



Lent Devotional

One

Reflections, prayers and
poems for Lent



tearfund

Welcome to One

‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.’ (Galatians 3:28)

This is the sixth of Tearfund’s Lent devotionals that I have been involved in creating. And this is by far the one I am most passionate about.

When we look around at the world today, we can see an awful lot of division and disconnection. Yet there is hope. A deep and thrilling hope.

When we realize that we are one in Christ, everything changes. When we embrace togetherness – unity with creation, with each other and with God – extraordinary things can happen.

At Tearfund, we see this every day in our work. Faced alone, poverty can seem inescapable. But when people come together in unity – in oneness – there is great power. We’ll be sharing some of these stories with you throughout this Lent journey.

May you have a blessed Lent. May you take hold of the thrilling hope we have in Christ. And may you, and all of us, be one.

Gideon Heugh,
Editor

This Lent devotional is a collaboration between Tearfund UK, Tearfund Canada and their friends. All Bible quotations are NIV unless otherwise stated.



Week one:

One with our identity

‘The great struggle of the Christian life is to take God’s name for us, to believe we are beloved and to believe that is enough.’

Rachel Held Evans, *Searching for Sunday*

Day 1: Fire

Wednesday 2 March

‘Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.’

Romans 12:2

The first day of Lent is known in many traditions as Ash Wednesday. Ash is the aftermath of fire – the remnant of a burning away.

Part of the spiritual journey is learning to let go; it is to subtract whatever the world has put upon us to make more room for God’s abundance. So, to begin Lent, let us reflect upon some of the things it might be time to burn away from our lives:

- **Negative beliefs about ourselves.** For example, ‘I’m not enough’. You are more than enough in Christ.
- **Bitterness and unforgiveness.** The only person it’s hurting is you.
- **Whatever the ‘thing’ is that you’re waiting for to complete you.** ‘If only I had that job/that house/that person etc.’ It won’t complete you; only Christ will.
- **Material possessions.** These can be anchors that weigh us down. It is liberating when we realize that all things belong to God.
- **Self-centredness.** There is a desperate need for society to move from ‘me’ to ‘we’; from ‘I’ to ‘all of us’.

Write down a list of some of the things that you want to subtract from your life this Lent. Commit your list to God.

Gideon Heugh

Gideon writes for Tearfund UK and is a poet and environmentalist

Day 2: Meeting my maker

Thursday 3 March

 'For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb'.

Psalm 139:13

In a world where we can add filters to our photos, share curated highlight reels of our lives, and present the best version of ourselves to others, this verse reminds me that I cannot hide from our omnipresent Creator. To be honest, that can sometimes be a frightening and uncomfortable thought.

But this verse also delivers a freeing truth: God knows every corner of our hearts and being – even the dark depths we want to keep hidden in shame. He knows us intimately and yet still fully delights in me, in you!

Since we were so carefully and intentionally created, we each have a valuable role to play, flaws and all, in advancing his kingdom. This encourages me in my day-to-day work here in the Middle East, knowing that every task – whether big or small, seen or unseen, or seemingly insignificant – ultimately contributes to a much bigger purpose, which you are also part of.

Loving God, thank you for this wonderful truth. Help me to invest my whole being in it, so that everything I do will flow from it. Amen.

Jade Beakhouse

Jade works in Tearfund UK's Middle East Team

Day 3: In the image

Friday 4 March

 'So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.'

Genesis 1:27

This is a verse many of us know so well that sometimes we forget to stop in awe at its power, beauty and meaning. We are made in the image of the same God who flung stars into space and who brings meaning from chaos.

Pause, and breathe it in. The image of our Lord is woven deeply into the fabric of humanity.

Wrapped up in this short verse is the calling to our identity as image-bearers of the King. And the calling to actively look for the image of our King in others.

This is a world-changing truth. How different things would be if we saw past the headlines into the image of God? A changing climate, modern-day slavery, war... I dare to believe that if we truly lived out this verse – poverty would be over. Injustice gone.

So today, let's proactively look and find the image of God in ourselves and others.

Creator God, we pause in awe. Thank you that we are woven in your image. Help us Lord to see this in ourselves and in others. Might we live differently in light of this truth. Amen.

Dot Tyler

Dot leads Tearfund UK's work with young people

Day 4: **The real you**

Saturday 5 March

 **'Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.'**

John 1:12

Read this prayer out loud and let the truth soak into you: you are created and you are loved. And, as we journey together this Lent, let us ask God how we can seek freedom for others too.

God of creation, of the parted seas and the miracle birth, the empty tomb and risen King, help me to see myself as part of your story.

Wash away any shame or fear that is holding me back, declare over me again that I am a new creation in you, Lord.

Show me the areas of my life where I need to prune, so I can walk in greater freedom with you.

And when life is difficult: grant me patience, like you did Joseph, grant me boldness, like you did Rahab, grant me courage, like you did Ruth, grant me wisdom, like you did David.

God of my past and my future, let me never forget that you are working in the present, help me to see myself in your greater plan. Show me how I can best serve you with all of me, as a beloved child of God, because – yes – that is who I am. Amen.

Rachael Adams

Rachael is the Editor of Tearfund UK's weekly prayer email

Day 5: A new light arrives

Sunday 6 March

‘Weeping may stay for
the night, but rejoicing
comes in the morning.’

Psalm 30:5

Each Sunday we will be sharing a poem with you. Treat this as a Sabbath Day – read them slowly, soaking in the words and asking God to speak to you through them.

A new light arrives

*Buried in the night,
anxious thoughts crowded darkly
around me.*

*The last thing I expect
is a miracle;
the last thing I anticipate is God
riding the dawn.*

*But then,
like the only answer we ever need,
a new light arrives,
splashing grace-paint
on the worn-out canvas of my heart,
and all of a sudden
hope is running along the tops of the trees
wild-eyed
and rampant.*

Gideon Heugh

Poem is © Gideon Heugh, from ‘Rumours of Light’



Week two:

One with Christ

“Look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in.’

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Day 6: The difference

Monday 7 March

 'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.'

Galatians 2:20

'There is still hope. Even if we lost everything, God will not leave us alone... As long as God is there, we can recover from this.'

These are the words of Rowena, from the Philippines. I spoke with her after Super Typhoon Goni washed away her home. Rowena was in the process of trying to move on.

