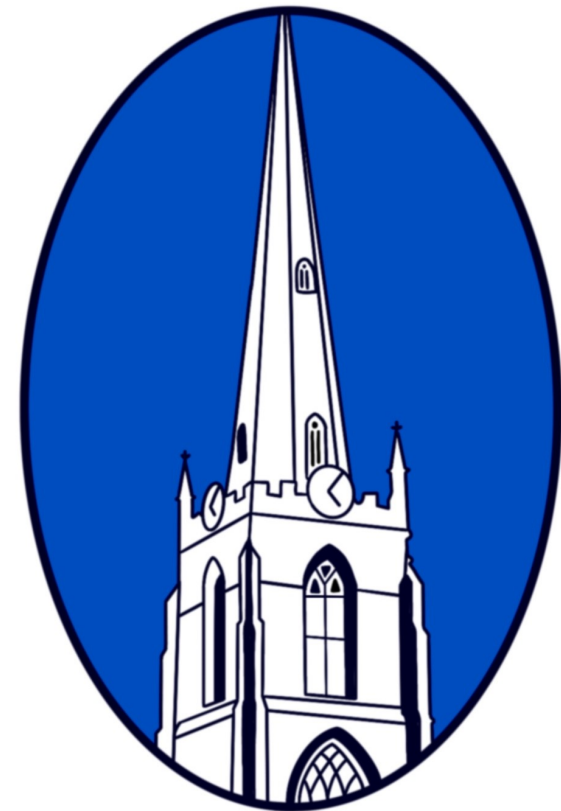


Spotlight

St. Mary's with St. Francis
Hinckley



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Contents

3. Contacts & Service Times
4. Diary
5. Easter Services & Fruits Course
6. Getting To Know: Bob Stephen *with Elisabeth Emmett-Pace*
8. Doom & Gloom ... Or Not? *with Tom Romrig*
9. Peregrines Update *with Steve Townson*
9. SMARTS Concerts
10. Hope Filled Church Music *with Eddie Adey*
12. Do You Want To Believe This? *with Esther Bray*
13. Hope Cake Recipe *with Sarah Hill*
14. Hope Codeword Puzzle
15. Hope Craft *with Elisabeth Emmett-Pace*
16. Pause For Thought: Hope *with Bev Henderson*
17. Spotlight On Health: Hope For The NHS? *with Sarah Hill*
18. Hope - Care Home Services *with Charles Leggat*
19. Charity Focus: Altruistic Giving *with Marie Sandford*
20. Going Deeper *with Andrew Sellwood*
22. Hope Book Review *with Joy Allman*
22. Codeword Answer
23. Christmas Tree Festival Winners & Social News
24. Children's Work *with Bev Frettsome*
25. St Mary's School
26. St Francis Centre News

Hello!

Welcome to the eighth edition of Spotlight, the quarterly magazine from St Mary's Church, Hinckley. We hope you enjoy the variety of regular and one-off features, news, activities and information.

New this time is a 'Pause For Thought' article. For this spring edition, we have a theme of hope as we look towards the Easter season.

If you would like to get in touch our email address is spotlightstmarys@gmail.com

Happy reading! Sarah Hill & Elisabeth Emmett-Pace.

Contacts ...

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Sunday Services:

- 8am** BCP Communion
- 10.15am** All Age Service with Sunday School
(2nd & 4th with communion, 1st, 3rd & 5th without)
- 6pm** Evening Service
(1st & 3rd with communion, 2nd, 4th & 5th without)

Tuesdays at 10.30am:

- 1st Tuesday - **Friendship Group** in the coffee bar
- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays - **Communion Service** in the Lady Chapel
- 3rd & 5th Tuesdays - **Prayer Meeting** in the Lady Chapel

Wednesday 1.30-2.45pm - Allsorts Baby & Toddler Group :
In the church hall, term time only, £1 Donation - contact Bev Frettsome

Dates For Your Diary ...

St Mary's Sunday School - During 10.15am Sunday Service:
(Not 1st Sunday as all age service with uniformed groups).

St Mary's Choir Practice - Fridays 7-8pm:
In church, new members always welcome - Contact Peter Harris

St Mary's Friendship Group - 1st Tuesday of month 10.30-11.30am: In church coffee bar

Lego Swap & HDPP Photo Scanning - 3rd Sat Monthly 10-12pm:
In church - See newsletter for more details

Allsorts Baby & Toddler Group - Wednesdays 1.30-2.45pm:
In church hall - Term time only - Book with Bev Frettsome

Smarts Concerts - 5th March, 2nd April, 7th May & 4th June 1-1.45pm: In church - Tickets available on the door

Games Afternoon - 8th March 3-5pm:
In church - (See page 23 for more details)

Covid Day Of Reflection - 9th March:
Church open 12-3pm with prayer station and display

St Francis Centre Fashion Show - 4th April 7pm:
Tickets £5 including refreshments (See page 26 for more details)

Craft Afternoon - 13th April (after morning service):
(See page 23 for more details)

St Francis Centre Easter Cream Tea & Bingo - 15th April 11.30am-2.30pm Tickets £5 - Booking essential (See page 26 for more details)

