

HOPE

from the hospice



HOPE

from the hospice

We've put together some words and pictures which we think will encourage you in these troubled times. The contributions have been shared by some of the hospice staff and volunteers because each one has proved meaningful to them.

Why not read and reflect on what we've shared several times over the coming days? Some contributions will mean more to you than others, which is how it should be.

May you find comfort, strength and peace, inspiration and ... hope!

April 2020

Notes

'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse' by Charlie Mackesy is popular with a number of staff. We hope Charlie won't mind us reproducing some of his illustrations here. The book is published by Penguin.

Unattributed contributions shared by Keith Judson, Spiritual Care Coordinator.

“The needs of the spirit are as critical to health as those individual organs which make up the body.”

Florence Nightingale

Mud or Stars?

Dale Carnegie

Two men looked out from prison bars,
One saw the mud, the other saw stars.

**“All shall be well, and all shall be well
and all manner of thing shall be well.”**

Mother Julian of Norwich, 1342-1416

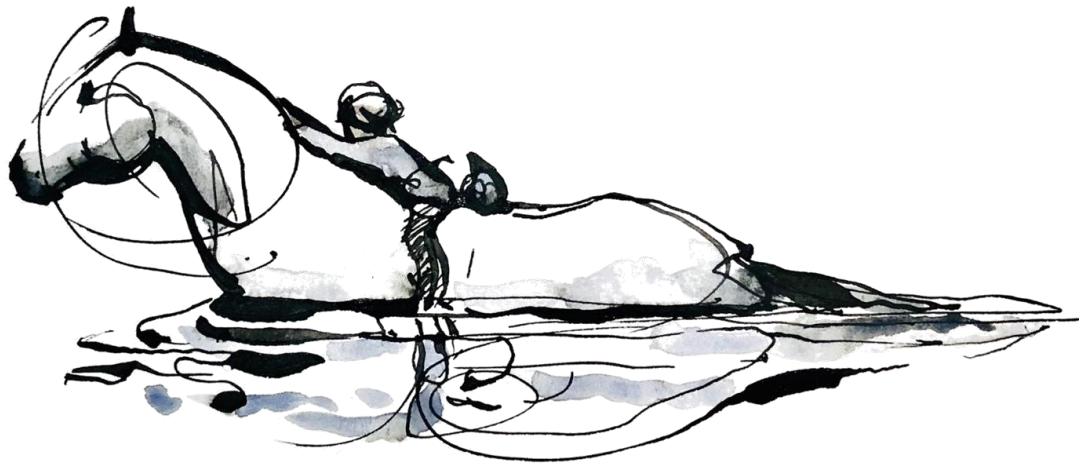
**"Every tomorrow has two handles. We
can take hold of it with the handle of
anxiety, or with the handle of faith."**

(Henry Ward Beecher)

- shared by Joan Detheridge, Assistant Manager, Sedgley Shop

Charlie Mackesy

"Everyone is a bit scared,"
said the horse



"But we are less scared
together."

- shared by Gemma Allen, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

A soft reminder ...

Lisa Olivera

We (all of us) are currently going through a collective traumatic experience. Trauma is often thought of as “too much, too fast” ... which is exactly what’s happening. Of course you’re exhausted. Of course you’re afraid. Of course you’re overwhelmed. Of course you’re clinging to certainty in the midst of so much unknown. Of course you aren’t as productive, feeling foggy, or wondering how you can possibly go through so many waves of emotions all in the same day. This all makes so much sense in the context of our circumstances. Be gentle with yourself. Give yourself grace. You are good, no matter how you are managing this completely new experience.

- shared by Dawn Spencer, Lawnswood Shop Manager

Protest and Trust

Rowan Williams

The Cry to God as 'Father' in the New Testament is not a calm acknowledgment of a universal truth about God's abstract fatherhood. It is the Child's cry out of a nightmare.

It is the cry of outrage, fear, shrinking away, when faced with the horror of the 'world'. Yet not simply or exclusively protest, but trust as well.

Teresa's Bookmark

St Teresa of Avila

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing;
God only is changeless.
Patience gains all things.
Who has God wants nothing.
God alone suffices.

