

TOGETHER PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S FUTURE

The Other Side Awaits



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE MOVE FROM SPECTATORS TO PARTICIPANTS IN GOD'S UNFOLDING STORY

2 - 23 August 2026

Across Scripture, God repeatedly draws ordinary people into extraordinary work. God's movement has never been a solo performance, but a symphony of unlikely collaborators. So, this month's series invites us as the church to move from attendance to participation, from passive concern to shared responsibility and from isolated effort to communal discernment.

To participate in God's future is to notice where God is already at work and to ask the hard, holy questions: What is my section of the wall? Whose life must be protected? Which outsider is God asking us to trust? What violence must we interrupt? For our context as a society, these questions land with weight in a society marked by inequality, unemployment, violence, mistrust and deep fatigue.

It is easy, in such times, to become spectators, critics, or mere survivors. But Scripture does not give us the luxury of spectatorship. Scripture calls the church to become participants in repair. We are not building from scratch; we are joining a movement already in motion.

This month, we also honour the sacred memory of the more than 20,000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in 1956. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa also marks 50 years of the ordination of women into Presbytery, reminding that prophetic participation is never achieved overnight, nor carried by one generation alone. It has indeed been, in its own way, a glimpse of "the other side". Furthermore, fifty years is not a point of arrival; it is a marker on a much longer road.

The work is not finished. And so this theme invites all of us in our different capacities, from our diverse spaces, across our varied genders and sexualities, to hold firmly to God's call. Together, we are invited to participate in God's unfolding story for God's people, to the glory of God. In each week's text, God opens a future through cooperation rather than individual heroism. The question is not only, "What will God do?" but also, "How are we being invited to participate in what God is already doing?"

Together, the church practises hope by participating in God's future before that future is fully visible. We walk toward the other side together; not in certainty, but in faith; not as finished products, but as co-labourers with the God who is making all things new.

Week 1: Sunday 2 August	<i>Participants in rebuilding</i>	Rev Thabiso Mcinga
Week 2: Sunday 9 August	<i>Participants in hospitality</i>	Ncumisa Willie – Lay preacher (on trial)
Week 3: Sunday 16 August	<i>Participants in Justice</i>	Nqabomzi Besman – Lay preacher (on trial)
Week 4: Sunday 23 August	<i>Participants in courageous partnership</i>	Gcobisa Sigwilli – Lay preacher
Week 5: Sunday 30 August	<i>Participants in Life.</i>	Nomphelelo Kayi– Lay preacher (on trial)

Week 2 - Participants in hospitality

WORSHIP SONG: Hymn: The Spirit of Hospitality: Christian Song on Sharing God's Love https://youtu.be/njld4iNRj9g?si=wrYD-VoRMvXfE7XM	BIBLE READINGS: Joshua 2 Joshua 6:22-25 Psalm 146 Hebrews 13:1-3	Story of Rahab & the spies Rahab participates in Israel's future through risky hospitality, and the spies participate by receiving help from an unexpected outsider. Her courage opens a door for her household and Israel's future is shaped by the faith and protection of someone from beyond its own boundaries. So this week invites the church to practice hospitality that is more than politeness: a courageous openness to the people through whom God may be speaking, helping, correcting and enlarging us.
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HOME GROUPS AND CLASSES GUIDE:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).

REFLECTION: WRITTEN BY Ncumisa Willie – Lay preacher (on trial)

Hospitality in Scripture is the disposition to receive strangers with warmth, generosity and protection, and in Rahab it becomes something costlier still. As Israel prepared to enter the Promised Land, Joshua sent two spies into Jericho. They came to the house of Rahab, a Canaanite woman and a prostitute. Scripture names her trade plainly and never hides it. She took them in. When word reached the king of Jericho that the men were in her house, he sent a direct order to her door: hand them over. Rahab defied the king's command, hid the spies on her roof and sent the search party off in the wrong direction (Joshua 2:3–6). This was not merely kindness. It was open defiance of her own king, and discovery would have cost her life. She acted because she had recognized who was at work: *I know that the LORD has given you this land*” (Joshua 2:9). Her faith showed itself further in her plea that her family be spared when judgement came.

Rahab was an unlikely participant in God's story, and that is the point. An outsider in a hostile city, a woman the town had already judged, she was welcomed into the covenant people, became the mother of Boaz, an ancestor of King David, and stands in the lineage of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5). The letter to the Hebrews names her among the heroes of faith and still calls her by the trade she was known for. Her past is not erased; it is redeemed (Hebrews 11:31). What began as an act of hospitality became part of God's unfolding work of salvation. Her story presses a question on us: God's grace reaches beyond the boundaries we draw, and He often works through the very people we overlook, dismiss or avoid. Rahab challenges our assumptions about who may be used by God, and who may become an instrument of His grace to us.

