

SUGGESTED LENT GROUP RESOURCES

Lent is traditionally a time when people have turned their attention to some extra study and reflection about their relationship with God. There is no bad time to do this! Last year, as a diocese, we produced a Lent course which lots of people enjoyed. We recently also produced an Advent Course. This year, we are producing a course for the post-Easter period based on the 5 themes explored at the Diocesan Conference and which will help to shape our diocesan vision. They are Discipleship, Stewardship, Caring for God's Creation, Equality and Diversity and Social Justice.

We hope that you will take the opportunity to run that course but we also hope you will continue the Lent courses that lots of places are used to holding and which, as well as study, prayer and reflection, offer a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, whether the course is held face to face or online.

There are lots of different Lent Courses available but if you're struggling for ideas here are some that might be of interest (there are many more around as well). Some require resources that need to be purchased, others can be downloaded online free of charge. USPG resources can be sent away for free of charge, although obviously donations to their work are appreciated.



AUTHORS WITHIN MONMOUTH DIOCESE

From a local author

Making Sense of God's Love (SPCK)

Lorraine Cavanagh

<https://homegroups.org.uk/series/making-sense-of-gods-love/>

This course, written by Lorraine Cavanagh, who lives and works in the Diocese, accompanies her book by the same title. The book, although strongly recommended for each course participant, is not an absolute essential. Encouragement to read it should certainly be given though.

This course looks at themes such as 'Why do we need atonement?', 'Sin and the problem of Evil', 'Redemptive love and the 'wrath' of God', 'For freedom, Christ has set us free,' 'The church and the redemptive love of God' and 'The resurrection of Christ – the point of the story.'

Book to accompany the course (available from SPCK and other places including Amazon):

Making Sense of God's Love: Atonement and Redemption

£7.99 (paperback) £6.99 (kindle)

Online (free at the link above) there are short films for each session and also bible readings and notes to go along with the particular session.

To be held in person at the Cathedral (beginning February 10th)

Exploring faith - looking at the sayings of Jesus and how they relate to our lives today

The Very Revd Ian Black

This course is discussing the Dean's book 'Follow me: living the sayings of Jesus' (Sacristy Press 2017). Each session is stand alone. It will follow a different chapter and all that is needed is to read the chapter before coming to the group and discuss what you thought/ask about anything that you'd like to know more about.

Sessions each week on 10th & 17th February, break on 24th, resume on 3rd March until 7th April. The evening session will begin at 7.30pm in the Cathedral and conclude with Night Prayer at 9.00pm.

If you would like to join the course, please email: deanofnewport@churchinwales.org.uk

Everyone is welcome.

Books - paper and ebook

Available from the Cathedral Shop (paper only) and Sacristy Press <https://www.sacristy.co.uk/books/theology/follow-me> (paper and ebook)

OTHER AUTHORS

The Joy of the Gospel (Church House Publishing)

Paula Gooder

A six-part course for Lent groups based on Pope Francis' reflections on mission and evangelism, published as *Evangelii Gaudium* ('The Joy of the Gospel'). This is widely recognised as offering a positive and realistic approach to sharing faith in the modern world.

The course comprises six sessions:

1. Joy and the Gospel
2. Going Forth
3. Saying Yes and Saying No
4. Proclaiming the Gospel
5. Making the Kingdom Present in Our World
6. Being Filled with the Spirit

The book contains everything needed to run the course including Bible readings and leader's notes. Each person in the group will need a copy.

£7.99 each or £40 for 6 copies

Experiencing God's Love

Five Images of Transformation (Church House Publishing)

Steven Croft

Experiencing God's Love is a short study guide that aims to deepen our understanding and first-hand experience of living a life of faith.

It explores five biblical images of the ways in which our lives are changed by walking with Christ: Being securely rooted in prayer and scriptures; Cleansed through baptism, confession and forgiveness; Enlightened through worship, mission and growth in holiness; Tended through care for one another and the world; Welcomed in the Eucharist and in the fellowship of the Church.

Each chapter explores one of these images in the Psalms and the Gospels, and in popular culture, supported by free online audio introductions to each session. Opening and closing worship, discussion starters, questions, and a leader's guide are all included making this ideal for Lent groups or as a Christian discipleship course at any time of year.

Booklets £ 5.99

COURSE PROVIDERS

USPG Courses

USPG study courses explore different aspects of Christian life and mission from the perspective of the global church. By offering insights into how church partners are putting their faith into practice, the courses will hopefully inspire people

On the link below are a number of courses that could be used for Lent and which are available free of charge online or by ordering booklets. Some of the courses are also translated into Welsh for groups wishing to meet and study in the Welsh language.

<https://www.uspg.org.uk/uspg-study-courses.php>

York Courses

York courses have for many years provided material for small groups suitable for various times of the year. They offer courses that can be run over 4, 5 or 6 sessions. There are also some specific Lent Courses although a lot of the other courses can work at any time.

Click the link below and click on 'Shop' for details of courses and the costs involved

<https://www.yorkcourses.co.uk>

OTHER COURSES

Church Army Lent Resource

The Church Army Lent Resource has been designed to give you, your small group and your church space and time each day throughout Lent to listen to God, reflect on the Bible, and see how and where you can listen to His leading in your actions and attitudes. Each pack contains 40 beautiful cards divided into Action Cards, Character Cards, and Reflection Cards and Marks of Mission Cards.

Available as both free email reflections or as a stunning pack of cards from <http://www.churcharmy.org/lent>

Life on the Breadline Lent Course

This is a free 6 session study available online (or to download). There is a short film to accompany each session as well.

<https://breadlineresearch.coventry.ac.uk/churches/lent-course/>

The sessions covers the following themes:

1. Christian responses to poverty
2. “Love thy neighbour” – poverty and inequality
3. Race, ethnicity, austerity and faith
4. Deficits and assets
5. Housing (in)justice
6. Poverty and structural inequality

The course has been developed from the 3 years of Life on the Breadline research as a result of engaging with Church leaders, Christians, and community groups across the UK.

40 Stories of Hope (2018 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland Course)

This course offers 6 sessions reflecting on the hope we can have as Christians.

A written 'handout' is available online (or to print off) for each session, and the course is also available in Welsh. There is a book to go with the course, but this is optional. The prices for the book have changed slightly and it is now £8.99 or £5 if you buy 20 or more.

Each of the downloadable sessions has an Introduction, Bible reading, Questions to think about, Life Lessons, a Look Ahead section as well as a personal story and some prayer.

The Bible Course

The Bible Society

For those wishing to extend their study group period the Bible Society have produced this excellent resource which runs as an 8 week course. It is for anyone wishing to engage a little more deeply with the Bible and is particularly appropriate as the Church in Wales has designated 2022 as a year of Biblical Literacy. There are costs involved.

For details of the course:

https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/the-bible-course/?source_code=782618_tbc_19st_gethelp_1808&gclid=CjwKCAiA5t-OBhByEiwAhR-hm3hJZRZ9yM2vnR0KWHWE_I_L4UuRdluDm73IpsxTq0eN0opFDkSmhoCeVgQAvD_BwE