

UNLOCK

Virtual LONDON WALK 2021

Stage 1— Waiting Patiently

Lambeth Methodist Mission to Crossway URC Church



The 2021 Unlock London Walk is in the form of 6 online daily episodes starting on Sunday April 18th. We expect to be able to hold a 'real' walk again on April 23rd 2022. We hope you enjoy this 'armchair' version of the walk and then please donate to Unlock just as you would have done if you have been out walking the London Streets for us this year, if not more so! See page 7 for details. Unlock needs the funding that you provide more than ever. When the COVID 19 emergency is over the poorest communities will have been hit the hardest and those are the places where Unlock's work will be essential! We are relying on you to make that possible. We are already preparing resources to help people to process the difficult emotions that the Pandemic has created for all of us; the materials in these walk episodes are based on them. A taster pack is already here: -

http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources_projects.php#bible_study_resources

and the full resource will be in the same place shortly - or on request from the Unlock Office.

Unlocking Real life stories of urban people
Revealing Good News of the down to earth Christ
Releasing life changing skills and confidence

WALK THIS WAY

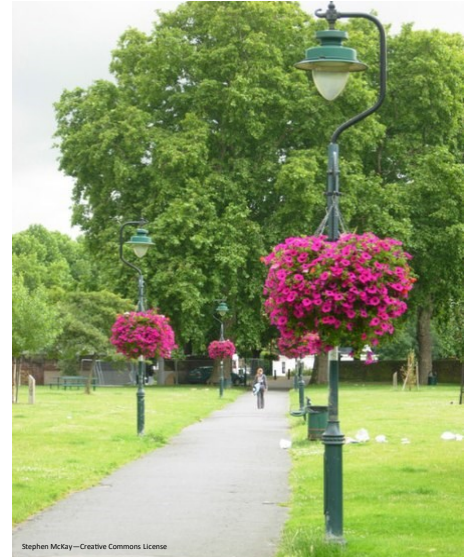


Like the other churches in this area, Lambeth Methodist Mission has been at the heart of a community that has suffered great deprivation since the 19th Century. It is significant that the church was rebuilt quickly after WW2 as it formed an important hub for the community as it tried to rebuild and reform itself. The many social changes that have taken place in the area still present huge challenges for the local, very multicultural society it serves, and the church is still planning and



working to serve in new and effective ways. As part of that ambition, the church has had to overcome resistance to the plan to demolish and rebuild the church and to use the incorporation of a hotel on the site to pay for the church and community facilities they want to establish there.

Turn right out onto Lambeth Road and continue to the crossroad. The tall building on the right houses students and, on your left is the Waterloo Hub Hotel that housed a large number of homeless people during the first Lockdown. Turn right and continue down Kennington Road and, after the school on your right you will see the older part of the China Walk Estate built in the 1930's and you will see the advice centre serving the large Latin American Community present in this area. Since the late 1950s this estate, along with others in this area, have seen a steady flow of immigrant groups coming to live here. Afro-Caribbean families followed by different groups from the Indian subcontinent (many of them Bangladeshi but also Ugandan Asian families), then Chinese and Filipinos, South Americans and African families have all made their home here in the past few decades. And while earlier communities were council tenants, gradually, a significant proportion of immigrant groups have become victims of the change in tenure. The estate is now about a third council renting tenants, a third owner occupied and a third are owned by "buy to let" owners, privately renting out their flats in a variety of different ways. Sadly, a proportion of these private landlords are unscrupulous, resulting in the levels of overcrowding and causing deprivation



and greater hardships for newer groups of incomers, leaving them trapped in expensive, unsuitable but hard to escape from, accommodation.

Cross the road and enter Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park (wikipedia.org/wiki/Geraldine_Mary_Harmsworth)

which forms the grounds of the Imperial War Museum. The entrance shows that the park was opened in 1934 and the land was gifted to the "splendid struggling mothers of Southwark and their children" by Viscount Rothermere (wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Harmsworth,_1st_Viscount_Rothermere) in memory of his mother, so, cross over and enter the Park. The





Family owned do Laszlo portrait of Geraldine Mary Harmsworth after whom the park is named .
Teresa Stokes - under license Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Imperial War Museum was, of course, the site of the former Bedlam Hospital. Take the left fork and follow the path along past the grand frontage of the museum with its huge pair of guns, then left into the Tibetan Peace Garden, commissioned by the Tibet Foundation to provide a tranquil space for contemplation and opened in 1999, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalai_Lama).

