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C EDAR

At Bow Church we seek to grow in our faith as followers of Jesus becoming like the great Cedars of Lebanon, (Psalm 92.12–15) with roots that draw nourishment from God’s Word, standing tall in fellowship alongside each other and doing life well. Cedar enables us week by week, day by day to journey together in faith through a combination of: Sunday Sermons, Midweek Meetings and Daily Devotions.

BC

BC was first used by Bede in the 8th century to describe the times 'before Christ'. But it was years later in the early 1700's when Isaac Newton used the phrase before Christ (BC) in his 'Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms' when it began to move into common usage. Since then many people and nations have used this notation regardless of any stated belief in, or allegiance to Jesus the Christ. Christ simply means 'the promised one' or 'Messiah' – the People of God had been looking and waiting for a Messiah for 100's of years before the Son of God was born incarnate and recognised by many Jews to be the one. Other people around the world came to the same conclusion and to date millions have put their trust in Jesus as the Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Today however there are still large numbers of observant Jews who don't believe Jesus to be the Messiah and are still waiting for one to arrive.

We believe Jesus is that Messiah, that Christ, today sat at the right hand of God – we believe he was born to a virgin in Bethlehem, living, teaching and performing incredible miracles all across the Galilee region before being crucified just outside the Jerusalem city wall and then resurrected three days later before ascending alive into heaven 40 days after that. This Cedar course looks at some of the key moments in history as recorded in the Old Testament that set the scene for Jesus' birth and his incarnate mission. We are digging into the years before Jesus birth; BC to better understand who he is.

EIGHT **BC** SERMONS

Sin – Call – Exodus – Covenant – A King – A Prophet – A Priest – A Virgin

27 th Oct Colossians 1:15–23 (21) **SIN separates us from God**
(Genesis 3)

3rd Nov Genesis 11:1–9 & 12:1–8 **Abraham is CALLED**

10th Nov Exodus 12:1–13 & 31–42 **The great EXODUS**

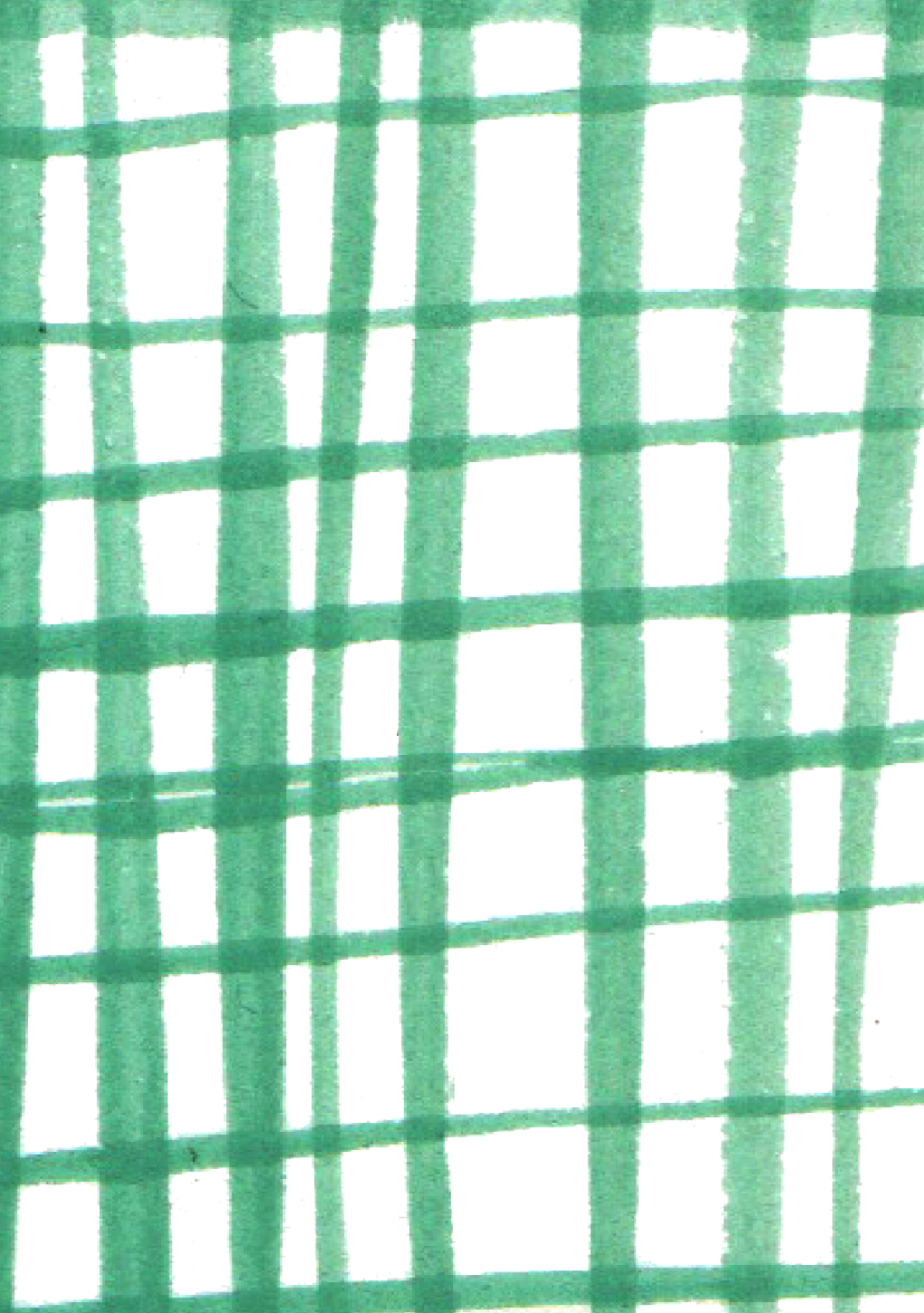
17th Nov Exodus 19:1–6 & 20:1–21 **The God of COVENANT**

