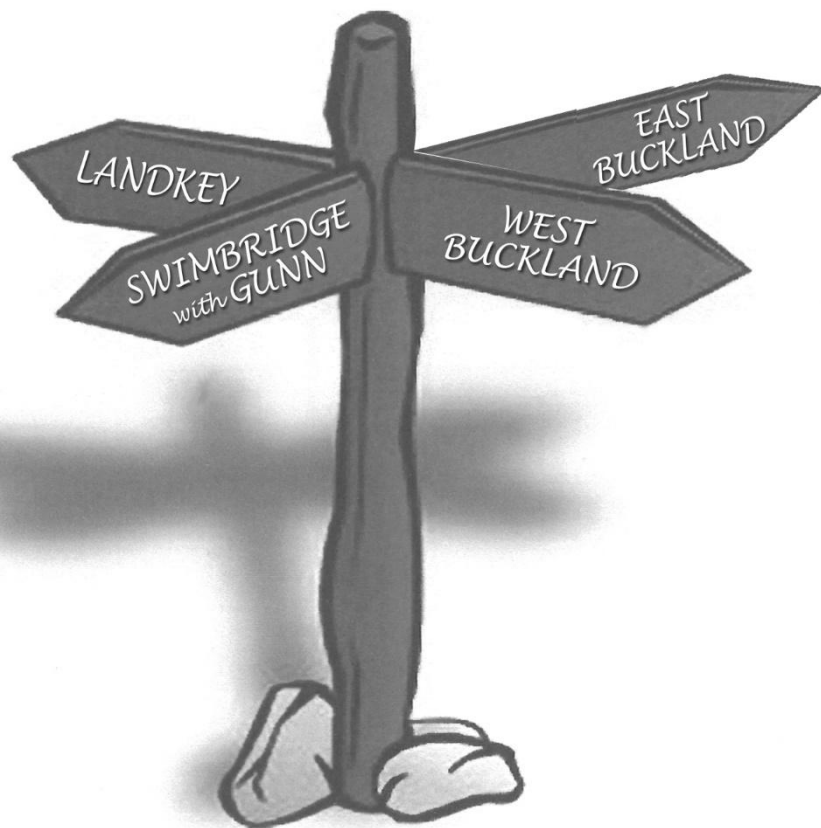


Parish Magazine

for

The Four Ways Mission Community

**St Paul, Landkey, St James the Apostle, Swimbridge
with The Holy Name, Gunn,
St Peter, West Buckland & St Michael, East Buckland**



February 2026

SUNDAY SERVICES – FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY 1st February <i>Candlemas (White)</i>	Readings
Swimbridge, 9.30am HC	Malachi 3:1-5; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2: 22-40
Landkey, 10.30am HC	<i>As above</i>
West Buckland, 11.45am HC	<i>As above</i> <i>PLEASE NOTE LATER SERVICE TIME</i>
SUNDAY 8th February <i>2 before Lent (Green)</i>	
East Buckland, 9.30am HC	Genesis 1:1 – 2:3; Romans 8: 18-25; Matt 6: 25 - end
Swimbridge, 9.30am HC	<i>As above</i>
Landkey 10.30am HC	<i>As above</i>
Gunn, 11am HC	<i>As above</i>
SUNDAY 15th February <i>Sunday before Lent (Green)</i>	
Swimbridge, 9.30am HC	Exodus 24: 12-end; 2 Peter 1: 16-end; Matt 17: 1-9
Landkey, 10.30am HC	<i>As above</i>
West Buckland, 11.15am HC	<i>As above</i>
SUNDAY 22nd February <i>Lent 1 (Purple)</i>	
Swimbridge, 9.30am HC	Genesis 2: 15-17, 3:1-7; Romans 5: 12-19; Matthew 4: 1-11
Landkey, 10.30am, HC	<i>As above</i>
West Buckland, 11.15am HC	<i>As above</i>

HC – Holy Communion; MP – Morning Prayer; FS – Family Service



Mission Community Service

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Wednesday 18th February, 6pm

St James Church, Swimbridge

READINGS: Isaiah 58: 1-12; 2 Corinthians 5: 20b-6:10; Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

The Mission Community of St. James, Swimbridge with the Chapel of the Holy Name, Gunn, St. Peter, West Buckland, St Michael, East Buckland and St. Paul, Landkey

