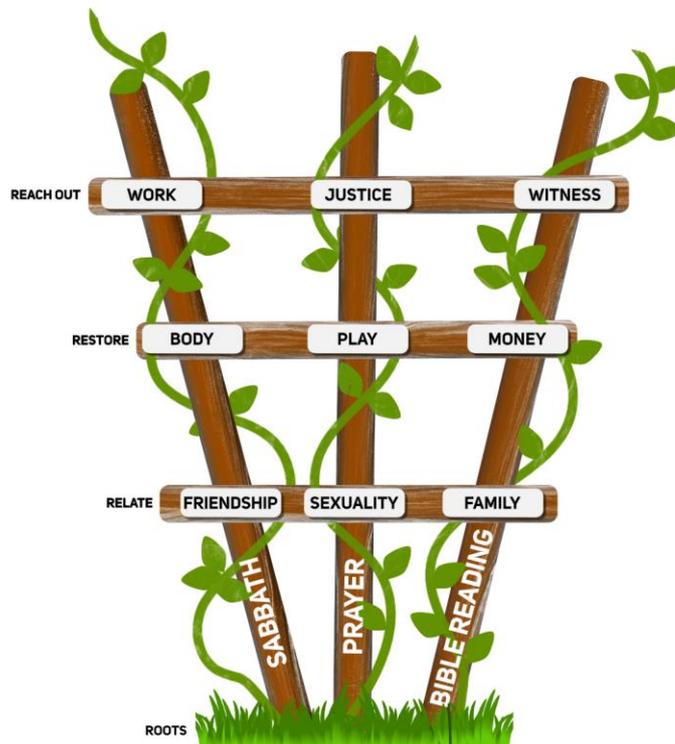


Lent Prayer Leaflet 2021

“God in my Everything”



Through this year, we will be exploring together how we can centre our lives more fully upon Jesus by developing rhythms and habits in our day to day lives.

*Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,
continue to live your lives in him,
rooted and built up in him,
strengthened in the faith”
(Colossians 2:6-7)*

During the 6 weeks of Lent, we are inviting everyone to begin thinking about their “**rule of life**”; those practices and habits that enable us to centre our lives more fully upon Jesus.

As the year progresses, we will explore all the areas shown on the trellis picture, but for the next 6 weeks we will be looking at the 3 “root” practices of Bible reading, Prayer and Sabbath. We have been exploring them through our Sunday sermons and midweek Connect groups, and this leaflet is designed to help you personalise that thinking.

It provides material for one “quiet time” a week; with each “root” practice being covered over 2 weeks; giving ideas to explore and experiment with as you start to think about what will most helpfully constitute your own “rule of life.” The last page of the leaflet gives you a way to start writing that down.

After Easter we will be continuing to look at the other staves on the trellis of: Family, Sexuality, Friendship, Body, Play, Money, Witness, Justice and Work.

If you want to read more widely, we would highly recommend Ken Shigematsu’s book “*God in my Everything.*”¹ Ken is a wise and humble pastor who in our opinion has written one of the best books on how we can centre our lives upon Jesus.

¹ “God in my everything” by Ken Shigematsu ISBN-13 : 978-0310499251

Week 1: (Sun 21st Feb – Sat 27th Feb)

Root Practice 1 - Bible Reading:

Read slowly:

“Blessed is the one.....whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” (Psalm 1:1a, 2-3)

Prayerfully reflect:

1. Can you think of times when **God has spoken** to you through the Bible? How has that changed your life?
2. The Psalmist gives us great **encouragement** to spend time reading and meditating on the scripture, by saying that we will be fruitful. How does that make you feel about the time you spend studying?
3. Most people find it helpful to have a **specific time** each day to read their Bible. When can you be most attentive to God? How will you use that time?
4. You might like to experiment with:
 - a. **Meditating** on a Bible verse. Try this simple exercise: Read the passage of Scripture above a couple of times and see what speaks to you. Whatever catches your attention, spend some time “chewing it over” in your mind and then turn your thoughts back to God in prayer. Take that word into the day with you.
 - b. **Memorising** a Bible verse regularly. There are lots of phone apps to help here. *Verse Locker* is one worth trying.

Week 2: (Sun 28th Feb – Sat 6th Mar)

Root Practice 1 - Bible Reading:



Read slowly:

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2Timothy 3:16-17)



Prayerfully reflect:

1. What are the most powerful **truths** that the Bible has taught you? How have these truths equipped you in your life?
2. There are many **different ways** to engage with the message of the Bible. Would any of the following help you?
 - a. Reading through the Bible in a year?
See <https://bibleinoneyear.org>
 - b. Daily Bible reading notes eg BRF, Scripture Union, CWR
 - c. Learning more about the Bible by watching short teaching videos? See <https://bibleproject.com>
3. One ancient way of **encountering** Jesus through a Bible passage is through using our imagination. Try this:
Read through the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Shut your eyes and imagine that you are in the story. Which character are you? Where is Jesus? What does Jesus say to you? Now respond to Jesus.
4. There are many ways to creatively engage with the Bible. Have you thought about joining Fiona Setchell at her “Art journaling” session at 7pm on a Thurs evening? (Contact Fiona on 07974 641 583 for details)
5. **What rhythm of Bible Reading are you going to use as part of your “rule of life”?** Write it on the back page.