24th Nov 1 Samuel 8:1–2 **God's people want a KING**

1st Dec Isaiah 9:1–7 **A PROPHET foretells the Messiah**

8th Dec Luke 1:5–20 & 57–79 **A PRIEST foretells the Messiah**

15th Dec Luke 1:26–38 **A VIRGIN ushers in Jesus incarnate**



The background of the entire image is a green and white checkered pattern, resembling a picnic blanket or a tablecloth. The green squares are a medium shade, and the white squares are a bright, clean white.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

WEEK ONE

Saturday 26th	<i>Colossians 1.15-23</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 27th	<i>Colossians 1.15-23</i>	SIN separates us from God
Monday 28th	<i>Genesis 1.1-19</i>	Everything in creation seems to be good
Tuesday 29th	<i>Genesis 1.20-31</i>	Humanity alone is made in God's image
Wednesday 30th	<i>Genesis 2.1-17</i>	God and man in the garden but there are limits
Thursday 31st	<i>Genesis 2.18-3.7</i>	Humanity is tempted away from God
Friday 1st November	<i>Genesis 3.8-24</i>	Found! Banished, and in need of salvation.

WEEK ONE

WEEK TWO

Saturday 2nd	<i>Genesis 11.1-9 & 12.1-8</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 3rd	<i>Genesis 11.1-9 & 12.1-8</i>	Abraham is CALLED
Monday 4th	<i>Genesis 11.1-9</i>	"Come let us make a name for ourselves"
Tuesday 5th	<i>Genesis 11.27-32</i>	Terah's family move from Ur to Haran
Wednesday 6th	<i>Genesis 12.1-9</i>	"I will make your name great & bless you but go"
Thursday 7th	<i>Genesis 15.1-5</i>	"Look at the stars, so shall your offspring be"
Friday 8th	<i>Genesis 17.1-19</i>	Abram and Sarai renamed and granted a child – the Abrahamic covenant is sealed!

