

Tamworth Baptist Church

40 Days of Prayer – A Journey through Lent Together



This Lent (Wednesday 1st March to Thursday 13th April) we are being encouraged to take time each day to read a short passage from the Bible, to reflect on it and to spend some time with God in prayer: praise, thanksgiving, confession, asking.

There will also be opportunities each Saturday in Lent to meet together (see below), to share what God has been saying to us and to pray together.

Please do put aside some time to engage with God in this way. It would be really good if as many people as possible in the church were thinking around the same things as we prepare to celebrate Easter. And please do talk with each other about what God is saying to you, about what you are learning, about what you are struggling with, about how you are growing in relationship with Him.

The “readings and reflection” material will be available as a paper document, as a PDF document downloadable from our website, as a daily post on our Facebook page and as a daily email for those who request it. This is to try and make it accessible to as many people as possible.

Saturday Sharing

These will be opportunities to meet together, to share what God has been saying and to pray together.

Each session will be for an hour and at different times over the six weeks of Lent to make it possible for as many people as possible to join in.

4th March: 8:30am - 9:30am

25th March: 11:30am - 12:30pm

11th March: 3pm - 4pm

1st April: 8:30am - 9:30am

18th March: 11:30am - 12:30pm

8th April: 3pm - 4pm

Please note that the sessions on the 4th March and 1st April coincide with the monthly Prayer Breakfast – so breakfast will be available to share afterwards.

Readings and Reflections

<p>Wednesday 1st March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 51:1-10</i></p>	<p><i>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How easy do you find it to recognise and acknowledge your sins to God (v3-4)? ▪ Is there anything that stops you asking God for His forgiveness (v7)? ▪ Are you prepared to pray for a pure heart (v10)?
<p>Thursday 2nd March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Jonah 3:1-10</i></p>	<p><i>When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. (Jonah 3:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do you respond when someone points out to you the reality of sin in your life? ▪ How do you respond to the forgiveness that we receive from God (v10)?
<p>Friday 3rd March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Romans 1:16-17</i></p>	<p><i>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. (Romans 1:16)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there any way in which you – by how you act or what you say – show you are “ashamed of the gospel”? ▪ What does it mean to you to “live by faith” (v17)? ▪ Spend some time rejoicing in the good news of God's salvation
<p>Saturday 4th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Isaiah 58:1-12</i></p>	<p><i>“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? (Isaiah 58:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How are you challenged by this call to caring generously? ▪ Do you sometimes feel that God is not accepting what you are offering Him (v3)? If so, does this passage challenge you in any way about how you are treating others?

<p>Sunday 5th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Genesis</i> <i>2:15-17,</i> <i>3:1-7</i></p>	<p><i>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. (Genesis 3:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear instructions from God (2:17) but the man and woman saw something they wanted and took it. How much do we do the same? ▪ How easily do we listen to voices that speak against what God has said (3:1-5)? ▪ What are some of the consequences of sin (3:7)?
<p>Monday 6th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 32:1-11</i></p>	<p><i>Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. (Psalm 32:1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are you experiencing – right now – the blessing of knowing your sins have been forgiven? If not, have the confidence to come to God and seek His forgiveness. ▪ What trials do we sometimes go through before coming to God and asking for forgiveness (v3-5)? ▪ Are you rejoicing in the righteousness of God (v11)?
<p>Tuesday 7th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Hebrews 4:14-16</i></p>	<p><i>Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How are you encouraged by knowing that Jesus has experienced real temptation just as we do (v15)? ▪ How are you challenged by knowing Jesus did not give in to temptation (v15)? ▪ Rejoice in the privilege of confidently approaching God's throne because of what Jesus has done (v14,16)
<p>Wednesday 8th March</p> <p><i>Read :</i> <i>Matthew</i> <i>18:10-14</i></p>	<p><i>In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish. (Matthew 18:14)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God seeks to bring back those who wander off. Do we need to return to God? ▪ Reflect on the privilege of being kept safe by such a loving Father. ▪ How would you express your appreciation to Him?