Tearfund's local partner has been helping people like her recover from the storms – storms that are becoming even more severe due to a changing climate. They provided immediate relief in the aftermath and are training communities to become more resilient when disasters hit.

I was there to help Rowena, yet I felt as though she was the one encouraging me. God never forsakes us. God never abandons us. Jesus' sacrifice at the cross means that that love is alive today in us. It is a hope that we can hold onto through the ups and downs of life. This is the difference that being one with Christ makes.

Christ our Lord, thank you for the sacrifice you made so that we are never apart from you. We pray that people around the world who are affected by disasters will know this love too. Amen.

Patricia Pagulayan

Tearfund UK's International Communications Coordinator



📍 Rowena stands with her husband and daughter in front of their wrecked home.

Photo: Patricia Pagulayan/Tearfund

Day 7: The faces of Christ

Tuesday 8 March

‘But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”’

Luke 10:29

There are around 125 billion galaxies in the known universe. All of them unique. Each of these galaxies contain hundreds of billions of stars. All of them unique. Most of these stars have planets orbiting them. All of them unique.

One of those countless planets is of course the Earth. And on this gorgeous world there are around 8.7 million different species of life. All of them unique.

And one of those beautiful species is us. Human beings. Today, there are around 7 billion of us. All of us unique.

God, clearly, loves diversity. Everything created has a unique identity. Yet all of this awesome abundance of uniqueness is held together by one thing: Christ. All of it, all that has ever been made, was made by and through and for Christ (Colossians 1:16).

When we look into a face, we see a beautiful uniqueness, but also a beautiful connectedness. We see Christ. Who is our neighbour? Everyone, and in everyone, Christ.

Christ over all, thank you for the diversity of your creation. Help us to embrace it in awe and wonder. And open our eyes so that we can see you in all things. Amen.

Gideon Heugh

Day 8: **What the light illuminates**

Wednesday 9 March

**“I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never
walk in darkness, but will have
the light of life.’**

John 8:12

I love looking up definitions to enhance my understanding of words – even common words.

Light – the agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible; something that makes vision possible.

I also think of a flashlight (or torch in some countries) that provides illumination, especially in darkness. How marvellous that Jesus is the light of the world, allowing us to see more clearly and guiding us when things seem dark. There are so many other verses which speak about the ways that the Lord wants to accompany us and provide for us on this journey of life.

Deuteronomy 31:8 states, “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Isaiah 9:2 says, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned.”

Thank you, Jesus, for your presence with us. Thank you for lighting our way, guiding our steps, and giving us someone to follow. Amen.

Diane Young

Diane is the Finance Manager of Tearfund Canada

Join us in praying regularly for those living in poverty. Sign-up to receive monthly prayer points by visiting tearfund.ca/pray. Every month you will receive an email with points you can use to pray for the world along with a video from one of our staff.

📷 In Malawi, a women's self-help group gathers for prayer and singing.

Photo: Alex Baker/Tearfund



Day 9: Union

Thursday 10 March

‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!’

2 Corinthians 5:17

Have you ever visited a new destination and been keen to explore your surroundings? Whether undertaking a day trip, week away, or permanent move, I often look forward to experiencing my new environment, its history, architecture, culture and people. When we are in Christ, we are a new creation and there is plenty to explore and experience.

As we abide in Christ and he in us, we are transformed. Our mind is renewed daily as we feed on God’s word. Spending time in his presence and in prayer we develop a new perspective and begin to see the world through Christ’s lens. Our hearts are awakened to opportunities to be Christ’s hands and feet in the places we reside and beyond.

In the forthcoming days, let us be excited about the new things that Christ is doing in us, in our community and worldwide, and let us explore how we can play our part.

Lord, thank you for the ways in which you transform us. Help us to perceive and embrace the new things that you are doing in and around us. Please make us aware of that which you want to do through us, so that we can be a blessing to others. Amen.

Rev Lotwina Farodoye

Rev Lotwina is part of Oxted Team Ministry

Day 10: **The everyday divine**

Friday 11 March

**'The Word became flesh
and made his dwelling
among us.'**

John 1:14

The birth of a baby always brings excitement to those who are affected: the expectancy, the pregnancy, ultrasounds, baby showers, gender naming parties, the labour, the delivery and health, the splitting image of which parent; there's excitement in the air.

How much more then, when we consider the supreme nature of God, the creator of the whole universe, taken on the form of frail humanity, coming as a babe introducing us to His Grace.

Excitement filled the air with the angel's announcement, but we're speaking about the King of Glory. Why human? Why come as a babe? So that we, in his humbleness, would be attracted to his gentle glory, and find our peace in his truth and favor: God loves us!

Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us. Thank you for your only Son who came, showed us his glory in his humbleness, and opened the door to your grace and truth. Amen.

Dean Taylor

Dean is Tearfund Canada's Donor Relations Coordinator

Day 11: Alive with Christ

Saturday 12 March

'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.'

Romans 6:8

As you pray, invite Christ's presence into your body. Take a few moments to relax. Listen to your body: what can you feel? Notice any pain, tension, sickness. Notice also any feelings of fear or hope, a smile, a sigh or a tear. Offer these to God as you pray.

Christ Jesus, you are the Lord of my body. You who inhabited this same flesh, know what it is to grow and move and change, to be both healed and wounded, to feel alive.

In this space in which I live, in each breath, each cell, each feeling nerve, in this gifted skin where your Spirit dwells with me, I carry the joy and power of your resurrected life along with the sorrow of advancing death, through which I will come to you. Wherever I go, you are with me, whatever the world has for me, there you are active through my life, long past the end.

Give me the gift of becoming more aware of you of, feeling your holy presence in the death and life of my body, of knowing hope beyond my experience – because you have looked out of eyes like mine and, gloriously wounded but forever alive, you call me on. Amen.

Rosie McNeil

Associate National Director, Vineyard Churches UK and Ireland

Day 12: The path

Sunday 13 March

 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.'

