



Diocesan Education Team Project 2021
EYFS Copy



Our Vision : Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good



Introduction

Two years ago while visiting my family in the USA, at Ground Zero in NY City we gathered under *The Survivor Tree*, then sat in silence pondering on the amazing story behind the now-flourishing natural gift to the community and memorial site.

October 2001 - one month after the devastation of the collapsed Twin Towers, some workers were removing the still-smoking rubble. An incredible moment occurred. Poking through the crumbled grey concrete and ash some live, green leaves were visible.

The workers carefully uncovered the tree : most of her limbs had been sheared off, and only a few roots remained, but the green leaves were a sign of hope that she could be saved.

For nine years the tree was tended and loved at a nursery, and the Callery Pear Tree was returned to a place of honour, near where it had lived, in the newly- named 9/11 Memorial Plaza.

I often re-read the picture book we bought that day. It's a metaphor for hope, endurance and flourishing, even when the odds seem stacked against it. I was reminded of it recently when a flyer dropped out of the predictable bundle in the Sunday Supplement titled *The Tree That Should Never Have Grown*. The charity *Practical Action* requested a donation to fund families severely affected by extreme weather events in North Darfur, Sudan. A smiling woman who had planted an Acacia Tree that flourished, was beaming from the flyer. In this context where families are losing their homes, crops and livelihoods, planting life-changing trees to prevent desertification is critical.

Thinking about such things, and especially being practically involved, not only helps other people, the environment, the climate and creation, but also has a tangible impact on our own well being and mental health.

There has been a great deal of research highlighting the benefit to child mental health of spending time in wild places. By exploring their natural environment, children and adults have opportunities to think and speak about their relationship with the world in which they live, how they feel about themselves, their relationships with others, the world and their faith.

Our 2021 **Ten Ten # flourishing** project is focussed on developing spiritual wellness in our school communities. Our aim is that children and adults in our schools will learn, worship, pray and meditate in the great outdoors to support positive mental wellbeing for both pupils and staff.

This project draws on contemporary research that shows being involved with nature improves child and adult mental health. At the same time, it is a project that focuses on ancient Christian traditions when sacred places and practices were outside.

Tough problems need ingenious solutions, and the Education Team wishes to support school communities with practical advice and activities to improve mental health at this challenging time for schools. It is important for our school leaders to nurture their own mental health and to support employee wellbeing during this time. Therefore, this year's project is for the whole school community, not just pupils.

Sometimes of course, as adults we will not see the long-term impact of our immediate actions, whether those are impacting on the environment, or on the mental and spiritual health of the children with whom we learn. But we earnestly commit ourselves to the privilege of serving them. Somewhat like the allegorical tale of Elzeard Bouffier – *The Man Who Planted Trees*. This is subtle parable of the life-giving shepherd who chooses to carry out the work of God for over forty years in the desolate hills and lifeless villages, with only partial knowledge and sight of the enormity of his commitment and service.

This Project Booklet contains some suggestions for developing spiritual wellness for the school community. This includes active, physical projects, as well as stilling activities. Many resources for the activities are free of charge and use things found in the natural environment, regardless of whether your school or church in an urban, rural or coastal setting.

Our hope and desire is that by the end of the academic year, each of our schools will have created an outdoor Spiritual Space – be that a Garden, a Sunflower or Willow construction, or just re-thinking and presenting an existing area of the school grounds. Lots of ideas are in the booklet, but do let us know of more!

So I invite you to join us in **Planting Hope and Reaping Happiness**. Feel free to share this resource booklet widely!

Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves.

Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other.

No matter how difficult it is... Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you.

Best wishes

Jeff

Jeff Williams
Director of Education



The project title **Ten Ten #flourishing** is derived from John's Gospel Chapter 10 Verse 10 : I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

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As practitioners will be aware 2021 will see changes to the Early Years goals, with early adopter schools already currently working to the new framework.

Where you see this tree symbol and blue text, the suggested activity has been linked to the seven areas of learning in the new Statutory Framework for Early Years.

Why go outside?

According to the mental health charity Mind, spending time in green space or bringing nature into everyday life, can benefit both mental and physical wellbeing. Activities like growing food or flowers, exercising outdoors or being around animals can have numerous positive effects. They can:

- improve mood
- reduce feelings of stress or anger
- help you take time out and feel more relaxed
- improve physical health
- improve confidence and self-esteem
- help you be more active



It is hoped that being involved in one, some or all of the projects in this booklet will contribute to improving children's and adults mental health and provide a common ground for shared experience of God's wonderful world.

