THESE ARE DAYS.

WEOMAHA.COM/LENT2022

Our FATHER *who art in heaven,*
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this DAY *our daily bread,*
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but DELIVER *us from evil.*
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever.
AMEN.

THESE ARE DAYS.

A LENT 2022 STUDY

THE WATER'S EDGE CHURCH

Created by The Water's Edge Church
February 2022
Contributing Writers: Michele Bonewell,
Craig Finnestad & Doug Giffin
Design and Layout: Michele Bonewell

40 DAYS. MY JOURNEY. MY STORY.
(sign here)

THESE ARE DAYS...

These are days of distraction and division. Days of greed and gluttoney. Days of hurt and hopelessness. Days of anger and anomosity. Days of loneliness and losses.

But, Jesus is present and these can be....

Days of...
...repentance and renewal...
...releasing and relinquishing...
...restoration and response...
...remaining and reflecting...

And days of...
Redemption

These are days of preparation and promise. Days of hope and humility. Days of connection and change. The days of turning from what keeps us from God and turning toward what brings us closer to Him.

THESE ARE DAYS...

AN INVITATION...

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd, The Water's Edge invites you to embark on a journey to say, "These are days..." Over the next 40 days, WE will replace the things in our lives that take hold of our days. The things that keep us from days of hope. The things that keep us from days of gratitude. The things that keep us from days of joy. The things that keep us from days with Jesus.

Each day, WE invite you to use this study guide - individually, as a family, with friends or with your House Church - to lead you through the week's practices. In this guide you will find:

YOUR HOPES - Use the adjacent page to write down your hopes as you work through this study. What do you hope comes from the next 40 days?

BIBLE READING PLAN - Join as we spend the next 40 days reading through the book of Luke. We encourage you to read each day's passage and then take time to reflect over what you have read.

DEVOTION & APPLICATION - A weekly devotion based on this week's theme. Take time to read the devo and then aswer the questions on how you will apply what you have learned.

REFLECTION - A place to reflect on choices you made this week as well as this week's sermon. Reflect on your week and the message and then take time to pray.

THESE ARE DAYS OF... - What stood out to you this week? What are things from this week that you want to express gratitude for?

BE SILENT AND STILL - Take time each day to sit in silence with God. How does He speak to you in the silence?

PRAYERS & BLESSINGS - To help you on your journey.

If you have any questions about this guide or the *These Are Days* series, let me know. You can email me at michele@weomaha.com.

With Joy,
Michele

THESE ARE DAYS...

Use this page to write or draw out your hopes during this season of Lent.

March 2

Luke 1:1-38

March 3

Luke 1:39-80

March 4

Luke 2:1-20

March 5

Luke 2: 21-52

March 6

Rest & Reflect

March 7

Luke 3:1-38

March 8

Luke 4:1-30

March 9

Luke 4:31-44

March 10

Luke 5:1-39

March 11

Luke 6:1-16

March 12

Luke 6:17-49

March 13

Rest & Reflect

March 14

Luke 7:1-23

March 15

Luke 7:24-50

March 16

Luke 8:1-25

March 17

Luke 8:26-56

March 18

Luke 9:1-27

March 19

Luke 9:28-62

March 20

Rest & Reflect

March 21

Luke 10:1-42

March 22

Luke 11:1-28

March 23

Luke 11:29-54

March 24

Luke 12:1-32

March 25

Luke 12:33-59

March 26

Luke 13:1-35

March 27

Rest & Reflect

March 28

Luke 14:1-35

March 29

Luke 15:1-32

March 30

Luke 16:1-31

March 31

Luke 17:1-37

April 1

Luke 18:1-17

April 2

Luke 18:18-43

April 3

Rest & Reflect

April 4

Luke 19:1-28

April 5

Luke 19:29-48

April 6

Luke 20:1-26

April 7

Luke 20:27-47

April 8

Luke 21:1-8

April 9

Rest & Reflect

April 10

Luke 22:1-23

April 11

Luke 22:24-53

April 12

Luke 22:54-71

April 13

Luke 23:1-31

April 14

Luke 23:32-56

April 15

Luke 24:1-27

April 16

Luke 24:28-53

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....

A PRAYER FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Dear God,
It is Lent. A season of renewal.
Days of reflection. Nights of replenishment.
Weeks of repairing and refocusing.
Ending in a day of resurrection and rebirth.

Grant me discipline. Discipline to be faithful.
Discipline to hunger for Your Word.
Discipline to thirst for conversation and quiet time with You.
Discipline to love what You love and to love
like You love.
Teach me again that discipline yields a rich harvest of grace and peace.
Remove any obstacles between us and move me closer to You.

REPENT

To turn from lust to love.
To turn from fear to freedom
To turn from jealousy to justice.
To turn from selfishness to service.
To turn from haughtiness to humility.
To turn from gluttony and greed to goodness and grace.

FROM PRAYERS FROM THE WATER'S EDGE WRITTEN BY CRAIG FINNESTAD

To turn from doubting and depression to depending fully on You.
To turn from worshipping counterfeit gods to worshipping You.

Help me repent of my sins and turn to You, so my sins are wiped away.

Remind me of my mortality.
I was created from dust and to dust I shall return.
My time in the world You created is limited.
Help me make the most of it.
Let Your dreams for me be my dreams for me.
Make my purposes clear. Give me a passion for my purposes.
And let me know that this world is not my permanent home.
Your Kingdom; Your heart is my true and eternal dwelling place.

You are faithful to me.
Re-create me in Your image so I am faithful to You and others.
Do something in me during this season.
Do something small and do something big.
And as You do something in me, do something through me.
Bless me and make me a blessing to others and to the world.
Let me experience the resurrection of Christ.
Resurrect me. Give me a rebirth. Raise me to new levels of life.

Amen.

MARCH 2, 2022

ASH WEDNESDAY

Reflect on how you felt as you received the imposition of ashes.

What does repentance mean to you?

MARCH 2-5, 2022

Use this space to jot down your thoughts on the week's scripture readings.

BELOVED IS WHERE WE BEGIN

If you would enter
into the wilderness,
do not begin
without a blessing.

Do not leave
without hearing
who you are:
Beloved,
named by the One
who has traveled this path
before you.

Do not go
without letting it echo
in your ears,
and if you find
it is hard
to let it into your heart,
do not despair.
That is what
this journey is for.

I cannot promise
this blessing will free you
from danger,
from fear,
from hunger
or thirst,
from the scorching
of sun
or the fall
of the night.

But I can tell you
that on this path
there will be help.

I can tell you
that on this way
there will be rest.

I can tell you
that you will know
the strange graces
that come to our aid
only on a road
such as this,
that fly to meet us
bearing comfort
and strength,
that come alongside us
for no other cause
than to lean themselves
toward our ear
and with their
curious insistence
whisper our name:

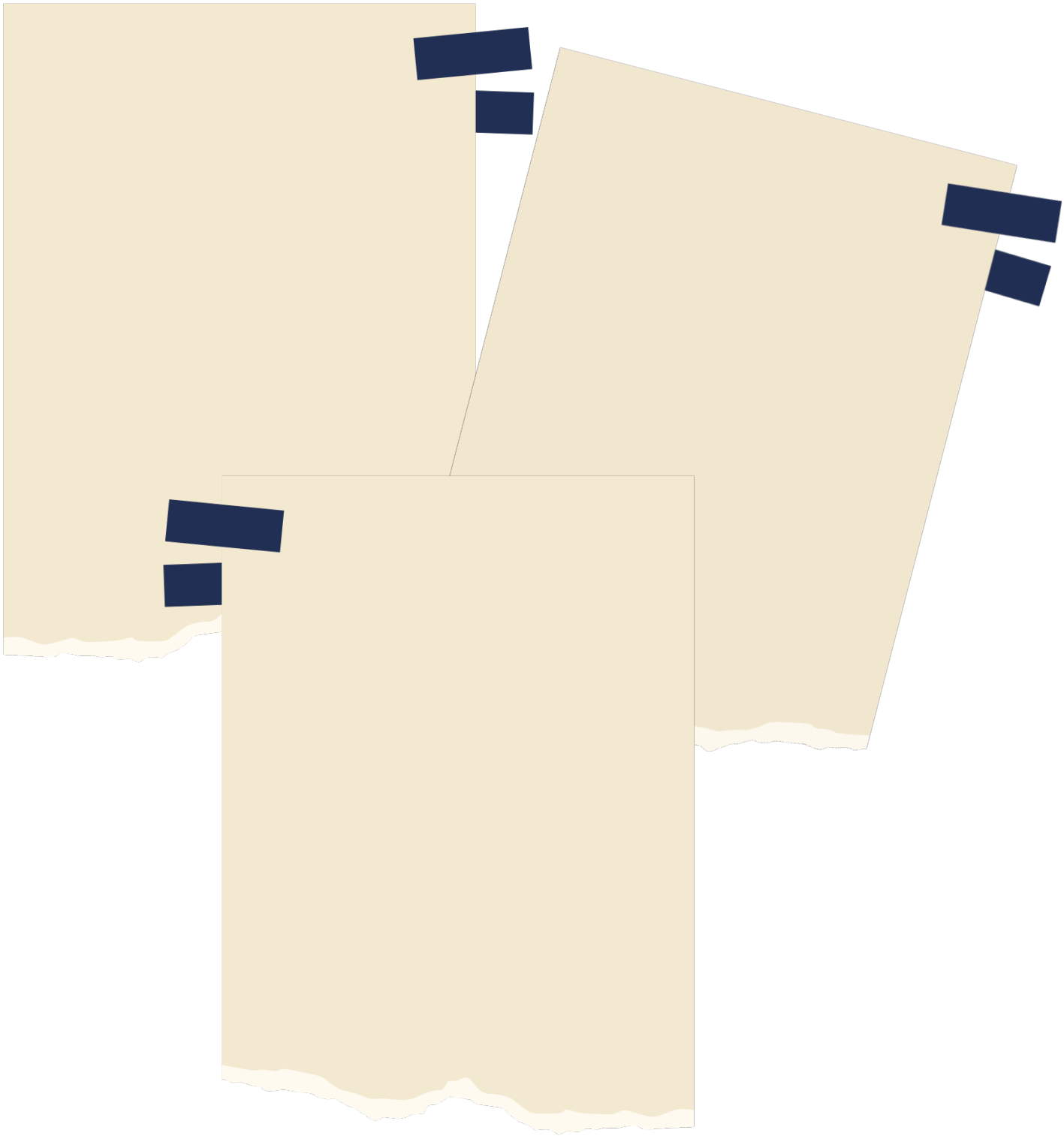
Beloved.
Beloved.
Beloved.

A BLESSING AS WE BEGIN LENT

FROM CIRCLE OF GRACE: A BOOK OF
BLESSINGS FOR THE SEASONS
BY JAN RICHARDSON

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Use this as a time of silence. Enter the silence with no agenda. Just listen for hints of God. After a time of silence, pray:

Scattered. Cluttered. Restless.
Anxious. Bored. Broken.
Overwhelmed.
I come to You.

I haul heavy burdens from the past.
I carry busyness and distractions from today.
I bring uncertainty and fears for the future.

The world sends constant messages and keeps littering my life.
I want to disconnect from the world's voice and be still with You.
I want to know You and be led by You.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....
RENEW

MARCH 6-12, 2022

Oh loving Lord,
I don't want to fall into a routine.
So I come to you seeking
A fresh, new perspective.
Not to throw away past lessons,
But for your Spirit to rebuild and
Breathe new life into my faith.
Show me how to do this.
Let me open myself completely
To your voice;
The voice that tells me
God is love,
And in Christ all things are new.
Renew me, restore me,
Break me down if needed, then,
Let me fall in love again, oh Lord,
Trusting in your promises.
Now a bit more mature and solid
In the ways of the Master
But still with so much to learn.
Let my joy be a deeper joy,
One that celebrates and gives thanks.
Let my love be a deeper love,
One that receives and gives life.
May it all start and end
With my Lord, my God,
My Savior Jesus Christ,
In his holy name,
Amen.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

WEEK 1

01

THESE ARE DAYS....

Ever find yourself mourning something? A dream that ended. A relationship that died? The place you called home? A time not so long ago that had become just a faint memory? What once was? What was supposed to be? What you thought was real but turned out to be smoke and mirrors?

Having something end is heartbreaking and heart-wrenching. But...what if we flipped the switch? What if we saw not just the death of something, but the new life that has been with it? Even when we experience the death of something God can use it. To help us grow. To help us understand. To help us lean into Him. And, baby step by baby step, God can and will breathe life back into us. And we are renewed.