Proverbs 3:5

The Path

*You can step away from the treadmill now.
We both know how tired you have become;
we both know how the noise has been driving you mad.*

*I won't blame you for getting on in the first place.
We were all lied to. We were all told that it led somewhere.
Look how many increase the speed hoping to get
there faster; see how inevitably they fall.*

*I am glad to have reached you.
Come away now. Come out into the sun,
into the wind and the rain. Here is a path.
I cannot tell you how long it is, or the wonders, the tragedies
you will find around its sharp corners.*

*I can tell you that it will end in your death –
of course! And why would we forget?*

*The ground is solid, but softer than you might think.
You can sit down anywhere and admire the view.
You are encouraged to make a habit of rest.*

*At many points it will branch off
and you won't know which path to take.
But take note of this:
in all places it is wider than one set of shoulders.*

Gideon Heugh

Poem is © Gideon Heugh, from 'Rumours of Light'



Week three:
One with
creation

‘To love a place is not enough. We must find ways to heal it.’

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Day 13: This good world

Monday 14 March

 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.'

Genesis 1:31

Once I built a chicken coop.

It wasn't sturdy, polished or worthy to be paraded in the streets. There were raggedy edges and bits of nail sticking out. But when I finished I breathed out a satisfied sigh and surveyed my work.

God did a far better job creating a home for us humans than I did for my hens. With the work of creating done, God surveyed his handiwork and called it 'very good'. Not good because of what we can get out of it – but good for goodness' sake.

This beauty, crafted by God as a home for his image bearers to thrive in, has signposted centuries of Jesus' followers towards a life of worship.

Consider author Richard Foster's words on creation and use them to spur you into prayer today:

Give your attention to the created order. Look at the trees, really look at them. Take a flower and allow its beauty and symmetry to sink deep into your mind and heart. Listen to the birds – they are messengers of God. Watch the little creatures that creep upon the earth. These are humble acts, to be sure, but sometimes God reaches us profoundly in these simple ways if we will quiet ourselves to listen.

Glen Mitchell

Glen is the director of Tearfund Northern Ireland

Day 14: The immeasurable

Tuesday 15 March

‘For in [Christ] all things were created... all things have been created through him and for him.’

Colossians 1:16

So much of what we cling to disintegrates when looking at the stars. I feel a similar thing when walking in the mountains, or watching a sunrise, or spending time in a quiet wood. Awe is a fantastic remedy for worry.

You're never going to reach the edge of wonder. When you make your life about the immeasurable, there will always be abundance.

When we bring our hearts before the immensities – the beauty and the wonder of God's creation – something inside us opens up. We realize that we are part of a greater whole.

Wonder helps reabsorb us back into the wider natural world. Through wonder, we are knocked out of the illusion that the world revolves around us.

But to do this, we have to do it. We have to go outside. We have to stop and stare. We have to put down our busyness and embrace quiet stillness.

God of wonder, show me new ways that I can get lost in you through your creation. Open my eyes, my ears and my heart to the wonder around me. Help me to stop, to be still, and to stare at the beauty around me. Amen.

Gideon Heugh

Day 15: Love in action

Wednesday 16 March

 'To act justly and to love mercy.'

Micah 6:8

It was the summer of 1995 and monsoon season was in full force as I stepped off the train and onto the platform at Howrah station, Kolkata. This was my first trip to India, and I remember as a young student being overwhelmed by the cacophony of sights and sounds and, the unbearable humidity. Throwing my backpack over my shoulders, I caught an iconic Ambassador taxi and made my way to Emmanuel Ministries where I was to stay and volunteer for the week.

During my week in Kolkata, I served breakfast to street children and sat and listened to their stories of abandonment and abuse. Their stories of stolen innocence pierced my heart and changed my life.

The words of Micah 6:8 is the garment we all need to be clothed with to follow Jesus in this broken and hurting world. We are called to pursue justice for the most vulnerable, love our neighbours with a deep compassion and to walk with our God reliant upon grace and mercy.

Loving God, allow my heart to be broken so that I may live a life that is dedicated to justice, compassion and mercy towards everyone that I encounter.

Philip Reilly

Phil is Tearfund Canada's National Director of Development & Mobilization

Day 16: Without excuse

Thursday 17 March

‘God’s invisible qualities...have been clearly seen...so that people are without excuse.’

Romans 1:20

The Psalmist asked a question of God after pondering the vast scale of the heavenly creation, and frankly he couldn’t even see with his naked eye what we see today with the help of the Hubble telescope, “What are mere mortals that you should think about them...?”

Obviously because of how magnificent and spectacular the heavenly bodies are, God was revealing a bit of himself in them – who would deny God that truth? Only the person who doesn’t desire to submit to his Lordship.

The fact is, there is something far greater than God’s creation of the universe with all the galaxies and stars, that reveals who God is, so more clearly than all the stars put together, and that is God’s son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life, that we could know and come to God in peace. Do you know him?

Heavenly Father, no greater love has anyone than the one who laid down his life so that we could know you. I have no excuse, so help me draw close, knowing that as I draw close, you too will draw closer to me. Thank you for revealing yourself in more ways than one. Amen.

Dean Taylor

Day 17: All things

Friday 18 March

‘How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.’

Psalm 104:24

The first time I heard about Fairtrade was in a primary school assembly. My friend’s mom was giving a talk on cocoa farmers – how they struggle to earn a fair wage for their work – keeping them trapped in poverty.

It is now more than 20 years since that assembly and it saddens me what little progress has been made.

Our team in Ivory Coast is working with hundreds of cocoa farmers, but a changing climate has changed the weather patterns, making it harder to farm. They still struggle to earn a fair price for their labour and crops.

God calls us to care for creation and for our neighbours. We cannot do that if we keep ourselves separate from their daily struggles. If we opt for a life of consumerism over connection.

But how do we reclaim this? By a life of thanksgiving. Of recognizing the part each person and creature plays in the world. And matching our lifestyle choices in recognition of this.

Before your meals today, thank God. Lift up every part of it and the journey of how it made its way to you. Pray for a fair wage and working conditions for the farmers and workers involved.

Rachael Adams

Day 18: Grief and hope

Saturday 19 March

 ‘Do not be afraid, you wild animals, for the pastures in the wilderness are becoming green.’

Joel 2:22

We often think our sin only affects us. But that’s not the case. Our actions always affect others.

Earlier in this chapter Joel speaks to Israel of God’s judgement for turning away from Him. It doesn’t just affect them personally, but also the land that they live in. Calamity is upon them. But there is hope.

As the people repent we realise that God’s mercy and love is more powerful than his wrath. We see a beautiful picture of God restoring the earth and coming to dwell with his people once again.

