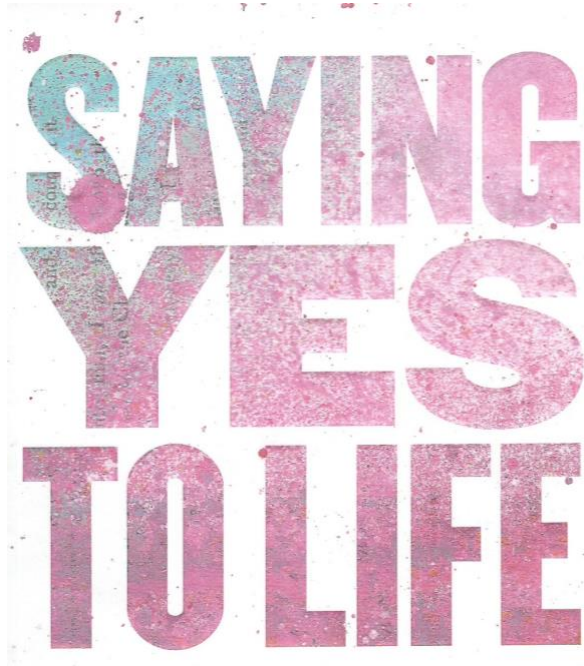




Canford  
PARISH CHURCH

 CANFORD MAGNA CHURCHES



Life Group &  
Bible Study Groups  
Study Booklet

## Introduction

*'The Lord said to Job ....*

*'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.*

*Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!*

*Who stretched a measuring line across it?*

*On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone –*

*while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?*

The irony in the passage above from Job 38:4-7 puts humanity in its rightful place when it comes to the massive questions our global community faces. If we truly believe God created the world we have to also honour the special responsibility we have been given to steward this precious planet. As Job and his friends were humbled after they felt they had all the answers, so we too have to look to God and the Bible for guidance to fix the biggest global emergency currently affecting our world – climate change.

As we begin Lent this weekend our special focus for this next 40 days is going to be Care of God's Creation. This is the Church of England's Lent Campaign for 2020, [#LiveLent](#), and each day involves a small challenge to change our habits. I'd love you all to engage in this study and sermon series – do join a Life Group to get involved. Our [website](#) has got details of all the links to books, videos and resources.

This isn't something that just affects us individually. It affects children and their children, and our brothers and sisters around the world, where the impact of climate change is being felt even more acutely. To quote the Archbishop:

*God has entrusted us to look after his wonderful creation. We are called to care for and honour God's creation as a way of delighting in its Creator. We are also called to care for our brothers and sisters all over the world who face having their families uprooted and their livelihoods destroyed by the effects of climate change. As part of our discipleship to Jesus Christ every single one of us has a responsibility to live a life of stewardship.*

Do engage. Do join in. If we all make small changes it can add up to a big impact on our beautiful world.

Chris Tebbutt



March 2020

## About Canford and our Life Groups

Canford's vision is 'To become a vibrant, overflowing, multi-generational Church growing in the likeness of Christ'. Our values are that we will be 'Authentic, Joyful, Compassionate and Intentional'.

As an evangelical charismatic Anglican church, we place a high priority on Bible-based ministry, together with a commitment to be open and give space for the work of the Holy Spirit to transform our lives.

We believe that "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." and so we see studying the Bible, individually and in groups, a vital part of growing in our faith in Jesus Christ.

Consequently, we strongly advise all our members to join a Life Group. In Life Groups we pray and worship, study the Bible, discuss and debate, enjoy fellowship and mutual pastoral support. We also encourage Life Groups to think about supporting one of our Mission Partners in prayer and practical ways. We also see belonging to a Life Group as a sign of unity within the church. There will be times when we are encouraged to study and work through issues together.

