

St Francis Weekly News for THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT [or the Sunday called Sexagesima] 7th February 2021



This newsletter 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?

CHURCH REMAINS CLOSED FOR WORSHIP

In order to keep everyone safe the church remains closed for Sunday worship. However, we continue to broadcast the service via the St Francis YouTube channel.

If you would like assistance in respect of joining our YouTube channel or would like to talk about how you might receive the sacrament please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

SUNDAYS BEFORE LENT

So, The Nativity sets, cribs and all things Christmas have been packed away; we have taken one last look at the Baby Jesus and now we prepare ourselves to turn to follow the man Jesus on his journey to the cross and all that lay beyond.



The church is now dressed in green, the colour for this time between Epiphany and Lent, and how apt it is that it should be so!

With snowdrops appearing in otherwise dark and dismal patches of winter touched ground, green shoots of spring bulbs and leaf buds clearly to be seen on the trees – this is indeed a time to give thanks that Spring is not too far away.

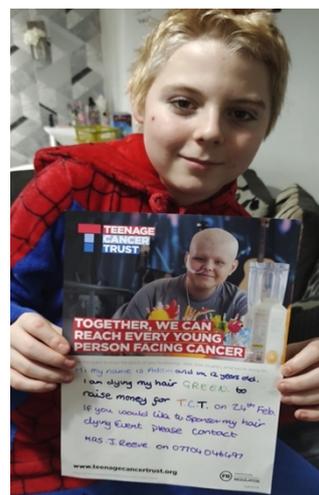


The window crew are happily celebrating the appearance of the first Snowdrops – and Revd Winnie is showing off his snowdrop stole [actually it's Revd Janet's...]

On this Second Sunday before Lent we continue with our usual pattern of worship and will be offering a simple service of Holy Communion. A copy of the service is available to anyone who would like one, please visit our temporary website by searching 'St Francis Church, Heartsease' in your search engine and clicking on the 'A Church Near You' link and the service sheet will be available as part of the online version of this newsletter.

Alternatively – just get in touch and we can talk about how to keep you up to date with our service sheets.

AND TALKING OF GREEN...



One of our younger members of the St Francis family, Adam, has made the brave decision to dye his hair green on 24th February as part of his fundraising efforts for the 'Teenage Cancer Trust'. If you would like to sponsor him in this endeavour please contact his mum, Mrs Jeanette Reeve: 07704 046497.

You can also give via Jeanette's Facebook page. Please support Adam if you can - especially as this is a real challenge for him, as Jeanette says "If any of you know my son, you know he hates anyone doing anything with his hair...". We wish you well in your fundraising efforts Adam!

THE LIGHTS ARE STILL SHINING AND THE BELL IS STILL RINGING...

Many thanks to all of you who have been in touch to say that the ever changing window displays and the 9am, 12pm & 5pm bell ringing are appreciated.

It's amazing how a little thank you can lift the spirits and raise the energy levels!

Please don't forget that the bell signals the start of the prayers that are regularly offered for the community and those who have specifically asked for prayer. So, if you or someone you know would like to be on our prayer list – just let us know.

Also you may have noticed a candle burning in the window beneath a prayer for the Heartsease Community – you may be interested to hear that each candle burns for around 7/8 days and as soon as it dies out is replaced by another. The first candle was placed in the window on the evening of 23rd March last year and we expect that we will continue on with the custom for some time to come.

If you would like to sponsor a candle in memory of a loved one – or as a sign of your own prayers for your community, we would be pleased to hear from you.



A blazing sign of hope

GET CREATIVE!

There have been a couple of offerings for our 'get creative' spot this week, firstly a photo with a cryptic message...



Hmmm, maybe it didn't originate in Wuhan after all...

And Martin Moore sent in this piece for all you who like calculator puzzles...

MATHEMATICAL METHODS WITH MARTIN THE MEMORY BUTTONS (BASIC CALCULATOR)



Have you ever wondered what the memory buttons do on a calculator? They are very useful when it comes to inputting mathematical functions on a calculator!