Our culture is one filled with consumerism and excessive materialism. I often wonder if we truly believe our joy comes from God or from more stuff. And it is having devastating effects—on our planet—and others around the world.

There is a better way. Will we turn away from our actions that are destroying creation? As I visited the Scottish Highlands after attending COP26 I was in awe. I couldn’t help but worship. With true repentance we won’t just better realize God’s gifts, but God himself.

Matthew Schroeder

Matthew is the Director of Marketing and Communications for Tearfund Canada

Day 19: A forest once

Sunday 20 March

 ‘Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.’

John 12:24

A forest once

*I thought I dreamt of a forest once, darkfully green,
a place where the wind could hide
and becoming lost we would find ourselves.*

*I thought I dreamt of fallen leaves,
of decay enriching the soil – life rising
from the sweet sting of impermanence.*

*Now awake, encased by undying concrete,
I think of the beginnings that will never come
because of the endings that cannot.*

Gideon Heugh

Poem is © Gideon Heugh, from ‘Rumours of Light’



Week four:
One with
each other

“Love is larger than the
walls which shut it in.’

Corrie ten Boom, *The Hiding Place*

Day 20: The power of community

Monday 21 March

 'How good and pleasant it
is when God's people live
together in unity!'

Psalm 133:1

The fading night sky was filled with lightning flashes over the rainforest. We were sat out eating delicious doughnuts cooked over an open fire. I was visiting the Democratic Republic of Congo with a small team from Tearfund, collecting stories from a remote village near Bunia. It had been a difficult journey, up a sharp hill. Fortunately, we were welcomed by a team of local church pastors on motorbikes, and we rode pillion up the steep track. The pastors joined us for food and asked if we'd like them to sing.

As they sang their beautiful Congolese worship songs, the sky sparkled and heaven opened. I didn't understand the words, but their passion and faith echoed in harmony all around us. It was the most amazing expression of Christian community I have ever experienced. That is what helps bring heaven to earth – when barriers are broken and we join together as one.

*The dawn is breaking, wake up
God's glory, is going around the world
The world asks me, where is your God?
I say my God is seated in glory, oh Yahweh, be praised!
Let me magnify him, for he is my strength!*

From *Glorify the Lord*, a Congolese worship song.

Peter Shaw

Peter is Editor of Tear Times and The Prayer Diary

Day 21: Each other

Tuesday 22 March

‘Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.’

Philippians 2:3

‘Sometimes you can’t make it on your own’. Bono had it right, apart from that first bit. We can take away the ‘sometimes’.

Our culture worships the individual. The self-made. The self-sufficient. Self-care. Do-it-yourself. Self-obsession. Cue an explosion of loneliness.

No one is self-sufficient. You alone cannot entirely care for yourself. It’s about time we embraced that fact, and surrendered to our interdependence.

We are not simply individuals. We are part of this world; and this world is part of us. We need friendship. We need family. We need community. We need helping hands and shoulders to cry on. Without this – without relationality, unity, togetherness – we fall apart.

We need each other. And each other needs you.

God who is one, make us one with you, one with creation, and one with each other. Help us to tear down the walls that divide us; to build bridges across the divides that separate us; to reach out in love and inclusion, always. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Gideon Heugh

Day 22: The lonely place

Wednesday 23 March

‘So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.’

Romans 12:5

Tearfund works with churches around the world to set up savings groups. In these groups, people come together to find solutions that lift themselves out of poverty. At the heart of the success of these groups is connection. Poverty is a lonely place. Any response to it needs to restore people’s emotional and spiritual wellbeing, as well as their practical needs.

Widowed at 27 years old with five children Maria is hopeful. Her four-year old daughter jumps alongside her with a hoe, eager to show us their farm from which they harvested sorghum grains, cowpea leaves and pigeon peas during a dry season when most farmers’ crops failed. Maria was awarded the “Best Farmer in Mulching” prize amongst the 1,200 farmers practicing conservation agriculture in her village.

When Maria’s husband passed away from HIV, his brothers moved to evict Maria and her children from her husband’s land, rendering her destitute. Thankfully, members from Maria’s savings group rallied behind Maria, protecting her from this gross injustice. To date, they ensure that Maria receives her antiretroviral medication from the government clinic every month. And now, they learn from Maria how to retain moisture in soil through mulching.

Doing life with the humble in Kawelu is God’s love in action. Everyone grows.

Anja Oussoren

Tearfund Canada Program Manager – East Africa & South Asia

Lent Appeal

Savings groups, like Maria's, are quietly lifting millions of people out of poverty. But they have been hit hard by the pandemic. Please consider giving to Tearfund this Lent to ensure these groups continue to thrive and transform.

Please give today at tearfund.ca/oneLent



Day 23: Fully New

Thursday 24 March

‘He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!”’

Revelation 21:5

My son, who moved home during the pandemic, recently moved out again. Maybe it's the pandemic or maybe it's a normal part of the process when kids leave home but I got the urge to overhaul his old basement bedroom. I tore down part of a wall, repainted, rearranged and even moved my home office into the space. It's great but there are still some problems. The old windows need replacing. The floor's not quite right. There are not enough electrical outlets. It's new but it's not all new.

Sometimes we apply a similar DIY approach to ourselves. We tweak and alter and cover. We want to feel better, look better, be happier. But it's not quite enough because we still have the same insecurities, weaknesses and brokenness.

The Enthroned One says “I am making everything new!” No temporary fixes. No cover ups. This One will change the whole order of things. No more death or pain. No more brokenness or insecurities. For God will dwell with us and be our God. Come, Lord Jesus, and make us new.

Rebecca Cuthbert

Rebecca is Tearfund Canada's Director of Administration



❏ Sexual and gender-based violence robs people of their dignity and causes deep wounds. Tearfund works in several countries to rehabilitate survivors of abuse and bring healing through Christ.

This woman, a member of a choir in the DRC uses music to educate her community about change attitudes on sexual and gender-based violence.

Photo: Hazel Thompson/Tearfund

Day 24: Wounded healers

Friday 25 March

'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.'

Luke 4:18

It's easy to sit back and examine the lives of others. Sipping at the cup of comparison and judgement we can find ourselves feeling rather smug.

