



**Diocese  
in Europe**



**A Deanery of Germany Initiative  
Six-Week Lenten Study 2026  
Building on the Racial Justice Conference Theme:  
HOPEMAKERS: FROM HOSTILITY TO HOSPITALITY**



The cross stands open, arms outstretched wide,  
Calling every story from every side.  
It gathers colours, languages, and scars,  
And draws them close in love's strong embrace.  
It honours difference, distinct and diverse,  
A meeting place beneath wounded stars.  
Held together, yet never confined,  
In love, the cross makes room for all creation

## Introduction

As we journey through the sacred season of Lent, you are warmly invited to join an **Online Lenten Study Programme** on the theme “**Hopemakers: From Hostility to Hospitality**,” a timely and deeply relevant exploration of Christian discipleship in a world marked by division and fear.

In a global context increasingly shaped by **racial exclusion, prejudice, and hostility towards the ‘other,’** this study invites us to reflect on the Gospel call to repentance, reconciliation, and radical welcome. Through Scripture, prayer, and shared reflection, we will discern how God calls us to confront racism, dismantle barriers of exclusion, and become communities of hospitality, healing, and hope.

You are invited to join us **every Wednesday during Lent at 8:00 pm** as we seek together to embody Christ’s reconciling love and become authentic Hopemakers in our churches and societies.

Bible studies can be awesome! Scripture certainly is not always easy to understand. It uses language and symbolism that are rooted in cultures and times very different from our own. These Lenten Bible Studies are designed in such a way that a group leader does not need to know everything. A structure is provided on the last page of this document with appropriate guidance. The role of a group leader is to enable participants to explore questions as clearly and thoughtfully as possible. Group leaders can of course prepare a few questions or very short comments to ease the group discussions.

This Study is a follow up event of the Racial Justice Conferences, and has been prepared within the Deanery of Germany with named resource persons. It is to be held via **ZOOM** in the German Deanery, but it is open to all who are interested across the Diocese and elsewhere. It would be wonderful if the participants could join in as many sessions as possible.

For Registration and Zoom Link kindly write to: [racialjusticeconference@gmail.com](mailto:racialjusticeconference@gmail.com)

Those who wish to use the material in other chaplaincies, deaneries or archdeaconries are free to do so, and free to adapt the material appropriately.

Friends let us through these Bible Studies, that can also be used at times other than Lent, seek to take our place in the story of Jesus’ love and salvation. And even when we sometimes end up with more questions than answers, we can be confident that God is in our midst, drawing us closer, and offering us the renewal and strength to advance in faith.

The Venerable Dr Leslie Nathaniel  
*Archdeacon of the East*  
*and Archdeacon of Germany and Northern Europe*  
*Chair of the Diocesan Racial Justice Working Group*

## Study 1: A World of Hostility – Naming Broken Relationships

Wednesday 25th February 2026. 8:00 pm Online

**Theme:** Understanding hostility as sin - causing fear and dehumanisation

**Focus:** Why hospitality is necessary in a fractured world

**Lead:** The Revd Prof Dr David Joy, Principal Kerala United Theological Seminary; India and President of the Senate of Serampore University

### Key Texts:

- Genesis 4:1–16 (Cain and Abel – hostility begins)
- Psalm 137 (Pain, anger, unresolved hostility)
- Luke 10:25–37 (The Good Samaritan – crossing hostility lines)

### Key Ideas:

- Hostility is rooted in fear, rivalry, and loss of dignity
- Systems and cultures that institutionalise exclusion
- Hope begins by *naming* hostility honestly

### Hopemakers Lens:

Hopemakers first see and name hostility rather than deny it.

## Study 2: Jesus and Radical Hospitality – Welcomed by Grace

Wednesday 04 March 2026. 8:00 pm Online

**Theme:** Jesus as the embodiment of God's hospitality

**Focus:** Who Jesus welcomes and why it disrupts society

**Lead:** The Revd Dr Deborah Chapman, Assistant Chaplain, St George's Church, Barcelona

### Key Texts:

- Luke 5:27–32 (Jesus eats with tax collectors)
- Luke 7:36–50 (The sinful woman welcomed)
- Luke 19:1–10 (Zacchaeus)

### Key Ideas:

- Hospitality is not politeness but restoring dignity
- Jesus' table is open before repentance is complete
- Welcome becomes a means of transformation

### Hopemakers Lens:

Hopemakers create spaces where grace comes before judgment.

