

St Martin of Tours
Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs
Langley Vale

The parish of
St Martin of Tours
with St Stephen-on-the-Downs

Weekly Newsletter
Registered Charity Number: 1134149

Sunday 14th March 2021 – Mothering Sunday

Dear Friends,

Today asks us to focus on the Blessed Virgin Mary as the mother of Christ. A young woman who displayed enormous trust in the Word of God and courage to see through the consequences of obeying it. At St Martin's we have a talk about the work of The Children's Society and their work with young people. Scripture paints a picture of Mary as a humble young person from a simple family who faces challenges regarding her pregnancy, who found support from a faithful partner and kindness from others and matured into a strong woman who faced tragedy in her life. It is the work of the Society to support young people struggling with their circumstances and help them to maturity in safety. Pray for their work, and thank God for the example of Mary. **Nick Parish**

THIS WEEK

Sunday 14th March – Mothering Sunday

9.30am – No Service

10.00am – Service of the Word at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish with a talk from The Children's Society

6.30pm – Holy Communion – online only, led by David Candlin

Wednesday 17th March

10-11am Individual prayer at St Stephen's

7.00pm Lent Study: Adrian Esdaile speaks on
'Getting Older: The meditations of a caterpillar'

Thursday 18th March

10.00am – Holy Communion, in Church and live streamed – led by Andris Abakuks

To join us from home for our services, go to our website and click on the link.
www.stmartinsepsom.org

FUTURE SERVICES

Sunday 21st March – Mothering Sunday

9.30am – No Service

10.00am – Holy Communion Service at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by David Candlin

6.30pm – Evening Prayer – online only, led by Martyn Holloway-Neville

DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS

Contemplative Prayer Group

I send out notes for the Group each month – let me know if you would like to receive them either by email or by post.

The Workshops on Contemplative Prayer, hosted by Revd Christopher Hancock in the Parish of Headley and Boxhill, will continue. The next one is scheduled for the 18th March at 8pm. Anyone is welcome to join in by zoom. go to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82217687907>.

Adrian Esdaile

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER PLANS **UPDATED**

Palm Sunday

10.00am Live/ livestreamed Holy Communion

6.30pm Livestreamed Evening Prayer

Stations of the Cross

recorded reflections on these will be available to view online.

Maundy Thursday

10.00am Live/livestreamed Holy Communion.

Good Friday

2.00pm Hour of reflection at St. Stephen's

2.00pm Live/livestreamed service for Good Friday at St Martin's.

Easter Day

9.30am Holy Communion at St Stephen's

10.00am Holy Communion

live at St Martin's and live streamed

6.30pm Evening Prayer live at St Martin's and live streamed

Sun 11th April

9.30am Holy Communion at St Stephen's

10.00am Morning Prayer at St Martin's

6.30pm Easter Celebration words and music live and streamed at St Martin's

(We had initially planned to have some recorded reflections for Good Friday, but this has proved too much in terms of our resources – all the stations of the cross reflections will be online, and the 2pm service from St Martin's will be livestreamed).

STEWARDSHIP

Giving to St Martin's and St Stephen on the Downs

For general and stewardship giving you can give online giving via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit.

To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below



There is also a "Donate" button on our website.

Thank you for your continued giving directly and via online giving.

OTHER NOTICES

The Roadmap

Looking at the government plan for easing lockdown, there are a few milestones relevant to us. The number of people allowed to attend a wedding begins at 6 from the end of March, and builds up with each phase to 15, then 30, and then unrestricted. Funerals remain at 30 until derestriction, but wakes will be permitted in increasing numbers as the plan progresses.

A key change for us will be when indoor meetings for social purposes are allowed from phase 3, albeit with a limit of 6 people, and then unlimited from phase 4.

EASTER CARDS AVAILABLE

While restrictions on what we can do are gradually being relaxed I have decided that it would still be more sensible to run the Easter Card Shop online, as I did for Christmas cards. Please find attached to this newsletter an order form and pictures of all the available cards. I will be selling them on a first come, first served basis, however I will confirm with you exactly how much or your order you will receive and how much it will cost. I will deliver all cards to you personally (socially distanced, of course!).

Please help support St Martins by buying your Easter cards from me. Thank you.



