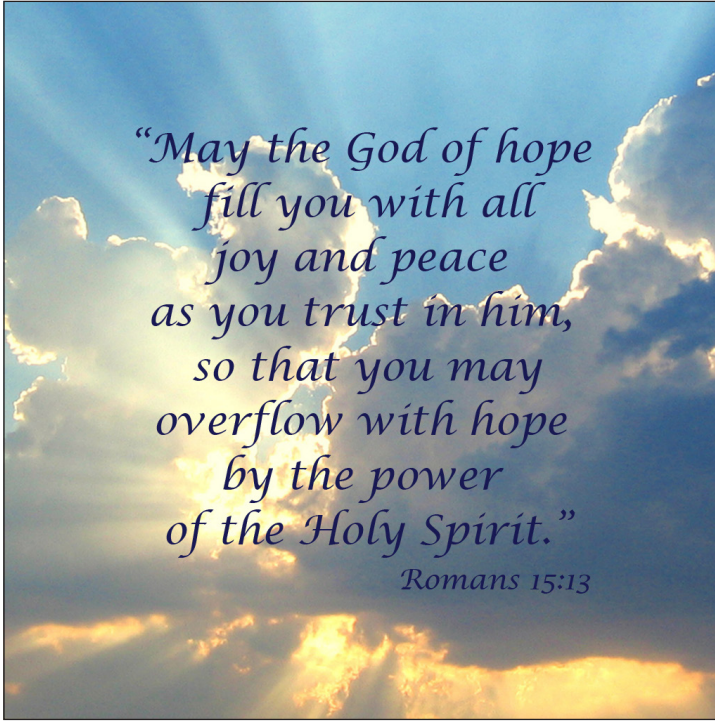


Stepping into Hope



A Resource to reflect on and begin to process our experience of the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020-2021





This booklet has been compiled by Carolyn Gower, Unlock Rotherham.

It has been inspired by 'The Year we Stayed at Home', the post-Covid resource produced by Unlock, written and compiled by Dawn Lonsdale.

This is available to download from the Unlock website: http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources_projects.php#bible_study_resources. Alternatively copies can be acquired from: Unlock, 15, Station Road, Rotherham. S60 1HN.

Telephone: 01709 380318;

email: office@unlock-urban.org.uk

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Stepping into Hope

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Reflection

The Pandemic has been undeniably tough for everyone. Even if we haven't lost someone to Covid-19, we have lost opportunities, we have lost precious time with loved ones and we have had to let go of hopes, dreams and plans.



These disappointments are real. The emotional impact has been substantial with many people experiencing heightened anxiety and fear and as 2021 unfolds many facing financial hardship too.

As our society opens up it is helpful to reflect on our experiences; to process the

difficult ones; identify what we have learnt and want to hold onto; and think about how to move forward.

This booklet contains reflections, Bible verses and activities on six themes. Working through it will help you to:

- Reflect and process your experiences of Covid-19 and the Lockdown restrictions;
- Better understand your role in the 'now' as restrictions ease and communities regather;
- Step into a hopeful future with your loving heavenly Father.

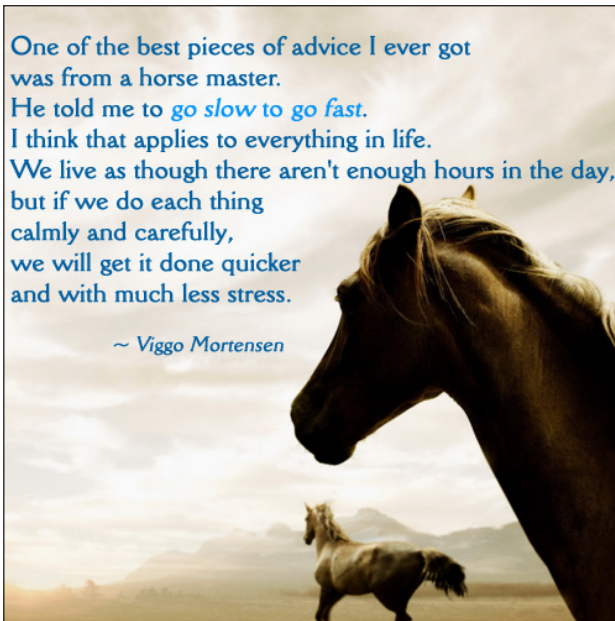
**WE ARE NOT
HERE TO WAIT
FOR THE STORM
TO PASS
BUT TO LEARN
TO DANCE
IN THE RAIN.**

We begin by looking back at the last twelve to eighteen months in Lament slowly moving through that into a place of Gratitude.

Then we focus on the 'now' as we and our communities emerge from the restrictions. We consider the importance of patience and kindness as each of us finds our way and our role in a post-pandemic society.

Finally we look forward - daring to hope for a better future and considering how we can discern God's good plans and purposes in the months ahead.

As you work through the activities, take your time. Allow yourself space to think and to process what comes to mind.



.....
Looking Back
.....

Looking back in Lament

We begin by thinking about what has been lost during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Experiencing loss is a normal part of the ups and downs of life but when loss floods our lives, it can be overwhelming.

Expressing loss and the emotions that flow from it can be helpful and healing - this kind of expression is often described as Lament.

Many of the Psalms in the Bible are poems of complaint expressing personal and communal anguish.

They can provide a helpful pattern for us. For example, Psalm 142 encourages us to express our troubles and complaints to God - He can handle it!



*I call to the Lord for help;
I plead with him.
I bring him all my complaints;
I tell him all my troubles.
When I am ready to give up,
he knows what I should do.*

Psalm 142:1-3 GNB

We begin our focus on Lament with the Timeline.

Pause and think about the things that you have lost due to Covid-19 or the Covid-19 restrictions.