Renewal. Finding the beauty in what's left. The beauty in what is yet to be. The beauty that comes when we let go of the smoke and mirrrors. When we let go on the quest for perfection and open our hearts to a connection. One that is real. One that is good. One that is rooted in Love. The Love that remains when everything else seems to have fallen away.

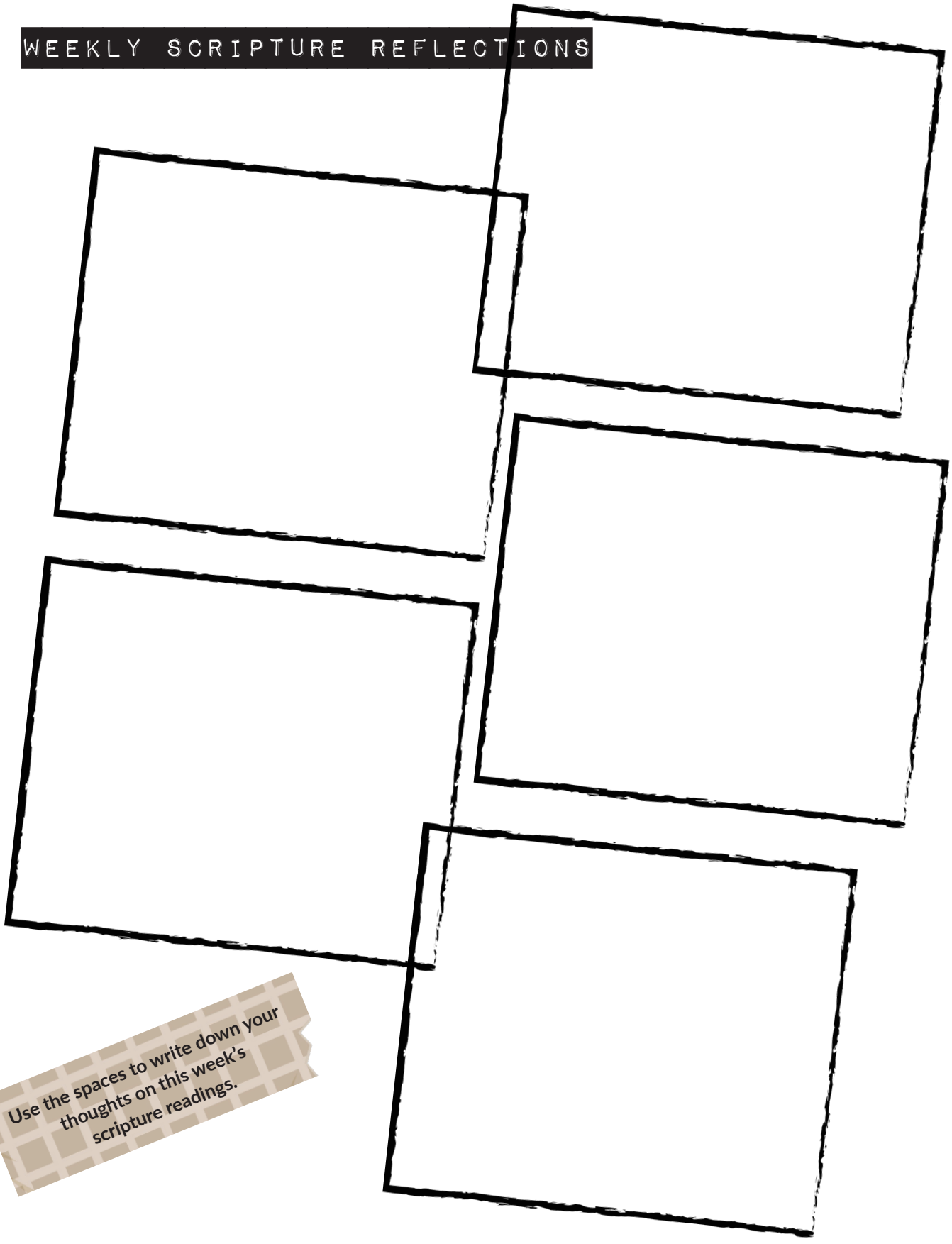
He will open our eyes to beauty. He will grant us rest. And, He will renew us in ways we can't ever imagine.

It won't be easy. We're not promised that. But, friend, what we are promised is something so much better. So, mourn what once was. But, don't forget what is to be. His gift. His promise. A gift and promise for us all.

How will you allow yourself to be renewed by God today? What is it you need to let go of? Where is the beauty He is pointing out to you?

DEVOTION BY MICHELE BONEWELL

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 5:17-26

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. Jesus was a healer and quite good at making people whole again (verse 17). Jesus initially healed the paralyzed man by forgiving his sins (verse 20). Why do you think Jesus forgave the man's sins before telling him to get up and walk?

2. Healing can happen emotionally, physically, spiritually, and relationally. Which of these four types of healing do we typically focus on? Why do we spend less time praying for each other's emotional, spiritual, and relational heath?

3. What are examples of relational, emotional, and spiritual healing you have experienced or have witnessed others experience?

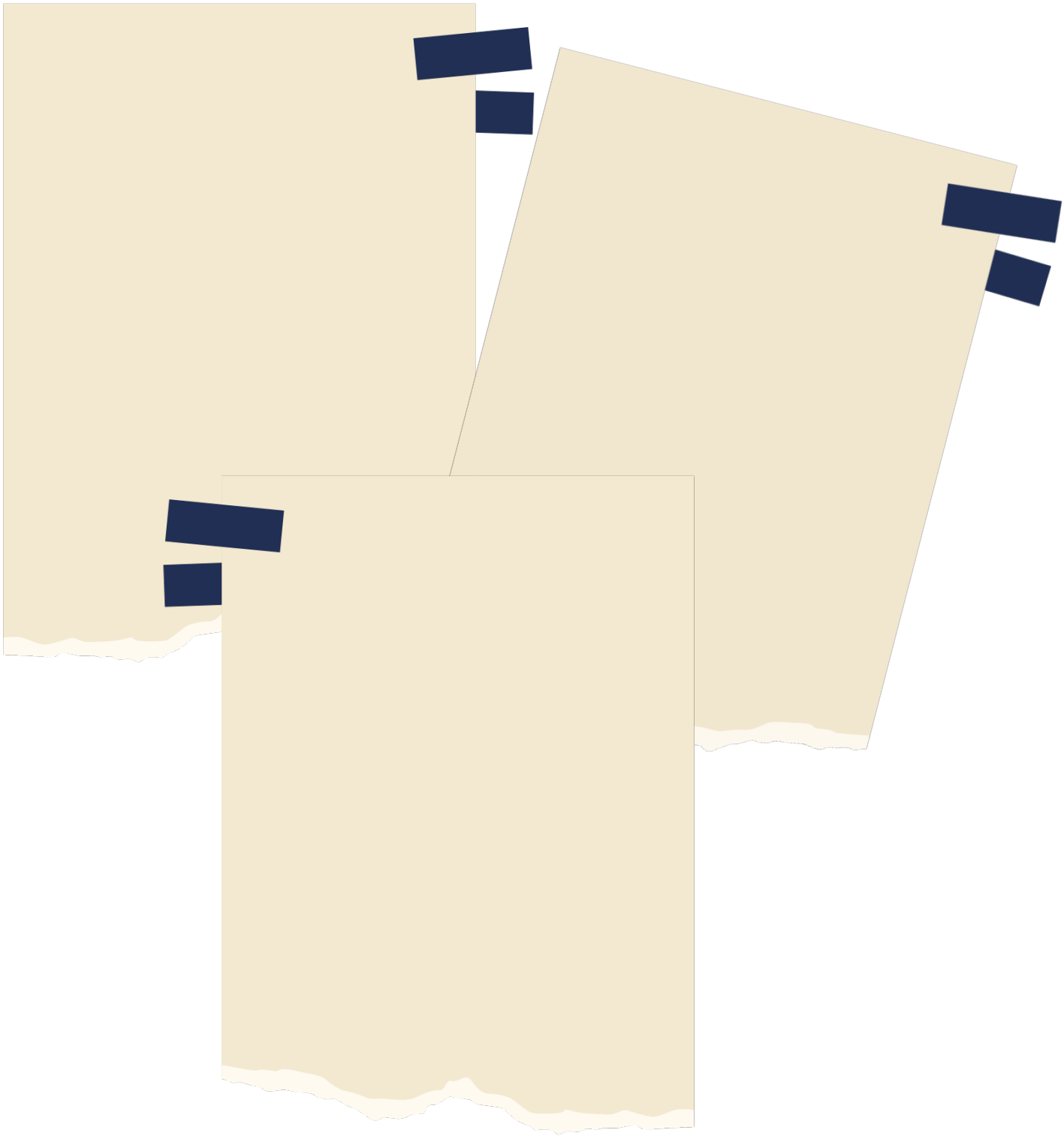
4. Jesus notes the relationship between faith and healing (verse 20). How can faith in Jesus lead to healing and renewal?

5. The man was renewed by Jesus and went home praising God (verse 25). When is a time you have experienced renewal and praised God because of it?

6. Jesus does amazing things (verse 26) including leading people to places of renewal. What is an area of your life you would like to experience renewal?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Be silent. Relax. Enjoy the silence. You probably don't get a lot of it.

After a time of silence, pray:

You have created me for You
and for You alone.
Teach me that my heart and
my mind will not experience
harmony until I find rest in You.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....
RELEASE

MARCH 13-19, 2022

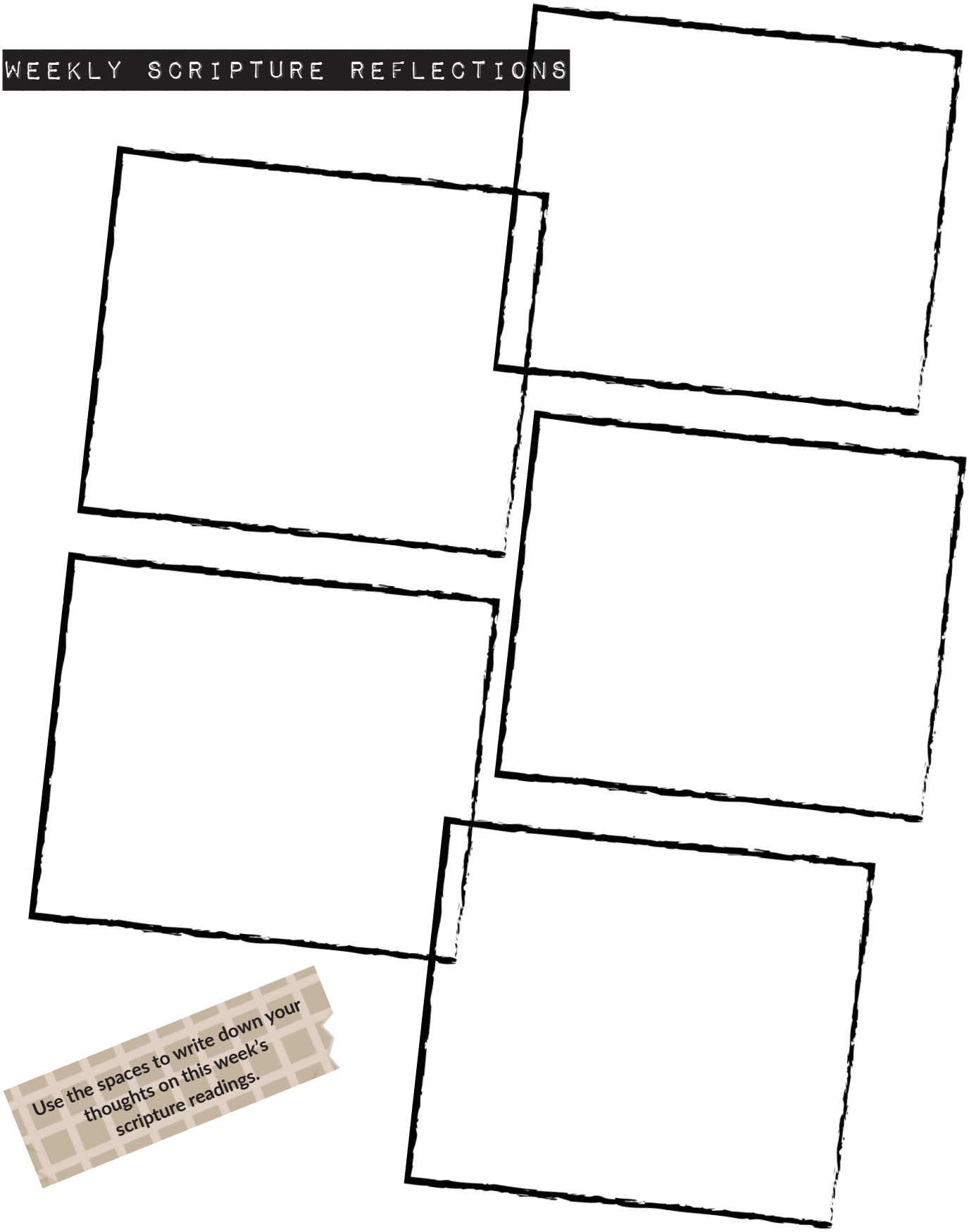
Find release with me, He calls.
Find release with me and let the troubles of the world fall away.
Release your trust in me and allow me to hold your heart in my hands.
For you are my beloved, He whispers.
My beloved child whom I will not let go.
Find release with me; follow my lead.
For I will take you exactly where you need to be.
And while the path may wind and, at times, become rocky and steep,
I will be there, each step of the way.
Like the steadfast sherpas, I will guide you to the mountain's peak so we can gaze at the valley below.
Find release with me, He calls.
Come gaze at the valley from the safe distance of the mountainside.
From here, you can see its beauty.
From here, you can see how the sunlight washes over it.
Bathing it in a soft glow. Washing away the dust so its beauty shines through.
Find release with me, He calls.
For there is so much I have to show you;
So much we have yet to do.
Find release with me, He calls.
Find release and let 's experience this life with all it has to offer.
Find release with me, He calls.
Find release and live.

