



COMPANIONS OF BARNABAS  
a missional community in the Wesleyan tradition

## SIX LENTEN PRACTICES

'Lent' is the Old English word for Spring, the season that ends Winter and in which new life begins again. Drawing on the ancient Celtic tradition of these islands, these six Lenten practices that will help us to prepare for the feast (of Easter) by focussing on nature, learning and the ordinary. In this, we will be accompanied by a number of Saints whose lives embodied these practices.

The six practices are:

1. *Giving*
2. *Planting*
3. *Noticing*
4. *Connecting*
5. *Learning*
6. *Sending*

The popular misconception of Lent is that it is about giving up pleasure in order to become more holy. Our Celtic forebears knew that it was about a much deeper search for true pleasure and satisfaction which could only be found by removing distractions and becoming attentive to the God who dwells in the ordinary and the simple. It is a rediscovery of (or reorientation to) the things that truly matter: beauty, truth, hope and love.

There will be a blog post and podcast each week to guide us and help us to focus. The pattern will be the same each week:

- *Entry into stillness*
- *Introduction to our saintly companion*
- *Listening to Scripture*
- *Waiting for the Word*
- *Practicing Lent*
- *Blessing*

## WEEK TWO: PLANTING

### *Entry into stillness*

○ Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you:  
as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to God, Source of All,  
Word of Truth, Breath of Life,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be  
for ever. Amen.

### *Canticle*

Alone with none but Thee, my God,  
*I journey on my way; What need I fear,*  
*when Thou art near,*  
*O king of night and day?*  
*More safe I am within Thy hand,*  
*than if a host did round me stand.*  
*My destined time is fixed by Thee,*  
*and death doth know his hour.*  
*Did warriors strong around me throng,*  
*they could not stay his power;*  
*no walls of stone can man defend*  
*when Thou Thy messenger dost send*  
*My life I yield to Thy decree,*  
*and bow to Thy control in*  
*peaceful calm,*  
*for from Thine arm no power can wrest*  
*my soul.*  
*Could earthly omens e'er appal*  
*A man that heeds the heavenly call!*  
*The child of God can fear no ill,*  
*His chosen dread no foe;*  
*we leave our fate with Thee*  
*and wait Thy bidding when we go.*  
*Tis not from chance our comfort*  
*springs, Thou art our trust,*  
*O king of kings.*  
*St Columba (trans. unknown)*

### **Introduction to our saintly companion**

We are focussing on PLANTING this week, as the season of Spring begins in the northern hemisphere. So often the New Testament refers to sowing, growing and harvesting in the context of faith and discipleship, reminding us of our connection to the whole of creation.

Lent is about preparing for new life and growth, physical and spiritual. It encourages us to get our hands dirty in clearing the ground of weeds, stones and all that obstructs a good harvest. Planting is a sign of hope and trust in the future.

### **Clarence Jordan & Koinonia Farm**

Koinonia Farm was founded in 1942 by Clarence and Florence Jordan and Martin and Mabel England in 1942 as a “demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God.” For them, this meant an intentional community of believers sharing their lives and resources, following the example of the first Christian communities as described in the Acts of the Apostles. Other families soon joined, and visitors to the farm were invited to “serve a period of apprenticeship in developing community life on the teachings and principles of Jesus.”

From the beginning, Koinonians emphasized the brotherhood and sisterhood of all people. When we could afford to hire seasonal help, Black and White workers were paid a fair, equal wage. When the community and its guests and workers prayed or ate a meal, we all sat together at the table, regardless of colour. Their commitment to racial equality, pacifism, and economic sharing brought bullets, bomb and a boycott in the 1950s as the KKK and others attempted to force us out. They responded with prayer, nonviolent resistance, and a renewed commitment to live the Gospel.



### **Listening to Scripture      Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8**

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is

planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

### ***Waiting for the Word***

*We spend some time reflecting and listening for the Word.*

### ***Practicing Lent***

*This week why not:*

- *plant some seeds as a sign of trust that the future will be warmer and brighter*
- *set aside some space to create a 'bee-friendly' garden in your church grounds or back garden*
- *support the Farming Community Network - [www.fcn.org.uk](http://www.fcn.org.uk)*

### ***Blessing***

Circle us, Lord

Keep strife without, keep peace within;

keep fear without, keep hope within;

keep pride without, keep trust within;

keep evil out, keep good within.

May we walk in the hope of your presence;

fill us with your light and love; be with us all through this day Source, Word and Spirit.

### ***Further reading***

Hope in God's Future -

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/3201/higf-report-and-study-guide-0514.pdf>

Koinonia Farm - <https://www.koinoniafarm.org/>