



urban expression  
creative church planting in the inner city



Praying our Values  
Prayers for UE Daily Liturgy



# Praying our Values

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Urban Expression

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Urban Expression is an urban mission agency that recruits, equips, deploys and networks self-financing teams, pioneering creative and relevant expression of the Christian church in under-churched areas of the inner city, outer estates and marginalised communities.

Our 21 core values are gathered under the headings *relationship, humility and creativity*, together with the 7 commitments that flow from these values.

'Praying our Values' provides a month's worth of prayers, readings and exercises that help us to reflect more deeply on these values so that they become part of who we are.

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# Introduction

'Praying our Values' is a 28-day cycle of prayers, readings and exercises based around the core values and commitments of Urban Expression. It can be used in various ways:

- For personal prayer or prayer in small groups
- Regularly or occasionally
- During one calendar month or for any 28-day period

There are five cycles of readings that can be used as part of this daily liturgy. These focus on biblical texts that explore these themes, ranging from Genesis to Revelation.

Those who use 'Praying our Values' daily during a calendar month will, of course, find that most months have additional days 29, 30 and/or 31. Additional material is provided for those days.

We welcome feedback on this material. If you notice any errors or have suggestions that might enhance it, please let us know. If you are interested in developing a further cycle of readings, please contact us to discuss this.

Feedback: [rachel@urbanexpression.org.uk](mailto:rachel@urbanexpression.org.uk)

# Day 1

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

## Readings

Silence

## Relationship

We believe that, in Jesus, God is revealed locally, and that we should be committed to our local community or relational network and active members of it.

*Call to mind where you live.*

*Imagine that you're in a balloon floating over the roofs and parks, people and traffic, houses and flats.*

*Hear the sounds of where you live; breathe its air; feel its life and stay with this for as long as you like.*

*This is where God has invited you to live.*

*Notice what part of the neighbourhood is uppermost in your mind. What's calling out for transformation today? Silently offer that to God.*



God

we come before you just as we are  
with all our frailties and vulnerabilities,  
our baggage and prejudices,  
our hopes and dreams, our life and love,  
and we offer it all to you.

Take all we are and hope to be.  
Use us here where you've brought us  
and help us to be like Jesus.  
Use our hands, our eyes, our ears,  
our words, our silences,  
our work, our rest,  
our hearts and minds,  
and let your kingdom come in the lives of all who live  
next door and round about,  
in this street and square,  
in the whole neighbourhood.

Confirm in us your invitation  
to be your people here.  
Deepen our commitment to it.  
In our experience of the  
heights and depths of life here  
help us to know your surging and renewing love.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 2

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

### Readings

Silence

### Relationship

We believe that the gospel works through relationships and that serving God consists largely in building life-giving relationships with others.

*Call to mind the relationships in your life that you carry in your heart today - family, friends, neighbours, your church community - and as you focus on each of them, imagine God's arms surrounding and holding them.*

*Are any particular relationships calling for your attention?*

*Offer your thoughts and feelings about them to God, or simply pray, 'Lord, have mercy.' confident in the loving work of the God who knows you and the relationship in a way which does not demand words of explanation.*

### God

thank you for all those that you've placed in our paths,  
for the sorted and the centred,  
for the muddled and bemused,  
for the broken and the fractured,  
for the searching and confused.

In all our relationships  
let the piercing light of your love  
infuse us and flow through us,  
challenging the depths of the darkness,  
offering the hope of new beginnings,  
providing warmth where hearts are cold,  
giving strength where wills are weak.



In us and through us  
let all those we meet today  
be touched by your Spirit,  
and may we see your presence  
reflected in the faces of friends and strangers.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 3

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Relationship

We recognise that Christian faith is a journey and we are committed to helping people move forward, wherever they are at present.

*Reflect on all those in your life today. Where are they on their faith journey? What do they struggle with?*

*What do you struggle with?*

*What have they taught you of God?*

*Where has God been present in your interactions?*

*Hold them quietly in your heart and imagine what life would be like for them if God was more fully in their lives. What prayer does that image call from you? Offer it to God.*

*Now reflect on your faith at the moment. What would change for you if God was more fully present to you and in you? Is that a change that you desire? Offer your response to God.*

Our God,  
we are part of that great crowd of people  
who are learning what it means to abide in your love.  
We thank you that we are not alone on our journey,  
but from the beginning of human experience,  
right through Scripture,  
right through the stories of faithful people,  
you have invited us to travel with you  
in this journey of salvation.



We recognise the journey takes us through desert  
landscapes, sometimes dotted with oases, sometimes arid,  
dry and forbidding, as far as the eye can see;  
through beautiful landscapes  
filled with water, trees, sky and hills,  
where all creation cries Alleluia!  
through urban landscapes  
noisy with change  
yet a place where nothing really changes.

We offer you our journey and pray that, while you lead us  
to where we need to go,  
you'll help us to be fully present today to your Spirit,  
ever beckoning,  
ever calling,  
ever inviting  
to life in all its fullness.

And we offer to you the faith journey of those we know  
praying for them your peace and hope,  
and an ever deepening awareness  
of your love and life.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 4

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Relationship

We focus on under-churched areas and neglected people, trying to find ways of communicating Jesus appropriately to those most frequently marginalised, condemned and abused by society

*Who are the most despised in your neighbourhood?*

*What label does the rest of the neighbourhood give to them?*

*In your work, recall the faces of individuals from that group who you've spoken with or spent time with.*

*What are their names?*

*Created uniquely by God in God's holy image, what has this person, or group of people, taught you about Jesus?*

*Imagine what their life would look like if they knew good news and the one who brought it?*

*What action does this reflection call from you? Offer that to God.*

God, we pray for all Christians in this place  
that, as yeast in the dough, you will  
use us to be a transforming presence.  
We confess our own labelling  
of those who are not like us;  
our standing apart from strangers  
as we surround ourselves with friends.

We are sorry for the ways in which  
we scaffold up the walls that divide us  
and pray that you'll give us a vision  
of this community fully reconciled, redeemed  
with the rubble of walls building  
places of meeting and eating together.



