



# INSPIRE

FEBRUARY 2023



**“Live as children of light ... and find out what pleases the Lord”  
(Ephesians 5:8b, 10, NIV)**

Editor: Jenny Lesley - [inspire@belperbaptist.org](mailto:inspire@belperbaptist.org)

Distribution: Church Secretary – [secretary@belperbaptist.org](mailto:secretary@belperbaptist.org)

## Better Together....

Dear Friends,

There's a love song by Jack Johnson called *Better Together* which was first released in 2005. Through its unusual rhythm and lyrics, this song gives the impression of it being really hard being away from someone who is deeply loved, but also brings out the importance of moments of togetherness in getting through the ups and downs of life.

In John 10:10, Jesus spoke about having fullness of life and, for Christians, it is possible to see how life can be so much better because of our closeness to God through faith in Christ. We are better together with God and our shared faith can help us to build strong relationships with one another within the church. In Paul's letter to the Philippians, we find these words: "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27, NIV). To strive together means making great efforts to achieve our goals in relation to faith; we could, of course, pull against one another as we try to shape things to suit our own goals and priorities, but we could be so much better by pulling together – working together – in the service of the gospel. Put simply, we can be better together, in so many ways, with our fellow Christians within God's church.

Being better at something will often mean learning from our past experiences and putting that learning into practice. Some of those experiences may be of things which went so wonderfully well that we want to repeat what we did over and over again. Often, though, we will also learn from disastrous experiences, or from those times when we didn't quite get things right. In baking a cake, for example, we could ruin the whole thing by using salt instead of sugar, or we could notice that the colour or flavour wasn't quite as we had hoped and we could learn from that experience to make the next cake taste or look better by slightly adjusting things like the combination of ingredients or the baking time.

Toward the end of this month, we will enter the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, will mark the beginning of this season of self-examination and reflection on our journeys of faith, as we are encouraged to focus on Jesus' life and on his journey to the cross. If we reflect on church life during the season of Lent, we may conclude that things are just as we hope they would be. Or we may, perhaps, realise that we could make a few small adjustments to the things that we are looking to be or do to help us to be even better together at living out our faith. May the times that we spend together and the times when we are apart help us to see what it means to be better together as we continue to journey together in faith.

God bless,

**Robert.**

Robert will be taking a week's leave between 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February. If there are things that you would normally talk to him about that cannot wait until he is back please contact one of the Trustees: David, Jonny, Jo, Lorraine and Raymond.

## Ash Wednesday

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,  
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.  
The forests of the world are burning now  
And you make late repentance for the loss.  
But all the trees of God would clap their hands  
The very stones themselves would shout and sing  
If you could covenant to love these lands  
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.

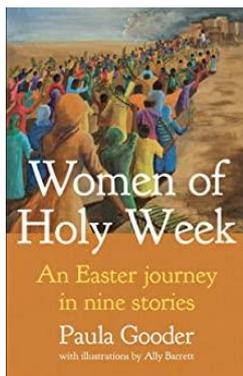
He sees the slow destruction of those trees,  
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,  
And still you make what purchases you please,  
And still to dust and ashes you return.  
But Hope could rise from ashes even now  
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

~ Malcolm Guite



Photo by [Samuel Jerónimo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

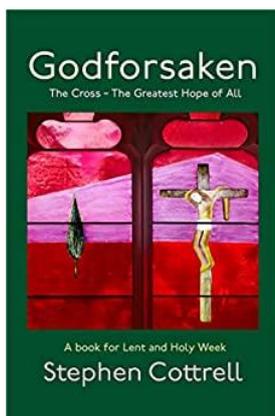
## Newly Published Books for Lent



Paula Gooder uses her extensive biblical expertise to retell the events of the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension through the eyes of nine female characters she imagines accompanying Jesus during these momentous days.

Accompanied by nine colour illustrations, each story brings to life the tension, drama and shock of the events of Holy Week, banishing any over-familiarity and helping readers enter into the Passion narrative in a deeper, more meaningful way.

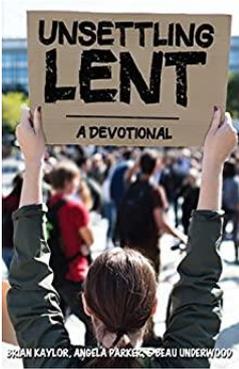
Originally given as a series of addresses at Southward Cathedral during Holy Week 2021, these nine stories are for all who long to encounter Jesus afresh through the Easter Story.



In the Gospel of Mark's account of the Passion narrative, Jesus calls out from the cross 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which is the Aramaic for 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' - the first line of Psalm 22. It's an anguished expression - traditionally ascribed to King David - of defeat, failure, abandonment and despair.

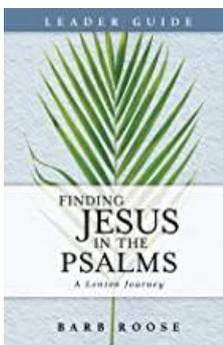
This series of reflections, written for Lent and Holy Week 2023 by the Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell, ponders the significance of these words. What does it mean for Jesus to have quoted them, at the very end of his life? What do those words mean for us?

This is a beautiful and compelling exploration of the dark, suffering side of the Passion - and how Jesus' words lead us to the greatest hope of all.



A daily devotional for the season leading to Easter, *Unsettling Lent* invites Christians to reexamine Biblical stories through social-justice lenses.