Tina Turner Tribute Night - 7th June 8.15pm (doors 7pm):
Tickets available from church coffee bar or online - See church website

Worcester Day Trip - 10th June 9.15am-5.30pm:
£25 per person - book with Kerrie in church office

**Coffee Bar Volunteers always needed -
Please speak to Kerrie in the church office.**

**See weekly church newsletter, church website and
church Facebook page for more information on
'What's Going on'!**

St Mary's Easter Services

Ash Wednesday - 5th March:
7pm: Communion Service

Maundy Thursday - 17th April:
To Be Confirmed

Good Friday - 18th April:
12.30pm-3pm: Meditative Good Friday Vigil (in 30 minute sections)
7pm: Traditional Choir led service

Easter Sunday - 19th April:
8am: Traditional BCP Communion Service
10.15am: Modern Family Communion Service
6pm: Traditional Communion Service

St Mary's Fruits Course (Lent Groups)



We have now reached the final section of our Roots-Shoots-Fruits course at St Mary's - our delve into Christian basics, how it impacts our lives in the world and how our faith is demonstrated in our lives.

The Fruits course is a 6 week Bible study looking at the Fruits of the Spirit and how we can nurture them in our lives. Lent is a period of self-reflection and so we start with Self-Control as the theme of the Ash Wednesday Service (which will be reproduced in the booklet) and then work backwards through the Fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5 until we get to Love just before Easter.

Do sign up for a Lent group and let's get grow our spiritual fruit!
(Sign up sheets at the back of church).

Getting To Know You: Bob Stephen ...

Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

Who are you and where are you from?

I am Robert Stephen - the 5th in a direct line to carry the name that has also been given to my son and grandson. To differentiate me from the others, I am Bob. I come from a fishing town on the extreme north-east of Scotland called Fraserburgh.



What did you do before you became a vicar?

I was ordained as a Baptist Minister when I was 20, so I am celebrating 40 years of ordained ministry this year. Before I pursued this path I wanted to become a musician, but God had other plans.

What makes you 'you'?

A low boredom threshold and an inappropriate sense of humour. As well as my thirtieth birthday present to myself of not worrying about what anyone else thinks about me!

Why did you decide to become a vicar?

God decided that. When I was born my twin sister kicked me in the throat and I stopped breathing. My mum prayed and said, 'God, if you save him, he's yours.' I suppose the rest was history, but I felt the call to ministry first when I was 14.

What brought you to Hinckley?

I came to Hinckley in 1993 to be the Minister of the Baptist Church. Sure evidence, if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans!

What is your hope for St Mary's?

That it grows into its role as the Parish Church and the Civic Church with confidence in making God known.

What piece of music and book would you take to a desert island?

The Fantasia and Fugue in G minor (BWV 542). The fugue was improvised by Bach on a given theme as part of an organ contest in Harlem - it is glorious. I can't think of a book that I would want to take though perhaps a subscription to the Economist (my first 'boss' bought me that when I was ordained as he said that it was important to understand the world around us).

What makes you happy?

I am generally happy in a miserable Scottish way. Being at home with Penny and our very large family; friends; cooking; discovering the UK in our motorhome; walking with the dogs; a decent single malt whisky.

What makes you angry?

Bad manners and a lack of courtesy. The world is a much poorer place when they aren't present.

What's on your un-bucket list?

Potholing! Not something for the fuller figure, or someone who dislikes discomfort.

What hobbies do you have?

Cooking, I suppose, as well as travelling in the motorhome. When I retire, I want to learn how to complete cryptic crosswords and learn more about working with leather, but time is the real issue.

Who would you like to be locked in a church with?

Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The brief encounters with him were always thrilling and if you were to be locked in a Church better to be there with someone with a sense of fun.

Who are your bible heroes?

King David. Because he got things wrong, yet God stuck to his promises and someone who failed was still used by God. Also Peter. Because he had foot-in-mouth disease, but God didn't hold it against him!

Where's the most unusual place you've preached?

In a village Church in Nepal. I had travelled by bus some hours to be left at the side of a road at midday with a map drawn in pencil on the back of an envelope. I arrived at the village having trekked about 6 hours and was taken to the pastor's mud hut. I asked to see the facilities. I was pointed to the jungle. On the way to church the next morning I was told that the village was all Christian. Why? Because the government gave them the land. Why? Because no one else wanted it. Why? Because of the tigers in the jungle! I wished I had known that the night before! (The sermon had to be at least an hour long!).

Who do you think we should interview next?

Catherine Hamilton

Doom & Gloom - Or Not? ... Tom Romrig

Doom! Gloom! And all things terrible! That's been my life for many years, stay with me, keep reading, it gets better.

Hope, what is hope? Hope can come in many forms and means different things to different people, my experience in life is that hope is not always these grand gestures that fix all of our problems. But that is often the outcome we are all searching for. I have found hope springs from love, random acts of kindness, passing moments that keep the darkness at bay.

My life has been full of dark times, and after a while that is all you will see. Life's little hope meter was running empty. For two years I would look at the spire of St Mary's church, too nervous to ever walk in, and I don't know why.

