

faith at home

Weekly Resources for Collective Worship, Spiritual
Development and Pastoral Care

PHASE: SECONDARY

**WEEK 11 THEME:
FLOURISHING**



KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

Flourishing means to thrive, to grow well or develop in a healthy and vigorous way. For some it can be seen when others blossom or succeed, being in one's prime or things that are abundant. It also means to make dramatic sweeping gestures!

For Christians, the notion of “flourishing” goes much deeper than the standard cultural definitions. It’s not just “the good life” – it’s the way life was meant to be. When God finished creating the world He said it was, “Very good.” In the Old Testament, the concept of flourishing is best described by the Hebrew word *shalom*. Shalom denotes a right relationship with God, with others, and with God’s good creation. It is the way God intended things to be when he created the universe. In most of our English Bibles, we translate shalom as peace, but it means much more than just an absence of conflict. The Old Testament prophets pictured shalom as the lion lying with the lamb, weapons becoming farming tools, deserts blooming, and the mountains streaming with red wine.

BIBLE VERSE OF THE WEEK:

⁶⁻¹⁰ Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again. “I’ll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep. All those others are up to no good—sheep stealers, every one of them. But the sheep didn’t listen to them. I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. **I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.**”

John 10 The Message (MSG)

TO CONSIDER AS YOU PREPARE

KEY QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

“The worst thing that can happen to a person is that they should succeed before they are ready.” Martin Lloyd Jones

LISTEN: Listen to the song ‘Faithful One’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRBlgbaQd6k>

WATCH:

Clip from Lion King-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGQnGQzIAmA>

Few things are as powerful and confusing as our identity and image. God has beautiful and transformative things to say about who we are and who we can become. When we know who we really are, we flourish.

Consider: Use the images below



**What do the pictures make you think of?
How do they make you feel?**



PRAY:

Father God, today may we choose life. May we choose to follow you and obey Your Word so that our lives can truly flourish. In Jesus' name, Amen.

I. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP - *Invitational, Inclusive, Inspiring.*

GATHER:

You will need a bowl of water and some paper and a pen.

Reflect on something you are hoping for-maybe something for yourself, or for your family, or for the world?

Write or draw something that will help you or someone you know flourish onto a square of paper. Fold the four corners of your square so they meet in the middle. Carefully place your square into the water, with the folded corners facing upwards. Wait as it slowly unfolds. You might like to offer your hope to God as you wait.

See a summary on the Prayer Spaces at home site-Hope blossoms

https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/upload/home_resources/downloads/da41215f2cf46e5ef7a8bff481afc414.pdf

ENGAGE:

In today's Bible story, Jesus says he has come to enable the flourishing of all people. He is the gate, if we go through the gate, we will flourish, those who go through and listen will be saved. We often hear the phrase 'Live life to the full'. The phrase stems from John 10:10, where Jesus says he has come so that we 'may have life and have it to the full'.

We can read the story together here:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10%3A10&version=NRSV>

The Bible tells us that through God all people can flourish; it is available to all people. In Galatians (3:28) St Paul writes that "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ." The Bible also suggests that we flourish most when we are helping others, and as such there are many Christian charities that work to enable others to flourish. Musa is a young man who lives in a supported community, L'Arche, in Kenya. Through the care of others he has been enabled to flourish and bring great joy to others - he truly lives life in all its fullness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OZN-Mjon90>

REFLECT:

Take a moment to think about the things in your life that you want to grow.
Good things that bring you joy and that will help you flourish: Faith, Discipline, Peace, and Patience.
Write a list of the things you want to learn or achieve and think about who you can ask to help you.
Consider positive things that will bring you energy and excitement and help you to live well.

Choose a Fruit of the Spirit that you would want other people to associate with you.
These are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
How might you grow that in the way you live and the words you use? Who could help you flourish?

Now the tricky bit:

Think about the things in your life that take joy away from you, that sap your energy and make you fearful. Reflect on how these might be given less time, how they might change to be life-giving, how they can be feared less.



Ask yourself:

- What do you need to do to **BUILD** good things in your life?
- What do you need to do less or **STOP** in order to do something more positive more often?
- What could you **START** to achieve what you want?
- Who do you need to spend more time with to **GROW** more in good ways?
- Who do you need to spend less time with to be less distracted from the joy in your life?
- Do you need to listen less to negative influences?
- Do you need to find coaches and cheerleaders who will encourage you?

Ask God for His help and His Spirit. Ask God to flourish within you. Ask for the Faith to keep trying.

We are surrounded by a great crowd of witnesses - faithful people who pray for us to find joy and peace in the love of the Lord Jesus. Pray that God will help you find someone to encourage you, to help you flourish in all you want to achieve and in the way you want to live.

