

St Francis Weekly News for FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 5th July 2020



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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

ST FRANCIS IS OPENING UP...

How good it is to be able to share the good news that St Francis is beginning to wake up after what has seemed a very long time!

Alongside our regular 3.00 – 5.00pm Sunday afternoon opening, we have the joy of weekly worship happening in church at 10.30 every Sunday, and I am delighted to welcome back Charlotte our volunteer administrator.

Charlotte will be opening the admin office in St Francis three mornings per week: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 12pm.

This means that any visitors to the church can be greeted and looked after in a much more welcoming way. We have recently been very much aware that although the Free Food Team are on the premises we not always able to respond to visitors as quickly or sensitively as we would have liked.

Now, at least three mornings a week, Charlotte will be on hand to provide a warm welcome and a hand of guidance whatever assistance might be required.

Thank you Charlotte!

... IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!

When we gather together in the church space on Sunday morning there is another change that may not be immediately be apparent, but is actually a change of some significance. The 'temporary vestry' is no more!



Thanks to Stephen and Don Nichols the partition that was put in place last year to allow the necessary building work in the vestry to be undertaken has now been dismantled and removed.

Having never seen the church without the partition wall I was absolutely delighted with the newly created area that has not only opened up the church, but has also provided extra seating [a real gift given the need to ensure appropriate social distance between worshippers] and given us room to position the projector in what will be its permanent home for the foreseeable future.

The area looks absolutely lovely – and I extend my deep gratitude to Don and Stephen for making it happen so swiftly and with absolutely no fuss or disruption whatsoever.

And it looks as though Revd Winnie and Eeyore are also pleased with the new working space...

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Charlotte, our recently re-installed administrator, has returned to a stack of tasks – not least the preparation of the activity packs for our summer Genesis Adventure that we are running in collaboration with ENYP.

Thanks to her patience and goodwill thirty packs have been prepared – and some have already found their way into the hands of local children.



On Thursday afternoon me, Cairan, and Ryan [two young St Francis ENYP leaders] got together to set

up for that afternoon's launch of the Genesis adventure.

Trying not to take any notice of the dark clouds that were gathering we put up a couple of tables outside the church along with some colourful bunting, advertising notices, and a large bubble machine.



Once in place, everything looked great – and all we needed was the young people!

Unfortunately as time went by it was clear that the weather had deterred a lot of the youngsters from venturing out – but we still managed to give out a dozen or so packs and have a good catch up with some children who we haven't seen for quite some time.

Next week we will be trying again – so please, if you have children of primary school age in your family who would like to take part, bring them along, or tell them that we will be outside the church on Thursday 9th July 4.00 – 4.45pm. It's all free, there's free tuck, and they might get the opportunity to meet Revd Winnie! [they'll certainly meet me, Dominic from ENYP and Ciaran and Ryan...]

PS. Lesson learned – do not stand in front of a bubble machine when a young person has the remote control in their hand... 😊

WORSHIP & PRAYER

Sunday 5th July sees us returning into the church space for worship. Alleluia!

We have been hard at work making sure that everything is in place to make our time of worship and fellowship is as safe as possible.

We are asking that those intending to come along pre book a seat [don't worry if you didn't this week – we are expecting the new routines to take a little

while to get used to] either call me [07990 576118] or Diana [01603 434753] to get your name on the list

Entry into church will be via the bell tower – and exit will be out by the side door on the north side of the church. [unless physical limitations make steps difficult – if that is the case we will make special provision for that]

When in church there is a stop/go red/green system in place on the seats – someone will show you into church and to your preferred seat; they will remove the sign from the seat and then make way for you to take your place.



Unfortunately for the time being there will be no singing, and all the responses will be said throughout. Also, there will not be a hand held service book with the service being projected in it's entirety onto the East Wall by the Altar.

In order to maintain distancing and to ensure minimal contact with surfaces such as the backs of seats we will remain seated throughout the service; and of course, very sadly, we will not exchange a sign of peace in the usual way.

When it is time to receive Holy Communion someone will tell you when to go to the altar rail; once there please remain standing and the priest will administer the sacrament into your hand.

In accordance with the guidelines published by the Church of England, Holy Communion will be offered in one kind only, with the consecrated wine being taken by the presiding priest on behalf of God's people.

Once you have received communion, please then return to your seat.

These new arrangements will mean distribution of communion will take a little longer, but this means that we have more time to sit quietly in God's presence - surely a time of blessing; please try to respect the silence as others will be at prayer.