Recognising Spiritual Development

The Stapleford Centre in Nottingham completed helpful work looking at spirituality through the concepts of windows, mirrors and doors. Many schools now use this vocabulary to teach even very young children how to recognise their own spiritual development. A basic outline of this is below:

MIRROR MOMENTS: Give children opportunities to *talk about* their experiences. In this they are learning *from* life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.

WINDOW MOMENTS: Give children opportunities to become *aware* of the world in new ways; to *wonder* about life's 'WOWs' (things that are amazing) and 'OWs' (things that bring us up short). Children learn *about* life in all its fullness.

DOOR MOMENTS: Give children opportunities to *respond* to all of this; to **do** something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts. In this they are learning to *live* by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

CANDLE MOMENTS: Give children opportunities to think beyond all this: to think of things that they cannot see, but perhaps feel or see reflected in the words and actions of people in the stories from their faith.



Trees of Hope

For the Ten Ten # flourishing project, the Diocesan Education Team is again working with Richard Pollard (formerly of Kew Gardens and now leading The Tree Council National Schools Programme). Richard was involved in our hugely popular Bee Inspired project and has been working with us on developing an orchard planting offer to settings that will teach children resilience and connectivity using the example of trees.

Trees appeal to all the senses, fresh smells, the sound of moving leaves and birdsong, the texture of the bark – all of these are appealing, especially in modern towns and cities.

By planting saplings that may take years to become fully grown, children are offering a gift of God's creation to other children yet to be born. That in itself should be a pretty good feeling! The Orchards for Schools project, set up by The Tree Council, provides an excellent opportunity for Early Years settings to get involved with their nearest church school.

Orchards for Schools

Orchards for schools has been setup in partnership with the Daily Mail and pre-school settings attached to a church school may like to take advantage of the scheme . All diocesan schools are being encouraged to apply for a FREE orchard tree pack, or fruiting hedgerow pack by using the link below:



<https://treecouncil.org.uk/schools-and-education/orchards-for-schools/>

You will receive a pack containing five mixed fruit trees or 30 fruiting hedgerow samplings. Five trees or more constitutes an orchard. The pack will contain all the advice needed on preparing the ground, planting, connecting, caring and sharing in unlocking the wonder of trees. There are helpful resources that can be downloaded from the website including a simple application guidance and a planner.

Settings will be able to join a training webinar with Richard Pollard and partners Learning through Landscapes in which they will discuss the project, activities and a simple guide on the tree planting process to ensure the success of the trees.

Colours of Creation



Children will explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants

You may like to start this activity by watching the creation story using the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAYULgEEIpg>

This activity could follow a special walk (see below). The technique relies on tissue paper, which "bleeds" when water is added and produces a mingled effect. Children enjoy watching the colours bleed into each other.

You will need:

Tissue paper of various colours (the colours should bleed)

Thick Card

Instructions:

Print a leaf template on to the card.

Rip some yellow, orange, red, brown and green art tissue paper into small pieces.



Paint part of the leaf template with water and stick on the tissue paper, adding lots more water over the top to make sure the tissue paper is stuck down. Keep adding more water and tissue paper until the leaf is covered. Leave to dry.



When the tissue paper dries, it peels off easily leaving a lovely mix of colours, which will fade a bit too. When the tissue paper dries, it peels off easily leaving a lovely mix of colours, which will fade a little.



Making your own paint!

Make the most of your outdoor time by collecting some materials together for a painting session later - using paints that you make yourself.

Mud:

Stir warm water into some dry mud to make brown paint.

Grass and leaves:

Soak grass in boiling water over night, and strained the next morning, for green. You can also rub some leaves directly onto paper, but make sure you don't use any with irritating sap.

Flowers:

Rub dandelions onto paper for a yellow colour.



Prayer activity with sticks

Give the children two sticks each and call one 'day' and one 'night'.

As they hold each stick, ask the children to think of the things that they do in the day and in the night; Ask them to share their ideas.

Ask them to choose one of their sticks – either the day or the night. Put the other one down.

Ask the children to choose one thing that they do in the day or the night, depending on what stick they have chosen. Tell the children that you are going to pray for them. Ask God to be with the child the next time they do the chosen activity.



