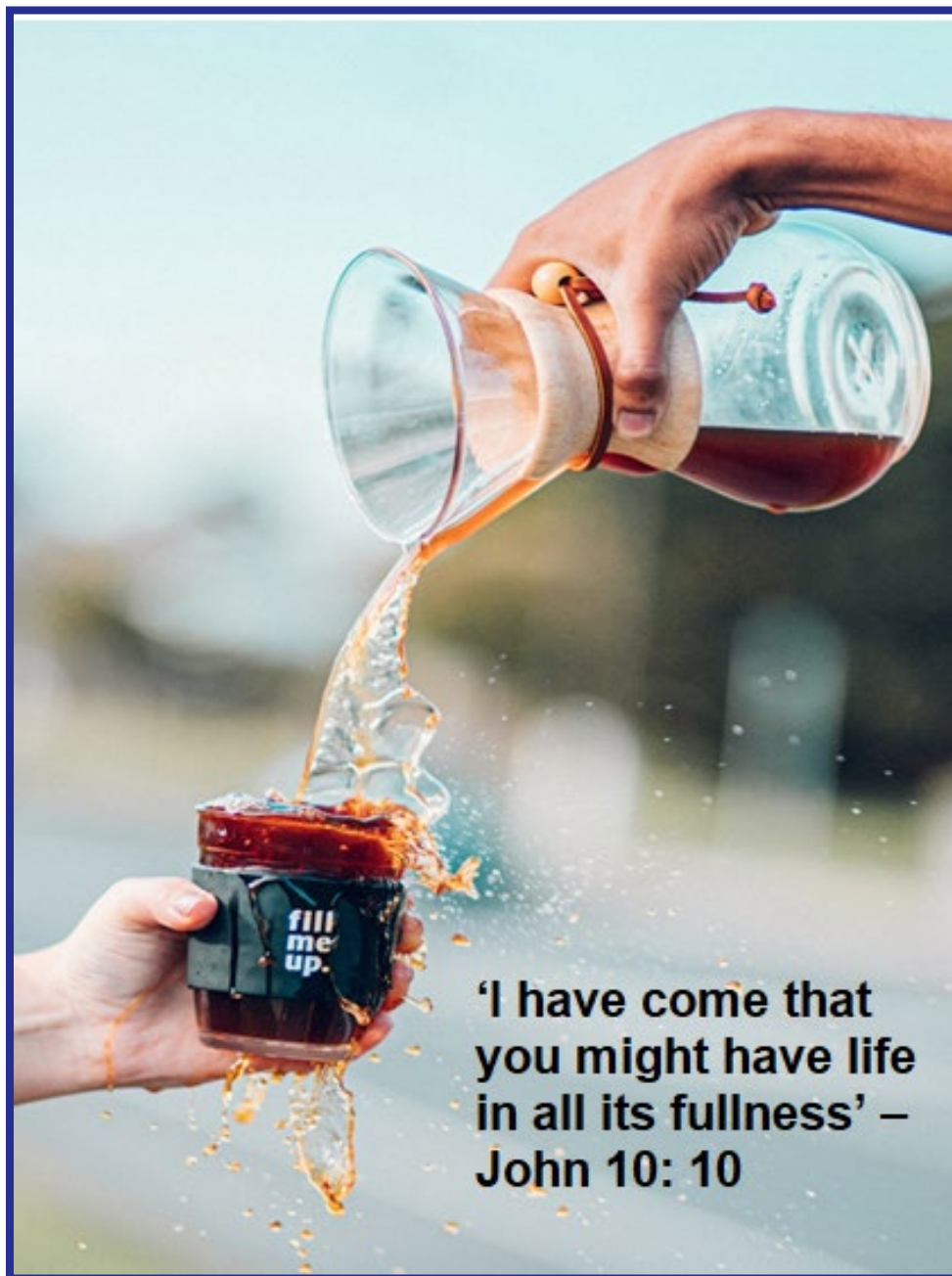


BISHOP STEPHEN'S LENT CHALLENGE 2023

'Live Life Full this Lent'



**'I have come that
you might have life
in all its fullness' –
John 10: 10**

Vision and Overview

Lent Challenge 2023 is about living as full a life as we can with the encouragement of Jesus' words in the Gospel of John – 'I have come that you might have life in all its fullness'

We will take the simple idea of a cup that can be full, half full or empty; a cup that we can fill with good or negative things; a cup that God wants to fill to overflowing so that we can have an abundant life; another person's cup that we can help to fill by our actions and words.