WEEK TWO

WEEK THREE

Saturday 9th	<i>Exodus 12.1-13, 31-42</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 10th	<i>Exodus 12.1-13, 31-42</i>	The great EXODUS
Monday 11th	<i>Exodus 12.1-11</i>	The blood of the lamb, will save you, eat it in haste.
Tuesday 12th	<i>Exodus 12.12-20</i>	It is the Passover Lamb! Celebrate this salvation.
Wednesday 13th	<i>Exodus 12.21-28</i>	Tell them how the Lord saved you.
Thursday 14th	<i>Exodus 12.29-42</i>	The Lord kept vigil over them, saving them from slavery
Friday 15th	<i>1 Corinthians 5.7-8</i>	Let's keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth

WEEK THREE

WEEK FOUR

Saturday 16th	<i>Exodus 19.1-6 & 20.1-21</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 17th	<i>Exodus 19.1-6 & 20.1-21</i>	The God of COVENANT
Monday 18th	<i>Genesis 9.1-17</i>	God's covenant with Noah – the world preserved
Tuesday 19th	<i>Genesis 17.1-22</i>	God's covenant with Abraham – redemption initiated
Wednesday 20th	<i>Exodus 19.1-6</i>	Gods covenant with Moses – a nation established
Thursday 21st	<i>2 Samuel 1.29</i>	Gods covenant with David – an eternal king promised
Friday 22nd	<i>Jeremiah 31.31-34 & Matthew 26.26-29</i>	God's new covenant – all the covenants fulfilled

WEEK FOUR

WEEK FIVE

Saturday 23rd	<i>1 Samuel 8.1-12</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 24th	<i>1 Samuel 8.1-12</i>	God's people want a KING
Monday 25th	<i>1 Samuel 8.1-9</i>	As Samuel grows older, Israel asks for a king, to be like other nations.
Tuesday 26th	<i>1 Samuel 8.10-21</i>	An earthly king will be quite unlike God as king.
Wednesday 27th	<i>1 Samuel 9.1-21</i>	A divine appointment, between the last great judge and the first king of Israel.
Thursday 28th	<i>1 Samuel 9.22-10.8</i>	Samuel anoints Saul with oil for his new role.
Friday 29th	<i>1 Samuel 10.9-27</i>	God changes Saul's heart! "Long live the king"

WEEK FIVE

WEEK SIX

Saturday 30th	<i>Isaiah 9.1-7</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrows sermon
Sunday 1st December	<i>Isaiah 9.1-7</i>	A PROPHET foretells the Messiah
Monday 2nd	<i>Isaiah 7.10-15</i>	A virginal birth foretold
Tuesday 3rd	<i>Micah 5.1-4</i>	A Bethlehem birth foretold
Wednesday 4th	<i>Jeremiah 31.1-15</i>	Weeping in Ramah for the children Herod killed
Thursday 5th	<i>Hosea 11.1-4</i>	Our of Egypt God called Israel and Jesus
Friday 6th	<i>Isaiah 53</i>	He would be pierced for our transgressions yet bring us a new day