Andy Goldsworthy



Children will explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants

Children will safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;

Famous sculptor and photographer, Andy Goldsworthy not only works *with* nature, but *in* nature. In his artwork, stones, rocks, branches, twigs, leaves and ice are arranged carefully and patiently, making use of various repeated snaking lines, spirals, circles and holes. A collection of his work can be seen following the link below:

https://youtu.be/B4jV87O_cMI



Goldsworthy's work is often used as a stimulus in schools to create natural artwork in the outdoors.

For the Ten Ten #flourishing project , settings are encouraged to focus on those pieces in which Goldsworthy places himself in the centre of his art (see below).



This will give the children an added sense of connecting with the environment and being physically part of the creative process (see below). Involve the children in creating large pieces of art in which they feature and then consider creating a photo album of the creations.



Walking to Wellness

As many of us know, walking is an excellent way to maintain not only physical but mental health. Encouraging children from an early age to walk regularly sets them up with positive habits later in life.

Walking to improve mental health does not have to be gentle or slow. A brisk walk through around the field, playground or along the road can be equally invigorating and inspiring.

Schools should follow the latest government Covid 19 guidelines for these activities.

Walking has been proven to encourage feelings of calm and happiness. It is also a great way for children to explore God's world in all its various forms, feeding their curiosity and promoting independence.

Walk with reflections

Walking with reflections is a simple activity and can be calming for both children and staff. The idea is to walk as a group (socially distant if necessary) and stop a few times to listen to a Bible story.

To teach younger children to take part in mindful walking, the image of the snail could be used:

Slow down

Notice things

Appreciate what is around you

Investigate and Imagine

Live thoughtfully and thankfully, being kind to others



‘Sit Spots’



Children will explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants

Children will describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;

Having a familiar place to be alone to think or reflect can be powerful for very young children. A ‘sit spot’ is simply a favorite place in nature that children can visit regularly to reflect or to study patterns of local plants, birds, trees, animals, etc.

By choosing one place outside that they visit over and over again, children can develop the self-awareness and gradually acquire an enhanced sensitivity to God’s world and their place in it.

The instructions below may be helpful for staff wanting to develop this practice in their setting.

- Take a small group of children outside to choose a Sit Spot.
- Choose one spot in the grounds where children feel comfortable and safe.
- Encourage the children to look around at where they are...
- Notice what’s happening with the plants, trees & birds of this place
- Are there birds? Insects?
- Ask the children to listen to the sounds, smell the air, open their eyes to all that they can see
- Tell them that they are sitting in the middle of God’s wonderful world
- Teach them how to breathe slowly and gently
- Tell the children that this is a special place where they can come to be quiet whenever they want



Simple prayers and reflections



- Marvel with a magnifying glass – allow children time to look closely at things, perhaps with a magnifying glass and marvel at minute beauty in nature before giving thanks.
- ‘Soft Eyes’ – children and adults stand outside for a few minutes nice and still. Try to breathe slowly and sense the world around you. This is a relaxing and meditative process.
- Try physical ways of praying or reflecting. After a vigorous walk or run, ask the children to simply try lying down in the school field or playground, and feel their bodies supported by the earth. Ask the children to relax in the moment. Watch the clouds – do nothing but watch them for a few moments. Breathe in God’s air as if it were God’s love.

Create a prayer bucket

Turn a large ice-cream tub or cardboard box into a mini prayer bucket to help children pray when they are worried or sad about something. Ask the child to draw someone or something they want to pray for on a square piece of paper. After they draw the person or thing they want to pray for, direct them to drop it in the prayer bucket.

Bring the bucket to the carpet at worship or story time, remove the papers. Tell the children that prayer is talking to God and that they can tell him anything about the person or thing they drew. Tell the children that you are going to say a little prayer now to pray for the people/things on the paper.



Godly Play worship promoting Spiritual Wellness

Godly Play UK, in association with the Church Schools of Cambridge, has support the launch of a new, free resource.

Developed by teacher-researcher Elisabeth Sutcliffe, this new resource draws on the Godly Play style and process. Its approach helps to create a different atmosphere within the setting that provides for reflection as a class and individually. Using story, wondering and imaginative response time, pupils' spiritual wellbeing is given focus and value.

It offers teachers accessible, simple-to-follow material that requires almost no additional resources. Children are given space to wonder and respond to Covid-19 pandemic challenges and opportunities. [A short guidance video](https://www.godlyplay.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Collective-Worship-Autumn-2020.pdf) is included, alongside four acts of worship (more to be released soon).

