

## Devotional Reading Scheme:

### **BOOK I (1 - 41)**

**Thu Feb 20<sup>th</sup>: Introduction** (including Psalms 1 & 2).

#### **Week I:**

**Fri:** Psalms 5, 3, 4

**Sat:** Psalms 8, 6, 7

**Sun:** Psalms 9, 10, 11

**Mon:** Psalms 12, 13, 14

**Tue:** Psalms 15, 16, 17

**Wed:** Psalms 18, 19 and 119v1-8

**Thu:** Psalms 20 and 21 (daytime)

**Thu Feb 27<sup>th</sup>: Orientation & Disorientation** Ps 119v9-16, 22,23,24

#### **Week II:**

**Fri:** Psalms 25, 26, 27

**Sat:** Psalms 28, 29, 30

**Sun:** Psalms 31, 119v17-24, 32

**Mon:** Psalms 33, 119v25-32, 34

**Tue:** Psalms 35, 119v33-40, 36

**Wed:** Psalms 37, 119v41-48, 38

**Thu:** Psalms 39 and 119v49-56 (daytime)

**Thu Mar 6<sup>th</sup>: New Orientation**, Ps 40, 119v57-64 and 41.

### **BOOK II (42 - 72)**

#### **Week III:**

**Fri:** Psalms 42, 43, 44

**Sat:** Psalms 45, 46, 47

**Sun:** Psalms 48, 49, 50

**Mon:** Psalms 51, 52, 53

**Tue:** Psalms 54, 55, 56

**Wed:** Psalms 57, 58, 59

**Thu:** Psalms 60 and 61 (daytime)

**Thu Mar 13<sup>th</sup>: Calm in the Storm**, Ps 62, 63, 119v65-72, 64.

#### **Week IV:**

**Fri:** Psalms 65, 66, 67

**Sat:** Psalms 68, 119v73-80, 69

**Sun:** Psalms 71, 70, 72

### **BOOK III (73-89)**

**Mon:** Psalms 73, 74, 75

**Tue:** Psalms 76, 77, 78v1-31

**Wed:** Psalms 78v32-55, 78v56-72, 79

**Thu:** Psalms 80 and 81. (daytime)

**Thu Mar 20<sup>th</sup>: The God of Justice**, Ps 82, 83, 119v81-88 and 84.

#### **Week V:**

**Fri:** Psalms 85, 86, 87

**Sat:** Psalms 88, 89v1-18, 89v19-52

### **BOOK IV (90 - 106)**

**Sun:** Psalms 90, 91, 92

**Mon:** Psalms 93, 94, 95

**Tue:** Psalms 96, 97, 98

**Wed:** Psalms 99 & 100, 101, 102

**Thu:** Psalms 103 and 104 (daytime)

**Thu Mar 27<sup>th</sup>: Remembering and Hope**, 119v89-96, Ps 105 & 106

### **BOOK V (107 – 150)**

#### **Week VI:**

**Fri:** Psalms 107, 119v97-104, 108

**Sat:** Psalms 109, 110, 111

**Sun:** Psalms 112, 113, 114

**Mon:** Psalms 115, 117+119v105-112, 116

**Tue:** Psalms 118, 119v113-120, 119v121-128

**Wed:** Psalms 120&121, 122&123, 124&125

**Thu:** Psalms 126&127 and 128&129 (daytime)

**Thu Apr 3<sup>rd</sup>: Pilgrimage**, Ps 130&131, 132, 133&134

#### **Week VII:**

**Fri:** Psalms 135, 137, 136

**Sat:** Psalms 138, 119v129-136, 139

**Sun:** Psalms 144, 119v137-144 145

**Mon:** Psalms 140, 119v145-152, 141

**Tue:** Psalms 142, 119v153-160, 143

**Wed:** Psalms 146, 119v161-168, 147

**Thu:** Psalms 148 and 149 (daytime)

**Thu Apr 10<sup>th</sup>: With all Creation**, 119v169-176 &. Psalm 150.

### **A Daily Pattern:**

As you will see from the devotional reading scheme, there are usually three psalms allocated to each day (but usually only two on the day of the evening session); one for morning, daytime and evening. In some small way this reflects the 'hours' of worship in religious communities.

You might like to make one of these times your main time of prayer, when the suggestion is that your prayer time might include:

Silence.  
An Opening Prayer  
The Psalm  
A Bible Reading  
A Hymn  
Prayers for Others  
The Lord's Prayer

You can find resources for such a pattern of prayer in, for example, the Methodist Prayer Handbook. At other times in the day, you may simply use the Psalm at the meal table, either alone or with others.

### **Translations and Renderings of the Psalms:**

Apart from the usual choice of bibles (New International Version, New Revised Standard Version, Good News and King James being the most common), you may also find Jim Cotter's 'Unfolding' of the Psalms helpful. Thirty six of the Psalms are given a more accessible and congregational form in the Iona Abbey Worship Book.

### **Further Reading:**

'Psalms', Brueggemann and Bellinger, New Cambridge Commentary, CUP 2014.

'A Story of the Psalms', V.Steven Parrish, OSB, Minnesota 2003

'Spirituality of the Psalms', Brueggemann, Fortress, Minneapolis 2002

'The Psalms', Eaton, Continuum, London/New York 2005.

'Out of the silence... into the silence', Jim Cotter, Cairns Pubs, 2010

'Living with the Psalms,' John.L.Bell, SPCK 2020

## **PRAYING THE PSALMS**

### **Why Pray the Psalms?** For many reasons...

- Jesus did. They are the prayer book of the Jewish people and form the heart of the Hebrew Bible.
- Jesus' disciples have. They quickly found a core place in Christian worship and prayer, and still to this day constitute the backbone of the liturgy in religious orders.
- By internalising them through frequent use, they become part of us and available to us (as they were for Jesus).
- They insist on the link between faith and justice; like so much of the bible they are written from the standpoint of the oppressed.
- They embrace every shade of human emotion and experience, and thus convey faith in a God who is fully engaged with our humanity.
- They give us words to use when we have none ourselves; and for every kind of personal and pastoral context;
- They are a treasure of our faith tradition which we have to offer to others, in times when many are hungry for spiritual experience and practice.

### **How to Pray with the Psalms:**

The way the Psalms are prayed in religious communities is:

- Quietly – Methodists have a habit of 'belting them out'!
- With a pause in the middle of each verse. This respects the 'parallel pattern' of the Hebrew poetry.
- Thus, as Jim Cotter says, 'Out of the silence... into the silence.'
- Finally, for those who wish to pray their way through all the Psalms over the course of our 8 sessions, this will be quite demanding. You would need to find time in the morning, during the daytime and in the evening...