We pray for all those who are most neglected  
and most unloved;  
those used as scapegoats for the  
deeper sin which besets us all.  
Help us to challenge wrong attitudes and  
destructive behaviours  
and in our churches to create communities  
which are truly inclusive, filled with justice  
and peace  
and flowing with life-giving love.

And God,  
where the old ways of introducing people to  
Jesus seem to have lost their power, ignite  
our imaginations and give us courage to share  
his life in ways that truly connect, truly  
empower, truly transform.  
We ask for this, because we have  
no-one else to turn to.  
You are our God and we are your people.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 5

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Relationship

We challenge the trend of some Christians moving out of the cities and encourage Christians to relocate to the inner-city neighbourhoods, outer housing estates and other marginal communities.

*Write a psalm of lament for the reasons why Christians move out of cities and then a psalm of hope for the inner city, celebrating its unique gift and challenge, affirming God's presence in all that it holds.*

God our hope,  
you have called your people  
to live lives of fullness  
throughout the world.

We pray today for brothers and sisters  
who find it hard to live that calling  
in the inner cities and who,  
wearied or frightened,  
crowded out or isolated,  
have clashing aspirations  
and seek what they don't have  
somewhere else.

We pray for those facing questions today of  
whether to stay or go  
and ask that you guide them in their discerning,  
fill them with your love  
and give them a vision for  
your city redeemed.

Let your people come here and grow here  
and may we be the community they need  
for them to flourish and fulfil the potential  
that you have given each of them.

Let your church grow!  
Let your people be free!  
Let your kingdom come!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 6

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

### Readings

Silence

### Relationship

We believe in doing things with and not just for communities, sharing our lives with others and learning from others who share their lives with us.

*Reflect on an idea you've had for the wider community. Hold it before God. Think about the people or groups of people in the neighbourhood who share the vision for a healed community. Are there any groups calling for our special attention today? Groups we could work with creatively? Groups we could work in partnership with that could make a new idea flourish? Groups that we've never worked with before? Groups that we know well? Offer the potential for synergy to God.*

God our shaper,  
thank you for calling us into community  
in this community.  
Thank you for its colour and vibrancy,  
its texture and life.  
Thank you that we can't do all that you've asked of us on our own.  
But it's together with all the people here  
that we're asked to build your commonwealth  
of justice, peace and fullness of life.

We offer to you our hopes for this community  
and name them before you now.

*(pause)*



We pray for partners in this community  
with whom those hopes could be made real  
and name them before you now

*(pause)*

We pray that you will take from us any pride,  
any assumption that we know best,  
and that you will give hearts open  
to receive your word and life  
from the friend and stranger we will meet today.

In all our work, keep us humble,  
conscious that without you we are nothing  
and without our neighbours we are a clique.

Bless our partnerships and our dreams  
and let your kingdom come!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 7

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Relationship

We see teamwork, networking and mutual accountability as vital, recognising that individuals and churches need each other.

*Are there situations you're facing, or questions in your mind that could be helped by sharing them with the team today? What's the core issue that you're concerned about? How are you feeling about it? How will you phrase it?*

*Are there things other team members are facing that you want to hold before God today? Is there something you can do to encourage them or help them? How can working together and mutual accountability be made real today?*

Thank you God  
for bringing us together,  
working as a team,  
held by a vision,  
committed to a way  
of living and working  
in which Jesus is known.

We readily confess our need  
of support and encouragement,  
of honest listening and talking,  
of friendship and laughter,  
of each other.

Bless each of our relationships,  
and help them to reflect  
the depth of relating  
known in the holy Trinity -  
mutual, flowing, life-giving, abundant, free.



God, we're human enough to know  
that sometimes relationships become strained.  
Wherever this is true for us,  
may your reconciling Spirit  
work among us,  
repairing and deepening  
our mutual understanding  
respect and love.

God thank you for this team!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 8

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We recognise the importance of taking risks and the demands of urban mission, and we believe that it is acceptable to fail.

*Hold in your heart something that's difficult for you today.*

*What risks are you invited to take with this situation?*

*What are the possible outcomes?*

*What would the situation look like if the best outcome happened?*

*God does not demand that we are successful, but that we are faithful and real. Let us own again the glorious permission to fail!*

*Acknowledge the difficult situation and how you feel about it before God.*



God our encourager,  
you know the many things in which we're involved.  
We offer to you  
our frailty and fragility,  
our fears and inadequacies,  
and pray that you'll use them all  
to build up your church and world

Sometimes we retreat onto safe ground,  
keeping our borders well defended,  
our protocols and policies in sharp relief.  
And in doing that,  
we forget the tender hearts  
of the people around us  
and their need of your presence in us.

Whatever we're facing today,  
give us courage to be creative,  
and take the risk of  
opening our hearts and minds  
to your pioneering Spirit,  
recognising that you might call us  
to do something new for you  
and this neighbourhood.

Help us know that  
no defence mechanism,  
however secure,  
can protect us from  
danger and failure here.  
But assure us in our deepest places  
that we walk into today  
with you before us, beside us and behind us.  
And you, our God, are all we need.

Thank you God.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 9

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We value courage, creativity and diversity as we try to discover relevant ways of being church in different contexts.

*Reflect on the patterns of living expressed in your church community.  
How typical are they of patterns lived out in the wider community?  
What are the differences?  
What can you celebrate?  
What is calling a question from you?  
Name one new thing that would help your church to become a truer  
community of God's people?*

So much, Lord, so much!  
Talents, gifts, personalities, temperaments;  
Histories, stories, influences, backgrounds;  
All here in this neighbourhood,  
this street, this church.  
So much to hold that it weighs us down;  
so much to unlock that it's potential is  
overwhelming ;  
so much to discover that it knows no boundary.

God,  
help us to receive this diverse community as  
your gift to us;  
your creativity to celebrate,  
your people to love,  
your kingdom come.



And help us to see it as you do,  
attentive to the parts that need mending,  
the signs of your coming,  
the glimpses of redemption.

And help us to say 'Yes!' at the tops of our voices  
to all that you ask us to be and to do.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 10

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We believe that questions and theological reflection are important as we learn together and so discern the way forward.

