

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>	Nomphele Kayi– Lay preacher (on trial)

Week 3 - Participants in Justice

WORSHIP SONG: Make Me a Channel of Your Peace by Chet Valley Hymns and Songs https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8eorCEMIK4&t=12s	BIBLE READINGS: 1 Samuel 25:14-35 Psalm 34:11-18 Romans 12:17-21 Matthew 5:1-12	Story of Abigail who saved a king from himself Abigail steps into a dangerous space between insult and revenge - using wisdom, truth and courage to prevent unnecessary bloodshed. Her intervention does not excuse Nabal's injustice or David's anger; however, it interrupts the spiral of retaliation so that the future is not stained by violence. This week invites us to honour the peacemakers who do more than keep things quiet. Participation in God's future sometimes means standing in the gap before revenge becomes history.
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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 Nqabomzi Besman – Lay preacher (on trial)

“For the sake of peace,” many of us keep quiet. Yet peace purchased with silence is fragile, temporary, and often false. True peace demands truth, bravery, and courage. Scripture gives us a vivid example of this in the story of Nabal, Abigail, and David.

Nabal's Haughtiness

Nabal's servants witnessed him insult David and his men, fully aware that their master's arrogance placed the entire household in danger. Their silence did not secure peace — it only delayed conflict. One servant finally spoke up, describing Nabal plainly: *“He is such a wicked man that no one can speak to him”* (1 Samuel 25:17b NLT). Haughtiness closes the ears, hardens the heart, and blinds a person to danger. Scripture repeatedly warns that pride leads to destruction, and Nabal embodied this truth.

Abigail's Wisdom: The Courage to Intercede

Abigail, blessed with wisdom, did not waste time with debate or fear. She acted. She prepared food and wine, sent provisions to David's men, and went out to meet David herself. Her actions were simple but profound: She acknowledged the offense, she bowed before David, even though he was not yet king, she took accountability for a wrong she did not commit, she named her husband's foolishness without dishonouring God, she asked for pardon and favour. Abigail's humility and bravery prevented bloodshed. She stood in the gap for her household, demonstrating that the price of peace is courage, humility, and decisive action. Her response contrasted sharply with Nabal's arrogance, and God honoured her.

David himself was on the brink of taking revenge, something God forbids His people to do. Abigail's intervention saved David from sin and reminded him that vengeance belongs to God alone. We often forget this. Pride convinces us that we are the architects of our own safety. Humility reminds us to give thanks to God.

Standing in the Gap for South Africa

The most impactful intercession we can offer is to stand in the gap for our families, our communities, the Church, and our nation. As South Africa approaches local government elections, reports of political killings are on the increase, peace feels fragile.

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa carries a vision of: *“A Christ-healed Africa for the healing of nations.”* This vision demands both individual and corporate intercession. God gives us a clear instruction in 2 Chronicles 7:14: *“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face,*

and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.” To heal our land, we must: humble ourselves, seek God’s face, turn from pride and wickedness, intercede with courage, stand in the gap even when others remain silent.

QUESTIONS FOR INTROSPECTION

1. Where in my own life have I been “*silent for the sake of peace*,” and is that silence protecting peace or merely postponing conflict?
2. In what ways does pride — mine or others’ — prevent God from fighting battles on my behalf?
3. How is God calling me to stand in the gap for my family, community, or church the way Abigail stood in the gap for her household?
4. As South Africa approaches local government elections, what specific areas of our nation am I committing to pray for, repent of, and intercede over so that God may “*heal our land*”?

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

MONDAY

Memory Verse

"Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." – **Psalm 34:14**

Prayer

Lord, make me a person who actively seeks peace and chooses what is right. Amen.

TUESDAY

Memory Verse

"The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." – **Psalm 34:18**

Prayer

Father, help me to reflect Your compassion by standing with those who are hurting. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

Memory Verse

"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone." – **Romans 12:17**

Prayer

Jesus, give me the grace to respond to conflict with wisdom, integrity, and love. Amen.

THURSDAY

Memory Verse

"Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good." – **Romans 12:21**

Prayer

Lord, empower me to be an instrument of Your goodness in a broken world. Amen.

FRIDAY

Memory Verse

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." – **Matthew 5:9**

Prayer

God, use me to bring healing, reconciliation, and hope wherever there is division. Amen.

SATURDAY

Memory Verse

"Abigail acted quickly..." – **1 Samuel 25:18**

Prayer

Father, grant me Abigail's wisdom, courage, and humility to prevent harm and pursue justice. Amen.

SUNDAY

Memory Verse

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." – **Matthew 5:6**

Prayer

Lord, deepen my desire for Your righteousness and help me to participate faithfully in Your work of justice and peace. Amen.

KIDS AND TEENS

Week 3 Participants in Justice

Worship Song: *God of Justice* – Tim Hughes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErvzIIHibSk&list=RDErvzIIHibSk&start_radio=1

Bible Reading: 1 Samuel 25:14–35

Welcome

Have you ever seen something that wasn't fair? Maybe someone was left out, bullied, blamed for something they didn't do, or treated differently. Sometimes we might think, "*It's not my problem.*" But today's story shows us that God sometimes asks us to **step in**. Justice means standing up for what is right, protecting people from harm, and treating others with dignity and fairness.

Worship Together

Listen to "**God of Justice**" by Tim Hughes together.

As you listen, think about: "**How might God be asking me to move from watching to doing?**"

Read Together - 1 Samuel 25:14–35.

The Story for Younger Children

David was angry with Nabal and planned to attack him and his household. Abigail heard what was happening. Instead of staying quiet, she bravely went to meet David. She spoke wisely and helped him see that taking revenge would be wrong. Abigail stepped into a difficult situation and helped prevent people from being hurt.

Talk About It

- Why was Abigail's situation difficult?
- What could have happened if she did nothing?
- How did Abigail help bring peace?
- What can we do when we see something unfair?

For younger children:

What does it mean to be fair?

What should you do if someone is being treated badly?

Family Activity

Justice Detective

Think of a situation where someone might be treated unfairly.

For example:

- Someone is being left out.
- Someone is being bullied.
- Someone isn't being listened to.
- Someone is being treated differently.

Now ask: "**What could we do?**"

Remind children that justice can look like speaking up, including someone, listening, protecting someone, or asking a trusted adult for help.

Bringing It Home

Abigail wasn't the most powerful person in the story, but she saw what was happening and chose to act. She reminds us that **we don't have to be powerful to make a difference**.

Sometimes participating in God's work simply means noticing what is happening around us and asking: "**What can I do?**" We may not be able to fix every injustice, but we can faithfully do our part.

Family Prayer

Dear God,

Thank You for being a God of justice.

Help us notice when people are being treated unfairly.

Give us courage and wisdom to speak up, protect others, and bring peace.

Show us our part to play in making our homes, schools, churches, and communities places of fairness and love.

Amen.

Family Challenge

Choose **one act of justice** to do this week:

- Include someone who is being left out.
- Speak up kindly when something is unfair.
- Help someone who is struggling.
- Stand beside someone who is being bullied.
- Give something you have to someone who needs it.
- Pray for a situation of injustice and ask God how you can help.

At the end of the week, ask: "**Where did we notice injustice, and what did we do about it?**"

Remember:

We don't have to fix everything. We simply must do our part.