It will of course take a little while for us to become accustomed to this new way of being a worshipping community, and inevitably along the way we may find a wrinkle or two. But please bear with us as we do our best to keep us all safe and well.

Alongside the worship in church we will still be offering the Zoom Room for those who are shielding or unable to get into church. Again, we will be finding our way with this and ask your patience as we have had to adjust our way of zooming to suit the new worship routines.

ST FRANCIS FREE FOOD

I am very conscious that very little has been mentioned in the newsletter about the Free Food operation.

Parcels are still being prepared and sent out on a daily basis throughout the week – and each week we do find that new people are finding their way to us and asking for assistance.

This remains as it ever was – free food to whoever asks, with the only details we require being a full name and a Heartsease address.

We do respond to requests made on behalf of others, but we must seek the recipients permission to deliver prior to a parcel being sent out.

If you know of anyone who is in need of a helping hand, please do not hesitate to let them know that we will do all we can to assist them.

On a practical note I think it fair to let you know that we are receiving less and less in terms of out of date best before food coming in from supermarkets and FoodHub, this means that we no longer have some of the 'goodies' we were once able to offer.

However, because of the continuing generosity of our sponsor who gives us much appreciated financial support, we are able to buy in fresh provisions which we can then share with those who need them.

St Francis Free Food is now not so much distributing surplus food that was once destined for the dump – although we do still get some of that; but rather a very localised source of food and necessities trying to help our Heartsease family through this very difficult time

LET IT GROW

The peas and beans are more or less finished, and four clumps of garlic have been enjoyed.

We have lots of tomato plants, largely courtesy of David Lechmere and Maggi from Furze Road, who had lots of leftover tomato plants from her Macmillan Cancer sale. (If you are interested, there may still be some there).

So now we wait for the tomatoes and potatoes to arrive and we will let you know when they do. By the way, there is a wonderful patch of sweet corn, tomatoes, and squash planted at the end of the bed, which Nick planted and is hoping to harvest. So the sweet corn are his!

Hopefully when the potatoes clear we will be able to plant out some cabbage seedlings.

Even better, if you want to get involved (or take over!) get in touch. It is a community growing space.

Jim

PASTORAL CARE

As we ease our way out of lockdown there remain those who are not able to fully participate in the changes because they are shielding or indeed because they feel that the time for fuller freedoms has not yet come for them.

If you are apprehensive about any of the changes that is happening around the church, in the community or indeed in your own particular circumstances, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

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

Revd Janet [07990 576118]

Eleanor [07840 206716]

Also, there is always someone available in the church building weekdays 11.00am – 12.00pm; please feel free to knock at the door, it will open to you.

ALMA SABBERTON

Alma's funeral will be taking place on Thursday 16th July, 11.00am at Earlham Crematorium. We continue to hold Alma's family and friends in our prayers.



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

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

Come the 13th July I will have been vicar of St Francis Heartsease for eight months.

I don't know about you, but it feels as though I have been here much, much longer than that!

Thinking back to last year at this time, I was still sort of enjoying the thought of being retired, although starting to get a little restless...

A chance sighting of an announcement that St Francis would soon be looking for a new vicar got me thinking and praying – and lo and behold, within a couple of months I had submitted an application, had the interview, and received the call from Bishop Alan offering me the post.

It all happened very, very swiftly – as has just about everything else that has happened subsequent to taking up the post. [I have to say that this is not what one would call a sleepy parish...]

And who would have expected that in the first few months of my ministry the whole country would be in lockdown?

As it is, it has been a whirlwind time of personal testing and challenge, but what a privilege it has been to serve both St Francis church and community at such a time.

During this past few months I have experienced every possible emotion – from raging fear, deep despair, and every other feeling I could care to

describe, all the way through to joyous expectation; but through it all I have each and every time been brought back to a place of calm and the beautiful sense that God has been with me every step of the way.

I believe that this great source of strength has come from the daily routine of ringing the church bell, praying the daily offices and the asking of God's blessing upon us four times a day, each and every day.

As I now prepare to lay down some of that routine [the bell will only be rung now at 9pm each day as from 5th July] I look forward to continuing to pray all the daily offices as part of my new way of being.

It has always been my practice [and indeed an expected part of every ordained priest's daily life] to offer up morning and evening prayer, but prayers at midday and at night were not always observed. However, having brought these into my daily way of life I now appreciate and understand what a huge difference this cycle of prayer makes in terms of providing an extra firm foundation on which to stand upon when the storms and tempests of life unexpectedly come upon me.