However, as we examine the shape of our lives, we make room for Christ to tend to our wounds, leading us towards others in love. When the Spirit of the others-centred Christ takes up residence in our lives, we become those who are centred on others.

Suffering can harden or humble us. If our hurts soften our hearts and we allow humility to run its course, it will lead us into washing the feet of those in pain. Like Christ, our wounds may never go away, but they can form us beyond self-absorption and towards co-suffering.

We often believe that the broken parts of our stories rule us out from serving others, when in fact our woundedness can be embraced as a gift and a guide, keeping us on humility's highway in the direction of others.

Dear God, might we feel compassion like Christ did, feel pain in the deepest places; might we reach down and reach out until our lives become cruciform, shaped into the cross of Christ. Shape us so. Break us, so we might proclaim good news to the broken. Amen.

Stuart Bothwell

Stuart helps lead Lagan Valley Vineyard church

Day 25:

Friend

Saturday 26 March

‘If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.’

Ecclesiastes 4:10

Falling down happens to everyone. Therefore, developing deep mutually beneficial relationships is crucial to perseverance, particularly when it comes to the Kingdom mission of God.

Through authentic mutual relationships there can be a satisfaction of spirit that is not hidden from hardship. Obstacles do exist and we need each other in the midst of it.

...we need the help of others.

...and we need to help others.

...we need to be protected from evil.

...and we need to protect others from evil.

In this we are also reminded of the words of Jesus: “that where two or three are gathered, I am there with them.” We need relationships willing to be empowered by the Spirit of God to overcome the onslaught of evil in the spiritual realm. Partnerships are strengthened by a co-operative dependence on the presence of Christ and a mutual commitment to honour His ways.

Aynsley Persad

Aynsley is a Program Coordinator at Tearfund Canada

Day 26: **Us, not me**

Sunday 27 March

'For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.'

1 John 4:20

*God of unity, connection, togetherness, community –
When divisions arise and conflict takes hold,
Help us to dethrone ourselves,
To look for common ground,
To seek the greater good,
To let go of me and mine and embrace us and ours.*

*When we are faced with challenges
Such as extreme poverty and disaster and a changing
climate,
Help us to work as one,
To embrace our shared humanity
To see that the path ahead is in our togetherness,
To let go of me and mine and embrace us and ours.*

*God, I love you. And I do not want to be shown to be a liar.
When I find other people difficult,
When I am tempted to anger, unforgiveness, or even hatred,
Help me to let go,
To see your face in everyone,
To share your love with everyone,
To let go of me and mine and embrace us and ours.*

*In Jesus' name,
Amen.*

Marc Antoine

Marc leads Tearfund UK's work in Haiti



Week five:

One with the church

‘The church isn’t simply a collection of isolated individuals... we need to learn again the lesson that a hand is no less a hand for being part of a larger whole.’

N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian*

Day 27: Hands and feet

Monday 28 March

‘Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace.’

1 Peter 4:10

Being the Editor of Tearfund’s weekly prayer email can often mean hard conversations with teams around the world, where we sit in the tension of an unanswered prayer. Like persisting in prayer for peace in Yemen then feeling our hearts shatter as the conflict continues.

But we don’t stop. Petitioning. Crying out together for change. Waiting. Encouraging each other in the meantime. It’s not easy – but I’m glad we don’t have to do this alone.

The easier conversations to have are the ones where God is on the move, despite the challenges we face around us.

One that has stuck with me is of a pastor we work with in Chad who rescued hundreds of girls in his community from female genital mutilation and cutting by opening up his church as a refuge, providing them with shelter, safety and hope for the future.

This was one person deciding that they could use what they have at their disposal to share God’s love with those in need. That is the call of the church today.

Open up your hands before you and ask God how you can use what he has given you to bless someone else today. Repeat often, enjoy seeing God at work and bring the glory back to God by sharing your stories with others.

Rachael Adams

Day 28: Faultless

Tuesday 29 March

‘Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.’

James 1:27

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

A way needs to be followed. Truth needs to be put into practice. Life needs to be lived.

Christianity is a journey, not a destination. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus himself says, ‘Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.’ (Matthew 7:21)

In other words, to listen to and worship Jesus is not enough. We need to walk the talk.

All this begs the question: what, in essence, is this way – this beautiful, truthful path?

That’s the question that James is answering in these verses. To ‘look after orphans and widows’ is Biblical shorthand for reaching out to the marginalised and oppressed. To look after those in need. To love; because love changes everything.

Jesus, help us to follow your way. Help us to practice your truth. Help us to live your life. Amen.

Gideon Heugh

Day 29: Heart and mind

Wednesday 30 March

‘Then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.’

Philippians 2:2

Being like-minded is never easy. In our families, churches, and workplaces we do not always agree, but more often than not this is due to a lack of communication.

In a previous role, as a professional mediator, I worked with victims and offenders enabling them to talk to each other. As they talked, both parties often realized they had more in common than they first thought and many of their differences were just perceived differences rather than actual ones. By simply talking with each other they became even more like-minded.

For us in the church, we become more like-minded by studying the Bible together and talking through our different interpretations and how we apply it.

Read Ephesians 4:17-25 and consider the behaviours outlined that bring about like-minded living. Select two or three of these behaviours to work on in your own life and write down specific action points of how you might do this.

Graeme McMeekin

Graeme leads Tearfund UK's work in Scotland

Day 30: Salt and light

Thursday 31 March

 'You are the light of the world.
A town built on a hill cannot
be hidden.'

Matthew 5:14

With no job or prospects, François preferred to stay hidden. 'As a husband and father I could not meet my responsibilities,' he says. 'I was ashamed to go to large family events.'

Kinshasa, the capital city of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where François lives, used to be a beautiful, green place. It's now overflowing with discarded plastic. Both François and his home were in need of some enlightenment...

That's where the local church came in. Answering God's call to care for creation, the church established a plastic waste project. Not only does it uncover the hidden beauty of the city, it also provides meaningful employment.

François's job at the project has brought him back to life: 'I feel like someone coming out of the abyss. I am a new François.'

Lord Jesus, thank you for reigniting the light in François' life. Help us to see that by caring for creation, we do more than just preserve the environment, we become a beacon of light that shines out your goodness for all to see. May we, as part of your church, be bringers of salt and light in all that we do. Amen.

