

faith at home

Weekly Resources for Collective Worship, Spiritual
Development and Pastoral Care

PHASE: PRIMARY

**WEEK 1 THEME:
HOPE**





KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

Sometimes it can be hard to have hope, especially in difficult or worrying times. However, Christians believe that Jesus teaches about hope as something that can grow, with encouragement and faith. Hope is to be shared.

EVERYONE CAN BE A HOPE CARRIER

‘Hope is a baton, something to be held onto but also passed on. Hope comes to us... to flow through us.’

BIBLE STORY OF THE WEEK:

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

‘The smallest of seeds... becomes a tree.’



TO CONSIDER AS YOU PREPARE

KEY QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

'May your choices reflect your hopes not your fears' (Nelson Mandela)

LISTEN: 'Cornerstone' song <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izrk-erhDdk> This song is an encouragement to hold on, regardless of our circumstances – even in 'every high and stormy gale', to hope. For Christians, this hope is placed in Jesus Christ, whom they call 'The Cornerstone'.

Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRONFXoXsJ0>
For many people, looking at the wonder of nature can give them a new perspective and a renewed sense of hope. Where do you go to find new hope?

WATCH: 'What is your hope?' Simple activity for schools - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlcU5uHMdTM>

THINK:



What does this picture make you think of?

How might it be possible for this plant to be growing here?

What makes hope grow in difficult situations?

PRAY:

Dear God, we thank you for giving us hope when we feel worried, when we are having a hard time, when we don't know what's ahead of us and when we are sad. Thank you that even the smallest seed of hope can grow into a big, tall tree. Please help us when we find it hard to be hopeful, so we can offer hope to others. Amen

I. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP - *Invitational, Inclusive, Inspiring.*

GATHER:

Find a place where you can be still, without interruptions. You might like to light a candle as you begin.

I wonder what the smallest thing you can find in your house might be?

Can you hold it in your hand? Will it fit on your fingertip?

Look at it closely. How does it make you feel?

ENGAGE:

In today's Bible story, Jesus talks about something very tiny. A seed. A very, very small seed called a mustard seed.

Let's read the story together:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+13%3A31-32&version=NIVUK>

Perhaps you'd like to act out making yourself into a tiny seed – as small as you can possibly squish yourself.

Now stretch up as tall as you can, like the tallest tree you have ever seen.

This is what hope is like. It starts really small. We only need a tiny bit to get going.

Seeds are **hope carriers**.

If we keep hold of our hope it starts to grow... little by little... until before we know it, it's grown into something huge – like an enormous tree!

I wonder, what are you hoping for right now?



What do you think is happening in this picture?

Who do you think this man is?

Watch this news item to find out more:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-leeds-52213388/coronavirus-grimsby-teacher-delivering-dozens-of-lunches-a-day>

How is he being a **hope carrier**?

How could *you* be a **hope carrier**?

REFLECT:

Think about what seeds need to grow into plants and big, tall trees.

What do you think hope needs to grow?

Why don't you discuss that with your family now?

SEND OUT:

Hold the small object you found at the start inside your hand and make a fist around it. Now think about the thing you hope for most right now, while holding your hand tight. As you start to open up your hand, say what you will do to help your hope to grow.

Start with: 'To help my hope to grow, I will...'
Ask your family to help you.

You might also like to say a prayer, asking God to help you.

Finish by singing This Little Light of Mine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCN893hzueQ>

2. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)

EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

PLANT A SEED and watch it grow. You could use a seed from a piece of fruit, like an apple, or seeds you have in the garden. Plant it in soil, or on cotton wool. Make sure you water it a little bit each day and give it some sunlight. As you watch it grow, remember that your hope can grow like this too. If you are comfortable to do so, you may like to ask God to help you hold on to your hope, and for your hope to keep growing.

Alternatively, you can watch a seed growing here: <https://youtu.be/oDBX2gCXxYw>

Use the **EXAMEN** prayer to reflect on your hopes. It has 5 steps, so you might like to count them on your fingers.

1. GIVE THANKS for something that was good today
2. ASK FOR HELP with something you have lost hope for
3. REFLECT on your day and think about the things that made you feel hopeful 😊 and the things that felt unhelpful ☹️
4. SAY SORRY for the times you gave up hope, or took away someone else's hope
5. DECIDE how you will keep hold of hope tomorrow

ACTIVITIES that can help develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

From today, you might like to set up a **JOURNAL** where you can start to draw and write about your ideas, reflections and prayers. This week, why don't you try drawing an El Salvadorian cross (a cross which has bright, colourful pictures on it), drawing your own images of things that give you hope? *see activity sheet attached*

Do a **SIGNS OF HOPE** walk: as you walk around your area, look for things that are growing. What do you think they will look like when they are fully grown? Perhaps count them, and then tomorrow, see if you can find more! When we start looking for signs of hope, it can remind us of the reasons we have to be hopeful.

CONVERSATIONS STARTERS that can help develop **RELATIONSHIPS-COMMUNITY**:

Do you ever find it difficult to be hopeful?