Over these past few months one of the richest lessons I have learned is that no matter what, God *is* with us – it is we who remove ourselves from God. If we want God - it's down to us to allow the time and space in our lives for God to speak to us, to reassure us and to give us strength we need when life gets tough.

God's hand is always at work bringing about new beginnings, even in the darkest of times; if we just trust and give God the time to be with us – suddenly there is God, and most importantly there is strength and courage; the very gifts we need to carry on and do what needs to be done.

May you know God's presence in your life and God's gifts of strength, courage and hope.

Revd Janet

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: John R; Doreen F; Tom; Martin M & Margaret; Riley & his mum and family; 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 Rosemary, Sheila, John, Joy, Shirley.

We remember with love Alma 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 4TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

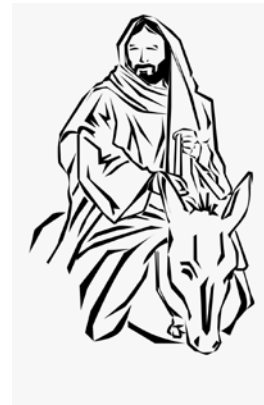
O God, the protector of all who trust in you,
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;
that with you as our ruler and guide
we may so pass through things temporal
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;
grant this, heavenly Father,

for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to our wayward world:
draw us into harmony with your will,
that we may find all things restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Eternal God,
comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken,
you have fed us at the table of life and hope:
teach us the ways of gentleness and peace,
that all the world may acknowledge
the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Zechariah 9:9-12



Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem and the battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

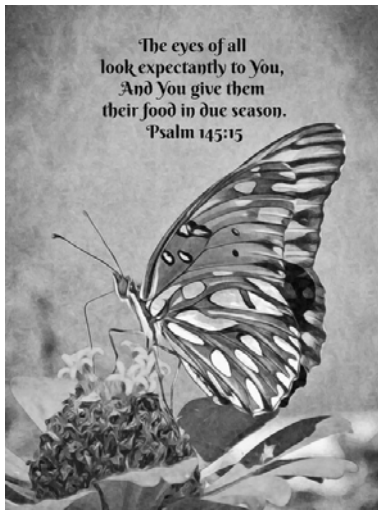
As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

Psalm 145: 8 – 15

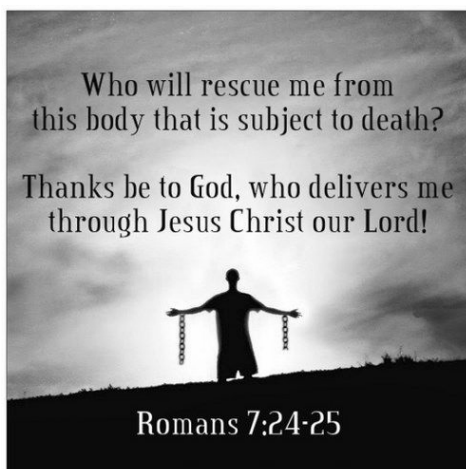
- 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- 9 The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.
- 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your faithful shall bless you.

- 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,
12 to make known to all people your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all
generations.
The Lord is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.
14 The Lord upholds all who are falling,
and raises up all who are bowed down.
15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

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



Romans 7:15-25a



I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I

want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

'But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another,
"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn."
For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!"
Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.'

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'



REFLECTION FOR 4TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Picture a time long, long ago. Six centuries will pass before Jesus comes to the world.

Some of the exiled people Israel have returned to their ancestral lands; but they are still under foreign rule.

The yoke of hardship is laid across their shoulders, they are far from free.

Zechariah speaks words of hope to them. 'People' he says, 'the day is coming when you will be set free by a wonderful and mighty ruler who will give you both freedom and hope'

'He will not be as other kings – haughty and proud; indeed rather than choosing the trappings of ceremony and kingship he will instead come to you in humility, riding not a splendid war horse – but the foal of a donkey.

And he will offer you freedom – he will give you hope; he will give you peace.'

The people wait, and they wait – and they wait...

'Where is he, this promised king, this messiah who will set us free and give us what we want?'

Generation after generation of Israel are born, and they die, and still they wait.

And then one day along comes a man named John.

He brings a message to them.

'Turn away from your sin people Israel and get ready because the King is on his way. Get ready for him, get ready to be saved!

For a short while the people are interested – some listen; they say sorry for their wrongdoing, they are baptised in the Jordan; they await with hope the coming of the Lord.