WEEK 2

02

WRITTEN BY MICHELE BONEWELL

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS....

I have this coffee mug. It says, "no bad days." I hate this coffee mug. I honestly don't know why I keep it.

No bad days. No bad days? Really? Because everyone has bad days. Days when it seems everything is going wrong. Days when you find yourself crying because the grief overwhelms you. Days when you feel stuck. Days when you lose something (or someone) you love. Days when you mess up. Days when you feel every harsh word that has been said to/about you and it physically hurts. Days when you don't know what is really wrong, but you do know that just getting out of bed is a task you're not quite prepared for. We all have bad days. For everyone, those days look different. And, our perspectives on what constitutes a bad day will be different based upon our experiences. But, the one things we call all agree on is...

Despite what my silly coffee mug says, there are bad days. And, we will all have our share of them.

And it's ok.

It's ok to feel the bad days. It's ok to cry the tears. It's ok to scream and curse and get angry. And, it's ok to need help. It's ok to fall to your knees and cry out to the One who can release you from the bad and open your eyes to the good.

DEVOTION BY MICHELE BONEWELL

There will be bad days. In the story of the sinful woman, I can only imagine the types of bad days that she faced. After all, we know nothing about her other than she was the "Sinful Woman." That is her only indentity. But, Jesus changed that. Jesus released her from her bad day and gave her something that she needed more than anything - hope for better days ahead.

So, when the bad days come, no matter what their root, allow yourself to feel them. And then, release them at the feet of Jesus. Because, with some faith...a little hope...a little love and, a whole lot of Jesus...there will be good days, too. Waiting for us. For each of us.

So, lean into the bad, experience it, reflect and reminisce and then...release it and open your eyes and see the good He has to offer. You might have to squint to bring it into focus. But it is there. It is good because, He is good.

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 7:36-50

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. A Pharisee invited Jesus to have dinner. Jesus accepted the invitation (verse 36). When is the last time you had dinner or did anything socially with somebody who is much different than you? What was it like? What made it challenging? What made it rewarding?

2. Simon, the Pharisee, put Jesus to the test (verse 39). Have you ever done this before? How did putting Jesus to the test work out for Simon? How did it work out for you?

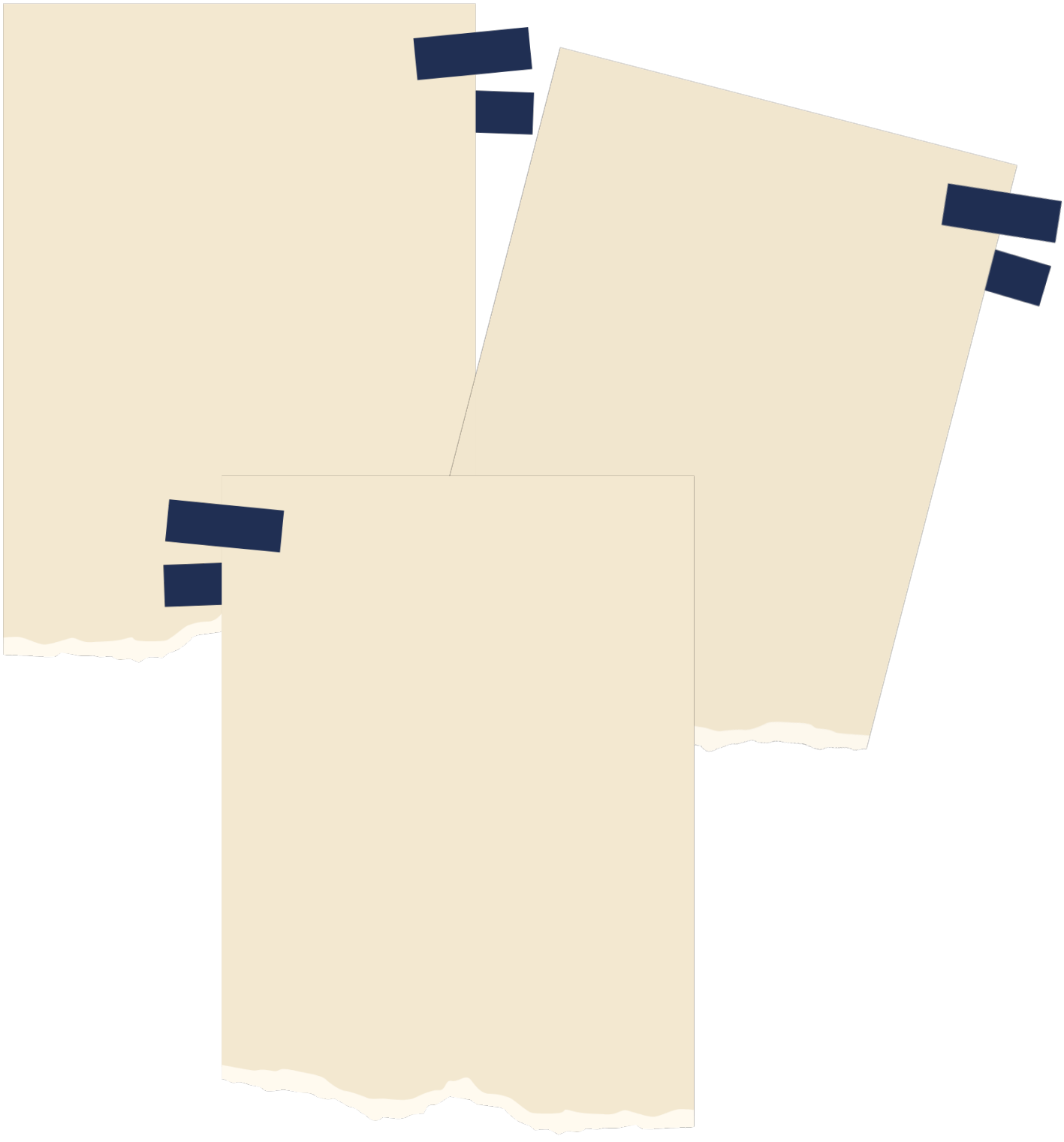
3. Jesus tells Simon a story and asks Simon a question to point Simon to the truth (verses 41-42). How can stories point us to truth in ways that facts can't? How can questions point us to truth in ways that statements can't?

4. The story Jesus tells is about a moneylender who lends a lot of money to one person and some money to another. Neither can pay the lender back. Both are released from their debt. When have you experienced forgiveness for a little thing? When have you experienced forgiveness for a big thing? What is it like to experience forgiveness and release things like guilt, shame, and resentment?

5. The sinful woman wept at Jesus' feet, washed his feet with her tears and hair, kissed his feet, and poured her perfume on his feet (verse 39). Jesus honored this extravagant worship (44-46) and forgave her sins (47-48). What do we learn from the sinful woman about worship?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Be silent. Give your burdens to God. Meditate on what your life would look like if you fully accepted and experienced God's grace. After a time of silence, pray:

You have created me
to know You.
Not just to know about You,
but to know You.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....
RELINQUISH

MARCH 20-26, 2022

Father,
Let me be dependent on you alone.
Let me turn to you in each and everything.
And let me turn each and everything to you.
Father,
Let me rejoice with you in times of celebration.
Let me weep with you in times of tribulation.
For, today, I hand it all over to you.
That which brings me happiness.
And that whichs breaks me.
Today, I look to only You to make me whole.
Father,
I surrender all to you.
Shape me and guide me.
Prune from me that which is unnecessary.
Plant new roots embedded in the richness of Your love.
Let me grow in warm sunlight of Your grace
And through Your mercy may I put forth seeds that will do the same.
Father,
Here and now, I say yes.
Yes to who you are.
Yes to what you give.
Yes to living each day through you and for you.
From this day forward and forever more,
I relinquish all I was, all I am and all I will be to you.
Amen.

WEEK 3

WRITTEN BY MICHELE BONEWELL

03

THESE ARE DAYS....

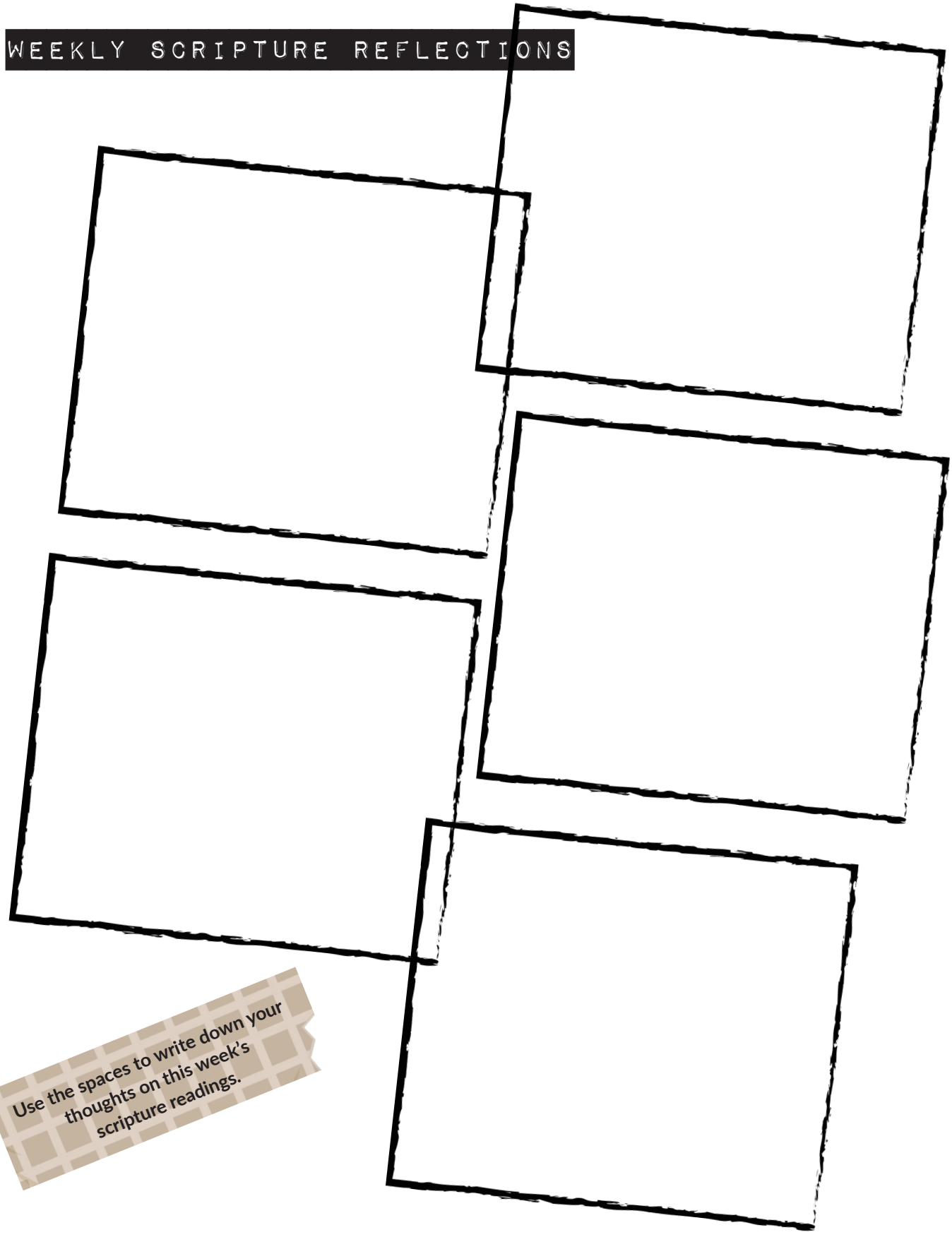
Formal cost benefit analysis was introduced in 1708 by Abbe de Saint-Pierre regarding road improvements of all things. Clearly, he was merely fleshing out the work done by a certain religious leader long before. To appreciate the conundrum Jesus puts this man into you must appreciate who the man was. He was, after all, a religious leader.