Mary Holloway-Neville

A Message from Joan Armstrong

Because of circumstances and my age I have decided to live in Tunbridge Wells. I will be moving on the 5th March to a care home which is only 10 minutes from my daughter Glenys so I can have her visit me. My new address will be:

Fountain Lodge Care Home

Room 7

13-17 London Road,

Southborough,

Tunbridge Wells

TN4 ORJ,

Tel No: 01892 886408

Mission For March

HOME

Spinnaker Trust – Engaging – Inspiring - Equipping

The aim of this Christian Charity is to support Primary Schools with Assemblies and R.E. lessons. Locally here they have worked at 11 schools in Epsom and Ewell. They aim to inspire this generation of primary school children to engage with the Christian faith and explore its values.

Jill Chapman

ABROAD

The Mission to Seafarers has been caring for sailors throughout the world for more than 150 years and they are now busier than ever dealing with the problems of men and women who are often away from their families for many months and sometimes years at a time. Because of the virus at the moment they are not even allowed off their ships when they are in port.

As an island we depend on these men and women to supply our food and goods and we need to support those who help all seafarers wherever they are.

Maureen Suatt

Can you please hold these Mission areas in your Prayers – Thank you

Latest message from Chris Short at Food Bank

This week we need:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Packet Soup- Hot Chocolate- Coffee- Long Life Fruit Juice- Spaghetti in sauce- Custard- Rice- Pasta Sauce | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- UHT Milk (Semi and Full fat only please)- Easter treats and small Easter eggs- Pump soap- Household cleaning- Nappies (sizes 4, 6 nappies and pants, 6+ nappies and pants) |
|--|--|

Please either donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask);

Epsom & Ewell Foodbank
Generation Resource Centre
(Behind West Ewell Primary School)
Ruxley Lane, Ewell
KT19 0JG
Monday – Friday : 9am – 2pm

* Please ensure all donations are sealed, in date and do not contain alcohol.

Kind regards, Chris Shortt

CONTACT US

Parish Office:

***Church House, Church Street, Epsom,
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567***

E-mail: stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com

Website: www.stmartinsepsom.org

The Revd Nick Parish, Vicar – 01372 743336

Email: vicar@stmartinsepsom.org

The Revd David Candlin – Curate - 07723 849 477

Email: revcandlin@gmail.com

COLLECT

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family
to himself:

strengthen us in our daily living
that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence
to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING (Alternative readings)

Either **Exodus 2:1-10**

A reading from the book of Exodus.
A man from the house of Levi went and
married a Levite woman. The woman
conceived and bore a son; and when she
saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for
three months. When she could hide him no
longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and
plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put
the child in it and placed it among the reeds
on the bank of the river. His sister stood at
a distance, to see what would happen to
him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down
to bathe at the river, while her attendants
walked beside the river. She saw the basket
among the reeds and sent her maid to bring
it. When she opened it, she saw the child.
He was crying, and she took pity on him,
"This must be one of the Hebrews' children,"
she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's
daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse
from the Hebrew women to nurse the child
for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her,
"Yes." So the girl went and called the child's
mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take
this child and nurse it for me, and I will give
you your wages." So the woman took the
child and nursed it. When the child grew up,
she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and
she took him as her son. She named him
Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out
of the water."

Or **1 Samuel 1:20-end**

A reading from the first book of Samuel.
Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named
him Samuel, for she said, "I have asked him
of the LORD." The man Elkanah and all his
household went up to offer to the LORD
the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But
Hannah did not go up, for she said to her
husband, "As soon as the child is weaned,
I will bring him, that he may appear in the
presence of the LORD, and remain there for
ever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time."
Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do what
seems best to you, wait until you have weaned
him; only – may the LORD establish his word."
So the woman remained and nursed her son,
until she weaned him. When she had weaned
him, she took him up with her, along with a

three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a
skin of wine. She brought him to the house of
the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young.
Then they slaughtered the bull, and they
brought the child to Eli. And she said, "Oh,
my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman
who was standing here in your presence,
praying to the LORD. For this child I prayed;
and the LORD has granted me the petition
that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him
to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to
the LORD." She left him there for the LORD.

PSALM *Either* **Psalm 34:11-20**

R *[Come, children, and listen to me:]
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

Come, children, and listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
Who among you loves life
and desires long life to enjoy prosperity? **R**

Keep your tongue from evil-speaking
and your lips from lying words.
Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it. **R**

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.
The face of the Lord is against those who
do evil,
to root out the remembrance of them from
the earth. **R**

The righteous cry and the Lord hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.
The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and will save those whose spirits are crushed. **R**

Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the Lord will deliver him out of them all.
He will keep safe all his bones;
not one of them shall be broken. **R**

Or **Psalm 127:1-4**

R *It is the Lord who builds the house.*

Unless the Lord builds the house,
their labour is in vain who build it.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
in vain the guard keeps vigil. **R**