WEEK SIX

WEEK SEVEN

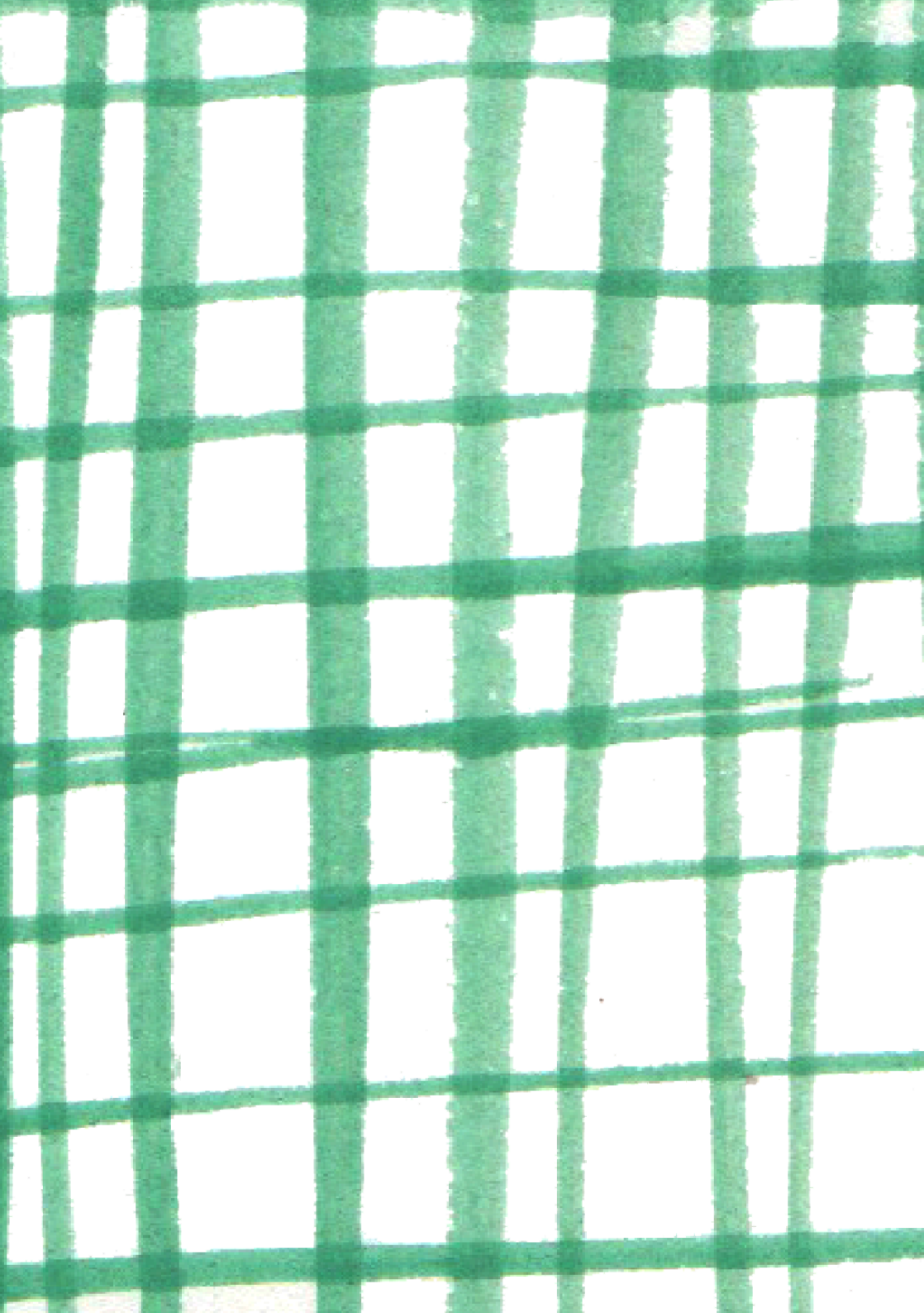
Saturday 7th	<i>Luke 1.5-20, 57-79</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrow's sermon
Sunday 8th	<i>Luke 1.5-20, 57-79</i>	A PRIEST foretells the Messiah
Monday 9th	<i>Luke 1.5-10</i>	Zechariah & Elizabeth were righteous in the eyes of God.
Thursday 10th	<i>Luke 1.11-20</i>	The angel of the Lord visits Zechariah.
Wednesday 11th	<i>Luke 1.21-25</i>	Elizabeth, old in years becomes pregnant.
Thursday 12th	<i>Luke 1.57-66</i>	Zechariah writes "His name is John"
Friday 13th	<i>Luke 1.67-80</i>	Spirit filled Zechariah prophesies the Benedictus!

WEEK SEVEN

WEEK EIGHT

Saturday 14th	<i>Luke 1.26-38</i>	Read ahead and pray for tomorrow's sermon
Sunday 15th	<i>Luke 1.26-38</i>	A VIRGIN ushers in God incarnate
Monday 16th	<i>Isaiah 7.14</i>	A virgin birth is foretold by Isaiah
Thursday 17th	<i>Luke 1.26-38</i>	The Angel Gabriel visits Mary
Wednesday 18th	<i>Matthew 1.18-25</i>	An Angel of the Lord visits Joseph
Thursday 19th	<i>Luke 1.39-45</i>	Mary shares her news with her cousin
Friday 20th	<i>Luke 2.1-20</i>	The virgin gives birth to the Messiah – the Christ child

WEEK EIGHT



The background of the entire image is a green and white plaid pattern, consisting of intersecting horizontal and vertical lines of varying thicknesses, creating a grid of squares.

CEDAR GROUP SESSIONS

WEEK 1

27 Oct – 1 November *Colossians 1:15–23 (21)*

SIN separates us from God

1. What does it mean to you that:
 - a) The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation? (v1)
 - b) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour? (v21)
2. Genesis 3 tells the story of how sin separates us from God, read it through together and thank God that his Son comes to repair that gap.