As they come to mind add them to your Timeline. These prompts may help. Add:

- Ordinary events that would have normally been spent with family and friends (for



example, birthdays, anniversaries, significant moments or life's turning points);

- People you were unable to see;
- Activities you were unable to do;
- Places you were unable to go;
- Other things you lost out on.

As you come to the end of your list, sit quietly and listen to River of Tears by Eric Clapton: <https://youtu.be/X55nF0QgTmA> or read the words - they are in Appendix A.

What emotions surface as you remember these things and as you listen to the song?

Our lament and complaints may not just be personal - we may feel that the pandemic has exposed injustice and unfairness at the root of society:



We may be upset by the inequalities that have been exposed by the Pandemic.

We may be upset by the suffering of minority groups and the vulnerable.

We may be upset by the treatment of key workers who have looked after the public but not been rewarded for the risks they take.

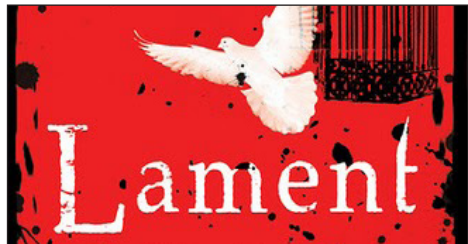
We may be upset by many other things too.

Psalms 44 is a communal poem of complaint - they are the words of the defeated remnant of a nation - complaining, lamenting and in great distress.

Wake up, Lord! Why are you asleep?

Rouse yourself Don't reject us forever!

Why are you hiding from us?



Don't forget our suffering and trouble!

Psalm 44:23-24 GNB

What are your complaints to God after the year we have just experienced?

What are you upset about?

What are you angry about?

What do you feel about these things?



As your emotions surface, take this opportunity to express them in a physical action.

Take a chalk or stone and go outside.

With your chalk or stone score the names of your emotions onto a concrete path or, if you prefer, use a stick and score your emotions into a patch of earth.

When you go back inside, listen to this song, 'Weep with Me' by Rend Collective:

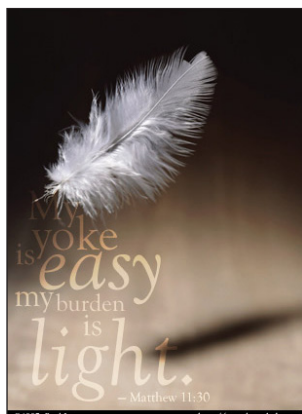
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAGqvq4N_zQ

Pause as you think about the words of the song (you can read them in Appendix A).

Jesus says these words,

"Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 GNB



With Jesus' words in mind, revisit the emotions you wrote on the path or in the soil.

Fill a container with water and carry it outside. Imagine Jesus is carrying it with you.

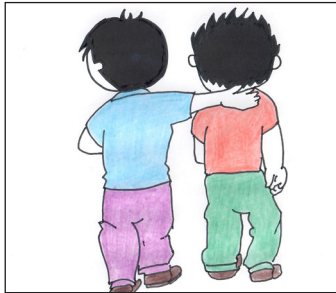
Together, you and Jesus, pour the water over the words.

Watch them fade..

This is a picture of Jesus giving you rest, lifting each burden, each worry, every fear, the raw grief and sadness, the resentment and anger – all these heavy loads and any others you carry. Lifting them off you and putting them on his own shoulders.

As you carry your empty container back into the house, welcome Jesus' arm resting around your shoulders, drawing you close.

Feel his rest.



Looking back in Gratitude

Being close to open, green spaces and waterways has been a great comfort for many during Lockdown..

For some of us our gardens or allotments have been a haven.

Step outside into a garden or green space and pause.

Quieten yourself.

What can you see?

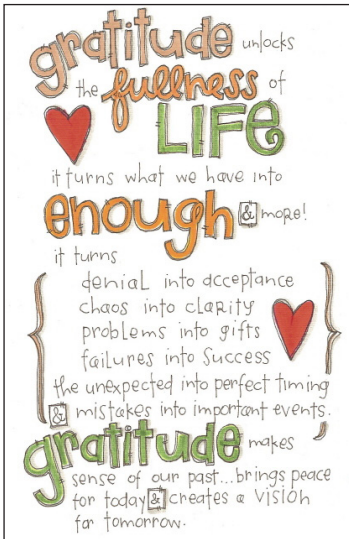
What can you hear?

What can you smell?

Walk up close to a tree or plant, what does it feel like?



With these reminders of the timeless cycle of living things around us, we turn from Lament to think about Gratitude. Being grateful or thankful is a skill that we can practice. It begins by learning to notice the small things.



Dawn Lonsdale, C.O of Unlock wrote about her experience of the power of Gratitude during Lockdown. She writes, "I started to think about all of this as a kind of 'banking of joy' – storing up the goodness we experience every day as a reserve for hard times to come. And the great thing about this bank account is that you can withdraw from it again and again without ever diminishing the capital. But first you have to develop the habit of saving; you have to put things into the bank so that they will be there when you need to draw on them.

The key is to slow down enough to pay attention, and to notice the delights and blessings that God generously strews across our path; to cherish the moments, the smiles, the tiny expressions of trust, all those things that express care for each other and joy in one another's company,



To notice the natural world too, the colours in a stormy sky, the patterns in a butterfly's wing, the sound of birdsong (we could hear so much more of that during lockdown); to take joy in art and music, poetry and dance."

(Extract from The Year We Stayed at Home by Dawn Lonsdale, CO of Unlock³)

grateful for ...”

Developing rhythms of gratitude in our ordinary day can be very helpful. For example:

- Pause for a moment every time you stop to have a drink during the day. Take notice of things around you that you are thankful for.
- At the end of each day, ask yourself what are you grateful for in the day.
- As you note the many things you are grateful for, collect them together in a ‘Thankfulness Diary’ along with Bible verses that encourage you to be thankful. Begin by copying the things you are grateful for from your ‘Gratitude Hands’ into your ‘Thankfulness Diary’. Add to your ‘Thankfulness Diary’ every day!