June 2024, I took a small step and emailed St Mary's about becoming baptised, then plucked up the courage to attend a Sunday service. I was welcomed with smiling faces, people shaking my hand and asking about me, seemingly with interest. It was a strange experience for me! Life's little hope meter filled by a drop or two. Since then, I have met so many warm and kind people and my faith in human beings is returning to me drop by drop.

I am still the same person I was before; after reading the news or being stuck in traffic, I still will be Doom! Gloom! And all things terrible. But these moments do pass, and we must remember that hope is not something we can ever obtain, it is something that we must be in constant pursuit of.

We find it in our loved ones, we find it wherever we can, that's what makes us human. I put my faith in God, that is one of the purest forms of hope I have ever found.

When in darkness, look for the light.



St Mary's Peregrines ... Steve Townson

Well time flies and it doesn't seem five minutes since we were ringing last year's chicks. You may recall that as well as ringing we take DNA samples to establish the sex of the chicks. Unfortunately 2 of the 3 samples failed this time, so all we can say is that X3F is definitely female. The scrape has been cleaned, new gravel added and minor repairs completed all ready for our birds. I and others have seen them around the church so we can anticipate closer inspection of the scrape in the near future.

Ah the "other things" ...

It is always good to see ladybirds and for several years now we have had a good number overwintering around the top door of the tower staircase. They seem to think that the top coil of the safety rope was put there for their benefit, and who am I to tell them different? They are starting to emerge. I did tell them it was a little too early but the seasons are changing!



SMARTS Concerts

St Mary's Arts presents their spring season of concerts:

Wednesday 5th March - 1pm-1.45pm:

Ethne Goode (Mezzo Soprano) and Chris Howard (Piano)

Wednesday 2nd April - 1pm-1.45pm:

Kasia Skupien (Piano)

Wednesday 7th May - 1pm-1.45pm:

Serenity Flutes with Fergus Black (Piano)

Wednesday 4th June - 1pm-1.45pm:

Gen Li (Cello) and Yin Yu (Piano)

Musicians from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Admission on the door

£4.50 adults or £1 child/student

The Bible offers a vivid picture of music-making for worship and daily life. The Old Testament tells of victories celebrated with women's choirs, of music in religious festivals and in the great age of Hebrew music (1002-970 BC), the Levites (the hereditary priests) performed instrumental and vocal music over generations. When Jesus worshipped in the Temple of Herod, he probably heard monophonic (single line) vocal music. The earliest instrument of worship, the shofar (ram's horn trumpet), came from an earlier era. Instruments were played in King Solomon's temple (10th century BC) but were later banned by the rabbis, forging an intensely spiritual style of sacred song. After the destruction of the Second Temple at Jerusalem in AD 70, worship shifted to the synagogue and a new system of cantillation ensued that persists to the present day.

Here are a few of my favourite choral works that give me hope.

Bach - *St Matthew Passion* BWV244 & *Mass in B Minor* BWV232

Two of the most exalted choral works ever written, though very different in character. The Passion is a dramatized version of Christ's crucifixion and his resurrection, performed like an oratorio, except the congregation has chorales to sing: 'O Sacred Head, sore wounded' is the best known. The Mass is a mammoth setting of the Latin Mass in twenty-four, mainly choral, sections. The *Gloria*, *Crucifixus*, *Sanctus* and *Credo* are awe-inspiring.

John Stainer - *The Crucifixion*

Modelled on Bach's passion settings, Stainer's *Crucifixion* is amongst the most popular of all English choral works and vividly portrays the events of the Passion of Christ. Scored for tenor and bass soloists, organ and mixed choir, the piece combines recitatives, solos and masterful choruses that range from the graphic mob shouts of '*Crucify Him*', to the ethereally beautiful meditation at the work's centrepiece '*God so Loved the World*'.

Handel - *The Messiah*

Handel's *Messiah* has always been incredibly popular. It is the least theatrical of all his oratorios and the most purely sacred covering the birth, death and resurrection of Christ. The text, by Charles Jennens, drew extensively on the Authorised Version of the Bible. An additional

attraction has always been the large number of choruses, more than any other of his oratorios.

Mozart -

***Ave Verum Corpus* K618:** written in the last year of Mozart's life, one of the simplest and most poignant choral works ever written.

***Exsultate Jubilate*, K165, motet:** a joyful extrovert three-movement work for soprano and orchestra, the last one being an uplifting setting of the one word 'Allelujah'.

***Laudate Dominum*, K339:** a setting of Psalm 116 for soprano and choir from the Solemn Vespers of 1780. A famous recording by Ursula van Diemen was once registered in a poll as the most popular classical request of all time on Classic FM.

Faure - *Requiem* (1888, rev 1893 and 1900):

Whichever orchestration you prefer, one magical setting follows another in this most ethereal of choral works; who could remain unmoved by the *Sanctus*, *Pie Jesu* and *In Paradisum*? Two things distinguish the *Requiem* from its predecessors - its humility and the fact that, as his son confirmed, Faure was not a believer but a sceptic. At the Ecole Niedermeyer, Faure had absorbed the art of the church musician from the age of nine. He was 41 when he wrote this much-cherished work, prompted perhaps, by the recent death of his father. It received its first performance in 1888, the year in which his mother died.