<p>Thursday 9th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalm 121:1-8</i></p>	<p><i>My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:2)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From where or from whom are you looking for help (v1)? ▪ How do you respond to the idea of God watching over you (v5) and that He will do this forever (v8)? ▪ How do you reconcile the words of this Psalm with the reality that we all experience difficulties and distress in life?
<p>Friday 10th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Micah 7:18-20</i></p>	<p><i>You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:19)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on the question “Who is a God like you” (v18)? ▪ Even though God delights in mercy, He does become angry (v18). What sort of things do you think would anger God? ▪ How might you rewrite the description (v19) of how God deals with our sins and failures?
<p>Saturday 11th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Luke 7:1-10</i></p>	<p><i>When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.” (Luke 7:9)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How great is our faith in God, how much do we trust in Jesus? ▪ Who are you “pleading earnestly” (v4) to God for, and why?
<p>Sunday 12th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Genesis 12:1-4a</i></p>	<p><i>So Abram went, as the LORD had told him (Genesis 12:4a)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God called Abram and promised to bless him & make him a blessing. And Abram went. Are we willing to respond to God’s call on our lives? ▪ What do you think God may be calling you to do? ▪ What would stop you saying “Yes”?



<p>Monday 13th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Hebrews 3:1-6</i></p>	<p><i>Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. (Hebrews 3:1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why do we sometimes find it difficult to keep our thoughts fixed on Jesus? How can we do so more consistently? ▪ In what ways was Jesus faithful to God (v2)? ▪ What do you think about the idea of being built up together in Jesus Christ (v6)?
<p>Tuesday 14th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 128:1-6</i></p>	<p><i>Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in obedience to him. (Psalm 128:1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We live under God’s blessing – how much do we really appreciate that? ▪ What does it mean to you – today – to walk in obedience to God?
<p>Wednesday 15th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>John 7:53-8:11</i></p>	<p><i>“No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” (John 8:11)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much do we think of our own failings when accusing others (v7)? ▪ Reflect on the privilege of having been forgiven by Jesus and no longer under condemnation ▪ But think also about the call of Jesus to leave sin behind. Are there sins that we need to be leaving behind? ▪ Those who have been forgiven by Jesus are no longer condemned. What an amazing truth!
<p>Thursday 16th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 95:1-7a</i></p>	<p><i>Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. (Psalm 95:1–2)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What reasons do you have to sing and shout and give thanks to God? ▪ How would you write them down to follow on from verses 1 & 2?

<p>Friday 17th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Exodus 16:9-21</i></p>	<p><i>Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. (Exodus 16:21)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much do we rely on yesterday's (or last year's) experience of God instead of receiving from Him each day? ▪ Take time to bring before God the needs of today and seek His blessing and help ▪ Can you testify to God's daily provision as the people of Israel could (v35)?
<p>Saturday 18th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>John 4:1-6</i></p>	<p><i>Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. (John 4:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jesus experienced opposition and – on this occasion – withdrew (vv1-3). How do we respond to those who oppose us? ▪ Jesus – tired from his journey sat down to rest. Do we need to lay any burdens down and to rest?
<p>Sunday 19th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Romans 5:1-11</i></p>	<p><i>But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Even when we were opposed to God, He loved us, sent His Son and brought us back to Himself. How do you respond to that? ▪ What does it mean to you that you have “peace with God” (v1)? ▪ How much do you “glory in your sufferings” (v3) as you see the growth they produce in your life?
<p>Monday 20th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>2 John 1-6</i></p>	<p><i>And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walking in truth, being obedient to God, loving each other. How can we do this more and more? ▪ We show that we love each other by being obedient to Jesus (vv5-6). What do you think about this statement?