[i carry your heart with me(i carry it in]

e. e. cummings

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere
i go you go,my dear;and whatever is done
by only me is your doing,my darling)

i fear

no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

- shared by Jemma Mondon, Financial Controller

Lockdown

Richard Hendrick OFM

Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.

But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
Across the empty squares,
Keeping their windows open
So that those who are alone
May hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the
housebound.

Today a young woman I know
Is busy spreading fliers with her number
Through the neighbourhood,
So that the elders may have someone to call on.

Today churches, synagogues, mosques and temples
Are preparing to welcome
And shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary.

All over the world people are slowing down and
reflecting.
All over the world people are looking at their
neighbours in a new way.
All over the world people are waking up to a new
reality;
To how big we really are;
To how little control we really have;
To what really matters.
To Love.

So, we pray and we remember that
Yes, there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.

Wake to the choices you make as to how to live
now.
Today, breathe.

Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again,
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able to touch across the empty
square,
Sing!

Don't leave the house unless it's for the

...



What you can't and can control ...

<https://thecounselingteacher.com>



- shared by Jill Tait, Spiritual Care Team

The Time We Spring-Cleaned the World

Louise Gribbons (especially for children)

The world it got so busy,
There were people all around.
They left their germs behind them;
In the air and on the ground.

These germs grew bigger and stronger.
They wanted to come and stay.
They didn't want to hurt anyone -
They just really wanted to play.

Sometimes they tried to hold your hand,
Or tickled your throat or your nose.
They could make you cough and sneeze
And make your face as red as a rose.

And so these germs took over.
They started to make people ill,
And with every cough we coughed
More and more germs would spill.

All the queens and kings had a meeting.
"It's time to clean the world up!" they said.
And so they had to close lots of fun stuff,
Just so these germs couldn't spread.

We couldn't go to cinemas
Or restaurants for our tea.

There was no football or parties,
The world got as quiet as can be.

The kids stopped going to school,
The mums and dads went to work less.
Then a great, big, giant scrubbing brush
Cleaned the sky and the sea and the mess!

Dads started teaching the sums,
Big brothers played with us more,
Mums were in charge of homework
And we read and played jigsaws galore!

The whole world was washing their hands
And building super toilet roll forts!
Outside was quiet and peaceful,
Now home was the place for all sports.

So we played in the world that was home
And our days filled up with fun and love,
And the germs they grew smaller and smaller
And the sun watched from up above.

Then one morning the sun woke up early,
She smiled and stretched her beams wide.
The world had been fully spring cleaned,
It was time to go back outside!

We opened our doors oh so slowly
And breathed in the clean and fresh air.
We promised thar forever and always

Of this beautiful world we'd take care!

- shared by Zoe Barnard, Health Care Assistant

And the People Stayed at Home

Kitty O'Meara

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Listen to the silence

Frances J. Roberts

Listen to the silence
It will teach you
It will build strength
Let others share it with you
It is little to be found elsewhere

Silence will speak more to you in a day
Than the world of voices can teach you in a lifetime
Find silence
Find solitude
And having discovered her riches
Bind her to your heart

In the Time of Quiet

Philippa Atkin

No one's told the daffodils about the pause to Spring
And no one's told the birds to roost and asked them
not to sing

No one's asked the lazy bee to cease his bumbling round
And no one's stopped the bright green shoots
emerging through the ground

No one's told the sap to rest, deep within the wood
And stop the sleepy trees from waking, wreathed about
in bud

No one's told the sky to douse its brightest shades of blue
And stop the scudding clouds from puffing headlong
into view

No one's asked the lambs to still the springs beneath
their feet

To stop their rapid rush and quell each joyful bleat

No one's told the stream to halt its gurgle or its flow
And warned the playful breezes, not to gust and blow

No one's asked the raindrops not to fall upon the earth
And fail to quench the soil in the season of rebirth

No one's locked the sun down, or dimmed the shimmer
of the moon

And even in the darkest night, the stars are still immune
Remember what you value, remember who is dear
Close the doors to danger and keep your family near
In the quiet all around us take the time to sit and stare
And wonder at the glory unfurling everywhere

Look towards the future, after the ordeal
And keep faith in Mother Nature's power and will to heal

*- shared by Mark Burns,
Community Volunteer Service Coordinator
- and Marie Faux, Senior Sister*

Even though ...