Join us on this challenge as we explore what makes us truly happy and how we can spread that happiness to others.

Our aims and thoughts

Now more than ever, we face challenges in coping with the world we live in. It can often seem a negative, lonely and fearful place and our cups can often be empty. We have little left to give and we find ourselves feeling unhappy and empty.

We know it is really important to look after our minds and mental health so that we don't become empty. This Lent season we are asking all staff and children to take part in *Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge* and learn how God can enable us to live life in all its fullness.

The bible is full of times when people were exhausted, burdened and felt like they had reached the end of what they could do. Time and again, God refreshes them and gives them renewed energies to cope with the next part of life. Jesus, also, needed to look after himself so that he could face the huge demands on him.

A refreshed person with a full, or nearly full cup, has plenty to give to others and it is in this place that we can give of our best to our schools, our communities and our world.

This year, we're excited to hear and see from you and the children in your classes and schools. Get reflective and then get creative, with videos, podcasts, songs, written work, and drawings too. I am sure that you will have an overflowing cup full of things to share.

Reverend Mandy Flaherty – Development Officer for Schools Mission

Message from Bishop Stephen and Bishop Dagmar

Dear Friends,

Jesus' promise that he has come so that we can have 'life in all its fullness' is a foundational part of our Christian life. We may think that Lent is a season of the year where we deny ourselves and suffer some hardship so that we may empathise with others less fortunate than ourselves. More fully, Lent is a season where we inwardly reflect on what makes us fulfilled human beings, how God has shaped and made us so that we can live full lives and give out to others. However, in order to be able to give out to others and be a society where there is mutual support, compassion and love between people, we first of all need to learn how best to care for ourselves and allow God to transform us so that we can give to others out of the abundance that God has given us.

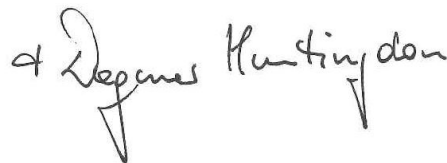
Jesus tells us that the first commandment is to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind' and that the second commandment once we have done that is to 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself'. The focus is Love God first, love yourself and love your neighbour. In loving God, He teaches us how to love ourselves and then we can love others. God wants us to know and experience how valuable, loved and protected we are and in turn we can give that to others. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the man was helped by another man who was self-confident, well balanced and self-assured. He knew what to do, he was not afraid, and he had bags of compassion! This was a man who knew his own worth as a human being and he was able to help others because he knew the value of life.

This Lent, we encourage you to explore Jesus' offer to bring 'life in all its fullness' and what that means for you. Then, being strengthened and protected by God, go out and be good neighbours to others, demonstrating God's love to all.

May God transform us with his loving protection this Lent.



Bishop Stephen



Bishop Dagmar

Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge 2023: Collective Worship Ideas – 'Live Life Full this Lent' – My Imaginary Cup

Focus for the Lent Challenge – a note for teachers

This year's Lent Challenge is all about discovering what it means to have a full life which is happy and rewarding. To do that, we are asking our children to look after themselves and to look after others so that all may be a little bit happier as a result. A wider reflection is to look at how some of our well known charities work to make people's lives happier.

Before you embark on the Challenge itself, you may wish to do some preliminary work in RE lessons or other parts of the curriculum on the following charities and projects which all embrace this theme of looking after people and offering help to make people's lives better. These first three are all recognized through different parts of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource and will be familiar to teachers and children.



World Vision has a long history of taking action that transforms the world. Our focus is on helping the most vulnerable children, in the most difficult places, overcome poverty and experience **fullness of life**. Together, with supporters like you, we've helped millions of children and families out of poverty and we are often first on the ground when a crisis strikes.