Patrons: The Bishop of Exeter and The Earl Fortescue Trust (Patronage suspended)

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PCC Sec: Sarah Muirhead 07585941215

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Choir: Janet Patton 01271 831065 Bell Ringer: Chris Ley 07890331478

C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School: Head Teacher: Gemma Poland

Website: www.swimbridgeparishchurch.org

Chapel of the Holy Name, Gunn

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Deanery Synod: Vacant

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PCC Secretary: Charlotte Smalley 01598 710629 Treasurer: Vacant

Tower Captain: Peter Crook 01598 760437

St Paul, Landkey

Churchwardens: Hazel Price 01271 831259 and Peter Soper 01271 830801.

PCC Secretary: *vacant* Treasurer: Ann Rumble 01271 346463

Deanery Synod: Hazel Price 01271 831259

Website: www.landkeyparishchurch.org

Magazine Editors:

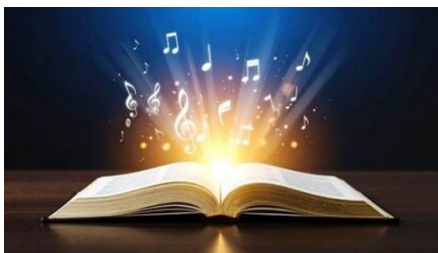
Revd. Preb. Cathy Scoffield and Philip Dalling.

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by the 15th of preceding month.

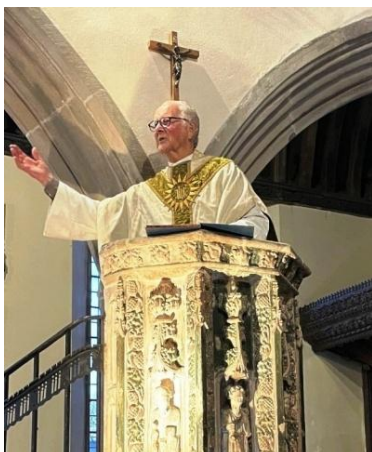


Hymns as spiritual reading

By Father David Chance

Sometimes we play the game of Desert Island discs. What is your favourite piece of music? A new question - What are your favourite hymns?

Here are my thoughts about using hymns as spiritual reading. I would like to take a ride through the centuries and tell you of those hymns I find helpful as spiritual guides.



Father David in the pulpit at St James, Swimbridge

The first Christian hymns are written in St. Luke's Gospel – the Magnificat, the Nunc Dimittis and the Benedictus. Luke records them as being the songs of pivotal characters in the salvation story. Mary sings, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord...for he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden....from henceforth all generations will call me blessed.'

Zechariah, John the Baptist's father sings, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he has visited and redeemed his people.....through the tender mercy of our God.....to give light to them that sit in darkness and to guide our feet into the way of peace.' And Simeon sings, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' These New Testament songs have been used by Christians down the centuries and we use them in the Church of England Prayer Books for daily prayers.

During the three centuries when Christianity was being persecuted we do have some evidence of hymns especially, in AD 275 the Communion hymn, 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence.... For with blessing in his hand Christ our God on earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.' This is an amazingly beautiful hymn and is perfect for reading while waiting, or having received Holy Communion.

In AD 750 St John of Damascus gives us the great Easter hymn, 'The day of resurrection !... our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.'

The monks of the middle ages have give us a treasury of hymns. Their main contribution is plainsong, the setting of psalms and hymns to easy to sing chants. St. Bernard monk of Cluny, (1100's) has given us 'Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blessed.....I know not, ah, I know not what joys await us there, what radiancy of glory, what bliss beyond compare.'

Surprisingly not many hymns from the Reformation period have crept into our hymn books. The Tudor governments took over Christianity in England and suppressed anything that smacked of Catholicism or revolutionary Protestantism.

Hymns in Church of England worship were still regarded as unacceptable until the 1800's. But we do have great hymns from the poetry of George Herbert, (1593 – 1633) 'Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing, my God and King!' 'Teach me my God and King, in all things thee to see; and what I do in anything to do it as for thee,' and 'King of glory, king of peace, I will love thee..... seven whole days, not one in sev'n, I will praise thee; in my heart, though not in heav'n, I can raise thee,,,, e'en eternity's to short to extol thee.'