Hebdavi Muhindo

Hebdavi is the country Director of Tearfund DRC

Day 31: A Different Love

Friday 1 April

‘By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.’

John 13:35

Love is more than just a feeling, it’s a verb. To me, this is a weighty verse. But it’s also beautiful. It means that there is truly something different about this kind of love. It’s a love that gets noticed!

This love can be found in Sierra Leone, a county devastated for years by civil war and Ebola. Neighbours today would have been on opposite sides of the conflict before. Memories of the brutality are fresh. But in this tense situation, the church is shining brightly.

Our church partner, EFSL, is teaching a new generation of farmers grow more food. But they do so to everyone—even the Muslims up the road. “Why are you helping us?” Their leader asked, an ex-military officer. “No one ever comes to help us, not even the government.” The church replied, “Because Jesus loves you, and we do too.”

Now they want a church in their village too.

This is the kind of love that changes the world. How can you show a Christ-like love today?

Matthew Schroeder

Lent Appeal

Tearfund works through local churches around the world to love and empower people in some of the hardest places. To enable work like this to happen, please consider supporting our *Lent Appeal*.

Please give today at tearfund.ca/oneLent

📍 Susanna leads a group of Muslim women dancing with joy in a Tearfund community vegetable garden in Sierra Leone. Her husband asked, "Will you help us start a church?"

Photo: Wayne Johnson/Tearfund Canada

Day 32: Make us one

Saturday 2 April

‘All the believers were together and had everything in common.’

Acts 2:44

Acts 2:41-47 is a passage that has helped shape my life and ministry. The passage represents, approximately, the first 25 years of the early Church. The early Church is described as dynamic, even breathing! God breathed His Spirit and the early Jesus-followers breathed His life-giving breath into each other and their community.

There is a sense of oneness: Jesus had prayed for oneness in John 17. Specifically, He invites us into the experience of the oneness. This was not a nebulous ideal for Jesus, but it is Jesus' reality – He is already living as One with His Father and Holy Spirit.

We are invited into this relationship, not to be God, but to be in relationship with Him and each other. An intimate, life giving, loving, relationship with each other and Him. In Acts, those who saw this oneness (or unity) in action wanted in!

“Father, to be one with You, requires me to strive to live in unity with Your Church. Today, help me to love (1 Cor 13 type of love) the Church, so that others see this love and want in!”

Cliff Fletcher

Cliff is the Bishop of The Free Methodist Church in Canada

Photo: Michael Owen/Tearfund



Day 33:

Rabble

Sunday 3 April

‘Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives among you?’

1 Corinthians 3:16

Rabble

*We are where the divine dwells –
not in stone or marble,
but in our soft and playful bodies.*

*We are God’s temple –
not the lavish or gilded
but the lowly and unexpected.*

*We are the church –
not an institution or an idea
but a rabble of flawed,*

*belly-laughing, mess-making,
tear-shedding, culture-shaking,
head-scratching dreamers.*

Gideon Heugh

Poem is © Gideon Heugh, from ‘Devastating Beauty’



Week six:

One with the marginalised

“God loves and defends those with the least economic and social power, and so should we. That is what it means to “do justice.”**”**

Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice*

Day 34: The meaning of justice

Monday 4 April

**‘Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed. Take
up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow.’**

Isaiah 1:17

What would a Christian society truly look like?

Would it be one in which everyone goes to church?
One in which we all read the Bible every day? One in
which worship music tops the charts?

If we follow God’s word, a Christian society would be one that is free from inequality. One in which people looked after each other with compassion. Christianity is more than church numbers – it’s about justice. To build God’s kingdom is to lift up those who have been cast down. Without doing that, we are missing the whole point. Old and New Testaments both are emphatic with this (Deuteronomy 27:19; Amos 5:21-24; Matthew 7:21; James 1:27).

Earlier in today’s passage, God rejects his people’s worship. Why? Because there is injustice in the land. Because the cries of the marginalised are going unheeded. Because his people are not looking after those in need.

Would God want to receive our worship today? It is a challenging question. But one that must be asked.

God of justice, have mercy on your church. We recommit ourselves to your will – the will that says seek justice and defend the oppressed. Amen.

Dr Ruth Valerio

Ruth is Tearfund UK’s Director of Global Advocacy and Influencing

Day 35: Radical inclusion

Tuesday 5 April

 'For you are all one in Christ Jesus'

Galatians 3:28

God opposes oppression. This is because to marginalise, oppress or exclude a human being is to violate God's image.

Every single one of us is made in God's likeness. Every. Single. One. Of. Us. We are one. There is no 'them', there is only 'us'.

One of my favourite sayings is, 'Build bridges, not walls.' But Jesus went further than that. He tore down the walls. He sought out those who had previously been excluded, and he included them. He sought out those who had been rejected, and he embraced them. He sought out those who had been left out, and he let them in.

That is the nature of Christ: radical inclusion. And Christ is everywhere, always. The moment of creation itself was an action of inclusion: to bring physical matter into union with the divine. That is the story of God. And that is our story, our mission.

God of inclusion, make us more like you. Help us to focus on the things that unite, not the things that divide us. Help us to include. Amen.

Gideon Heugh

Day 36: Savings Groups

Wednesday 6 April

‘Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.’

Romans 12:16

People living in poverty often don't need assistance, but opportunities. They are able and willing to better their circumstances, but are often excluded from the process. That is why savings groups centre on help, not hand-outs. Leonille, from Rwanda, found herself excluded from society due to her disability. She was encouraged through our church partner to set up a savings groups, bringing together people with disabilities. The group now has 19 members!

‘The convincing part was not easy. Most of the group members believed that they were no use for anything,’ says Leonille. ‘Once we came together, we were able to discover our abilities. Disabilities don't necessarily mean limitations... This category of people is normally left out and the society does not consider them. I encouraged others to come together to value our talents, escape from loneliness, and improve our living conditions.’

The group has formed new friendships, learned new skills, and are now able to contribute financially to support their families. Praise God.

Dear God, bless self-help groups like Leonille's with friendship and provision. We pray that even more people in Rwanda and beyond will be connected to groups like these so they can overcome poverty together. Amen.

Joanne Uwera

Joanne is part of our East and Central Africa Team



Lent Appeal

Help support local churches to set up even more savings groups so that more people can lift themselves out of poverty for good.

