

# GUIDELINES

BIBLE STUDY FOR TODAY'S  
MINISTRY AND MISSION

SEP–DEC 2023

## INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

**Psalms 42—72**

Bill Goodman

**Proverbs 1—9**

Peter Hatton

**St Francis of Assisi**

Richard Martin

**A bioethical toolkit**

Ruth Bancewicz et al.

**Matthew 24—28**

Andy Angel

**Images of the church**

Helen Miller

**Romans 13—16**

Stephen Finamore

**John the Baptist**

David Spriggs

**Trauma**

Karen O'Donnell

**Advent: the art of waiting**

Isabelle Hamley

**John 15: abide and go**

Leoné Martin

# GUIDELINES

VOL 39 / PART 3  
September–December 2023

Edited by Rachel Tranter and Olivia Warburton

- 7 **Psalms Book II (Psalms 42–72): prayers of David and others – God’s message for the world**  
Bill Goodman *4–17 September*
- 22 **Proverbs 1–9: an introduction to ‘wisdom technology’**  
Peter Hatton *18 September–1 October*
- 37 **St Francis of Assisi**  
Richard Martin *2–8 October*
- 45 **A bioethical toolkit**  
Ruth Bancewicz et al. *9–15 October*
- 53 **Matthew 24–28**  
Andy Angel *16 October–5 November*
- 75 **Images of the church in the New Testament**  
Helen Miller *6–12 November*
- 84 **Romans 13–16: riding with Romans**  
Stephen Finamore *13–26 November*
- 99 **The biblical witness to John the Baptist (part I)**  
David Spriggs *27 November–3 December*
- 107 **Reading the Bible through the lens of trauma**  
Karen O’Donnell *4–10 December*
- 116 **Advent: the art of waiting**  
Isabelle Hamley *11–24 December*
- 131 **John 15: abide and go**  
Leoné Martin *25–31 December*



15 The Chambers, Vineyard  
Abingdon OX14 3FE  
[brf.org.uk](http://brf.org.uk)

Bible Reading Fellowship is a charity (233280)  
and company limited by guarantee (301324),  
registered in England and Wales

ISBN 978 1 80039 183 3  
All rights reserved

This edition © Bible Reading Fellowship 2023  
Cover image © Yotsuya/stock.adobe.com

Distributed in Australia by:  
MediaCom Education Inc, PO Box 610, Unley, SA 5061  
Tel: 1 800 811 311 | [admin@mediacom.org.au](mailto:admin@mediacom.org.au)

Distributed in New Zealand by:  
Scripture Union Wholesale, PO Box 760, Wellington  
Tel: 04 385 0421 | [suwwholesale@clear.net.nz](mailto:suwwholesale@clear.net.nz)

### **Acknowledgements**

Scripture quotations marked with the following acronyms are taken from the version shown. Where no acronym is given, the quotation is taken from the version stated in the contributor's introduction. NIV: The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. NRSV: The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Anglicised edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Notes by Andy Angel, Stephen Finamore, Bill Goodman and Richard Martin  
commissioned by Helen Paynter.

Every effort has been made to trace and contact copyright owners for material used in this resource. We apologise for any inadvertent omissions or errors, and would ask those concerned to contact us so that full acknowledgement can be made in the future.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed by Gutenberg Press, Tarxien, Malta

# Suggestions for using *Guidelines*

Set aside a regular time and place, if possible, when and where you can read and pray undisturbed. Before you begin, take time to be still and, if you find it helpful, use the BRF prayer on page 6.

In *Guidelines*, the introductory section provides context for the passages or themes to be studied, while the units of comment can be used daily, weekly or whatever best fits your timetable. You will need a Bible (more than one if you want to compare different translations) as Bible passages are not included. Please don't be tempted to skip the Bible reading because you know the passage well. We will have utterly failed if we don't bring our readers into engagement with the word of God. At the end of each week is a 'Guidelines' section, offering further thoughts about, or practical application of, what you have been studying.

Occasionally, you may read something in *Guidelines* that you find particularly challenging, even uncomfortable. This is inevitable in a series of notes which draws on a wide spectrum of contributors and doesn't believe in ducking difficult issues. Indeed, we believe that *Guidelines* readers much prefer thought-provoking material to a bland diet that only confirms what they already think.