Not a hymn but a very moving poem from this period is **Robert Herrick's** Litany to the Holy Spirit. Herrick was a vicar in south Devon, near Ashburton. Part of his poem has been set to beautiful music by Peter Hurford, 'In the hour of my distress, when temptations me oppress, and when I my sins confess, Sweet Spirit, comfort me !' You can search the internet for a choir singing this.

Then we have **John Newton's** , 'Amazing grace' (1725-1807) with **John Rees'** additional verse,

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) has given us some special classics, 'When I survey the wondrous cross.....were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life my all.' And, 'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run;.....let ev'ry creature rise and bring peculiar honours to our King; angels descend with songs again and earth repeat the loud amen.'

The revivalists gave us many great hymns, especially **Charles Wesley** (1707-1788): 'Love divine all loves excelling, joy of heav'n to earth come down..... changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.'

William Williams gave us, 'Guide me O thou great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land.' There was a burst of hymn writing in the 19th century. **Prime Minister** Gladstone was a prolific composer of hymns. The Clapham Evangelicals and the Oxford Movement Anglo Catholics have contributed many helpful hymns;

Horatius Boner (1808-1889) 'I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Come unto me and rest....I came to Jesus as I was....I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad. I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'I am this dark world's light; look unto me, thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright....and in that light of life I'll walk till trav'ling days are done.'

William Chatterton Dix gave us , ' Alleluia, sing to Jesus, his the sceptre , his the throne.....thou within the veil hast entered robed in flesh, our great High Priest; thou on earth both priest and victim in the Eucharistic Feast.'

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), 'In the bleak mid-winter....what can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man I would do my part, yet what I can I give him: give my heart.'

Mrs.Alexander (1818-1895) 'There is a green hill,' 'All things bright and beautiful,' 'Once in royal David's city.'

Bishop Walsham How (1823-1897) 'For all the saints...thy name O Jesu, be forever blest, Alleluia!'

Father Faber, 'There's a widness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea....for the love of God is broader than the scope of human mind, and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.' John Henry Newman, 'Praise to the holiest in the height, and in the depth be praise; in all his words most wonderful, most sure in all his ways.'

G.K.Chesterton (1874-1936)' O God of earth and altar, bow down and hear our cry, our earthly rulers falter, our people drift and die.... From all that terror teaches, from lies of tongue and pen, from all the easy speeches that comfort cruel men...deliver us good Lord!'

Athelstan Riley (1858-1945) 'Ye watchers and ye holy ones, bright seraphs, cherubin and thrones, raise the glad strain, alleluia. Cry ...out, dominions, pryncedoms, pow'rs, Alleluia !

Edmond Bundry (1854-1932) 'Thine be the glory, risen conqu'ring Son, endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won;....make us more than conqu'rors through thy deathless love; bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above,'

There has been a lot of modern hymn writing and these are a few examples-

Graham Kendrick (1950) 'Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity...O what a mystery...bow down and worship, for this is your God.' And his 'Shine Jesus shine !'

David Evans (1957) 'Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.'

John Bell (1949) ' Christ's is the world in which we move, Christ's are the folk we're summoned to love....to the lost Christ shows his face, to the unloved he gives his embrace.....Christ makes with his friends a touching place.'

Bernadette Farrell (1957) ' O God you search me and you know me. All my thoughts lie open to your gaze. When I walk or lie down you are before me: ever the maker and keeper of my days.,,,for you created me and shaped me.... For the wonder of who I am, I praise you: safe in your hands, all creation is made new.'

Stuart Townsend (1963) & **Keith Getty** (1974). 'In Christ alone my hope is found, he is my light, my strength, my song; this Cornerstone, this sold Ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace when fears are stilled, when strivings cease! My Comforter, my All in All, here in the love of Christ I stand.....No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me;Jesus commands my destiny.... Till he returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I stand.'

What hymns do you find helpful? **Father David Chance**



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News from the churches ...

St Paul's, Landkey Valerie Orchard



New Year Greetings to you all. It now seems that Christmas was quite a while ago.

The Christmas Tree Festival that was held at St Paul's Church from 11th December was once again a great success. Thank you to Joyce for inviting all the various organisations, school and clubs in the close proximity to Landkey.

We were delighted to know that it raised almost £450 towards church funds and thank you to all who supported the event. I have no doubt that plans are afoot for the next festival.