Finally, to remind ourselves of Father God’s great love, listen to ‘What love is This’ by Doug Horley. You can find it on this link (the words are in Appendix A): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtDfHejeRdA>



.....
Looking to 'today'
.....

Reflecting on lockdown lifting

As the third UK Lockdown begins to ease, people across the country are emerging from the shelter of their homes and gardens. We are a little like dormice and hedgehogs coming out of hibernation - blinking in the bright light! Each one emerging at their own pace in their own time.



As a nation we have a 'roadmap' out of the restrictions. For many this is great, we cannot wait to meet up with family and friends, to return as much as possible to 'normal'. For others, the new freedoms seem reckless and risky. For still others their response is somewhere in between.

Some of us, especially key workers have 'given their all' over the last 12-18 months and are exhausted. Others have been unable to work, furloughed or on reduced hours - their battle has been with boredom and lack of purpose - even mental health issues. Many of our young people have lost opportunities, their dreams on hold - they are desperate for some kind of normality to be restored.



Is it possible for everyone to move forward together?

How can we ensure that no one is left behind as the pace of life picks up again?

This section considers the role of patience and kindness in the recovery process.

Patience for 'Today'



'An old fashioned word for patience is 'forbearance' and it is something we have all needed during the pandemic.

The Google definition is: 'the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious'.

Patience is more than waiting, it's about how we wait.

It might be helpful to think of it as 'Hard waiting', or 'Gracious waiting'. Patience does not mean that we do not suffer; it just means that we manage those feelings without getting too stressed about it, and without taking that stress out on others.

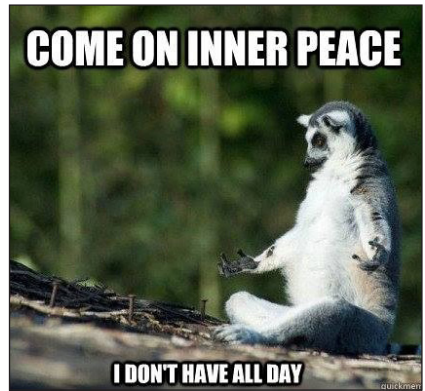
Patience is a quiet thing – it does not grab our attention. It is the impatient who make a lot of noise and fuss, who shout and storm and demand. Patience often goes unnoticed'.

(Extract from The Year We Stayed at Home by Dawn Lonsdale, CO of Unlock³)

As we all emerge from Lockdown with our own agendas, patience will be a valuable quality in our attitude to others, to ourselves and to wider society

This article appeared in The Guardian on April 20th - two weeks into the first level of Lockdown easing. Its a window into how easy it is to forget that everyone has had a tough time and we need to 'cut them some slack!'

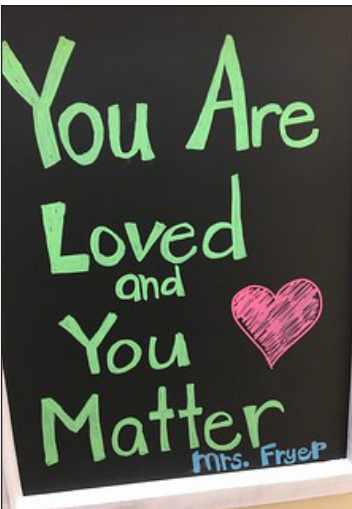
'Kids are reacclimatising, like the rest of us. After a year of boring responsibility, I'm delighted to read reports of them



getting stuck in swings and swearing in parks. I'm not sure what qualifies as a "spate" (is there official guidance?), but there has been a spate-adjacent number of incidents of teenagers getting stuck in baby swings in York recently, solemnly reported in the local paper. The fire brigade "released the teenager and gave advice", says one report, the advice presumably being: "Do not sit in a baby swing."

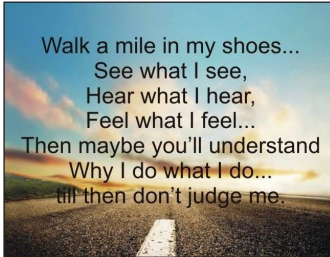


I'm delighted by these incidents and what they represent: teenagers being teenagers and doing stupid stuff. There are neurological explanations for teenage silliness: the late maturing of the connections between the prefrontal cortex (involved in regulating decision-making and self-control) and other parts of the brain skews their perception of risk. Sometimes, that means eating detergent pods, duct-taping a friend to a tree or worse; more often it involves the kind of cheery, universal daftness typified by wedging yourself into a tiny swing.



The re-emergence of teenagers, lounging around children's play areas, treading on municipal tulips, mock (or not mock) fighting and abandoning their cans has prompted a panicked surge of disapproval. They are using "foul" language and causing a "nuisance" and gathering in groups of more than six, people tut, swerving to avoid them. The neighbourhood app Nextdoor is full of complaints about youths "causing absolute mayhem", as one user put it.

... This lot have had no opportunity to do anything silly for most of the past year. They have been stultifyingly, admirably responsible and their reward is a cold shower of adult disapproval. They might be annoying, but I'm thrilled to see them getting wedged in street furniture. Nature is healing: bring on the mayhem.



Emma Beddington⁴

Maybe we all need to be a bit more patient with each other as we find our feet post-Covid. Maybe we need to walk in each other's shoes for a while to understand where we are all coming from!

We begin our reflection on patience outside. It is difficult to focus only on the 'short-term' in the 'great outdoors'. There is usually a sense of timelessness, of future possibilities, of living things getting on with living regardless of all that is happening.

Sit in your garden or in a green space where you feel comfortable.

As you still yourself, look at the plants around you carefully. Notice the small movements caused by the wind, birds or little animals.



