

## Sunday 22nd March

### Our Verse for the week

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Repeat this verse several times out loud. See if you can memorize it.

Think about why we should give thanks to God for everything?

What are some things for which we can give God thanks? See how many you can think of.

### Bible Study

Our Bible verse teaches us to be thankful to God for everything. Here are two more Bibles passages to look at to help us think about this more.

Read the verses directly from the Bible. Read each passage before thinking through the questions that follow.

Read 1 Timothy 4:4-5

Questions:

1. Is everything created by God?
2. Does scripture say that everything made by God is good or bad?
3. How does this verse make you feel when the shops have run out of your favourite food?
5. How can we be more thankful to God at this time?

Read Psalm 136

Questions:

1. Why does Psalm 136 say we should thank the Lord?
2. What endures forever?
3. What is one thing mentioned in the scripture that God has done for which you are thankful?

### Adults & Teens

Take time to read this psalm through again slowly. Is there a particular verse that catches your attention?

Let God speak to you through this verse. Listen to what he has to say to you today.

Then take time to pray and praise God. Give him thanks for his care and provision.

If you're the creative type you may want to draw or doodle a verse or phrase from the psalm.

### Kids

You can download the colouring sheets and word search from the website page.

Maybe you might like to draw a picture of all the things you are thankful for. Send Laura a photo of your artwork & she'll share it with the whole church.

### Prayer

Father God, as we move into these strange times of change and confusion, we trust that you are by our side. You walk with us always, at all times, in every situation. Grant peace to those who are anxious. Bring joy to all who are self-isolating. Keep safe all who work in front line professions. Help us to spread kindness and love wherever we are. We give you thanks and praise, now and forever. Amen.

## **A Reflection written by Baptist Minister Rev Mike Sherburn**

I found this poem very honest and encouraging this week so thought I would share it with you.

### **The world is not mine.**

I did not call it into being,  
or design its hillsides.  
It was not me who decided that birds should fly  
or that springtime lambs should gambol.

My voice did not spread the oceans  
my fingers did not spread the rambling moorlands  
make streams and rivers as fountains of life  
or call glaciers to trace their paths through the mountains.

The world is not mine.

And so, the people are not mine.  
They owe me nothing,  
they are not toy soldiers or tea-party dollies  
Their follies are not my entertainments

It is not for them to fit my situations or create my solutions  
My confusion is not their problem.  
For I did not form them or shape them,  
make them creative or surly, burly or effervescent.

They bring life to my life or not, but the people are not mine.  
My fear I feel, the seal of anxiety on the letter I write myself,  
that fear is mine.  
I am afraid. I have strayed from contentment. I am worried.

I am off my own map of regular living.  
In these moments, I struggle to be forgiving.  
My misgivings are on display. My dismay is broadcasting.  
It takes an effort to offer thanksgiving – there is heaviness in my heart.

I know the strain on my spirit. I feel I am reaching my limit.  
I have reached the end of my rope and I need another.  
I rage at the world and cradle it, too...

The fear and frustrations of girls and boys whose futures feel fraught  
as exams are cancelled, their years to come feeling mishandled and scrambled.  
My anger peaks at the selfishness and my heart bleeds for the fear  
of those who are storing up more than their cupboards can clasp.

The lack of clear picture, the restrictions and vague lectures  
leave us with blurry vision.

So where can I go?

To the one whose promise has never been of ease.  
To the one whose compassion will never cease.  
To the one who can no more be controlled or channelled than the breeze.  
To the one who lived through hardship, exclusion, confusion and pain.  
To the one who brings rain and sunshine on all.  
He gets my call: my first shout and my last cry.

It's him. It's Jesus.

And he'd better listen. He had better hear me. Because he has promised.

And he will.

He is saviour, he is friend;  
He is justice, he is comfort;  
He is hope, he is promise.  
And he is love.

He is mine.