2025 Christmas Tree Festival photographs taken by Cathy Scoffield.



The Christmas Services at St Paul's Landkey were all joyful occasions and very well attended.

We had a very full church for Candlelit Candles on 18th December with wonderful musical accompaniment from organist Philip Price, flautist ShirleyAnne and local choir Landkey Sings.
Thank you everyone !

Photograph by Cathy Scoffield



We are in discussions as to plans for the forthcoming year for social events.

Signs of Spring are in the garden with daffodils and other bulbs showing themselves through the earth. As I have said before nature is incredible.

On Saturday 10th January I was just leaving Filleigh village hall, when I stopped the car to look up into the sky and watch a Red Kite flying overhead. I had heard that they had been reintroduced in the area to see this one just filled me with joy.

Our church service on Sunday 11th January was taken by Reverend Keith Wyer, now residing in North Devon. His sermon had us all smiling and a little laughter was to be heard. He was talking about Francis of Assisi walking through the marketplace, speaking to stall holders and people he passed by. The novice who was with him asked why he was not preaching the Gospels. His reply was that actions speak louder than words, which got me thinking. The smallest of kind gestures to a neighbour or helping someone in the street who may be looking lost. This means so much more.

As the Rev Wyer said Blessed are the Peacemakers. I am quite sure that we all hope and pray for peace in our troubled world. The symbol of a white dove gives such a strong sign of love and friendship to all mankind.

This has now prompted me to go back and read the readings we heard on that Sunday from Isaiah and Matthew.

Joyce Alderman writes:

Well,,Christmas is fast receding into the past and Easter is upon us. Just a few days after Christmas my daughter sent me a picture of her supermarket shelves crammed with Easter eggs. Actually I was surprised that there wasn't Valentine's Day merchandise on display, but perhaps it was elsewhere in store. Oh and don't forget Mother's Day. After Easter we hustle through summer, buckets, spades, fishing nets, barbecues, Father's Day, then it's on to Halloween ,Guy Fawkes and lo and behold it's Christmas again.

Commercialism has us by the scruff of the neck, we are not on an escalator which has a start and finish instead we are on a continuous loop with no end in sight. We have no time to nurture our relationship with God, no time to stand back and appreciate the wonderful world he created or to look up at the stars, no time to take stock, no time to stand and stare.

The poet William Henry Davies in his poem *Leisure* expresses this perfectly:-

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass,
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night

St Michael, East Buckland



The Light of The World

The central theme of Epiphany: Hoping that it's not too late or inappropriate to wish you all a Happy New Year. We most certainly had a fantastic array of Christmas services throughout the Mission Community, a wonderful way to celebrate and spend that time together.

Now we are in Epiphany tide, light is a central theme. The star that guided the Magi symbolises Christ as the light of the world, a light that darkness cannot overcome. As we celebrate, we rejoice that God does not hide, but seeks to reveal himself, so as baptised Christians we are called to live with faith, generosity and humility, through our words, actions, and love for others, so we may become reflections of the star that led the Magi. As we continue our journey through Epiphany we are guided by that light. So we journey together until the beginning of Lent. **Di Tearall**

The Holy Name, Gunn

As the first storm of the year, 'Goretti', is beating against the windows and the rain is lashing down it seems the ideal time to reflect on the last few weeks of 2025.



Sadly Rev Richard Freeman was not well enough to take service on Christmas Day. He had a very painful knee when we last saw him and has been in hospital. We wish him a very speedy recovery and hope to see him again soon. Luckily Rev Cathy was free to step in and we had a wonderful Christmas service with Pete Caine accompanying Pam our organist on his guitar.



Gunn's 2025 nativity scene

We had 23 people at the service despite many of our regulars being away spending the day with members of their families which is, of course, is very much part of what the day is about. However we still had a very jolly service with some of the congregation from Swimbridge and a good turnout from Gunn who we do not normally see on a regular basis. We even made our eldest daughter's Christmas lunch and party afternoon in Somerset in good time!

After our 150th service and celebrations at The Holy Name in 2023, the year 2025 saw a Candlemas service instigated and taken by the late Rev John Ewington and a funeral service for Gill Ellis. Now in 2026 we are due to have a wedding to grace our door. Although there has been a christening some years ago the other events are 'firsts' for Gunn - what is going to happen next?!