For example, the following mathematical formula: $14+4 \times 3.50$ looks ok, but when inputted into a calculator, the calculator thinks you want to add the 4 to the 14, = 18, then it times the 18 by 3.50, =63! This is totally wrong, because the real answer should be 28! ($14+14=28$).

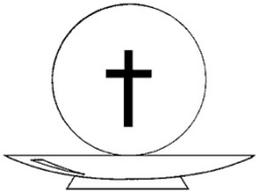
To get around this problem, we shall use the memory buttons, which are: MRC (memory recall), (M+) memory plus, adds a total) and finally, M- (memory minus, takes away a total) Our first mathematical formula, then, is simply: $14M+, 4 \times 3.50=14M+, MRC$ to find the answer!

The second part of 4×3.50 must be calculated with =14, Then press M+! The first 14 is an imaginary part in a shop, only 1 was needed, but 4 other items each costing 3.50 (£) needed to be calculated!

WINTER LOCKDOWN

Please note that the Church is not open for Sunday Worship.

However, the church is available for individual prayer every weekday 10.30am – 11.30am.



Fr Tracy - 07834 845623

If you would like to spend some time in the church or would like to make enquiries about receiving the sacrament please do feel free to contact Revd Janet – 07368 832294 or

If you would like to join in with Sunday Worship we continue to broadcast via the St Francis YouTube channel. Just search for 'St Francis Heartsease YouTube' !

HOME GROUP

Many thanks to Jim Green who is offering folk the opportunity to get together via a Zoom Room every fortnight on a Wednesday evening.

The forthcoming dates are:

February 10, 24

March 10, 24

As before the times are 7- 8pm, and the format is very simple: chat, catch up with each other, read a Bible passage, pray for each other.

Please email Jim and he will forward on the zoom link address:

jimpiecrust@gmail.com

NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTICE BOARD

If you have a notice you would like included under the noticeboard – please email your piece to revdjanetwyer@outlook.com or deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com

A LETTER FROM 100 ACRE WOOD...

Dear Revd Winnie, Brother Eeyore and Piglet, Revd Janet too,

A lot has happened since we last sent a letter, we have had a lot of rain and a little bit of flooding. Luckily we are all ok even though we then had a storm and a few trees came down. [and we had some snow!]

We are still caring for the vulnerable animals and still clearing up lots of rubbish – but we have seen snowdrops!



What a joy – the first sign of spring.

Tigger and Rabbit are well and happy and me. Owl, I am ok too.

Good luck to all, take care

*Owl Tigger Rabbit and all at 100 Acre Wood
X. X X*

Ps forgot to mention due to bad flooding downstream we have visitors, the water vole family the otter family, the hedgehog family and the field mice family – all are well xxx

[sent via 'Robin Post']

It's always great to hear from the 100 Acre Wood – although not so good to hear about the flooding.

Talking of flooding we continue to have problems with leaking roofs [rooves] here at St Francis and with the current budget worries we are slightly concerned about what the future might bring – if you feel you might be able to help us with regular financial support we would be very pleased to talk through how you might go about that. Please contact our Treasurer Deborah Lechmere: 01603 431259 [24/7 answerphone] or email: deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com

PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

The lock down and the doom and gloom that seems to relentlessly stream out of the media might be too much for some of us to cope with - in all sorts of ways. Please remember you are not alone, if you would like a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

If you live on the Heartsease we are also able to offer help if you or someone you know needs support with emergency basic food provision. Our contact details are as follows:

Revd Janet: 07368 832294

Fr Tracy: 07834 845623

24/7 Answerphone: 01603 431259
[checked daily]

There is also someone available in church weekday mornings if you would prefer to talk to someone face to face.



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

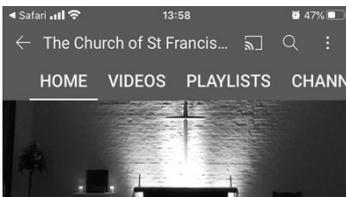
[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

Norfolk Assistance Scheme: **01603 223392**

THE CURATES'S CORNER



It's now a couple of months since we began to live stream our Sunday service on YouTube. This has allowed us to reach a much wider congregation than ever before. On the

other hand, some will feel unable to cope with using the required technology and feel excluded – more on this later.