*Note down the questions that have been raised for you in the last month.*

*Offer them to God in prayer*

*Is any one demanding for your attention over the others?*

*What's God's invitation to you in the question?*

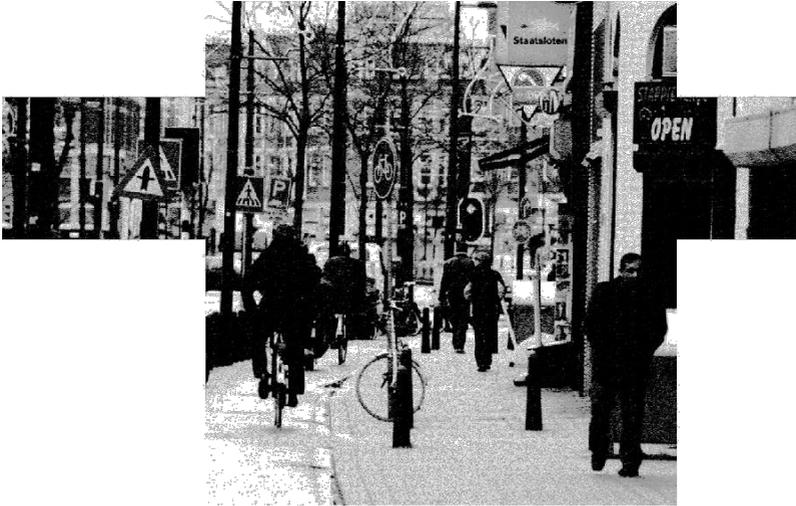
*Are there steps that you need to take as a result of it?*

*As you share this process and reflect with others in your church and team  
- are there implications for your common life?*

Our God,  
you call us to a cycle of life  
that involves growth, pruning, renewal and new growth.  
As we engage our minds with your calling of us  
we meet people and situations, issues and questions,  
that disturb us, provoke us, challenge us, deepen us.

Sometimes the questions can scare us,  
as they rattle our cages and raise anxieties.  
Sometimes the questions can thrill us,  
as they make possible new things, new directions.

Lord in your mercy,  
hold the questions we're living with today.  
Infuse us with your peace  
and help us to work with them,  
so that we become more truly yours, more truly ourselves  
and more truly followers of Jesus.



Thank you for the people who help us to reflect well,  
and those who give us the courage to deal with the consequences.  
Thank you for our fragile communities  
in whom you live  
and grace with your hope.

Jesus invited us to a full and overflowing life.  
Today we again gladly accept that invitation.  
Grow us, prune us, whatever it takes,  
for your commonwealth of love to be known.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 11

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We aim to be catalysts, encouraging and releasing creativity in both the church and the local neighbourhood as we seek and share God in urban areas.

Where have you been moved by creation recently?

Where was it?

What were the distinctive shapes, scents and colours there?

Is there any act of human creativity that has inspired you?

What was it that touched your heart?

God we are alive and we thank you!

Your creative heart beats around us  
in colour and sound, sight and scent.

We are blown away by your vision,

awed by your imagination

which is so much bigger than we could dream of.

But you have planted in us an imagination that can soar to the  
highest places and release in us gifts well-hidden and under-used.

Our God,

let your Spirit unlock in us

new ways of thinking, of being,

of behaving, of creating,

and give us the eyes to see potential

in ourselves,

in others,

in our neighbourhood,

in our families.

And use us all to make the world

more beautiful,

more whole,

more integrated,  
more centred,  
more lovely,  
just as Jesus did.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 12

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We believe in discouraging dependency and developing indigenous leadership within maturing churches that will have the capacity to sustain and reproduce themselves.

*Visualise people in your church community*

*Which of them have been catalysts for community growth?*

*Who has been influential in recent decisions?*

*How is leadership being exercised?*

*Think of one thing that's happened involving others in the church for which you can give thanks.*



Loving Lord,  
you built your church with a mixed bag of people,  
gentle and impulsive, schooled and uneducated,  
men, women, young and old,  
and somehow through it all  
you formed a community,  
charged with loving the enemy,  
welcoming the stranger,  
living with values that others laugh at,  
and all this so that the world might be redeemed.

We are part of that mixed bag  
And, while we struggle with its clashes,  
we rejoice in its diversity  
and we're committed to it  
because we've seen you at work  
doing impossible things  
in this crucible of love.

Help us to be attentive to those around us who can be  
holders of hope,  
makers of peace,  
catalysts for change  
who can help shape our future life in good ways.

And help us, Lord,  
to help them be all that you call them to be.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 13

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We are excited that God can be discovered in the urban context and commit ourselves to explore various forms of prayer and worship that are appropriate here.

*Reflect on the times of prayer that you've experienced recently.*

*What has moved you?*

*What has made you react negatively? Why?*

*Where has God been in the experience?*

*Is today the day for changing your pattern of prayer to something different?*

*A day held in silence*

*A day for a prayer walk*

*A day for being attentive to God in the strangers we meet*

*A day for praying with music*

*A day for journaling/painting/composing/dancing*

*A day for .....(feel free to fill in the gap)*

God of the city,  
You are here in  
the lives of the people,  
the bricks of the buildings,  
the pavements we walk on,  
the scrub ground we pass by,  
the trees in the park,  
the voices in the market,  
the hopes and dreams of all our neighbours.  
We thank you for that.

Give us the eyes to see you at work  
and minds that can quickly glimpse  
your growing kingdom.

And when we see it,  
help us to sing an Alleluia!  
A jazzed up, street sourced Alleluia!  
A grating, soaring, garage Alleluia!  
A rap, urban, Bangra Alleluia!

You are the beginning and end of our worship  
and we want to worship you  
honestly and boldly.  
Help us to work out ways of worship  
and prayer that aren't borrowed ways,  
but ways that our community,  
our environment  
our churches  
are aching to express.

Give us eyes to see and ears to hear.  
Alleluia!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 14

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Creativity

We realise that God's Spirit blows freely and so we will not assume our work should continue indefinitely.

*Where have you known the Spirit's movement recently?  
Is there any aspect of your work which calls for more time from you?  
Where's the spark in what you do?  
Is that God saying 'be more attentive to this in your life'?  
What aspect of your work is life-denying?  
Is God inviting you to move on from it?  
Hold all this before God in prayer.*

Living God,  
thank you that you don't leave us simply maintaining  
ways of worshipping,  
ways of meeting,  
ways of being your people,  
but that your invitation is to an abundant, overflowing life.  
Help us to see our lives in seasons  
when there is a time  
to sow and reap,  
to plant and establish,  
to harvest and enjoy,  
to prune and wait.  
What we do is all yours.