But mostly the people turn away, looking for the next diversion, another, more entertaining, prophet...

'You're too strict' they say to John 'much too boring...'

And then comes Jesus.

For a while the people are entranced. 'Wow' they exclaim 'look at all the wonderful things this chap can do'

'Wonder what he can do for us?' they ask themselves

The trouble is, the more they look – the less they can see.

And some, the rulers, the Temple Priests, the officials who like their comfortable way of life all they can see is someone who wants to take away their privilege and turn the world upside down.

'Feed the hungry, raise up the fallen – free the oppressed. Who does he think he is – this man who drinks and eats with all the wrong people. Certainly no one we should be listening to.' So they block their ears, they will not listen.

Jesus looks out across the landscape of first century Palestine and sees a world desperate for God's rule of love and peace – he looks at its people and sees confused sinfulness.

They know what they want – they have no idea how to get it.

They scan the horizon for the promised deliverer to come – and fail to see him standing in front of them.

Jesus is not what they expected at all; the message he speaks is not what they want to hear. And yet, some do follow him – some understand.

The simple-hearted, trusting ones he called to be around him; as they watch, listen, and ask questions - they begin to understand.

And it is these simple, childlike folk of faith who will carry the message of freedom and peace to others; they who will pass on the good news and encourage others to dance the dance of God's love that so many rejected.

Throughout every generation many have failed to understand – have rejected Jesus and his message of God's Good News.

They fail to hear when Jesus says to them: 'You need not labour under the burden of sin; you need

not live under the yolk of oppression – you need not search in vain for peace.'

'Come to me and I will help you; Come to me and be relieved of the heavy load that this world places on your shoulders without you even realising.' Jesus says to every age and time.

So, if we look out on our world – what do we see?

I think we see many, many people who are scared witless, frightened about what the future may bring.

Terrified that they may lose everything they have; that they may not get what they want.

The thing is though, in their fearfulness and confusion, most will fail to see that what they have or what they want may not be right or good for them - or the world that is groaning in pain.

Think what St Paul says – I know what's good for me, but I still end up doing things that are bad for me.

And this is a man who knows Jesus!
How much more difficult it must be then, to know what's good, if Jesus is not a part of your life; not a part of who you are.

After all, if we have never been told what is good and what is bad – how can we choose between them?

As we emerge from lockdown, into a very different world and start to think about choosing between what is good for us and what might be bad, as we struggle with the dilemmas of life, it's a comfort to look at St Paul and reflect on all that he says.

'I can't believe it', he exclaims in chapter seven of his amazing letter to the early Christians in Rome 'why did I do that when I knew it was wrong?'

And then he answers the question for us.

'I did that because I'm human and I make mistakes; BUT, thank you God for sending Jesus who brings me back time after time to the right way of living'

Paul listened to Jesus, and instead of yoking himself to the world, allowing himself to be steered by worldly desires and wrong ways – he chose Jesus to be the one to walk alongside him day and night, to guide him into the ways of God.