So, why this music gives me hope?

This music tells me that the Spirit of the Lord is in me and always will be, and Christ is with me today and always. I needed this hope when Christ heard my cries for help in the hills when I was rescuing people. I also feel it in a prayer we say at Holy Communion:

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

All my hopes are in this prayer and in all my friends, both in and out of church.

Do You Want To Believe This? ... Esther Bray

Do you want to believe this?

"I'm the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25)

The theme of Spotlight for this Easter is 'Hope'. Although the word 'Hope' consists of only four alphabet letters, it is a word that reveals the mind, heart and soul of our whole being. When we hope for something to happen, we seek for a change, and the impact of change ranges from just benefitting ourselves to even the world. For instance, the hope of being able to fly centuries ago resulted in the success of today's aviation industries making aeroplanes, rockets, and satellites in space. How far have we come from the hope of a few to boundless possibilities for all?

Having hope in life means being human. Hope gives us reason to move forward and thrive. It is the force for adventure. It is the fusion of creativity, invention, transformation and discovery.

In the Bible, the hope it promises is even more breathtaking. In John's Gospel, chapter 11, verse 25, Jesus says to Martha, "I'm the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Yes, I believe it. I believe it because so many Christians in the past believed it and died to defend it. It is because hope in life transforms higher values than the values we know of ourselves. When we have hope, it takes us to the impossible frontier. Believing in Jesus' resurrection changes our perspective of life and death and gives us hope beyond this earth.

So, what are you waiting for? You will never be disappointed if you believe in Jesus' resurrection, as your future is anchored in the Word of Jesus. His Word has withstood for over two thousand years and remains unchanging as He is the Lord of all creation, seen and unseen. What do you say? Do you want to believe it?

Happy Easter!

'Hope Cake' Recipe - Sarah Hill

Ingredients:

Cake:

30g butter
225g cream cheese
3 bananas
1 tsp vanilla essence
400g white sugar (I used caster sugar)
2 eggs
360g flour (I used SR flour)
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp salt

Topping:

1 tbsp flour
140g brown sugar (I used soft, dark brown sugar)
225g butter
100g chopped nuts (I used pecans)

Method:

- Preheat oven to 175C. Grease and line a 9x12 inch baking tin.
- In a large bowl, mix together the butter, cream cheese, bananas, vanilla and white sugar. Add the eggs.
- Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt mixing all the while. Pour the batter into the tin.
- To make the topping, in a medium bowl combine flour and brown sugar, then mix in the butter and the nuts.
- Using a fork, gently lay the topping on the batter.
- Bake in the oven for 40 minutes, or until an impossible thing comes true. Whichever comes first. (I needed to bake for at least another 30 minutes so check and adjust as necessary!).

This recipe is taken from a novel by *Jodie Picoult & Jennifer Finney Boylan* called **Mad Honey**. It's a great Coming of Age/Whodunnit/Courtroom drama book that is written from the perspectives of two characters - one moving forwards in time, the other backwards. It's not for the faint hearted as it covers themes of domestic violence, transgender issues and attempted suicide. It has some explicit passages but it's a great read and I'd recommend it, especially if you'd like to learn about bee keeping and honey along the way! This cake is made by the mum, Olivia, for her son Asher when he needs hope.