It is in vain that you rise so early
and go to bed so late;
vain, too, to eat the bread of toil,
for he gives to his beloved sleep.
Children are a heritage from the Lord,
and the fruit of the womb is a gift. **R**

SECOND READING (Alternative readings)

Either **2 Corinthians 1:3-7**

*A reading from the second letter of Paul to the
Corinthians.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the
God of all consolation, who consoles us in
all our affliction, so that we may be able to
console those who are in any affliction with
the consolation with which we ourselves are
consoled by God. For just as the sufferings

of Christ are abundant for us, so also our
consolation is abundant through Christ. If we
are being afflicted, it is for your consolation
and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is
for your consolation, which you experience
when you patiently endure the same sufferings
that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is
unshaken; for we know that as you share in our
sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

Or **Colossians 3:12-17**

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the
Colossians.*

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness,
humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with
one another and, if anyone has a complaint
against another, forgive each other; just as
the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must
forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds everything together in perfect
harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in
your hearts, to which indeed you were called
in the one body. And be thankful. Let the
word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and
admonish one another in all wisdom; and with
gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns,
and spiritual songs to God. And whatever
you do, in word or deed, do everything in the
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God
the Father through him.

GOSPEL (Alternative readings)

Either **Luke 2:33-35**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.*

The child's father and mother were amazed
at what was being said about Jesus. Then
Simeon blessed them and said to his mother
Mary, "This child is destined for the falling
and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a
sign that will be opposed so that the inner
thoughts of many will be revealed – and a
sword will pierce your own soul too."

Or **John 19:25b-27**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.*

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his
mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the
wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When
Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom
he loved standing beside her, he said to his
mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he
said to the disciple, "Here is your mother."
And from that hour the disciple took her into
his own home.

POST COMMUNION

Loving God,
as a mother feeds her children at the breast
you feed us in this sacrament
with the food and drink of eternal life:
help us who have tasted your goodness
to grow in grace within the household of faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday Homily

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

14 MARCH 2021

YEAR B

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.”

John 3:16

Illustration

“The cat has brought in another mouse!” How many of us have heard that familiar refrain? And there it is, a small grey bundle of fear tucked trembling behind the cooker while the sleek, black cat prowls around and licks its lips in anticipation. Your kids cluster round, shooing the cat away, eyes wide with concern and pleading with you to save the mouse. “Okay,” you say, “we’ll catch it and put it back outside where it belongs.” And then there follows a good ten minutes of planning to find a way of safely removing the terrified mouse. “Okay mouse,” you say hopefully, “just you sit quietly and we’ll get you back outside,” and carefully, oh so carefully, you try and catch it in your hands. But, of course, the mouse isn’t having any of this. He is just as distrustful of us as he is of the cat. Then, as the effort becomes greater and you wonder if the trouble is really worth it, your eyes turn heavenwards and you ask yourself why the stupid mouse won’t let you help it.

Gospel Teaching

We can be like that mouse when God in his goodness and compassion tries to save us. Sometimes we seem to have the idea that God is out to get us – that he is the Judge, the one waiting to trip us up if we go wrong, the one who sees all our dark and secret sins which we would rather no one knew about. But if we are anxious it is because we are letting our false notions of God take over – we are forgetting the Gospel. God does see all we do, but his response is not to condemn us. He sees sin for what it is, the damaging and wounding force that causes us so much misery and distress. God’s response to our sin is to look on us with great tenderness and compassion. Jesus did not come to damn us, but to free us, to liberate us from all that makes us less than what we really are, from everything that makes us less human, less loving.

This is why the Gospel today asks the exasperated question: Why on earth do people continually resist God’s efforts to save the world when he is only trying to help? “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

That seems the hardest thing in the world for us to believe. And we so-called religious people seem to find it just as hard to accept that God really does not condemn us. He wants to rescue us. He offers us love.

But people clearly do resist the love of God. We still watch the news broadcasts full of war and greed and violence, of rich and poor, the well-fed and the hungry. We are still unable to do very much in the face of the rising tide of poverty at home and abroad. We still hurt our children, our mothers and fathers, our brothers and sisters. We still lash out at our friends and bully and torment those we don't like. We can look into our own hearts and see that there is a mixture of good and bad within us. All of us live ambiguous lives, sometimes living the life of God and sometimes destroying the vision that we are trying so hard to build. We are still in need of the healing grace of God if we are to fulfil our purpose.