Taken from their website – www.worldvision.org.uk

Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can **live a full life**, free from poverty.

Look them up on their website www.christianaid.org.uk



The Salvation Army is a worldwide evangelical Christian church. Our mission is based on our faith in Jesus Christ who wants everyone to experience **life in all its fullness**.

Their website is www.salvationarmy.org.uk

In addition, the following organisations have similar purposes and are worth knowing about as tools for the Challenge. They do not have a specific Christian foundation, but they share the similar purpose of helping to make people's lives better. However, please be aware that some of these organisations specifically try to help people who are suicidal and it may not be appropriate to discuss this with very young children.

The Samaritans



www.samaritans.org

Shout Text Service



www.giveusashout.org

Content

Included with this pack are:

- Ideas for Collective Worship and school activities over four - six weeks in Lent. These are for initial support and ideas. We hope each school will develop their own creative ideas.
- Prayers to encourage living a full life
- Resources and materials to extend learning in RE lessons
- Contacts for further information

Children's Work

We invite schools to send materials produced by the children to the diocese in electronic format. We are really looking forward to seeing how creative our children can be. And it couldn't be easier for you to share!

Simply send content to share to mandy.flaherty@elydiocese.org

In 2023 we have created a page on our website for all materials produced from our schools, found via our Schools pages on the Diocese of Ely website:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/schools/>

We would love to have uplifting and inspiring work on how to live truly full lives which can be shared widely with others. We'll be sharing everything with Ely Cathedral, Church Schools of Cambridge and the Diocese of Ely Education, Mission & Ministry Team. And we're sure parents and carers will love to see all your hard work – so please share on your school websites too.

Ideas for Collective Worship and Activities

We're excited to bring you four – six weeks (you decide when and how long you want to run the Challenge for) of lesson inspiration, classroom and whole school activities and Acts of Worship.

Please be encouraged to use these however works best for your class/school.

There is a suggested Act of Worship, plus ideas for classroom and whole school activities too. These are intended as a guide; you are the best people to work out ideas for your own school, and we know the children will have lots of ideas too.

We're also conscious that this theme of 'Life in all its fullness' dovetails well into schools' work on mental health and wellbeing. Please feel free to adapt and use across the curriculum – whether focused on Christian content or not.

This is a framework which can be copied and pasted into teachers' own methods and IT systems. The document is a Diocese of Ely document and all we ask is, that if it is used elsewhere reference is made to The Diocese of Ely.

In order to fill your cup every day you need to learn about the things you need to make you feel good and recognize who in your life fills your cup. This will also help you to learn to recognize and be more able to help others whose cups might need filling. However, it can be hard to constantly fill up your cup. Life throws challenges at us and that takes some of goodness out of our cup. It is important to learn what stops your cup filling and think of ways to replace what is lost. We need to learn to be good neighbours and help to fill not empty other people's cups too.

God wants us to listen to Jesus and follow him. God wants each person to flourish, to have their cups full and offers guidance through Jesus to help us to live our life in all its fullness. Next week we will learn a story told by Jesus to help us understand that more.

Respond

Questions:

- How can we do fill our own cups?
- How can we fill the cups of those close to us?
- How can we help fill the cups of those further away from?
- What do we need to have to start filling our cups?
- What do you think Jesus means when he says we should live our life to all its fullness?

Songs for Choral Worship Suggestion:

- One Way Jesus – Hillsong Kids
- This is amazing grace – Bethel Music Kids
- We are ready – Watoto Children's Choir
- Waymaker- Allstars Kids Worship
- I wanna do right – Jana Alayra

Prayer:

Dear Lord,
 Help us to learn how important it is to start our day by filling our cup with sleep, food and drink. Help us to learn how to support others and help them to live their life in its fullness. Help us to listen, be guided by Jesus' teachings and remember that it is OK to ask for help when we need it. Amen

Sending

Message:

We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world, to celebrate and fill each other's cup so we can all live life in all its fullness.