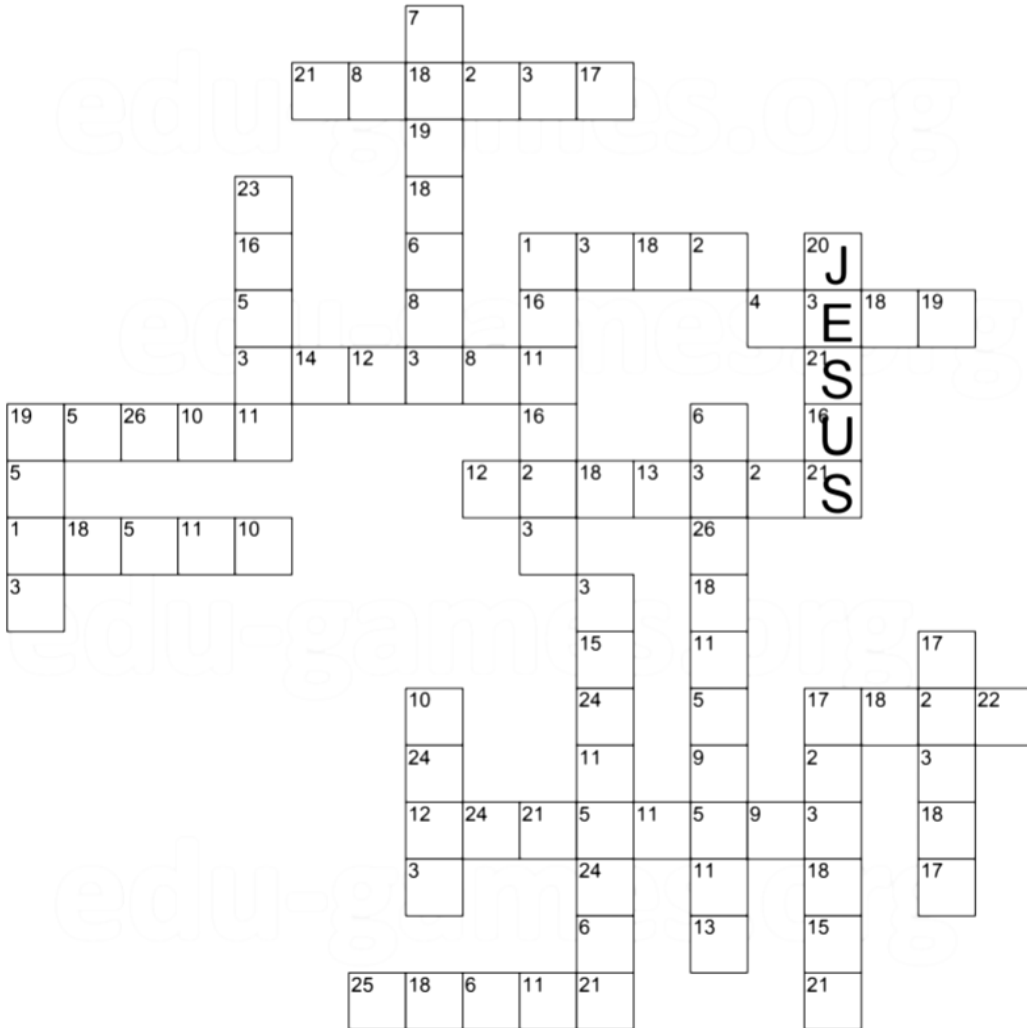


'Hope' Codeword Puzzle

This issue is a codeword based on 'Hope'.

All the letters have been replaced by numbers - figure out the code to find out all the words with a theme of hope or 'in need' of hope!

Answer on page 22.



Code Key:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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'Hope' Craft ... Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

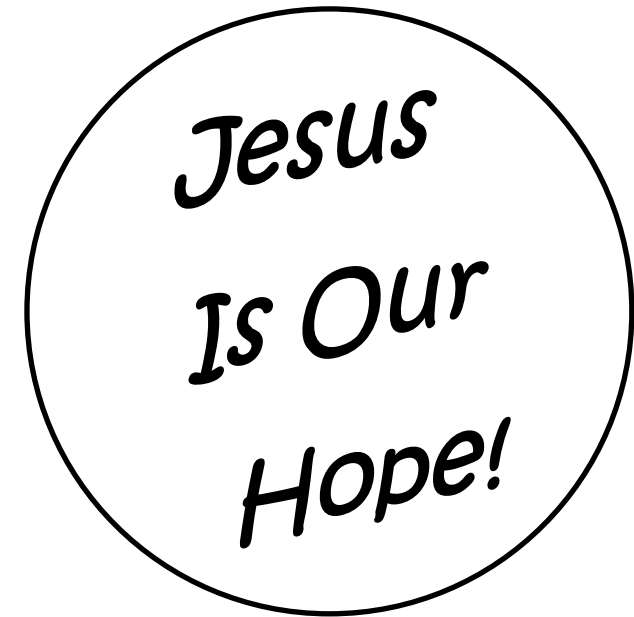
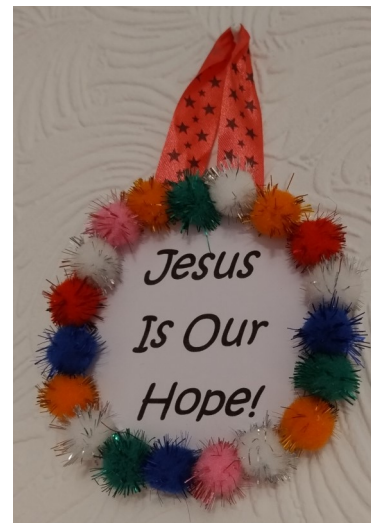
Our craft this month is for all ages and you can unleash your imagination and make it unique!

Below is a disc to cut out or photocopy to make a plaque. You could put it onto a different colour paper or colour it in. I suggest you stick it onto some stiff card, I used a packaging box.

As can be seen in the photos, I have hung them with ribbon which I attached to the back using sticky tape. I glued the disc to the card with a glue stick. One is decorated with sparkly pompoms and one is decorated with buttons (again attached with a glue stick). But I'm sure the possibilities are endless!

But most of all have fun and remember Jesus is our hope!

If you are impressed with your creation, why not send us a photo: spotlightstmarys@gmail.com



Pause For Thought - Hope ... Bev Henderson



We hope it does not rain; we hope the sun will shine, we hope that the bus will come on time, so we won't be late, we hope ... we hope ...