## **Study 3: The Cross – From Hostility to Hospitality**

**Wednesday 11 March 2026. 8:00 pm Online**

**Theme:** The Cross as God's ultimate act of welcome

**Focus:** The Cross ends enmity, not by violence but by self-giving love

**Lead:** The Revd Vinod Victor, Chaplain Anglican Church of Freiburg and Area Dean in Germany

### **Key Texts:**

- Luke 23:33–43 (Crucifixion and the criminal welcomed)
- Ephesians 2:13–18 (Christ breaks the dividing wall)
- Colossians 1:19–22

### **Key Ideas:**

- The Cross absorbs human hostility and returns forgiveness
- Jesus welcomes even in abandonment and suffering
- Salvation is hospitality extended to enemies

### **Hopemakers Lens:**

Hopemakers live cruciform lives—absorbing hostility without reproducing it.

## **Study 4: Resurrection Hope – Hospitality that Heals and Restores**

**Wednesday 18 March 2026 8:00 pm Online**

**Theme:** Hospitality as resurrection practice

**Focus:** Hope emerges when wounds are acknowledged and shared

**Lead:** The Revd Maria Obafemi-Onuigbo, Chaplain St Nicolas' Church Helsinki

### **Key Texts:**

- Luke 24:13–35 (Emmaus – hospitality reveals Christ)
- John 20:19–23 (Peace offered behind locked doors)

### **Key Ideas:**

- The risen Christ meets people in fear and confusion
- Hospitality opens eyes to resurrection hope
- Shared journeys and meals restore faith

### **Hopemakers Lens:**

Hopemakers walk with others, creating hope through presence.

## **Study 5: The Early Church – A Community of Equal Dignity**

**Wednesday 25th March 2026, 8:00 pm Online**

**Theme:** The Church as a hospitable alternative community

**Focus:** Equality, sharing, and belonging in Christ

**Lead:** The Revd Kasta Dip, Chaplain, Anglican Church in Poland & Christ Church Kyiv

### **Key Texts:**

- Acts 2:42–47
- Acts 10:34–48 (Peter and Cornelius)
- Galatians 3:26–28

### **Key Ideas:**

- Hospitality breaks ethnic, social, and gender barriers
- The Spirit creates inclusive togetherness
- Dignity is rooted in baptism, not status

### **Hopemakers Lens:**

Hopemakers build churches where no one is a guest—**only family**.

## **Study 6: Becoming Hopemakers Today – Practising Hospitality in a Hostile World**

**Wednesday 01 April 2026. 8:00 pm Online**

**Theme:** The Church's mission as hope-making

**Focus:** Living Lent beyond Lent

**Lead:** The Venerable Dr Leslie Nathaniel

### **Key Texts:**

- John 10 : 1-21 (The Good Shepherd)
- Hebrews 13:1–3
- Matthew 25:31–46

### **Key Ideas:**

- Hospitality is public witness, not private virtue
- Welcoming the stranger is welcoming Christ
- The Church becomes a sign of God's coming kingdom

### **Hopemakers Lens:**

Hopemakers transform hostility into hope through everyday practices of welcome.

## **The Structure of the Programme**

### **Lenten Study – Finding Guidance: Journey to the Cross**

#### **1. Gathering in Fellowship (5 minutes)**

Meet and Greet / Icebreakers

Creating a welcoming space of fellowship and trust as we begin our Lenten journey together.

#### **2. Listening to the Word (10 minutes)**

Reading of the Biblical Text and Initial Reflections

Hearing Scripture read aloud and offering brief personal or guided reflections.

#### **3. Unpacking the Text and the Theme (15 minutes)**

Deciphering the Word in Context – Resource Person

Theological and contextual insights into the Scripture, connecting the text to the Lenten journey.

#### **4. Walking Together in Reflection (15 minutes)**

Group Discussion and Shared Insights

Engaging in dialogue, sharing perspectives, and discerning how the Word speaks to our lives today.

#### **5. At the Foot of the Cross (10 minutes)**

Summarising Spiritual Takeaways

Drawing together key personal learnings, challenges, and calls to discipleship as we reflect on Christ's sacrifice.

#### **6. Sent Forth in Prayer (5 minutes)**

The Power of Prayer – Closing Prayers

Committing ourselves, the Church, and the world to God through prayer as we conclude the session.