

The logo for 'The 6th National Big Church Read' features the text in a mix of blue and red colors. The word 'The' is in light blue, '6th' is in red, 'National' is in light blue, 'Big' is in dark blue, 'Church' is in dark blue, and 'Read' is in dark blue. Four small illustrations of people reading are integrated into the text: a man standing on the left, a person sitting on the '6', a person sitting on the 'Read', and a person standing on the right.

The 6th National Big Church Read

Session 1: Origins

At the end of Origins, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

Why is tracing ancestry and family history so popular today?

How would you respond to the objection that we can't take Genesis seriously because it contradicts modern science?

Based on the world we see around us, what can we deduce about what God is like?

Read Genesis 1:26–8 again. What might it mean to be made in the image of God? How should this affect the way we see ourselves and treat others?

How does the story of Adam and Eve being tempted by the serpent in Genesis 3 still resonate with our experiences today?

Read the promise in Genesis 3:15 and consider the flood story and the rainbow. How do these point forwards and declare hope over our broken world?

Overall, how has the origins story in Genesis helped you make sense of life today?



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Session 2: Exodus

At the end of Exodus, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

How does Western culture define freedom? Why does this not seem to work in the end?

What feels like your 'Egypt' or Pharaoh-like challenges at the moment?

How has Jesus fulfilled the story of Exodus in the ultimate sense?

In what ways do we experience increased freedom when we choose to live God's way?

How can the story of Exodus inspire us to work for justice and freedom today?

Overall, how has the story of Exodus helped you make sense of life today?



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Session 3: Exile

At the end of Exile, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

How does the Bible's concept of shalom help us appreciate what true peace really means?

In what sense are we all living away from home, in a state of exile? How do we experience the sharp end of this in everyday realities?

During the era of the Judges and Kings, Israel got stuck in negative cycles. What patterns of behaviour in our lives rob us of peace? How can we end these negative cycles?

In the sixth century BC, the Israelites experienced the darkness of exile. When have you faced seasons of suffering and pain? How have you, or people you know, experienced God's peace in and through the storms of life?

Despite exile, Daniel shows that God's people can 'win away from home'. What specific practices can help us stand strong in a hostile culture?

Overall, how has the Bible's story of exile and peace helped make sense of life today?





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Session 4: Messiah

At the end of Messiah, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

What are some of the main differences between the way our culture defines love and the way God's love is revealed through Jesus?

'Messiah' means 'the anointed king'. What is God's kingdom like if Jesus is the one who rules it? Think about the way he treated people, his teaching and his healing ministry.

How would you respond to the question: 'If Jesus was so good, why did he die like a criminal?'

The cross has become the globally recognised logo for the Christian faith. How does this symbol of torture and execution reveal the extent of God's love for us?

What piece of evidence for the resurrection do you find most compelling and why? What difference does it make if Jesus really rose again?

Overall, how has this section on the Messiah helped make sense of life?



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Session 5: Spirit

At the end of Spirit, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

In what ways is true community a challenge in our modern culture? Why do so many of us experience loneliness in a hyperconnected age?

What has been your experience of the Holy Spirit? How can you open up your life more to his empowering presence? The book of Acts tells the story of the early church. What made their community life so radical and attractive (e.g. Acts 2:42–7; Galatians 3:28)?

What do you think of when you hear the word 'church'? How has the book of Acts helped you reimagine what Christian community can be like?

The mission of Acts continues today. Now we are called to faithful 'impro!'. In what practical ways can you play your part and make a difference where you are?

Overall, how has this section on the Spirit and community helped you make sense of life today?





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Session 6: Hope

At the end of Hope, take a moment to review what we've learned and how it makes sense of life:

What is true hope and why is it such a vital energy for humans? What false hopes do we put our trust in as society?

How does the resurrection of Jesus reveal the nature of our future hope?

Dramatic visions at the end of Revelation reveal our ultimate destination. What surprised you about the physical and sociable nature of our ultimate hope?

Read Revelation 22:1–4. What are you most looking forward to about our future home and why?

How can this hope on the far horizon inspire us today? How does it change the way we approach bereavement and death? How does it shape our priorities in life?

Overall, how has this section on the theme of hope helped make sense of your life today?