In order to have become such a leader he would have had to keep all the Jewish laws, all 613 of them. He would have kept these laws personally but also, certainly, he would have had to have done everything in his power to make others do likewise. To be a leader he would have been exemplary and frankly the five laws Jesus named would have been a piece of cake. These would have been a low hurdle, but Jesus wasn't done. Being a leader gave him a certain status, he may have commanded other Jews, perhaps even had disciples of his own. When the scripture says he was rich, it's not just talking dollars and cents. But it's things Jesus tells him he must relinquish and ultimately eternal life isn't enough of a benefit for him to pay with his wealth. The cost just isn't worth it.

The man already had his reward, or so he thought. He had built a wonderful life and unlike George Bailey, he knew it. Even everlasting life wasn't worth the bird he had in his hand. He loved his earthly life more than the prospect of being with God forever. He couldn't give that up and it made him sad, a sadness of his own doing. Everything has a cost and whether we realize it or not we make value judgements, we do cost benefit analysis many times every day. While these aren't questions of life forever vs. life now, we're constantly weighing what we'll have to give up. The question of this story really becomes, what do we value most?

DEVOTION BY DOUG GIFFIN

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 18:18-23

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. The rich man asked Jesus how he could get to heaven (verse 18). Have you ever wondered what you have to do to get to heaven?

2. It was a common belief, during the time of Jesus, that good works would earn people the reward of eternal life. Jesus let the rich man know that good works alone are not enough, but that following Jesus and having faith in Jesus gets people to heaven (verse 22). Is this a shift from what you previously believed?

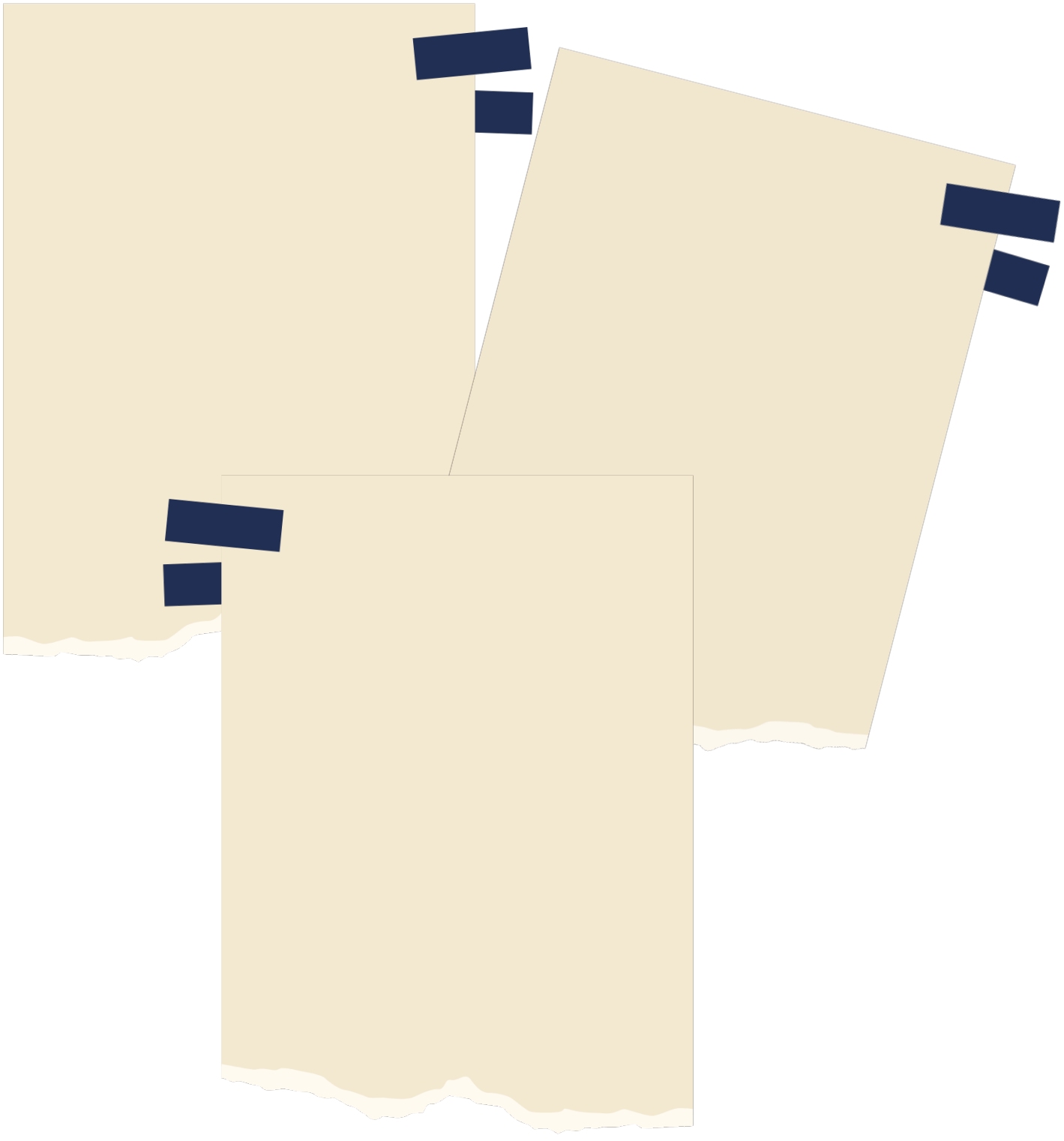
3. The rich man is invited to trust God completely. But he cannot or rather will not relinquish his attachment to wealth (verse 23) as he rests comfortably on the security of his surplus. What is something you are having trouble relinquishing that is preventing you from more closely following Jesus?

4. Jesus says that people can't save themselves—it's God who does the saving (verse 27). What would it take for you to relinquish control over your salvation and trust more fully in God for this eternal gift? What would be the blessing if you were able to pull this off?

5. Jesus tells Peter that those who relinquish their attachments to lesser gods and make sacrifices so that they can follow Jesus more closely will be rewarded in this life and in the life to come (verses 29-30). How have you experienced this to be true?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Be silent. You are alone with God. Simply spend time together.

After a time of silence, pray:

Almighty God –
These things I ask of You:

Replace scattered with focus.
Replace cluttered with simple.
Replace restlessness with balance.
Replace anxiety with peace.
Replace boredom with passion.
Replace broken with blessed.
Replace overwhelmed with over-
whelmed by Your presence.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....

MARCH 27-APRIL 2, 2022

Blessing the Fragments

Cup your hands together, and you will see the
shape this blessing wants to take.
Basket, bowl, vessel:
it cannot help
but hold itself open
to welcome
what comes.

This blessing
knows the secret
of the fragments
that find their way
into its keeping,
the wholeness
that may hide
in what has been
left behind,
the persistence of plenty
where there seemed only lack.

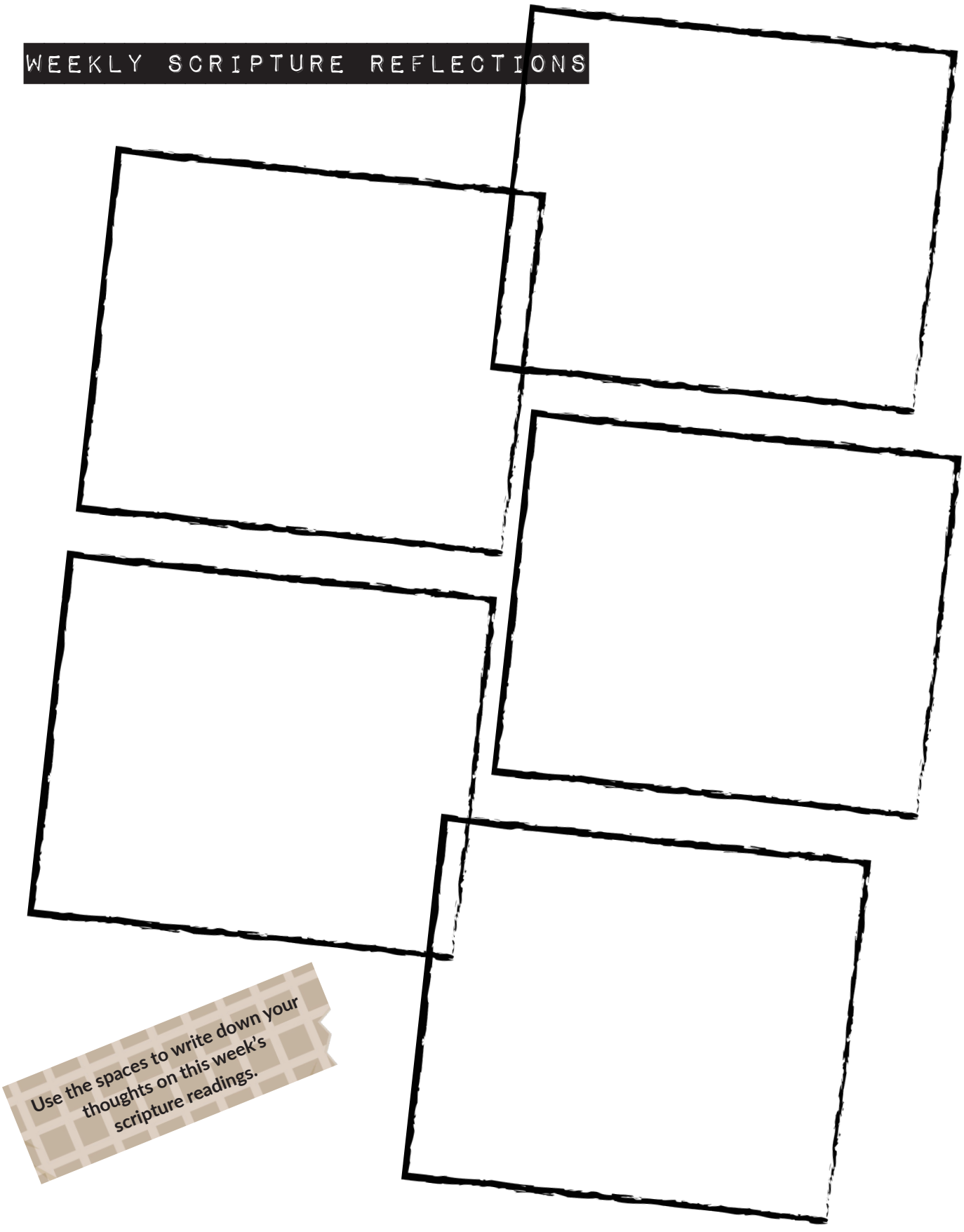
Look into the hollows
of your hands
and ask
what wants to be
gathered there,
what abundance waits
among the scraps
that come to you,
what feast
will offer itself
from the fragments
that remain.

WRITTEN BY EMILY P. FREEMAN

WEEK 4

04

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS....

Ever hang out with the wrong people because you didn't know any better? I have. True story. My first friend in Junior High when I literally knew three kids among about 750 was David Zikmund. Dave was the first kid in the building to speak to me. I don't recall what he said but I know I was grateful someone took interest in me, a shy, awkward, skinny kid from the country. I wouldn't learn until much later Dave was looked down upon by the "cool" kids in my class. I don't know if he caught flack because he hung out with me, an outsider, but we know Jesus was in the doghouse for associating with Zacchaeus. And why wouldn't he be?

Jesus went to eat with a guy who was notorious for the crummy things he did. His reputation was so bad the rank and file had written him off long ago as a traitor and a sleaze. He had been judged and come up way short as unredeemable, but Jesus didn't see it that way. Why? Did Jesus see something in him? Maybe. Perhaps Jesus knew anyone who would climb a tree just to get a glimpse of him was looking for something. Maybe Jesus knew Zacchaeus's time was right to change, to become a new kind of person. Jesus knew Zacchaeus needed a new start, a reset, he needed restoration. We all do.