You are our guide, our leader,  
our protector, our nourisher.  
You build up and you tear down.  
Help us not be so attached to what we do  
that we miss your voice saying  
'Enough!' or 'Move on'.



But in all that we do,  
and in your mercy Lord,  
help us to hear your voice saying  
'Well done, my good and faithful servant.'  
Because when times are hard,  
we need to know that this matters to you.

And it's only because all these people  
and all their situations matter to you  
that we are here at all.  
Bless us Lord, we pray.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 15

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We acknowledge our dependence on God and affirm our continual need of prayer and God's empowering Spirit.

*Bring to mind all that God has done in your life recently.*

*What's your response?*

*Who has been praying for you?*

*Bless them with a prayer.*

*Rest in God's presence for a while*



Our brother Jesus,  
without you we are nothing,  
we can do nothing,  
create nothing.  
You are the vine,  
we are the branches.  
And you call us your friends  
and invite us to dwell in your love.

When life gets busy  
and the demands never-ending,  
we find that hard.  
It's hard to be still  
and to stop our minds from whirring,  
and thinking about the next  
thing that needs doing.  
But we say again that we need you  
we yearn to be closer to you  
we long to deepen our understanding  
and our following.  
In spite of the noise in our lives  
hear the quiet convictions  
of our hearts  
and lead us on.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 16

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

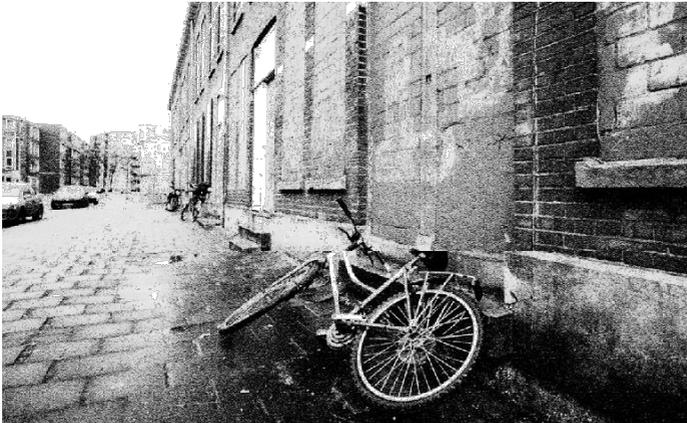
We believe that all people are loved by God, regardless of age, gender, education, class, ethnicity, sexuality or physical/mental health and that God works through all believers - and others beside.

*Call to mind people you've met this week.*

*Picture their faces.*

*Remember the conversations you held with them  
or the impressions they left on you.*

*And hold them before God.*



Holy God,  
the Bible is filled with stories of you  
working through  
the unlikely,  
the despised,  
the stranger,  
the enemy,  
and you constantly shocked  
those who were called your own  
and offended their sensibilities.  
And for that we thank you!

When we get precious about  
who's in and who's out,  
remind us again of our role models:  
Abraham and Sarah, the travellers  
Shiphrah and Puah, the Hebrew midwives  
Ruth and Boaz, the boundary breakers  
Cyrus and Darius, the faithful outsiders  
and all those restored by Jesus  
to their full humanity,  
and all those in the history of your people  
who have defied convention  
in subversive ways.

In Jesus you showed us how to love  
those who are not like us  
but who are adored by you.  
Help us to love our neighbours too  
and to see you reflected in their faces.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 17

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We respect others working alongside us in the inner city and are grateful for the foundations laid by the many who have gone before us.

*Call to mind colleagues and partners in the work in your area.  
Are any calling for special attention for prayer today?  
What have they taught you about God and about yourself?  
Who are the saints who have gone before you?  
Do any give you real inspiration for what you're doing now?  
Celebrate them before God!*

Risen Lord,  
thank you for the inner city  
with its clashing needs and hopes.  
It's here that we find you  
constantly working to make broken lives whole.  
Thank you for calling us to be partners in your work  
and thank you for those who work alone

Deepen our friendships;  
let our vulnerabilities be shared;  
envision us with a fiery passion;  
we are your body, one body, and we thank you.

We thank you, too, for all those  
who pioneered kingdom building here  
for Muriel Lester, Ken Leech,  
Catherine Booth, Colin Marchant ..... (fill in names)  
who lived prophetic lives  
that truly transformed the neighbourhood.

Help us to be like them.  
Use us to speak and act prophetically,  
and to live lovingly.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!



## Day 18

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We want to learn from others, seeking to shape what we do in light of the experiences, discoveries, successes and mistakes of fellow-workers.

*Where have experiences been shared recently? What have you taken from that sharing? What have you contributed to it?*

*Is there something else that needs to be shared your with church, your team?*

Living God,  
thank you for never leaving us alone  
in the work you call us to do.  
We thank you for Urban Expression  
and everyone who works within it.  
Thank you for the richness of experience,  
the diversity of gifting,  
the depth of hope,  
the quality of commitment,  
all held here.

We pray that our relationships  
will be honest, open and true;  
that we will never fear vulnerability  
with each other  
but help to build each other up;  
through sharing our experiences,  
reflecting on your presence in them,  
discovering who we really are,  
and working out what we should do.

Help us to listen well to each other,  
to speak words wisely,  
to hold silences sensitively,  
to be as willing to learn as to teach,  
so that in all things  
you are glorified.  
Let your kingdom come!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!



## Day 19

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We are careful not to drain other local churches of their often limited resources, but hope to be an encouragement and support to them.

*Picture the other churches in the area.  
Is one calling for your attention today?  
Dream a dream: what could this church be?  
Hold the present and potential before God*

Living God,  
your story of our salvation  
began with your world's beginning;  
and we thank you that you've  
invited us to be part of that story today.

Disciples have come before us  
and will come after us  
and you choose to use us all  
in loving the world.

We thank you for brothers and sisters  
in other communities around here;  
people with hope and vision,  
people with questions and concerns,  
people searching for truth,  
people longing for healing.