WEEK TWO – GOD SHEPHERDS US

Scripture Focus: 1 Samuel 16:10-14, Psalm

Key words: abundance, abundantly, fullness, fullest, fully

Gathering	<p>Song suggestion for entry: Life Song, Casting Crowns</p>
	<p>Welcome and response: Jesus came into the world, So, we can live life in all in its fullness.</p>
Engaging	<p>The Bible tells us many stories about God’s people. Today I will give you clues about a group of people talked about throughout the Old and New Testament. Put your hand up as soon as you think you know the answer to my clues. Ask a few children to come out and write down what they think on post-it notes.</p> <p>I work outdoors, all day and all night. I am very protective about those I work with. I have to watch for predators. I have to sometimes fight or kill to protect others. The young are most precious. If I lose one, I must find them. Those I watch, know how I sound, they know my voice. Those I watch, follow where I lead them - to good pastures and clean water. In Luke’s gospel, when Jesus was born, angels visited us. The ones I watch over are known as ‘flocks’ That’s right – SHEPHERDS</p>
	<p>In the Old Testament, there is a story about a shepherd boy who became a famous King. A King who ruled in the Old Testament times and was still talked about and remembered in the New Testament. Can anyone think of who that might be?</p> <p>Play this video clip about King David: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPCDIKQazAc David had a heart like God’s heart which was full of love. God promised him that one day a King would be born in his family who would heal the whole world. David wrote a Psalm (song) called ‘The Song of the Shepherd’ and it teaches Christians about how God is like a shepherd and mankind are God’s sheep. We are God’s flock of sheep – we turn to Him to guide us, look after us and to give us everything we need.</p>



	<p>Ask a group of children to gather together – these are your sheep (give them masks if you can prepare them). Ask more children to gather around the outside of a gym mat to create a wall but leaving a space wider enough to create a doorway. Choose a confident child to be your shepherd (dress up if possible). Explain to the children how in Biblical times, shepherds would sleep outside with their sheep to keep them safe from predators like wolves or bears. At night they would gather their sheep and upon hearing their shepherd’s voice calling they would follow him wherever he went. The shepherd would lead them to a sheepfold (move the children to the mat) and then lay down to sleep over the entrance to protect their sheep. If a predator arrived the shepherd would wake and kill the predator or be killed himself protecting his flock. Shepherds would call their sheep and they knew their master’s voice, he kept them safe and protected. They knew that in the morning the shepherd would lead them to pastures new – good and fresh.</p>
Respond	<p>This was the understanding in the Old Testament about God, the Father. Christians believe that they are always protected by God because He knows where they are (like a good shepherd), he keeps them safe and he rescue them in danger.</p>
	<p>Questions: I wonder... Whose voice do we need to know? To follow? Who would be the good shepherd, the greatest shepherd ever in David’s Psalm? Who would lead all of God’s lambs back to where they should be, in God’s love?</p>
	<p>Song for Choral Worship Suggestion: I just wanna be sheep – Happy Puppets The Baa Baa Song – Sibling Harmony</p>
	<p>Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you for being my shepherd, my leader and protector. I put my trust in you and I know you give me all I need. You give me the promise of Heaven and your goodness fills my cup. Amen</p>
Sending	<p style="text-align: center;">Message: We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world, we all leave with God’s blessing.</p> <p>Song for exit: The Lord’s My Shepherd (Psalm 23) by We Are Worship Lyrics & Chords</p>

WEEK THREE – I AM THE DOOR

Scripture Focus: John 10:10 '**That I came**'