Even though the world feels strange,
the birds are still singing.

As we learn new ways of being
the sun is still shining.

While much feels uncertain,
the world is still turning and the plants are still growing.

And in all of this,
that which we call divine resides within us
and brings comfort and hope.

Listen and breathe it in.

- written by Awen Clement, Spiritual Care Team

Gift from the Sea

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

It is a difficult lesson to learn today, to leave one's friends and family and deliberately practice the art of solitude for an hour or a day or a week. For me, the break is most difficult ...

And yet, once it is done, I find there is a quality to being alone that is incredibly precious. Life rushes back into the void, richer, more vivid, fuller than before!

In the Moment

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Hurry is an unpleasant thing in itself but also very unpleasant for whoever is around it. Some people came into my room and rushed in and rushed out and even when they were there they were not there – they were in the moment ahead or the moment behind. Some people who came in just for a moment were all there, completely in that moment.

Live from day to day, just from day to day. If you do so, you worry less and live more richly. If you let yourself be absorbed completely, if you surrender completely to the moments as they pass, you live more richly those moments.

Silence-Stilling-Surrender

“When you are quiet and still I can speak to your heart”

“Give your heart and then you will receive God’s thoughts.”

- Margery Kempe

1. Find a comfy chair, sit with both feet on the floor with your hands in your lap or whatever position is most natural.
2. Close your eyes and ask God to be with you.
3. Starting with your feet and moving up, pay attention to each part of your body. Feel the levels of tension or tiredness. Try to relax the muscles there.
4. Notice the sounds around you, then try to ‘let them go.’
5. Feel your body as it becomes relaxed on the chair, try to maintain stillness.
6. Pay attention to your breathing: the in - out- rhythm. Gently extend the breaths.
7. Begin to surrender. Breathe:
 - God’s breath of love in, ‘things to be done’ out.
 - God’s love in, worries out.
 - God’s love in, stresses and anxieties out.

God with You, Gods Presence, God’s Breath, Gods Love.

- shared by John Flitcroft, Spiritual Care Team

A Smile

John Bisner

A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None is so rich or might that he can get along without it, and none is so poor that he cannot be made rich by it. A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business and is the countersign of friendship.

It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and is nature's best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, barrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away.

Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.

- shared by Alison Goodwin, Estates & Facilities Assistant

Memories

Helen Steiner Rice

Tender little memories
Of some word or deed
Give us strength and courage
When we are in need.
Precious little memories
Of little things we've done
Make each day together
A bright and happy one.
Blessed little memories
Of happiness and love
Are gifts to keep forever
From our Father up above.

- shared by Belinda Hawk, Health Care Assistant

Courage

from 'Consolations' by David Whyte

Courage is the measure of our heartfelt participation with life, with another, with a community, a work, a future.

To be courageous is not necessarily to go anywhere or do anything, except to make conscious those things we already feel deeply and then to live through the unending vulnerabilities of those consequences.

To be courageous is to seat our feelings deeply in the body and in the world: to live up to and into the necessities of relationships that often already exist, with things we find we already care deeply about: with a person, a future, a possibility in society, or with an unknown that begs us on - and always has begged us on.

To be courageous is to stay close to the way we are made.

- shared by Awen Clement, Spiritual Care Team

Charlie Mackesy

"Sometimes" said the horse
"Sometimes what?" asked the boy
"Sometimes just getting up,
and carrying on is
brave and magnificent"



- shared by Gemma Allen, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

Dark Days

Nikita Gill

on the darkest of days
I look at the stars
and marvel at
the patchwork of time
staring back at me.

not a single burst of starlight is the same age
some of these stars
are born billions of years apart,
yet travel through time together
making this beautiful piece of art

sometime, somewhere
these stars have already encountered
a better version of me
on her best day looking up at them
and thanking them for helping me see

- shared by Awen Clement, Spiritual Care Team

Musings on Habakkuk

Habbakkuk (Old Testament)

The prophet Habakkuk chose to be positive in dire circumstances:

Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Saviour.
The Sovereign Lord is my strength;
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
he enables me to tread on the heights.