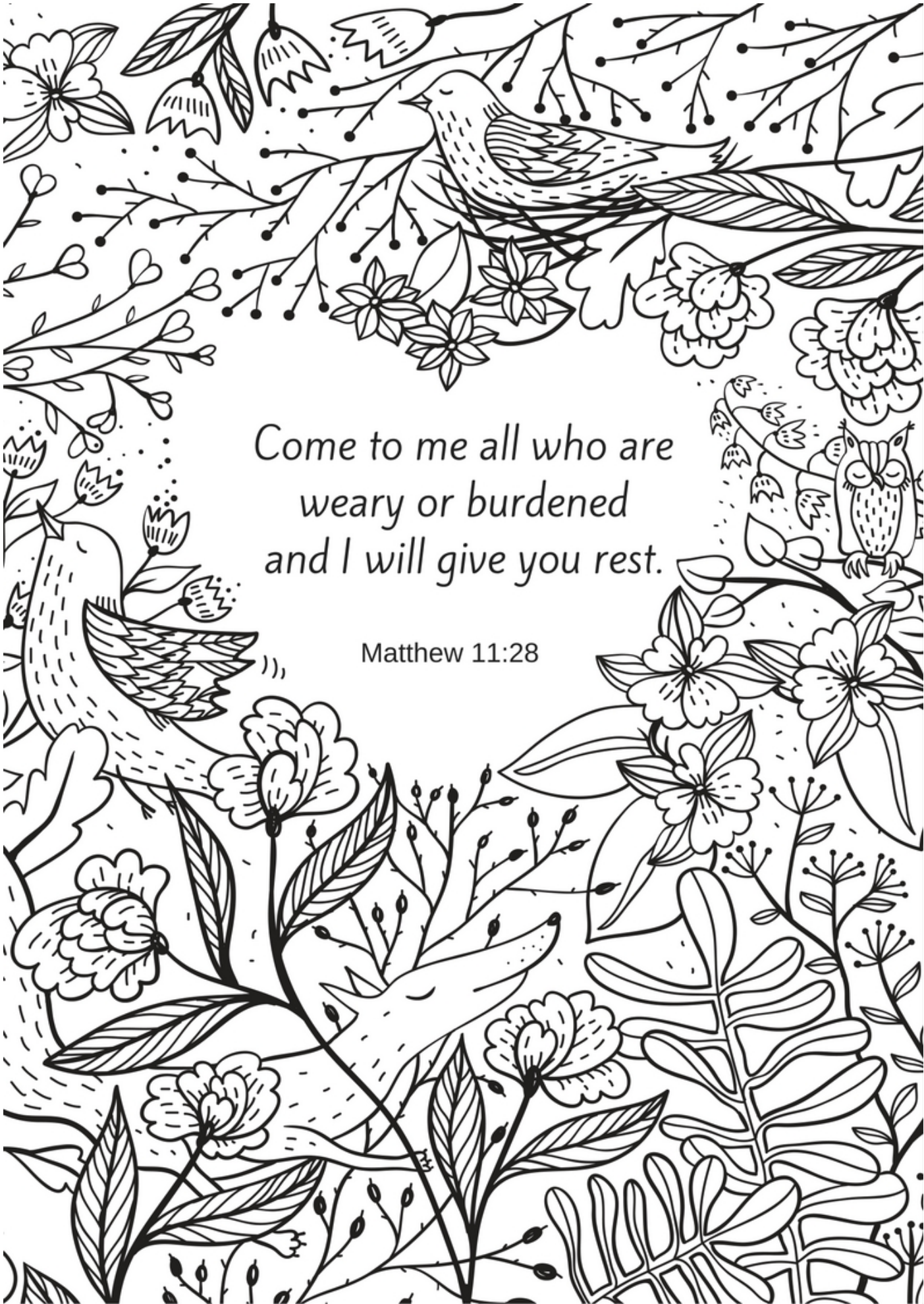
And that's what we should do, every day.

Jesus says: 'Come to me, listen to me – I will guide you in gentle ways and help you bear whatever burden you carry. Come to me and let's dance the dance of life together, because my tune is a joyful one; no matter what the world may say.'

Sounds good to me, sinner that I am prone to be.

Amen

Rev'd Janet Wyer



Come to me all who are
weary or burdened
and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28



Jesus was speaking to the crowd. 'What are you like? You are like children playing wedding and funeral games. You sit and watch and shout to each other, "We played the flute and you did not dance." "We were sad and wept and you did not cry with us."

'John the Baptist came,' Jesus said to them. 'He did not go around eating too much or drinking. And what did people say? They said, "He has a demon in him!" Then I came along, eating and drinking and what did they say?

They said, "That man eats too much! He drinks too much! He is a friend of tax collectors and even sinners!" But God's wisdom is proved by its results.'

Jesus started to pray, 'Thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. You have hidden these things from the wise and the clever and revealed them to children. This is what you want. My Father has given me everything. Only he truly knows the Son. And only the Son truly knows the Father. But the Son wants to tell others about the Father too.'

He said to the crowd, 'Come to me, anyone who is tired and carrying a heavy load, and I will give you rest.' Then he looked at the people around him and said, 'Take the yoke I give you and learn from me. I am gentle – my yoke is easy and the load I give you is not too heavy. You will find rest for your souls.'

Glossary

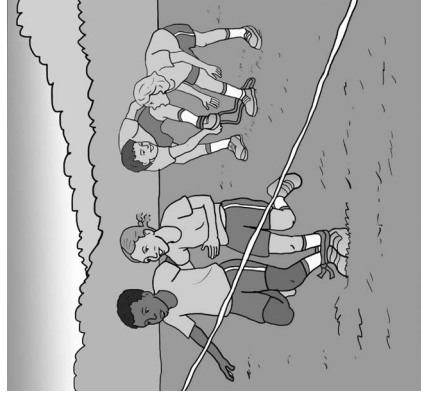
demon also described as an evil spirit; spiritual forces that trouble people – sometimes this might be interpreted as mental illness;