<https://www.godlyplay.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Collective-Worship-Autumn-2020.pdf>

Developing a Spiritual Garden at your setting

A spiritual garden is a place where children and adults can sit quietly and enjoy the peace and calm of natural surroundings. The garden may contain a range of features representing elements that are important to the community using it. There may be a wonderful array of plants which stimulate the senses with their bright colours, fragrance and textures; the soothing sounds of a wind chime; a beautiful bird bath; a cross or Christian symbol that reflects the church vision for the setting; stepping stones and paved areas; fountain or water feature as a reminder of Jesus as the 'Water of Life'; seats, benches, raised timber planting beds, and lighting. Natural stone may suggest silence and strength, the wooden features and trees provide a sense of warmth and shelter. The list goes on.





In addition to the suggestions above, it may be that a new school is able to incorporate an architectural feature of the previous building such as a bell. Willow sculptures, gazebos and so on may also form part of the garden. Whatever is included should contribute to the feeling of a special sacred space for the whole community.

Developing a garden

It is good to involve as wide a range of stakeholders as is practicable in the planning and ideas for the garden. Ensure that everyone understands the vision for the project and the benefits that will ensue. Many people can be involved in the creation, for example, by designing, planting, landscaping, building structures, laying a patio, donating plants and lots more. Some tips to bear in mind:

- Do some research and find examples of existing gardens (see below). This can stimulate ideas to get you started.
- Begin the actual design process by discussing and sketching lots of ideas—everyone who wants to can have a go. In one school, children and parents built models of their garden designs which made a fabulous display.
- Select a working party team of ‘experts’ to collate designs and draw up a final plan for implementation.
- Make garden spot plan layouts on graph paper to scale.
- Consider future maintenance and development of your garden.

Finally, don’t be afraid to ‘phone a friend’. Schools who have been through a similar process will be only too pleased to share their expertise. The following schools are happy to help:

Alverstone Church of England Junior School
(pictured right)



Longparish Church of England Primary School



St Albans Church of England Primary School,
Havant

Breamore Church of England Primary School
in the New Forest



Labyrinths

Labyrinths can be found in churches across the world and many cathedrals have portable labyrinths that people can use. One of the most famous labyrinths can be found at Chartres Cathedral in France (right) which dates back to 1205. Pilgrims travel from all around the world to use the Chartres labyrinth. The idea is that, as pilgrims walk around it, they walk towards God. At the central point, the person comes to the center of his or her relationship with God.



Labyrinths can be found in hospital gardens, parks, schools and home gardens as they are known for their meditative properties.



What is a Labyrinth?

A Labyrinth is **not** a maze; a maze has blind dead ends that are used to confuse and trick the mind. A labyrinth is a spiral course having a single, winding unobstructed path from the outside to the centre that is used to calm and relax.

Finger Labyrinths – start simple

A finger labyrinth is similar to a full sized labyrinth you would walk, except it is on a much smaller and more portable scale. The user traces the path to the centre using your finger rather than with their feet. There are many different kinds of labyrinths differing in size and complexity.

Finger Labyrinths are known to help children relax, feel better when they are sad or scared, deal with situations when they feel ashamed or embarrassed and help them to concentrate.

There are lots of very simple finger labyrinths on the internet that can be printed off.



Finger Labyrinth Meditation.

1. Ask children to place their pointer finger on the entrance of the labyrinth. This can be marked with a coloured dot.
2. Encourage them to trace the pattern of the labyrinth with their finger. They may need to place their hand on yours while you do it. This exercise allows the child's mind to clear from extra thought and focus solely on following the path of the labyrinth.
3. "Walk" to the centre of the labyrinth and rest momentarily, taking deep breaths.
4. Retrace your path out of the labyrinth.
5. Sit back, breathe deeply and relax.

Note: The same steps apply for a Walking Labyrinth, except you slowly walk the path.



Free Printable Finger Labyrinths are available using the link below:

<http://www.relax4life.com/paperlabyrinths.html>

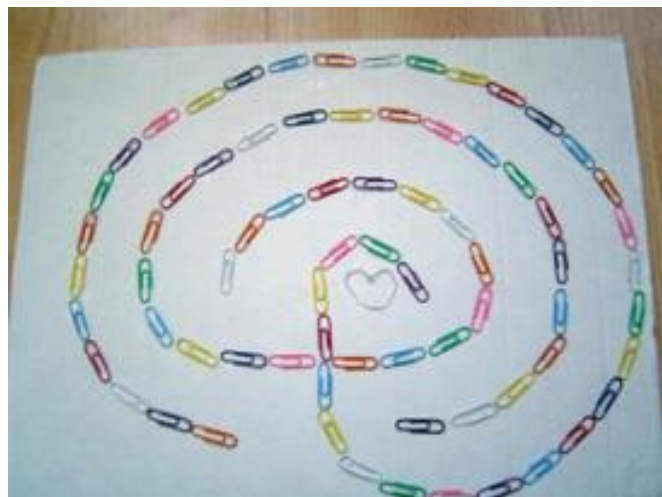
Other Activities:

- Instructions on making your own Finger Labyrinth using Play Dough can be found here: <https://educationsvoice.wordpress.com/2017/03/09/mindfulness-in-the-classroom-using-play-dough-part-2/>
- Make a 3-D Finger Labyrinth: <http://heatherplett.com/2015/01/make-finger-labyrinth-also-piece-art/>
- Challenge the children to create their own Finger Labyrinths by drawing or using small objects on a flat surface or drawing one in sand/salt/rice.

- Create Walking Labyrinths using jumping ropes, construction bricks, cones, bean bags, chalk etc. outside or in the hall for children to walk.
- Challenge children to create their own Walking Labyrinths using jumping ropes, construction bricks, cones, bean bags, etc. outside or in the hall for children to walk.



Children respond immediately to the pattern of a labyrinth. Of course, they first want to race to the middle and out again as fast as they can but with some training labyrinths can be used to support a wide range of learning, including dealing with grief, problem solving, conflict resolution, building community and celebrating joyful events.



Using what you have

The construction of a labyrinth can be very simple. The most basic, and easiest, way to build a labyrinth is to place stones on the earth to form the pattern. You may want to have a base of gravel, coarse sand or bark on which to place the stones. The benefit of children bringing the rocks to be used is that they feel a part of the construction. The stones should be about the size of a grapefruit - small stones can be easily displaced. Different or changing layouts can reflect interest, ability and emotional need of the children.

Other possibilities are paint on pavement, playing field liner on grass or earth, bricks or tiles buried in grass, bottles buried in the ground, short stubs of branches set on end in the ground or temporary labyrinths of almost any materials.

Encourage the participants to paint stones to put in the labyrinth. Stones can represent family members, local groups, classes, subjects, Christian values or emotions. Consider starting a labyrinth book which might include:

A good website to start with is : www.labyrinthociety.org and www.veriditas.net.

Symbols of Balance – Building with Willow



Children will safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

One of the greatest traits of the willow is its flexibility. It is one of the few trees capable of bending into lots of positions without snapping.

Willow spaces serve as excellent prayer or reflection areas and can provide safe havens for children to talk about their feelings or have some time alone.

The collaborative nature of the building of the space builds self-esteem and confidence and the domes themselves provide space for quiet story times..

Willow 'cocoons' can also be used inside and can be purchased readymade fairly cheaply. Domes can be used as stimulus and prayer or Bible story stations.



Building willow structures

Long unrooted willow cuttings (whips) can be used to make functional and attractive structures/barriers that grow and develop throughout the years as well as the seasons. Willow structures can be used for tunnels, domes (which can be interconnected with tunnels if you have the space) and as prayer or reflection areas. You do not need to be especially creative and even the simplest structure can look very impressive, and there are no rigid rules to follow - just handy guidelines.

Willow roots easily when you plant freshly cut willow (long whips or short cuttings) in the ground in Winter. If you order willow whips online you will receive a bundle of sticks, but push them in the ground and you can create attractive, environmentally friendly, practical structures to form dens, tunnels, shaded seating areas and much more.

Making a Twigloo – a prayer or story space

You will need

1. Living Willow Whips – the *Salix Viminalis* variety - 6', 7', 8' or 9' lengths is best
2. Strong garden string
3. Spade or garden fork
4. Weed matting (optional)
5. Play Bark (optional)

Find a suitable spot for your willow den and mark the footprint using a spade, some string or sand.

If weeds are a concern, weed matting is a good idea. Play bark can then be added for a more natural feel. Secure the weed matting into the ground.

Now you're ready for your willow. *Salix Viminalis* or other *Viminalis* species are generally recommended as they are quick growing, hardy and ideal for living willow dens.

Start by finding 6 of the sturdiest willow whips to make your entrance, bringing them together to form an arch. Tie these securely together using the garden string.