Allow any personal impatience and frustration to fall away.

Let go of your urgency to 'get on'.

What is Father God saying to you?

When you return indoors, get out your Timeline again.

Notice the large yellow box entitled, 'One day I will know it is over when...' at the bottom of the sheet.

Pause for a moment and then write your 'I know it is all over when...' things in this box.

How patient do you feel as you think about these things that you are hoping for?

What other feelings are surfacing as you recognise the need to wait patiently for these hopes and dreams to be realised?

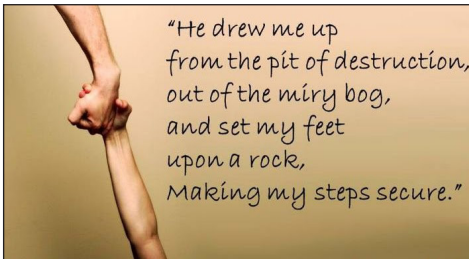
What does this tell you about yourself?

As you think about this need to be patient, listen to:

Be Still my Soul Before the Lord by Bryn Haworth <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkxkha2HFek> - the words are in appendix A.

The song words echo parts of Psalm 40:1-3 (GNB):

*I waited patiently for the Lord's help;
then he listened to me and heard my cry.*



*He pulled me out of a dangerous pit,
out of the deadly quicksand.
He set me safely on a rock
and made me secure.*

*He taught me to sing a new song,
a song of praise to our God.
Many who see this will take warning
and will put their trust in the Lord.*

These verses suggest that there are many positive outcomes from patiently waiting for God's perfect timing. For instance, he takes action on our behalf, he provides us with safety and he even teaches us new things.

Has that been your experience of waiting patiently during the Pandemic?

To help us wait patiently for the realisation of the things we have written on our Timeline, we can create a parable!

Plant some seeds in our garden, in a pot outside or in a pot on a window sill. Plant them in the hope that a beautiful show of colourful flowers will emerge in a few months time. This is the parable of your patient waiting!

Hopefully when your seeds are flowering your patient waiting for the things you have written on your Timeline will be over!



Kindness for 'Today'

During Covid-19 in the UK, there have been reports of a pandemic of kindness. In February 2021 the Independent reported a survey of 2000 people conducted by the Travelodge. This study revealed that,

'People had been more friendly to one another in the last year, made more of an effort to stay in touch with their relatives and donated more to food banks and other charitable organisations.' The survey also found 'that people have been talking to strangers more frequently and surprised friends with gifts.'⁵



How brilliant is that! Wouldn't it be great if it continued.

The story Jesus told of the Good Samaritan is an extraordinary case of one person being exceptionally kind to another.

Jesus responded to a question with this story:

"There was once a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead. It so happened that a priest was going down that road; but when he saw the man, he walked on by on the other side. In the same way a Levite also came there, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by on the other side. But a Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon the man, and when he saw him, his heart was filled with pity. He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way, I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.'"

.And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these

three acted like a neighbour toward the man attacked by the robbers?"

The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him."

Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."

Luke 10:25-37 GNB

The Samaritan's kindness is highlighted even more by the unkindness of the other people who 'passed by on the other side of the road'.

This story leads us to ask two questions of ourselves:

1. Who have I been kind to?
2. Who has been kind to me?

Let's begin with the first question. Hopefully we can all think of someone we have been kind to recently (just a smile counts!).

Whatever our answer, I am sure we would all love to become kinder!



To be kind, we need soft hearts! Welcoming and receiving God's incredible kindness to us, will soften our hearts. Psalm 103: 1-2 (GNB) reminds us of the Lord's kindness towards us:

Praise the Lord, my soul!

All my being, praise his holy name!

Praise the Lord, my soul,

and do not forget how kind he is.



Father God loves each one of us so much

It is from this reservoir of received love and kindness that we can love and be kind to others.

Pause to listen to the song Kindness

by Chris Tomlin.

As you listen receive God's love and kindness towards you afresh: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Y40OMgFog>.
The words are in Appendix A.

2. Now to the second question, Who has been kind to me?

Who comes to mind?

What do you feel now as you remember those kind acts?

This is an opportunity to say thank you to that person or people!

Think about how you can do that - maybe you could send them a card, or a message. Maybe you could invite them over when the restrictions allow or maybe you could do an act of kindness for them. There are many ways to say thank you.



.....
Looking Forward
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The Hidden Rivers of Sheffield.

If you've ever stood on the platforms of Sheffield train station, you probably didn't realise that the River Sheaf is flowing just meters beneath your feet! This is just one of the hidden rivers that flow through a network of secret tunnels running below Sheffield City Centre. Tunnels that lead to the infamous cave-like Megatron storm drain culvert system.



The Sheaf and Porter Rivers Trust was formed in 2019 to preserve and uncover hidden rivers in and around Sheffield.

One of their projects was developing the Porter Brook Pocket Park. Here, the river runs alongside a little city centre park; somewhere you can go to enjoy lunch or have a nice relaxing sit right next to the river.

Other ambitions of the Trust include creating the 'Sheaf Field' park and removing part of the deteriorated culvert. This would open up the River Sheaf by the ruins of Sheffield's castle at the old Castle Market site. Stakeholders are exploring the possibility of having water sports such as kayaking on a stretch of the river here.

There are also plans to open up light wells where access points are currently situated (on Platform 5a to mention just one!). As a result, fish - including salmon - would be able to move upstream and into the city centre.⁶

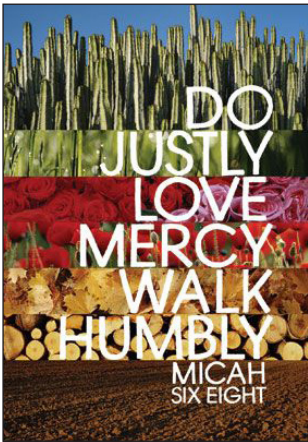
The volunteers and members of the Sheaf and Porter River Trust are passionate about their vision to see the centre of Sheffield enhanced by a free flowing river. They are lighting a beacon of hope

that a healthy river habitat can be restored and an environment created for many people to enjoy in the years ahead.