My background is in broadcasting and since I still had some equipment left over from the days when I had left the BBC to go freelance, I decided to dust it off and use it as an experiment. My main priority was good sound quality – poor video can be tolerated but poor sound makes for very bad communication. Fortunately I think we have managed to offer a high standard of both, assuming that our internet connection holds up. It has been finicky a few times, but overall fairly reliable. The experiment paid off, and best of all, has cost us nothing.

As a result we have managed to acquire 30-plus people, or groups of people, watching either on a Sunday morning or later on in the week. Some of

these are very far afield; we have two in Australia and one in Bulgaria, for instance.

The service is also recorded digitally, and as a result the Sunday sermon is edited out and uploaded to our YouTube channel where it remains indefinitely; we are building up a good collection. The Sunday service itself is deleted after a few days. We are also able to stream other services if it should ever be required, such as weddings and funerals. We have already provided for one funeral which attracted 140 viewers.

So it is then that St Francis Heartsease has become a 'digital church', and although this might sound very modern and hi-tech, we should remember the words of St Stephen, 'the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands'. (Acts 7:48). The Holy Spirit will always find ways to overcome adversity and reach the hearts of people, as now.

I am however very aware that some may feel unable to join us because of their lack of technical facility. Do get in touch with me if you would like help; it is amazing how easily our services can be seen using little more than a low cost smart phone and a mobile connection. You may even already have some equipment but be unsure of what to do with it; if so, we are happy to help you. Do not feel left out, you are not forgotten, you are held before God and prayed for.

These new ways of accessing church have come about because we are in the middle of a pandemic and a lockdown. When things return to normal, the building will re-open to the community and provide many more new facilities; we hope, however, to continue to provide our online presence for those who may be housebound or would like to continue to join us from further afield. I'm sure you will agree that this is a wonderful new way to hear God's holy words and to spread the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If you are wondering where on the World Wide Web we are, simply type 'St Francis Heartsease' into Google on your browser and we will appear in the first few search results. If you go to our YouTube page, you will see recordings of previous reflections, and perhaps the last Sunday service. If you go there at 10.20 on a Sunday and wait, the live service will appear there.

Every blessing,

Fr Tracy

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

You may have noticed that I've included the old Book of Common Prayer name for this Sunday at the top of the newsletter. That's because I believe that although we here at St Francis, Heartsease are a modern, vibrant and forward looking church, we need also to recall and remember all that has gone before us - the traditions that have made the Church of England the beautiful broad and all-encompassing Church it is today.

As well as using the older terms and observing some of the traditions in our worship, we have also begun to regularly use the Book of Common Prayer for our Morning and Evening prayers [9am & 5pm] Hopefully, when lockdown ends and we can once more freely meet together for worship, others will come and join us in our prayers for the World, God's church and our Local Community, and more of us can reacquaint ourselves with the richness of worship and prayerfulness the prayer book offers.

But whatever form of prayer we use – there is a wonderful gift of peace, joy and strength to be found in regularly praying together.

Not only does prayer bring us closer to God, it brings us closer to one another as well.

In the past I have had the deep joy of saying morning and evening prayer in a great number of churches throughout Norfolk and North Suffolk – and through those times of regular prayer I have made some good and lasting friends.

One deep source of comfort to me is that I know for a fact, every Thursday morning, one of those dear friends picks up her prayer book and joins me in prayer from her armchair. We may not be together in body – but we are certainly united in spirit.

And, if that were not enough, if for one reason or another one of us isn't able to attend to our devotions that day, we know for sure the other is praying for both of us – and our families. What a blessing!

As I said before, hasten the day when we can once more meet together for prayer and worship in St Francis, Heartsease – and grow together in mutual love and friendship.

