

HOPE GROUPS



HOPE GROUP – INTERGENERATIONAL PILGRIMAGE WALK 2 - BACKYARD

Pilgrimages are religious journeys which people take to learn more about God and faith. Whilst we are not currently able to go very far and can only leave home for an hour, we can still go on pilgrimages.

Why not decide on a pilgrimage walk and invite someone else or another family to do the same walk. Even though you are not able to walk it together, you can share what you discovered and talked about afterwards.

BEGINNING

Begin each walk in the same way:

- gather together quietly
- light a candle saying, 'This candle reminds me/us that God's light will never be extinguished.'
- pray:
Creator God,
Guide my/our feet as I/we walk this pilgrimage today.
Open my/our eyes to see your goodness.
Open my/our ears to hear your call.
Even though I/we walk alone,
I/we know others walk this pilgrimage too.
Amen
- blow out the candle and start your pilgrimage
- at the end of each section, ask for a volunteer to lead a prayer if you are a family or pray your own prayer if you are a sole pilgrim.

It doesn't matter if your yard is a paddock, a small courtyard, at the front or the back of your house, whether it is shared or you have it all to yourself. Whatever your outside space, even if it's on a balcony, have a go and see what you find.

DOOR TO THE OUTSIDE

Stop at the door to the outside space.



This is the door in and the door out – it's where you might welcome someone or say goodbye.

Who did you last welcome?

Who last came and enjoyed your backyard? Or did you go to someone else's backyard?



Jesus was clear that all were welcome in God's creation, that God's hospitality is for everyone.

Retell a story of hospitality from the Bible or read this one about Zacchaeus, the tax collector.

LUKE 19:1-10

“ He entered Jericho and was passing through it. ²A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. ³He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. ⁵When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.’ ⁶So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. ⁷All who saw it began to grumble and said, ‘He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.’ ⁸Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, ‘Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.’ ⁹Then Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.’

CREATION

Pick up a stone or look under a leaf. Maybe move a pot or a branch that's fallen. Be careful of any insects that could sting or bite you.

Can you find creatures living here? Is there any evidence of homes?

Don't hurt the creatures and always put the rock or leaf back where you found it.

Some things scare us – some people are scared of spiders, others of bees, some don't like lizards. Some creatures like snakes can hurt us so it is important to show respect for other creatures and be aware.

God's creation is for all living creatures, everything has a place and a role, and everything is cherished by God.

Humans have been given the task of caring for creation. How well do you think we're doing?



This is the second creation story from Genesis 2.

GENESIS 2:4-15

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

“ In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. ⁸And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹²and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

CORNERSTONE

A cornerstone is a large stone or brick that joins 2 walls of a building forming a solid foundation. It makes sure the walls are secure.

Can you find a corner stone on your house? How does it join the walls together?

Can you see how the bricks are cemented together so they stay strong and firm?

What are the bricks in your life? What keeps you strong? What holds you together firmly so you don't fall over?

Psalm 118 talks about the cornerstone being the one the builders originally rejected and threw away whilst they were building a wall. The Psalm is quoted in Acts 4 by Peter where Jesus is called the cornerstone.

ACTS 4:1-12

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, ²much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. ³So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

⁵The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone."

¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.'

SKY

Look up into the sky (not at the sun!)

Can you see any birds flying?

Can you hear birds singing?

Birds can seem so free and without worry as they soar and dive and float through the air. They seem so happy in the morning when they wake us with their singing.

A flock of birds can also be really noisy.

Some birds fly for thousands of kilometres to migrate from one country to another – some geese fly up to 3000km a day if the wind conditions are right.

Can you think of a bird that doesn't fly but swims?



Retell a Bible story about birds or read this one from Luke 12 which encourages us to rely on God for what we need.

Luke 12:22-26

He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁶If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest?

SUNSHINE AND RAIN

The weather in Melbourne is more varied than other parts of Australia – we have 4 seasons, often in the one day.

What is the weather doing today?

Different plants grow in different parts of Australia according to the weather.

We need plants and trees to help the weather patterns – in the rain cycle and in order to lower the temperature. Trees are essential to the wellbeing of the earth.

In some parts of the world, extreme weather events cause destruction – hurricanes, tornados, flooding.

Animals adapt to the weather – animals that live in the snow are often white, those living in rainforests are more brightly coloured to blend with the foliage and flowers. What about native Australian animals? How do they blend with the landscape?

What weather events are happening around the world right now?

In Australia, we don't always hear the news from other parts of the world. But if we aren't aware, we can't learn different ways of living which might prevent some of the extreme weather events.



Can you think of an extreme weather event in the Bible?

The story of Noah had some pretty extreme weather – these verses are at the end of that story in Genesis.

GENESIS 8:15-19

“ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶‘Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.’ ¹⁸So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives. ¹⁹And every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.