Hospitality, then, is more than good manners. It is making room for God's purposes by making room for people. Wesley insisted there is *no holiness but social holiness*” and that *the world is my parish*”, crossing social and cultural boundaries because grace was already at work there ahead of him. This is the heart of our Methodist conviction: all people need to be saved, and **all people can be saved**. No one stands outside the reach of God's grace, and no reputation places a person beyond it. Rahab is proof. Sometimes we are called to extend welcome; sometimes, like the spies, we must humbly receive it. Since we are commemorating Women's Month, Rahab reminds us that God has always called women into His saving purposes. In communities marked by hardship, inequality and GBV, courageous hospitality remains a witness to the Gospel: it resists fear, extends grace, and honors the dignity of every person made in God's image. Like Rahab, we may never see the full significance of our ordinary acts of faithfulness, yet through them we become participants in God's redeeming work.

QUESTIONS FOR INTROSPECTION

1. Who might God be calling me to welcome with the love of Christ this week?
2. Where in my home, church or community would hospitality cost me something?

3. Think of a time when someone welcomed you when you had no claim to them: a stranger, a neighbor, a church that took you in. What did that welcome make possible for you that you could not have done alone? And who is waiting for you to do the same?
4. Who have I quietly written off as unlikely to be used by God?

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

MONDAY

Memory Verse - *"The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow."* – **Psalms 146:9**

Prayer - Lord, open my eyes to welcome and care for those whom You love. Amen.

TUESDAY

Memory Verse - *"Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters."* – **Hebrews 13:1**

Prayer - Father, fill my heart with genuine love that reflects Christ to everyone I meet. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

Memory Verse - *"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."* – **Hebrews 13:2**

Prayer - Jesus, help me to welcome every person with kindness, generosity, and grace. Amen.

THURSDAY

Memory Verse - *"Remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering."* – **Hebrews 13:3**

Prayer - Lord, give me a compassionate heart that stands alongside those who are suffering. Amen.

FRIDAY

Memory Verse - *"I know that the Lord has given you this land... for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."* – **Joshua 2:9, 11**

Prayer - God, give me the courage of Rahab to trust You, even when faith requires bold action. Amen.

SATURDAY

Memory Verse - *"Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho."* – **Joshua 6:25**

Prayer - Lord, help me to extend mercy and embrace those whom the world overlooks. Amen.

SUNDAY

Memory Verse - *"The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord."* – **Psalms 146:10**

Prayer - Heavenly Father, may my life proclaim Your kingdom through love, hospitality, and faithful service to others. Amen.

KIDS AND TEENS

Week 2 - Participants in Hospitality

Bible Reading: Joshua 2; Joshua 6:22–25

Welcome

Have you ever been invited to someone's house and felt really welcome? Maybe they smiled, shared a meal, or made you feel like you belonged. Hospitality is more than having people over for dinner. Hospitality means welcoming others with kindness, love, and care, even when it's difficult or unexpected. Today's Bible story is about a woman named Rahab. She made a brave choice to welcome two strangers, and God used her kindness to change history.

Read Together

Read **Joshua 2** and **Joshua 6:22–25** together.

If you have younger children, explain:

God sent two spies to explore the city of Jericho. Rahab welcomed them into her home and protected them from danger. She believed that God was powerful and chose to trust Him. Because of her faith and

kindness, Rahab and her family were rescued when Jericho fell. Later, Rahab even became part of Jesus' family line!

Discuss these questions:

1. Why do you think Rahab helped the spies?
2. Was it an easy or difficult choice? Why?
3. How did God use Rahab's kindness to help others?
4. What does this story teach us about welcoming people?

For younger children:

1. How do you make someone feel welcome?
2. Have you ever been the new person somewhere?
3. What can we do to help someone feel included?

Family Activity (optional)

The Welcome Challenge

Pretend that someone new is coming to visit your home.

As a family, think of five ways you could make them feel welcome.

Ideas might include:

- Greeting them with a smile.
- Offering them something to drink.
- Learning and using their name.
- Sharing your toys or games.
- Including them in conversations or activities.

If you'd like, make a simple **"Welcome"** sign together and decorate it. Talk about how our hearts should be just as welcoming as our homes.

Then ask:

- Which is easier, making a nice house or having a kind heart?
- Why do both matter?

Rahab probably never imagined that one act of kindness would become part of God's bigger story.

Sometimes we think only big actions matter, but God often works through simple acts of welcome.

When we invite someone to sit with us...

When we include someone who feels left out...

When we share what we have...

When we listen to someone who needs a friend...

...we are participating in what God is already doing.

Hospitality isn't just about opening our doors. It's about opening our hearts. Every smile, every kind word, every invitation can help someone experience God's love.

Family Prayer

Dear God, Thank You for welcoming us into Your family. Help us to have hearts that are kind, brave, and open to others. Show us the people who need friendship, encouragement, or a place to belong. Help our family to welcome others the way You welcome us. May our words, our actions, and our home reflect Your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Challenge for the Week

Choose **one act of hospitality** to do together this week:

- Invite someone new to join you at church or school.
- Bake or make a treat for a neighbour.
- Write an encouraging card for someone.
- Invite a friend to play.
- Sit with someone who is alone.
- Pray each day for someone who needs to know they are loved.

At the end of the week, ask:

"Who did we welcome this week, and how did we see God at work through our kindness?"