Even though we are confined
and cannot have fellowship with one another,
Even though there's lack of food upon the shelves,
Even though our hearts are sometimes filled with fear
and we are troubled and confused,
Even though the times are difficult
and some walk in darkest valleys,
YET ... we will rejoice in the Lord.
Our HOPE is in you ... you are the God of all HOPE!

- shared by Jill Tait, Spiritual Care Team

Psalm 46

from "Psalms Now" by Leslie F Brandt

Our great God is still our Refuge and Strength,
He knows our problems and fears.
Thus, we have no business doubting Him
even though the earth is convulsed in tragedy
or its human masses threatened
by ethnic hatred or disease,
drugs, crime or abuse.

God continues to reign as all-wise
and as almighty as ever
His eternal plan is not cancelled out
by the whims of human leaders
or the freakish accidents of nature.
Nations will destroy each other.
Civilizations will perish.
The earth itself may one day become
a smoking cinder, but God will not leave us.
He is forever our sure Refuge and Strength.

Just look around you, read the pages of history.
Refresh your flagging spirit with the reminder
of His great fears throughout the ages.
And you will again hear Him speaking:
"Relax, stop fretting, and
remember that I am still God.
I still hold the reins of this world."

God is here among us.
He continues to be our Refuge and Strength.

- shared by Terry Graham, Spiritual Care Team

My Guide

Psalm 16:7 (Old Testament)

I praise you, LORD, for being my guide.
Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill my mind.

- shared by Joan Detheridge, Assistant Manager, Sedgley Shop

For Light

John O'Donohue

Light cannot see inside things.
That is what the dark is for:
Minding the interior,
Nurturing the draw of growth
Through places where death
In its own way turns into life.

In the glare of neon times,
Let our eyes not be worn
By surfaces that shine
With hunger made attractive.

That our thoughts may be true light,
Finding their way into words
Which have the weight of shadow
To hold the layers of truth.

That we never place our trust
In minds claimed by empty light,
Where one-sided certainties
Are driven by false desire.

When we look into the heart,
May our eyes have the kindness
And reverence of candlelight.

May My Heart Be Gentle

Abby Willowroot

may my heart be gentle
my mind still and open
my spirit unshackled
my awareness keen
my conscience clear
my nature giving.

may I be a healing energy
may I be of benefit to all
may my life enrich others
may I know what matters
and live in harmony with nature

- shared by Sally Meaden, Income Generation Assistant

The Gate of the Year

Minnie Louise Haskins

This poem caught the public attention and the popular imagination when King George VI quoted it in his 1939 Christmas broadcast to the British Empire. The poem was handed to him by his daughter Elizabeth, aged 13.

Here is the first part:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand
into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light
and safer than a known way."

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God,
trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day
in the lone East.

When Morning Comes

An old African tribal custom was that when a boy was thirteen he became a man. However, to prove that he was now a man, he would be blindfolded and taken into the jungle to spend the night. If he stayed, then it proved that he was ready to be a great warrior.

So, the boy was taken and left.

He heard sounds that frightened him. He imagined so many things that would happen to him. Perhaps animals would pick up his scent and kill him? The darkness seemed as though it would never end.

But morning did come and the chief came to take off the blindfold and welcomed him as a man

As the boy's eyes got used to the light, the first thing he saw was his father sitting a short distance from him. He had been there all night watching over his son.

When our days seem long and dark, and we lose sight of God, morning comes and faith shows us that he was there all the time.

- shared by Brenda Guest, Spiritual Care Team

From 'Hebridean Altars'

collected by Alistair Mclean

As the rain hides the stars,
as the autumn mist hides the hills,
happenings of my lot
hide the shining of Thy face from me.
Yet if I may hold Thy hand
in the darkness,
it is enough;
since I know that,
though I may stumble in my going,
Thou dost not fall.