The main structure can now be built. Begin with several of the thicker stems and plant these vertically at about 30-40cm intervals around the willow den base. Tie opposite whips together where they meet to begin to form a dome shape. Then begin planting and weaving in the diagonal willow whips. The top of your willow den can be left open to grow before then weaving together.

Stems should be planted about 10cm into the ground. Cut a small cross into the matting (if used) and push the stem into the ground if the soil is soft.

Smaller stems can be planted diagonally, working around the willow den base. These stems will produce more shoots and will make your den nice and bushy, whereas the vertical stems grow long and add to the height.

When your living willow den is complete you can add more structure by weaving in horizontal willow whips around the structure and from the top of the entrance arch to the rest of the structure. The floor of the den can be left as bare matting or play bark can be added.

A step by step guide to building willow tunnels

Step 1: Mark out 2 trenches, dig to a depth of 30cm and mix with compost. You may wish to make the tunnel curve or taper.

Step 2: Insert 2 poles opposite each other along the length of the trenches at a spacing of approximately 25cm. Shorter poles can be used towards the rear of the tunnel to enhance the tapering effect.

Step 3: Bend each pair of poles together to form an arch and tie at the end of each pole.

Step 4: To increase the stability of the structure you can secure a pole(s) along the length of the tunnel at the apex of curves.

Step 5: In order to build up the growth on the sides of the tunnel insert two woven poles at an angle of approximately 45 degrees at the base of each upright on each side. These are then woven back along the tunnel to finish near the top of the curve.

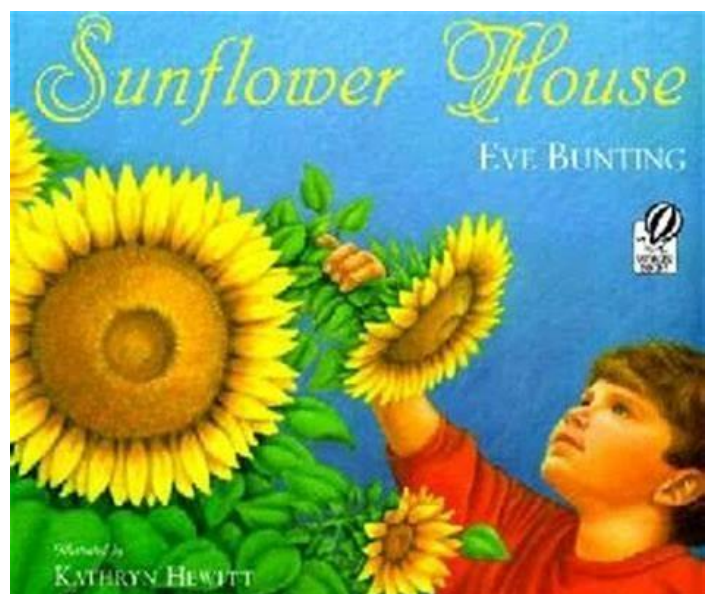
Sunflower Houses as Prayer Spaces



Children will understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

“Sunflower House” by Eve Bunting is a story about a boy who plants a circle of sunflower seeds into the ground. It tells the process of how he watches them while they grow and what happens when they are fully grown. The book is a nice starter for this project, to build a sunflower house in your grounds.

The house, which will need to be built as early as possible in the Spring in order for it to grow in time for the children to use it later in the summer term, can be a focal point for prayer and provide shelter for children wanting to talk with their friends or staff.



An added element to this project is that the seeds from your first sunflower house will be able to be replanted for the following year's house. This enables children to contribute to the ongoing prayer of children in years to come.

Building a sunflower house

The seeds of the giant varieties, when planted in a square or circle, create the perfect setting for a prayer or gathering space.

You will need:

- One packet of sunflower seeds - choose a tall variety like Mammoth or California Greystripe
 - Stakes
 - String or twine
 - A hoe
 - Compost
1. In early spring, find a suitable location with good soil, flat ground, and at least six to eight hours of direct sunlight during the growing season.
 2. Decide whether the sunflower house is going to be a square or a circle.
 3. Stake off the agreed design in the chosen location. Tie a string to one of the stakes and stretch it around the perimeter to designate the walls of the house – remember to leave an opening for the doorway, approximately two-feet wide.
 4. Remove any rocks, grass, and weeds from inside the perimeter. To make the ‘floor’ of your house weed-free, place flattened layers of cardboard inside the marked area, then cover the cardboard with straw or mulch. If you want to, later you can plant a cover crop inside the house to form a comfortable ‘carpet’! Using the string around the perimeter as your guide, use a hoe to clear the perimeter area.
 5. Use a trowel to dig a small hole, 2cm deep, every 30 cm along your marked outline. Place two seeds in each hole, following the packet instructions. Cover the seeds with loose soil. Water seeds thoroughly and daily.



