

St Francis Weekly News for FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 14th June 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?

At last we may be taking the first tentative steps toward opening up the church building for prayer, praise and worship.

As you may well have seen in the media over the past week, plans are being put in place for places of worship to open up for private prayer as from 15th June.

Unfortunately because of the need to complete various risk assessments and ensure that hygiene and social distancing requirements are in place [the guidance has only just been made available] it looks as though we may have to wait until at least Sunday 21st June before we can open up our beautiful worship space to those who feel called to pray there.



In the first instance we would very much like to see the church open every Sunday afternoon between the hours of 3pm and 5pm.

With the prayer time drawing to a close at the Evening Prayer bell that has over past months been both calling the community to prayer, reassuring those who hear it that they are enfolded in God's love and reminding us all that are not alone – God is with us, always and everywhere.

Opening the church is very much dependent upon us having enough volunteers to assist in welcoming, hosting and ensuring that when each visitor leaves, the area they have used is cleaned and sanitized as required under the newly published guidelines.

This is a big undertaking, we not only have to welcome with love and offer our time to those who may seek sanctuary in the sacred space of St Francis church, but we have the responsibility of ensuring the good health and well being of every single individual who enters the building – ourselves included.

I do however, honestly and truly believe that just as we have risen to the challenges that have been placed before us thus far – so will be meet this challenge with integrity, patient perseverance and enthusiasm.

For those of you who might be interested in knowing more please contact me or Diana Cooper [01603 434753]; we will be very happy to hear from you.

'LET IT GROW'

This week has seen rather a mixed bag in terms of the weather – mostly dull, but incredibly damp and humid. With the brilliant and beautiful sunshine that I'm enjoying through my window this gorgeous Saturday morning I can't help but notice that the garden and green spaces are flourishing once again.

At one point it seemed that the earth was so parched and dusty that all our plants and greenery would wither and die – but all is well, thanks be to God!

Revd Winnie and Eeyore are also pleased with the growing weather as they can now move forward with their plans for the Let it Grow project.

As can be seen they are both enjoying potting up sunflower seedlings and marigold plants ready to place by the Empty Tomb in the Prayer Circle for Heartsease residents to come and take away for transplanting into gardens and shared spaces.



Revd Winnie and Eeyore are hoping that this will encourage children, families and beginners and enthusiastic gardeners alike to get involved in the Let It Grow project that is based in the field at the back of the church.

Let It Grow is all about living in harmony with the created world; encouraging our communities to cherish the world around us and learn a little about growing food in season so as to start to think about sustainable living and ecologically friendly ways of being.

There is also an added incentive to visiting St Francis Field – if you happen to see any beans or veg ripe for the picking in the Hugelkultur bed you are welcome to pick them and take them home; another added incentive to explore what has become a beautiful area right on our doorstep where we can spend time enjoying some of the glorious abundance of God's gifts of creation.



ST FRANCIS PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council will be meeting on Thursday 18th June at 7.30pm.

A few of the council will be gathering together at an appropriately social distance – whilst most will be zooming in on the meeting.

This the first opportunity we have had to meet together since the lockdown – so there is much to discuss. Not least what we hope to do and how we see ourselves as a church community as lockdown eases and we are able to think once again about meeting as a congregation of Jesus Shaped People.

We do have a full agenda for this meeting, especially as we missed out on the Annual Parochial Church Meeting – but if there is any issue or subject you would like to bring to the attention of the PCC, please do make contact with me, Revd Janet [07990 576118] or Margaret Bell the PCC Secretary [margabel70@gmail.com]

ST FRANCIS HEARTSEASE FREE FOOD

As time passes by we continue to grow and evolve in terms of how we offer the gifts we have been given to those who need them most.

This week we have been in conversation with the ENYP picnic project with a view to assisting them with their operation.

The Picnic Project has long been involved with a number of Heartsease families and I am delighted to be able to share the good news that St Francis Free Food will soon taking over the support of those families

It makes enormous sense that we should do this as we have more than enough food to go around [God is indeed very good] and it will be lovely for us to get to know a few more of our Heartsease family.

