**Introduction to Bible Journalling with Gratitude and Thanksgiving**

According to modern day research, gratitude and thanksgiving are powerful things which can transform lives. As Christians we shouldn’t be surprised by this. God tells us throughout Scripture that gratitude and thanksgiving is something we should take seriously and practise in all circumstances (1 Thess 5:18).

Biblical gratitude is not based on a passing whim or contortion of how we actually feel in the face of all the painful things in the world. It is based on a God who is good – a God who loves us. We can see him at work throughout history and in our own lives. Yes, there is pain in the world, and many difficult things that we don’t understand. We feel the pain at times and wrestle with the questions but we can still choose to practise gratitude and thanksgiving. It points us to the positive things present in any situation. It does us good, even in the darkest of hours.

The Bible is full of exhortations to thankfulness, stories of people expressing thanks, and liturgies we can use in our own worship. These passages are often accompanied by reasons to give thanks and many of these still ring true for us today. These reasons include friends and fellow Christians, food and drink, salvation both here on earth and awaiting us in heaven, the gift of Christ and the faithful goodness of God throughout generations. They also show us different ways of expressing our gratitude: e.g. through shouts, prayers, music and song.

The following studies for creative Bible journalling each contain several Bible references. You can focus on just one or look at all of them. As you read, let your imagination engage with the different sights, images and sounds of thanksgiving. Talk with God about your thoughts and feelings. Use whatever colours, and pictures you have available to decorate your pages. Include written thoughts and prayers if you want to. Enjoy the *process* of creativity. This is not about creating a finished piece. It’s about enjoying some creative space with God and seeing where it takes you.