*Unsettling Lent: Following Jesus to the Cross* is not your ordinary Lenten devotional. That's a good thing, given the ways Lent's radical meaning has been diminished by our culture's false promotion of religious complacency. By connecting the biblical story to present-day realities, it invites Christians to make Lent a season of solidarity and justice-seeking. In contrast to devotionals emphasizing personal spirituality and interior transformations, *Unsettling Lent* emphasizes the public implications and communal aspects of self-denial, sacrificial love, and confrontations with power. Followers of Jesus are invited to journey to the cross in a more faithful way that promises to harness the power of this season for the renewal of ourselves, our churches, and our world.



Barb Roose guides the reader through a meaningful encounter with the Psalms through the season of Lent. Combining an interpretation of the psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah.

“The Psalms provide a perfect framework for experiencing Lent through the verses that were Jesus’s own scriptures, offering both him and us strength and wisdom in a painful and redemptive season. The Book of Psalms hums with the heartbeat of our humanity with divinely inspired words that find purchase in the tenderest places in our hearts when our human words or wisdom fails us.” Barb Roose

Available from [www.eden.co.uk](http://www.eden.co.uk) or any good book shop.



## Masese Uganda

Pastor Simon at Masese Church goes from strength to strength. Sunday services and weekly activities continue to be very busy. Also.....

**30th September** 3rd quarter overnight prayers took place.

**4th November** Nine Students completed certificate in Bible Study at neighbouring village Wanyange.

**1st December** Simon co-hosted the “Real Men Conference – Empowering the God given identity of Real Men” at Butiki village 10 miles away. After the event they apologised as the 300/500 attendees expected were actually 800 so many had to sit on the floor!

**December 20th** Children’s Christmas party, dancing, acting and fellowship.

**27th – 31st December** the 10th annual Gospel crusade was attended by hundreds of people with different Pastors preaching. The final night of 31st – “Our 10th crossover prayer night blessed the lives of people in Masese, thank you for turning up in a big number, Glory to Jesus!”



“Finally, am humbled to convey our thanks to each and everybody who is standing with us through financial support and prayers, May the good Lord our God bless you all abundantly. With much thanks and prayers”  
Simon and Irene

If you wish to see more pictures and follow more of the progress see “Muwereza Simon” and “Masese God's Power International Ministries” on Facebook

# Satellites

Young people, living with God at the centre of their lives.

4-8 August 2023 —

Bath & West Showground,  
Shepton Mallet



Satellites is a five-day Christian youth event brought to you by the team at Youthscape, aimed at 12-18 year olds.

Youth groups camp together, and we join as one for a huge gathering each morning and evening in our main sessions. Our team works hard through the year to create a dynamic programme for the week which reflects our seven core discipleship values, and sets your group up for their faith journey all year round.

Alongside the main programme for young people, we also run Satellites Kids for the children of youth leaders and team members – a holiday-club-style mini-event for children aged 5-11, and a crèche for 1-4's. There's also a dedicated programme of input, prayer and relaxation for youth leaders too.

## Dates for your Diary – February

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Morning Service:10.30am - Leading: Jenny Lesley , Preaching: David Harvey

Weds 8<sup>th</sup> Craft and Chat 9.30-11.30am

Warm Welcome 12.30pm to 4pm

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Morning Service: 10.30am – Leading: Jonny White, Preaching: Robert Foster

Weds 15<sup>th</sup> Craft and Chat 9.30 – 11.30am

Warm Welcome 12.30pm to 4pm

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Communion Service :10.30am -Leading and Preaching: Robert Foster

Weds 23<sup>rd</sup> Craft and Chat 9.30 – 11.30am

Warm Welcome 12.30pm to 4pm

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Morning Service: 10.30am – Leading: Su Churm, Preaching: Greg Hall



## Notices

### Sunday Services:

Sunday services have resumed in the building but any who cannot come in person will also be able to join via Zoom using the details below:

You can join by visiting <https://zoom.us/j/3431622013>

... or using the Zoom app and meeting ID 3431622013

... or phone (0330) 0885830 and enter the meeting ID 3431622013 then #

The meeting password is .....

Please pray during the week for those who are due to lead, preach and cover the technical aspects of the service. Also please pray for all those who lead the online children's work before, during and after the service.

### Prayer Meetings

There will be daily prayer meetings at 7.30am every weekday morning and 9am on weekends and bank holidays – using the following Zoom details: Meeting ID: .... / Password: ....

### Bible Study Notes

Fiona Worrall orders bible study notes for many people in the fellowship. If you would like to place a regular order or discuss which notes might suit you please see Fiona in person or she can be contacted by phone or text on and by e-mail at

### Food and Community Hub: General Shopping List

We have **many gaps** so if you are shopping in the near future and could donate one of these items we would be very grateful:

Tinned Potatoes and Packets of Mash  
Tinned Fruit  
Steamed Puddings  
Rice pudding  
Tinned Meat Meals e.g: curry, chilli  
Fray Bentos style pies  
Vegetarian Meals  
Corned Beef/Cooked Ham, Hotdog sausages

Toilet Rolls, in smaller packs preferably  
Tea, Coffee  
Sugar  
Shampoo, shower gel, deodorant etc.  
Wrapped cake bars and biscuits  
UHT Milk  
Cat and dog food

### New Home Group

The new home group has started to meet fortnightly and will meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February will be at Robert and Liz Foster's house. New members are very welcome, please just contact Robert or David.