



# Lent 2025

## Keeping Lent together at St Lawrence Eastcote

'O felix culpa?'

In the story of human beings' fall, the moment when sin is usually thought to have entered the world comes with Adam and Eve each biting into an apple taken from the Tree of Knowledge.

I wonder, though, if this is right as being the moment of humanity's fall? What was it that *actually* caused Adam and Eve to think that this forbidden tree had fruit that was 'good to eat', apparently justifying their disobedience to God's command? What was it in Adam and Eve that gave rise to their disobedience to God's command? The serpent's words alone couldn't cause this rejection of God's authority; the temptation had ultimately to come from within, unless we believe that the pair's moral naivety made them susceptible to suggestion.

This first moment of sin is looked back on in a positive light from the vantage of Easter. After the Easter candle is first lit, the Exultet is sung in which this sin is recalled with the words 'O happy fault' ('O felix culpa' in Latin). The point being made is that Adam and Eve's sin led to a better outcome for humanity than if sin had never occurred. The full line of the Exultet reads: 'O happy fault that earned for us so great, so glorious a Redeemer'. Augustine of Hippo later observed, 'God judged it better to bring good out of evil than not to permit any evil to exist' (Enchiridion VIII).

However one might seek to make sense of bad things happening, a shared human experience is that it is possible for good to come out of unwelcome situations or even evil. There is a peculiar human dignity to be found in returning good for evil or making some kind of good issue from even the worst situations.

This Lent will be the last the parish has in its Interim Process. I am conscious that new people have joined the congregation and others left over the past five years, meaning that their knowledge of what has happened is limited or partial. Indeed, even for many who have been present throughout, understand of the process and its impact has been limited.

I am going to use sermons through Lent to give thanks for the learning that has been achieved and the progress made through the Interim Process. Hopefully this will allow us all to be up to speed with what has happened and where things are now, so that there is a shared narrative.

In addition, Saturday mornings will be put aside to follow the Diocese of London's Lent resources which this year focus on Climate Justice. As well as being informative, the sessions promise to offer the opportunity to support each other in fellowship as disciples and to learn new practices of prayer. Details are on the following pages.

## Lent sermon series:

### Giving thanks for St Lawrence's Interim Process

As the Interim Process reaches its conclusion, sermons in Lent will provide an opportunity to take stock and to give thanks for all that has been achieved.

- Lent 1**            **The starting point and Past: faithfulness to God as a sure foundation**  
09 March          Romans 10.8b-13, Luke 4.1-13
- Lent 2**            **Consolidating aspirations: faithfulness to gathering the children of God**  
16 March          Philippians 3.17b-4.1, Luke 13.31-35
- Lent 3**            **Community: patience with transitions and faithfulness through time**  
23 March          1 Corinthians 10.1-13, Luke 13.1-9  
(30 March        Mothering Sunday & Confirmations)
- Lent 5**            **The future: faithfulness to the friends of Jesus**  
06 April          Philippians 3.4b-14, John 12.1-8

## Lent Study Groups

The groups offered by Churches Together in Eastcote (CTE) and St Lawrence's are summarised below:

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday		CTE group: Pinner Methodist Church, Cannon Lane 1430 – 1600 <i>Dates: Mar 11, 18, 25 Apr 1, 8</i>	
Wednesday			CTE group: Elsie Fischer Room, St Lawrence Eastcote 2000-2130 <i>Dates: Mar 12, 19, 26 Apr 02, 23</i>
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday	St Lawrence Elsie Fischer Room 1000-1130 <i>Dates: Mar 15, 22, 29 Apr 5, 12</i>		

## CTE Lent group



If you'd like to sign up for the "Opening the Scriptures: Setting our Hearts on Fire" Lent groups please sign up by the end of March either using the lists at the back of St Lawrence's or by using the link [here](#).

**Clare Amos**, who wrote this Lent course at the invitation of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), found her own heart first 'burned' by scripture many, many years ago. After studying theology at Cambridge University, she was privileged to spend two years learning at the École Biblique et Archéologique Française Jerusalem. An Anglican by church affiliation, Clare was fortunate enough to be awarded an ecumenical scholarship to study at the École Biblique, which has played a significant role in the development of Roman Catholic biblical scholarship.