GIRLZ STUFF

I am sad to say that the Girlz Stuff box will be remaining in place for what looks like some time to come. I say sad to say because it has become very clear that this is a much needed service within our own community.

I was talking recently with someone who was absolutely appalled at the very idea of girls and women not being able to afford the essentials that they need; and even more so at the notion that a proportion of the cost of feminine products are, and always have been subject to VAT [that is rather a side issue I know, but one that really gets me steamed up!!]

Anyway, from the swift turnover of products being taken from the box we now know that there are many girls and women who have been unable to access what must surely be a fundamental necessity in life.

Thank you to Sam who brought this to our attention, and thank you to all who have helped make Girlz Stuff happen.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

For many years St Francis has been at the forefront when it comes to offering clubs and groups to the children and young people of the Heartsease.

Working with ENYP, Franky's, Defenders and Download were all incredibly popular with the local community but of course with the lockdown all these had to temporarily close their doors.

Hopefully, as from next week St Francis and ENYP will be breathing some new life into our children's work by launching an outreach programme that will happen on a weekly basis and culminate [all being well] with a series of summer holidays activity days in August.

As they say – watch this space...

If you have experience of working with children and young people and would like to be involved – now is the time to say!

PASTORAL CARE

Please don't forget...

In times of stress and anxiety it's always good to know that help and support is always available.

This is just a gentle reminder that we are always ready to listen if you need to talk.

Revd Janet [07990 576118]

Eleanor [07840 206716]



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

In these difficult times someone might just need one of them...

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

St Francis Free Food: 07990 576118

WORSHIP & PRAYER

ZOOM SERVICES

Every Sunday morning at 10.30am we are now offering a Service of the Word followed by Spiritual Holy Communion.

If you have wifi access and a smart phone, laptop or computer but haven't yet plucked up the courage to have a go at joining us please do think about trying.

Many of our now regular zoomers had never even dreamed such a world existed before we offered this worship experience and have found it to be a great way to keep in touch through worship and prayer.

We are more than happy to help you get online if you need some help – just ask!

This weeks information regarding the service and the zoom room link is below:

You are invited to join Revd. Janet at St Francis Church in worship this Sunday morning at 10.30am. We begin with a Service of the Word, followed by a time when we can talk and share fellowship with one another. At the end of this time, a bell will be rung, calling us back to worship and to Spiritual Communion. Please mute your microphones again when the bell for Spiritual Communion rings, as this helps to reduce background noise and any unexpected interruptions.

If you would like to stay for the Spiritual Communion Service, you are invited to join in with a piece of bread and some wine or juice, if you would like to.

The 'Zoom Room' will be open from 10.15 to allow some set-up time, and then participants are invited to join us from 10.20 for private prayer, with worship beginning at 10.30am.

*You are asked to mute your microphone on arrival, as this helps avoid unexpected interruptions.
At the end of the service please leave the Zoom space prayerfully. We look forward to welcoming you on Sunday.*

To enter the St Francis Zoom Space, please click on the link below from 10.20am on Sunday.

Topic: *StFrancisChurch Zoom's Sunday Spiritual Communion Meeting*

Time: *10.20 onwards on 14th June 2020*

Join Zoom Meeting [*click this link – but be aware you may need to then set up a zoom account*]

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7985930265>

Meeting ID: 798 593 0265

Your feedback and any comments will be welcome after the service via text or email, and throughout the week in conversation with Revd. Janet.

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

So, the great festival of Easter is over; we celebrated Trinity Sunday last week – and here we are in 'Ordinary Time'

It seems very strange to be talking about ordinary time at a time that is from from ordinary.

In fact nothing has ever felt stranger to me than these times we are living through at the moment.

The extraordinary thing that is called 'social distancing' is a case in point. Unless we are two metres apart we are not allowed to meet with family and friends, and even then outside only. We are not allowed to hug anyone other than those who share our household; not allowed to get alongside someone to share either their joy or their sadness.

This is for me the most difficult of all, but it is through this act of sacrificial social distancing that the good will come – just as wintertime heralds the spring, so these times of abstinence will make way for times of free expression of love and joy; compassion and sorrow; springtime indeed.

