

ENOUGH

THE UPPER ROOM
PROJECT 

A space to rest/relax with your tribe,
be challenged by the prophetic call of
compassion and connect with heartbeats
for living

*“My tears have
been my food day
and night, while
people say to me
continually, “Where
is your God?”*”



A WORSHIP RESOURCE FOR YOUTH GROUPS, CONGREGATIONS AND GROUPS RESPONDING TO THE BUSHFIRES

The following ideas are possible ways of helping youth, churches and community groups process and debrief the tragic week of fires in Australia. Feel free to adapt, cut, paste and tweak it to ensure it is helpful with your group and context.
Adrian Greenwood

Leaders Notes

The process I am suggesting is: Lament, Name and Respond.

‘Lament’ starts where we are – during this time we remember all that causes us hurt, all that once was and now is forever different. This time allows us to express our anger and questions to God. We join with Jesus crying out from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken us.”

It is hoped that by being reminded of the suffering of Jesus we will be reminded that in such times of devastation God draws near to comfort, as One who in Jesus, shares the pain of creation. Please avoid ‘rushing to the resurrection’ and trying to make everything neat and finished – that time is yet to come.

In these spaces and weeks people need to name the pain, shout at God and hopefully, meet our healing/suffering God there. Give God and people the space for healing.

Pre-preparation:

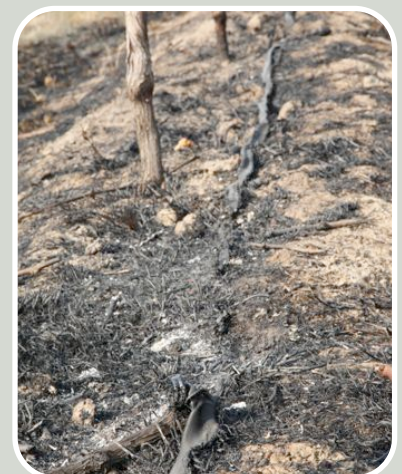
Glass bowl of water with a printed OHP sheet floating in it with the word “Enough” written on it with a marker.

Large sheets of paper with the words - Family, Friends, Service, Homes & Businesses, Pets and Animals, Environment, Memories. Coloured Textas

Image to reflect: I suggest an image/s of comforting and community. Times of crisis can build community, and the

possibilities for neighbourliness are many.

Choose a room where you can make a circle with the people – it’s OK to have it layers deep. Think of this as a group hug.



MIKE'S PHOTOS



Mike Emmett

These photos were taken by our friend Mike in the spaces between defending Claire and his home plus the surrounding homes of their neighbours in Healesville.

“Burning is what the Australian bush does. Surviving the fires, honouring the lost, and picking up the pieces is what Australians do. “

Psalm 42 (NRSV)

Readers note: This is a despairing angry, questioning psalm of longing which covers a lot of emotional territory.

As the deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living
God.

When shall I come and behold the
face of God?

My tears have been my food day and
night, while people say to me
continually,
“Where is your God?”

These things I remember, as I pour
my soul; How I went with the throng,
and led them in procession to the
house of God,

With glad shouts and songs of
thanksgiving, a multitude keeping
festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within
me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise
him, my help and my God.

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of
Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

Deep calls to deep at the thunder of
your cataracts; all your waves and
your billows have gone over me.

By day the Lord commands his
steadfast love, and at night his song
is with me, a prayer to the God of my
life.

I say to God, my rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?

Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses me?
As with deadly wound in my body, my
adversaries taunt me, while they say
to me continually, “Where is you
God?”

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within
me? Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him, my help and my God.

A Time to Remember Activity

During this time place the worded
sheets of paper around the room with
textas available.

Encourage people to draw or write
about their feelings and thoughts in
each area.

Allow enough time for this then call
people back to make a circle.

Celtic Circle

Ask people to form a circle.

The Celtic tradition loves circles.
They are unbroken with no
beginning or end. They also
surround and protect the centre.

‘Today we are going to name and
pray for those we wish to surround
with the strength, hopes and
prayers of this community. We will
begin by naming those we know of
in the various areas affected by
the fires. I will name an area and
leave time for people to name
those within this area either aloud
or silently....’

Let us pray for:

- Those who have lost their lives
- Those who have lost homes,
businesses and property...
- Those who fought/are fighting
fires...
- Those who helped/are helping
care in various ways...(CFA,
police, ambulance, SES,
chaplains, counsellors, family
members and friends of those who
have suffered, church and
community agencies and groups,
government departments (local,
state, federal)
- The environment and animals...