Their hopes and plans to open up the rivers of Sheffield and restore light to the dark culverted waters are like a parable for us as we come out of the darkness and control of lockdown and it's impact on us and on our communities.

What will 'building back better' look like, and what part do we have in making it a reality?

Discernment for the Future



The Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable suffering and difficulties. With the success of the vaccination programme in the UK, many people are now talking about 'recovery'.

What is the best way forward?

How can we recover and heal?

How can our communities be restored?

The Prophet Micah has some helpful advice for people of faith who are asking God to show them the right way forward.

He summarises how God expects his people to behave - whatever the situation they find themselves in.

He says:

"... the LORD has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this:

to do what is just,

to show constant love,

and to live in humble fellowship with our God."

Micah 6:8 GNB

Wow! That seems a good starting point:

To care about injustice and to act justly!

To behave with love, kindness and compassion!

To keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, walking humbly alongside our shepherd Lord – watchful and attentive to recognise where he is at work.

Sit quietly thinking about each of Micah’s instructions in turn.

Asking the following questions may be helpful (when an idea pops into your head, write it down, share it with a trusted friend, and if they think it is wise, do it!):

What can I do to nurture justice and help those who are suffering or being discriminated against?

What acts of love, kindness and compassion can I do to bring sunshine into someone else’s life?

What can I do to keep in step with Jesus more consistently?

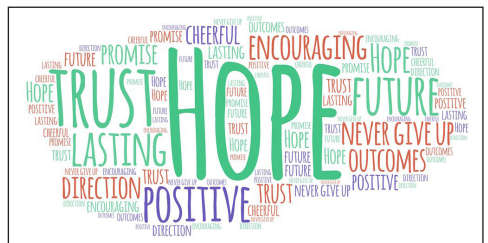
When you have written down your actions, join in with Rend Collective singing You are my True North, affirming Jesus as your true direction (the words are in Appendix A): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkxBms_kB_U



Hope for the Future

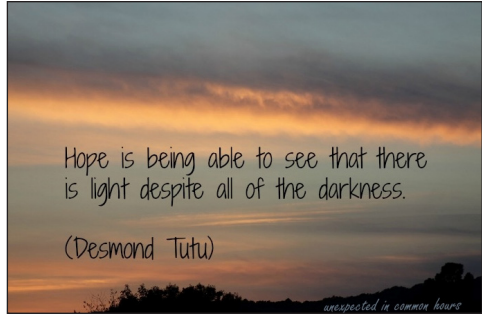
Rhian Mannings is founder of the charity ‘2 Wish Upon a Star’ that has supported more than 3,300 people in Wales affected by the sudden death of a child or young person.

She says: “I went through all this trauma. I was knocked off my feet to a place that I never want to experience again. I went right downhill, but then I came back up. I know it’s made me a different



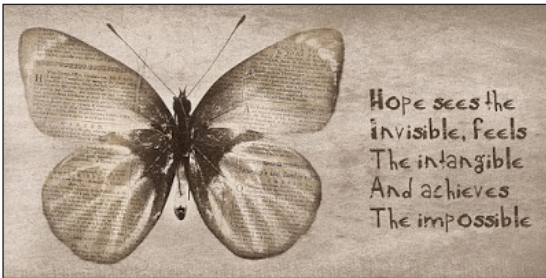
person, a better person.”

Her nine year journey is harrowing reading. In 2012 she suddenly lost her one-year-old son to pneumonia. The shock was tsunamic, resulting in her husband committing suicide soon after.



In the 1980s Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun, psychologists at the University of North Carolina, interviewed people who had survived difficult experiences, including bereavement. They coined the term post-traumatic growth to describe the positive changes that occur in the aftermath of a trauma resulting from the process of a struggle with these traumatic events.

Tedeschi says that post-traumatic growth does not happen only with individuals, but also in systems, communities, nations. Can we see it in the birth of the NHS in 1948, out of the horror and losses of the second world war?



This is how he sees the birth of '2 Wish Upon a Star' in 2012: as a fierce, mighty kind of care, rising up from pain a person should never have to face, but did.

He asks, "What growth might be possible for us, for our society, after Covid?"⁷

Rhian's story is inspirational. Her traumatic experience has resulted in practical care and the birthing of hope in thousands of people who shared a similar experience to hers.

As we come to terms with all the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, what gives you hope?

Look at your Timeline again. It should be looking fairly full now.

As you read through it - identify the things which kept hope alive in your heart during the pandemic and lockdown restrictions.

Mark them with a coloured asterix.

You have also written your personal signs of the end of the pandemic in the large yellow box at the bottom of the Timeline.

Are these things you are hoping for?

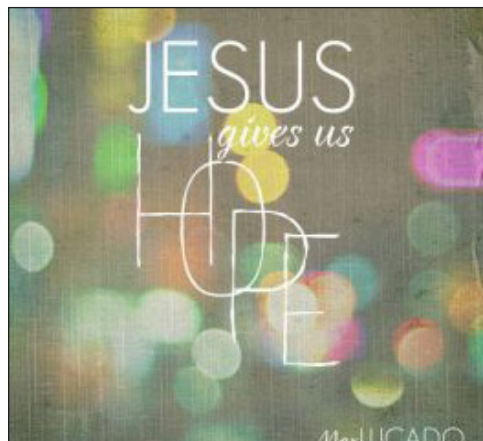
What other things are you hoping for? Write them in the box too.

For many, our faith has kept hope alive in our hearts through the last 12 to 18 months.