As we pause in the Peace Garden, we can reflect on the contrasts we have witnessed and experienced so far. The changes since the war and how the Christian response anchored post war communities, the more recent changes and the new demands they are causing. But churches are embedded in communities with a vision that is not short sighted.

Waiting and patience go

hand in hand with steady, committed work that listens to and cares for the people you have been called to serve. Wonder at the causes for hope that emerge from your reflection and take note of them

Re-join the main path and turn left to the grand gates and exit the park. Carefully cross St George's Road with the Catholic Girl's Secondary School in front of you. The Catholic Cathedral of Southwark (stgeorgescathedral.org.uk/) is at the top of the road to your left but we turn right and continue past St Jude's C of E Church which was built on the site of the Chapel of the Philanthropic Society and is also now home to New Testament Church of God, serving part of the black African community in this area. We continue on till we reach the Salvation Army Community Church on your left, another small but key church that helps serve the marginalised as well as the established community in this area.



Cross the road and continue to the Elephant and Castle and note that the Elephant and Castle Centre is currently being demolished. A new, controversial development of this and other parts of the surrounding area will cause a great deal of disruption, loss of services and will take up to ten years to complete. The developers aim to build a number of tall blocks providing a housing stock that will be rented, not sold. The local community has spent many years struggling to gain assurances that the developers will have a portion of properties that will be genuinely affordable for local people. They also want to stop the practice that many local developers have adopted where the more expensive tenants use the main entrance and can use the various services in the building (gym, community areas, roof to garden, etc) but the lower rental properties have a different entrance (at the back) and no access to facilities.

The name "Elephant and Castle" has been

connected with a number of myths and rumours. One that has been a favourite for a long time is the name is a corruption of the title La Infanta de Castilla who supposedly had a house near here. This is not true. The location has been a crossroad for a very long







time and in the eighteenth century there was a blacksmith's shop here. Soon after Westminster Bridge was built, a new road was built to connect it with London Bridge and from this other new roads were developed or upgraded including St George's Road (linking the new road to the crossroads here). New Kent Road was also transformed from a country lane to a new turnpike, adding another road to the busy junction and the



blacksmith's was turned into a tavern called the White Horse, but this was changed to the Elephant and Castle and became a major coaching inn. The symbol was a reflection of its origins as it was taken from the Worshipful Company of Cutlers.

Turn right past the grand façade of the Metropolitan Tabernacle on your right. This impressive church has a tradition starting in 1650, during a time that Parliament had just banned Baptist meetings. It traces its roots to a congregation which braved constant persecution, and who met in a house in Kennington belonging to Widow Colfe. It enjoyed a series of long serving pastors and, after moving sites a number of times, the Metropolitan Tabernacle was



established here by the famous preacher and teacher, Charles

Haddon Spurgeon (wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Spurgeon). The site was partly chosen by him because he believed it was the site where the Southwark Martyrs were burned. It continues as a vibrant, independent Baptist centre of worship and teaching, serving a community that is both local and London wide.

On your right, just past the Tabernacle is a very tall block called One the Elephant. Southwark Council sold the land to the developers for six million pounds which was the amount the council anticipated in spending on the new leisure centre next door. The developers sold flats "off plan" (i.e. based on the plans before building started)





worth three times that amount to overseas buyers a few months after the plans were approved. A recent advert for one of the flats here included these two sentences “A luxury two bedroom apartment in Elephant & Castle's iconic One The Elephant landmark, rising 37 floors. One the Elephant is a stunning 37 storey, 284 unit residential tower with zero affordable housing.”



Continue on along Newington Butts and cross to your left after the Walworth Road Junction. We go straight along Walworth Road until we reach the very tall building called the Strata (with three large turbines on the roof). This was the first building in what has become the long process of “redeveloping” the Elephant and Castle area. The turbines, originally heralded as an eco-friendly design, have never been used as the vibrations they cause are too noisy and disturbing, and the energy they

provide is not significant enough to justify the trouble they cause. Echoing this failure in eco-sensitive development, the development on the land once occupied by the Heygate Estate ([wikipedia.org/wiki/Heygate_Estate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heygate_Estate)) next door was given a major award for the planned eco-friendly energy aspects of its design, all of which have now been abandoned. The old estate provided over 1,400 truly affordable homes and the new development is still failing to provide any affordable homes on a site that is much more densely occupied than before.