God's blessing be upon you and yours

Revd Janet

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in need of prayer at this time: Derek H; Evie; Alberto & Rodrigo; Huggy; Megan; Denise H; Christine; Stephen C; Margaret T; David & Cynthia S; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Pete; Fr Brian; Hazel.

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 pray too for Stephka Bechover & all NHS and NSFT Staff.

We remember with Kevin Lemmon; Georgina; Peggy Bunn 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 feeling isolated. 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 THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth
and made us in your own image:
teach us to discern your hand in all your works
and your likeness in all your children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
reigns supreme over all things,
now and for ever. Amen

Almighty God,
give us reverence for all creation
and respect for every person,
that we may mirror your likeness
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

God our creator,
by your gift the tree of life
was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:
may we who have been nourished
at your table on earth be transformed
by the glory of the Saviour's cross
and enjoy the delights of eternity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

PROVERBS 8:1, 22 - 31



Does not wisdom call,
and does not understanding raise her voice?

The LORD created me at the beginning of his work,
the first of his acts of long ago.

Ages ago I was set up, at the first,
before the beginning of the earth.
When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the
hills, I was brought forth —
when he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the world's first bits of soil.

When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when
he made firm the skies above, when he established
the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the
sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress
his command, when he marked out the foundations
of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master
worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before
him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and
delighting in the human race.

PSALM 104: 26 - end



O Lord, how manifold are your works! ♦
In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full
of your creatures.

There is the sea, spread far and wide, ♦
and there move creatures beyond number, both
small and great.

There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan ♦
which you have made to play in the deep.

All of these look to you ♦
to give them their food in due season.

When you give it them, they gather it; ♦
you open your hand and they are filled with good.

When you hide your face they are troubled; ♦
when you take away their breath,
they die and return again to the dust.

When you send forth your spirit,
they are created, ♦
and you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord endure for ever; ♦
may the Lord rejoice in his works;

He looks on the earth and it trembles; ♦
he touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; ♦
I will make music to my God while I have my being.

So shall my song please him ♦
while I rejoice in the Lord.

Let sinners be consumed out of the earth
and the wicked be no more. ♦
Bless the Lord, O my soul. Alleluia.

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

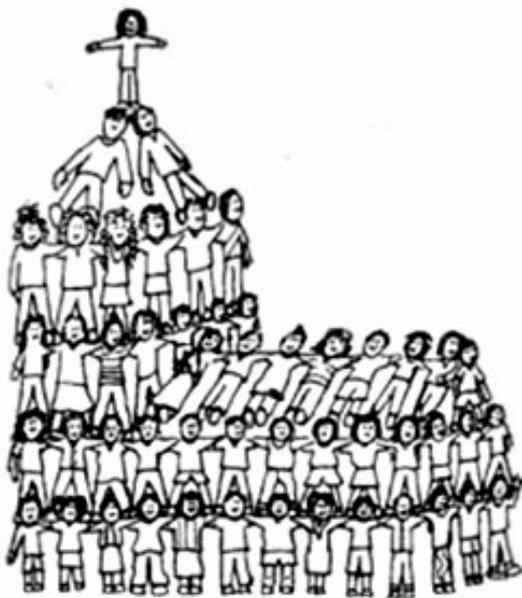
COLOSSIANS 1:15 - 20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers — all things have been created through him and for him.

He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.



JOHN 1:1 - 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was

life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.



REFLECTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Having had a little time on my hands the other week, I decided to tackle a few boxes of bits and bobs that still remain packed up in boxes after the move into the Vicarage.

In one I found some stuff that I have moved from house to house for years, including an old lampshade that used to hang from the landing ceiling at the top of the stairs in my childhood home.

I wondered what I should do with it, battered and dented as it was.

Well, because I couldn't make up my mind, I did as I have done many times before – I wrapped it back up and put it back in the box; along with the threadbare teddy bear and the other stuff I haven't had the heart to part with.

Thinking about it since, I've decided that I keep these things because they remind me of feelings of being loved.