Application

It does seem a hopelessly difficult task. In fact, if we depended solely on our own efforts it would be impossible and we might as well give up right away. But thank God it is not by our own efforts that we can start to live the life of the kingdom of God. God reaches in to pluck us out of our sin and fills us with his grace so that we are transformed. He takes away our sin and gives us his own life. He encourages us to nourish that life with word and sacrament. All we need to do is accept it and allow ourselves to change as we grow.

Giving ourselves up to the love of God can appear to be a frightening process. But if we can only let go of our fears and trust him, then we will not be disappointed. God is truth and his truth sets us free.

MONDAY**15 MARCH**

Isaiah 65:17-21

Psalm 30:1-5. 8.

11-end

John 4:43-end

TUESDAY**16 MARCH**

Ezekiel 47:1-9. 12

Psalm 46:1-8

John 5:1-3. 5-16

WEDNESDAY**17 MARCH**

Isaiah 49:8-15

Psalm 145:8-18

John 5:17-30

THURSDAY**18 MARCH**

Exodus 32:7-14

Psalm 106:19-23

John 5:31-end

FRIDAY**19 MARCH**

Joseph of

Nazareth

2 Samuel 7:4-16

Psalm 89:26-36

Romans 4:13-18

Matthew 1:18-end

SATURDAY**20 MARCH**

Jeremiah 11:18-20

Psalm 7:1-2. 8-10

John 7:40-52

REFLECTION

As we step closer to Holy Week the Gospel readings shift from the synoptic Gospels to a semi-continuous run through of John 4 to 7. Whatever Jesus does or says he comes into conflict with religious leaders who are unable to cope with his unbridled demonstrations of God's glory.



Whether healing on the sabbath or declaring his relationship to the Father, he is breaking their rules, offending their theologies and prising God from their control. With their authority threatened, they resort to ungodly methods as plots to kill him foment.

Mirroring Jesus' persecution, in the week's first readings Jeremiah finds himself facing the ire of his peers for prophesying God's hard words of desolation to rebellious Jerusalem, while Moses must turn back divine wrath when the Hebrew nation prefers the domesticity of a golden calf to the awesome, ineffable power of God. In Monday's reading from Isaiah the Lord's glorious, magnificent generosity restores Jerusalem, creating new heavens and a new earth; a secure, peaceful home. On Tuesday Ezekiel is caught up in God's vision for a rebuilt Temple, from which flows a life-giving, sustaining river. In these passages hints of resurrection glory begin to shine, even as the cross draws nigh.

PRAYER

Holy God,
 may narrowness of vision never cloud our passion for you,
 or hold us back from sharing the overwhelming generosity
 of your love with every person and all creation.
 Setting the sacrifice of the cross as our guide,
 lead us into the life-changing hope of the resurrection.

PART III – TWO BLESSED MOTHERS

Bekky Mynett concludes her series about motherhood in the Bible.

In the previous two articles in this series we saw how God worked through some of the most unlikely women. Firstly we looked at the seven barren matriarchs of Jewish tradition and how they can be seen to lead to Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist. Then we looked at the mothers in Jesus' genealogy at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, and how these foreign women with somewhat dubious pasts paved the way for Mary.

Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah, "had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years". The couple are faithful and blameless, but Elizabeth has been unable to become a "real woman" through motherhood, as was expected in biblical times. When she becomes pregnant she is grateful to God, saying that he "looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people".

When Mary wonders how, as a virgin, she can have a child, Gabriel reassures her with the news that her cousin Elizabeth, who was said to be barren, is six months pregnant, "for nothing will be impossible with God". This prompts Mary to accept what will happen to her, and straight away she rushes off to visit Elizabeth. When she arrives and greets Elizabeth, the child in Elizabeth's womb leaps for joy and Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaims with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Mary joyfully responds with the Magnificat.

Both these women, who weren't expecting to become mothers, are blessed with children as a result of divine intervention. At this time of year we tend to see motherhood as a sugar-coated ideal of maternal tenderness yet, as we have seen, the biblical reality was far from this romantic ideal. Yet each of the mothers we have looked at, the barren, scandalous, or dysfunctional, had an important role to play in God's plan for the world.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
Caroline Hodgson
and
Heather Smith



Basilica of St Clotilde, Paris.
Zvonimir Athletic / Shutterstock.com

Fourth week of Lent

Monday 15 March to
Saturday 20 March
2021

WEEK

We need each other

Ricarda Witcombe *reflects on*
John 19:25b-27

Mothering Sunday is a day of celebration and pain. Together we have much to celebrate – all those who have mothered and nurtured us in so many different ways. There is also much to grieve – all the losses, those who are no longer with us, the betrayals and the lack of care.

