

## LENT COURSES, BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR 2019

### AN INTRODUCTION

The Chinese bamboo plant spends what seems like a ridiculously long time thinking about growing. For four whole years the bamboo farmer has little results for his labour, then suddenly the Chinese bamboo starts growing. And it sprouts rapidly, averaging about a foot a day, and often reaching heights of eighty feet by the end of the year.

Sometimes the solemnity of Lent can feel like a period of enforced dormancy. But in order to reach such amazing heights, the Chinese bamboo requires a robust root system, and throughout those initial years this is precisely what it is busily developing. In much the same way, the ‘supposedly’ dormant season of Lent, is actually the perfect time for us to concentrate on spreading our roots further into the promises of God, as together we look forward, with eagerness, to what lies ahead. The promise of a Cross planted in the soil of Golgotha, and the joy of an empty tomb!

*Jesus, image of the invisible God,  
By your words and example, and by your divine life abiding in me, teach me to see  
and know the God of love, whose light and life you came to reveal.  
Amen*

Please use this guide to inform your choice of Lent materials for 2019, and pass it on to others to whom it would be helpful, especially those in your church communities who might not know what is available to individuals, or who would benefit from following a program.



Resources with this symbol are for use by individuals.



Resources with this symbol are for use by groups



### THE MYSTERY OF GOD

CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) recognizes that although there are many different Christian churches and denominations, they all still have the same calling: to proclaim good news. This year their Ecumenical Lent course is titled; **The Mystery of God**, drawing on one of their five marks of mission ‘We believe in a Church that is more concerned with the mystery that is God than its own success.’ Participants are invited to delve more deeply into the mystery of God, through the reading and study of Scripture – as they allow Jesus to draw them, in love and wonder, into the mystery of God’s plan for our salvation. For more information, downloadable resources – and more visit;

<https://ctbi.org.uk/lent/>



### GIVE IT UP FOR LENT

This year Christian Aid is asking people the question: what if this year Lent could be about more than just giving up your morning coffee, your

craving for chocolate, or the pizza you look forward to on Friday evenings. What if Lent could be a time of radical generosity, as well as a time of enriching spiritual discipline? Christian Aid is asking people to give something up, in order to do something good. So this Lent set up a JustGiving fundraising page, share your challenge with friends and family, spread the word on social media, and by giving up a little luxury, make a real difference to those living in poverty.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/fundraising/give-up-for-lent>



### **GROWING A RULE OF LIFE**

#### ***Relationship with God, Self, Creation & Others***

Throughout the gospels Jesus seems to relish using metaphors drawn from the natural world. He describes the miraculous growth of the tiny mustard seed; He seems to speak from experience when describing the rampancy of weeds, and the immense importance of good soil. And in St John's gospel, Jesus describes himself as the True Vine, drawing us into relationship with him, by identifying us as His branches. **Growing a Rule of Life** is a six-week journey, introducing the monastic discipline of a Rule of Life designed to support and cultivate our relationships with God, Creation and ourselves. It has been prepared by the Society of Saint John the Evangelist & the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary. Download the 16 page journal and companion materials for free, and sign up for daily reflections.

<https://www.ssje.org/growrule/>



### **ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S LENT BOOK 2019**

**Reconciliation** by Dr. Muthuraj Swamy. Archbishop Justin Welby has commented that 'reconciliation is the gospel.' So much in our world, our community and within our own relationships is fractured and destructive. But in the person of Jesus Christ reconciliation walks hand in hand with truth, justice, and sacrifice. In forty Biblically based meditations Dr. Muthuraj Swamy offers a timely message, global in scope, but homing in on the role ordinary people play in conflict and division, peace and reconciliation. Throughout the book, Swamy encourages us to engage confidently in the ministry of reconciliation, a ministry bequeathed to us by Christ Himself.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Reconciliation-Archbishop-Canterburys-Lent-Book/dp/0281080089/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1547124432&sr=1-1&keywords=Lent+2019](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Reconciliation-Archbishop-Canterburys-Lent-Book/dp/0281080089/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1547124432&sr=1-1&keywords=Lent+2019)



### **DARING TO SEE GOD NOW**

It is always wonderful to be reminded that the word 'Gospel' can be translated as 'Good-News.' The first words of Jesus in St Mark's Gospel declare that he has come that we might 'believe in the good news.' But, what is this good news, and who is it for? Taking Mark 1:14-15 as a starting point, the perennially popular York Course reflects on how we can live in the light and hope of this good news. Participants on the audio-based course include; Professor Keith Ward, Rachel Lampard, Bishop David Wilbourne and Cathy Galvin.

<https://www.yorkcourses.co.uk/product/daring-to-see-god-now-2/>



### **THE MERCIFUL HUMILITY OF GOD by Jane Williams**

‘During Lent, we are preparing to meet and to recognise the mercy of God. God's action is for us; we are the goal of what God is and does in Jesus Christ; it is all directed towards our salvation, which means our returning home, like the Prodigal Son, to find God waiting, arms outstretched, to welcome us.’ An extract from: **The Merciful Humility of God** by Jane Williams. A book filled with reflective depths, one that will serve as a truly valued companion throughout this season of Lent, and beyond.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Merciful-Humility-God-2019-Lent/dp/1472954815/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1547128543&sr=1-3&keywords=Jane+Williams](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Merciful-Humility-God-2019-Lent/dp/1472954815/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1547128543&sr=1-3&keywords=Jane+Williams)



### **LIVING FRUITFULLY**

Lent is a time to be transformed, strengthened and challenged. As the plight of the persecuted church continues to reverberate through our hearts, Embrace the Middle East, (a Christian charity partnering Christians in the Middle East) has entitled their Lent Study guide this year: **Living Fruitfully**. The six-session guide encourages us to renew our faith in the God who calls us to flourish in his love. Further free resources include Lent Lunch recipes.

<https://www.embraceme.org/embrace-resources-lent-2019>



### **THE PROPHETIC VOICE OF THE CHURCH**

For over 300 years USPG – United Society Partners in the Gospel – have been sharing God’s love through practical action. Their goal is to help people ‘take hold of the life that is truly life’ (1 Timothy 6:19). Their Lent Course; **The Prophetic voice of the Church**, looks at the radical nature of the gospel, with a special focus on the church in India. This five-week course is designed to inspire congregations to be dynamic in mission, and to truly live the words of the Prophet Micah, seeking justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God.

<http://www.uspg.org.uk/resources/lent2019/>

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