No matter if our sins are large or small in our estimation or in others' we are worthy of forgiveness, of having the slate wiped clean. The newness that only God can pull off is available when even we don't think it's possible. New beginnings others don't think are available because of the rotten things we've done in their eyes are offered to us by God if we will only look for them.

The good news is we don't have to climb any trees to catch a glimpse of our savior. We need merely to go to God in prayer and trust in His promise of abundance. When we speak with our Father about what's in our heart, we are restored. Re-birth is ours. What we are made into is something better than we were before. And that's very Good News indeed.

Jesus came to redeem and restore the lost. Do you feel that way? If you're lost, how will you seek Him? How will you re-order your life and accept the full life He offers?

DEVOTION BY DOUG GIFFIN

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 19:1-10

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. Zacchaeus had labels attached to him (verses 2-3): leader, tax collector, wealthy, short. What labels do people attached to you? How do you respond to these labels? How do these labels distance you from the image of God in which you were created?

2. Zacchaeus ran to Jesus (verse 4). He didn't walk. He ran. What does this tell you about Zacchaeus? Do you typically run to Jesus? Or are you more likely to walk? Or maybe walk and seek other possible destinations on your way to Jesus?

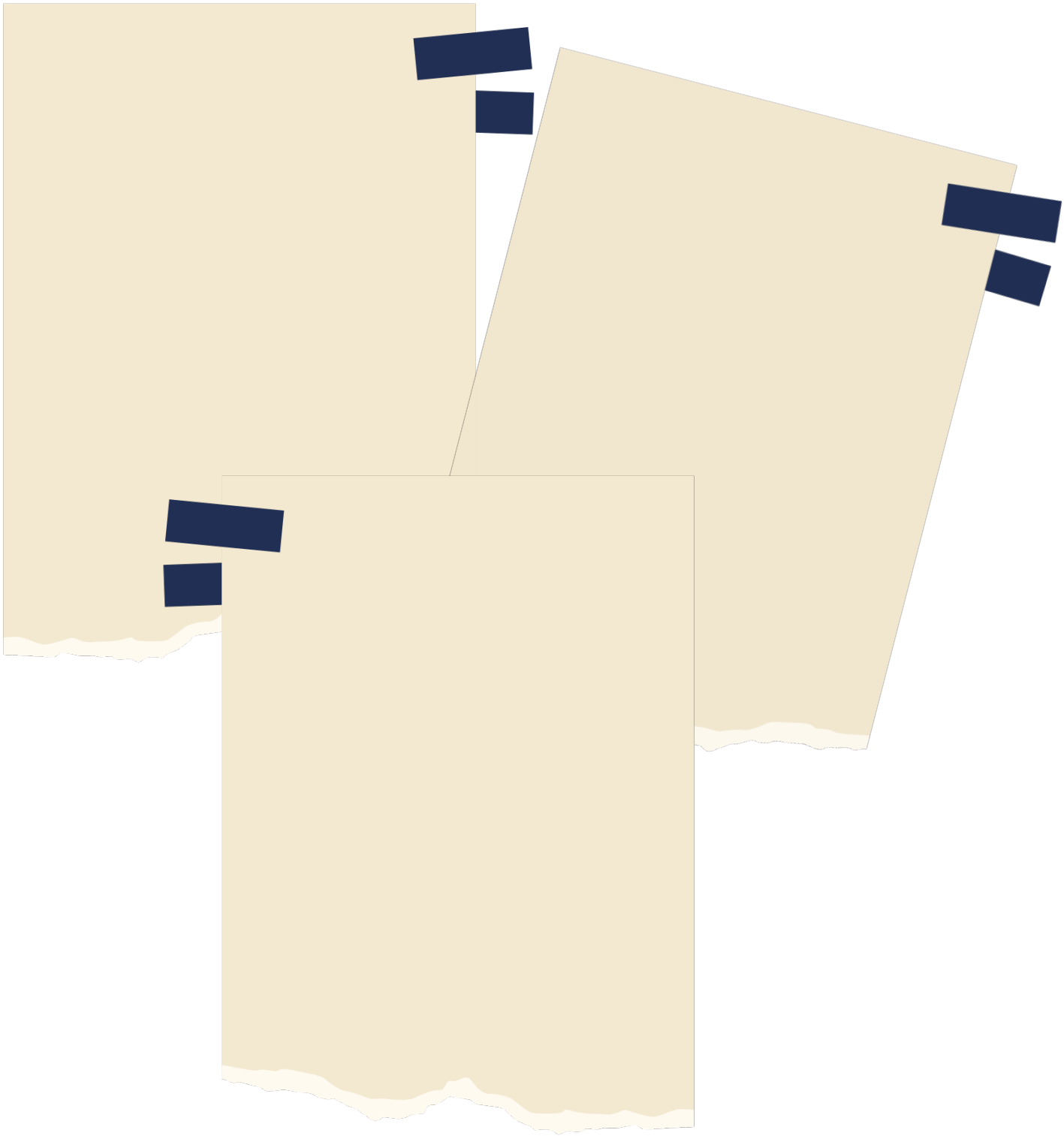
3. Jesus welcomed himself into Zacchaeus' life and Zacchaeus gladly let Jesus in (verses 5-6). Jesus continually invites himself into your life. Are you like Zacchaeus and let Jesus in or do you prefer to keep Jesus at a safe distance?

4. Zacchaeus repented. He turned from his old ways and turned to Jesus (verse 8). What is it that you need to repent of?

5. Zacchaeus' repentance led to his restoration (verse 9). Restoration is thinking, speaking, and acting more like Jesus. In what ways would you like to run to Jesus, invite him into your life, and have him restore you?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Relax and allow yourself to adjust to the silence. Let the noise of the outside world disappear as you focus on spending time with God. After a time of silence, pray:

Lord, thank you for enabling
me to be still in your
presence.
You are my strength,
and I trust in you.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....
RESPOND

APRIL 3-9, 2022

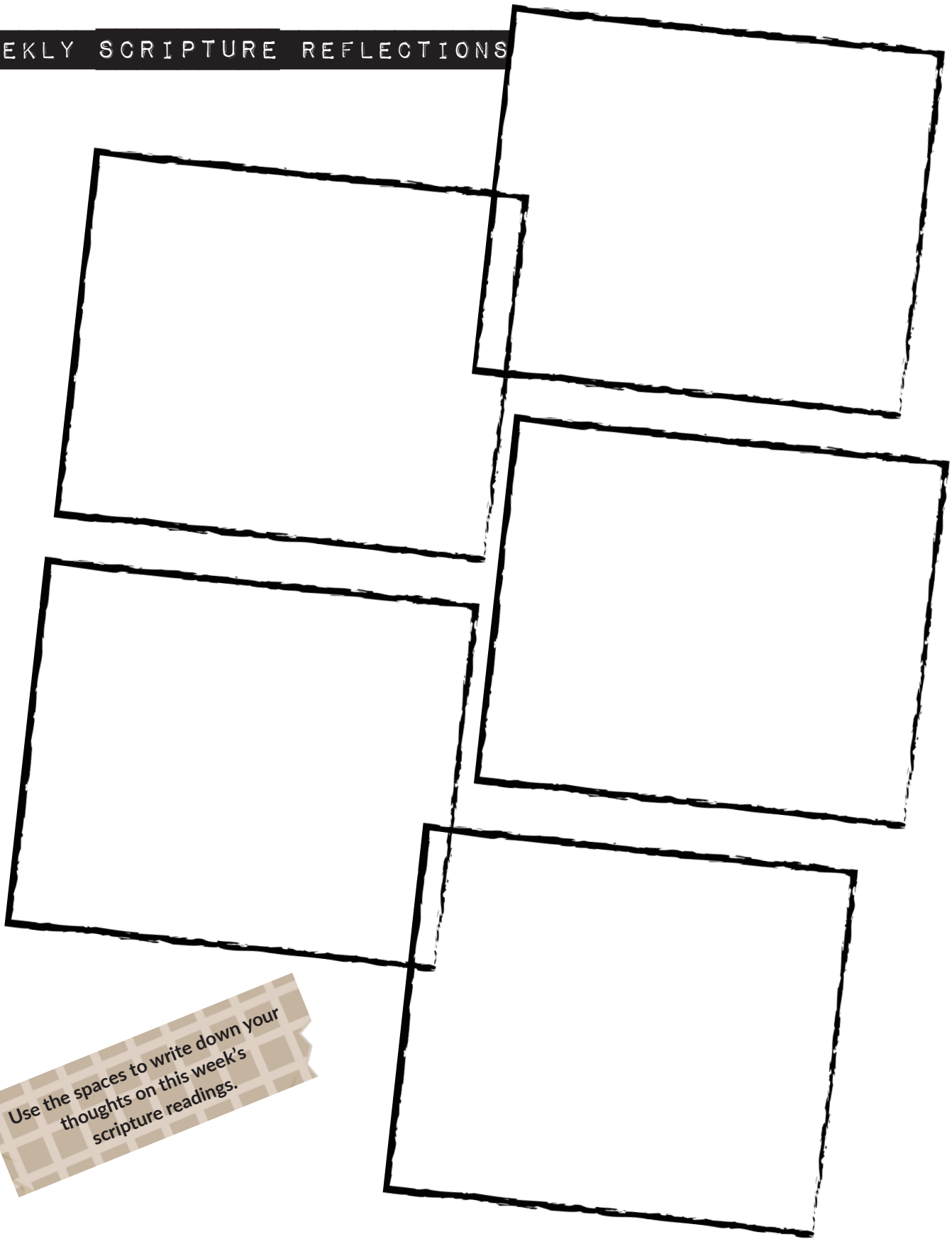
Father,
Today, I just want to say...
Thank you...
For beautiful sunrises that remind me of new beginnings.
For belly laughs and ugly cries.
For the stranger whose warm smile has a way of replacing the light in my eyes.
Thank you...
For showing up, when no one else does.
For loving those deemed unloveable.
For giving peace to this restless heart.
Thank you...
For the chance to wonder and...wander.
For following each of my steps and for rest when my feet can go no further.
Thank you...
For reminders of not just who I am, but whose I am.
For giving me worth when so often I feel, well, worthless.
Today, I just want to say, thank you.
For yesterday, today and tomorrow.
For love, mercy and grace.
And for...hope.
Hope that surrounds me each and every day.
In each and every thing. And in each and every circumstance.
Thank you.
Amen.

WEEK 5

05

WRITTEN BY MICHELE BONEWELL

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS. . . .

I think often when we read this scripture, we wonder at the fact that Simon (who would become Peter) and the others walked away from their lives and followed Jesus after his simple invitation. We don't know if they have families (with the exception of Peter, whose mother-in-law is mentioned in scripture), but it seems like a monumental leap of faith to leave your work, your livelihood and follow a relatively unknown man. But was it really?

Peter is by far the strongest voice in this little partnership and he goes on to be the most outspoken and headstrong one of the disciples. He's a captive audience in the boat with Jesus so he hears what he preaches to the people at the waters edge. So, he knows what Jesus is about but when Jesus enters his world, the world of fishing and tells him to put down his nets again, he balks. And why wouldn't he? Peter's a strong personality, probably used to taking charge and they've just finished a long night of unproductive fishing. Couple that with the fact they'd washed their nets, a task that was arduous and you can see why he doesn't want to follow the direction of someone he sees as a rank amateur. For some reason though, he does.
Peter takes the direction of someone not of his ilk, with no supporting evidence of knowledge of what he says and puts his nets down. The results are so large he can't handle them; he must ask his men for help. When they've finally gotten the fish aboard two boats it hits him, like a cold fish upside his head, who's in his boat and he confesses himself not worthy because he knows what Jesus is about in Jesus's realm having just listened to him preach. But Jesus doesn't accept Peter's self-assessment.

Like any good manager or boss may do around annual review time, he sees something in Simon and the rest of the men they don't see themselves. Jesus sees their potential. Jesus knows they're not where they need to be to get the job done (who of us is?) but he knows where they can be. He knows what they're capable of even though they'll go on to deny it many times and show it many times in the coming days as they follow him. The key, as I see it, to this story is the response.

Peter trusted Jesus, whom he'd never known before and never trusted before, with a small decision. He trusted him to provide direction in a place where he, Peter, was the recognized authority. Peter wasn't a rocket scientist but even this working-class guy could see and reason and determine that if the small trust extended yielded abundance and bounty too great for him to handle alone, that accepting the invitation to allow Jesus to order his life from now on was a no-brainer.

How can we Simons of the world trust Jesus to transform us into the Peters of tomorrow? How can you put your faith and trust into the Lord for just one thing so you can trust Him with everything?