Below are a number of Bible verses that may have encouraged you over the last year or so. Take your time as you read them.


Which one do you find most encouraging?

Write it out and place it somewhere to remind you of the hope you have in Jesus.



"Never will I leave you,
Never will I forsake you."
Hebrews 13:5

-talk about a
promise. -



But they that wait upon the Lord
shall renew their **STRENGTH**;
they shall mount up with
WINGS AS EAGLES;
they shall run, and
NOT BE WEARY;
and they shall walk,
AND NOT FAINT **ISAIAH**
40:31



ChristianQuotes.info

Joshua 1:9
"Have I not
commanded you?
Be strong and
courageous.
Do not be afraid;
do not be
discouraged,
for the LORD
your God
will be with you
wherever you go."

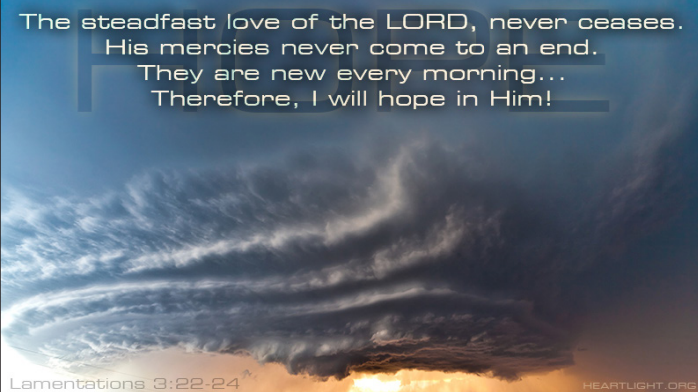
for **GOD** so
LOVED
the world
that he gave his one and
ONLY SON
that whoever believes in Him
shall **NOT** perish
but have
ETERNAL LIFE
john **3:16**

ChristianQuotes.info

The steadfast love of the LORD, never ceases.
His mercies never come to an end.
They are new every morning...
Therefore, I will hope in Him!

Lamentations 3:22-24

HEARTLIGHT.ORG



THE LORD IS AT HAND;
DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING,
BUT IN EVERYTHING BY
AND PRAYER
SUPPLICATION
WITH THANKSGIVING
LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD.
AND THE
PEACE OF GOD,
WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING,
WILL GUARD YOUR
HEARTS AND MINDS
IN CHRIST JESUS.
PHILIPPIANS 4:5-7

*“May the God of hope
fill you with all
joy and peace
as you trust in him,
so that you may
overflow with hope
by the power
of the Holy Spirit.”*
Romans 15:13



Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.
Not as the world gives do I give to you.
Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
John 14:27

www.LiveLaughLovePost.com

I lift up my eyes to the mountains -
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2 niv

heartlight.org

Final Thoughts

We have all been on a journey during the Covid Pandemic - whether we knew it or not!

Hopefully this booklet has initiated another journey for you - a journey into hope. The hope that flows into us as we trust in a good loving heavenly Father; and a hope which flows out of us in joy and peace to bless those we live and work amongst.

I pray that this will be your experience in the weeks that lie ahead.

Finally, let's pray for the Church locally, nationally and globally by joining with Rend Collective singing, Build Your Kingdom Here.

It's on this youtube link (the words are in Appendix A):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbdJXKqVgtg>

.....
Appendices
.....

Appendix A: Song Words

River of Tears by Eric Clapton

It's three miles to the river
That would carry me away
And two miles to the dusty street
That I saw you on Today
It's four miles to my lonely room
Where I will hide my face
And about a half a mile to the downtown bar
That I ran from in disgrace
Lord how long do I have to keep on running
Seven hours, Seven days or Seven years
All I know is since you've been gone
Feels like I'm drowning in a river
Drowning in a river of tears
Drowning in a river
Feels like I'm drowning
Drowning in a river
In three more days I'll leave this town
And disappear without a trace
A year from now maybe settle down
Where no one knows my face
I wish that I could hold you
One more time to ease the pain
But my times run out and I got to go
Got to run away again

Still I catch myself thinking
One day I'll find my way back here
You'll save me from drowning
Drowning in a river
Drowning in a river of tears
Drowning in a river
Feels like I'm drowning
Drowning in a river
Oh how long must this go on
Drowning in a river
Drowning in a river of tears

Eric Clapton, Simon Climie ©1998 Reprise Records. CCL number 960723

Weep with me by Rend Collective

Weep with me
Lord, will You weep with me?
I don't need answers, all I need
Is to know that You care for me
Hear my plea
Are You even listening?
Lord, I will wrestle with Your heart
But I won't let You go
You know I believe
Help my unbelief
Yet I will praise You
Yet I will sing of Your name
Here in the shadows
Here I will offer my praise

What's true in the light
Is still true in the dark
You're good and You're kind
And You care for this heart
Lord, I believe
You weep with me
Part the seas
Lord, make a way for me
Here in the midst of my lament
I have faith, yes I still believe
That You love me
Your plans are to prosper me
You're working everything for good
Even when I can't see

Chorus

Turn my lament into a love song
From this lament, raise up an anthem
(I'll sing it in the darkness)
Oh, turn my lament into a love song
(`Cause I love You, Lord)
And from this lament, raise up an anthem, oh

*Rend Collective ©2018 Rend Family Records and Sparrow Records.
CCL number 960723*

What Love is This by Doug Horley

What love is this, the love of Jesus
That gave it's all, that cost His life
Flesh torn by nails, life cruelly taken
The Father's Son, love's sacrifice

And I thank You Lord for loving me, and I lift my hands so gratefully
And I thank You Lord that I can be a child of Yours - Eternally
You are my King, You are my Saviour
You'll always be a friend to me
Safe in Your arms now and forever
Your love shines bright, my morning star
And I thank You Lord for loving me, and I lift my hands so gratefully
And I thank You Lord that I can be a child of Yours - Eternally
Now let Your power rain down upon me
Such peace and joy cascading down
May Your love touch all those around me
I'll shine for You; I'll shine for You
And I thank You Lord for loving me, and I lift my hands so gratefully
And I thank You Lord that I can be a child of Yours - Eternally
What love is this, the love of Jesus
That gave it's all, that cost His life
Flesh torn by nails, life cruelly taken
The Father's Son, love's sacrifice, the Father's Son, love's sacrifice
Jesus, oh Jesus, Jesus, oh Jesus,
Thank You oh Jesus, thank You, oh Jesus
For Your love, for Your goodness
For all that You've done in my life and all that You are going to do
Jesus, oh Jesus, daily Your love surrounds me
Daily Your love protects me, daily Your love sings over me
Thank You, You're my friend;
Thank You, You're my friend.