If you are not in a Life Group, or Bible Study Group, and you'd like to be, please have a word our Life Group co-ordinator, Sandra Webster,  
[churchwarden@canfordparish.org](mailto:churchwarden@canfordparish.org)

There is not a mass of information in each study – the reason being that we want the Holy Spirit to prompt discussion at each Life Group meeting, rather than give each member information overload. If you want more background think about getting one of the excellent books listed in the next section. But remember, the best commentary is the Bible itself, especially if you pray and ask God to reveal his precious Word to you through the Scriptures.

The suggested format for each week is

**Welcome** – a warm up exercise or reflection to begin the evening – this may be with refreshments or you may have those at the end.

**Worship** – it is good to worship together – prayer and praise unites us the body of Christ.

**Word** – the core to each of our Life Group evenings is our Bible Study. Through it we not only gain knowledge but also hear other insights from other group members. These questions are merely there to stimulate your thoughts rather than setting a limit on the true meaning of the Scripture.

**Witness** – having learned something new, how is the Holy Spirit prompting you to apply it in your everyday life? How has this study changed you to become more like Jesus Christ?

## Recommended books

Saying Yes to Life, Ruth Valerio, SPCK

[#LiveLent](#), available hardcopy and as an App, SPCK

Genesis, Walter Bruggemann, Interpretation

The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17, Victor Hamilton, NICOT

Genesis 1-11, JW Rogerson, Sheffield Academic Press

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## 1 March      Let there be light      Genesis 1:1-5

### Welcome

Welcome all the members to the group. Talk about how the daily readings are going. (If you haven't already started, you can look [here](#) to find the App or call into the office for a hardcopy booklet). If you are a new group go round the group just introducing yourselves.

### Worship

Invite the Holy Spirit in prayer. There may be differences in opinion on Scripture, the urgency of Climate Change, and our Christian response.

Sing Songs of Fellowship 3-1419 'Light of the World' or watch the video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MmRGSEG2LM>

### Word

[Read Genesis 1:1-5](#)

Watch the introductory 14 minute [video](#) to the series.

1. In the book, Wangari Maathai remarked, 'One is left to wonder whether conceiving of God as the origination of all that is would make people of faith recognize that they have a responsibility to be the custodians of God's creation and, in the process, their own survival'. Take time to reflect on this. What place does God as creator have in your faith and in that of your church? How might it make a difference if that understanding was more strongly emphasized?
2. Do you agree with the statement made by Chris in Sunday's opening sermon, 'There is an inextricable link between creation and salvation? How does Scripture support your argument?'
3. Where does light feature in your own life? Can you share any particular experiences that have given you a new appreciation of light?

### Witness

All of us need to make changes if the climate crisis is to be averted. What changes have you made over the past decade and what further changes would you consider making in the future, bearing in mind we all have to halve our emission of CO2 in the next ten years if we are to reach the climate target of net zero and 1.5 degrees by 2050?

What changes would you like to see our church make?

### Light of the world

You stepped down into darkness

Opened my eyes, Let me see

Beauty that made this heart adore you

Hope of a life spent with you

*Here I am to worship*

*Here I am to bow down*

*Here I am to say that you're my God*

*You're altogether lovely*

*Altogether worthy*

*Altogether wonderful to me*

King of all days  
So highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven above  
Humbly you came to the earth you created  
All for love's sake became poor

## 8 March      Let the waters be separated      Genesis 1:6-8

### Welcome

Welcome to week 2 of the study. How is the App or [#LiveLent](#), book going? This week we are challenged about our use of, care for, and sustainability of water. Also, about how we often take water for granted but others have to walk miles for even the smallest drop.

### Worship

Do you remember that children's song 'Have you heard the raindrops'?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3OQEVBmndA>

It's an incredibly simple and some may say childish song, but it does connect us with the idea of our need for physical water with the need for all humanity to connect to God through Jesus, the living water of life.

Pray for those areas that are experiencing drought around the world, and also for those experiencing flooding in the UK at the moment. Pray also that the Living Water will flow into those parts of our nation parched by apathy to the Gospel.