The colour the church uses to denote 'ordinary time' is green.; the colour of spring.

Green symbolises the idea that this is a time of growing and learning, living in the present and looking to a future filled with the flowering and fruiting that springs up from a time of growth.

In fact, ordinary time really isn't ordinary at all, it is actually a very special time indeed.

It may not be as exciting as the Easter season, as joyous as Christmastide; or as deeply moving as Lent and Holy Week, but ordinary time is filled with a richness to be discovered and explored.

As of now, perhaps, it is also a reminder that it is sometimes those things that we consider ordinary that must be cherished, valued and protected.

The way of life that Jesus calls us to is the Kingdom life; in God's kingdom every life is of equal value – every single part of God's beautiful creation is cared for and protected from exploitation and harm.

This kingdom way of living is something that we take for granted – they are our very ordinary Christian values, but, if we look at the world around us, they are considered by some to be quite extraordinary.

Unlike many in this world we live in, kingdom people do not believe that a persons worth is to found in the colour of their skin, the clothes they wear, where they live or how much money they have. Kingdom people work for the good of all, no matter who they are, and they want the best for this beautiful earth that we have been given as our home.

If all this sets us apart – so be it; I'd rather be considered extraordinary than buy into a way of living that knows the cost of everything but the value of nothing.

This particular season of ordinary time is, I believe, the beginning of our time. We have caught a glimpse of how good the world could be; and rather than lapse back into worldly ways this could be our opportunity.

Our opportunity to work with God to eventually bring about the day when the extraordinary Godly notion that the world can live in peace becomes as mundane and common place as this thing we call social distancing.

Just like social distancing, the idea of working together for a just and fair world and the good of the earth will take some getting used to – it will require lots of thought and effort, but eventually, if we really try, with God's help we can do it.

And if you are wondering how to make a start – just read Jim's reflection

God's blessing and peace be with you and yours

Revd Janet

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: Martin M; Riley & his mum and family; Simon; Danny DS; David; Jeanette, David & Grace; David B; Paula; Gill; Karen; Maegan; Colin; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; Hazel L.

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

We remember with love Barry S; Margaret Rudd and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends

A 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 1ST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

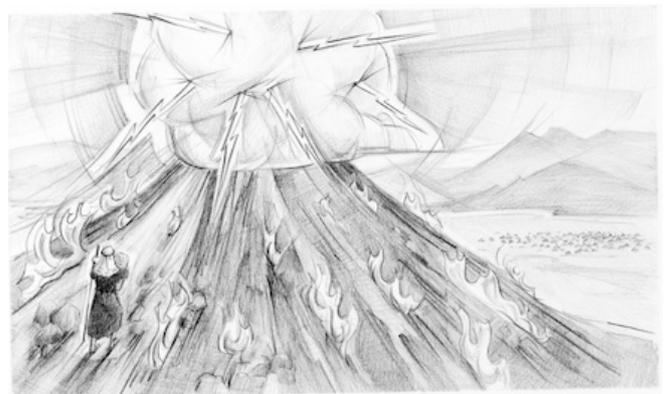
O God,
the strength of all those
who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers
and, because through the weakness
of our mortal nature
we can do no good thing without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in the keeping of your commandments
we may please you both in will and deed;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

God of truth,
help us to keep your law of love
and to walk in ways of wisdom,
that we may find true life
in Jesus Christ your Son. Amen

Eternal Father,
we thank you for nourishing us
with these heavenly gifts:
may our communion
strengthen us in faith,
build us up in hope,
and make us grow in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

READINGS FOR 1ST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

EXODUS 19: 2 - 8a



They had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain.

Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites:

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples.

Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.

These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.'

So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him.

The people all answered as one: 'Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do.'

Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord

PSALM 100

1 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

3 Know that the Lord is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever, and his faithfulness to all generations.



ROMANS 5: 1 - 8

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person —though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die.

But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.



MATTHEW 9: 35 - 10: 8

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness.



These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near." Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.

You received without payment; give without payment.

REFLECTION FOR 14TH JUNE

What do we want our world to be like?