Please give today at tearfund.ca/onekent

Day 37: Tearing down the walls

Thursday 7 April

‘For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.’

Ephesians 2:14

I was born in a refugee camp in Burundi. My Rwandan parents had fled their home due to the violent conflict in the 1960s.

My name means ‘God is with us’. And God has been with me. He has taken away the bitterness of my youth; I no longer harbour ill feelings against those who caused my pain, nor against those who killed my relatives. Christ forgave me and has taught me to forgive.

For many Rwandans, and in my own life, there has been much to forgive. Today marks the 28th commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Violence like this begins when we stop seeing our fellow human beings as people – as our neighbours – when we stop seeing the one-ness of humanity. Conflict begins in our hearts (Matthew 5:21-22), but it can also end there, when we choose to forgive and to bring down the dividing walls of hostility.

Reconciling God, thank you for the power of forgiveness. Show me how I can practise this in my own life. Reveal to me the walls I need to tear down – especially the ones that are stopping me from loving my neighbours. Amen.

Emmanuel Murangira

Emmanuel is the Country Director of Tearfund Rwanda

Day 38: The destitute God

Friday 8 April

‘Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”’

Matthew 8:20

Jesus lifestyle didn't include much in the way of material goods, and he warned those who were considering following him that it would mean the same for them.

Jesus' trade was carpentry, but the majority of his time was not spent fashioning furniture; he invested in the lives of those he encountered. He acknowledged and cared for the outcasts, prayed for those who needed deliverance and brought healing to those who suffered. He was a craftsman of redemption.

A person with many possessions can still be in spiritual poverty. When Paul writes that Jesus became poor so we might be rich (2 Corinthians 8:9), it means that Jesus gave up (temporarily) the glorious riches of heaven so we would have eternal riches. He spent his time building the spiritual wealth of the lost, pouring out love upon the marginalized. For love and justice are the currencies of God's kingdom.

As followers of Jesus, we too must spend our lives to this aim.

Lord, thank you for showing us what heavenly wealth looks like. Guide our hearts and minds, so that we may focus on what truly matters in this life. Amen.

Amanda Miah

Amanda is Chief of Staff at Tearfund USA



 **A boy at prayer in Malawi.**
Photo: Aaron Koch/Tearfund

Day 39:

One with Marginalized

Saturday 9 April

‘But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.’

Luke 14:13-14

“Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you.”

Jesus is at the home of a prominent leader in the community. As he observes the sights, sounds and smells of the room, he sees those who are jostling to be in the position of honor near the head of the table. The educated, the wealthy, the popular people of the town. This was the routine at dinner parties and common practice to want to sit in a position of honor.

That space becomes a beautiful teaching moment for all who chose to listen in. Jesus turns to the host and makes a statement about the marginalized of society. The community that Jesus knew well as they were often in the crowd surrounding him. Those living with a physical challenge, not accepted, hidden from sight and living on the fringes.

The challenge to this host is one that we all need to hear. Do we have guest lists that exclude a segment of people or do we invite all people in?

Don Miller

Church Relations Director at Tearfund Canada

Day 40: **Amos 5, 2022**

Sunday 10 April

 **'But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!'**

Amos 5:23-24

Amos 5, 2022

*Fallen is the church. Swallowed
By the sea that was allowed to rise
While she stood by
And did nothing.*

But seek God; seek justice; and live.

*Fallen is the church. Consumed
By inequalities that were allowed to rage
While she turned away
And did nothing.*

But seek God; seek righteousness; and live.

*Fallen is the church. Tripped up
By the impoverished who were left on the ground
While she walked around
And did nothing.*

*Our services are meaningless
Our worship is worthless
Our prayers appal the ears of the Lord
As long as we stand by and do nothing*

*So let justice roll on like a river,
Righteousness like a never-failing stream.*

Gideon Heugh
Poem is © Gideon Heugh



Week seven:

One with redemption

‘All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.’

Julian of Norwich

Day 41: **All shall be well**

Monday 11 April

 **'Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.'**

Psalm 30:5

My country knows what it is to weep. We have suffered the unthinkable; we have borne the unbearable.

And yet... we also know what it is to wake up to a new day. We know what it is to rejoice. We have seen reconciliation and redemption where such things may have seemed impossible.

I have seen such things here – things made well despite the weight of unimaginable suffering. I know, therefore, that things can be made well wherever you may be; whatever you may have been through.

This is because God is our Great Redeemer. The Almighty Restorer. The Unrivalled Healer. He can heal our wounds, take away our sorrows, and wipe away our tears.

It may take time. It may even take a long time. Yet all shall be well. Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

God of redemption, I lift my weeping to you, and the weeping of the nations. Hear our cries oh Lord. Hear our pleas for deliverance, and come quickly to make all things well. Amen.

Jean Paul Ndagijimana

Jean Paul is the pastor for Hope Evangelical Church in Rwanda

Day 42: Reconciliation

Tuesday 12 April

 'And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.'

2 Corinthians 5:19

God calls us to be peacemakers. Stepping into this role requires us to put the needs of others before ourselves.

In the last presidential election in Burundi, we saw how the church stepped into this gap. Elections in Burundi have often been marred by violence. But the church was able to show another way.

In the lead-up to the election, Tearfund ran workshops with church leaders on how to promote peace. 'I believe that church leaders should be present in everyday life, engage and invest in the peaceful processes in their country,' shares Rev Onesphore Ndayizigamiye, who attended the training. 'They should not be afraid, but step up, because their role is very important.'

'When different religious denominations work together for the same cause, their message is really powerful,' adds Bishop Pontien Ribakare.

The election in Burundi was largely peaceful, praise God – a huge transformation from the last one.

In a society full of division, Lord, show me how I can begin to bridge the gap. I lay down my own prejudices and fears. Give me opportunities to heal and reconcile for your glory. Amen.

Diane Igirimbabazi

Diane leads Tearfund UK's communications for East and Central Africa

Lent Appeal

Find out more about our life-changing work across the world and how people are coming together to lift themselves out of poverty – and the difference you can make.

Please give today at [tearfund.ca/oneLent](https://tearfund.ca/one Lent)



Day 43: Redeemed

Wednesday 13 April

‘I have swept away your offences like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.’