DEVOTION BY DOUG GIFFIN

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 5:1-11

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. The people gathered at the water's edge (verse 1) to hear the teachings of Jesus because Jesus had earned the right to be heard. What are some practices you can do to earn the right to be heard by others?

2. Simon was a bit frustrated at their lack of success fishing. When Jesus told Simon to let the nets down, Simon responded with faith in Jesus and agreed to do so (verses 4-5). Jesus has a long history of helping people accomplish things they haven't been able to achieve before (verse 6). What is something you are wanting to accomplish that you need Jesus' help to be successful?

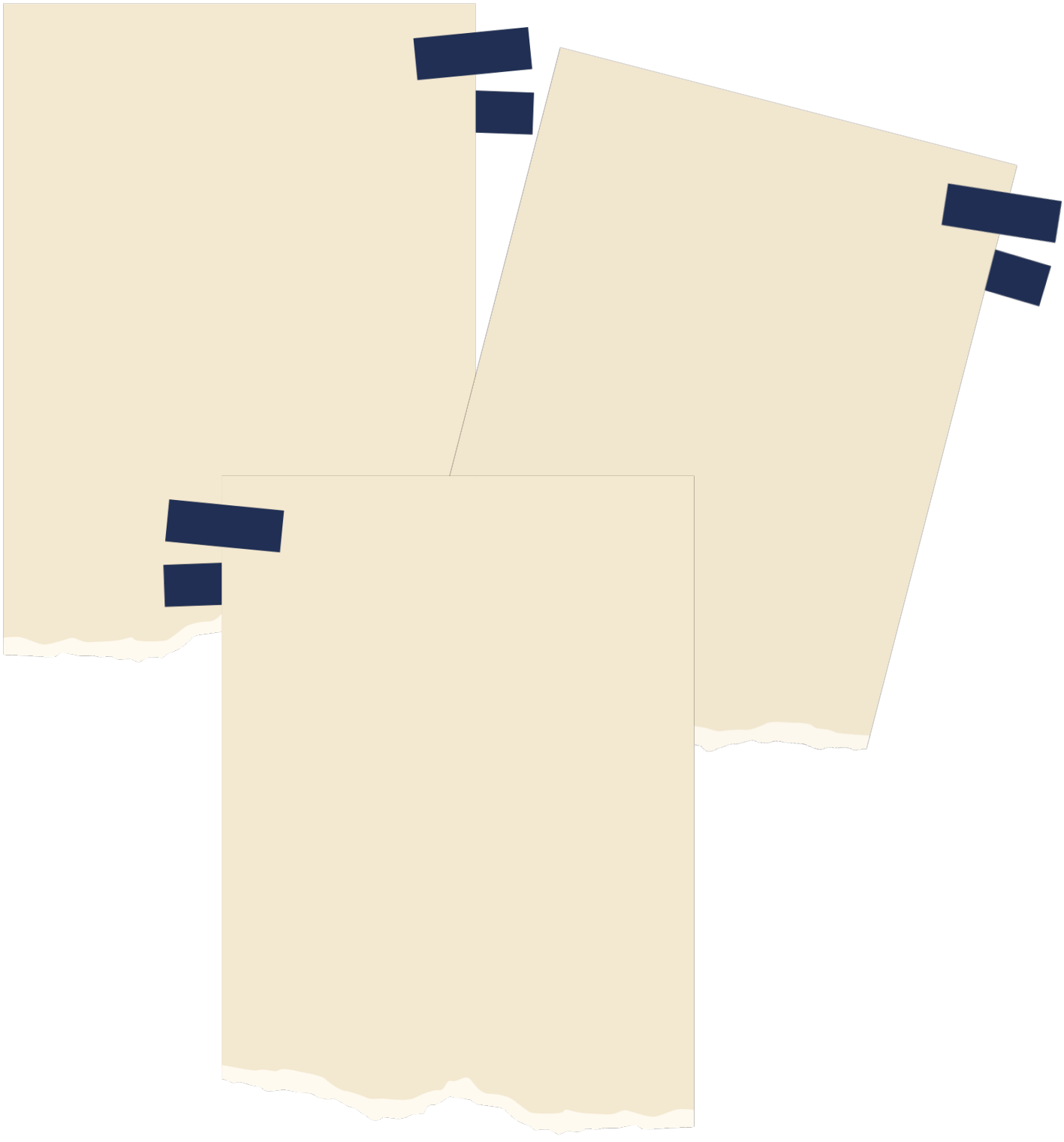
3. Simon was amazed at the amount of fish they caught (verse 9). He responded by worshipping Jesus (verse 8). When is a time Jesus amazed you? How did you respond?

4. Jesus told Simon to not be afraid (verse 10). What are some of your fears? How do you respond to God telling you, "Do not be afraid"?

5. Jesus told Simon that he would now be fishing for people (verse 10) and Simon pulled the boats up to the shore, left everything, and followed Jesus (verse 11). How do you typically respond when Jesus asks you to do something? If you make excuses to not follow Jesus, what are some of those excuses? How can you overcome those excuses?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



Be silent. Relax. Enjoy the silence. You probably don't get a lot of it.

After a time of silence, pray:

You have created me for You
and for You alone.
Teach me that my heart and
my mind will not experience
harmony until I find rest in You.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

THESE ARE DAYS TO.....
REMAIN

APRIL 10-16, 2022

HOLY WEEK 2022

Dear Lord,
Your disciple Peter wanted to know who would betray you. You pointed to Judas but a little later also to him. Judas betrayed, Peter denied you. Judas hanged himself, Peter became the apostle whom you made the first among equals. Lord, give me faith, faith in your endless mercy, your boundless forgiveness, your unfathomable goodness. Let me not be tempted to think that my sins are too great to be forgiven, too abominable to be touched by your mercy. Let me never run away from you but return to you again and again, asking you to be my Lord, my Shepherd, my Stronghold, and my Refuge. Take me under your wing, O Lord, and let me know that you do not reject me as long as I keep asking you to forgive me. Perhaps my doubt in your forgiveness is a greater sin than the sins I consider too great to be forgiven. Perhaps I make myself too important, too great when I think that I cannot be embraced by you anymore. Lord, look at me, accept my prayer as you accepted Peter's prayer, and let me not run away from you in the night as Judas did.

Bless me, Lord, in this Holy Week, and give me the grace to know your loving presence more intimately.
Amen.

WRITTEN BY HENRI J. M. NOUWEN

WEEK 6

06

THESE ARE DAYS....

Do you know how the fruit of a fig happens? A fig becomes a fig when a female wasp lays her eggs inside a flower, dies and decomposes within the flower.

A little bit gross, right? Yeah, it is. And, I apologize if I just ruined eating figs for you. But, if you can get past the gross part, there's something beautiful about how the flower becomes a fruit. It doesn't happen on its own. And it doesn't happen through a chance encounter. The female wasp doesn't lay her eggs and then leave. She dies. And, yet, she remains. And because of this, the flower becomes fruit. Fruit that will continue to bare more flowers that will, in time, bare more fruit. All because the female wasp remained with the flower.

What does this have to do with our faith? Nothing really. I just thought it was a cool story. I kid. Honestly, it has everything to do with our faith.

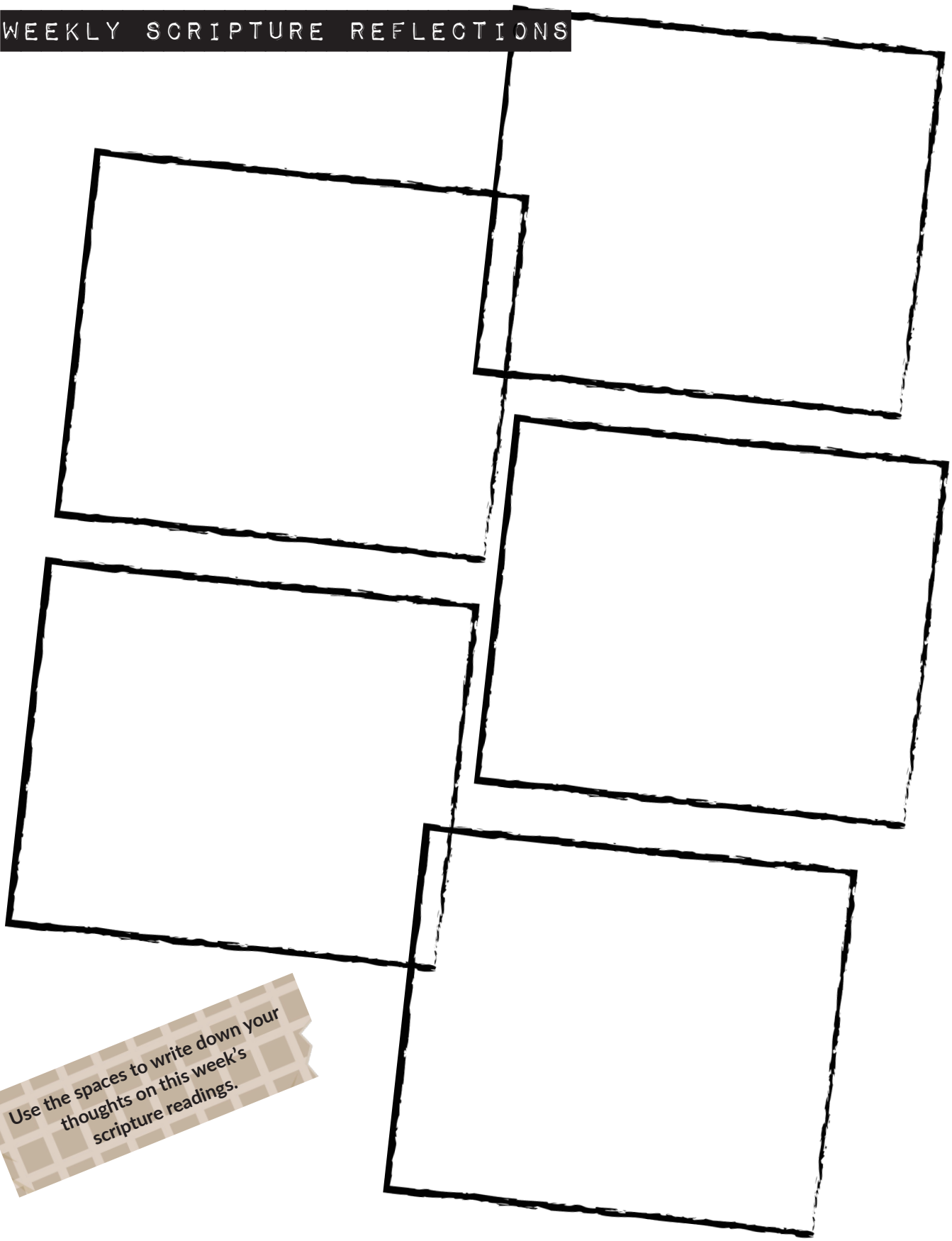
You see, in order for you and I to bare fruit, something, *someone*, had to die. Someone had to give something up in order for you and I to become beautiful and whole. Someone had to die for us to become what we were made to be. Just like God created the flower to produce fruit, He created us for a purpose.

But, things get in the way. Life happens. Disappointments happen. Sin happens. But, so did Jesus. When Jesus died for us, that wasn't the end of it. We know how the story goes. We know on the third day He rose. And we know that He joined our Father in heaven. But...he didn't just leave us. Just like the wasp remains in the flower, Jesus remains in each of us.

He didn't just leave us. He remains with us. Wanting to be a part of us. Creating something beautiful within us. The question is, will we be like the flower of the fig tree and welcome Him? Or, will we close ourselves off and risk withering? Will we be like Mary, welcoming Him with open arms and eager to remain next to Him? Or, will we be like Martha? Too busy with the mundane things to accept what it is He offers us?

DEVOTION BY MICHELE BONEWELL

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS



Use the spaces to write down your thoughts on this week's scripture readings.

THESE ARE DAYS TO REFLECT...

Lent is a time to reflect as WE work toward drawing closer to Christ. Take a look at this week and reflect on how you worked toward this. Use the questions below as prompts for reflection.

TO LET GO

What are some *things that drew you away from God this week?*

TO HOPE

What are some *things you hoped for this week?*

TO CHOOSE

What are some *choices you made that made you feel closer to God?*

TO PRAY

What is your prayer as you reflect on the week and look toward next week?

LUKE 10:38-42

Reflect on the questions below on your own, with your family, friends or House Church.