Turn right in front of this tower with the lower black and white building on your right and continue into a car parking area with Wolaston Close ahead. Continue on the close to the junction with Hampton Street. The modern Crossway URC Church is on the corner on your left.

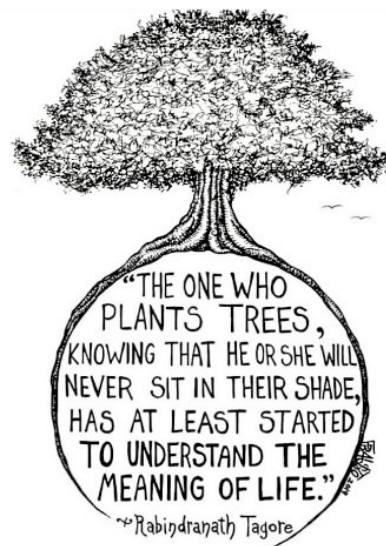
This is the church Unlock visited in 2011 before the developers began to demolish the Heygate Estate, whose community Crossway was partly built to serve. As part of the deal to allow its demolition, Crossway was found a new site here, where the developers built a new church. It is still in the heart of the marginalised population living in this area. You are on the edge of the Newington Estate where a very socially and ethnically mixed community lives, including, of course, people who are council tenants, owner occupiers and private tenants, a number of whom live in notoriously overcrowded and cramped conditions. Recent stabbings and other events highlight the problems with drug gangs and “county lines” activities here. Despite the new building, Crossway Church’s roots are directly linked with the 19th century Congregationalists and also with the Southwark Dissenters and Separatists dating back to the 16th Century.



Thinking about Waiting patiently

The area we have walked through has been living in a series of phases of turmoil now since the nineteenth century. Each phase of improvement or wealth creation has resulted in part of the community paying the price for other people's success. At the heart of this series of changes there have been stable points like the churches, who have continued to see the community through the lens of love and the knowledge that short term gains are not what makes the difference. And as each change takes place, those who gain from it move on, leaving the rest of the community to continue living normal lives with friends and family to love and support.

The stability of faith in this area has been a powerful and often quiet force, but the tradition of preaching and spreading the word has also been in this place since people started to settle here. So, it is hard to walk far without encountering centres of faith doing outreach, finding the best ways to serve their local communities and provide a way to faith and belief that is needed by everyone, but especially important in times of crisis and uncertainty. So, it is unsurprising that new churches are beginning to emerge, locally, further down the Walworth Road and into other run-down estates south of the city centre, and new communities are being served in established churches across the area, too. So, it is Christ that is patient, waiting for us to act, knowing that we will encounter him and trusting that those who have already begun



On the following pages you will find the factsheet for Lambeth Methodist Mission, a reflection, Bible texts, an Unlock story, a prayer and a selection of activities.



PLEASE DONATE TO SUPPORT UNLOCK'S WORK

- Online via Virgin Giving : http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/support_donations.php
- By Bank Transfer to Account No: 65031179; sort code: 08-92-50, quoting ref: walk quoting house number and postcode if eligible for Gift Aid
- By cheque to 'Unlock', mailed to: Unlock, 15 Station Road, Rotherham, S60 1HN

Due to COVID 19 the Unlock Office will be running on fairly minimal staffing over the summer of 2021.

Donations via Virgin Giving and Bank Transfer save Unlock money and time, and get the funds into our account much faster. Cheques will take longer to process in the current circumstances.

For this year only, we may not be able to acknowledge individual donations (donations via Virgin Giving will be acknowledged automatically) , as we will have neither the staff nor the necessary details to do so.

Please be assured that we are more grateful than we can possibly say for your generous and faithful support.

Lambeth Methodist Mission



Lambeth Mission and St. Mary's is located at 3-5 Lambeth Road, SE1 7DQ

We are set on the edge of a large housing estate, and opposite the church and in other surrounding areas, private housing.

Our area then is very mixed in terms of people of different social status.

We are very close to the Imperial War Museum and Lambeth Palace and then just over the river you will find the Houses of Parliament.

Lambeth Methodist Mission
Minister: Rev. Dr. Andy Lyons
3-5 Lambeth Road, SE1 7DQ
Tel: 020 7735 2166
Andylyons58@gmail.com

The current building is the third set of Methodist Church premises that have stood on the site since the 18th Century. The current buildings were completed after WWII as substantial bomb damage destroyed the previous building. During this time the church became a Local Ecumenical Project as Anglicans from St. Mary's made a home with the Methodists. This LEP ceased in 2016. In this current year we will be demolishing and then rebuilding with a brand new 4 storey church and community facility and a hotel.