In all that we do  
keep us attentive to their needs,  
their aspirations,  
their boundaries  
so that we never call from them  
something they just can't give or do or be

but help us in all our relating  
to deepen friendship  
and welcome strangers  
as we journey on together.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 20

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We realise the importance of living uncluttered lives, holding possessions lightly and recognising that all we have is to be at God's disposal.

*Is there anything consuming your mind at the moment?*

*Is it a gift to be held or a distraction to be let go?*

*As a sign of commitment to today's value, pass something onto a neighbour, throw something out, or have a good holy tidying session!*



God,  
all that we are and all that we have  
comes from you.  
Our possessions, our money,  
our breath, our life,  
all comes from you.  
Where we get tied to stuff  
and obsess about acquiring more;  
where we fall into thinking  
that retail therapy is good for us;  
where we find our attitudes  
shaped by the advertising we see  
rather than the gospel we know  
forgive us - and turn us round again  
to see the wonder of your gifts,  
the generosity of your heart,  
the magnitude of your love,  
and bring us to our senses!

Preserve us from consumerism;  
help us to live more simply;  
keep reminding us what you've called us to be;  
and in that we will find our joy and our freedom.

Thanks be to God!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 21

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Humility

We know we are not indispensable and what we attempt to do is part of a much bigger picture, so will try to keep ourselves in perspective.

*Have there been any occasions when we've been a bit prickly, or self-absorbed, or just a bit too intense recently?*

*Anything we need to say sorry for?*

*Let's offer our confession to God and words of regret to each other.*

*Then, get out some old and new photographs - enjoy the friendships celebrated, the events attended, the signs of God's presence they represent - and give thanks for God's perspective on us!*



Lord  
you've called us to be pioneers  
and we have gladly responded  
even if some days are hard.  
We know that we're looked to  
by those searching for more  
cutting edge ways of being church  
and we carry that responsibility  
because we want others to  
get the vision.

Sometimes, though, this adventuring heart  
can get a bit full of itself  
and we take greater pride  
in what we do  
rather than who you are.  
God save us from  
our own self-absorption  
our own puffed-upness  
and bring us down to earth,  
gently if possible.

We know that we are just  
a part of your work in the world  
and that your Spirit is  
healing and transforming  
in places we haven't heard of.

But we thank you for this place,  
where you've put us now,  
knowing that it's as wonderful  
and valuable to you  
as the whole universe.

Thank you God.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 22

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to following God on the margins and in the gaps, expecting to discover God at work among powerless people and in places of weakness.

*During the past month, where have you experienced powerlessness and weakness, either in yourself or others?*

*Where was God in it?*

*What did you learn of the kingdom through it?*

*Did it leave you with a sense of pain?*

*Of hope?*

*Of a decision to be made?*

*Gently offer it to God in prayer*

Lord of the universe,  
Lord of the smallest particle of dust,  
we meet you in the broken and the despairing  
we know you in the unlikely and the unimagined.  
We live alongside the bent and bruised  
and we see you there.  
We worship with the damaged and deranged  
and we see you there.  
We work with the oppressed and yearning  
and we see you there.  
And we meet our own fragmentation there too.



In encountering powerlessness  
we see Jesus;  
in our weakness  
we meet Jesus;  
in living with the gaps  
we follow Jesus;  
who is our power,  
who is our strength,  
who is our Lord,  
and who leads us on.

You are working to make all things new  
so help us to embody that hope,  
to express that vision,  
and to work for its coming.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 23

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to being Jesus-centred in our view of the Bible, our understanding of mission and all aspects of discipleship.

*What have we noticed in our reading of the Bible recently?*

*What verse, story, image, person has impacted on us?*

*Have we met something new in Jesus?*

*What is God's invitation to us in our noticing?*

Creator God,  
we thank you for giving the Word  
flesh and bones  
in Jesus, our friend and brother.  
In him we find our life,  
we find our hope,  
we find our joy.  
In him we find out it means  
to be fully human.  
We thank you for his centre  
a life completely grounded in you.  
We thank you for his compassion  
which welled up uncontrollably  
when he met brokenness.  
We thank you for his vulnerability,  
being fully alive in the hard places  
with no protection, no defence.  
We thank you for his playfulness,  
enjoying parties, good food and fine wine.

We thank you for his tenderness  
in dealing with men and women.  
We thank you for his vision  
of lives, the neighbourhood,  
the country and the world  
healed and whole,  
filled with peace and justice.

We thank you for his sacrifice  
that carried all the ugliness,  
the bruised and battered stuff,  
on a cross.

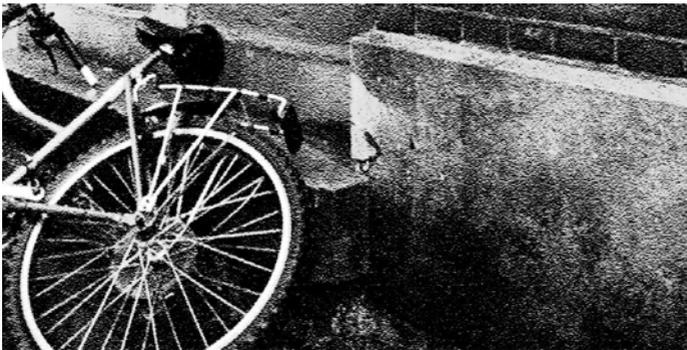
We thank you for raising him to life,  
giving us a brand new place of standing  
and through him a whole new future

Lord, we long to be like Jesus.  
Keep converting us,  
and help us to be like Jesus  
and walk with Jesus  
through today  
and this coming season.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!



## Day 24

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to seeking God's kingdom in the urban context, both by pioneering creative and relevant expressions of the Christian church and by working in partnership with others in mission.

*The Bible gives wonderful images of the kingdom – yeast in dough, salt, light.*

*When you think about the signs of the kingdom in your neighbourhood, what images come to mind?*

*Write them down.*

*Today, do something to symbolise the coming kingdom in your area – shake a packet of wild flower seeds over waste land; have a blitz on litter in one area; brighten something up with a lick of paint; go and stand and pray somewhere which has known pain and sorrow recently  
.... feel free to add your own initiative here .....*

Lord, you surprise us in so many ways!  
A smile from a person we hadn't even noticed;  
a flower defying the ugliness around it;  
a laugh heard from an open window;  
the scent of a curry floating down the road;  
the glory of a sunset lighting up the flats.  
You are God!