Celebration and pain are both important, and we must deny neither. We see them both in this Gospel passage that takes us to the moments before Jesus dies. The last thing he does is to create a new family. This is the heart of what Church is: we are here for each other, given by love, for love. Both Mary and John, the beloved disciple, love Jesus with all their heart. It is their love for him, and his love for them, that will enable them to walk the painful path ahead. As Jesus gives them to each other, he invites them not to walk the path alone, but to care for each other as he cares for them.

Who are those people given to you to care for? And who are those who care for you? Take some time today to think about them and to pray for them. Whatever our age or gender, and whether we get on with each other or not, whether we feel included or not, we are God's gifts to one another, a means of God's grace in each other's lives. We need each other. ☺



Lord Jesus Christ, you give us to one another to live in love and peace, and to care for everyone. Open our eyes to each other, that we may see and be seen, and that we may care and be cared for. Amen.

Motherhood in the Bible

Part III – two blessed mothers

by Becky Mynett

Becky Mynett concludes her series about motherhood in the Bible.

We have seen how God worked through some of the most unlikely women. This week we look at the story of Elizabeth and Mary from Luke 1.

Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah "had no children, because

Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years". When she becomes pregnant she gives thanks to God, who has "looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured".

When Mary wonders how, as a virgin, she can have a child, Gabriel reassures her with the news of Elizabeth's pregnancy, "for nothing will be impossible with God". This prompts Mary to accept what will happen to her, and straight away she rushes off to visit Elizabeth.

Both these women become mothers through divine intervention. Their children are special, but they are also blessed because God, not man, is the true Father, and this is an important part of the good news that Luke goes on to tell in his Gospel. ☺

Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

In the *Common Worship Pastoral Services* book there is "A Song of St Anselm", composed a thousand years ago. The refrain for it is "Gather your little ones to you, O God, as a hen gathers her brood to protect them."

The image of God as a bird brooding her young is a familiar one in Jesus' longing expressed in Luke 13 and in the image of the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the waters at creation. Brooding is what a mother bird does to both hatch eggs, and then keep the young warm and safe from harm. Last year a rescue hen of ours brooded seven guinea fowl eggs and, having hatched them, raised them as her own. Her fierce devotion brought these orphaned birds to maturity. God as mother bird is fierce but life-giving to all who need warmth and safety. ☺

“Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God.”

Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), Carmelite nun, mystic and theologian

Sunday 14 March 2021

John 3:14-21

4th Sunday of Lent



My name is _____

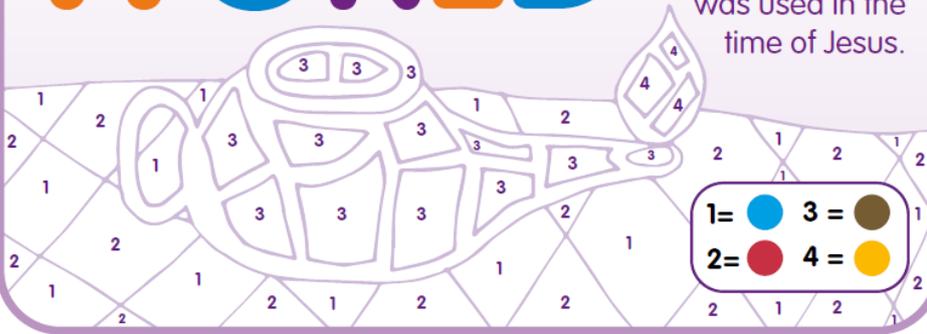
IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

Jesus says that he was sent to be the light of the world because God loves us so much.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus makes our lives bright and happy.

Colour the shapes to find a lamp that was used in the time of Jesus.



A poem to finish

Use these words in green to finish the poem



Who is Jesus?

Find the words that tell us about Jesus by colouring all the X squares.



X	J	E	S	U	S	X
I	S	X	H	T	H	E
L	I	G	H	T	X	X
O	F	X	X	T	H	E
X	W	O	R	L	D	X

Jesus comes to bring us _____

To put our fear and pain to _____

To fill our lives with joy so _____

And keep us safe by day and _____

Be a light!

How is Hibah going to be a light for the people she meets today?

Tick the good suggestions and cross out the bad ideas. Perhaps you can choose to try some out yourself?



A PRAYER TO SAY

Dear Jesus, you are the light of the world. Help us to be loving and kind so that we brighten up the lives of all we meet. Amen.