<p>Tuesday 21st March</p> <p><i>Read: Psalm 81:1-16</i></p>	<p><i>“But my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me. (Psalm 81:11)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there something we need to hear from God, are we ready to listen to Him? ▪ God warns His people against idols (v9). Is there anything in our lives taking the place that God should have?
<p>Wednesday 22nd March</p> <p><i>Read: Jeremiah 2:4-13</i></p>	<p><i>Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols. (Jeremiah 2:11)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there any area of our lives where we have turned away from following God and followed something / someone else (v5)? ▪ Verses 6&7 describe some of the things God did for His people. How would you describe some of the things God has done for you?
<p>Thursday 23rd March</p> <p><i>Read: Psalm 23:1-6</i></p>	<p><i>Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How has this Psalm provided comfort through some of the difficulties of life? ▪ What dark valleys have you walked through and known God’s presence with you (v4)? ▪ Take time today to rest and rejoice in the provision, protection and guidance of our loving and caring God
<p>Friday 24th March</p> <p><i>Read: Ephesians 5:1-9</i></p>	<p><i>For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (Ephesians 5:8)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can you “walk in the way of love” (v2) today? ▪ Is there anything in our lives that we know is wrong (v3-7) and that we need to get rid of? ▪ What do you think it means to “live as children of light” (v8)?



<p>Saturday 25th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>John 1:1-9</i></p>	<p><i>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does it mean to you that the “true life” came into the world (v9)? ▪ Are there areas of darkness in our lives that we need to open to the light of Jesus? ▪ In what ways can you be a “witness to the light” (v8) today?
<p>Sunday 26th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Ephesians 5:8-14</i></p>	<p><i>Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. (Ephesians 5:11)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can you think of modern-day examples of “fruitless deeds of darkness”? ▪ How can we best resist being involved in them? ▪ Is there anything in our lives that we would be ashamed to have “exposed by the light” (v13)?
<p>Monday 27th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 146:1-10</i></p>	<p><i>I will praise the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. (Psalm 146:2)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do verses 7-9 tell us about the heart of God? ▪ Are you trusting in God or someone / something else (v3)? ▪ What do you have to praise God for (vv1-2, 10)?
<p>Tuesday 28th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Colossians 1:9-14</i></p>	<p><i>For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13–14)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take some time to reflect on what God has done for us ▪ Let’s pray for each other that we will be filled with the wisdom and power of God and live lives worthy of Him
<p>Wednesday 29th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Matthew 9:27-31</i></p>	<p><i>As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, ‘Have mercy on us, Son of David!’ (Matthew 9:27)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For what do we need to receive mercy from God? ▪ Do we believe that Jesus can heal us and bless us – as the two blind men did (v28)? ▪ Let’s be prepared to ask God to strengthen our faith (v29) and to expect to see God doing great things

<p>Thursday 30th March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalm 130:1-8</i></p>	<p><i>If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you. (Psalm 130:3–4)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God doesn't keep a record of our sins – but do we? ▪ What do you think about the idea of being forgiven to serve? ▪ How does it make you feel to know that even in times of deep distress we can call out to God and know that He hears us (vv1-2)?
<p>Friday 31st March</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Revelation 11:15-19</i></p>	<p><i>The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.'</i> (Revelation 11:15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is absolutely certain that one day Jesus will reign over all of the earth – and will be recognised as king. How do you respond to that? ▪ How does knowing that there will be a day of justice and reward (v18) help you cope with the trials and difficulties we experience today?
<p>Saturday 1st April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Luke 24:44-53</i></p>	<p><i>When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. (Luke 24:50–51)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As Jesus returned to heaven He was blessing His followers. Let's continue to experience His blessing as we seek to follow Him ▪ What part can you play in preaching the message of repentance to all nations (v47)? ▪ Let's pray for open minds so that we can more fully understand the scriptures (v45)
<p>Sunday 2nd April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Romans 8:6-11</i></p>	<p><i>The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. (Romans 8:6)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are our lives governed by "the flesh" or "the Spirit"? ▪ What do you think about the idea that those "governed by the flesh" are "hostile to God" (v7)? ▪ Because Christ was raised, we will receive eternal life (v11). How does that make you feel?