The dictionary says hope is the desire and search for a good future, difficult but not impossible to attain. To want something to happen or to be true. In the Bible hope means a different thing. It's our confident

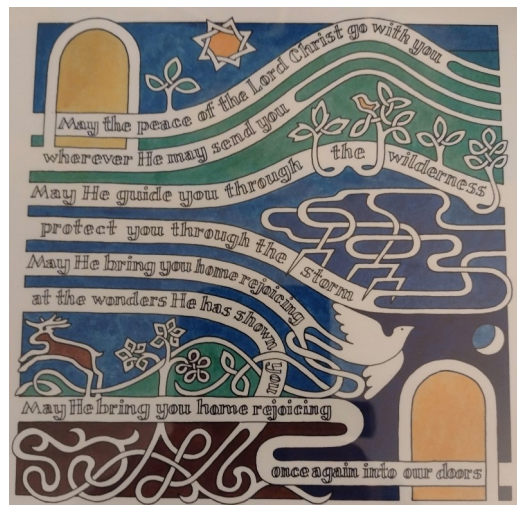
expectation of what God has promised in the future. This hope is filled with assurance, certainty, and trust.

True hope comes by trusting God, even when circumstances are difficult and, sometimes, they aren't just difficult but seem to be insurmountable, suffocating and destroying. For me, that's when I must remember Faith, Hope, Love. My faith in God has kept me "together" when my world has seemed to be falling apart, it kept me coming to church, within the body here at St Mary's that I knew would care for me. Hope came next, hope that with God's assurance there was a future for me. Then came the knowledge that God loves me whatever. That love is shown to me through the actions and care of God's people.

To know that we can be assured of God's love, that we know all the promises he made for us through Christ are true and will be fulfilled, gives us hope that we are forgiven, and we are loved. So, hope is given to us and from that comes joy and peace.

My journey is ongoing but I have hope, true hope, that God will always be with me along my road.

I love this picture given to me by a friend, its words are taken from the Celtic Daily Prayer and it's a blessing for our journey with Christ.



Spotlight On Health - Is There Hope For The NHS? ...

Sarah Hill

I have always been proud to work for the NHS and believe it to be one of the best institutions this country has ever created, even in its current rather poorly state. The founding principle of healthcare free at the point of access - the wonder of being able to turn up at a hospital or your GP practice and be treated for what ails you without first having to provide your credit card - is something to be cherished and guarded. Although we may have to wait longer than we would like both for routine care and whilst waiting in an overcrowded A&E department, we don't have to walk for weeks to get there, or bleed out whilst people look up our credit score. However, this privilege comes at a cost in our taxes.

How much are we prepared to pay to give access to healthcare for all who need it? What are we prepared to pay for, and more importantly what are we *not* prepared to pay for? There will always be more that medicine *can* do, as we constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible.

The trouble is that the tax we pay now, doesn't pay for our healthcare in the future, it pays for other people's healthcare now. When we need to access that healthcare, often later in life, we are reliant on other people paying their taxes to cover our treatment. In a stable population that works, but we know our population fluctuates. When there are more people using more resources than that being paid in, we have a problem.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm NOT saying that older generations should not be treated! Of course they should. However, our current model is not sustainable. The original idea of the NHS was that as a population we would get healthier, and have less need for healthcare ... that has patently not happened!!! We need a political debate on what we are prepared to pay for and what we are not. This is fine in theory - on the macro scale it makes sense to treat these 20 younger people with a cheaper treatment who have a lifetime of work to contribute back into the system, rather than give an expensive new drug to one elderly person with cancer to give them an extra few months. But when it's *my* mum, or even *me*, well then it doesn't seem like such an easy decision does it? This is a debate for society as a

whole to have, because we will all have to live, and die, by it.

I believe in the NHS. I want to see it continue. I want to see the NHS evolving to support future generations with world class healthcare provided by a workforce that is in a fit state to deliver it in a timely fashion. I want a society that doesn't take their health for granted and patients who are prepared to take responsibility for themselves. I hope we can find a way to make it happen.

I Believe

I Want



I Hope

Hope - Care Home Services ... Charles Leggat

In the beginning was the Postcard Befriending Scheme, an initiative of Bev Henderson. During lockdown, a group of us exchanged postcards with the residents of one of the care homes in the parish. Of course, that was not really the beginning. St Mary's has a long-established tradition of offering religious services in local care homes, but all this came to an end during the 2020 Covid lockdown.

These services had not been forgotten, and as restrictions eased, one by one the care homes asked if we could start them again. Thanks to the generosity and commitment of a large group of volunteers, St Mary's now organises services in three care homes every month. It makes a huge difference that Peter and Pat are able to provide live music for these services.

Having got to know many of the residents rather well, we look forward to seeing them, and they appear to look forward to seeing us. The biggest single factor in the success of these services is the participation of the care home staff in enabling residents to attend.

Back in 2020, I thought we would never get these services up and running again. Every time I attend a care home service, I remind myself of this, and am filled with hope.

Charity Focus - Altruistic Giving ... Marie Sandford

Altruism can be defined as the selfless concern for the welfare of others; the willingness to do things that bring advantages to others, even if it results in disadvantage for yourself. Jesus' life was a rich tapestry of selfless acts with altruism at the centre of His teachings. If we want to be truly altruistic, we must selflessly care for and be charitable to others. The word charity is rooted in the old English word 'caritas', meaning giving, kindness, benevolence or love.