1. When you first read this story were you surprised by the reaction Jesus had to Martha? If so, what surprised you?

2. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and remained present with him, listening to what Jesus was saying (verse 39). How have you been blessed by remaining present and listening to Jesus?

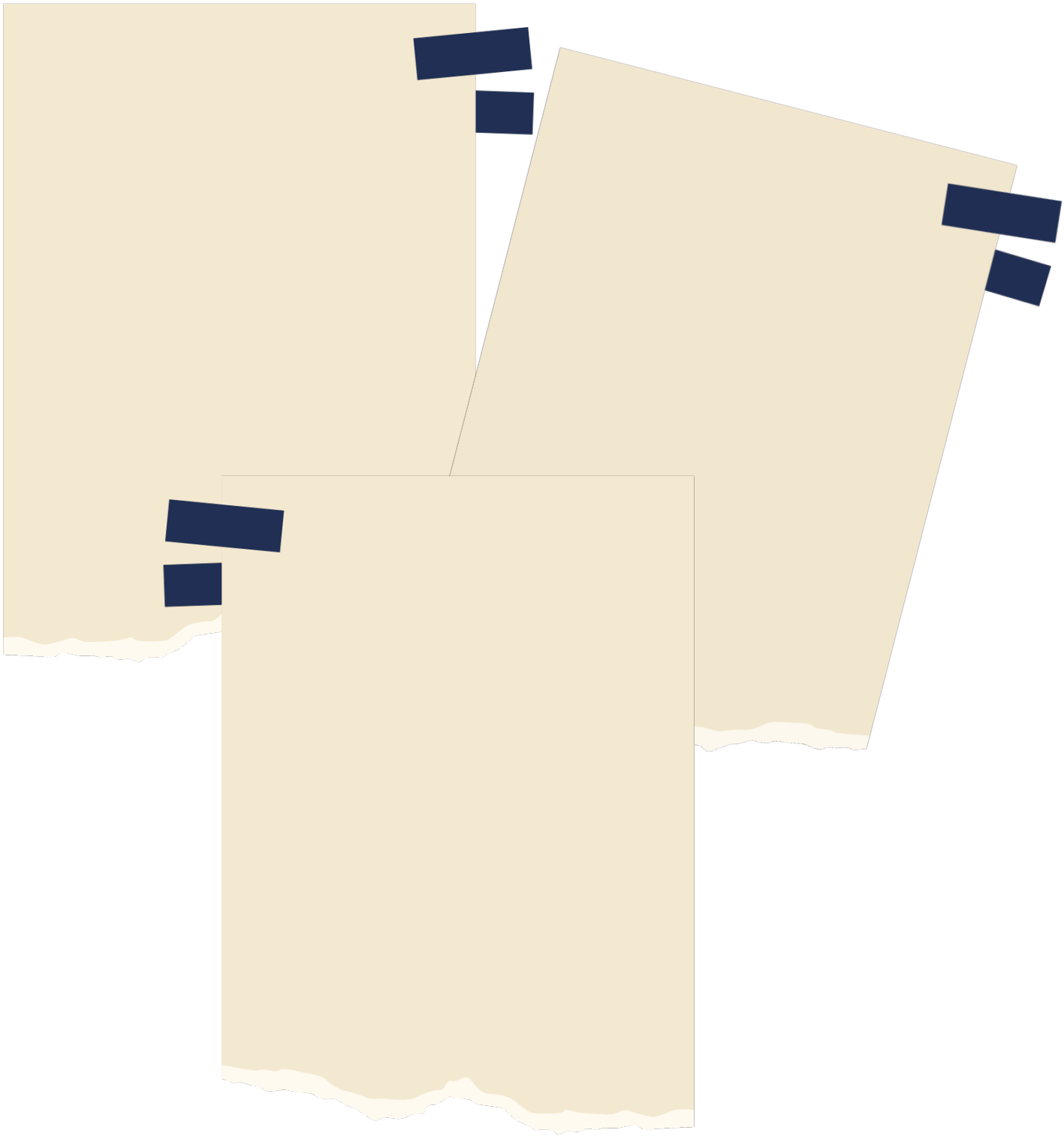
3. Martha was distracted from spending quality time with Jesus by cooking and cleaning (verse 40). What distracts you from spending time with God?

4. What are some strengths of being like Martha in life and ministry? What are the challenges of being like Martha in life and ministry?

5. Jesus was more interested in spending time with Mary and Martha than he was interested in sitting in a clean house and eating a good meal. He says that one thing is needed most—remaining present with Jesus (verses 41 and 42). What are some things you can do to remain more present with Jesus?

THESE ARE DAYS OF.....

Complete the sentence by using the spaces to write things you want to remember about this week. Things that brought you joy. Things you want to express gratitude for. For example...These are days of evenings with friends.



When you pray, do you feel as though you must speak continuously? Or are you content simply being in His presence in the silence? Ponder the experience of being silent in the presence of God. Immerse yourself in the unique language God speaks in silence. After a time of silence, pray:

Lord, I desire to seek You
and know You.
Help me to hear You speak
through the silence.
Help me to understand this deep
language of love and to allow
You to transform me
through the silence.

Reflect on the silence. How did God speak to you? What did you hear? What did you feel? Write your thoughts below.

THESE ARE DAYS . . .
TO BE SILENT AND STILL.

APRIL 14, 2022

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Dear God,

You washed the disciple's feet.
You showed us how to serve.
You tell me to do likewise.

I want to be loved by You.
May I let You regularly wash my feet.
May I be accepting of Your constant offers of grace and forgiveness.

Let my life be like Your life.
Enable me to follow Your example.
Make me a foot washer—a bold and daring servant.

Help me be mindful of the many opportunities for service in my life.
Let my service be a blessing and inspiration to others.
Bless me as I seek to act more like You every day.

I want to be faithful to You.
Not betraying You. Not denying You. But faithful.
Give me grace when I fail and perseverance to keep growing.

Give me the ears to listen to and understand others.
Give me the vision to see others through Your eyes.
Empower me to serve others like You.

Let me take the bread and learn from Your life.
Let me take the wine and embrace Your forgiveness.
Let me show the world I am Your disciple.

Amen.

FROM PRAYERS FROM THE WATER'S EDGE
WRITTEN BY CRAIG FINNESTAD

THESE ARE DAYS....

Thursday. Maundy Thursday.

Today, we reflect on Jesus' last meal with his disciples. A meal shared with friends. One who would...Betray. One who would...Deny. And yet others who would simply run away.

A few years ago on Maundy Thursday, Bob Goff wrote - "If I had one last meal, I wouldn't spend it with someone I knew would betray me." And, I think most of us would say the same.

But...not Jesus. The same man who betrayed Him...He served. The same man who would deny Him...He served. The men who would scatter out of fear and hopelessness...He served.

Why? Because of...Love. And that's the beauty of love. Of His love. Of His perfect, wonderful, reckless love. Even in the midst of betrayal...in the midst of loneliness... in the midst of denial...in the midst of fear...in the midst of pain, sorrow, anger...in the midst of everything we go through....in the midst of everything we throw at it...it still is. His love remains.

Always and in all ways.

DEVOTION BY MICHELE BONEWELL

THESE ARE DAYS....

"It never hurts to ask." How many times have we heard this? How young were you when someone told you this and were you like me and didn't believe it was true? Finally, how many of you stood gasping for breath on the baseline, loathing your teammate who had just said, "Aren't we done running wind sprints?' hearing the coach yell, "Five more!" and knowing yes, it does in fact hurt to ask. Questions, after all, are sometimes the utterances of the desperate. The criminal was clearly grasping at straws. Or was he?

He and his cohort were near death, it was a certainty. So why, after scolding his fellow guilty party, did he ask? Was it the desperate act of a desperate man who had nothing to lose? Or the hopeful request of a man who saw the truth and knew he would only be saved by it? To borrow another cliché, the truth will (supposedly) set you free. Truly this man got more than he asked for or deserved.

He asked just that Jesus think of him when he was in heaven. He didn't say "Forgive me!" or "Save me!" or "Take me with you." He merely wanted Jesus to know him. He wanted to be in relationship with Jesus. And for that he was redeemed, he was forgiven, he was saved, he did go to heaven with Jesus. It's a simple thing really, a simple question and one we're told by our faith never hurts to ask. In fact, it's the question at the cornerstone of what we believe.
Despite our missteps and foul-ups and sins we are delivered. We're taken up out of the muck and mire we've created, washed off and seated in heaven with our savior. We're given the chance, the do-over, we could not, would not expect. When we seek not for Jesus to issue us a "get out of jail free card" but instead reach out to him looking for relationship, we know the salvation only he can give.

Sometimes in our most dire circumstances we have moments of clarity we've never experienced. I believe this man experienced one of these. Though he was where he admittedly deserved to be, he knew who was next to him. He knew his earthly fate and he asked for something not of this world. He saw the bigger picture that had eluded him before and he asked.

Where will we be when we finally see the light? What pickle will we be in when we don't ask God to fix it but to just be with us through it? We've experienced some difficult times lately and unfortunately, we'll have more (although hopefully not the same) of those coming. Will you wait for those to reach out for God? Or will you ask for a relationship today, include Him in everything you do with the faith and trust that He alone can redeem you? He alone can save you.

DEVOTION BY DOUG GIFFIN

APRIL 15, 2022

STILL - FOR GOOD FRIDAY

This day
let all stand still
in silence,
in sorrow.

Sun and moon
be still.

Earth
be still.

Still
the waters.

Still
the wind.

Let the ground
gape in stunned
lamentation.

Let it weep
as it receives
what it thinks
it will not
give up.

Let it groan
as it gathers
the One
who was thought
forever stilled.

Time
be still.

Watch
and wait.

Still.

GOOD FRIDAY

WRITTEN BY JAN RICHARDSON

HE IS
RISEN!

THESE ARE DAYS....

2020. I preached in an empty room many Sundays.

Empty.

And, that Easter Sunday morning, while the sun rose behind me, when I looked in front of me, it was an empty field that I saw.

Empty.

I remember asking Pastor Wayne once if he was ever afraid that no one would show up? If he was afriad the room would be empty?

Empty.

"Nope. The message is the same whether the room is full or empty. God still shows up. Jesus is still the same." I never got to see Wayne preach, he was retired when I met him. But, if his sermons were anything like his prayers, then even an empty room would be moved.

Empty.

When my heart feels empty, He is there.

Empty.

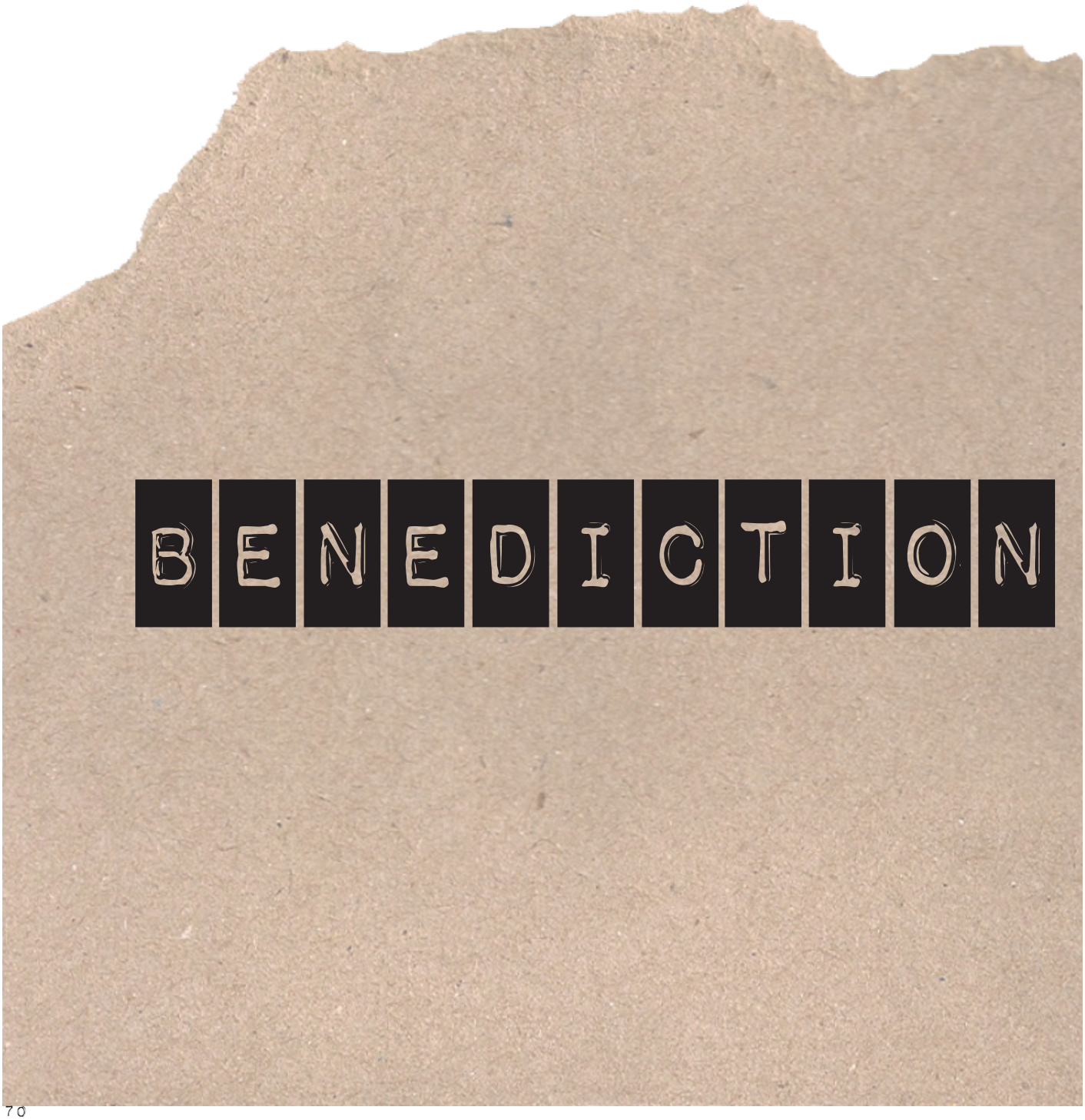
When the silence is so loud, it makes the packed room feel empty, He is there.