Thank-you to everyone who helps to keep Gunn church going - cleaning, flower arranging, reading, gardening, wine and nibbles and not least of all officiating at our services.

A Happy New Year to you all. **William Crosbie Dawson**

St Peter's, West Buckland.

A Happy New year to you all.

The January Coffee Morning got off to a great start this year. Thanks to everyone for the help and support, we missed Louise, a special thanks to Fran for doing an amazing job on the bake stall! Total raised - £ 245.50 which for a frosty January morning is very good going.

A fantastic raffle at £124.00. Entrance £32.00. Books £4.00. Bric a Brac

£ 11.50 including hats and scarves . Cakes £ 74.00 **Well done everyone! Best wishes Gail**

Looking back to Christmas..

St Peter's enjoyed hosting large congregations at our special Christmas services. As always, the church was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season with a stunning Advent wreath created by Liz. Thank you to all who so faithfully look after the church building and offer great hospitality.

Nine Lessons and Carols musically led by West Buckland School Choral Society was a wonderful highlight of Christmas week. Thank you to the Choral Society, Nick Smith and Dominic Carter for their beautiful musical repertoire and for reading the Lessons along with our regular congregation.

On Christmas Eve as part of West Buckland Nativity and Christingle Christmas Eve Service the young people of West Buckland village presented a marvellous silhouette nativity.

Louise Homewood with her team encouraged local young people aged from 11-16 years to create and narrate the Christmas Story. Well done everyone.

The silhouettes were actually seen **black on white**, but the camera picked up the red from the church heaters !
(*photograph taken by Cathy Scoffield*)



St James, Swimbridge

Shining Stars success: The re-appearance after a gap of several years of the Shining Stars Christmas Tree in St James, Swimbridge, raised a substantial amount of money for church funds and gave families an opportunity to remember absent loved ones during the festive season.



Shining Stars organiser Brenda Dyer pictured with the 2025 Tree and its messages at St James' church.

Some 40 families and friends donated and wrote messages to be hung on the Shining Stars Tree, which was blessed by the officiating priest at services during the Christmas season. The messages originated not just locally but from as far afield as Surrey in the south and Cumbria in the northwest.

The amount raised through donations was £930. This will be supplemented by a substantial amount in Gift Aid, and additional donations were also made electronically

The Shining Stars Christmas Tree was originated by former St James' churchwarden Vera Knight and the custom was revived in 2025 by her sister, Brenda Dyer. Brenda explained: "At Christmas, even though we may be surrounded by the ones we love, we are very aware of those who no longer form part of our family circle.

"Our faith tells us that those who have died are at peace and safe in God's keeping. Nevertheless, we miss them still and acknowledge our loss in many ways. Shining Stars tree means you can tangibly remember your loved ones during the festive season and help church funds at the same time."

"It is planned that Shining Stars will be repeated for Christmas 2026. Anyone who would like to receive information should contact Brenda Dyer on 01769 540271 or by email at brenda68brian@hotmail.com

LENT 2026

‘Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.’ James 4.8

The Church of England’s theme for Lent 2026 is
Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent.



This year’s Cof E Lent resources have at their heart the theme of a ‘rhythm of life’ – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God’s saving love at Easter.

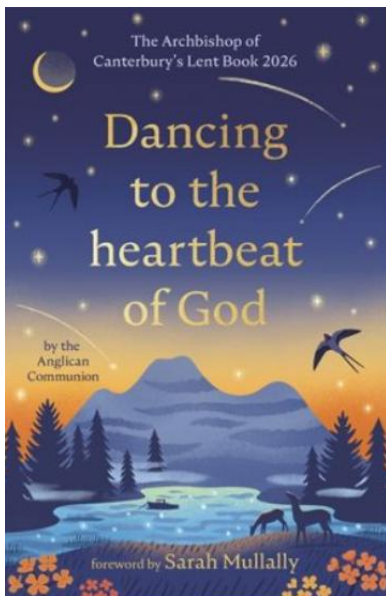
During Lent, reflections are centred around a [summary of the Christian Way](#) from *Common Worship*, which identifies six activities essential to our calling as disciples.

These come in booklet form and The [Everyday Faith app](#) will carry reflections for adults every Monday to Saturday throughout Lent, based on the booklet. [Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent | The Church of England](#)

Each week a different contributor explores a different aspect of Christian discipleship - worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

"Draw Near is all about teaching us how we can cultivate the habits and practices that will draw us nearer to God. And we will find that, in doing so, God will draw nearer to us, too."