Week 3: (Sun 7th Mar – Sat 13th Mar)

Root Practice 2 - Prayer:



Read slowly:

“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.” (Matthew 6:9-13)



Prayerfully reflect:

1. Can you recall some of the ways that **God has answered your prayers?** What effect does that have upon your relationship with Him?
2. Because of Jesus, we have the huge privilege of **access to our Heavenly Father**. Is there anything that stops you from drawing closer to Him? What could you do about it?
3. Using a **pattern of prayer**, like the Lord’s Prayer, or A.C.T.S (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) can enable us to keep our personal prayer lives “balanced.” Spend some time “praying” around the Lord’s prayer above, one phrase at a time.
4. You might like to experiment with:
 - a. **Praying a Psalm**....turning the words of the Psalm into your own prayers to the Lord.
 - b. Keeping a **Thanksgiving** notebook.
 - c. Using **Silence** to become aware of God’s presence.
 - d. Using the **Examen prayer** at the end of the day. Sit quietly and think through the day; the people you’ve seen, the places you’ve been, the tasks you’ve done. Ask yourself, “*What am I most/least grateful for?*” “*Where did I see God at work?*” Talk to Him about that.

Week 4: (Sun 14th Mar – Sat 20th Mar)

Root Practice 2 - Prayer:



Read slowly:

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” (Matthew 18:19-20)



Prayerfully reflect:

1. There are many different elements that will form the rhythm of prayer in each person’s life.

What might **praying on your own** look like in your “rule of life?”

- a. When works best for you to have times of **focused prayer** in your schedule?
 - b. What prompts could enable you to take **brief pauses** to pray throughout your day?
 - c. Have you thought about keeping a **prayer journal** – noting down prayers and the answers when they come.
 - d. Would it be helpful to use a **prayer app**, like *Prayer Mate*, *Lectio 365*, *Sacred Space* or *Daily Prayer*?
 - e. Is there a special **place** where you find it good to pray?
2. Reflect on the verses above and then think through what **praying with others** might look like in your “rule of life”
 - a. Do you have a **prayer partner** or are you part of a **prayer triplet / group**?
 - b. How could you join in with the **church’s prayer meetings**? Could you join in with Daily Prayer at 9am Mon-Thurs or the Boiler Room on Weds at 7pm?
 3. **On the back page write down what rhythm of Prayer you will use as part of your “rule of life”**

Week 5: (Sun 21st Mar – Sat 27th Mar)

Root Practice 3 - Sabbath:



Read slowly:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)



Prayerfully reflect:

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word, **“Sabbath?”** Does the word have good or bad connotations for you?
2. Living a life of love is the essence of our discipleship. How does being either too busy or well rested, affect your **relationships** with:
 - a. God?
 - b. Other people?
3. *“Sabbath reminds us that **God invites us to stop.**”* (K.Shigematsu) How does this statement make you feel?
4. Imagine Jesus standing in front of you as you read through the verses above a couple of times. Hear His **invitation to you to give you rest.** How will you respond to Him?
5. On the Sabbath, ceasing from work or activities that closely resemble our work involves **trusting God** with our lives; trusting that we are loved by Him; trusting that we don't need to earn His love by what we do. Spend some time receiving the truth that You are deeply loved as you pray over the verse: *“You are my dearly loved Son/daughter, and you bring me great joy.”* (Luke 3:22 New Living Translation)

Week 6: (Sun 28th Mar – Sat 3rd April)

Root Practice 3 - Sabbath:



Read slowly:

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work....For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11)



Prayerfully reflect:

1. God gives you **permission to stop** working one day a week to rest and do things that are life-giving for you.
 - a. What are the most **life-giving activities** that you enjoy taking part in? How can they be part of your Sabbath?
 - b. Is there something that you might like to explore doing that could potentially be life-giving during your Sabbath?
2. **Worshipping with others** and drawing close to God is a key part of keeping Sabbath well. How much priority do you give to being part of corporate worship each week?
3. If you are going to be able to **rest** well on your Sabbath, are there things you can plan to do on other days of the week?
4. Read the verses above and ask God to help you keep the Sabbath day **holy** and that you will grow in your trust of Him, and His provision for you.
5. **On the back page write down how Sabbath can be a “life-giving” day as part of your “rule of life.”**

Tips for Creating your “rule of life.”

Ken Shigematsu gives some great tips on how to create your own “rule of life” which we have summarised for you below:

1. Start simply

Add one new practice to your life at a time and allow that practice to be “bedded” into your life before you add another one.

2. Build slowly

Build your rule of life slowly and prayerfully to enable you to keep going and not give up!

3. Prune regularly

A rule of life isn’t mainly about adding more things to your life. If you add something to your life, think about what you can let go of.

4. Be energy conscious

Think about when you have most / least energy available for being present to God and to other people.

5. Consider your stage of life

Your rule of life will be affected by the season of life you are currently in.

6. Stay flexible

We need a rule that is flexible and that bends around the different situations that crop up in our day to day lives.

7. Make time for fun

Our rule ideally needs to include things that will bring us renewal, refreshment, and joy.

8. Include community

To grow in our discipleship, we need the community of love that God has given us. We are formed in a “school of love.”

My “Rule of Life”

Over the 6 weeks of Lent, see if you can start to create your own “rule of life” by adding ideas to the table below:

Practice:	Elements I will include in my “rule”:
Bible Reading:	
Prayer: a) Praying on my own	
b) Praying with other people	
Sabbath:	