Key words: abundance, abundantly, fullness, fullest, fully

Gathering	<p>Song suggestion for entry/exit: The Lord's My Shepherd</p>
	<p>Welcome and response: Jesus came into the world, So, we can live life in all in its fullness.</p>
Engaging	<p>What does a good shepherd do? (Reflect on last week) How do sheep know their shepherd? How did a shepherd protect his sheep at night from predators? Show the children the Bible Scripture: <u>Jesus said "I tell you the truth. I am the door for the sheep." John 10:7 (ICB).</u> Read John chapter 10 to the children – ICB or Message version is more accessible to children.</p> <p>Jesus gathered his followers and told them he was the good shepherd, who would not only keep them safe, guide and protect them, he was also the door who was prepared to sacrifice his life to help them to return to God's love. Jesus teaches his followers that he is the way to life – a reunited life with God. He tells his followers not to believe anyone else that claims to be the way to life (thieves in the story). Jesus teaches how mankind are like sheep, wandering around needing guidance. We need to trust Jesus to be our shepherd. We need to learn to listen for Jesus' voice through our actions and prayers.</p>
	<p><u>Lost sheep hide and seek</u> Gather a group of children to stand in a circle – these are the sheep (use masks if you still have them). Ask one child to wear a blindfold as they will be the shepherd. Choose one sheep to make a baa-baa sound. Ask the 'shepherd' to listen carefully and try to guess which child made the baa-baa sound. Then ask the shepherd to remove his mask. Get the sheep to close their eyes. Get the shepherd to move around the outside of the circle, call 'sheep' and ask them to point in the direction of the shepherd.</p> <p>Remind the children about Jesus' message in John's gospel about how he is like the shepherd and mankind are the sheep. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qPP0SgxAvw You can watch this clip to enhance your teaching.</p>
Respond	<p>Questions: How is Jesus like a good shepherd? How does knowing Jesus help Christians to follow him? How does a good shepherd show love for his flock? How does the good shepherd give his life for the sheep?</p>



	<p>Song for Choral Worship Suggestion: I just wanna be sheep – Happy Puppets</p> <p>The Baa Baa Song – Sibling Harmony</p>
	<p>Prayer: Dear Lord, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and staff they comfort me and keep me safe. Jesus you are the good shepherd, watch over us today in our learning and play. Stay with us all day and help us to fill our cups. Amen</p>
<p>Sending</p>	<p>Message: We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world, to celebrate and fill each other's cup so we can all live life in all its fullness.</p>

WEEK FOUR – LOOKING OUT FOR OTHERS

Scripture Focus: John 10:10 **'All in it fullness'** Matthew 22: 39 **'Love your neighbour as yourself'**

Key words: abundance, abundantly, fullness, fullest, fully

Gathering	<p>Song suggestion for entry/exit: Happy by Pharrell Williams</p>
	<p>Welcome and response: Jesus came into the world, So, we can live life in all in its fullness.</p>
Engaging	<p>Jesus wanted his followers to find happiness, to help those in need and fix their relationship with God. He wanted people to live life in all its fullness, to love themselves and those around them, with God by their side. In order to do that, we must learn how to be happy and to look after ourselves so we can help those around us in our community and the wider world. Self-care is one way to create personal happiness, it helps to fill own cup and then we can help others. Use your cup from week 1 – fill it up with the ways you self-care. Invite the children to think of ways they could look after themselves – create a Google jam-board to collate the ways that children suggest (see appendix for more ideas). The Google jam-board can be added in the classrooms after CW too, use this to create a display in school about ways children can fill their invisible cup.</p>
	<p>The best thing about looking after ourselves is it means we can help others (your neighbours) to find happiness too. We can spot those who need time to find calmness and be happier. What ways do you think we can help others to be fulfilled? Play a game of 'I spy' to look for ways to know that someone is not happy. Then think of ways to help fill their cup – for example if someone is crying – ask how you can help and give them a tissue. If someone is grumpy – offer to give them a hug or hold their hand. If someone has done badly in a test – offer to help them with that subject so they do better next time. If someone has stopped playing with you – offer to play something new or ask how you can help them. We need to learn to love our neighbours, this includes people we might not speak to regularly or someone not even in our class.</p>
Respond	<p>Jesus wanted us to know that God looks after us and protects us. Christians believe that God wants each person to flourish individually and in the community. He promises to guide and help us in times of need – like a shepherd who looks after his sheep. But the sheep have to listen and make sure they are the best they can be. This starts by supporting children to look after themselves, then helping others. Humans are meant to be together, to work together, to be a community and in order for harmony we have to help look after one another – this is the greatest commandment.</p> <p>Ask the children to create a 'One Thing Promise' during prayer time to think of ways to help others to live a life that is fulfilled. How will they notice? How will they offer help? What would they do to self-care? How can we hold human contact?</p>



Questions:

How can I self care and fill my cup?
How can I help others to fill their cup?
When your cup is full – who do you help?
Who would you share your full cup with?