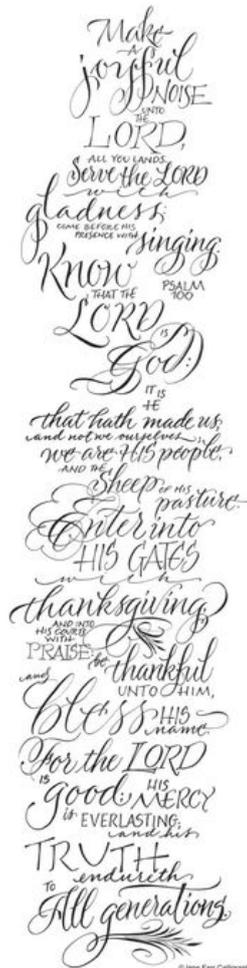


I was listening to Leroy Rosenior, the former Fulham footballer, (I remember seeing him play!) talking on the radio this week about the Black Lives Matter protests. He said that it is not enough to be 'not racist', we have to be 'anti-racist', which means being active in some way.

We also have to be active as we consider the world we want to see as we come out of coronavirus lock down, and let's not forget the connection with the environmental crisis: Inger Andersen, the UN's environment chief, says 'Our continued erosion of wild spaces has brought us uncomfortably close to animals and plants that harbour diseases that can jump to humans'. So, yes, the coronavirus pandemic is an environmental issue.

A recent YouGov poll found that only 9% of respondents wanted to go 'back to normal'. So whether it's on a personal, local, national or global level, what do we want to see?

Psalm 100



What has it got to do with Psalm 100? Everything!

First, most scholars agree that Psalm 100 was written in a challenging time for Israel, either leading up to or during their time of exile. Their very existence as a nation was under threat and people were asking deep questions, just as we are.

Though this Psalm might have started life in the temple, it was probably used in communities and homes, just like us. In my home and community I sometimes find it hard to worship a God who is 'good' when there is so much going on which seems to call God' goodness into question.

In the middle of this we get a psalm which either commands us, or at least encourages us, to worship God. 'Make a joyful noise....Worship the Lord....come into his presence...Know...enter... Give thanks....' Is this easy? No, but it is sometimes one of these things we just need to find a way to do.



At the same time, it involves our lives. When the writer says that the Lord is good, if we are made in the image of God, we need to do good ourselves to live up to that image. As Isaiah says, 'Learn to do good, seek justice...' (Isaiah 1:17) The psalm, says Marvin Tate, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, includes 'a call to opt for the decisive, divine, "power structure" in human affairs against the claims of conventional power structures'.

How do we rebuild?



We need to line up with God's purposes in creation and history. The psalm starts with 'Make a joyful noise *all the earth*' and ends with 'his faithfulness *to all generations*'. So, if we wish to be good to the whole earth and all generations, all people, we will need to seek God's justice for all, now.

We will have to consider how we can rebuild from the pandemic in a way that allows all people to relish the goodness of God *to them*.

This means embracing a way of living that enables all to flourish and create, and holding to account those people, governments and businesses which destroy. One way of doing this would be to demand that the government invest in clean, fair energy and jobs, not in fossil fuels.



This means allowing our worship of God to embrace his goodness and justice, and our search for justice to joyfully embrace worship of God .

So, let us enter his gates with thanksgiving, and come into his courts with praise, and at the same time, take active steps to bring about the world we want to see, on a personal, community and national or global level.

What can we actually *do*? What about

- Finding a place to be still and look with thanks at what God has made. You could do worse than stand among the long grasses in the field at the back of the church, and then get involved with the vegetables!



- Get involved with Mousehold Defenders when things restart.