Her years at the École Biblique were Clare's entry point into a life-path that not only has involved teaching biblical studies in Jerusalem, Beirut, Cambridge, South London and Kent, and guest lecturing in Africa, Asia, Australia and America, but also initiated her abiding commitment to the Middle East, to the world church and to ecumenism. Her working life has specifically included periods working for the Methodist Church of Britain, and for the Cambridge Ecumenical Theological Federation. Clare's final full time position before retirement in 2018 was to have responsibility for the interreligious desk at the World Council of Churches in Geneva. In 2012 Clare was honoured to be awarded a Lambeth Doctorate of Divinity by Archbishop Rowan Williams. The citation at that time referred to Clare's commitment to sharing the fruits of biblical scholarship as widely as possible among the people of God, which is what this Lent course seeks to do.

## St Lawrence's Lent Group – using Diocese of London resources

### *Climate Justice and Discipleship – a contemplative journey into action*

“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” – Micah 6:8

Following Jesus, responding to the climate and ecological emergency, and renewing our faith and discipleship aren't rival projects. They may turn out to be the same thing. For Lent 2025, everyone across the Diocese of London is invited to reflect deeply on five significant moments in Jesus' life and ministry. As we take this journey together, how might we encounter Christ through creation, pursue justice from within, and convert our fearful reactions into a loving response?

When: Saturdays, 10:00-11:30 am

Where: Elsie Fischer Room

#### Dates and Themes:

- **15th March** – Humility, hosted by Bishop Sarah, speaker: Revd Dr Peniel Rajkumar
- **22nd March** – Solidarity, hosted by Bishop Anderson, speaker: Dr Lisa Adjei
- **29th March** – Example, hosted by Bishop Emma, speaker: Revd Melissa Dickinson
- **5th April** – Accountability, hosted by Bishop Joanne, speaker: Deborah Colvin
- **12th April** – Hope, hosted by Bishop Lusa, speaker: Revd Dr Dave Bookless

#### Session Overview

Each session includes use of a 1 hour pre-recorded:

- Welcome and Opening Prayer
- Practice of Awe and Wonder
- Reflection by a Guest Speaker
- Response and Conversation with the Hosting Bishop
- Earth Examen Practice
- Home Activities and Closing Prayer

Followed by (30 minutes)

- Group Reflection
- Practices for the week





### Guest Speakers

**The Revd Dr Peniel Rajkumar** is the Director of Global Mission and Global Theologian at USPG, where he teaches Missional Theology in Global Contexts. Ordained in the Diocese of London, he has served in the UK, India, and Geneva, holding roles in academia and the World Council of Churches. His research spans Dalit Theology, World Christianity, and Interreligious Dialogue.

**Dr Lisa Adjei** is an international speaker, writer, and founder of the Sankofa Collective, which champions racial justice and reconciliation. Currently working for Christian Aid, she will begin her role as Head of Racial Justice Priority for the Diocese of London in January. Lisa also chairs Climate YES, the global youth climate movement, and serves on the board of Churches Together in England.

**The Revd Melissa Dickinson** is a curate at Emmanuel Church, West Hampstead, with a focus on ecotheology. Holding an MPhil in the field, she explores medieval prayer practices and ecological conversion. At Emmanuel, she has helped establish 'Climate Cafes,' providing space for people to share their emotions and anxieties about the climate crisis.

**Deborah Colvin** (born 318 ppm CO<sub>2</sub>) is an educator and environmentalist dedicated to addressing the spiritual dimensions of the climate and ecological crisis through communal action. Her recent work includes re-developing A Rocha UK's Eco Church programme and contributing to diocesan environmental initiatives. She supports direct action with Christian Climate Action and co-leads Earth Justice programmes at St James's Piccadilly.

**The Revd Dr Dave Bookless** serves as Director of Theology for A Rocha International and as a minister at St Mary's Church, Norwood Green. Passionate about creation care, he integrates ecological concerns into parish life. He speaks and writes widely, inspiring churches around the world to respond to ecological challenges.

A booklet with the full resources may be downloaded from the link [here](#).

### Expected Outcomes

This course invites participants to engage with new contemplative practices, deepen their understanding of climate justice, and explore how it connects to discipleship. We hope this journey will inspire practical action in both personal and communal contexts.

Please let Fr John know that you planning to attend ahead of the course beginning, so that he can provide resources for you to participate.