a book of the bible. If you don't read the bible by yourself often then start with the new testament. Alternatively, you could work through the bible in a year (a quick google search will lead you to guides to help you do this. Alternatively, you could purchase a reading guide such as 'Every Day with Jesus' which will give you readings and a little reflection on the text each day.



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## Reflections

- You could do a google street view pilgrimage. How about going from Wales to Santiago de Compostela in as many sessions as it takes?
- You could do a finger labyrinth.
- You could do a web search for the location of one of your bible readings or for pictures relating to a relevant theme for the day.
- You could work through a hymn book and spend time with the words to the hymns and listen to them online if you are able.
- You could just have a time sat listening to worship music.
- You could do a search on Pinterest for craft ideas around the theme of your readings. Go to [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com) and in pages search box type something like 'craft ideas for Daniel in the lion's den'
- Do some more work with clay making something interpretive.
- Write a bible verse on a piece of paper and decorate it with colour, shapes, or pictures.
- If there is a challenge in the bible reading such as to be encouraging, what practical steps could you take to encourage someone? Write a letter, make a phone call, bake a cake for them.

## Meditation on the Word

If your text is a narrative then you can continue as you have been, imagining the scene, placing yourself there and hearing the words spoken as if with your ears, or as one of the characters in the story. If it is not a narrative type text then read around the text to understand its context (after all if you take the text from the context you're left with only a con). If its a letter, then imagine it is written to you. If it is poetry consider the rhythm, repetition to help you understand what it is trying to draw out. If it is history, consider how God is working through the various situations. For the passages you read consider the following types of questions;

- Ask yourself what are the implications of this text for you?
- What does it tell you about who God is?
- What do we learn about the way he interacts with people?
- Does it point us to Jesus in any way?
- How does it shape the way you live as one of his people?
- How do you need to respond to it?

## Devotion

There are so many resources out there. Why not grab a commentary for whatever text you are reading, to help you better understand it? Pick up a relevant N.T. Wright's commentary, or one from The Bible Speaks Today series for something accessible or visit the Churches Together bookshop to see what they have.



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## Journal

You may want to do one or more of the following each time you come to this response;

- Write a letter to God as a means of praying.
- Write a poem in it.
- Write what you have learnt over the last week,
- Write what has stood out to you
- Write what has challenged you
- Write have you been left with questions from what you have read?
- Write a response to the epistles, if your reading came from there how would you respond to their letter if it was written to you?
- Write about what God has been speaking to you about this week.
- Or get inventive!

## Prayer

Continue as you have while you pray;

- Thank and praise the lord
- Bring to God those things you have done wrong
- Bring to God your requests for yourself and for others
- Pray for the church and for revival
- Remember to sit at times in God's presence letting him speak and minister to you.

## Worship

Again, this is easy to continue as normal. Tune into some form of broadcasted service and reach out to other people in the church and minister to them through prayer and encouragement.



The funny thing about pilgrimages is that they rarely go the way we expect. We made a whole load of plans for 2020 for our year of pilgrimage, and well, it hasn't quite worked out how we expected, which thinking about it now we should have expected... Anyway, the pilgrimage team have been working hard to put together this home pilgrimage guide for you to use!

Those who embark on this 40-day journey will be led through a spiritual journey from the comfort of their own home. From admiring the beauty and wonder of God's creation, then out into the wilderness and the seemingly endless road, but don't worry you won't be left out there for long. Eventually hope is discovered, the way is found, and the destination comes into sight.

This home pilgrimage includes liturgy, space for prayer, readings, devotions, reflective activities, and encouragement to engage in online worship.

Will you brave this pilgrimage and see where God takes you?