Even though the day be laden
and my task dreary
and my strength small,
a song keeps singing
in my heart.
For I know that I am Thine.
I am part of Thee.
Thou art kin to me,
and all my times
are in Thy hand.

Prayers

based on words from the Church of England

Dear God,
we pray that you will keep us
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Help and support those of us who are anxious and fearful;
lift up those who feel low, to experience your comfort.
We know nothing can separate us from your love and care
and we are grateful for this at such a difficult time. Amen

God of compassion,
Draw close to us so that we feel your loving arms around us,
bringing us comfort and peace.
Bring light into the darkness and the despair we may feel.
We pray for those we love and to whom we are close.
Please show your protection and care for them at this time.
Help us to be people of generosity:
giving and loving at all times
for as long as it takes;
knowing you, the God of peace,
are always with us. Amen

Lord,
in these troubled times we pray
for those leading our nation and shaping national policies:
guide them to make wise decisions.
We pray too for those caring for the sick:
give them skills, sympathy and resilience.

Give wisdom too, Father God,
to the scientists searching for a cure.
Strengthen all these people
that through their work many will be restored
to health and strength once again. Amen

- shared by Anne Harris, Spiritual Care Team

A Soul Midwife's prayer for the bedside

Felicity Warner

It is time to let go.
You are safe and loved and you are not alone.
Just fall into my arms and sleep.
You don't have to make things happen,
they will happen on their own.
Let me hold you.
Just let go, don't resist.
You are doing so well,
like a feather falling from the sky.
Sink back into soft feathered wings.
You are working hard,
delving deep within yourself,
like a chrysalis changing into a butterfly.
Of course you are weary, change is hard work.
Your body is tired, but don't be frightened,
just love and all will be well.

- shared by Rachael Field, Spiritual Care Team

On the Death of the Beloved

John O'Donohue

Though we need to weep your loss,
You dwell in that safe place in our hearts,
Where no storm or night or pain can reach you.

Your love was like the dawn
Brightening over our lives
Awakening beneath the dark
A further adventure of colour.

The sound of your voice
Found for us
A new music
That brightened everything.

Whatever you enfolded in your gaze
Quickened in the joy of its being;
You placed smiles like flowers
On the altar of the heart.
Your mind always sparkled
With wonder at things.

Though your days here were brief,
Your spirit was live, awake, complete.

We look towards each other no longer
From the old distance of our names;
Now you dwell inside the rhythm of breath,

As close to us as we are to ourselves.

Though we cannot see you with outward eyes,
We know our soul's gaze is upon your face,
Smiling back at us from within everything
To which we bring our best refinement.

Let us not look for you only in memory,
Where we would grow lonely without you.
You would want us to find you in presence,
Beside us when beauty brightens,
When kindness glows
And music echoes eternal tones.

When orchids brighten the earth,
Darkest winter has turned to spring;
May this dark grief flower with hope
In every heart that loves you.

May you continue to inspire us:

To enter each day with a generous heart.
To serve the call of courage and love
Until we see your beautiful face again
In that land where there is no more separation,
Where all tears will be wiped from our mind,
And where we will never lose you again.

The King of Love

Henry Williams Baker (based on Psalm 23)

The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow
With food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home rejoicing brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
Thy unction grace bestoweth:
And O what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;

Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.