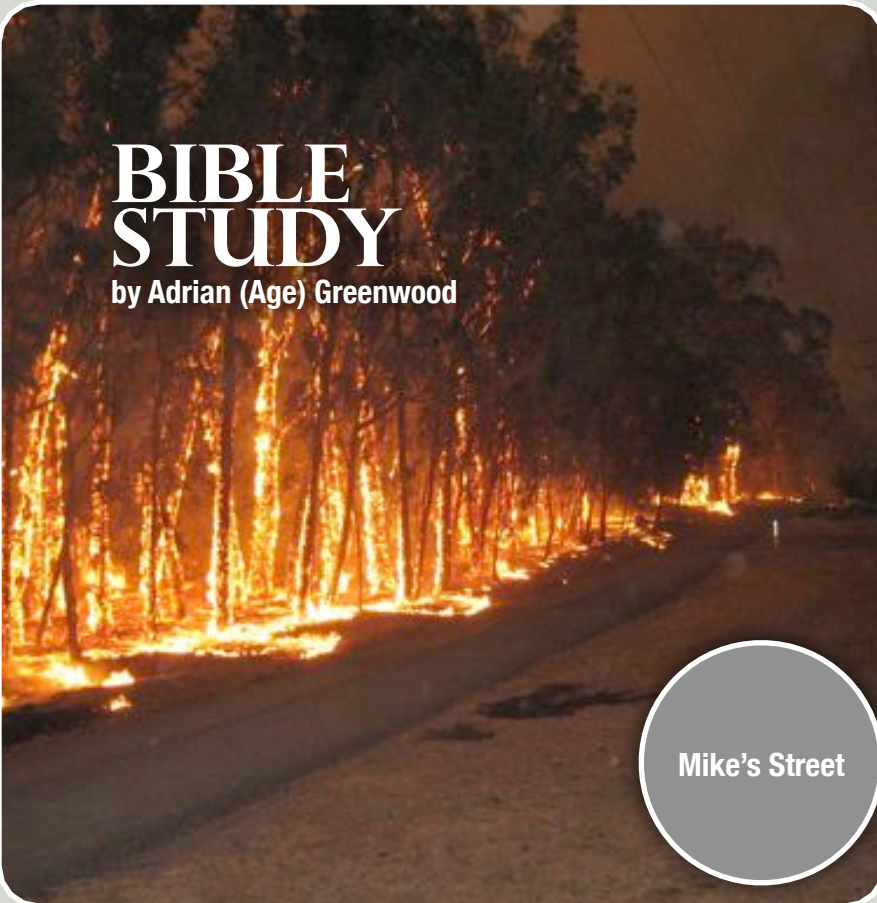
‘Now we will say the things we
wish to keep out of this circle for
those we have named. (Maybe
things like bitterness, revenge,
debt...) Burdens or attitudes which
may not help us during this
time....’

‘Now let’s share the things we wish
to keep in this circle for all named.
(Maybe things like friends,
compassion, chocolate,
perseverance...) Things and
attitudes which may help during
this time...’

‘Let us draw near each other as
community encircling ourselves
and those beyond this space.’

BIBLE STUDY

by Adrian (Age) Greenwood



Mike's Street



John 6:5-15

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

IN HIS OWN WORDS



BE FIRE READY

This is me, on Monday 9th Feb. Yep. I look tired and dirty. 4 hours sleep in 3 days will do that to you.

I'm standing on the boundary line at the south western edge of our property, where we held the fire before it turned away from us. That busted up fence post is the sum total of our damage.

(These are my fire clothes, by the way – Heavy woolen coat with high collar, leather boots (which now have melted soles), and heavy denim pants. Usually I have the goggles, mask, and gloves too... Everyone who lives in the bush, regardless whether they plan to stay or go, should have clothing for adequate protection should they get stuck and be forced to stay, as were our neighbours.)

Brief Reflection on Enough

In this passage the concern was whether there would be enough food to go around. Philip saw that they did not have the resources to cope with the need. "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

But others disciples looked to what they have with them, in their midst, a boy with five loaves and two small fish.... and Jesus.

Thousands have lost their homes in the fires and the need is great. Everyone knows someone affected by the fire and as such we all are affected. The need is very great. Like the disciples, as a community we look to what resources we have amongst us: the care and compassion of people opening their world, hearts, wallets and homes to others in need. This is all we have and, with Christ's blessing, it is enough. We are enough.

Jesus is with us as we face this tragic time. We have a God who is not a stranger to suffering, even in this passage he has to skip town before they make him king by force. Jesus, even after the resurrection, still bears the scars on his hands and feet (John 20: 19-20). Jesus multiplies the very common things we have and makes it enough.



Jesus multiplies the very common things we have and makes it enough

Celtic Poem Blessing. RS Thomas

I think that maybe
I will be a little surer
of being a little nearer.
That's all. Eternity
Is in the understanding
that that little is more than enough

Amen

Mark the Cross

As people leave you may invite them to dip their fingers into the bowl of water and mark the sign of the cross on the back of their hands or on their forehead to remind them that God is with them in this time and always.

Challenge

What are the common things you have in your life that could be used in the wake of the fires?

Links

The Bushfire Disaster Appeal
<http://www.shareappeal.org.au>

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