Song for Choral Worship Suggestion:

This is amazing grace – Phil Wickman
One of a kind – Vineyard Kids
Feels good – Rend Co Kids

God, You're good to me – Vineyard Kids
I'm gonna jump up and down – Bob Horley

Prayer:

Dear God,
Please can you watch over these wonderfully and uniquely made children. May you share with them your happiness and love. Help them to learn to recognize in others when help is needed and support them to make others happy. Please hear their voices as they silently tell you how they will others ... (pause for reflection). Amen

Sending

Message:

We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world, to discover happiness for ourselves and to become good neighbours in God's world.

Song for Exit: Can't stop the feeling – Trolls animation film.

WEEK FIVE – JESUS AND SELF CARE

Scripture Focus: John 10:10 'That I came to give you life' Matthew 22: 39 'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Key words: abundance, abundantly, fullness, fullest, fully

Gathering	<p>Song suggestion for entry/exit:</p>
	<p>Welcome and response: Jesus came into the world, So, we can live life in all in its fullness.</p>
Engaging	<p>Jesus wanted to make a difference to other people's lives but he also made sure that he looked after himself and those people close to him. Today we will look at different times the gospels teach us about Jesus' self-care and how he supported to others to fill their cup up too. <i>(choose some of these bible passages to help the children learn about how Jesus looked after himself)</i></p> <p><u>Matthew 14: 22-23</u> Jesus recognized the people who had listened to his sermon were hungry and so performed a miracle with 2 fish and 5 loaves to ensure they were all fed well. After this miracle, he asks his disciples to go out on a boat, he says goodbye to all of the followers and then goes up a mountainside to pray. He takes time to be alone, to reflect and to pray.</p> <p><u>Luke 6:12-13</u> Jesus spends time thinking about who would become one of his special followers. Again, he spends all night praying and reflecting before choosing and making the major decision of the 12 disciples. He surrounds himself with good people who believe in him and support him when making miracles happen. He builds a community to surround him with good things for his cup.</p> <p><u>Mark 6: 30-32</u> Jesus' disciples come to him to share their news about all of the things they had said and done. They did not have time to eat so Jesus takes them aside, offers them a quiet place, to rest and eat. This is a good thing to do – to recognize and celebrate other's achievements but also knowing their basic needs needed to met too.</p> <p><u>Mark 7:24</u> Jesus takes himself away from the crowd, to stay in a friend's house for some solitude. He takes time to refuel, to reflect and to find some peace. Once he has done this, he is ready to help others once more.</p> <p><u>Luke 22:41</u> Before the arrival of Judas, Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray because he is terrified of the pain and humiliation that he knew he would be facing over the coming days towards his death. It is sometimes a good thing to remove yourself from a situation, to seek guidance and to speak to someone about your fears.</p>



Exodus 20:8-11

God made one of the Commandments a day of rest. A day when no man, woman, child or animal should work, instead they should honour the Lord and rest as God did on day 7.

John 6:11

Jesus spends time to give thanks for what he has. Before eating, he gives thanks to God for the food they will eat (bread – which is still used during Communion when thanks is given again for the sacrifice Jesus made).

Jesus understood in order for him to help others he had to look after himself too. He took time out away from others when he needed it. He surrounded himself with good friends (some who become disciples) and good people. He supported those who were ill or mentally struggling with life – he touched them and healed them. He would make sure that people he was with had their basic needs met, offering food and opportunities to rest. He found strength through prayer and reflection, thanking God or asking for help when he needed it the most. Perhaps we could all take notice of the greatest teacher about how important it is to recognize when your own cup needs filling in order to support others when they need it the most.

Questions:

How does Jesus self care?

When do you think his cup was the fullest?

Do you think we should all have a mandatory rest day? In the past, no shops were open on a Sunday – should this happen again?

How well do you think Jesus looked after himself?