Isaiah 44:22

Have you ever watched the sky change in a moment? The clouds have overtaken the sun and no light is able to break through. Then, in a moment the sky turns a soft pink glow as the sun appears from behind the clouds. That’s what I picture when I read this verse from the book of Isaiah.

When we confess our sins, God not only forgives us – He forgets about our trespasses entirely (Psalm 103:12). In a moment, God dissolves the weights of darkness that sit against us. He doesn’t just stop there - He also fully wraps us in the light of His grace and welcomes us into His beautiful family (John 1:12-13).

We are called to live a life of redemption. As Christ redeemed us, we are to extend this redemption to the marginalized, lost, and even our own enemies. He takes people like us, who both contribute to and experience the brokenness and suffering of this world and He makes us new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Heavenly Father may you remind us of the forgiveness that is found in Christ’s resurrection. May you cause us to let go of the guilt and the shame of past sin, knowing that you have already forgiven us. Please help us to live a life of redemption and shine as lights on a hill.

Jewel Jamieson

Development Coordinator at Tearfund Canada

Day 44: Move forward

Thursday 14 April

**‘Then the Lord said to Moses,
“Why are you crying out to me?
Tell the Israelites to move on.”’**

Exodus 14:15

I am writing this in autumn, when leaves are giving themselves to the ground. There is about to be a wild silence in the trees. An aching expanse of waiting. When you read this, it will be spring. The great re-awakening where creation blossoms into life.

The seasons, created by God, can help us to understand the cycles of our own lives. When we need to grieve, process or petition God. And when we need to push forward.

The transition isn't easy. Holy Week is a reminder that Jesus didn't find it trouble-free to move forward. He spent hours kneeling in agony in the garden of Gethsemane. Blood and sweat and tears. And the immediate future wasn't so bright either.

It comes back to surrender. Reminding ourselves that God is good and God is love – that's why we can take a leap of faith. There was pain on the cross, but the stone was rolled away.

Name what you are holding onto that is keeping you still. Ask the Holy Spirit to help if you are unsure. Write this down and, as the events of Holy Week unfold, bring it to the cross. Surrender it to God and commit to moving forwards into the promise he has for you.

Rachael Adams

Day 45: The descent

Friday 15 April
Good Friday

‘Darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.’

Genesis 1:2

There was no light. It hadn't been created yet. The waters were deep and utterly dark. Yet God was lingering there, ready, waiting in anticipation.

What do dark waters symbolize? Chaos. Sadness. Fear. Emptiness. Loss. Doubt. Loneliness. Despair. The Good Fridays of life.

There is a concept in ancient literature called katabasis. It means to make a descent in order to gain understanding. Because the ancients understood something that perhaps we have forgotten: the most profound truths aren't necessarily found at the top of a mountain – they're more often than not at the bottom of a pit.

You'll know this from your own life. Think about the events that have shaped you. They won't be stories of plain sailing; they'll be stories of challenge, stories that have a little darkness in them. Good Friday stories.

Live long enough and you will know a time when there was no light. Maybe you are experiencing such a time now. What if God was lingering in that darkness; hovering above the waters; ready to make something new?

Christ who was crucified, Christ who is there in the darkness, make your presence known to me. Give me peace while I wait for the moment you say, 'Let there be light.' Amen.

Gideon Heugh



Day 46: Encouraging words of hope

Saturday 16 April

'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.'

1 Thessalonians 5:11

In times of stress and uncertainty how do you encourage people? Especially those young in years, or young in faith.

Paul faced that as he wrote to Thessalonians who had come to faith in Jesus just two years earlier.

He expressed gratitude for their faith in Jesus, in spite of persecution. He encouraged them to stand firm in their faith in the midst of opposition, and to lead devoted Christian lives. He encouraged them to look to the future and the certain return of Jesus.

As we celebrate Jesus our Messiah, Paul calls us out to speak encouraging words of hope, and to keep doing it. It's not a one-time message, but an encouragement for the year ahead. Every day. Word and deed. Words and actions. Doing it together.

So, who will you encourage and share words of hope with? Today, tomorrow and the rest of the week?

Father, bring to my mind those who I should encourage today and throughout this week with words of Your Hope. Guide me, and lead me, your servant...

Wayne Johnson
Executive Director, Tearfund Canada

Day 47: **A tremor in the void**

Sunday 17 April
Easter Sunday

 ‘And surely I am with you
always, to the very end of
the age.’

Matthew 28:20

A tremor in the void

*It began with darkness, a tremor in the void,
the shadow of God moving silently
over the cowering deep.*

*It began with darkness, a serpent's lie believed,
a temptation devoured,
a garden left behind.*

*It began with darkness, a people enslaved,
a murderer in exile,
the angel of death snatching a nation's young.*

*It began with darkness, the terror of war,
the breaking of kings, invasion and oppression
and a God abandoned, then forgotten.*

*It began with darkness, a frightened mother
travelling a dusty road, a stable for a delivery room,
a desperate escape into a foreign land.*

*It began with darkness, the plotting of the pious,
the betrayal of a friend, an arrest in the night,
an unjust trial.*

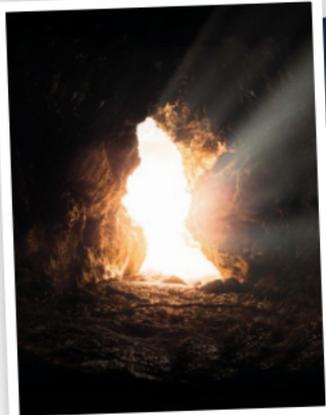
*It began with darkness, an innocent man's arm
forced against a wooden beam, iron nails driven through his
skin tendons ligaments bones
broken body hoisted high*

*the crowd jeering joking sneering spitting,
his mother, weeping.*

*It began with darkness,
an anguished cry, a spear thrust into flesh,
life pouring out, sky turning black.*

*It began with darkness, a tremor in the void,
the eyes of the anointed opening
in the cold heart of a tomb,*

*and then a voice:
'Let there be light.'*



*Happy Easter from
everyone at Tearfund*

May you know the reality of
the risen Christ in your heart.
May Christ's love, peace and
hope rest upon you and your
loved ones, now and always.

Gideon Heugh
Poem is © Gideon Heugh

**‘Then make my joy complete
by being like-minded, having
the same love, being one in
spirit and of one mind.’**

Philippians 2:2

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