

Hi again Sunday School.

I hope you're well. These have been a couple of tricky weeks, haven't they? We're coping with the 'new normal' that Corona Virus has forced on us and hoping a 'new normal' comes about because all of the powerful protests and discussions that are happening as a part of the Black Lives Matter movement. Keep strong guys, and remember, only 5 more weeks until the Summer holidays.

As always, do remember that Mother Juliet and I are here for you if you need to contact us. You can find contact information on the St Swithun's website or you can find us on the Sunday School WhatsApp group. You know we love hearing from you!

Today we are thinking about 'hope' – really important in these strange times. If you look back at the first paragraph of what's written here, you can see I've used the words 'hope' ('I hope you're well') and 'hoping' ('hoping for a new normal'). It's a word we use so much in our everyday lives, but what does it mean for us as Christians?

In today's reading from Romans, we are told that

'... hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.'

Paul is explaining that God loves us so much that he has poured his love into us as the Holy Spirit. With the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in us we are reminded that whatever happens, God's got our back – and that makes us powerful. Powerful to make a stand, make a difference, and keep on going with hope in our hearts.

Some of you might have seen on Facebook, or heard from Mother Juliet that the Black Lives Matter posters her family have put up outside the Vicarage are being ripped down.

In today's Gospel reading. Jesus is talking to his disciples about how they should go out into the world to share the message of Christianity. He knows that they will come across people who will not listen to their message. In that situation, he doesn't tell them to use violence to get their point across, nor does he say 'Give up hope when you come across people who won't listen and don't bother trying to get the message to anyone any more'. What he says is:

'let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.'

Jesus is telling the Disciples to peacefully protest. That's what will make a difference. He knows that with hope inside them they can return to a place of peace and continue sharing their message. That's what Mother Juliet and her family are doing every time they replace a Black Lives Matter poster that has been torn down from outside the Vicarage – sharing the hope we have through Jesus, shaking the dust off, sweeping up the scraps of ripped paper and proving that hope, peace and love make us powerful.

I'm sending you all loads of love with this message.

I've added some resources for you on the next pages.

May God keep you safe and healthy and happy.

Amen

O	O	N	I	O	L	O	N	O	E	Q	J	Y	O	R
D	P	L	O	L	A	O	E	P	C	L	N	T	P	T
Q	I	P	U	I	I	G	O	H	I	D	Q	N	T	H
X	V	K	O	T	T	H	Q	E	M	J	P	I	I	G
I	F	R	I	R	U	N	K	R	A	C	O	A	M	J
M	V	B	E	I	T	F	E	N	D	B	S	T	I	F
B	M	M	R	L	J	U	W	T	R	M	S	R	S	Y
A	R	S	Y	H	I	D	N	I	N	P	I	E	M	F
M	A	E	R	D	E	A	G	I	S	I	B	C	H	P
Y	F	J	S	S	C	H	N	M	T	H	I	L	T	L
F	A	N	I	A	T	O	T	C	U	Y	L	Z	I	A
S	U	R	E	N	E	S	S	S	E	P	I	E	A	N
E	E	G	E	G	O	A	L	N	U	H	T	Q	F	Z
P	P	S	Z	I	S	B	O	A	H	R	Y	O	R	G
K	S	G	S	N	U	H	T	I	W	S	T	S	W	W

AMBITION

DESIRE

GOAL

OPPORTUNITY

POSSIBILITY

TRUST

BRIGHTNESS

DREAM

HOPE

OPTIMISM

RELIANCE

WISH

CERTAINTY

FAITH

INTENTION

PLAN

SURENESS

See how many of these different words for ‘hope’ you can find in the wordsearch.

(If you look really carefully, you’ll see that I’ve hidden St. Swithuns in there too! Tell me if you find it!)

Can you find a quote about what hope means to you? Or create an acrostic poem using the word hope?

Write what you find or create here.....