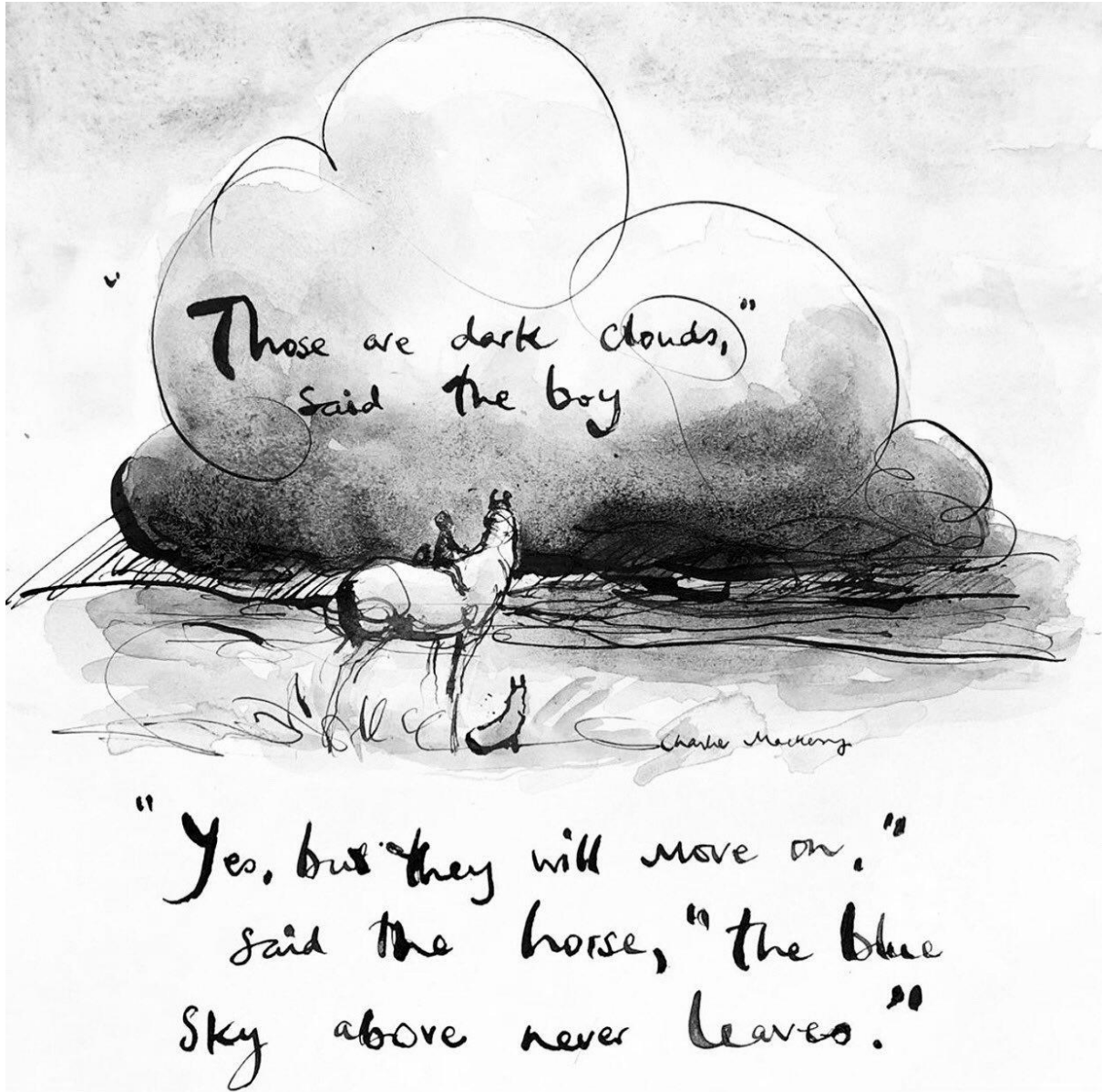
Faith

Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy

When storm winds sob to silence, fury spent
To silver silence, and the moon sails calm
And stately through the soundless seas of Peace.
So through the clouds of Calvary - there shines
His face, and I believe that Evil dies,
And Good lives on, loves on, and conquers all -
All War must end in peace. These clouds are lies.
They cannot last. The blue sky is the Truth.
For God is love. Such is my Faith, and such
My reasons for it, and I find them strong
Enough ...

Better known by his nickname "Woodbine Willie", Kennedy was a chaplain on the Western Front in the First World War. He was awarded the Military Cross for rescuing wounded soldiers while under fire at Messines Ridge in 1917.

Charlie Mackesy



- shared by Gemma Allen, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

Hope

Thich Nhat Hanh

Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today.

