

Hold On To Hope

Sunday 26th April 2020

Aim of the Session	<i>The aim of this session is to explore the idea of HOPE and FAITH, even when we have to wait for a long time.</i>
---------------------------	---

Intro/opening activity

Things you'll need for this activity:

- Catalogues, magazines, newspapers
- Glue
- Plain paper or card

Before the session, draw and cut out the letters H O P E. Make the letters as big and thick as possible.

Let the children go through catalogues or magazines (if you have any!) and find the things they are hoping they can get, things they'd like to do or places they'd like to go once the Coronavirus has gone. Ask them to cut them out and stick them on the letters. When the letters are full, stick them up on a wall in order. You could get them to draw pictures if you have nothing suitable.

It may be fun to display this craft work in your window for passers by.

The Point: For fun and to think about what we're hoping for.

Illustration

Things you'll need for this activity:

- 3 different surfaces - one is a table and the other two could be anything that would be hard to build on (bumpy rocks, pile of clothes, pasta, scrunched up newspaper, bowl of water)
- Something to build with - duplo, lego, wooden blocks, playing cards

In your room prepare the 3 surfaces (one being a table). Beside each of these, place some building materials - wooden bricks, Lego, or even a pack of cards!

Invite the children to see which surface is the best for building a tower on - how high can they get the tower on each of the foundations.

They should find that it is easiest to build on the table.

Ask them how easy they found it to build on the different foundations, and ask why this was so?

You might for example say something like - they didn't stand a hope of building anything successful on water or newspaper because it moves

too much! Shingle was easier – but still moved quite a lot. The table was the only place that they could really hope to build anything!

Say that life is like that – we can only hope to build good, strong lives if we build on the teaching Jesus gives us. Ask if they can remember a parable Jesus told which makes this point? (The wise and foolish builders: Matthew 7:24-27.) Read this parable if you would like (but the main teaching is coming up!)

The Point: To see that we only have hope of succeeding if we build on a firm foundation.

Teaching

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leN-xNrkJbo> up to 3:19

Discuss these questions together:

- Why did Simeon and Anna have hope that they would see the Messiah? (*Because the Holy Spirit had told them they would*)
- Do you think it was easy for Simeon to wait that long to see what he was hoping for?
- How are you finding waiting to be able to do the things you are hoping to do once the Coronavirus is over?
- What can we learn about hope from Simeon's story? (*That sometimes what we HOPE for takes a while to come, but we should have FAITH to keep believing in God because He is faithful*)

We all want this Coronavirus to end soon, we want everybody to be safe and we want our lives back to normal. In this time waiting for the virus and lockdown to come to an end we must be fuelled by hope and faith in the promises of God - the rainbow which everyone is putting in their windows was a sign of God's promise (after Noah and the Ark story) and He promises that He is with us in this time and we can remind ourselves and our children that Jesus is the Hope that we have.

Read this Bible verse in Hebrews 6:19 it says. "We have this Hope as an anchor for the soul." Write it out in separate pieces on paper and get the child(ren) to put in order. Say it several times then start removing words one at a time until they can remember it all.

The Point: To see how Simeon and Anna had hope, which was realised.

Pray

Pray together thanking God that we can have hope in Him and this is the firm foundation for us to build our lives on, especially during this difficult time.