You care for each person living here.  
You love us overwhelmingly  
and passionately.  
You have invited us to be your people  
of salt and light  
and smiles and beauty  
and joy and fragrance,  
a people who reflect your glory

And you have invited us to work together  
with people like us and people not like us.  
Lord, show us what your  
Kingdom-shaped communities can look like here;  
encourage us in the building of them,  
and lead us into deeper ways  
of faithful and risky living.

In our yes to you,  
keep our eye on the ball  
on your love and purpose  
on your touch and word  
on your life and energy  
for that is all we have and all we need.  
Thank you Jesus.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 25

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to a vision of justice, peace and human flourishing for the city and all its inhabitants.

*Hold before God the people and situations known to you who are crying out for justice and peace and the destruction of all that makes them less than human.*

*Name them, cup your hands and lift them to God.*

*What shape of justice is needed?*

*What tenor of peace?*

*How can their full humanity be restored?*

*In lifting and offering your cupped hands to God, imagine that a vision for each person or situation named is being poured into your hands as God's gift to you.*

*What does that call from you?*



Lord, we know that you intend for us  
a world filled with shalom,  
your gift of complete well-being  
to all people, the whole of humanity,  
all who you've created in your image,  
who hold holiness and hope  
and love and laughter  
and peace and purpose and justice  
and joy deep inside their hearts.

But we see too much of lives held down  
by systems and sin  
oppression and hate  
domination and darkness  
and we are angry!  
So much potential!

Jesus you hold us in your prayer;  
you know what life could be for us;  
you see how things could change;  
you move to drench us in your  
transforming love and life.  
Help us to see the possibilities and purposes  
in the most broken  
of people and places.  
Help us to feel your justice and peace  
and your shalom-filled creation.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 26

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to uncluttered church, focused on mission, rooted in local culture and equipping all to develop and use their God-given gifts.

*Where has life become cluttered, unfocussed, or dislocated recently?  
What gifts are needed in the local church, the local community at the moment?*

*Jesus asked blind Bartimaeus, 'What do you want me to do for you?'  
How do you answer Jesus?*



Jesus, preserve us  
from the trappings of church life,  
from endless discussions  
about things that have no weight  
or relevance in your kingdom.

Jesus, protect us  
from distractions and trinkets  
that blur your vision in us.

Jesus, deepen in us  
a love for the rhythms that surround us;  
the cultural joys  
of our streets  
and parks  
and homes  
and places of refuge.

Raise up among us  
men and women  
young people and children  
with the gifts needed  
to build your kingdom here.

Give us the sight to spot  
the gifts already here  
that need to be encouraged,  
and given oxygen, light, compost -  
whatever it takes for these gifts to grow!

Make us muck-loving gardeners in your kingdom!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 27

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to unconditional service, holistic ministry, bold proclamation, prioritising the poor and being a voice for the voiceless.

*Think back to what you offered of yourself at the beginning of your journey with Urban Expression.*

*What were your hopes?*

*What were your fears?*

*Has anything changed in you now?*

*Is there anything that needs to be offered to God that blocks a full 'yes' to the season ahead?*

*Spend time in silence with open hands before God.*

Lord you have given us everything.

There is nothing we have  
that doesn't come from you,  
a holy gift of divine grace.



You gave us your life  
and every breath that we breathe reminds us of that.  
We come to you in humility and hope,  
offering ourselves to you again,  
knowing our own frailty.  
You know the demons that lurk within us  
of weaknesses and compulsions  
addictions and obsessions;  
of lack of confidence and self-limitations.

Lord, you are much more generous to us than we are to ourselves  
and you see us for who we are, with our confused motives  
and clashing hopes and fears.  
But we want to be your people here  
who point to your coming kingdom  
and your sacrificial love.  
So in our fragility take us,  
make us, and use us. We are yours.

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 28

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

Readings

Silence

Commitment

We are committed to respecting and building relationship with other faith communities and averse to all forms of manipulation or erosion of liberty.

*Recall recent conversations with people of other faiths and none. Where has God been present to you in them?*

*Is there a stranger around whose name you want to know? Is there someone who needs to become a friend?*

*Is there a situation of manipulation or oppression which needs addressing?*

*Is there a call here for you, your church or the wider team?*

Jesus you have placed us in a  
place of such difference!  
We offer to you our neighbours,  
Muslim, Hindu, Sikh,  
Jew, Buddhist,  
and those of confused faith  
or no faith at all.

Help us to see you in their eyes,  
celebrate you in our relating,  
embrace new truths of you  
that we learn in our common life,  
and may our words and actions  
be filled with gentleness and respect.



You call us to be a people of dissent  
where prevailing culture and ways  
deny a voice to the voiceless;  
and we pray for strength and courage  
to speak out and act up  
when basic human rights are trampled on.

And in so doing, help us to address  
the manipulative tendencies in our own hearts  
that damage others and limit ourselves.

You are Lord!  
And we will live in freedom!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 29

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

After praying the values during the past 28 days, spend time today reflecting again on the first set of core values (with biblical texts for further reflection):

### Relationship

We believe that, in Jesus, God is revealed locally, and that we should be committed to our local community or relational network and active members of it. (John 1:14, 1 John 1:1)

We believe that the gospel works through relationships and that serving God consists largely in building life-giving relationships with others. (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

We recognise that Christian faith is a journey and we are committed to helping people move forward, wherever they are at present. (1 Corinthians 3:1-2)

We focus on under-churched areas and neglected people, trying to find ways of communicating Jesus appropriately to those most frequently marginalised, condemned and abused by society. (James 1:27)

We challenge the trend of some Christians moving out of the cities and encourage Christians to relocate to the Inner-city neighbourhoods, outer housing estates and other marginal communities. (Matthew 9:9-12)



We believe in doing things with and not just for communities, sharing our lives with others and learning from others who share their lives with us. (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6)

We see teamwork, networking and mutual accountability as vital, recognising that individuals and churches need each other. (Ephesians 4:11-13; Acts 2:42-46)