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slaT8Jl2zpl> Lauren Daigle - You say I am strong

or

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8qDOGLCSFo> Rachel Platten - Fight Song

or

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsjEmLkphrI> This Is Living (feat. Lecrae) (Music Video) - Hillsong Young & Free

SEND OUT: A blessing could be said. In the Bible, in Numbers 6:24-26 it says

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

You could watch [Makaton UK Blessing - signers throughout the UK #makatonukblessing](#) or the UK Blessing in British Sign Language: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnEhlz2eHow>

2. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)

EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

Consider the issue of identity and how we see ourselves

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-resources/communications/identity/>

How does social media make some people feel?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwaKEaG4m34>

Try some of the 'Real me' Messy church resources-<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/resource/real-me>

Flourishing is not just about having a good life, it is about the way things are meant to be. In the Book of Genesis we see God create and then say it was 'Very Good', this tells us that it was God's intent for creation to flourish. As part of God's creation, being made in His image we feel this desire for flourishing deep within us. In the video below Austin Channing Brown questions whether or not society has allowed all people to flourish. She is talking about racial injustice, timely given the Black Lives Matter movement following the tragic incidents in the USA. She asks, "Do you believe in your heart that God created everyone equal in the divine image of God?" Do we allow and support all people to flourish regardless of who they are or what they may look like? This is a long video, and you may wish to stop watching at 7 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20TgbIL5Bgw&feature=youtu.be>

In order for flourishing to happen it may be that relationships and structures need to be healed; reconciliation is needed. Reconciliation is an ongoing spiritual process, involving repentance, forgiveness and justice that restores broken relationships to reflect God's intention, for all creation, to flourish. That's what God intended from the beginning and as a result many Christians believe that it is their duty to work against injustice, to heal broken relationships and enable all people to flourish. This video talks about how that might be made possible.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSyHbQLWXYw&feature=youtu.be>

John 10:10 says that Jesus came so that we could live life in all its fullness. One of the Church Fathers Irenaeus said that 'The glory of God is a man fully alive.' Flourishing is about life being the way it is meant to be, in a relationship with God and with others; being allowed to be who you are, to grow, to learn, to love. Many Christians have struggled with this and felt that they have been unable to flourish. The following videos tell their stories and how this can be overcome and how they are now flourishing and supporting others to flourish.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXL2qtX7aAc&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7L398VU1ck&feature=youtu.be>

PRAY ABOUT IT:

The Bible talks about God's Holy Spirit enabling the fruit of the Holy Spirit to grow in us.

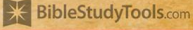
These are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Ask God to enable these fruits to develop more in your life.

ACTIVITIES that can help develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

YOU SAY... GOD SAYS...

<u>YOU SAY</u>	<u>GOD SAYS</u>	<u>BIBLE VERSES</u>
I can't figure it out.	I will direct your steps.	Proverbs 3:5-6
I'm too tired.	I will give you rest.	Matthew 11:28-30
It's impossible.	All things are possible.	Luke 18:27
Nobody loves me.	I love you.	John 3:16
I can't forgive myself.	I forgive you.	Romans 8:1
It's not worth it.	It will be worth it.	Romans 8:28
I'm not smart enough.	I will give you wisdom.	I Corinthians 1:30
I'm not able.	I am able.	II Corinthians 9:8
I can't go on.	My grace is sufficient.	II Corinthians 12:9
I can't do it.	You can do all things.	Philippians 4:13
I can't manage.	I will supply all your needs.	Philippians 4:19
I'm afraid.	I have not given you fear.	II Timothy 1:7
I feel all alone.	I will never leave you.	Hebrews 13:5

 BibleStudyTools.com



God says
You are

UNIQUE	PSALM 139:13
LOVED	JEREMIAH 31:3
SPECIAL	EPHESIANS 2:10
CARED FOR	EPHESIANS 3:17-19
LOVELY	DANIEL 12:3
PRECIOUS	1 CORINTHIANS 6:20
STRONG	PSALM 18:25
IMPORTANT	1 PETER 2:9
FORGIVEN	PSALM 103:12
PROTECTED	PSALM 121:3
CHOSEN	JOHN 15:16
FAMILY	EPHESIANS 2:19

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Try using the Bible verse in the list above or the chart left. Each aspect focuses on understanding more of how God sees us; if flourishing is part of God's creation and is how things are meant to be, then this should help us to flourish.

Hopes and Dreams Prayer Station

We all have hopes and dreams, but will these allow us to flourish - to grow, to develop - in the way God intended?

Take three pieces of paper and think about the hopes that you have; the things that will allow you to live life in all its fullness (remember it is not just about living a good life!). Write down three hopes and dreams; the first is a small hope or dream, something that could happen today. The second a bigger hope or dream, something that is certainly possible. The third is a huge hope or dream, something that feels impossible.

