

# Hide and Seek Seek and Find

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To the north east of the city of Norwich, but reaching into quite near the centre, is a large, open expanse of land called Mousehold Heath. Nearly five hundred years ago it was the scene of a rebellion against the rich landowners who enclosed common land for their own use, leaving the villagers nowhere to graze their animals. As an adult, I am fascinated by the history; as a child, if I thought about it at all, I just thought of it as a wonderful place to go off and explore with my cousin, who is a little bit older than I am. Nowadays letting two children wander around on their own like that would be unthinkable, unwise and probably downright foolish, though, back in the day, we were quite safe and very happy.

Luke is the only Gospel which tells us about Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to celebrate the Passover Festival in Jerusalem when he was twelve years old (Luke 2:41-52). From our 21st century, western viewpoint, one of the most remarkable things is that Mary and Joseph were comfortable setting off from Jerusalem to return home without checking exactly where Jesus was and who he was with. They had no doubt that he was somewhere in the group with friends and neighbours, safe and happy. When they had to return to the city, without the rest of the party, to look for him, it was a very different picture. They were searching for a twelve year old trying to look after himself in the big city. We can imagine their increasing panic as they searched everywhere they thought he could possibly be. His response when they find him, in the Temple, is calm and reasonable, 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?'

Mary and Joseph had to search for Jesus and they must have been worried sick as they did so. At the different stages in our lives, we sometimes may have to search for him too. At times, when we relax and think that all is well in our relationship with him he will be up ahead of us, asking something more of us or, perhaps, he will be staying behind while we rush ahead with something and we will need to step back to seek him afresh. A key part of walking with him is developing what the Church calls spiritual disciples. The two most basic (and essential) are prayer and Bible reading, but in these particularly dark times, we might also find the discipline of thankfulness - choosing to recognise and name the good things God has given and still gives - especially beneficial.



We can take comfort and encouragement from the old saying, 'If Jesus seems far away, guess who has moved?' When they find him, in the Temple, Jesus does not say, or do, what Mary and Joseph were expecting. He does not always say, or do, what we are expecting when we meet with him, either. What we can be sure of is that he meets us with love and understanding and walks with us, what ever we are going through, however difficult the path we are on, through bad times and good times.

*Pat Edwards, Staff Team*



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 StMarysChurchEastLeake



# Daily Prayer

A resource for the week ahead

*Below is a simple pattern of prayer. You might like to agree with a friend to pray these words together.*

**\$?4=8-6; >A3B'**

"Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory" Psalm 24 1o

*Pause for reflection as we offer the day to God.*

As our prayers come before you, O Lord, build your kingdom here, and lead us to grow in it, as we seek your will, your word and your presence in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**. 8;4' 4038-6°**

**fIA83OH'** ..... Psalm 21

**( OODA3OH'** ..... Malachi 3:1-4

**( D=3OH'** ..... Isaiah 2:2-4

**" >=3OH'** ..... Isaiah 1:1-9

**) D4B3OH'** ..... Zechariah 2:10-12

**, 43=4B3OH'** ..... Zechariah 9:9-10

**) 7DAB3OH'** ..... Ezekiel 37:24-28

**fIA83OH'** ..... Psalm 22

*Our passages this week give background to the kingdom of God which is a focus of this week's sermon. What does this passage tell me about the character and the will of God? And what difference does it make to what I want to pray for in life?*

**) 74~ >;42C5-AC74F 44:**

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
transform the poverty of our nature by  
the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
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. Amen.

**" ?AOH4A5-A>DA2< < D=8F**

Heavenly Father, we commend to your loving goodness those in our community who have been further isolated by this lockdown. May they know the care of good friendships, and the comforting presence of your Spirit. Amen.

**" ?AOH4A5-AC74# E (**

Lord Jesus, we are daily reminded of the enormous pressure being exerted on our health service. We pray that the infection rate and hospitalisations might fall, and that frontline staff might be protected both from the virus and the worst of the impact of the devastating mental strain of seeing so much suffering. Amen.

**" ?AOH4A5-AC74f=3>=4B88= 4OAC7@DO: 4**

Almighty God, we lift to you the island of Sulawesi following the earthquake, and particularly pray for rescue efforts at the collapsed hospital. Give energy to the emergency services, and aid to all who will need to rebuild their lives. Amen.

**" ?AOH4A5-AC74~ 7DA27 `>5/ =6;O=3**

Spirit of God, we give you thanks for churches around the country who are seeking to make you known in word and deed at this time. Bless, we pray, the Church of England, and keep it faithful to your purposes. Amen.

*Add your own prayers or say the Lord's Prayer*

**" ~ ;>B8-6%AOH4A**

Eternal Lord,  
our beginning and our end:  
bring us with the whole creation  
to your glory, hidden through past ages  
and made known  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.



# In Touch

Local news and thoughts from the wider church

At 8.30am, 9.30am and 10.30am every Sunday on our website, Facebook and YouTube channel. We have a main service streaming at 10am and evening prayer at 6pm.

On Monday night, St Mary's PCC decided to **suspend temporarily the midweek communions** in view of the increasing cases of coronavirus in the village. It was not a decision that was taken lightly but was seen as the wise and responsible thing to do at this time. Gathered services will restart when it is appropriate to do so and local Covid cases are starting to fall again. **The church building is still open every day during daylight hours** and additional cleaning has been put in place.

At that PCC meeting, the

committee also resumed discussing the creation of a paid role to focus on our ministry to children and families. The PCC agreed that this should be pursued in the coming months. Work will now start on finalising a job description, laying out a timetable for an appointment, and encouraging the church to partner in this vital ministry through financial giving and prayer. We are deeply excited by the prospect of being able to more effectively reach and care for the young families in our growing village and who attend our local schools. Do please hold these next steps in your prayers.

As always, there are a number of scams and fraud attempts doing the rounds at the moment by people impersonating clergy. Please be vigilant.

Join us for our Christingle service on **Sunday 17th January at 3.30pm** on the church website or Facebook page.

We'll make Christingles together as we learn about the meaning of each part.

## Christingle

THE BITS YOU NEED TO GATHER IN ADVANCE :

- ◊ 1 orange
- ◊ 4 cocktail sticks
- ◊ Red ribbon
- ◊ 1 candle
- ◊ Dolly Mixtures/Jelly Babies/Liquorice Allsorts + dried fruit

OR LAST MINUTE IDEAS:

- ◊ 1 ball shaped item (eg apple)
- ◊ 4 pencils
- ◊ A strip of red coloured paper + sticky tape or glue
- ◊ Cut out paper flame
- ◊ Sweets, dried fruit