### Word

Read Genesis 1:6-8

Watch the 11 minute video for this week where Ruth Valerio interviews the Archbishop of Cape Town, an area that has experienced severe water shortage.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQ5SqG1Di7o>

Use the interview to explore issues surrounding water justice in parts of the world experiencing climate crisis induced water poverty.

Reflect on the passages referred to in Wendy's sermon on Sunday, particularly Ezekiel 47:1-12 (get someone to read it out). Water is used as a sign of the coming of the Lord. Why is water such a powerful symbol of the source of fruitfulness and healing? Reflect on the second reading we had in church on Sunday, John 4:1-12.

Water is there at the beginning of the Bible, and also at the end. To end this section on God's Word, read Revelation 22:1-5.

### Witness

Wendy spoke about the action they had taken lately in response to the use of water in their home.

What personal action will you take to look after the world's precious resource of water and those that depend on it?

How could we as a church or as individuals support people in countries affected by poor water quality or shortages? E.g. Myra's Wells in Burkina Faso <https://www.myraswells.org>

### Water of life

Have you heard the raindrops drumming on the rooftops'?

Have you heard the raindrops dripping on the ground?

Have you heard the raindrops splashing in the streams

And running to the rivers all around?

*There's water, water of life, Jesus gives us the water of life;*

*There's water, water of life, Jesus gives us the water of life;*

There's a busy workman digging in the desert,  
Digging with a spade that flashes in the sun:

Growing into the likeness of Christ...

Soon there will be water rising in the wellshaft,  
Spilling from the bucket as it comes.  
[chorus]

Nobody can live who hasn't any water,  
When the land is dry then nothing much grows;  
Jesus gives us life if we drink the living water,  
Sing it so that everybody knows.  
[chorus]



## 15 March Let the land produce vegetation Genesis 1:9-13

### Welcome

This week the challenge is about how we treat woodland and vegetation and what we can learn from Day 3 of Creation. What is your favourite tree, and why? The challenge is that in the same way all vegetation was all seed bearing.

### Worship

Begin by singing that well known hymn 'All things bright and beautiful'.

Pray about the current health situation developing in this country and across the world (Covid-19 virus) and for wise government here and abroad. Pray for elderly members of our congregation and those who have experienced bereavement in the recent months. Thank God for the health and strength we are enjoying.

### Word

Read Genesis 1:9 - 13.

Watch the next video in the series.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=12&v=vVqXJNW1MR0&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=12&v=vVqXJNW1MR0&feature=emb_logo)

How has your life been impacted by deforestation farming? Have you visited a farm in the last year, or your ancestors had farming connections? Discuss the description (verse 11) of all the vegetation and trees being 'seed bearing'. How does that have a bearing on us?

Read Revelation 22:1- 4 What link or contrast do you see with the creation story in Genesis 1:1 – 13 and this passage if any?

Read John 15:1 - 8. The Vine produces fruit and we are expected to do the same. What 3 things are required?

### Witness

What can we do to help communities impacted by deforestation? Look up on the internet those Christian organisations helping churches in areas affected.

Also, thinking about our neighbours closer to home, how can we help those in our church and beyond who might have health issues during this difficult time of Coronavirus.

#### o *Refrain:*

All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful:  
The Lord God made them all.

2. Each little flow'r that opens,  
Each little bird that sings,  
He made their glowing colors,  
He made their tiny wings.
3. The purple-headed mountains,  
The river running by,  
The sunset and the morning  
That brightens up the sky.

5. The tall trees in the greenwood,  
The meadows where we play,  
The rushes by the water,  
To gather every day.

6. He gave us eyes to see them,  
And lips that we might tell  
How great is God Almighty,  
Who has made all things well.

4. The cold wind in the winter,  
The pleasant summer sun,  
The ripe fruits in the garden,  
He made them every one.