Song for Choral Worship Suggestion:

Lord I lift Your name on high – Worship Lyric Videos
Excited – Hillsong Kids

What a beautiful name – Hillsong Worship
Beat of your love – Watoto Children’s Choir

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

Help me to learn from Jesus’ example of self-care. Help me to meet my basic needs, find time for reflection and my thoughts, surround me with good people who will help me to be the best I can be and support me to help others like Jesus did.

Amen

Message:

At the end, invite the children to reflect on these questions

How can I self-care like Jesus?

Which strategy do you think would best help you to look after yourself?

Respond

Sending

WEEK SIX – LIVING A FULL LIFE

Scripture Focus: John 10:10 **'That I came to give you life'** Matthew 22: 39 **'Love your neighbour as yourself'**

Key words: abundance, abundantly, fullness, fullest, fully

Gathering	Song suggestion for entry/exit: Don't Worry mashup – Young Voices
	Welcome and response: Jesus came into the world, So, we can live life in all in its fullness.
Engaging	<p>Jesus wanted his followers to work, live and love one another. This is one of Jesus' Greatest Commandments- To love your neighbours. Watch the video clip https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rH2jyYG2isE – it is short reflection of what it means to be fulfilled by Jesus – blessed, personal growth, makes the world more colourful, real, challenged, rewarded, you have a purpose and you get strength. Christians would say that having Jesus in your life makes you feel fulfilled and they have a responsibility to help those who are not fulfilled or unhappy in the world.</p> <p>A 'charity' is an organization that offers support to people who need help. Not all charities are Christians but most work with the concept of 'loving your neighbour' and helping people to live a fulfilled life. Choose a charity to focus on and discuss with the children what they do and help they help others. Christian Aid, Salvation Army, World Vision are all Christian based charities who aim to help others to live a 'fulfilled life'. The Headlight Project, Samaritans and Shout are not Christian based charities however their focus is to help others to live a 'fulfilled life' through developing a better mental health. You could ask for food donations and Easter eggs to give to the local foodbank to support families during the Easter holidays – helping others to have a 'fulfilled life' by meeting those one of those basic needs – to have food. If you have a school charity who you help already – reflect as a school about how you are following Jesus and helping others to have a 'fulfilled life'.</p> <p>Consider inviting a representative from the focus charity to talk to the children about what they do and how they make a difference.</p>
	Respond
<p>Questions: How can I help others to flourish in my community and beyond? What can I do to make a difference? How am I a good neighbour?</p>	



	<p>Song for Choral Worship Suggestion: The Greatest Commandment – Hillsong Kids Junior Love your neighbour – Yancy not Nancy As One - Out of the ark Together – Out of the ark Give it all you've got – Lyrics for School</p>
	<p>Prayer: Dear Lord, Let Your love fill this nation and give us the heart to help others who need help to feel fulfilled. Fill us with the glory of Your name and lend us Your hand to guide us in the way You want us to live. Help us to sing Your praises and let Your kingdom come to Earth for all to live in happiness. Amen</p>
Sending	<p>Watch this song: Love your neighbour as yourself - Lucas Gervásio https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIA7J6r5xE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Message:</p> <p>At the end, invite the children to reflect on these questions How can we spread happiness? How can I help others to fill their cup?</p> <p>Create your own 'Life in all its fullness' video – starring your children to explain what they have learnt from Bishop Stephen's Challenge 2023</p>

Self-Care for Children Examples

- Read a book
- Have a bath
- Practice some yoga
- Mindfulness colouring
- Listen to meditation music
- Do some exercise
- Be creative – painting
- Play with some toys
- Look at photos of happy memories
- Make friendship bracelets
- Listen to music and dance
- Bike ride
- Fly a kite
- Write in a journal
- Think about what makes you happy
- Write a list of things you are grateful for
- Do some gardening
- Watch a film
- Go on a nature walk
- Play a family game
- Have a picnic
- Make tea and cakes to share
- Enjoy a hot chocolate
- Cook a meal as a family
- Cuddle your family
- Stroke your pet
- Share a story
- Try a new hobby
- Do a puzzle
- Fidget toys
- Hug a teddy
- Breathing techniques
- Play with some kinetic sand
- Build with some blocks
- Watch your favourite TV show
- Make a healthy snack