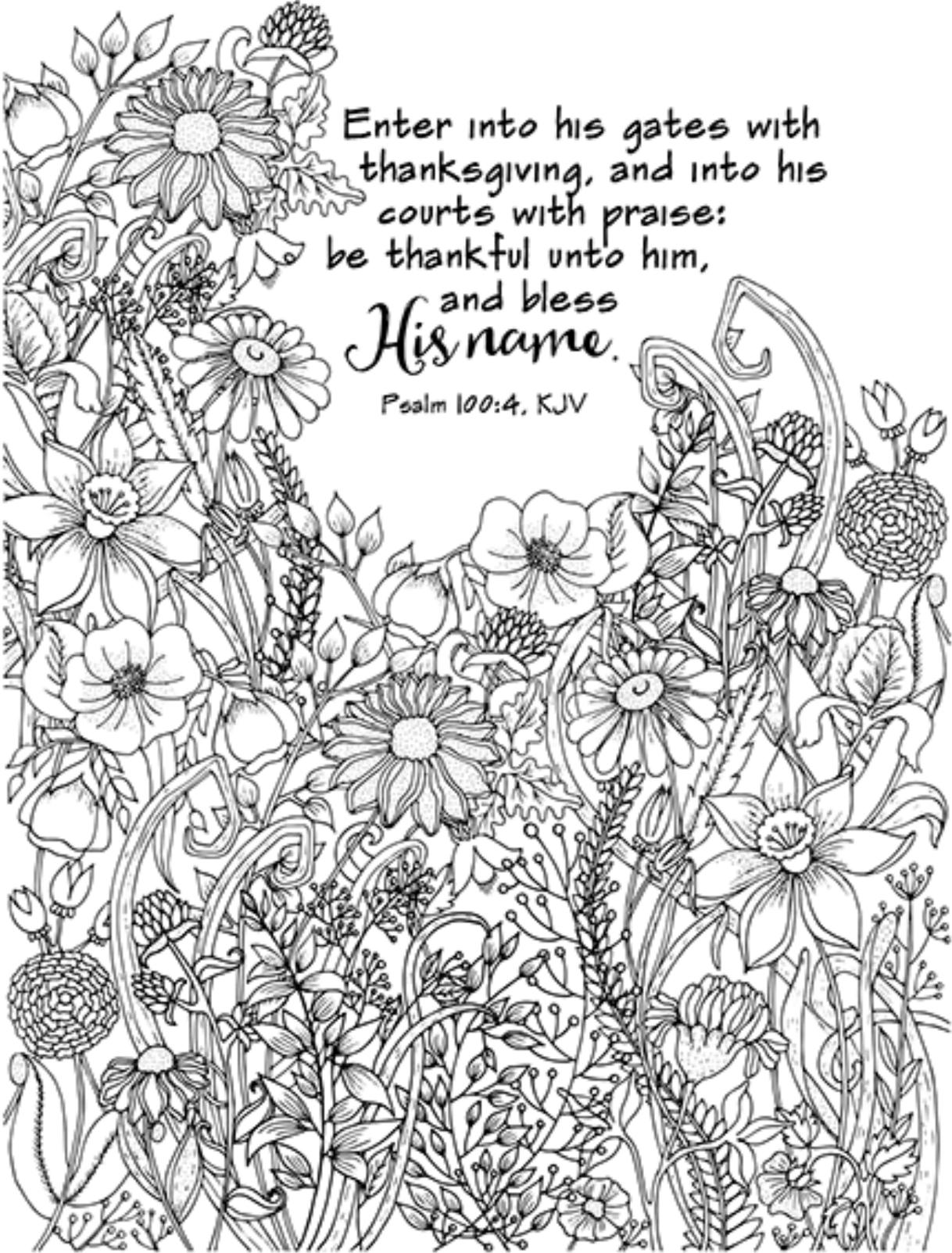


- Go to the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website, and watch their 'Climate Change: Church and Green Recovery webinar'.

<https://ctbi.org.uk/climate-change-the-church-and-green-recovery/>



To paraphrase Leroy Rosenior, its not enough to not destroy; we have to create.



Enter into his gates with
thanksgiving, and into his
courts with praise:
be thankful unto him,
and bless
His name.

Psalm 100:4, KJV



Jesus gathered his twelve disciples and sent them out. He gave them these instructions:

‘Don’t go to Gentile or Samaritan towns. Instead go to the people of Israel, for they are like a flock of lost sheep. Tell people the good news about the kingdom of heaven. Cure the sick, raise the dead, heal those with skin diseases, send out demons. You have been given all this freely, for no payment. Now you must help others without being paid.’