WEEK 2

3 – 8 November *Genesis 11.1–9 & 12.1–8*

Abraham is CALLED

This week we see God scatter the nations in Genesis 11.8 and in 12.1 call Abraham to follow him and father a special nation to be blessed and purposed by God.

1. Today that special nation is the church – to what extent do you feel one of God's chosen people? Part of the church?
2. When have you sensed God calling you into something new?
3. In 12.1–8 Abraham builds altars to God and calls on his name – for what are you calling on God these days?

WEEK 3

10 – 15 November *Exodus 12.1-13, 31-42*

The great EXODUS

- 1.The Exodus is the great foundational story for Jews and Christians alike – why might it be so foundational for Christians?
- 2.Exodus 12.31-42 tells of the great release, whereby God uses both Moses and Pharaoh to set his people free. In what ways have you felt freed since meeting Jesus?
- 3.What can you see of the significance of the feast of Passover and our Communion that celebrates another great story of release? How does it impact you when you take communion?

WEEK 4

17 – 22 November *Exodus 19.1-6 & 20.1-21*

The God of COVENANT

Covenant is a very special biblical term denoting something between a promise and a contract but born out of a loving relationship. God makes (this Mosaic covenant) the promise to be their God if they live by his commandments.

- 1.Baptism is an act of covenant, given freely by God and entered into freely by us – talk about your own baptisms.
- 2.To be a covenant people is to live in a special promissory relationship with God – what does this mean for you?
- 3.Did you know that God made 5 covenants with his people? Through Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus – what did Jesus say the new covenant was? (Matthew 26.27-29)

WEEK 5

24 – 29 November *1 Samuel 8.1-2*

God's people want a KING

1 Samuel 8 recounts how Israel clamour for a king to lead them just as the surrounding nations have kings, but till now God has been their King and divinely appointed judges have overseen their common life.

- 1.How would you feel if you were God in this story?
- 2.How hard do you find it to stand up for Jesus and to stand against the flow of society and contemporary thought?
- 3.This week is one of three when we consider Jesus as prophet priest and king – what does it mean that he is king of your life?

WEEK 6

1 – 6 December *Isaiah 9.1-7*

A PROPHET foretells the Messiah

In our 'mini-series within a series' we remember that Jesus is prophet priest and king, this week we consider the words of one of the greatest OT prophets foretelling the birth of Jesus 700 years before his incarnate birth at Bethlehem.

- 1.What struck you most about Isaiah 9.1-7?
- 2.How do you respond to the fact that in his virginal birth Jesus fulfils dozens of OT prophecies?
- 3.Why do you think God spoke through his prophets about a Messiah being born to the Jews?

WEEK 7

8 – 13 December *Luke 1.5–20, 57–79*

A PRIEST foretells the Messiah

Jesus is prophet, priest and king, his is the fullness of prophecy, the great high priest and the king of kings – how special it must have been years later for Zechariah to look back and see his part in the unfolding story of Jesus.

1. Who first told you about Jesus?
2. Who have you told or would like to tell about Jesus?
3. Read out loud together: Luke 1.67–79, often called the Benedictus – how does Zechariah's song of praise tell us about the person and purpose of Jesus?

WEEK 8

15 – 20 December *Luke 1.26–38*

A VIRGIN ushers in Jesus incarnate

Our Cedar series ends where the incarnation of Jesus begins, these weeks will hopefully have helped us see that the story begins right back at the dawn of time. But nevertheless, Mary plays a key role in ushering Jesus incarnate into the world.

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus was incarnate
2. Our church is dedicated to St Mary – how should we see her place in the Jesus story?
3. What has been the favourite part of this series for you? The part that has opened your mind to better understand who Jesus is and why he came and when he came?

VACANCY

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15.13

Our vacancy vision is to:

**LEAN IN
LIFT UP &
LOOK OUT**

Leaning in to support one another in love, lifting one another up in ministry and looking out for each other and those beyond our church family.

CONNECT WITH US:

EMAIL - HELLO@BOW.CHURCH

INSTAGRAM - [@BOW_CHURCH](https://www.instagram.com/@BOW_CHURCH)

MOBILE - 07908 416 052

