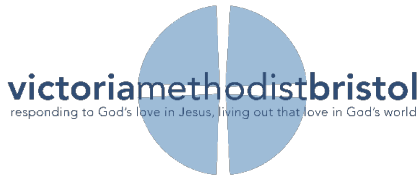

LENT KNIT-ALONG 2026

WEEK 1



Pattern by Lyn Lloyd-Jones
Reflections by Becky Hudson

Introduction

We are really grateful to Becky Hudson for writing the accompanying reflections for week one of the Lent Knitalong.

Becky lives in Carlisle, Cumbria, a short drive from the Lake District National Park. Having only taken up knitting relatively recently, she has enjoyed participating in the Knitalongs over the last two years. When she's not knitting, she enjoys expressing and exploring her faith through creative writing of various types, singing with the church music group, and spending time with her cat.

THIS WEEK'S REFLECTIONS

As we begin the season of Lent, we will be reflecting on some verses from the letter to the Hebrews:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

— Hebrews 12:1-3

Every year, the church of which I am a member has a "Bible verse of the year", and for 2026 the verses are taken from this short passage, so they are verses which have been fresh in my mind since the start of the year. However, they are also verses which have felt important to me personally for a long time. I hope they can encourage us all as we journey through Lent together.

Each day this week we will focus on a particular phrase from these verses, but I encourage you to read through the whole of this passage each day.

Wednesday, 18 February

Fixing our eyes on Jesus

A couple of years ago I decided to knit a nativity scene. There were fourteen individual items, mostly people or animals, so a lot of heads, bodies, limbs and tails to knit separately and sew together. Not to mention crowns for the wise men, shepherds' crooks...and a few beards! Weaving in ends and sewing up seams is my least favourite part of any knitting project and on this occasion there were loads of them! Rather than completing each character as I went along, I put this task off for as long as possible, ending up with a large quantity of pieces to sew together. Having started the project in June, it was now October; to motivate myself to keep going, I really needed to fix my eyes on the goal I'd set of completing the project in time for Christmas.



The phrase from Hebrews 12:1-3 which always stands out most to me is the encouragement to 'fix our eyes on Jesus'. In the past, I have tended to think about this in two main ways. Firstly, focusing on truths about the character of Jesus (and of God the Father), perhaps to help me through a challenging time; and secondly, remembering Jesus' death on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins.

Tom Wright, in his book *Hebrews for Everyone*, seems to give a third way. He translates this phrase as 'we must look ahead, to Jesus.' In running the race of our faith journey, this is an encouragement to fix our eyes on the finishing line – because *Jesus Himself* is waiting for us there and encouraging us onwards! Fixing our eyes on Jesus can also be about reminding ourselves that it is Jesus we are running towards; He is our goal.

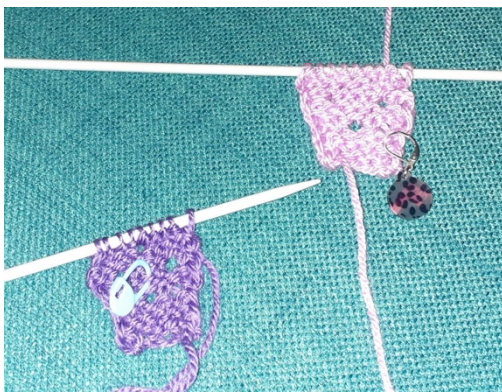
As we journey through Lent, beginning in the sombre mood of Ash Wednesday, we can fix our eyes, too, on the joy of Easter Sunday which lies ahead.

Prayer

Lord, thank you that your desire is to encourage us onwards with you. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on you throughout this season of Lent.

Thursday, 19 February

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses



We all need help and encouragement at times, don't we? One of the people who encourages me with my knitting is my friend and neighbour, Katie. We both took part in 2025's Advent Knitalong and, on the first day, simultaneously messaged each other because we were both stuck on a new method of increasing. As Katie literally lives a few doors away, she came round to my house then and there and, after a bit of trial and error, we managed to complete the first day's rows. It

was great to be able to sit together and encourage one another as we worked things out.

