

St Francis Weekly News for REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 8th November 2020



This bulletin may have come to you by email or through your letterbox, if you received it on paper but are happy to receive an email in future please email deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com If you know anybody else who would like this delivered or emailed please contact Deborah or Revd Janet: revdjanetwyer@outlook.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – 8TH NOVEMBER



It was planned that St Francis Church Act of Remembrance would take place outside the church building at 11am. Unfortunately changes in the government's Covid Restrictions means that we have had to make changes in how we will be honouring all those who have given their lives in the service of their country.

The Act of Remembrance will now take place in church and can be viewed via our Zoom Room; however, we hope that we will be able to signal the start and finish of the two minute silence by means of the church bell.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82750603997?pwd=eVBwcjFRRjhBUDN6MmVQMDYzZWdrQT09>

Meeting ID: 827 5060 3997

Passcode: 567377

As previously announced in the newsletter last week although there will be no Service of Holy Communion on the morning of the 8th November, BCP Holy Communion will be celebrated in the evening at 5pm in place of the usual service of BCP Evening Prayer and this too will be broadcast via the St Francis Church Zoom Room.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87136039841?pwd=OVc4UFJjSjY2TUI4MTIKNIZJNCtOUT09>

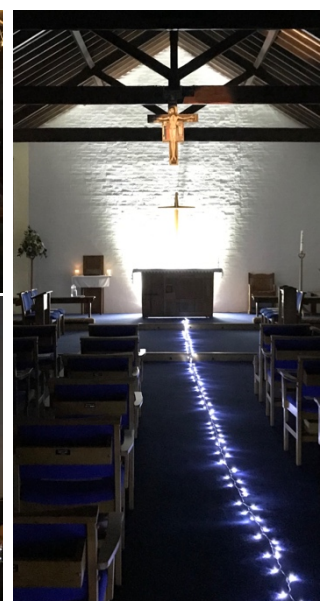
Meeting ID: 871 3603 9841

Passcode: 300382



SHINING OUT THE LIGHT OF GOD'S LOVE

Last week was a big week in terms of the beginning of the Church's 'Kingdom Season' that extends from 1st November, All Saints Day, until the Sunday before Advent, the festival of Christ the King which falls on 22nd November this year. To mark this season, the culmination of the church year, we lit up the church window and the church with some special light effects, and for the day and night of All Hallows Eve [Hallowe'en] Revd Winnie and Brother Eeyore shone out a special pumpkin message.



The window lights will remain in place until the First Sunday in Advent, when it will be 'all change' yet again!

NOVEMBER SOCIAL LOCKDOWN

Once more we find ourselves in a situation where getting out and about is restricted, incomes may be effected by non-essential shops and businesses being closed and family get togethers are not possible.

This is a little reminder that although we may not be able to help in every circumstance, St Francis Church remains a place where all are welcome to come to spend some quiet time in prayer, to enquire about assistance with food parcels – and to find a listening ear.

Please feel free to call at the church building any weekday morning 10am – 12pm; or call the 24/7 answerphone [01603 431259]

**The Church of St Francis
Heartsease**



OPEN FOR PRAYER

As mentioned above, St Francis Church building will be accessible for quiet individual prayer [or for people in a household bubble to pray together] throughout the social lockdown.

The church space will open every weekday morning 10am – 11.30pm. There will also be resources available and you will be able to light a prayer candle if that is something you would like to do.

The prayer table in the church was the focal point of last Sunday's 'Remembered with Love' service and it is a beautiful way to offer up your prayer to

God and to mark your visit to this very special place.

If you would like to arrange to come at a particular time, or need some further assistance please feel free to call Revd Janet [07990 576118] or Fr Tracy [07834 845623]



A PLEA FOR HELP

Those readers of this newsletter who also used to visit the Community Fridge may well remember a gentleman by the name of William Poulson who was a regular and avid supporter of the Fridge project.

Unfortunately William's home, his houseboat has sunk and he is trying to raise £35,000 in order to salvage it.

William has a gofundme page under 'Happy Moorhen Salvage' so if you are able to help with a small donation, your contribution would be most appreciated.

Our thoughts and prayers are with him at this very difficult time.



ST FRANCIS ZOOM ROOM HOUSEGROUP

Do you fancy an online get together to catch up with each other, share a Bible passage and pray?