D Horley & S Whitehouse ©2001 Thank You Music. CCL number 960723

Be Still my Soul by Bryn Haworth

Be still my soul, before the Lord
And wait for the sound of His voice
I will wait on the Lord
I will wait patiently
I will open my heart to His Word.
So speak Lord, Your servant is listening
Speak Lord, Your servant is here
Be still my soul, before the Lord
And patiently wait for His voice.
I will wait on You Lord
I will wait patiently
I will open my heart to Your Word
I have calmed my heart
I have still my soul
Like a child in his mother's arms.
Here in Your presence, I'll stay Oh Lord
Here in Your arms I will lay
Be still my soul before the Lord
And patiently wait for His word.

Bryn Haworth ©1991 Kingsway Thank you Music. CCL number 960723

Kindness by Chris Tomlin

Open up the skies of mercy
And rain down the cleansing flood
Healing waters rise around us
Hear our cries Lord let them rise
It's Your kindness Lord

That leads us to repentance
Your favor, Lord, is our desire
It's Your beauty, Lord
That makes us stand in silence
Your love
Your love
Is better than life
We can feel
Your mercy falling
You are turning our hearts back again
Hear our praises rise to heaven
Draw us near Lord
Meet us here
It's Your kindness Lord
That leads us to repentance
Your favor, Lord, is our desire
It's Your beauty, Lord
That makes us stand in silence
Your love
Your love
Is better than life

*Chris Tomlin, Jesse Reeves, Louie Giglio ©2001 sixstepsrecords.
CCL number 960723*

You are My True North by Rend Collective

Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
I will follow You into the dark; dark, dark
I will follow You with all my heart; heart, heart

I will not let the darkness steal the joy within my soul
I will not let my circumstance become my compass, no
I will not let the fears of life and sorrows of this world
Dictate to me how I should feel
For You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
I will not let my failures turn into the curse of shame
I will not walk beneath the clouds that taunt me and condemn
For I will stand on solid ground the shadow of Your love
Forgiven, changed, a heart renamed
For You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
I will follow You into the dark; dark, dark
You are my true north
I will follow You with all my heart; heart, heart
You are my true north
I will follow You into the dark; dark, dark
You are my true north
I will follow You with all my heart; heart, heart
You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north
Oh, You are my true north

Build your Kingdom Here

Come set Your rule and reign

In our hearts again.

Increase in us we pray.

Unveil why we're made.

Come set our hearts ablaze with hope

Like wildfire in our very souls.

Holy Spirit, come invade us now.

We are Your church.

We need Your power in us.

We seek Your kingdom first.

We hunger and we thirst.

Refuse to waste our lives

for You're our joy and prize.

To see the captive hearts released.

The hurt, the sick, the poor at peace.

We lay down our lives for Heaven's cause.

We are Your church.

We pray revive this earth.

Build Your kingdom here.

Let the darkness fear.

Show Your mighty hand.

Heal our streets and land.

Set Your church on fire.

Win this nation back.

Change the atmosphere.

Build Your kingdom here.

We pray.

Unleash Your kingdom's power
reaching the near and far.

No force of Hell can stop
Your beauty changing hearts.

You made us for much more than this!

Awake the kingdom seed in us!

Fill us with the strength and love of Christ.

We are Your church.

We are the hope on earth.

Chorus

Rend Collective ©2011 Kingsway. CCL number 960723

Appendix B: References

1. Unlock website: http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources_projects.php#bible_study_resources
2. The A2 Covid Timelines are available from <http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk>.
3. The Year We Stayed at Home. Available to download from: http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources_projects.php#bible_study_resources
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/20/an-outbreak-of-post-lockdown-teenage-mayhem-im-thrilled-to-see-it>
5. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/covid-kindness-study-pandemic-nicer-b1802092.html>
6. <https://www.sheafportertrust.org/>
7. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/may/11/post-traumatic-growth-the-woman-who-learned-to-live-a-profoundly-good-life-after-loss?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Appendix C

Unlock, by various names, has been around since 1972, trying to help (mainly) urban Christians to understand and share their faith appropriately. Our life experience matters; our stories; our joys and sorrows. The Bible has plenty to say, more than we'll ever know, about our lives, if we know how to read it and apply it - if we know how to **UNLOCK** it!

Unlock uses an approach to engaging with the Bible that is different to traditional Bible studies, based on a reflective learning cycle which is a tried and tested way of introducing people to the Bible in a non-threatening way (see below). We usually work with people outside of church who may be interested in finding out a bit more about faith but perhaps are not attracted to the formal methods of learning often associated with church life. Our approach starts from the stories and experiences of group members, whereas a more traditional approach starts from the Biblical text. It has been found to work well with small groups of urban, oral learners. Many churches have activities that draw in members of their surrounding community but then struggle with how to move on from those relationships into exploring faith, especially in urban environments where anything formal might be treated with suspicion. Unlock's approach can help with that.