If you do disagree with a contributor, you may find it helpful to go through these three steps. First, think about why you feel uncomfortable. Perhaps this is an idea that is new to you, or you are not happy about the way something has been expressed. Or there may be something more substantial – you may feel that the writer is guilty of sweeping generalisation, factual error, or theological or ethical misjudgement. Second, pray that God would use this disagreement to teach you more about his word and about yourself. Third, have a deeper read about the issue. There are further reading suggestions at the end of each writer's block of notes. And then, do feel free to write to the contributor or the editor of *Guidelines*. We welcome communication, by email, phone or letter, as it enables us to discover what has been useful, challenging or infuriating for our readers. We don't always promise to change things, but we will always listen and think about your ideas, complaints or suggestions. Thank you!

To send feedback, please email [enquiries@brf.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@brf.org.uk), phone +44 (0)1865 319700 or write to the address shown opposite.

# Writers in this issue

**Bill Goodman** encourages and enables lifelong learning in the Anglican diocese of Sheffield. He's also written Advent and Lent courses (available at [lightsforchrist.uk](http://lightsforchrist.uk)).

**Peter Hatton** is a former tutor at Bristol Baptist College, where he taught after 25 years in Methodist pastoral ministry. Preaching, some writing projects and looking after grandchildren are keeping him occupied in 'retirement'.

**Richard Martin** served with the Church Army before ordination to a curacy and an incumbency in Gravesend. He is now priest-in-charge of three parishes in the Gloucester diocese and is a Third Order Franciscan.

**Ruth Bancewicz** is church engagement director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge. The other contributors are former Faraday staff or have worked closely with The Faraday Institute.

**Andy Angel** is the director of formation for ministry in the diocese of Oxford, having recently been a vicar and previously having taught in two Anglican training colleges.

**Helen Miller** is head of Postgraduate Studies at Moorlands College and lectures on the college's MA and BA Applied Theology programmes.

**Stephen Finamore** is a minister of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and former principal at Bristol Baptist College. He is the author of *Romans Unwrapped*, which can be found on the BRF Resource Hub.

**David Spriggs** is a Baptist minister who served in three pastorates before working for the Evangelical Alliance and Bible Society. Since his retirement he has fulfilled part-time posts with three churches.

**Karen O'Donnell** is a trauma theologian. She has published widely on this topic including, most recently, *The Dark Womb: Re-conceiving theology through reproductive loss* (SCM Press, 2022). She is the director of studies at Westcott House, Cambridge.

**Isabelle Hamley** is a theologian, writer and broadcaster, currently working as theological adviser to the Church of England's House of Bishops. She has previously held posts as a university chaplain, parish priest, tutor in Old Testament and chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

**Leoné Martin** is an associate pastor at Cannon Street Memorial Baptist Church. She is passionate about equipping Christians for every good work through her teaching and writing, and is currently completing a theology research masters at Bristol Baptist College.

# The editors write...



This issue of *Guidelines* brings us a feast of good things as we start the journey towards Advent and Christmas.

Our Advent series will get underway with David Spriggs, as he takes a look at the biblical witness to John the Baptist, whose extraordinary birth preceded Jesus'. Taking us up to Christmas Day, Isabelle Hamley will encourage us to think about Advent and the art of waiting, showing how different biblical characters embodied this act of waiting throughout history.

We continue a number of our series, too. Stephen Finamore rounds off his four-part series on Romans with 'Riding with Romans', which takes us through the final three chapters of the book. Andy Angel also closes out his series on Matthew as we experience once again Jesus' death, resurrection and commission to his disciples. Bill Goodman will continue with Book 2 of the Psalms (42–72), investigating God's message to the world.

Our Old Testament series for this issue is on Proverbs, with Peter Hatton unpacking this book which is sometimes accused of putting forward 'a complacent, self-satisfied morality'; instead, Peter shows us how the first nine chapters of Proverbs teach us much, especially in our 'beautiful but troubled' world. Meanwhile Leoné Martin, a new contributor, takes a deep dive into the famous John 15 passage in which Jesus gives us the beautiful metaphor of the 'true vine'.

Helen Miller (née Morris) brings us a fascinating series on images of the church in the New Testament, while Richard Martin explores Franciscan spirituality to coincide with the Feast of St Francis at the beginning of October. New writer Karen O'Donnell brings us a week of notes on reading the Bible through the lens of trauma. Finally, Ruth Bancewicz and her team of scientists, who previously wrote about creation in *Guidelines*, return with a bioethical toolkit to help us think about how biblical principles apply to a Christian understanding of bioethics.