A redevelopment of the site has been considered for many years as the current buildings were not built to a good standard, as being post-war buildings there were limitations on materials available. Several schemes fell through until this last scheme was developed. Even this scheme has been hampered by difficulties, including a struggle to get planning permission, and more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. However, our hope is, once we complete our new building we will be able to offer a variety of programmes and to offer space to local groups to run their own programmes of social and cultural activity.

During the time of the current buildings many community programmes have been undertaken – perhaps the most famous being the films that were shown to children and young people – indeed the building was known as The

Ideal Cinema. However, during the 1960s to 1980s there were many outreach programmes run by the church for all ages. In more recent years members have been very pleased to work with the Robes Charity to provide a winter shelter for homeless people during winter months.

Over the years the nature of the worshipping community has changed. We are now a small but very multi-cultural community. We also have members of very different wealth and social status and we welcome LGBTQ

members. Our members have been very involved over the years with Christian Aid and supportive of other local community and charity groups. As our members come from many parts of the world and are of Methodist and Anglican heritage, we try to make our worship reflect these

differences. We have a small number of children who worship with us, although like many churches most of our members are more mature in age.

We give thanks for the multi-cultural, plural worshipping and local communities.

We pray for a successful completion of our new building, and, in time, developing new relationships with local people and groups.



We pray for all in Government, our local ecumenical partners, the staff of our local hospital of St. George's, the Robes project and all those who are homeless.

Patience Reflection/Prayer

Lord,
I am here in this garden
I can hear the traffic buzzing and rumbling
there are people rushing by
and I know I must be on my way
but this is a Peace Garden
and I know I should pause and pray.

Lord, are you there?

I know about the place we are in
How can peace be found
in a hospital famous for the mistreatment of those in their care
and is now the Imperial War Museum?
Perhaps, knowing that things change
that the hospital eventually became a force for good
and developed modern treatments in this place;
perhaps, knowing that this museum
remembers the truth about war
and teaches about the victims, the people with no voice
and the suffering that comes with conflict.
Perhaps this can be a place
where peace can be found?

Lord, I do know you are here.

And I can see how this garden of peace
makes sense in this place
Pausing here, I have discovered trust
to know we are not abandoned
and that there are times
when we need to place our troubles
in your hands
and wait patiently
to hear your voice again.



Ian Smith—Unlock London Walk Team

Unlock Stories:

Freedom from Oppression

Mike came to Unlock group last week, he is an (on and off) alcoholic. He used to go to church, but he struggled with the congregation and eventually left. Since then he has always associated Christianity and Jesus with being judged for his failings (his addiction to alcohol) – it was wonderful to be able to talk to him about how Jesus loves everybody, no matter how they have lived their lives. Mike struggled with this idea, but wants to talk more. As time goes on I want to think about how Jesus came to give freedom from oppression (including addiction) as well as having some conversations about grace and forgiveness when the time feels right. This is very exciting, but I think it is going to take a long time to journey through all this stuff.