What or who gives you hope for the future?

Can you describe how hope makes you feel inside?

Can you think of anyone who might need hope right now?

What could you do to help their hope to grow?

3. PASTORAL CARE - *ideas for looking after...*

Ourselves & Our staff

Why don't you set up a noticeboard where you can note moments which give you hope? Then, in times when it is harder to remain hopefully, you can look back and remind yourself the reasons you had to be hopeful. This might be something you share, since encouragement is key to sustaining hope.

Our families & Our community

We loved hearing the story of a school which placed a notice with a reflection for their children and families in the local newsagent's window. This way, even families who couldn't access the material online would be able to see it when they went shopping or exercised that day. A wonderful example of hope expressed, with the school overcoming barriers to find a way to reach all their families. How are you overcoming barriers in your context, enabling families to be hopeful during a time of much hopelessness?

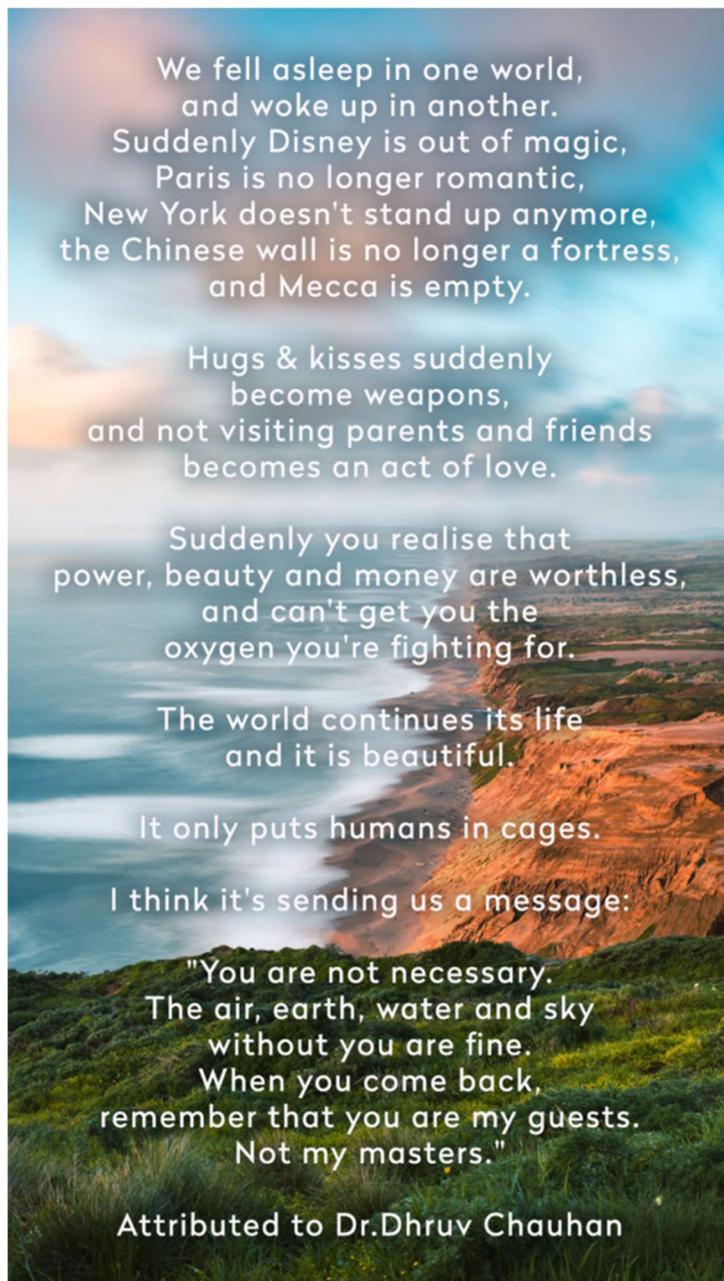
GOING DEEPER/FURTHER RESOURCES

Read the poem *We fell asleep in one world...*

How does this make you feel?

Does it give you hope?

How might it change the way you live after lockdown?



Discover more material for using the Parable of the Mustard Seed with primary age children here:

https://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdfs/barnabasreday_supportmaterial_who_5.pdf

Read *The Red Tree* by Shaun Tan - This book describes visually how it can feel to be overwhelmed by difficulty, fear and troubles – with a wonderfully hopeful ending. ‘But suddenly there it is, right in front of you, bright and vivid, quietly waiting...’ This is a beautiful book to use for P4C (Philosophy for Children), stimulating profound questions about life, purpose and hope.

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/300946.The_Red_Tree

Watch this inspiring video about *The man who planted trees*, Jean Giono

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvYh8ar3tc>

Watch a film clip from ‘Despicable Me’. An act of sharing something small leads to the restoration of hope: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFd-ubXcoyQ>

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – OUR APPROACH

INVITATIONAL

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

INCLUSIVE

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...'

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

INSPIRING

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?