We hope this has whetted your appetite! May God bless your reading and reflections.

**Rachel Tranter and Olivia Warburton**

# Images of the church in the New Testament



Helen Miller

March 2020 likely sticks in our memories. It saw the first UK lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with schools, businesses and churches adopting online forums to continue their work. Reflection on the pandemic has prompted questions about church. Should live-streaming be part of the new normal? Why have some churches kept people connected better than others? What is the role of the church in wider society and how is this best achieved? Addressing these and other such questions requires an understanding of the nature and role of the church. 'What is the church?' is one way that we might phrase our enquiry. John Stackhouse encourages us to frame our search differently, asking not, 'What is the church?', but '*Who* and *whose* is the church?' (Stackhouse, p. 9).

Swapping 'what' for 'who and whose' is affirmed by the New Testament, which focuses less on institutional structures and more on the identity and work of the triune God upon whom the church is founded. One of the ways that the relationship between the church and the Trinity is conveyed is through images. Paul Minear argues that there are over 80 such images, including salt, light, vine branches, a vineyard, wearers of white robes and an olive. These images don't depict different churches but highlight particular aspects of *the* church as a singular entity, albeit one that has multiple expressions through time and across the globe. We'll focus on six of these images: people of God, temple of the Holy Spirit, body of Christ, new creation, bride of Christ and family. We'll explore what light these images shed on the nature and role of the church, in particular who and whose it is.

Unless otherwise stated, Bible quotations are taken from the NRSV.

# 1 People of God

## Genesis 12:1–3; Ephesians 2:1–18

When did the church begin? Minear argues that the church's origin is not Pentecost, the great commission or even Jesus' birth. Rather, the church is the people of God whose covenantal relationship with God begins with Abraham (Minear, p. 70). When Abraham first appears, the situation is looking bleak. The spiral of sin seems in continual descent. But God has other plans. He promises that, through Abraham, 'all the families of the earth shall be blessed' (Genesis 12:3). Partial fulfilment occurs as 'a mixed crowd' joins the Israelites in their exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:38) and as foreigners such as Ruth and Rahab are brought into the line of blessing (Matthew 1:5). Jesus' call to his followers to 'make disciples of all nations' reveals the fulfilment of God's promise through Jesus' work, as is beautifully portrayed in John's description of 'a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb' (Revelation 7:9).

The fulfilment of God's promise is also evident in Ephesians 2. Paul celebrates that those who were 'far off' (v. 13) and 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise' (v. 12) have become God's people through Jesus' work. This is no small change in identity but a move from death to life, from facing God's wrath to receiving his mercy, and from servitude to desire to service to Christ. It is also through Jesus that Jewish believers, 'those who were near', have access to the Father, and one church is formed from those who were formerly enemies (v. 14).

The people of God image encourages the church to discover its identity and purpose from all of scripture, while noting the fulfilment of the Old Testament in Christ. To encourage us in this, Tom Wright gives the example of a Shakespearian play whose fifth act has been lost. He notes that skilled actors could improvise the fifth act so long as they'd immersed themselves in the first four acts to learn the nature of the play and its characters. Likewise, he argues, the church is to so immerse itself in scripture that it can live out of this story in ways that are faithful to God, scripture's author (see Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*).



## 2 Temple of the Holy Spirit

### Genesis 2:4–15; Ephesians 2:19–22

Is the church perfect or imperfect? A glance at the church in history and today makes the answer clear: the church is imperfect. It consists of broken people who have been rescued and redeemed but are still works in progress. Such is the church's imperfection that it isn't uncommon to meet people who, while still claiming faith in Jesus, struggle hugely with his church.

However, while the church's faults are self-evident, the New Testament reveals that the question of the church's perfection is complex. On the one hand, people like Paul were painfully aware of problems in the churches to whom they wrote. If you're discouraged by your own church, read 1 Corinthians and you'll see that struggling churches are nothing new. And yet, on the other hand, because of the forgiveness and transformation achieved through Jesus' death and resurrection, the Corinthian Christians are described as 'sanctified in Christ Jesus' and 'called to be his holy people' (1 Corinthians 1:2, NIV). In addition, the church doesn't exist as an independent and autonomous entity. Its life is founded on and sustained by the work of the triune God, who is resplendent in holiness and perfection.