Now, think about how you might be able to achieve these. What would you need to be able to flourish?

<https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/resources/15>

3. PASTORAL CARE -IDEAS FOR LOOKING AFTER....

Ourselves & Our staff

Explore music that might help us reflect further on flourishing, e.g. Spotify- Flourish play list- <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0gpuPhqT2NMc2lPgdrftE>

Try the prayer spaces at home activity on Hope ropes, to help us reflect on some of the areas of our lives that could be holding us back flourishing

Hope rope

https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/upload/home_resources/downloads/52019ddcee88d839322f3480d6a9c266.pdf

'Live Life Purposely' (<https://livepurposefullynow.com/4-things-stop-order-flourish/>) claims there are FOUR things we need to stop doing in order to flourish:

- i. Stop asking the wrong questions (e.g. 'what was I thinking?')
- ii. Stop arguing for your limitations (stop seeing yourself as victim, when we do we feed our limitations and hold ourselves back)
- iii. Try to stop complaining (flip our mindsets to be more positive dream bigger and aim higher not dwelling on our shortcomings)
- iv. Stop waiting for the perfect time (you make it the right time – direct your energy and thoughts to making it happen now)

Our families & our community

Try the prayer spaces at home activity on reconciliation zips, to help us remove some of the barriers that might be stopping us from flourishing

Reconciliation zips

https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/upload/home_resources/downloads/3c5bfdb964040294232b024a4967af75.pdf

Many Christian communities work together to help others to flourish. When Rev Rachel Treewek was ordained Bishop; her work enabling the flourishing of others was recognised. The pectoral cross, a symbolic item worn by a Bishop, presented to her was created from bullet shells which had been found in the battlefields of Mozambique's civil war. Bishop Rachel was very involved with a link with Mozambique for a number of years during her time as an Archdeacon in London. The pectoral cross tells the story of Mozambique's journey to peace after the post-colonial civil war which ended in 1992. The Christian Council of Mozambique set up the project, Transforming Arms into Plowshares, in 1995, which transforms recycled weapons of war into art, as a tool for peacebuilding and more importantly, peacekeeping in post-conflict societies. To date over 900,000 weapons have been decommissioned. How does this allow others to flourish?

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2015/bullets-beaten-into-cross/>

GOING DEEPER/FURTHER RESOURCES

Biblical References:

- **Numbers 6:24-26**

The blessing found in Numbers gives insight into the many facets of flourishing;

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

At the end of Numbers 6 God gives Moses a blessing for the priests to use to bless God’s people (Numbers 6:24-26). This “priestly blessing” has often been described by biblical scholars as the perfect Hebrew poem. The blessing is composed of three sentences. Each sentence is a separate blessing, which is composed of two parts. In the original Hebrew, the first sentence is only three words, the second sentence is only five words, and the final sentence is only seven words. The numbers three, five, and seven have significant meaning in the Bible: Three is the number of completion or perfection and unity: Five is the number associated with grace: Seven is the number of God, divine perfection, or completeness: Looking at the structure of this priestly blessing, we see God’s grace (symbolized by the number five) surrounded by his perfection (symbolized by the numbers three and seven).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUtl3mNj5U&disable_polymer=true - *The UK Blessing*

- **Genesis 1:1-31** This is the creation story. God creates from nothing. On each day, when God had completed the creation He says it was good. When God completes the creation of man He says it was ‘Very Good’. Genesis tells us that God created mankind in His own image. As part of God’s creation, being made in His image we feel this desire for flourishing deep within us.
- **Jeremiah 29:4-7** Jeremiah sends a letter to all those in exile. In it there are instructions, from God on how the exiles should live and flourish. It tells them to do very ‘normal things’ such as build houses, marry, have children, but that they should also seek peace and pray. It is in these things that they will flourish.
- **Psalm 19** Psalm 19 might help us to understand what it means for humans to flourish as it shows us that nature flourishes when it is allowed to do as God intended it to. We can learn from this by living in the way God intended - loving one another, serving and caring for each other, but also loving and serving God. C. S Lewis explained this further: “God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on himself. He himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.” God is our fuel that allows us to flourish.
- **Galatians 3:28** The Bible teaches that all people should be allowed to flourish.
- **1 Peter 4:8-11** Everyone wants to flourish in life, everyone wants to make an impact and everyone wants to make a difference. Ironically though, the less you think about yourself, the more you flourish and the more you become the person God created you to be.

Peter tells us here that we should be using our God-given gifts to serve others, using God as their strength, and enabling others to flourish.

Examples of individual people flourishing in Biblical stories

There are many examples of people flourishing shown in the Bible; you may want to read some of their stories. Here are just a few of them...