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 30

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

After praying the values during the past 28 days, spend time today reflecting again on the second set of core values (with biblical texts for further reflection):

Creativity

We recognise the importance of taking risks and the demands of urban mission, and we believe that it is acceptable to fail. (Hebrews 11:32-40)

We value courage, creativity and diversity as we try to discover relevant ways of being church in different contexts. (Joshua 1:6-9)

We believe that questions and theological reflection are important as we learn together and so discern the way forward. (Jude 17-23, 1 Peter 3:15)

We aim to be catalysts, encouraging and releasing creativity in both church and community as we seek and share God in the inner city. (Mark 4:26-29)

We believe in discouraging dependency and developing indigenous leadership within maturing churches that will have the capacity to sustain and reproduce themselves. (Acts 14:23)

We are excited that God can be discovered in the urban context and commit ourselves to explore various forms of prayer and worship that are appropriate here. (Hebrews 10:19-25; Revelation 21:1-4)

We realise that God's Spirit blows freely and so we will not assume our work should continue indefinitely. (John 3:7-8)

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

## Day 31

We draw near to God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Silence

After praying the values during the past 28 days, spend time today reflecting again on the third set of core values (with biblical texts for further reflection):

Humility

We acknowledge our dependence on God and affirm our continual need of prayer and God's empowering Spirit. (Proverbs 3:5; Mark 10:14-15; Ephesians 5:18)

We believe that all people are loved by God, regardless of age, gender, education, class, ethnicity, sexuality or physical/mental health, and that God works through all believers – and others besides. (Galatians 3:28)

We respect others working alongside us in the inner city and are grateful for the foundations laid by the many who have gone before us. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9, 1 Corinthians 16:15-18)

We want to learn from others, seeking to shape what we do in light of the experiences, discoveries, successes and mistakes of fellow-workers. (Ecclesiastes 12:11; Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)

We are careful not to drain other local churches of their often limited resources, but hope to be an encouragement and support to them. (Hebrews 10:25, 1 Corinthians 14:12)

We realise the importance of living uncluttered lives, holding possessions lightly and recognising that all we have is to be at God's disposal. (Luke 12:32-34)

We know we are not indispensable and what we attempt to do is part of a much bigger picture, so will try to keep ourselves in perspective. (Romans 12:3-5)

Free prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, in your mercy  
Let your kingdom come!

# The City Cycle

*daily readings*

## Week 1

- day 1 Genesis 4,8-17
- day 2 Genesis 11,1-9
- day 3 Genesis 18,17-33
- day 4 Numbers 35,9-28
- day 5 Joshua 6,1-16
- day 6 Nehemiah 2,1-6 and 11-20
- day 7 Psalm 24

## Week 2

- day 1 Psalm 46,1-6
- day 2 Psalm 48
- day 3 Psalm 122
- day 4 Isaiah 1,21-27
- day 5 Isaiah 61,1-11
- day 6 Isaiah 65,17-25
- day 7 Jeremiah 19,1-15

## Week 3

- day 1 Jeremiah 33,4-11
- day 2 Ezekiel 22,1-16 and 27-31
- day 3 Daniel 9,15-19
- day 4 Jonah 4,1-11
- day 5 Zechariah 2,1-13
- day 6 Luke 2,1-11
- day 7 Matthew 5,13-15

## Week 4

- day 1 Luke 19,28-44
- day 2 Luke 24,44-49 and Acts 2,1-7
- day 3 Acts 16,9-12; 16-31 and 35-40
- day 4 Hebrews 11,8-16
- day 5 Hebrews 12,18-24 and 13,11-14
- day 6 Revelation 18,1-24
- day 7 Revelation 21,9 and 22,1-5-27

# The Peace Cycle

*daily readings*

## Week 1

day 1 Leviticus 3,1-11  
day 2 Deuteronomy 20,10-19  
day 3 1 Samuel 1,10-17  
day 4 1 Kings 8,54-63  
day 5 1 Chronicles 22,7-13  
day 6 2 Chronicles 14,1-7  
day 7 Isaiah 32,1-20

## Week 2

day 1 Isaiah 57,15-21  
day 2 Jeremiah 32,36-43  
day 3 Micah 5,2-4  
day 4 Zachariah 9,9-12  
day 5 Matthew 5,1-10  
day 6 Matthew 10,34-42  
day 7 Luke 1,67-79

## Week 3

day 1 Luke 2,8-14  
day 2 Luke 2,25-32  
day 3 Luke 10,1-6  
day 4 John 14,25-31  
day 5 John 16,23-33  
day 6 John 20,19-29  
day 7 Acts 10,34-43

## Week 4

day 1 Romans 5,1-8  
day 2 Romans 12,9-21 and 14,13-19  
day 3 Ephesians 2,14-22  
day 4 Philippians 4,4-9  
day 5 Colossians 3,12-17  
day 6 1 Thessalonians 5,12-24  
day 7 James 3,13-18

# The Grace Cycle

*daily readings*

## Week 1

- day 1 Genesis 1
- day 2 Exodus 33:7-23
- day 3 Exodus 34:1-10, 29-35
- day 4 Numbers 6:22-27
- day 5 2 Samuel 7
- day 6 2 Samuel 9
- day 7 1 Kings 19:1-18

## Week 2

- day 1 2 Chronicles 30:1-27
- day 2 Nehemiah 9:1-38
- day 3 Psalm 86
- day 4 Proverbs 11:16; 15:26; 16:24; 22:11
- day 5 Isaiah 30:9-33
- day 6 Jeremiah 31:1-40
- day 7 Jonah 1

## Week 3

- day 1 Jonah 2
- day 2 Jonah 3
- day 3 Jonah 4
- day 4 Zechariah 12:1-13:1
- day 5 Matthew 11:1-6, 25-30
- day 6 Luke 1
- day 7 John 1:1-18

## Week 4

- day 1 Romans 3:21-31
- day 2 Romans 5:1-21
- day 3 Romans 11:1-36
- day 4 2 Corinthians 12:1-10
- day 5 Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Peter 4:1-11
- day 6 1 Timothy 1:12-17; 2 Timothy 2: 1-13
- day 7 Hebrews 1:1-4; 4:14-16; 12:1-17