HOPE

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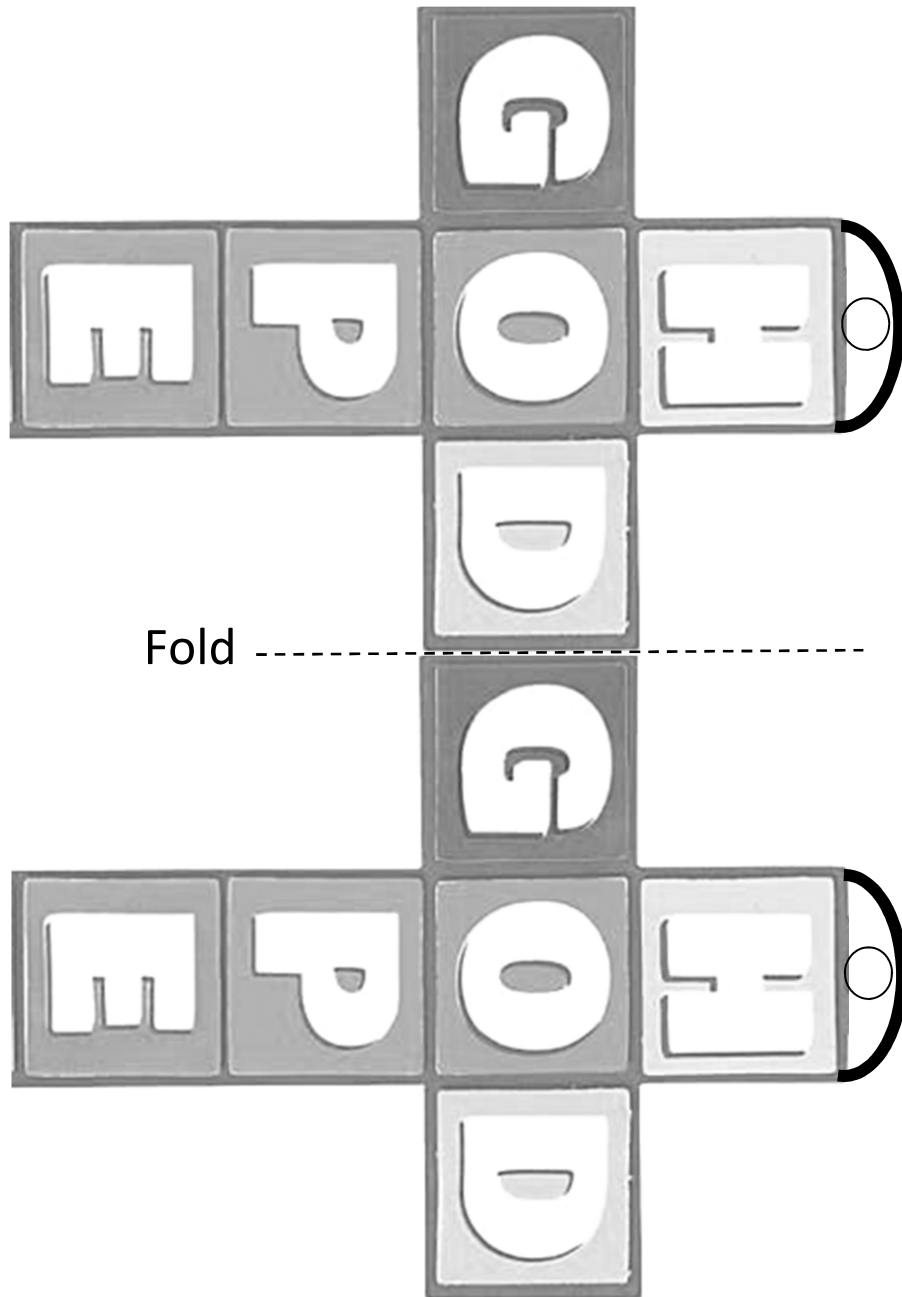
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Having faith in
Our heavenly father
People show their
Enduring unconditional love

"You may not always have a comfortable life, and you will not always be able to solve all of the world's problems at once, but don't ever underestimate the importance you can have. Because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own,"

Michelle Obama



Fold -----



Add some colour to this cross and then cut around the outside and fold along the dotted line so you have a cross you can hang up at home. I made it double-sided so you can put it in a window if you want.