The church's dependence on God is highlighted by the image of the church as a temple of the Spirit. To understand the power of this imagery, we need to see the temple's significance earlier in scripture. As Genesis 2 reveals, there isn't a temple in Eden. Rather, the garden itself is the temple – a place of intimacy with God. Prior to their rebellion against God, Adam and Eve relate to God without fear. However, when sin distorts humans' relationship with God, in his grace God provides the sacrificial system and tabernacle (then temple) so that his people can still meet with him. There are strict limits on this access, though. Entry to the Most Holy Place, where God's presence dwelt in its most intimate tangibility, was restricted to one man, the high priest, on one day of the year, the Day of Atonement. In Ephesians 2, therefore, Paul marvels that, through Jesus, it isn't just that all God's people can access the most intimate part of God's temple, but that they themselves have become this temple. The challenge is to live accordingly, allowing the resplendent perfection of Christ's Spirit to shine through our words and deeds.

### 3 Body of Christ

#### Joel 2:28–32; 1 Corinthians 12

What does a healthy church look like? The church in Corinth provides a sobering counter-example. Sexual immorality, greed, pride and selfishness are problems in the community. And yet, for all the character flaws on display, God has been generous with the gifts he's bestowed. Paul highlights the Corinthian church's richness of knowledge and observes no lack of spiritual gifts among them (1 Corinthians 1:5–7). This outpouring of gifts is significant in the overarching story of scripture. In the Old Testament, the Spirit empowers people for particular tasks, such as authoritative speech (e.g. 2 Samuel 23:2; Micah 3:8) and leadership (e.g. Numbers 27:18). However, the infilling presence of the Spirit for all God's people, and the bestowal of all with spiritual gifts, is something that the Old Testament prophets look forward to in hope (Joel 2:28–32; Ezekiel 36:25–27).

The gift of God's Spirit is now poured out on all God's people as a result of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension. Different gifts are given to different people, which can lead to comparison and jealousy. Paul adopts and adapts the metaphor of a body, which was used to encourage unity in the wider Roman world, to help his readers see their mutual interdependence.

For Paul, though, the church is not just a body; it is Christ's body. Jesus' nature and work is the foundation for believers' relationships with each other, marking the church out as distinctively countercultural. For example, whereas Greco-Roman moralists used the body metaphor to maintain pre-established hierarchies, Paul's body of Christ image turns the Corinthian Christians' hierarchical schemas on their head. It is not those who already receive honour who need more but those who lack it (1 Corinthians 12:23–24). The seemingly weaker members are those Paul highlights as being indispensable (1 Corinthians 12:22).

In addition, the key issue for Paul is not what gifts people have but whether they use them with humility as a blessing to others, or out of pride for their own selfish gain. As Paul goes on to argue, the health of a church is not ascertained by the quantity of its gifting but the quality of its love (1 Corinthians 13). We don't achieve this in our own strength. Remarkable intimacy between Christ and his church is conveyed through the depiction of the church as his body. It is Christ's presence in our lives that enables us to love and bless others.

## 4 New creation

### Ezekiel 36:24–32; Colossians 3:1–17

How does the church grow? When we reflect on the salvation that we receive through Jesus' sacrifice, we are inspired to share this good news with others. Passion for people to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord should characterise the church. However, a healthy desire to share the gospel with others can be replaced by an anxious striving for congregational growth to attain prestige and worldly success. Glen Scrivener compares this unhealthy striving with Jesus' example. He writes:

*Jesus never suffered from anxiety about the size or prospects of his movement. In Matthew 5 his band of followers was small and unimpressive, and his shameful death was imminent, but his belief in global success was unshakeable. Christ's concern was not so much that his church grow (he knew it would do that); he was concerned that it be distinct.*

Glen Scrivener, *The Air We Breathe: How we all came to believe in freedom, kindness, progress, and equality* (The Good Book Company, 2022), p. 194

Distinctiveness is a key theme in Colossians 3. Paul urges his readers to put on their 'new self' and outlines what this looks like in practice. The transition from the old to the new self is so significant that Paul describes the old self as dead. Ezekiel prophesies this same reality through recording God's promise to remove people's hearts of stone and give them a new heart that is filled with God's Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26–27). Paul sees that this promised transformation has been achieved through Jesus. Christians' union with Jesus means that, just as they share in his death, so they are raised with Christ as new creations.