Archbishop-elect Sarah Mullally & Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



The focus on habits and practices for discipleship in the reflections complements the focus on stories of discipleship from across the Anglican Communion which will be the focus for the 2026 Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book (published by SPCK), [Dancing to the Heartbeat of God](#).

Written to encourage the Church of England and Anglicans worldwide, *Dancing to the Heartbeat of God* is an invitation to rediscover the joy, movement, and missional heart of Christian discipleship today.

Bringing together around thirty contributors from across the globe, this rich volume reflects the breadth, diversity, and vitality of the Anglican Communion. Through personal stories, testimonies, and reflections, the book explores what it really means to follow Christ faithfully listening for God's rhythm, responding with courage, and sharing faith with others in authentic and creative ways.

FOUR WAYS MISSION COMMUNITY LENT GROUP

If anyone would like to be part of a Tuesday Lent Group at the Rectory, please let Cathy know.

**We need at least six people to make it viable for Tuesday Meetings on 4 February,
3 March, 10 March, 17 March, 24 March, 31 March, 7-8.30pm**

We will be using the Lent booklets and drawing on the Lent Book, 'Dancing to the heartbeat of God'

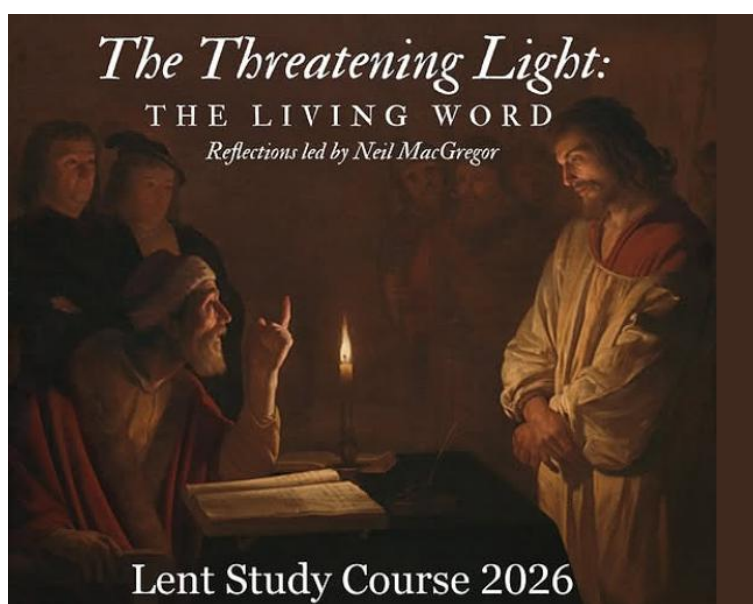
WEDNESDAY ON-LINE LENT COURSE

You may like to join the St Martin in the Fields Lent Course which each year is available as a very popular online option. As a Companion of the Nazareth Community, which is based at St Martin's, Cathy has been involved with these Lent courses for several years, as an online small group facilitator. Last year well over 200 people joined the online course which is open for all. Following a livestreamed talk on Wednesday evenings during the Bread for the World Communion Service, there is short reflection followed by small listening groups via Zoom. This year, rather than studying a Lent book, we will be reflecting on different paintings in the National Gallery, linking to Scripture. Here's the information from St Martin in the Fields website with the link to booking. The Lent Course costs £15.

We are delighted that Neil MacGregor will be leading the St Martin-in-the-Fields Lent Course 2026. Each week during Lent from Ash Wednesday onwards at St Martin-in-the-Fields during the service, Neil will be reflecting upon a different painting from the National Gallery. You can join us at St Martin-in-the-Fields or watch the livestream.

Neil MacGregor is a world-renowned art historian and former director of both the National Gallery and British Museum, and currently an international museum advisor. Widely renowned for his BBC Radio Series *The History of the World in 100 Objects* and *Living with The Gods* and the exhibition *Seeing Salvation* Neil MacGregor has explored and articulated how art and sacred

images not only reflect and shape religious belief but also challenge our humanity and our response to the Gospel narratives. This Lent series aims to lead you to look more deeply at seven masterpieces in the National Gallery collection and the narratives they tell, and to respond to their meaning and challenge for us today.



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