Let me explain, when I was a little girl, I was afraid of the dark. I can still remember being really, really

scared at night time and my parents leaving the landing light on for me until they came to bed.

They knew that even though I had my teddy bear to cuddle; I was still really scared - so they gave me a light that helped me to see my surroundings and help me find my way down the stairs if I needed them.

Which of course happened a lot more than they would have liked – but they did it because they loved me and didn't want me to be afraid, to think that I was all alone in the dark.

As it is, I was reminded of that light, and the love that I was shown when I was thinking about our readings today - the Lovely story of God and Wisdom working together in harmony at the very beginning of creation, rejoicing in the wonderful place and the people God had made – and John's beautiful piece of poetry that invites us into the story of God reaching out to us by sending his love, the light of his life into the world – to save us from the darkness that we, his beloved creation had fallen into.

By the time God sent Jesus to us, His beloved Wisdom, enrobed in flesh - the world had fallen a long, long way from the place that God had so lovingly made in the beginning

And we his people had almost forgotten how lovely the world would be if only we could get back to loving God, loving his world and loving one another.

When God sent Jesus into the world, the world was a very dark and scary place indeed: A world where killing and cruelty, oppression, suffering and pain were commonplace everywhere

Just think what the world was like in the first century...

No wonder God wanted to turn a light on for us, a light that would chase away the darkness, hold us in our fears and light the way back to him.

With infinite love and tenderness, knowing our fearfulness and our need – God gave us light in our darkness.

In the midst of human darkness and pain God gave us Jesus – the one who was with him at the beginning – the one who will be with us until God decides it's the end. The one who will stay with us

for ever, giving us real help, hope, comfort and strength for as long as we need him.

Unlike anything we can come up with – just think of some of the things we come up with to ward off our fears and anxieties...

When I was a little girl I had my teddy bear to keep me company, to help me feel safe – and to a point he helped; but when I grew up I realised I needed something more than my Teddy.

And the landing light that used to help make me feel safe – that's just a dusty old light fitting that I'm too sentimental to dispose of – it has no power to help me face the here and now.

But, it is a reminder of something that can help, there is one wonderful thing that can save us from our fears.

Love - it was a small act of love that kept the light on for me when I needed it; an expression of the immense and powerful love that gave us Jesus.

It was because we were frightened and afraid, lost in the dark, that God sent Jesus to be the light of the world – and two thousand years later we still need him. I know I need him...

The world out there can seem a dark, dark place – with all that we are living through, simply looking at the day ahead can seem very daunting indeed,

But, if we open our eyes and look around, Jesus is right here with us, his light still shines upon us.

The powers of darkness may not understand his light – but they certainly cannot extinguish it.