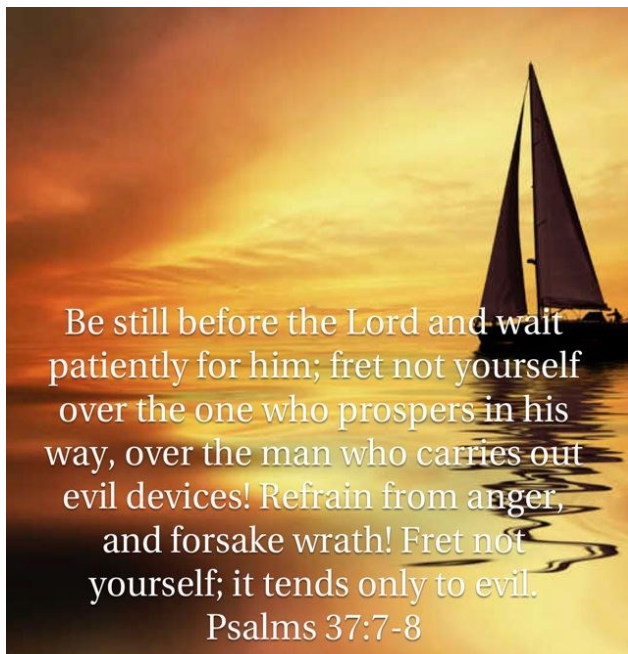
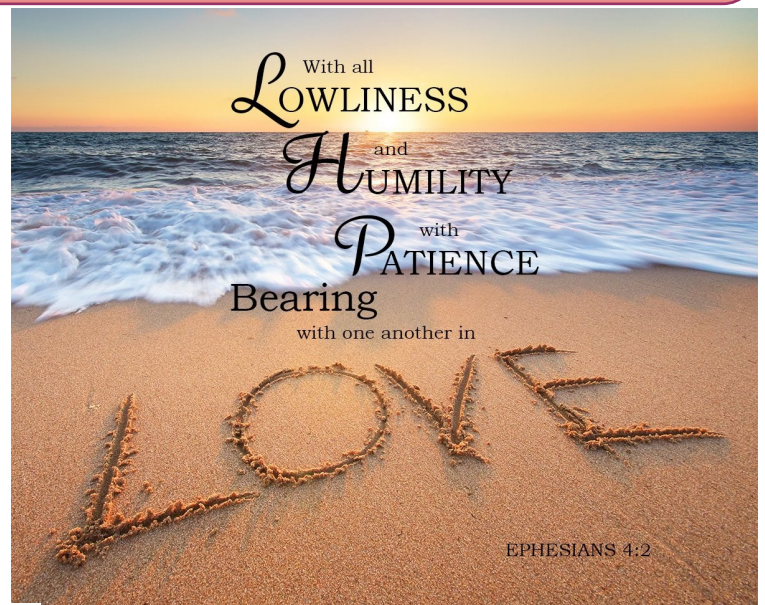
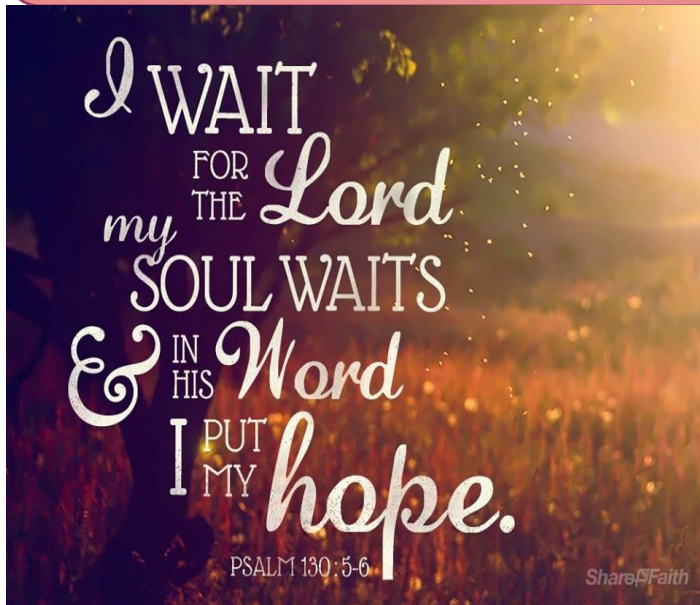


Five out of Six

Out of six MIND people who our Birmingham worker worked with, five are actively engaged in church activities one year after our worker left the group to continue without her input. When she first met them the group felt rejected by the church, where they had been told they could no longer hold their meetings.



Bible texts on Patience



ACTIVITIES - introduction -- Thoughts along the River

Choose whichever focus appeals to you and start there.

You can visit the others later if you would like to.

Together they provide a helpful way to process the last twelve months and help us look forward.

Welcome!

Take a moment to fetch yourself a cuppa, then come and sit on a virtual bench. This is an opportunity to take a breather.



The River Thames is never far away on this year's Virtual Unlock Walk. It has played a part in the development of many of the areas of London you have and will explore as you follow the route of the Walk. You crossed the Thames on London Bridge, walked along the Northbank and under Southwark Bridge. On the way back to Lambeth you crossed the Thames again on Blackfriars Bridge.



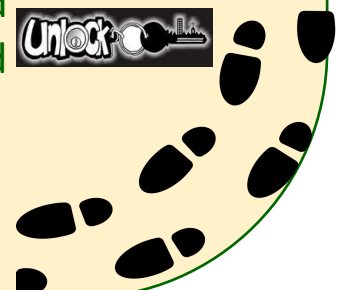
As you enjoy your drink, take your time, breathe in and out slowly. Close your eyes and imagine your bench is on the edge of the river.