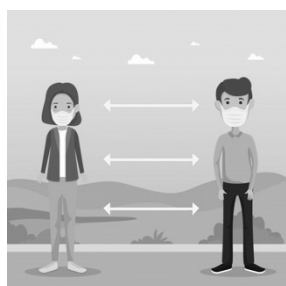
We will be starting a zoom group on the first and third Monday of the month, starting on 16th November.

The group will start at 7pm and finish around 8pm.

All are welcome – please contact Jim Green via email: jimpiecrust@gmail.com

ST FRANCIS WALKERS

We can't meet in each other's homes or gardens, but two people can go for a socially distanced walk together.



So we are suggesting that if you would like to go for a walk - just turn up at the church between 10am and 10.30am on a Wednesday morning.

As soon as there are two people they can go for the

walk of their choosing, to Mousehold, around the estate, or anywhere else they agree to go, for as long as they decide.

It could be a prayer walk, a nature walk, or just a walk and chat walk! Up to you!

We'll be starting the walks on the morning of Wednesday 11th November.

PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

CORONAVIRUS CASES ARE INCREASING IN NORWICH
WE MUST SLOW THE SPREAD NOW AND PROTECT EACH OTHER

- Wash your hands more often
- Carry and use hand sanitiser when you can't wash your hands
- Wear a face covering in public indoor spaces
- Keep your distance from others
- Stick to the rule of six

IF WE ALL PLAY OUR PART NOW, TOGETHER WE CAN KEEP NORWICH SAFE. PROTECT OURSELVES. PROTECT OTHERS. PROTECT NORWICH.

As we are all now well aware, Covid 19 is a real threat to the wellbeing of many people – and not only through the disease itself.

The November social lockdown may well present many people with all sorts of difficulties so never has it been more necessary for us all to treat one another with kindness.

And never before has it been so vital for us to look and listen out for folk who might be struggling.

Please, if you would like the opportunity to have a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

We are also able to offer help if you or someone you know needs support with basic food provision.

Please do not feel that you are alone - help and support is always available, whatever may be troubling you.

Revd Janet [07990 576118]

Father Tracy [07834 845623]

Eleanor [07840 206716]

Also, there is always someone available in the church building weekdays 10.00am – 12.00pm; please feel free to knock at the door, it will open to you.



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

Norfolk Assistance Scheme: 01603 223392

THE CURATE'S CORNER

Earlier in the week, I was having a conversation with someone about baptism, and that led to a discussion about the sacraments and what they are. Baptism (also known by its old English name of Christening) is a sacrament, and as this tends to get very confusing I thought I'd write about it this week.

So what is a sacrament? The standard response is that a sacrament is an 'outward sign of an inward grace', but I don't suppose that's much help! What is meant here is that a sacrament tends to be something we do, or something that we can see, or hear, or feel, and this is the 'outward sign', or the bit that we can actually know through our senses. This 'something' promotes and 'inward' or spiritual effect provided by God, or 'grace, which is the help that God can give us through any particular sacrament.

In our day to day lives, there are many examples of 'outward signs' that make it possible for us to receive something that we cannot see, something that is invisible. A simple example is when we give someone a hug, or when a parent hugs their child; what we see with our eyes is simply a person wrapping their arms around another. Hugs are a very mysterious thing, though, because through a simple hug we can experience an inner feeling of safety, affection and indeed love. This is an invisible thing and cannot be seen by an onlooker. Shaking hands with someone may appear to be just that, but the inner meaning that cannot be felt is that something has been agreed to, or a friendship has been established.

Strictly speaking, everything we know and see in God's created world is a sacrament as it reflects the glory of the creator. Where things have gone wrong, dark and messed up – then we can see that God has been pushed out and it is this disconnection that prevents the existence of a sacrament and the disturbance that follows. This may seem to be strangely contradictory, and it is; although it is important that this contradiction is embraced. It also explains why the Greek word for sacrament is from where we get our word mystery – partly because sacraments are indeed a mystery, but also because it comes from another word which means to initiate, or instruct in sacred mysteries, to learn a lesson of some kind. Baptism is therefore an instruction in the divine, an initiation.

The 'outward sign' of baptism is, of course, connected with water – we are either put into water,

or water is poured onto us. At the same time, the person who baptises says 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.