DEVOTION BY MICHELE BONEWELL

Empty.

When darkness fell, hope gave way to fear and all seemed lost, He gave us....Empty. An empty tomb. With an empty tomb, He gave us peace. With an empty tomb, He gave us hope. With an empty tomb, He showed us the Light Of The World would always overcome the darkness. With an empty tomb, He gave us new life. Empty. Here and now, yesterday, today and tomorrow, I will always be so thankful for empty.

Empty.


BENEDICTION

In the dark of the early morning,
It descended.
The very breath of God.

Dawn approached.
The Sprit filled the lungs of our fallen King,
And his heart began to beat anew.
At the rising of the sun,
He awoke. He opened his eyes.
He smiled. He rose.
Victorious.

They say the tomb was empty,
But we know otherwise.
Fear and shame.
Left behind.
Sin and Death.
Left behind.
Our old ways and
our old selves.
Left behind.
Forever entombed
by Christ the Son.

So, now, let us go forth
to live and serve in the name of
He who has conquered the grave.
He who is risen. He who reigns.

HALLELUJAH!

FROM: ECCLESIA CHURCH HOUSTON

THESE ARE DAYS...

Use this page to write down your reflections on how you have grown during Lent.

SOME DAYS

Some days you'll need the open road
and loud nostalgic music.
You'll need phone calls with family
and conversations with old friends.
Some days you'll need the rain and
you'll need the window down.

Some days, you'll need to get out of
the car and take a picture in the mid-
dle of the road or pull over to watch
the sunset.

Most days you'll need a cup of
coffee and an open Bible.
And you'll get a refill on both.

Some days you just need to be
reminded that today is another day.
And you'll need to do things to
remind yourself that you are you and
you're alive to live.

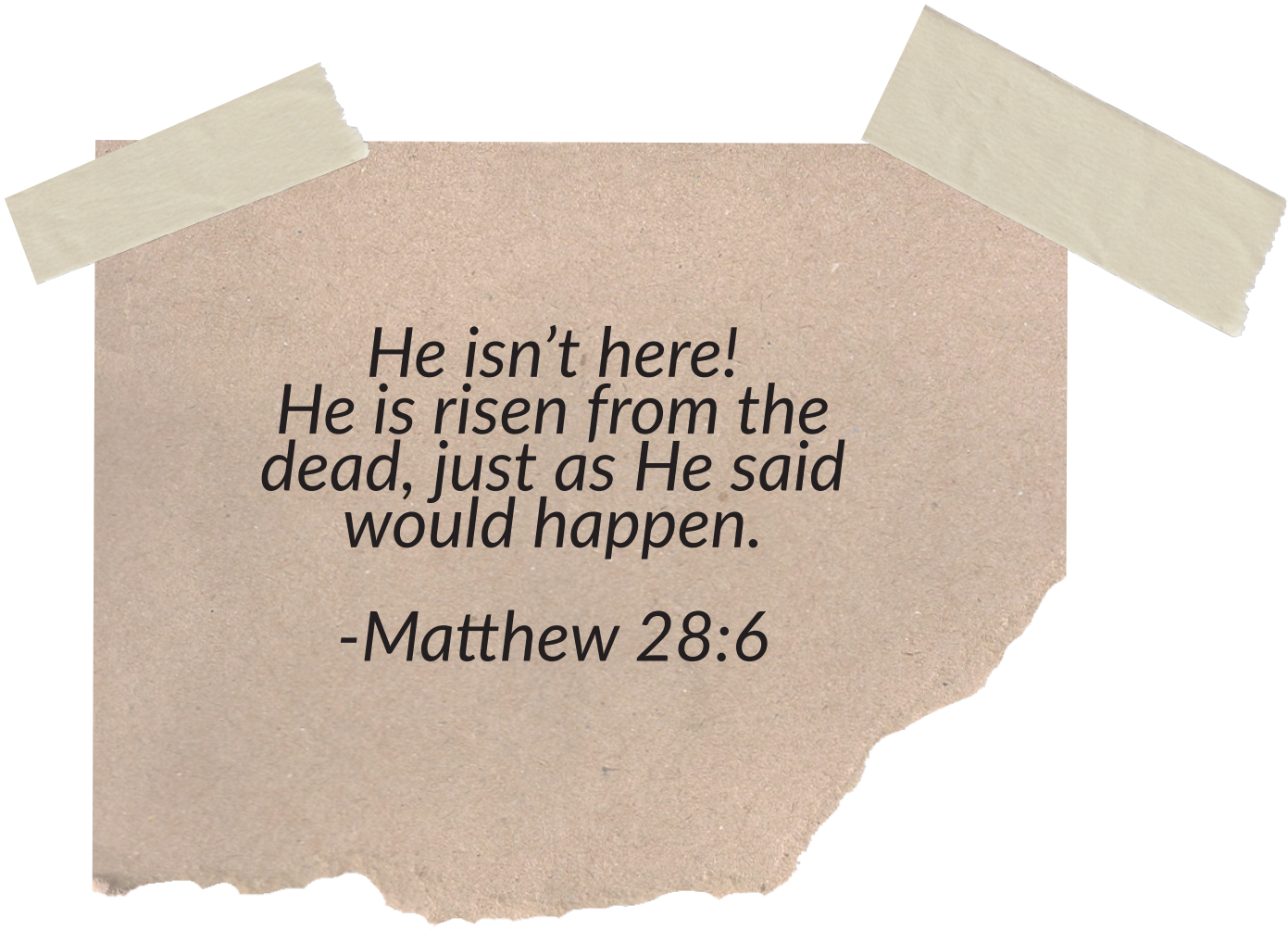
But everyday we will need each
other and we will need to be
reminded that we aren't alone.
Everyday we will need meaningful
hugs and a hopeful smile.
We will need to hear we are loved
and that it's okay for us to
be ourselves.

Some days we will ask to be told
these things; other days honest
words of love will be freely spoken
into our lives.

And those are the days we live for.
Those are the days that keep us
alive.

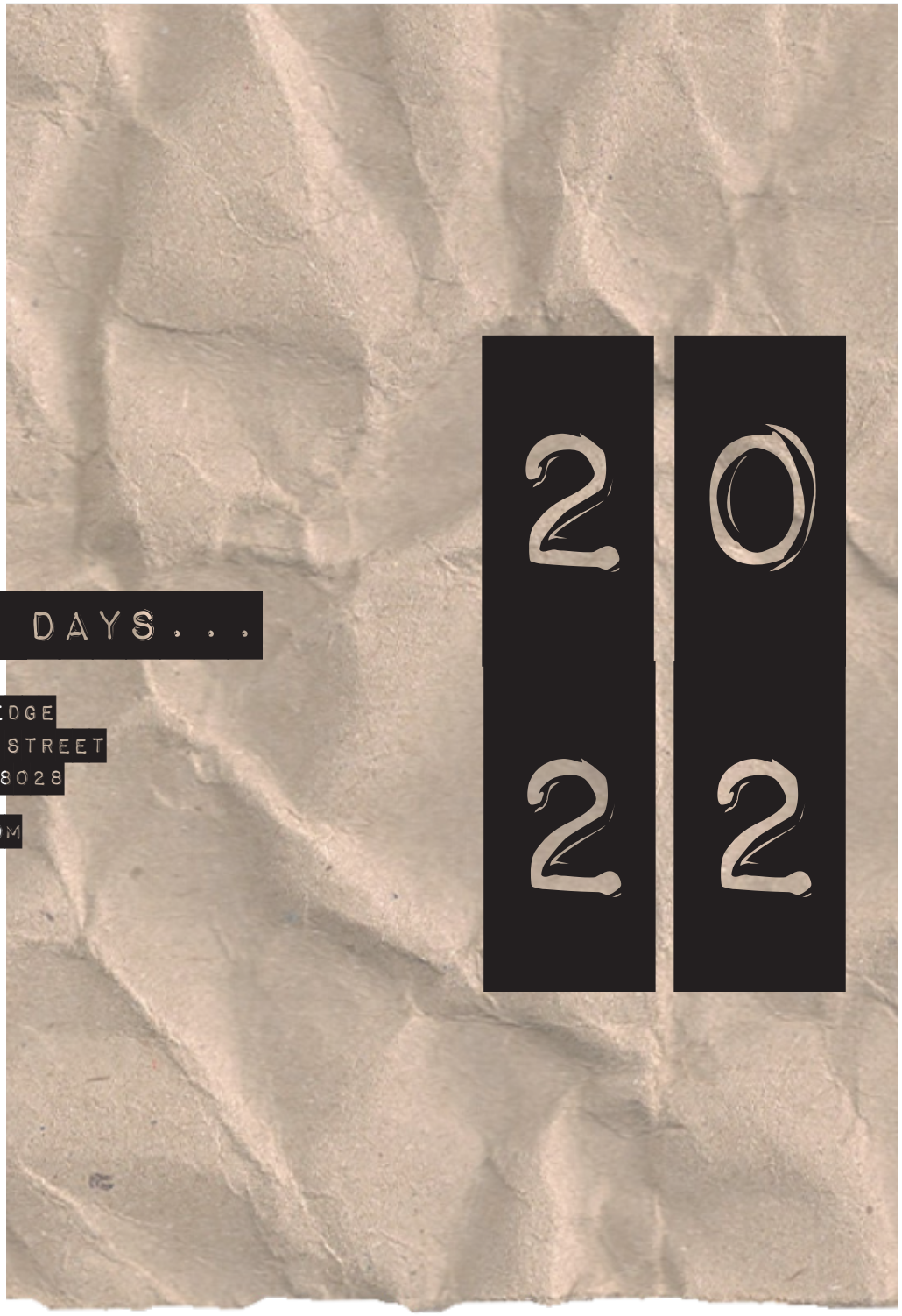
And being alive is a good thing.

FROM I'M ALL OVER THE PLACE
WRITTEN BY TANNER OLSON


He isn't here!
He is risen from the
dead, just as He said
would happen.
-Matthew 28:6

GOD, YOU ARE THE ONE TRUE *GOD.*
YOUR NAME IS ABOVE ALL NAMES.
MAY YOUR VISION FOR THE WORLD
BECOME A REALITY.
MAY I THINK, SPEAK, AND ACT LIKE YOU.
PROVIDE FOR ME; BLESS ME WITH WHAT I NEED.
FORGIVE *ME FOR MY SINS.*
LET ME SHARE THIS SAME GRACE WITH OTHERS.
MAY I GIVE YOU THE PRIMARY PLACE IN MY HEART
AND LOVE OTHERS LIKE YOU LOVE *THEM.*
SAVE ME WHEN I HURT OTHERS AND HURT MYSELF.
THIS WORLD IS YOURS BOTH NOW AND FOREVER.
I WILL HONOR YOU.
AMEN.

THE LORS'S PRAYER FOR TODAY
BY CRAIG FINNESTAD



THESE ARE DAYS...

2022

THE WATERS EDGE
19600 HARRISON STREET
GRETNA, NE 68028

WEOMAHA.COM