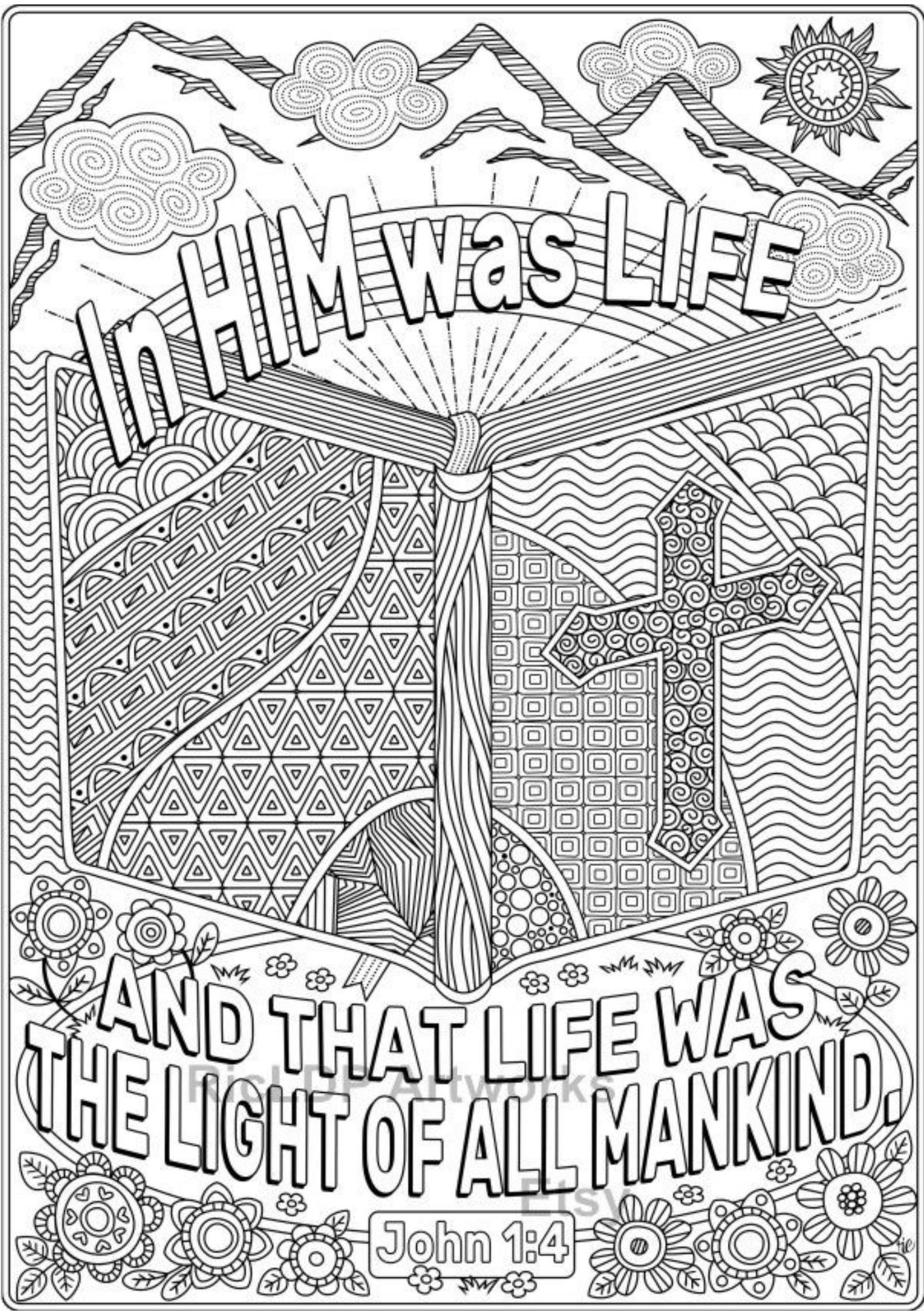
If we look to him, Jesus the Light of the World will chase the darkness away, He will make everything less scary – and he will help us find our way to God.

After all that's what God wants, he wants us to know Him, he yearns for us to run to him for comfort and courage; to work with him to make the world become his kingdom of light and peace.

Take heart and be not afraid of anything. God loves us - why else would he leave the light on for us?

Amen

Revd Janet
Vicar



IN HIM WAS LIFE

AND THAT LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF ALL MANKIND.

John 1:4



Before the world began, there was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made through him. Nothing was made without him. In him there was life. That life was light for the people of the world. The Light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overpowered the Light.

There was a man named John who was sent by God. He came to tell people about the Light. Through him all people could hear about the Light and believe. John was not the Light, but he came to tell people about the Light. The true Light was coming into the world. The true Light gives light to all.

The Word was in the world. The world was made through him, but the world did not know him. He came to the world that was his own. But his own people did not accept him. But some people did accept him. They believed in him. To them he gave the right to become children of God. They did not become his children in the human way. They were not born because of the desire or wish of some man. They were born of God.

The Word became a man and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father. The Word was full of grace and truth.

The Gift That Keeps On Giving

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12 (NIV)

Based on John 1:10-18 (NIV)



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T S B J L B L E S S I N G Y O

CHILDREN
GRACE
GLORY

BELIEVE
BLESSING
CHRIST

DWELLING
JESUS
FLESH

TRUTH
WORD
WORLD

RECEIVE
GOD
NAME

We are the body of Christ.

