

Faith at Home for families

Activity 8 – Peace and Hope



Hello to you once again from St Mary's Church! We hope and pray that you and your family are keeping well.

We have arrived at that time in the Church's year when we count down to Christmas. No, I haven't forgotten it's only June!

We are in what the Church calls 'Ordinary Time'. My children used to call it 'the long green bit before Advent' and when we get to Advent we really *are* getting ready for Christmas!

Green for Growing

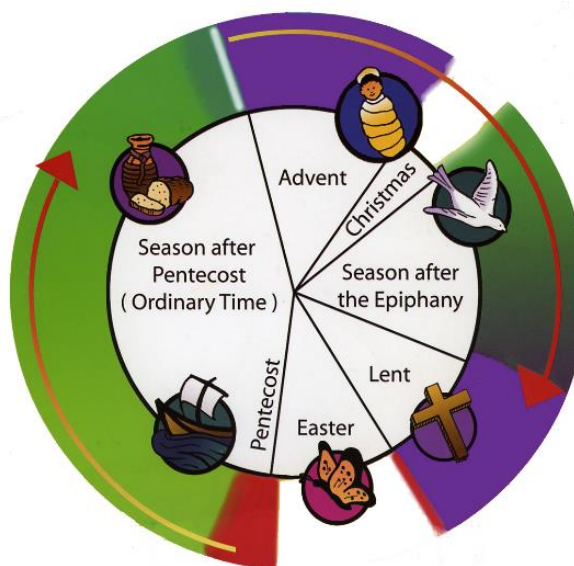
At this time of year in church the Vicar wears a green scarf, and in St Mary's there are green cloths on the brass eagle and on the pulpit.

I think of the green as a sign of growing, like seeds growing in the garden.

This 'season of growing' is a time when we can learn more about ourselves and about God.

Here is a picture of the Church's year.

- Can you see the Ordinary Time on the left...all that 'green'! This week we're just after the 'red' of Pentecost that we talked about two weeks ago.
- Have a look at the chart, do you recognise any of the seasons on it?
- I wonder which one is your favourite.



This week – God Loves Us!

The Bible story this week helps us to grow our understanding of just how wonderful God is! The reading is from Romans chapter 5 verses 1-8. You might like to read it in a Bible you have at home, or look it up online, or you can read it at the bottom of this sheet.

In these verses from the Bible, Paul, one of Jesus's friends, is telling some Christians in Rome about how God sees us.



Recently, I was out walking near Muston and I saw this field full of wildflowers.

It was really beautiful! But you know, the funny thing about wildflowers is they are really weeds!

People who like gardening often don't like it when weeds grow in a flower bed or on the allotment, but when we see them growing in a field like this, they're beautiful.

It's how you look at the flowers or weeds that makes the difference.

We're a bit like those weeds.

- we don't listen to our parents
- we don't go to bed when we're supposed to
- we talk back
- we do things we're not meant to do
- we say things we're not meant to say
- These wrong things are sin

The good news in this week's Bible story is that God doesn't stop loving us, even when we do the wrong thing.

He looks at us and he doesn't see weeds, he sees wildflowers!

God loves us while we are still making mistakes, and by believing in him, we are promised peace in our hearts and the hope of life with God forever.

So, we don't need to wait until we're perfect before we decide to follow Jesus, because if we did, we'd be waiting forever!

I wonder if you will be a weed or a wildflower this week.



Prayer Treasure Box – Idea 8

We thank God that he loves us even when we do the wrong thing

- Try and find something for your Prayer Treasure Box that reminds you about how wonderful God's love is:
- It could be something heart shaped
- Maybe you can draw a picture of some wildflowers
- Or even press a wildflower or a weed in a big book and add that to your Box (Ask a grown-up if you're allowed to pick the flower/weed and which book you can use)



A prayer you might like to say

Dear God,

we thank you for wildflowers,

and we thank you that you love us

even when we do the wrong thing.

Help us to see other people as you see them,

and to love them, as wildflowers and not as weeds.

Amen.

Other 'Peace and Hope' activities!

SOW A WILDFLOWER GARDEN

- If you have some spare soil in your garden, for about £2 you can buy a packet of wildflower seeds
- Sprinkle these in your garden and soon you will have your own patch of wildflowers that insects will love!
- Don't forget to ask a grownup if it's okay to plant the seeds

BAKE HEART SHAPED BISCUITS

- Have a baking session and make heart shaped biscuits.
- Who will you give one to?



Bible Story

Romans chapter 5 verses 1-8 Being accepted by God

By putting our trust in God we have been made right with him. And because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we have peace with God. By putting our trust in God, he has given us his grace.

We are happy because we can look forward to sharing in the glory of God. But that's not all! We are glad that we have troubles because we know that troubles help us learn patience. When we have learned to be patient, it shows we have stood the test, and that builds our character. When we have stood the test, it gives us hope. Hope never makes us disappointed because God has given us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy spirit fills our hearts with love.

Christ died for us when we were sinners and unable to help ourselves. Not many people will die to save someone else, even if that person is good.

Some people might be willing to die for a very good person. But God has shown us how much he loves us – while we were still living against him (still sinning), Jesus Christ died for us.

Some tricky words explained:

Grace is the love and mercy God gives us because he wants us to have it, not because we've done anything to earn it.

Glory represents the whole of God's nature and character and attributes that can be seen. It's a difficult word to explain! Does 'shining greatness' help?

Sinners are people who have done something that God doesn't like and sin breaks our relationship with Him. When Jesus died on the cross he fixed the broken relationship.