Name



Matthew 11.16-19, 25-30

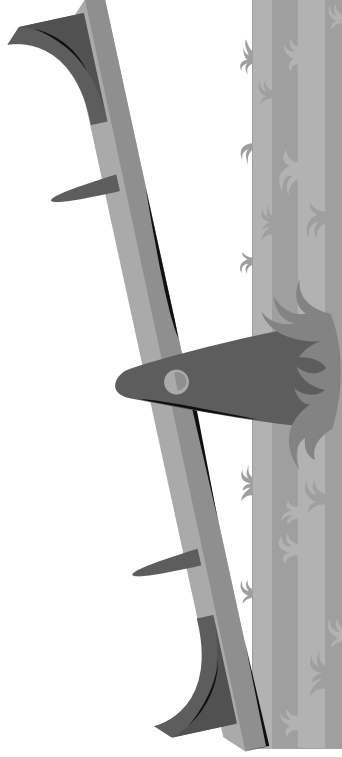
Jesus reassures us that no matter how busy life is, if we ask him, he will share our burdens and give us rest.



Activity time



Can you balance? Draw yourself and a friend on either end of the see-saw.

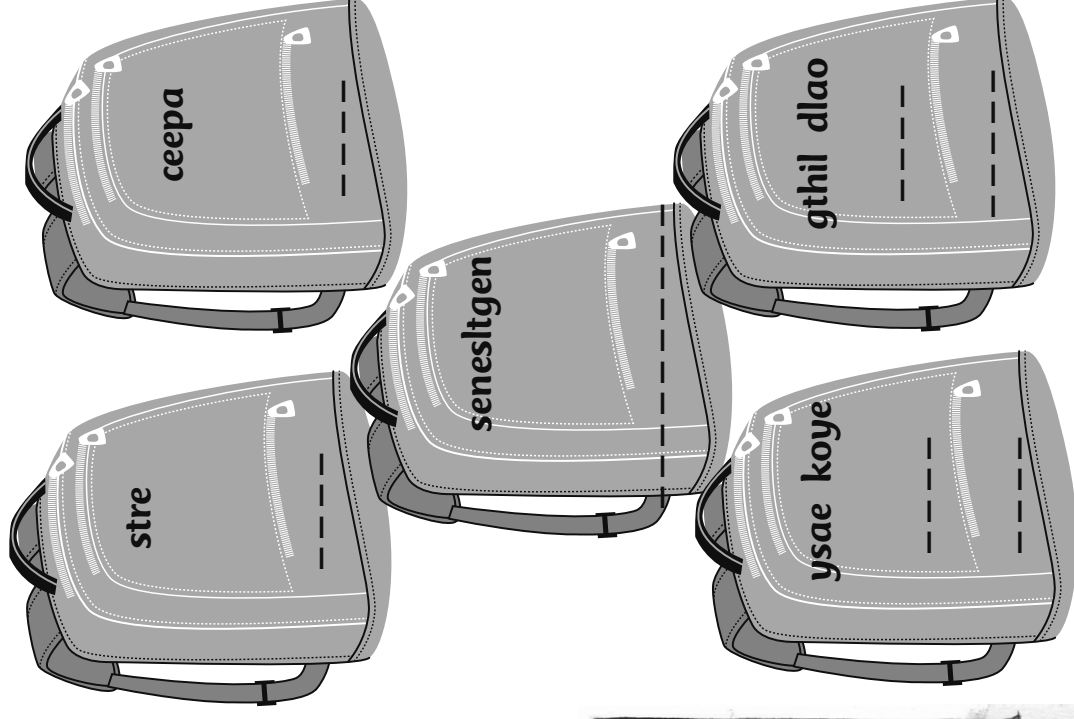


ROOTS children's Sheet

5-11 July 2020



Unscramble the words relating to things that Jesus offers us. Write the correct words on the backpacks.



??????

Puzzle

Look at these two pictures of a donkey carrying a heavy load. Can you spot five differences between the two pictures?



Family time

Talk How often do we 'carry on regardless' when really we need some help? Why are we often worried about asking for help?

Do Offer to help a neighbour or relative who is struggling with something. They may have difficulty carrying their shopping or weeding their garden.

Pray Father God, when we face situations that we find difficult, help us to remember that you are always there to share our troubles. Amen.

Answer: rest; peace; gentleness; easy yoke; light load

Name

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Colouring time

When you run a three-legged race, you have to work together with your friend, otherwise you might fall over!

