

Soul care through Lent.

At the start of his ministry, Jesus was baptised; God declared Jesus his Son, and the Holy Spirit came on him like a dove. What a high point! But then Jesus went into the desert for 40 days—a hard and long time in which he had to depend totally on God.

We remember this season of preparation as 'Lent', over the 40 days leading up to Easter. We encourage all of us to use this time for 'Soul Care,' preparing to serve God by learning to depend on Him again and hearing how God wants us to live.

These notes and activities are based on the five habits of well-being. Let's use them together to connect afresh with God and each other.

The colouring poster gives suggestions of activities or starters for discussion. Each day, or when you are able, choose an activity, talk about it and colour that section to show you have done it.

The Scottish Bible Society also offers downloadable 'Wonder Walks' free to use for Easter, based in Mark's Gospel: <https://www.scottishbiblesociety.org/shop/digital/wonder-walks-mark>

We pray that some of these ideas may spark creative moments, conversations with each other, and times of listening to God. We trust you will have fun as you explore together, pray for each other, and serve the people around you.

The five habits of wellbeing are:

Be Active:

Being physically active is known to improve our mental well-being. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, so we can honour God in the way we use our bodies.

Keep learning:

Keeping the mind active increases our sense of well-being. Discipleship is a life-long way of learning with Jesus.

Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said, "Come to me all who are weary. Come and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in Spirit, and I will give you rest."

Take notice:

- of our emotions, of what we can and can't control
- of what we can be thankful for
- of our place in God's wonderful world

Philippians 4:6-7 Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

Connect:

1 John 4:7-8 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. God **is** love.

Connect and spend time with God, and allow him to enrich our connections with other people. Connect with our feelings and bring them to God.

Give:

Our God is a generous God who blesses us so that we may bless others. Giving to others is known to build our own sense of well-being.

1 John 4:19 says, " We love because God first loved us.

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus summarises the commandments as "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. And love your neighbour as yourself."

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. God **is** love.