The 'inward grace', or help from God, is something else. If we consider what water is we can come to understand what it is that 'something else' is. In a sense water is a sign of death – the Bible says 'all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.' (Romans 6:3-4). In early times, and in some churches today, people are baptised by being immersed in water three times – sometimes quite strongly! This helps us to see that baptism represents our old lives being well and truly drowned and everything we've done wrong, all the mistakes we've made, are washed away – they are dead.

The idea that water can do this is illustrated in the Bible in several stories. One is the story of the flood, when an old and wicked world was drowned in water as God made a new start for Noah and his family. Another is the story of the Exodus when God set His people free from the rulers of Egypt where they had been kept as slaves. They were led through the Red Sea, the parting of the waters, as they journeyed to the Promised Land.

Again, these stories are clues. In baptism, we are, in some mysterious way, connected with the death of Jesus. Our old lives are left behind in a watery grave and we continue a new journey, through water, leading to the Promised Land of God's kingdom.

Water is also a sign of new life, too! Look what happens when water is scarce. We have drought and famine, but providing water will irrigate the land and enable the growing of crops and flowers. Animals and insects can suddenly flourish. Water has brought life and great joy.

Again when we are baptised and joined to Jesus we also become part of His new life, or 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Jesus himself called this being 'born again'. Look up John 3:3 and read about Nicodemus being completely in the dark about it!



Water is also a sign of cleaning. We are all washing our hands, or we should be, because we know that washing with water and soap gets rid of the coronavirus. If we don't, the virus might get inside us. Jesus said that it is also important to be clean on the inside spiritually, that is, to be clean of sin. Sin is simply stuff we do to push God out, to say no to Him. We all have the freedom to do this, to ignore God, and it is important that we do have that freedom. By token of the same freedom, though, we can say 'yes!' to God, just as Mary did (see my article last week). In doing so, we then become a living sacrament, as we have pointed our lives towards God.

The water of baptism cleans us inwardly from the stain of sin because Jesus made it possible by his sacrifice on the cross. In the Bible God says: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean . . ." (Ezekiel 36:25). This reminds us of the Apostle Paul when, just after he decided to follow Jesus, he was told, "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16).

Anyone who is interested in learning more about how to transform their lives and being baptised can easily do so here at St Francis – at least when we are out of the current lockdown. It is completely free of charge and all are welcome. In the meantime, we are open for private prayer from 10 to 11.30 every morning Monday to Friday; do feel free to pop in.

Every blessing,

Fr Tracy

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

Although I try to resist the lure of spending time on social media – every so often, without even thinking about it I find myself scrolling through my Facebook feed.

For those of you who are sensible enough to avoid Facebook, or indeed do not possess a smartphone of any kind – please forgive me this little meander down the pathway of social media.

I've chosen to confess my weakness for Facebook because although it can lead to significant amount so time being wasted on totally meaningless, mindless nonsense [those who have ever wandered into the video feed will understand], every so often something amazing crops up.

Only this week I saw a post that not only made me stop and think – it reminded me that whatever happens in life, for good or ill, God is with us and that God is the one who is in charge of all things.

What might seem a time of utter desolation and disaster is in fact a necessary time of change, a reminder that we frail human beings are not the boss, and that we do not have the final say on anything.

Having faith when all is falling apart around us is hard, but it is even harder to face trials and sadnesses without it. And more often than not we find that once we've weathered the storm and come through to calmer times some of what we've been through does make sense – in one way or another. Even if it's only to realise that we've perhaps found out something important about ourselves or what or who is really important in our lives.

So thank you Bev for posting this on your FB page – it helped a lot. I hope and pray it will help someone else as well.



God bless you and yours

Revd Janet

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: Stephen C; Barry S; Margaret T; David & Cynthia S; Darren L; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; Hazel; Ben; Frazer.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Doreen; Rosemary; Sheila; John; Joy; Shirley.

We remember with love Kathleen Kelley; Beryl Farrell; Barbara Littlewood; Stanley Lloyd; and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends.

PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Church of St Francis
Heartsease**

Heavenly Father

**We ask your blessing upon us.
Hold the Heartsease Community,
and all the world,
in your arms of love.
Be with us.
Give us your strength,
peace, and healing grace.
Watch over us,
protect us from harm;
and keep in safety
all those who care for the sick
and attend to our needs,
in Jesus name we pray.
Amen**

PRAYERS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,

and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

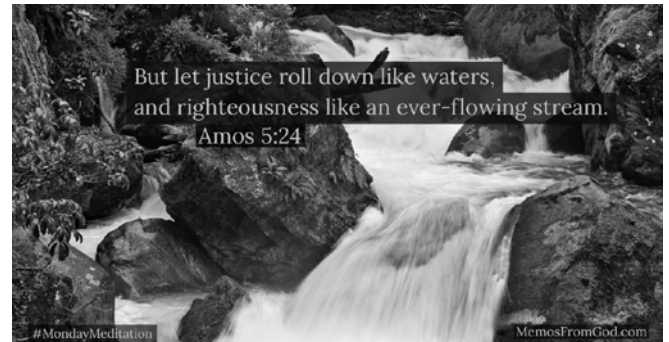
God, our refuge and strength,
bring near the day when wars shall cease
and poverty and pain shall end,
that earth may know the peace of heaven
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

POST COMMUNION

God of peace,
whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom
and restored the broken to wholeness of life:
look with compassion on the anguish of the world,
and by your healing power
make whole both people and nations;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

READINGS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

AMOS 5: 18 – 24



Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!

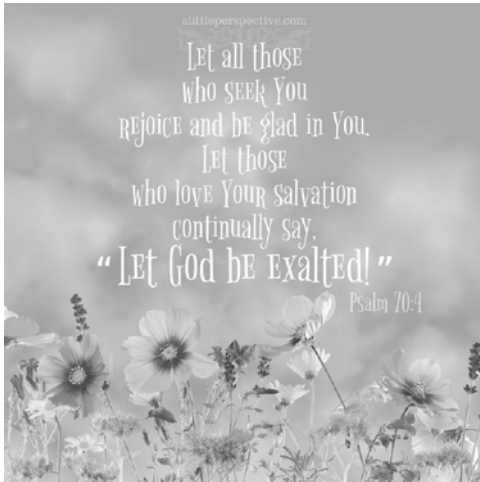
Why do you want the day of the LORD?
It is darkness, not light;
as if someone fled from a lion,
and was met by a bear;
or went into the house and rested a hand against
the wall,
and was bitten by a snake.

Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?
I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and
grain-offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted
animals

I will not look upon.

Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

PSALM 70



- 1 O God, make speed to save me; ♦
O Lord, make haste to help me.
- 2 Let those who seek my life
be put to shame and confusion; ♦
let them be turned back and disgraced
who wish me evil.
- 3 Let those who mock and deride me ♦
turn back because of their shame.
- 4 But let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in
you; ♦
let those who love your salvation say always, 'Great
is the Lord!'
- 5 As for me, I am poor and needy; ♦
come to me quickly, O God.
- 6 You are my help and my deliverer; ♦
O Lord, do not delay.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now,
and shall be for ever. Amen

1 THESSALONIANS 4: 13 – 18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers
and sisters, about those who have died, so that you
may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose
again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with
him those who have died.

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord,
that we who are alive, who are left until the coming
of the Lord, will by no means precede those who
have died.

For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with
the archangel's call and with the sound of God's
trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in
Christ will rise first.



Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught
up in the clouds together with them to meet the
Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for
ever.

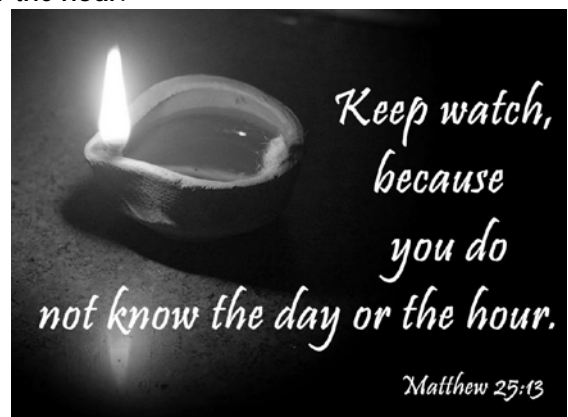
Therefore encourage one another with these words.

MATTHEW 25: 1 – 13

Jesus said, 'Then the kingdom of heaven will be
like this.

Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet
the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five
were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they
took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil
with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed,
all of them became drowsy and slept. But at
midnight there was a shout, "Look! Here is the
bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those
bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The
foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil,
for our lamps are going out." But the wise replied,
"No! there will not be enough for you and for us;
you had better go to the dealers and buy some for
yourselves." And while they went to buy it, the
bridegroom came, and those who were ready went
with him into the wedding banquet; and the door
was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also,
saying, "Lord, lord, open to us." But he replied,
"Truly I tell you, I do not know you."

Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day
nor the hour.



REFLECTION FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

1. Rebuilding

My father was a gunner in World War Two in Tobruk and Palestine, amongst other places, and wrote a book about his experiences: 'Gunner Green's War'. One thing he did in Palestine was start a library, as the army library was limited and one box received contained 6 copies of Pilgrims Progress - not what soldiers wanted to read. So he got subscriptions from his comrades and built up stocks from the bookshops of Haifa. If anyone had their own books he confiscated them but allowed them to be read on payment of the subscription fee!

What's the point of this?

The library was a small sign of things to come for life after the war: if everyone chipped in a small amount, everyone benefitted by having books to read.

This year one thing the Royal British Legion is focusing on is the rebuilding of life and community after the Second World War. Elections brought in reforming governments and in this country the most significant reform was probably the formation of the National Health Service in 1948: we all chip in, and we all benefit. But there was more to it than that: rebuilding housing, resettling millions of refugees, recovering from the trauma of war: the rebuilding was massive.

This obviously connects us to the present and the move to 'Build Back Better' after Covid. What is the connection between building back better and 'In Flanders' Field'? This is a poem written in 1915 by John McRae, a Canadian Officer after the death of a friend at Ypres, and after noticing poppies growing on a ravaged battlefield. The last verse is a request from dead soldiers, asking the reader to

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
On Flanders' field.

Who, or what, is 'the foe'? For McRae, in the early years of World War 1, before the continued slaughter led to disillusionment, the foe was clear. In World War Two, Nazism was a clear evil. Is there a 'foe' for us now?

It would be right to say that Covid is a foe we are fighting. Every death from Covid is a tragedy, especially when this has to happen without the support of loved ones, and the financial, social,

mental health consequences will leave problems from which we will need to rebuild.

But I would suggest that there is a bigger foe. What is it? In September 2019, Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary General said

Seas are rising, oceans are acidifying,
Glaciers are melting and corals are bleaching
Droughts are spreading and wildfires are burning
Deserts are spreading and access to water is dwindling
Heatwaves are scorching and natural disasters are multiplying.
And subsidised fossil fuels lead to the spread of disease

Is the earth crisis the present foe? Is it the injustice of many people in this world suffering from a crisis they did not cause? If it is, how do we take up 'the torch'?

2. Taking up the torch

As Christians we must turn to our Bibles.

I was going to use the parable in Matthew as a stepping stone to Amos, and talk about how many times different subjects get a mention, like

hell 13, wrath 86, grace 122, faith 424, love 538.

And righteousness and justice? 800.

I was going to talk about letting 'justice flow like waters.' If waters means waves then they keep coming, if it means rivers, they keep flowing, all the time. So we have to seek justice continuously. But I won't do that because something in the parable stopped me.

I didn't get stopped by the wedding celebration at the heart of the story, and the idea that even in difficult times, especially in difficult times, God calls us to celebrate, and we need to find ways of celebrating God's love for us now.

I wasn't stopped by the women at the centre of the parable, a marginalised group reminding us that Jesus was always including those society rejected.

I was stopped by the lamps.

Kenneth Bailey, a Middle Eastern scholar who has observed the lives of communities whose lifestyle has probably changed little since Biblical times, has seen village women walking around with oil lamps at night, and noticed something: they did not hold their lamps by their feet so that they could see the way, they held them by their faces, so that people could see who they were.
That's what stopped me.

We are invited to the celebration, as we are. When the women arrived, the bridegroom wanted to see their faces, and God wants to see ours.

Is that what justice is? Knowing that we are all the same, and all of us are welcome as we are, and we all receive the same love?

Is the 'foe' the idea that some people are more important than others? That some people don't matter?

If leaders in World War One could have seen the faces of individual soldiers would the slaughter have happened? If Nazi leaders had a way of seeing the faces, the humanity, the value of Jews and other marginalised groups, could the Holocaust have happened?