- Esther
- Joseph
- Daniel
- Peter (Flourished after a tough start)
- Gideon (Flourished after a tough start)
- Ruth (Flourished after a tough start)

Find out more/Exploring further

1. Explore The Transforming Arms into Tools project in Mozambique, where over 600,000 weapons were surrendered in exchange for tools.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/97OnxVXaQkehIbliKKDB6A>

<http://sites.miis.edu/reflections/2014/11/24/the-life-of-a-gun-transforming-tools-for-killing-into-tools-for-peacekeeping-in-mozambiques-tae-project/>

2. Consider Psalm 92-it has the most direct references to “flourish” than any other chapter in the Bible.

It begins and ends with God’s goodness, His provision and His righteousness. For this, we are told it is good to give thanks and sing praises because of His faithfulness.

It says the righteous will flourish like the palm tree and cedar in Lebanon. Trees are stable, long-lasting plants, and the longer they live, the more they tend to flourish, both in fruit and through adversity.

“The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.” Psalm 92:12-13

Take a moment to let that sink in. Not only are we like trees, sturdy and constant, but we are planted before the Lord. In His presence, there we flourish, there we thrive, and there we have life everlasting.

Reflect- are you a palm tree Christian?

http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk/2010/Mar_Apr/PlmTrChr.htm

3. Parts of our Planet (see video below) are now flourishing because of COVID 19 and lockdowns. Think about how or what we may do differently in the future to ensure we continue to heal our planet? For example - walk more, be less wasteful, and consume less?

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=the+flourishing+planet+during+lockdown&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dthe%2520flourishing%2520planet%2520during%2520lockdown%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dthe%2520flourishing%2520planet%2520during%2520lockdown%26sc%3D0-38%26sk%3D%26cvid%3DC4F6930AA1AC4BEA9ED895CE426097E5&view=detail&mid=24846BE0094A3053DB8524846BE0094A3053DB85&&FORM=VDRVRV>

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=the+flourishing+planet+during+lockdown&&view=detail&mid=C3C7957990CF0F1F344BC3C7957990CF0F1F344B&&FORM=VRD GAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dthe%2520flourishing%2520planet%2520during%2520lockdown%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dthe%2520flourishing%2520planet%2520during%2520lockdown%26sc%3D0-38%26sk%3D%26cvid%3DC4F6930AA1AC4BEA9ED895CE426097E5>

4. Flourishing by Chungha. Consider what the lyrics say about flourishing [CHUNG HA \(청하\) - 'Flourishing' LYRICS \[ENG COLOR CODED\] 가사](#)

Chungha said about "Flourishing" during the EP showcase on the 23rd of June 2019, "I sang it all in English because I wanted to communicate better with my fans abroad. It has the message that I'm telling everyone, 'I have grown and I will keep on growing.' It's about telling everyone that I'll be confident and not afraid of everything that I'm doing."

5. Watch the Clip from 'Britain's Got Talent' auditions. How have these children shown flourishing? What has enabled them to flourish?

[GOLDEN BUZZER! Sign Along With Us put on the GREATEST show in EMOTIONAL Audition | BGT 2020](#)

6. Leadership, Flourishing and Film

Not everyone considers leadership to be a quality they possess. Yet if we understood what good leadership looked like and how it can positively affect flourishing, we could all recognise we have the ability to lead and promote flourishing. Good leadership is allowing and providing others the opportunity to flourish and fulfil their true potential. By building trust amongst others in our communities we allow others to prosper and thrive. Good leaders are also able to listen, by simply giving someone the time of day and your genuine focus – which seems like nothing. However, in today's world we are often focused on our phones screens, laptops and tablets often failing to give others our real full attention. By truly listening to each other we build trust and form successful relationships leading to flourishing.

When we look at the world of sport, we can see many of the best examples of successful leadership. There are leaders who have gone on to lead to championships and win trophies. Sport also demonstrates that to fully flourish and be successful we must also be willing to fail and to accept failure when it comes. Failure is to be celebrated as an opportunity to build, grow, and get better.

Linked Films and Series:

'The Last Dance' (certificate 15): This series follows the story of one of the most successful dynasties in sporting history, and how they managed to flourish and dominate for 6 championships. As well as this it follows Michael Jordan recognised as the greatest basketball player of all time and renowned for his leadership and attitude towards winning, success and flourishing.

'Invictus' (certificate 12A): This shows the story of the South African rugby team (the Springboks) and their quest to win the rugby world cup in South Africa. It is set alongside the rise of Nelson Mandela and the start of his presidency following apartheid. It is a story of leadership and how the then captain Francois Pienaar and Nelson Mandela had to overcome many struggles and barriers to allow their sports team, but also their country to flourish.