- shared by Alison Goodwin, Estates & Facilities Assistant

There is a Hope

Stuart Townend

There is a hope that lifts my weary head,
A consolation strong against despair,
That when the world has plunged me in its deepest pit,
I find the Saviour there!
Through present sufferings, future's fear,
He whispers, 'Courage!' in my ear.
For I am safe in everlasting arms,
And they will lead me home.

Strengthen the things that remain

from 1 Corinthians 13 (New Testament)

Love is patient and kind;
it is not jealous or conceited or proud;
love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable;
love does not keep a record of wrongs;
love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth.
Love never gives up;
and its faith, hope, and patience never fail.
Love is eternal.

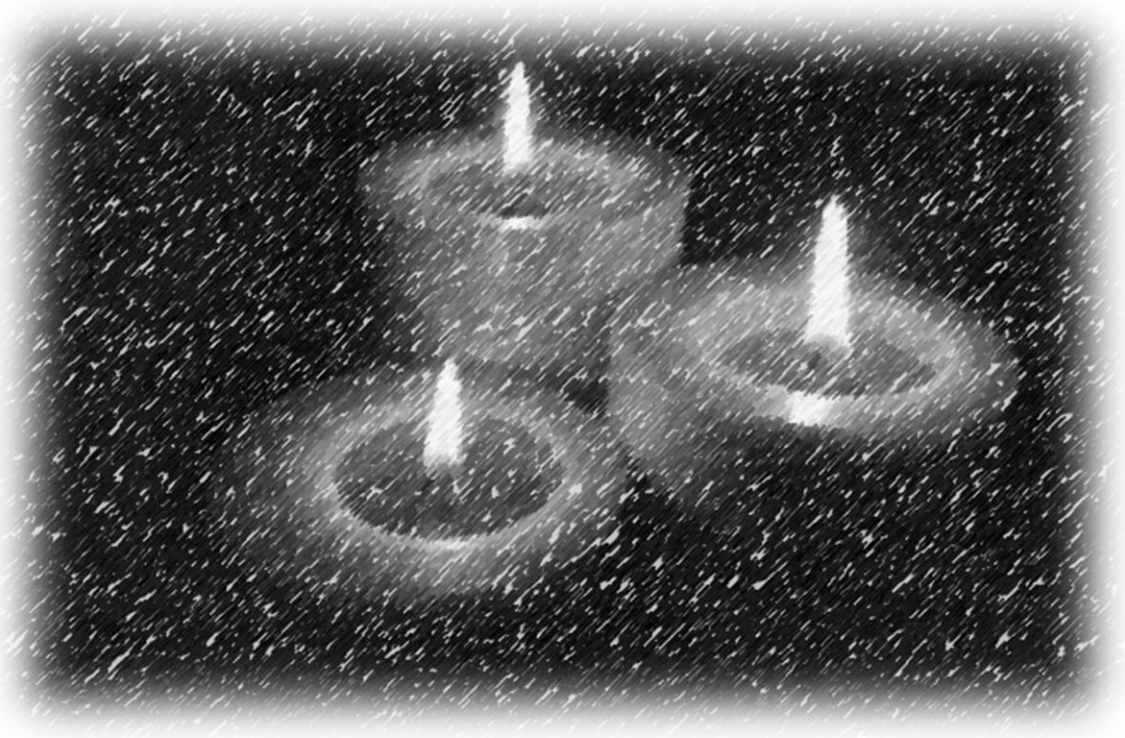
... Meanwhile these three remain:
faith, hope, and love;
and the greatest of these is love.

Peace, Light, Love

May peace surround you.
May light shine within you.
May your soul be held in love.

- written by Rachael Field, Spiritual Care Team

Faith, Hope & Love



Faith

continuing to burn despite the darkness of death

Hope

flickering in the darkness and sadness of our grief

Love

enduring in the midst of our helplessness and loss

Listen to your life

Frederick Buechner

Listen to your life
See it for the fathomless mystery that it is.
In the boredom and pain of it
no less than in the excitement and gladness:
touch, taste, smell your way
to the holy and hidden heart of it
because in the last analysis
all moments are key moments,
and life itself is grace.