The writer to the Hebrews begins Chapter 12 by giving one of the reasons we are to keep running the race. It is because 'we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses'. We find these witnesses listed in Chapter 11: great men and women of faith, both named and unnamed, from Abel at the beginning of Genesis, through Noah, Abraham, Moses, Rahab, David – and too many more for the writer to mention! God's people who went before us 'are there at the finishing line, cheering us on, surrounding us with encouragement and enthusiasm, willing us to do what they did and finish the course in fine style' (Tom Wright, *Hebrews for Everyone*). When we look at this list of names, yes, they are great heroes of faith – but you don't have to read much of their stories to realise how flawed and sinful they also were. This in itself is another great encouragement: they made it to the finish line despite their weaknesses and failings – and so can we!

As we journey through Lent, the Knitalong group on Facebook is a great place to encourage one another, both with our knitting and as we share thoughts on the daily reflections. Or perhaps you can share the project with someone else to encourage them?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the Christians who have gone before us and encouraged us in our walk with you. Help us to see how we can encourage others in their journey of faith.

Friday, 20 February

Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles

What is the thing which most hinders you from completing a knitting project? For many of us it might be busy lives, full of work commitments or family responsibilities. For me, it is quite likely to be my cat, Kelloggs! Sometimes she curls up quite contentedly on my lap and I can knit away undisturbed. But at other times, she sits on the knitting pattern, knocks scissors onto the floor, chews the yarn tails, or grabs hold of the knitting needles. And needle point protectors are just irresistible...



In today's verse, the writer to the Hebrews tells us to get rid of the sins that trip us up. That seems fairly obvious, surely – getting rid of all those wrong things which hurt others and ourselves? But a few years ago, I was especially struck that the writer also tells us to get rid of “*everything* that hinders”. There might be things in our lives which, in and of themselves, are not wrong. But are they things which help us to walk more closely with God? Or perhaps there are things which are in a grey area; it's not as clear whether they're right or wrong, so maybe it's tempting to find a way to justify them. But are they helping us or hindering us? In running the race, we need to be like runners in a physical race, who don't carry any extra weight beyond what they need.

As we journey through Lent, perhaps some of us have already chosen to give up something (as well as “taking up” our daily knitting!). But is there something we might need to give up that goes beyond these few weeks of Lent?

Prayer

Lord, thank you that you do not want us to be weighed down with heavy burdens. Help us to recognise, and turn from, those things in our lives which stop us knowing you better.

Saturday, 21 February

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us



The third item I ever knitted was a hat in a simple rib pattern. I cast on and knitted the first row, but it didn't look right. I pulled it off the needle and tried again with the same result. I then had to wait several days before I could ask my mum for help. Having started over for a third time, we realised that I wasn't purling correctly and I got back on track. At home later, I managed to complete eight rows without mistakes, before going wrong yet again. At this point, I was close to giving up. I

even said, "I don't think knitting is for me"! However, I persevered and completed the hat. And I'm so glad I did, because since then I have really come to love knitting and have gained so much joy from knitting for myself and for others.

Are we willing to persevere in our faith as we run the race, or do we sometimes just want to give up? I think this brings us full circle back to the phrase we looked at on Wednesday: fixing our eyes on Jesus – on His death and resurrection – can help us to persevere.

Firstly, whatever trials we are facing, Jesus has been through something far worse. 'He endured the cross', willingly undergoing torture, violence, and a degrading and agonising death. If we are growing weary and losing heart, we are to 'consider him who endured such opposition from sinners'; to fix our eyes on the sacrifice He made for us, trusting that when life feels desperately hard, Jesus understands our pain and He is with us.

Secondly, Jesus knew that His suffering would lead to great joy – the fulfilling of His Father's saving purposes for the world. Life can be really tough; but through Jesus' death and resurrection we have the hope of a day when 'there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain' (Revelation 21:4).

As we continue our journey through Lent, let's not lose sight of the resurrection joy which awaits on Easter Sunday.

Prayer

Lord, thank you that you were willing to suffer so that we could be forgiven. Help us to persevere, even when life is hard, and to keep our eyes firmly fixed on you.

Compiled by Vicky Davies