What do you notice as you tune into the sounds, smells and sights of the flowing river? How do you feel?

Think about the water flowing past your feet. This river has been flowing since the last Ice Age, over 10 000 years ago.

Turn your head to look down the river to the east. Think about where that fresh water is going – out into the salty North Sea.

Turn your head to look up the river to the west. Think about where that water is coming from – all the way from the Cotswold Hills, through farmland and towns like Reading and Windsor



ACTIVITY

Imagine yourself on your virtual bench beside the river focusing on the water flowing right past your feet. This water represents the present – the now!

Breathe in and out and still yourself.

Tune into the sounds around you. Listen to the water gurgling past your feet.

Are you happy to sit like this or are you wanting to 'get on'?



ACTIVITY

Tucked away behind the streets and among the churches are many remarkable gardens in this part of London. For instance, Newington Gardens, Leathermarket Gardens, Gibbons Rent and Rennie Gardens – to mention just a few.



These green spaces in the midst of high buildings and busy roads must be refreshing for the local residents and workers – like green lungs.

Many of these gardens were established on sites of old jails, executions or bomb-damaged buildings – a helpful picture of beauty out of dereliction. They have taken decades to become established and look as they do today.

Sitting in a garden is a little like sitting by a river – it is easier to be still, to wait, to watch.

It is difficult to focus only on the ‘short-term’ in a garden. There is usually a sense of timelessness, of future possibilities, of living things getting on with living regardless of all that is happening.

Imagine you are sitting on a bench in one of these beautiful gardens. Or go into your own garden and sit quietly.

Look at the plants around you carefully.

Notice the small movements caused by the wind, birds or little animals.

Allow any personal impatience and frustration fall away.

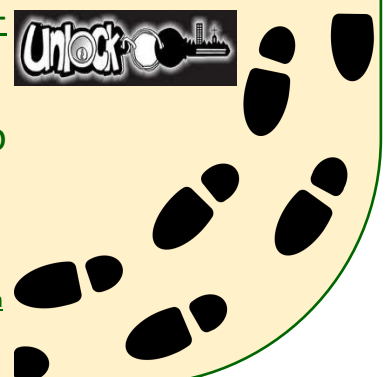
Let go of your urgency to ‘get on’.

Listen to Bryn Haworth Be Still My Soul Before the Lord: [Be Still My Soul - YouTube](#)

What is Father God saying to you?



Image of Leathermarket Garden: [Subsidence in Leathermarket Gardens - BermondseyStreet.London](#)



ACTIVITY

How can we build 'waiting' into our daily or weekly rhythm?

Does sitting on a virtual bench beside an imagined river help?

Maybe you have a real bench where you like to sit...



To make a start building 'waiting' into our life rhythm:

Each day for the next week, sit on your virtual bench.

Quietly say aloud the beginning of Psalm 23, pausing after each phrase:

The Lord is my shepherd, (Pause)

I have everything I need. (Pause)

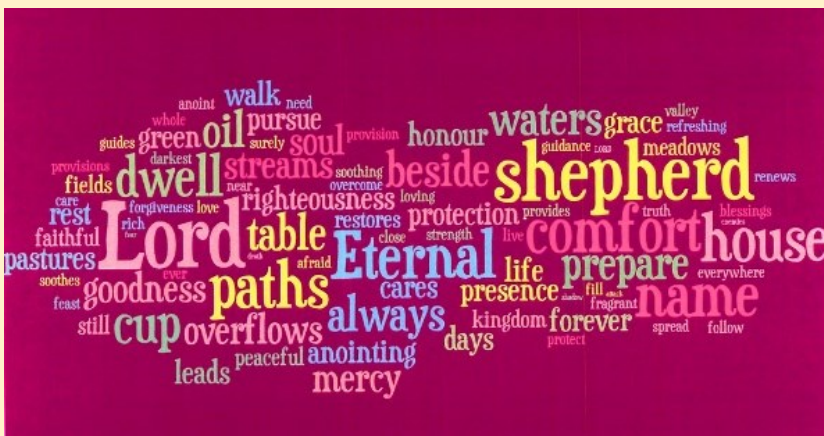
He lets me rest in fields of green grass. (Pause)

He leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. (Pause)

He gives me new strength. (Pause)

He guides me in the right paths. (Pause)

As he has promised. (Pause)



As Christians we are followers of the ultimate patient man!

How does that encourage you?



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