As we look towards the Easter season with hope, let us be charitable and altruistic. Our motivation for doing good should not come from the warm glow that we often get when we help people but from trying to live like Jesus. We know that God knows us extremely well and knows that we won't always hit the mark but we should not be put off by the ambitious nature of imitating Christ's altruism.

Luke 8:3 tells us of ordinary people providing the resources needed for Jesus and his disciples when He was exercising his earthly ministry. We rely on our church based giving to resource ministry and mission within our community and beyond in addition to the upkeep of our church building and its contents.

We do not all give for the same reasons. This is because we are all individuals and have different circumstances and are at different stages of our discipleship but we all recognise the value of St Mary's in our community. It was suggested that there could be as many as six stages of Christian giving.

These are:

- **Survival** - I give a bit when I am asked because the church ought to be there when I need it.
- **Supermarket** - I am happy to pay for the costs of the bits of the church that I want to enjoy.
- **Support** - The work of the church is important to me so I will support it.
- **Subscription** - I see myself as a member and I wish to contribute to the costs.

- **Submission** - My understanding of being a disciple is that I should put God first in my life.
- **Sacrifice** - I truly believe my Lord 'demands my life, my soul, my all'.

As we enter the season of hope and consider the altruistic sacrifice Jesus made for us, please think and pray about how we can increase our Christian, charitable giving to enable us to carry out God's mission in our community and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support and if you wish to discuss planned giving, please feel free to contact me as Church Treasurer via email: marieesandford@gmail.com



Going Deeper ... Andrew Sellwood

Hope lost and found at Easter.



Imagine the scene on that first Palm Sunday. Jesus enters Jerusalem. He arrives humbly riding a borrowed donkey. In the ancient Middle East, kings or generals rode donkeys when they came in peace, and horses when they went to war. Jesus comes in peace to the Holy city, but he is also fulfilling yet another a prophesy (Zechariah 9:9).

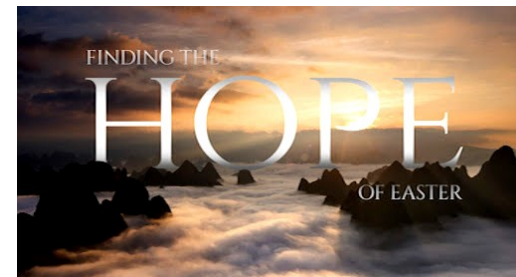
The crowd goes wild, the translation is seismic. Thousands of pilgrims have come for the Passover celebration. They put their cloaks in his path, wave palm branches and shout Hosannah! They are acknowledging Jesus as their saviour, their deliverer, the Messiah. He is going to free them from years of Roman oppression, he is their only hope. The excitement grows as they proceed up to the temple.

We move on to Good Friday a few days later. The mood of the crowd has radically changed. Why? There seems to be a misunderstanding of Jesus' Mission: many people in the crowd had different expectations of the Messiah. Some expected a political or military leader who would free them from Roman oppression, while Jesus' mission was primarily spiritual and focused on the kingdom of God. The crowd become disappointed and angry. They wanted a quick fix; hopes were now dashed. Their mood was easily manipulated by those who spread false information against Jesus. They now cry for his crucifixion. In accordance with the crowd's wishes Jesus is humiliated, crucified and buried ... dead! End of story. Hope is dead, all is lost, darkness and gloom prevail.

But we know that's not the end of the story. Three days later Jesus conquered death and rose victorious from the grave on Easter Sunday. Humanity's Hope is regained for ever, and we are all invited to share in that hope through Gods amazing grace. What is that new hope? Death and darkness are defeated. The relationship once broken between humankind is restored through Jesus.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade." 1 Peter 1:3-4a

Take a moment to listen to 'In Christ Alone (my hope is found)' by Stuart Townend & Keith Getty. Be inspired and be uplifted by those words.



Book Review ... Joy Allman

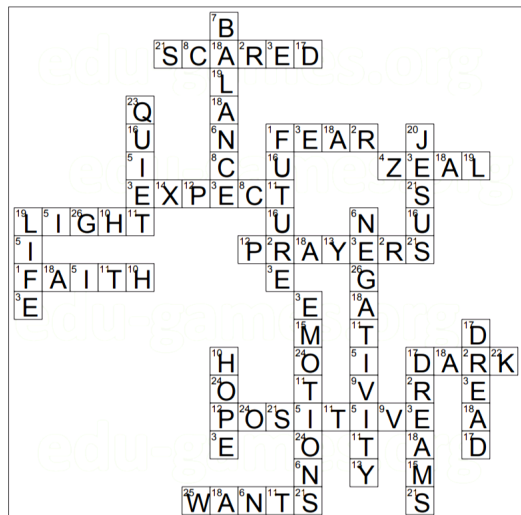


This hugely heartening book on hope will galvanise readers into looking at the world and the challenges we're facing in a new way.

It gathers together a fantastic range of lively, up-and-coming writers who are willing to dig deep. Here they write passionately about what gives them hope, in reflections including, Seeds of unity, A beautiful and messy awakening, Kingdom diplomacy across faiths, A vision for hope in politics, wild paths of peace and Hope in suffering.