There are many free resources on the Unlock website www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources designed for use with such groups. However, because each of these resources was designed for a particular

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- Obtain advance permission from Unlock if the material is to be distributed to a network wider than a local church group.

group in a particular time and place they are unlikely be a perfect fit for your group as they stand. They are offered more as inspiration to you to design your own materials along the same lines, rather than as ready to use packages.

If you have any queries relating to Unlock materials, please contact:

Unlock, 15 Station Road, Rotherham S60 1HN

01709 380318 office@unlock-urban.org.uk

The Unlock Learning Cycle

Unlocking real life

stories of urban people

Start with the group telling stories from their real life experience.

Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Change happens as a result of linking real life experience with the Bible. This change often leads to action among others.

Leading to more experience

What we learn now is learnt for life and changes us. We also learn to keep reflecting!

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

The real life stories are connected to and compared with similar situations in the Bible.



Appendix D: Picture Links

Introduction

Romans 15:30: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-XY8_cE2VCP8/UJzwy_iRIMI/AAAAAAAAADg/_aFrHSbN7I/s1600/2.jpg

Lockdown: https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-hppqimee46U/XyJohMe7WpI/AAAAAAAAIzW/QZvDZ5ntY7ItEUqGI_Syc7D992fWS6fNQCLeBGAsYHQ/s1600/lockdownnews.jpg

Dancing in the rain: <https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-Ra9fiogQkgE/Vr96p2Wc5mI/AAAAAAAAAJ7M/5KKCLHLwEOs/s1600/Dancing-in-the-rain-purple-moviematica.jpg>

Looking Back

Go slow to go faster: http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-ZgGBXSuMw_k/VCNHA4Bh_5I/AAAAAAAAAEdu/PZAYDF4dHIU/s1600/go-slow-to-go-fast-viggo-mortensen.png

Covid Timeline: <http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/documents/COVIDtimelinetemplate.pdf>

He hears us: <https://external-content.duckduckgo.com/iu/?u=https%3A%2F%2Ftse1.mm.bing.net%2Fth%3Fid%3DOIP.4ZXRbhCZL0dOs4Tbaief3wAAAA%26pid%3DApi&f=1>

Achilles and the Poetics of Lament: <http://brewminate.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/121917-79-Achilles-Classics-Literature-Lament.jpg>

Tears: <http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-SftfLZWXHI4/U3QtLK05IUI/AAAAAAAAAE80/mKqZ5-ocwdU/s1600/Looking+At+Tears+Under+A+Microscope+Reveals+An+Amazing+Fact.jpg>

Lament: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-8uMa8Dw8BAA/UFgheSTaqAI/AAAAAAAAAC_8/37YIGqQ3sPQ/w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu/Stiefvater,+Maggie+-+Lament.jpg

Concrete writing: https://live.staticflickr.com/5056/5442717431_4f507fd245_b.jpg

My yoke is easy and burden light: <https://external-content.duckduckgo.com/iu/?u=http%3A%2F%2F2.bp.blogspot.com%2F-9qfBKZ7FcY%2FT52sSAO5AXI%2FAAAAAAAAAArk%2FQXX40REzxvw%2Fs1600%2Fmatthew%2B11-30.jpg&f=1&nofb=1>

Spring Garden: https://external-content.duckduckgo.com/iu/?u=http%3A%2F%2Fupload.wikimedia.org%2Fwikipedia%2Fcommons%2F9%2F92%2FColorful_spring_garden.jpg&f=1&nofb=1

Gratitude: <http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-0rVVVcZy24U/Ts93qem9o-I/AAAAAAAAA0Y/KBIqIdSACEE/s1600/gratitude+%25281%2529.jpg>

Little things: <https://i1.wp.com/mysoultalks.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/gratitude-quote-image.jpg?ssl=1>

Butterfly: https://external-content.duckduckgo.com/iu/?u=https%3A%2F%2F1.bp.blogspot.com%2F-BqghdH5KaaY%2FXrg5E_gG7jI%2FAAAAAAAAAAV_s%2FIRIhoyaQBTYI3RvWx9WY1m2XgYv2FiuLACLcBGAsYHQ%2Fs640%2Fsmall%252Bcopper

[%252Bhome.jpeg&f=1&nofb=1](#)

Grateful montage: <https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-IoEtA88EM8k/WEScqXCsnPI/AAAAAAAAABHV8/wJXcqScAy7I0bvzzL27PRGz90kV8cEahwCLcB/s1600/November%2B-%2BGratitude%2BWord%2BCloud.png>

Today I am Grateful For: <https://janobrien.typepad.com/.a/6a00d8341f460053ef01bb07b67999970d-320wi>

Looking to Today

Dormouse: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/43/Graphiurus_spec_-_murinus-1.jpg/440px-Graphiurus_spec_-_murinus-1.jpg

Better together: <https://i0.wp.com/storypath.upsem.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/best-friends-better-together.jpg>

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You are loved: https://live.staticflickr.com/4384/36781394456_7b4be24758_n.jpg

Walk a mile in my shoes: https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/proxy/3XROj7_kCQA7Jf4fUak9iTTiaOLNPHOTJcBVPiBPqYwdYLNr5ZekAT_nOUOKPC8iai8qNiigtzck-flOvIinSlrvIRhehOeOSN8mPfshcLBLrzZnCRI4hoEK0wcHmPA8oGHmWBK8cBcdvb4=w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu

Cottage garden: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/25/Spring_garden.jpg

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Thank you: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-l4zAfrNIw8E/UsWWc7eL0bI/AAAAAAAAANUI/jUf5aIhVGEK/s1600/thank_you.jpg

Looking Forward

The River Sheaf: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/13/River_Sheaf_-_Highfield_25-04-06.jpg/250px-River_Sheaf_-_Highfield_25-04-06.jpg

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Compass: https://pngimg.com/uploads/compass/compass_PNG25562.png

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