Once your sunflowers are in full bloom, you will have around 20 days to enjoy the beauty of the house. The blooming phase provides the opportunity for bees to pollinate the flower and fertilize the seeds. When the back of the sunflower head turns yellow, you will know that the seeds are ripening.

To harvest the seeds of your sunflower, wait until your sunflower droops and turns brown. Then, cut the stem leaving four inches from the head of the sunflower. You must store the sunflower head upside down in a dry and breathable bag. Your seeds should be ready to harvest within 110 to 125 days after you planted the flower and can be stored ready for planting the following year.

The Power of Drumming

Research by the Royal College of Music found that drumming has a positive impact on mental health, with a 10-week course of group drumming reducing depression by as much as 38% and anxiety by 20%.

Making music can be a powerful tool for promoting mental health and wellbeing and the shared experience of

drumming in a group facilitates feelings of belonging, acceptance, safety and care.

Drumming accelerates physical healing and has even been found to boost the immune system. In addition specific studies conducted by professionals in the fields of music therapy and mental health show us that drumming:

- Reduces tension, anxiety and stress
- Helps control chronic pain
- Boosts the immune system
- Releases negative feelings and emotional trauma.
- Induces deep relaxation and lowers blood pressure
- Research also suggests that drumming serves as a distraction from pain and grief.

Drum Circles also provide an opportunity for adults and children to feel connected with others and gain a sense of interpersonal support. There are great benefits to feeling connected to others, especially those in similar situations. A drum circle can also provide children with an opportunity to connect with their own spirit at a deeper level. Founded in 1996 by drummer Terl Bryant, the Psalm Drummers' vision is to stir up prayer, praise and worship and lead people to Christ through drumming.



Follow the link below to watch the Psalm Drummers praising God at the Albert Hall.

<https://youtu.be/0cXtx7q1C-s>

The group calls on drummers everywhere to drum out beats that carry the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit. Psalm Drummers encourage a life lived in time with the heartbeat of God and in the worship of Jesus Christ.

Psalm drummer, Reverend Mike Griffiths from Winchester, has worked with diocesan headteachers, promoting good mental health through drumming. He recommends using packs of flat drums, the details of which are below:

<https://www.inspire-works.co.uk/remo-sound-shapes/>

e: info@inspire-works.co.uk t: +44 (0)7798 603180



Also, Amazon has a bongo Cajon for around £20. See the link below.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Meinl-MYO-BCAJ-Bongo-Cajon-Construction/dp/B009VDW4OM>

Tight budgets may make buying a set of drums impossible. If settings buy drumsticks, children can use the backs of chairs, the floor or tables to beat out the rhythm effectively.

Start drumming by asking the children to copy and respond, start by drumming simple patterns, building up simple rhythms and getting children to play a rhythm securely before breaking them into parts. This builds confidence and teamwork. Try asking children to drum to words eg. Cup of tea, have you got any cake? etc.

Marking the Way with a Cairn

A **cairn** is a man-made pile (or stack) of stones, often used as a waymarker. The disciple Peter wrote that we are like living stones being built together. (1 Peter 2:5) Just as stones start off with rough edges which are eroded away as they are jostled by other stones, so our rough edges are made smooth by the experiences life throws at us. Similarly, cairns can be a visual prompt to travellers, showing them a safe way to go.

Cairn building can be a chance to teachers to talk to young children about their worries. Staff may like to write the children's names and their worries onto pebbles using marker pens and symbolically 'hand them over' as they build them into a cairn.

Cairns may be painted or otherwise decorated. Your cairn could highlight your setting values or demonstrate teamwork and friendship. This activity lends itself to prayerful reflection. It is a project that shows children that being prayerful does not always have to involve sitting still and having your eyes closed.

Building a cairn can have lots of wonderful benefits for children– working as a team, finding appropriately shaped stones, deciding which to place at the bottom and how to build them up. Cairn building can work with very young children as the activity involves sorting skills and construction skills. Finally there are of course the balancing skills!



Cairn building will need to be carried out carefully to comply with Covid guidelines.

Please do not forget to share with us any of the above projects that your setting enjoys. Your work and pictures can then be published in our newsletters. Please email anything that your school wants to share to sue.bowen@portsmouth.anglican.org

Please make sure that you have parental agreement to share pictures of any children before you send.