Jesus reassured them, ‘You won’t need gold or silver; don’t take a travelling bag or an extra shirt; don’t take sandals or a walking stick. When you go into a town, find out who the good people are and stay with them until you are ready to leave. If you enter a home, bless it with your peace, but if it is not worthy, take the blessing back. If someone doesn’t welcome you or they won’t listen, leave at once, shaking the dust from your feet.

‘I am sending you out like sheep into a pack of wolves,’ he said, ‘so you need to be as wise as a snake and as innocent as a dove. Because of me people will hand you over to those in power and have you beaten. You will be dragged before kings and leaders. But if this happens, don’t worry about what to say – you will be given the words at the time. It will be God’s Spirit speaking.

‘Because of me there will be unrest in families,’ Jesus said sadly. ‘Brothers will turn against brothers. Fathers will turn against children. Children will turn against parents. Many will be hated because of me. But if you remain with me until the end you will be saved. If they persecute you in one town, run to the next. I promise that before you have been to all the towns of Israel, the Son of Man will come.’

Glossary

Gentile the name Jews give to non-Jews; **Samaritan** a person who lived in Samaria and worshipped God differently from Jews. Jews and Samaritans hated each other; **demons** spiritual forces that trouble people – could be interpreted as mental illness; **Son of Man** a title from the Old Testament Book of Daniel, used by Jesus to describe himself.

Activity time

ROOTS children's sheet

14-20 June 2020

Name

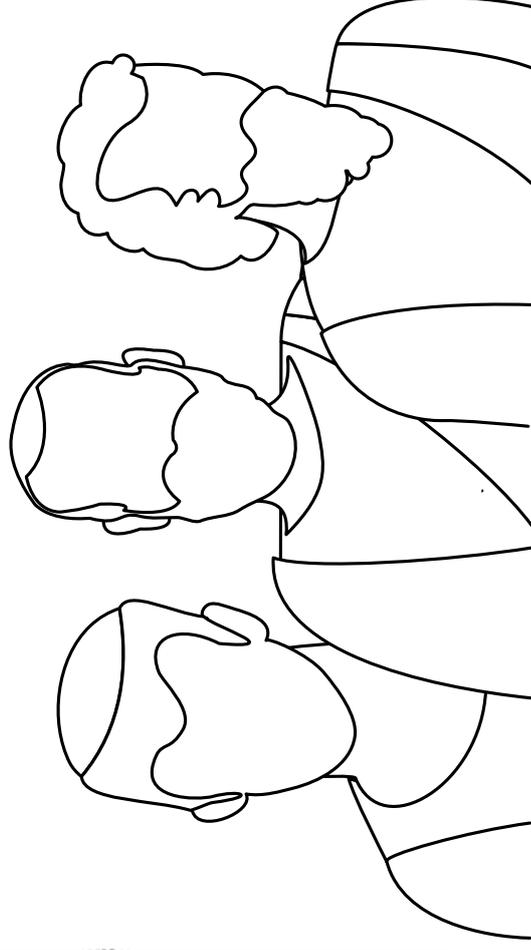


Matthew 9.35-10.8, (9-23)

Jesus' friends go out to share all that he has taught them with the world.



Jesus sent his disciples out to share God's love with everyone. How do you think they felt? Do you think some felt different things? Draw their expressions on these faces.



Write

Jesus gave his disciples some good advice. Look at these sets of words. Find the odd ones out and write them on the lines.

1 apple
you
pear

2 rabbit
rat
receive

3 freely
small
tiny

4 hour
minute
now

5 sweets
give
chocolate

6 dog
freely
cat

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

Family time

Talk A lot of people volunteer to do all sorts of things in the community. Do you know anyone who gives their time freely?

Do Read *The smartest giant in town* by Julia Donaldson and talk about how the giant gives everything away. What might that feel like?

Pray Lord, we pray that you will give us the courage to tell people about you. Amen.



Puzzle

Jesus told his disciples what to say and gave them the power to do everything he asked. Write the first letter of each object to read his instructions.



Name

14-20 June 2020

Colouring time

Jesus sends his disciples out to share God's love with everyone.