This identity as a new creation is the reality of all Christians. However, Paul urges his readers to walk more fully in this reality through directing their thoughts towards Christ, putting to death the corrupt behaviours of the old self and putting on the Christlike characteristics of the new self. Paul's exhortation is: this is who you are, now live it! Living as a new creation isn't a solo endeavour. Paul urges believers to encourage and challenge one another and, with gratitude, sing together songs of praise to God. Encouraging one another to live out our new identities in Christ more fully will help the church grow in Christlikeness. As Scrivener notes in the quote above, it will also help the church grow.

## 5 Bride of Christ

### 2 Corinthians 11:1–4; Revelation 21

What are the church's anchors? As Paul emphasises, a faithful church is anchored to the good news of Jesus, as preached by Jesus' first witnesses and recorded in scripture (2 Corinthians 11:1–4). If a different Jesus is preached than the Jesus whom scripture reveals, it isn't Jesus at all, but a deception. Therefore, as churches adapt to the opportunities and challenges of their context, they must stay anchored to the past events of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension to remain faithful. A key component of the gospel, however, is yet to be realised. Alongside being anchored to the past, churches must also be fastened to the future hope of Jesus' return.

The imagery of the church as Christ's bride depicts the church's future hope, alongside its current reality. This bridal imagery develops the marital metaphor that's used in the Old Testament to describe God's relationship with his people. In the Old Testament, the marital metaphor is predominantly used negatively to depict the rebellion of God's people as an unfaithful wife. These are deeply provocative passages that preachers need to handle with care. In the New Testament, the bridal imagery is used positively to depict the intimacy of relationship between Jesus and his church, although 2 Corinthians 11 echoes the Old Testament in emphasising the importance of faithfulness.

The bridal image is fulfilled in Revelation 21, where the church is described as 'a bride adorned for her husband' (Revelation 21:2). Interestingly, though, when John sees Christ's bride, rather than a beautifully dressed woman, he sees a giant gold cube (Revelation 21:16)! Why this contrast? John's vision mixes metaphors. In describing a cube, John brings to mind not just the temple but a particular part of it, the Most Holy Place. Whereas in the old covenant, only one man could enter the Most Holy Place on one day of the year, when Jesus' returns, the Most Holy Place will fill all of God's creation.

In the busyness and concerns of everyday life, it is easy to get bogged down in the here and now and lose track of where we're going. The bridal imagery encourages us to look ahead to the glorious future that awaits Christ's return: a time when God himself is with his people, wiping every tear from their eyes, and when death, mourning, crying and pain are no more (Revelation 21:3–4).

## 6 Family

### Isaiah 11:1–9; Ephesians 6:10–24

In Ephesians 6, Paul draws on a military metaphor to encourage his readers to stand against the devil's schemes. Paul was probably influenced in his armour metaphor by the soldiers of his day. He also draws on Old Testament imagery. In Isaiah 11:5, the prophesied Messiah is described wearing righteousness and faithfulness as a belt. In Isaiah 59:17, God puts on righteousness as a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on his head. In both verses, the context is God's victory in bringing judgement on those who oppose him and salvation for those who repent.

In Ephesians, God's victory is a strong theme. Jesus is victorious over sin, death and the devil through his death and resurrection. Putting on the spiritual armour helps us stand firm in this victory. However, the different pieces of armour are not standalone commodities. We don't put on truth, faith or salvation as separate items. Rather, through our union with Jesus, his righteousness becomes our righteousness and his inheritance becomes our salvation. To put on God's armour is to put on Jesus, the ultimate victor, himself. Prayer is important in this. Paul instructs us to pray and in particular to pray 'for all the saints' (Ephesians 6:18). If Paul were to draw again on a military metaphor here, he could have turned to the Roman army's tortoise formation. A single soldier was vulnerable to attack, as their shield only covered part of their body. In the tortoise formation, soldiers stood close together, encasing the whole group in an impenetrable wall of shields, in front, at the sides and above.