Useful books and further information

Books for Children:

The Monster at the End of This Book by Jon Stone.

Can't You Sleep, Little Bear? by Martin Waddell.

The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark by Jill Tomlinson.

What a Bad Dream by Mercer Mayer.

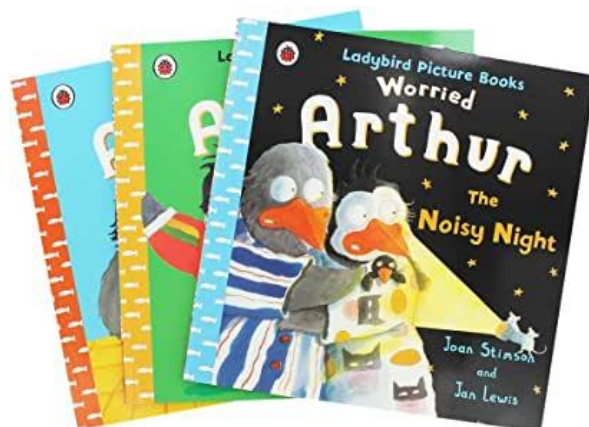
Say "Ahhh!" Dora Goes to the Doctor by Phoebe Beinstein.

Curious George Goes to the Hospital by H.A. Rey. ...

The Berenstain Bears Visit the Dentist by Stan and Jan Berenstain.

The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers by Stan and Jan Berenstain.

Thunder Cake by Patricia Polacco.



'The Day the Crayons Quit' -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=share&v=489micE6eHU&app=desktop>

'The Dot' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Clpw7PG7m1Q>

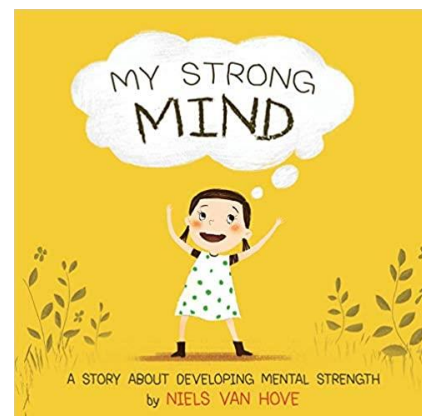
'Be Kind' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6NUJ2JZz50>

The Worried Arthur Series

I Am Stronger Than Anger, Elizabeth Cole

Ruby's Worry, Tom Percival

My Body Sends A Signal, Natalia McGuire



Books for Adults:

Wild Worship, Wild Lent and Wild Advent – 3 books by Rachel Summers

Soulful Nature, Brian Draper and Howard Green

Spiritual Intelligence, Brian Draper

Earthed in God : Four movements of spiritual growth, Christopher Chapman

Nature Spirituality – praying with wind, water, earth, fire, Mark G. Boyer

Saying Yes to Life, Ruth Valerio

Forest Church, Bruce Stanley

Think Like A Tree, Sarah Spencer

Stilling, Michael Beesley

Planetwise, Dave Bookless – book and resource pack

Sacred Space Sacred Place, Barnabas

Teaching Children the Magic of Silence and Stillness, Maggie Dent

Creating a Multi-sensory Spiritual Garden in your school, Shahne Vickery

Outdoor Worship: Engaging with God in his Creation, Sara and Sam Hargreaves

The Nature Fix: Why Nature makes us Happier, Healthier and more Creative, Florence Williams

The Man Who Planted Trees, Jean Giono

Websites:

<https://thirdspacelearning.com/blog/13-outdoor-maths-activities-early-years-year-6-plus-bonus-ages/>

<https://www.communityplaythings.co.uk/learning-library/articles/maths-in-the-great-outdoors>

<https://www.planetdolan.com/15-beautiful-examples-of-mathematics-in-nature/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/services-for-schools/mental-health-resources-for-schools/>

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/get-involved-schools/school-resources>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/stories-and-features/primary-school-pupils-given-targeted-mental-health>

http://thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/creative_prayer_idea_wild_worship_field_guide.pdf

<https://engageworship.org/ideas/outdoor-worship-garden-prayer-stations>

<https://arocha.org.uk/wildchristian/>

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/19-must-read-books-to-help-kids-understand-their-emotional-and-mental-health/>

<https://childmind.org/article/best-childrens-books-about-mental-health/>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/booklists/m/mental-health-awareness/>