<p>Monday 3rd April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Psalms 143:1-12</i></p>	<p><i>I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done. (Psalm 143:5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take some time to reflect on all the good things God has done for you in the past ▪ Do we feel pursued by enemies (v3)? If so, let's call out to God for rescue and deliverance (v9) ▪ Let's give thanks for God's "unfailing love" (v12) towards us
<p>Tuesday 4th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Ephesians 2:1-10</i></p>	<p><i>But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:4–5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God loves us, was merciful to us and made us alive with Christ. Let's rejoice in that ▪ How often do we try to earn God's favour as opposed to resting in His grace (v8)? ▪ What good works do you think God has prepared for you to do (v10)?
<p>Wednesday 5th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Jeremiah 32:36-41</i></p>	<p><i>I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul. (Jeremiah 32:41)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What a wonderful thought – that God rejoices in doing good for His people ▪ Even when God acts in anger against His disobedient people there is always restoration (v37). For what should we be praying for restoration?
<p>Thursday 6th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Philippians 1:1-11</i></p>	<p><i>God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:8)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do we care for each other in the same way that Jesus does? ▪ How much time do we spend thanking God for, and praying for, each other (v3)? ▪ How much are we seeking to live "to the glory and praise of God" (v11)?



<p>Friday 7th April</p> <p><i>Read: Philippians 1:27-30</i></p>	<p><i>Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1:27a)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How important is it to you to conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ? ▪ How much are we frightened by those who oppose what we seek to do for God (v28)? ▪ Are we prepared to suffer for the Christ we believe in (v29)?
<p>Saturday 8th April</p> <p><i>Read: Psalm 31:9-16</i></p>	<p><i>But I trust in you, LORD; I say, 'You are my God.'</i> (Psalm 31:14)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much do we experience the ideas of vv9-10 in our lives? ▪ Whatever experiences we are going through – are we prepared to trust in God and to commit our lives to Him? ▪ What confidence does it give you that “our times” are in God’s hands (v15)?
<p>Sunday 9th April</p> <p><i>Read: Philippians 2:5-11</i></p>	<p><i>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: (Philippians 2:5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do you respond to what Christ Jesus endured for us (vv6-8)? ▪ How much are we prepared to treat each other with the same “mindset” that Christ had for us in sacrificial self-giving? ▪ Are you willing to fully acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ (v11) in your life?
<p>Monday 10th April</p> <p><i>Read: Hebrews 9:11-15</i></p>	<p><i>How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (Hebrews 9:14)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are we living with “cleansed consciences”? ▪ Do we really realise that we have been set free from sin (v15)? ▪ In response to what God has done, how much are we prepared to “serve the living God” (v14)?

<p>Tuesday 11th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>John 12:20-26</i></p>	<p><i>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we would like to see Jesus.’ (John 12:21)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are we so obviously “with Jesus” that people come to us and ask us how they can get to meet Him? ▪ Are we prepared to follow and serve Jesus wherever that takes us (v26)? ▪ How does the idea of the Father honouring those who serve Jesus (v26) motivate you?
<p>Wednesday 12th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>Hebrews 12:1-3</i></p>	<p><i>Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1–2a)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think of faithful believers who have gone before you – how much does their example encourage you in your walk with God? ▪ What things can distract us from perfectly following Jesus? How do we “throw them off”? ▪ Are you keeping your eyes “fixed” on Jesus?
<p>Thursday 13th April</p> <p><i>Read:</i> <i>1 Corinthians 11:23-26</i></p>	<p><i>For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:26)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Even betrayal did not stop Jesus blessing His followers (vv23-25). Think what it must have been like to share in those moments together ▪ We live between the death and return of the Lord Jesus (v26). How important is it that we proclaim His death? ▪ What does it mean to you that Jesus was prepared to sacrifice Himself for you?