Today, if we could see the faces of our children and grandchildren who will suffer the effects of the earth crisis, would we allow it? If we could see the faces of our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia, for example, whom Tearfund tell us are suffering floods, drought, disease caused by drinking unsafe water, loss of homes and livelihoods, all from a climate crisis they didn't cause, could we allow it?

Does this story of the lamps tell us what justice is: knowing that God sees our faces and accepts us, whoever we are, and treats us all the same, and wants us to do the same to others?

So what is the foe? No being able to see the faces of others, that is the foe.

But I want to end with hope. In the same speech by Antonio Guterres, he also said that he was hopeful,

3 How can we be hopeful?

With two words: 'What if...'

Rob Hopkins spoke at the Green Christian Festival, telling us the great place imagination has in our lives. In Liege in Belgium they imagined, they said 'What if Liege could grow all its food within the city area of Liege?' And now they are doing it!

What if Norwich decided to grow its own food?

What if Heartsease decided to grow food for everyone on the estate?

And as I ask this I can see people's faces, and so can you, as old and young, insider and outsider, refugee and welcomed, share the growing of food. I can see everyone having a part, everyone's faces seen by others and by God.

What if everywhere, all over the world, this happened?

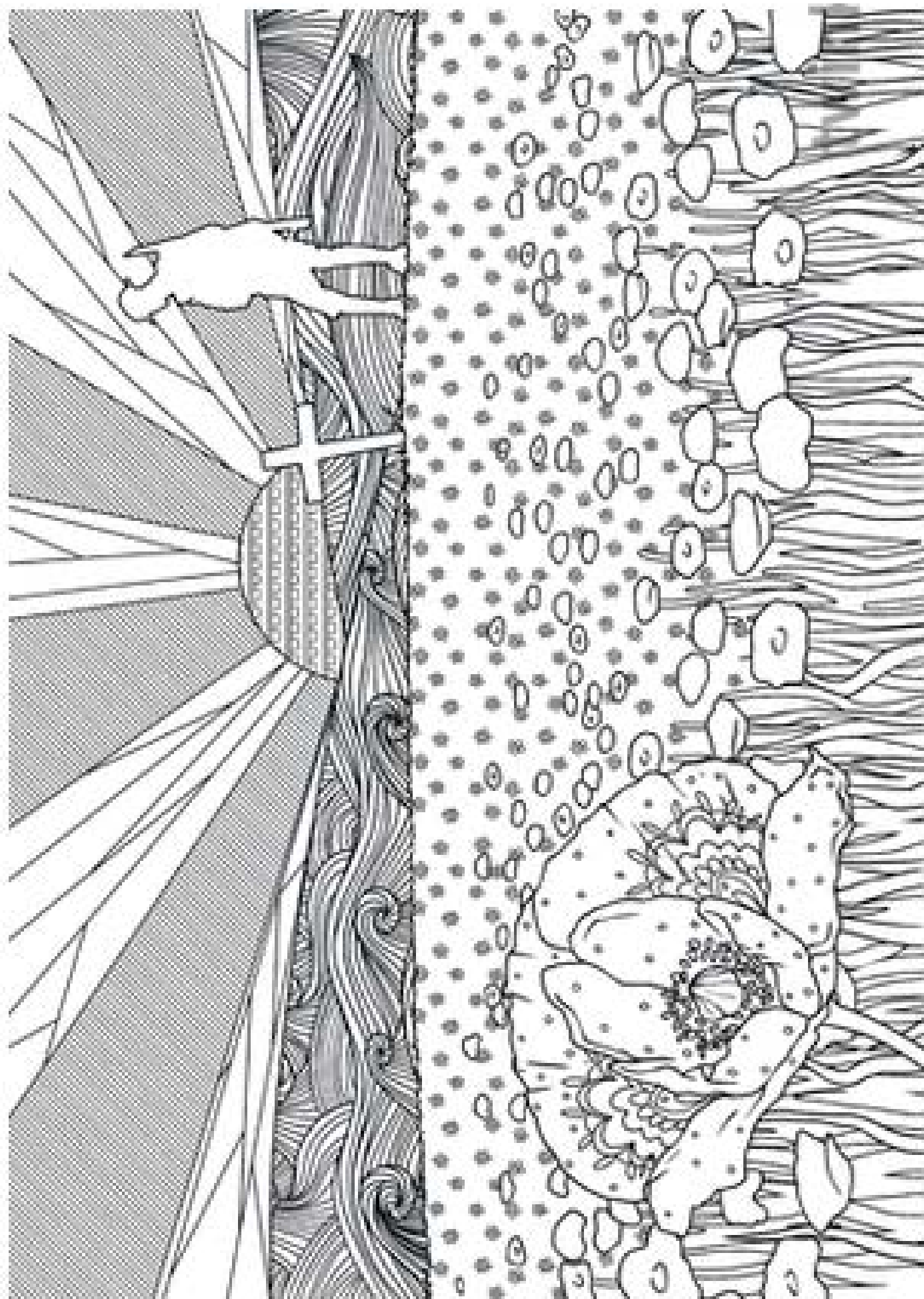
What if defeating our present foe, the injustice of the earth crisis became an exciting, wonderful, imaginative, fulfilling adventure?

