

## Junior Church at home for May 2022: Hope for the future

**“God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” Revelation 7:17**



### Readings for the Month

- 1 May Easter 3: **Catching on** (John 21.1-19)
- 8 May Easter 4: **Perseverance** (Revelation 7.9-17)
- 15 May Easter 5: **What next?** (Revelation 21.1-6)
- 22 May Easter 6: **All shall be well** (Revelation 21.10,21.22-22.5)
- 29 May Easter 7: **Coming soon...** (Revelation 22.12-14,16-17,20-21)

In this month's first reading, Jesus gives Peter renewed hope and a second chance, after he denied Jesus before the crucifixion. We then read about John's vision in Revelation. We are reminded of Jesus the Shepherd, who guides us through life's troubles. We're then shown how God will make everything new, a story of excitement and hope. We see John's vision of healing for the world, and of hope for all creation; and finally we are reminded and reassured that we belong to Jesus, and that Jesus is coming soon.

### **Bible story: Jesus appears to the disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 12: 1-8)**

Simon Peter and the disciples were fishing in the Sea of Galilee. They worked all night but didn't catch a single fish. Just after dawn, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples didn't know it was him. He told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. When they did that, it filled with so many fish that it was too heavy to lift, and they realised the man was Jesus.

Jesus called the disciples to shore to have breakfast with him. This was the third time the risen Jesus had appeared to the disciples.

When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter three times, "do you love me?". Simon replied yes, each time. This mirrors what happened before Jesus was crucified, when Simon Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, as Jesus had said he would. Jesus asks Simon Peter to look after his sheep, and then says, "follow me".



### **I wonder?**

- The disciples were experienced fishermen, and had been working all night. They must have been a bit frustrated to be told "just try the other side of the boat!" I wonder what made them try it anyway?
- Why were the disciples suddenly so sure that the man on the shore was Jesus?
- How did Simon Peter feel before the crucifixion, when the cock crowed and he realised he had denied Jesus three times? And how did he feel in this story, when Jesus asked three times, "do you love me?"

- Jesus wants the disciples to feed and take care of his sheep. He's not actually talking about farm animals – what is he asking them to do?



### **Creative Activity:** Small changes

Jesus isn't asking us to change huge things all at once. Even a little change – fishing on the other side of the boat – made a big difference to the disciples. We can all make little changes to make the world a better place. One way to protect our planet is to make homemade wrapping paper instead of buying it new.

**You will need:** raw potatoes, a small knife (and an adult!), paint, packing paper (take it out of a parcel and smooth it out) or newspaper

- Cut a potato in half and draw a simple shape (like a star or a heart) on the cut side
- Cut away the outsides of the potato – carefully – to make a stamp
- Use paint or ink pads and your potato stamp to design your wrapping paper

What other small changes could you make at home to protect the planet?



### **Creative Activity:** Perseverance

Not everything we do in life is easy. Sometimes we have to try and try and try again before something works. It can be really frustrating to fail over and over, but we are always learning and when we achieve something we've worked hard at we can be really proud.

**You will need:** A table, cup or bowl, a ping pong ball or bouncy ball

- Put the cup or bowl in the middle of the table
- Try to bounce the ball into the cup
- How many goes did it take you to get it in? Once you did it once, did it get easier? How many times in a row can you manage?

Jesus is with us when we're happy and when we're sad, when life is easy and when it is hard. We will all encounter problems much bigger than bouncing a ball into a cup. But we can always ask Jesus for help, we never have to persevere alone.



### **Prayer Activity:** Tasty prayer

In John's vision, the nations of the world bring honour and glory into the new Jerusalem. One way that we share our cultures between nations is through food. When you eat this week, take a moment to think about – or to find out – where your food comes from. Pray for the nations that provide your food, giving thanks for the good things and asking for healing where there is hurt or suffering.

You could also choose a country to pray for, and find a recipe from that country to make at home.



## Prayer

God of all history,  
who was, and is and is to come,  
thank you that you are here with us today.  
Amen.



## For the month

John's vision tells of a new Jerusalem, of a hopeful world healed and made whole. But our task is not just to sit and wait for that to happen, and for Jesus to lead us there. We pray: "Your kingdom come"; our task is to rebuild the city where we are today, making the kingdom come everywhere and for everyone.

### Talk with your family: Imagining a new Jerusalem

- What would a new Jerusalem look like and feel like? You could make a model or draw a picture or use Lego to develop your ideas.
- What can you do to make your home, or your school, feel more like the new Jerusalem? What needs rebuilding?
- The kingdom that Jesus describes invites everyone in. What does it feel like to be excluded or not invited and welcomed? Are there situations in your life when you could be more inclusive or welcoming?

### Talk to God: Reflect about journeying to the future

**You will need:** a finger labyrinth (link [here](#)), any maze from a puzzle book, or a maze or map that you've drawn yourself

- Take your finger on a slow walk round the pattern to the centre.
- Think about where you are journeying to in the future, and how God is with you on that journey.
  - What do you hope will be 'next' for you?
  - Is it always easy to remember that God will be with us wherever we may go in the future?
  - How can you remind yourself that God is with you, especially when things get tough?

**Have a great month, enjoy the Bank Holidays, and we hope to see you at Junior Church soon!**