Wild Bright Hope urges us not only to embrace a more hopeful perspective, but also to consider how we ourselves might play a full part in bringing in the kingdom of God.

'Hope' Codeword Puzzle Answer



Codeword answer ...

Did you get it right?

In the last issue ...

We set you a challenge to get as many words out of 'Christmas Tree' as possible.

We got over 200 - how did you do?

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St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival Winners

We had a wonderful tree festival again at the end of last year. The number of trees is increasing year on year. The competition was close, but the winners were:

Adults Category: Knit & Natter

Children's Category: Amy's House (SEND early years childcare)

Education Category: St Mary's School

A massive thank you to everyone who took part and we look forward to welcoming faces old and new to this year's festival which runs from 27th November to 1st December 2025!

St Mary's Social News ... Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

We had a musical start to the year with 'Cake & Sing' on 25th January with music from Sing Loud Be Proud Community Choir. People enjoyed cake and a wide variety of music, with songs spanning nearly a decade! A total of just over £350 was raised for church funds.

On Saturday 8th March we have a Games Afternoon with sausage rolls. There will be a range of games available to play and a raffle. Tickets are £5 and available from the church coffee bar.



Games

Afternoon

With Sausage Rolls

Saturday 8th March
3-5pm

In St Mary's Church

£5



On Sunday 13th April we have a Craft Afternoon. This will follow on from the morning service and we invite you to bring your own lunch to eat with us first. There will be crafts including iris paper folding, clay modelling and glass painting available, with a spring/Easter theme. Donations welcome.

We look forward to more social strolls once the weather improves - keep an eye on the church newsletter and Facebook for more details!

If you have any ideas for social activities, please let Elisabeth know!



**Shrove Tuesday
4th March**

**3.30pm-5pm
St. Mary's Church Hall**

Pancakes with a choice of toppings and drinks provided.

Children's Crafts and Toys
Adults & Children £1.50 each (Cash Only)
All Welcome!

Essential booking by
27th February
Text/ email
bevrettsome@hotmail.com
07973830668



An invitation to you...
**ALL AGE
MOTHERING
SUNDAY!**

**Sunday 30th March
10.15am at St Mary's**

Come and Celebrate Mothering Sunday all age family Worship. We would love to see you there.

We will make posies of flowers in thanks for our Mums, Carers and all those that Mother us!



St Mary's, Hinckley
everybody welcome



**Friday 18th April
10.30am-12.30pm**

At St Mary's Church Hall

Come and join us for Good Friday and Easter Activities in the church hall with Hot Cross Buns and drinks provided.

Bring your picnic lunch to eat at 12pm.
Donations Welcome

Booking essential please by 14th April.
bevrettsome@hotmail.com, text 07973830668

St Mary's, Hinckley
everybody welcome



An Invitation to Sunday services at St. Mary's Church Sunday at 10.15am every week.

1st Sunday of the month all age parade service a shorter service where we stay together and we welcome our uniform groups.

Sunday group during the service for children offered 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday in the month. Stories, games and craft. We learn together and have fun. Children's area for younger children open every week during the service, so parents can be part of the worship.

All welcome.

Any questions please email or text.
bevrettsome@hotmail.com, text 07973830668

**★ ROOMS ★
for rent**

The Centre has a fully functioning kitchen and a beautiful large hall recently refurbished and a private garden area. Dates and spaces are available for one off or regular groups at competitive prices.

**WE
NEED
YOU**

Your centre needs you!

We are in need of more volunteers. Particularly for one-off events at weekends and in the evenings. If you could spare a few hours please let Lisa know.



Various Christmas parties were held at the centre for the lunch club and friendship cafe.



We also entered a tree for St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival, created by the centre members.

St Francis Friendship cafe

Every Thursday
10am until 12pm

Everyone welcome

Tudor Rd, Hinckley, LE10 0EQ

Our winter term has been full of fundraising events with over £8k raised and another £8k received from grant applications. The Centre thanks everyone involved with these events: volunteers, our sponsors and all those attending and buying tickets to support the Centre. The kitchen has had an upgrade, with just a new cooker to be purchased once a relevant grant can be found. We hope you enjoy all the improvements and future events.



The 10th annual wreath making session enabled 50 people to make their own door wreath using natural materials. £1,200 was raised for the Centre through ticket sales and raffle donations from Tesco and volunteers.

Tabletop sales are run every 1st Thursday of the month during the friendship café. Free to have a table.

Free Coffee Morning Tuesday's

9.30am - 12.30pm

Free WiFi Free Toast

St Francis Community Centre
Tudor Road, LE10 0EQ

GOOD NEWS!
Community lunches have begun every Thursday 12pm-2pm. Take away offered. Donations welcome.

All enquiries, including bookings to:
Lisa Wheatley
St. Francis Community Centre,
Tudor Road, Hinckley, LE10 0EQ
Tel: 01455 617185 Centre Mobile: 07789743846
adminsfcc@stfranciscom.co.uk
Office Hours: Mon, Tue & Thurs 9am - 1pm; Wed 9am - 3pm

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*“For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
Jeremiah 29:11*