That's what I would call taking up the torch, and it wouldn't just be Building Back Better: it would be creating a whole new world.

Jim Green
Lay Reader in Training



Brothers, we want you to know about those who have died. We do not want you to be sad as others who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and that he rose again. So, because of Jesus, God will bring together with Jesus those who have died. What we tell you now is the Lord's own message. We who are living now may still be living when the Lord comes again. We who are living at that time will be with the Lord, but not before those who have already died. The Lord himself will come down from heaven. There will be a loud command with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God. And those who have died and were in Christ will rise first. After that, those who are still alive at that time will be gathered up with them. We will be taken up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And we will be with the Lord forever. So comfort each other with these words.



Name

1 Thessalonians 4. 13-18

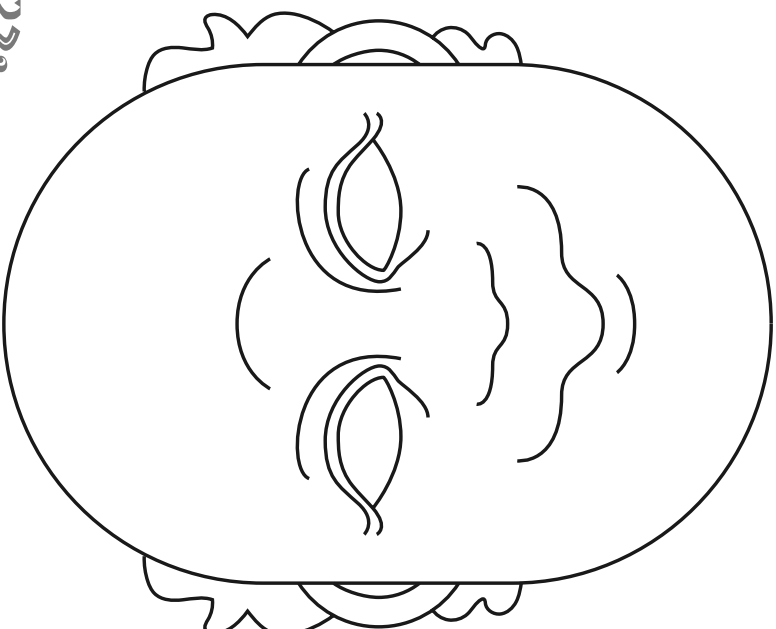
When sad things happen, Jesus gives us hope.



Activity time



Add a sad mouth and some eyes to this face. Now turn it upside down – what happens?

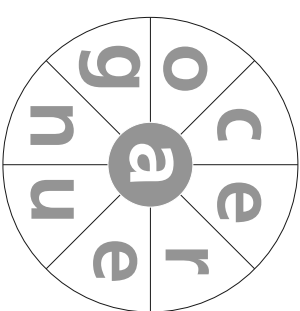


ROOTS children's Sheet

8-14 November 2020



Can you make at least eight different words from this word wheel? Each word can only use a letter once and must always use the central letter. We've given one word to start you off!



near

Can you put all the letters together to make a nine-letter word? (clue: it's what we do to make each other feel better).

Family time

Talk When have you felt sad about something but still had hope?

Do Read *The invisible string*, Patrice Karst, and talk about it together as a family.

Pray Take turns for each member of the family to say one thing they are hoping for. Bring this time together by thanking God for hope.



Can you match each word with the one which means the opposite? Draw a line between each pair.

grief

sadness

death

joy

life

hope

Name

8-14 November 2020

Colouring time

Since Jesus is more powerful than death, God can turn our sadness into hope.