# The Justice Cycle

*daily readings*

## Week 1

- day 1 Genesis 3:1-24
- day 2 Genesis 19:1-29
- day 3 Exodus 1:1-14; 13:1-16
- day 4 Exodus 20:1-21
- day 5 Leviticus 16:1-34
- day 6 Leviticus 19:1-18; 20:22-27
- day 7 Leviticus 24:10-23

## Week 2

- day 1 Numbers 16:1-50
- day 2 Numbers 27:1-11
- day 3 Deuteronomy 6:1-25
- day 4 Joshua 7:1-26
- day 5 Joshua 20:1-9
- day 6 1 Samuel 4:1-11
- day 7 2 Samuel 11:1-27

## Week 3

- day 1 2 Samuel 12:1-25
- day 2 Amos 5:1-24
- day 3 Micah 6:1-8
- day 4 Matthew 12:9-21
- day 5 Mark 14:32-72
- day 6 Mark 15:1-47
- day 7 Luke 11:37-53

## Week 4

- day 1 Luke 18:1-8
- day 2 John 8:1-11
- day 3 Romans 12:9-21
- day 4 Romans 13:1-14
- day 5 James 2:1-26
- day 6 Revelation 7:1-17
- day 7 Revelation 18:1-19:10

# The Poor Cycle

*daily readings*

## Week 1

day 1 Exodus 22:16-23:12  
day 2 Leviticus 19:9-18, 33-37  
day 3 Leviticus 25:8-34  
day 4 Leviticus 25:35-55  
day 5 Deuteronomy 10:12-22  
day 6 Deuteronomy 15:1-23  
day 7 Deuteronomy 24:5-22

## Week 2

day 1 Ruth 1  
day 2 Ruth 2  
day 3 Ruth 3  
day 4 Ruth 4  
day 5 1 Samuel 2:1-11  
day 6 2 Samuel 12:1-15  
day 7 Proverbs 14:20-35

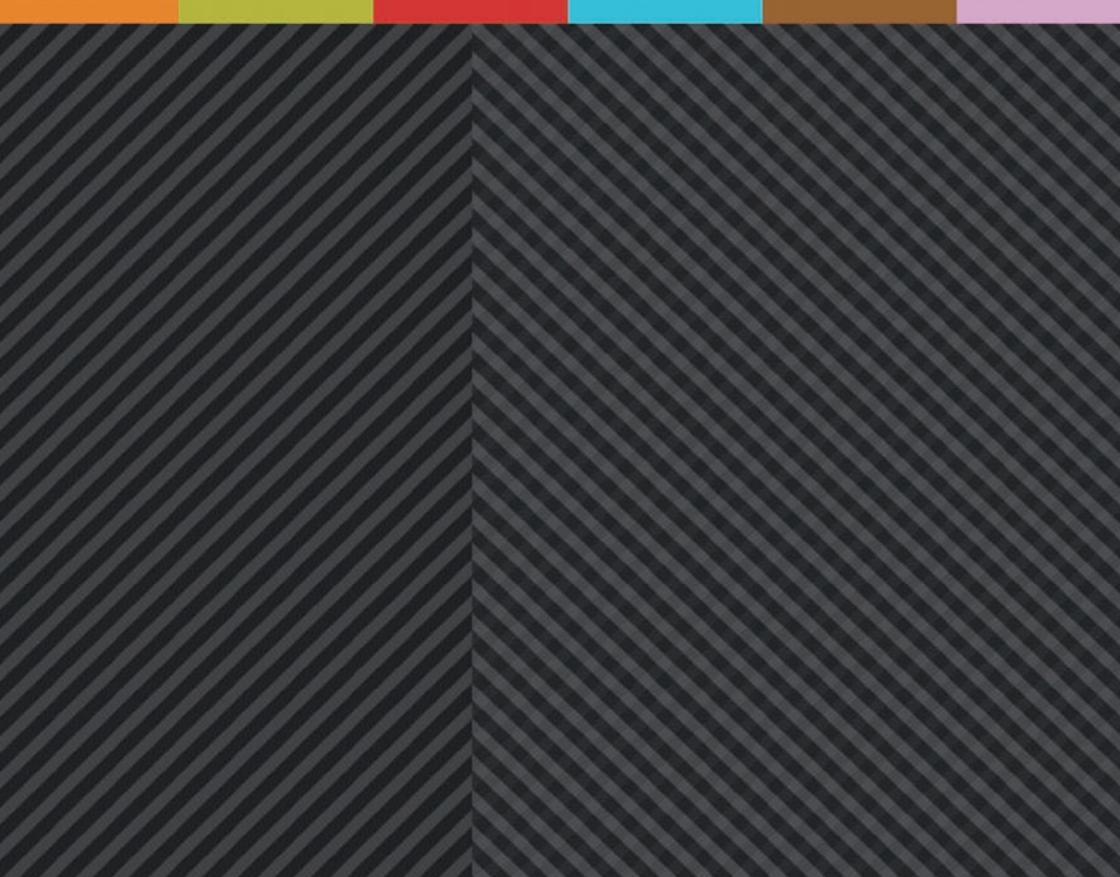
## Week 3

day 1 Proverbs 19:1-29  
day 2 Isaiah 58:1-14  
day 3 Zechariah 7:1-14  
day 4 Malachi 2:17-3:12  
day 5 Matthew 11:1-30  
day 6 Matthew 26:6-13  
day 7 Mark 12:41-44

## Week 4

day 1 Luke 4:16-22  
day 2 Luke 6:17-36  
day 3 Luke 14:12-24; 16:19-31  
day 4 Galatians 2:1-10  
day 5 1 Timothy 5:1-16  
day 6 James 1:19-27; 2:1-13  
day 7 Revelation 3:14-22





Urban Expression is an urban mission agency that recruits, equips, deploys and networks self financing teams pioneering creative and relevant expressions of the Christian church in under-churched areas of the inner city.

Our 21 core values are gathered under the headings relationship, humility and creativity, together with the 7 commitments that flow from these values.

'Praying our Values' provides a month's worth of prayers, readings and exercises that help us to reflect more deeply on these values so that they become part of who we are.