Paul closes Ephesians with a blessing for all the brothers and sisters (Ephesians 6:23). This is just one example of how the language of brothers and sisters, and therefore the image of church as a family, pervades the New Testament. As with the Roman soldier, it is hard, even impossible, to stand alone. Rather, as brothers and sisters together in Christ, we are called to stand together. 'Two are better than one... For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help' (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10). As we commit to our local churches, let us ensure that neither we, nor anyone else in our community, stands or falls alone.

## Guidelines

---

*When the church is confused about who it is and whose it is, it can become just another institution, just another collective, just another voluntary society... We need ecclesiology so that we can be who and whose we truly are.*

Stackhouse, p. 9

When we think about church, it is easy to go straight to issues of format and structure. What should Sunday services look like? What leadership styles and structures are most faithful to scripture? How formal or informal should the relationship between churches be? How often should Communion be undertaken and in what format? How do we best bear witness to Jesus within our local community? These are crucial questions. However, we're best placed to address these important issues if we have a robust understanding of the nature and role of church.

As we've considered who and whose the church is, my hope is that we've been encouraged and inspired by the images we've looked at. What an amazing privilege that the church is the temple of God's Spirit, the place where God's presence is experienced in its greatest tangibility. How awe-inspiring that the relationship between Jesus and his church is so intimate that the church is described as his body and bride. How mind-blowing that the church experiences the fulfilment of promises made over 4,000 years ago. What a blessing that we're not asked to walk the Christian life alone but that we do so empowered by Jesus' presence in our lives and in fellowship with brothers and sisters who stand alongside us. What incredible hope that the church will one day be the perfected bride of Christ, dwelling in the new heavens and new earth, where sin, death and pain are no more.

As you continue to reflect on the nature and role of the church, consider the following questions:

- Which of the images we've looked at has challenged and/or encouraged you the most? Why?
- What other images of the church in the New Testament are you aware of and what light do they shed on the nature and role of the church?

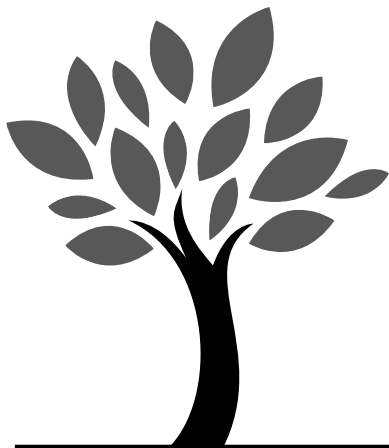
---

## FURTHER READING

- Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue and K. K. Yeo (eds), *The Church from Every Tribe and Tongue: Ecclesiology in the majority world* (Langham Creative Projects, 2018) – available as part 5 of: Green, Pardue and Yeo (eds), *Majority World Theology: Christian doctrine in global context* (InterVarsity Press, 2020).
- Tim Keller, *Center Church: Doing balanced, gospel-centred ministry in your city* (Zondervan, 2012).
- Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Graham Hill, *Healing Our Broken Humanity: Practices for revitalizing the church and renewing the world* (IVP, 2018).
- Paul S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Westminster John Knox, 2004).
- Helen Morris, *Flexible Church: Being the church in the contemporary world* (SCM Press, 2019).
- John G. Stackhouse Jr (ed.), *Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or illusion?* (Baker Academic, 2003).
- N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (SPCK, 1992).



*Enabling all ages to grow in faith*



Anna Chaplaincy  
Living Faith  
Messy Church  
Parenting for Faith

**BRF** is a Christian charity that resources individuals and churches. Our vision is to enable people of all ages to grow in faith and understanding of the Bible and to see more people equipped to exercise their gifts in leadership and ministry.

To find out more about our work, visit

**brf.org.uk**



**Guidelines** is a unique Bible reading resource that offers four months of in-depth study, drawing on the insights of current scholarship. Its intention is to enable all its readers to interpret and apply the biblical text with confidence in today's world, while helping to equip church leaders as they meet the challenges of mission and disciple-building.

**Guidelines** provides weekly units, broken into six sections, plus an introduction giving context for the passage, and a final section of points for thought and prayer. On any day you can read as many or as few sections as you wish.



This issue of **Guidelines** has been commissioned and edited by **Rachel Tranter**, Editorial Manager at BRF, and **Olivia Warburton**, Head of Content Creation at BRF.

BRF Bible reading notes are published three times a year, in January, May and September.

Also available:  
App for Android, iPhone and iPad

