

# A Legacy of Hope

## STUDY QUESTIONS

November 2022 (30 October - 26 November)



We have been entrusted with a legacy of hope by all the saints that have gone before us! Not a legacy of fear, or suspicion or bitterness, but one of hope! We are responsible for nurturing a legacy that has sustained, inspired and comforted generations over the centuries.

We begin by reflecting on All Saints Day, exploring the legacy that the Communion of Saints have carried with them and subsequently handed on to us. Over the month we want to ask, what legacies do we rely on and draw strength from? And what legacies will we leave behind? Are we leaving legacies of hope?

Our hope is a rich, transformative thing. Hope is not optimism, or foolhardiness, or cheerfulness, or a denial of reality. Our hope is knowing that the deep love at the heart of the universe — the deep love of God — loves us, and cares for us and considers us all worthy of that love. Life is incredibly hard and complex but we live hopefully in the light of that world-changing love, hoping to do our bit as we can, relying on God and one another.

As we enter a time of turmoil and change in our lives, churches and society — how can we ensure that we hold on to this hope? Our proud inheritance — handmade by God, given to us by Jesus, and instilled more each day through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit — is an invaluable resource.

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We shall end the month with the beautiful legacy of hope spoken from the cross, as Jesus turns to the suffering man in agony next to him and says, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (see Luke 23:33-43).

**SEEDS TO SOW:** A suggestion to facilitate varied ways of responding to the readings and sub-themes for the month. These are open-ended and optional and are designed especially for people wanting to develop their own resources in response to the material.

*These discussion questions adapt our monthly themes for small Connect Groups or personal Bible study (look up [A Legacy of Hope resource pack PDF](#) for more information on this month's theme). The questions are divided into 4 parts to correspond with the 4 weeks of the Daily Worship theme. They are offered as a guideline and there is no need to go through all the given questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose, or adapt to what interests you or your group.*

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### Part 1: Looking out with hope

#### SEEDS TO SOW: WRITING A LETTER TO GOD

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##### Read Ephesians 1: 11-23

We are sealed by the Holy Spirit, redeemed as God's own people, and called to hope. You could say the envelope is stamped, the address is written, and we are ready to be posted out into God's world!

Where is God sending you this week? Into what places and situations?

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##### Read Isaiah 1: 10-18

Does the legacy we carry do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow? If so, how? If not, why not?

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##### Read Luke 6: 20-31

What is the legacy of the beatitudes? In what ways has the church been shaped by these ideas or not? Where it has — how? Where it hasn't — why?

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### Part 2: A living legacy

#### SEEDS TO SOW: REFLECT, WHAT ARE WE CONSERVING?

Both our natural heritage and our theological heritage are living things with interconnected components. Part of preserving either is considering how to innovate, reconfigure and cross-pollinate. Carefully considering the whole eco-system can better protect individual strands and make them more adaptable and resilient. The decisions we make about what we grow and how we grow it — in both our gardens and our churches — can nourish a rich living tradition or stifle it...

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#### Read Psalm 98

How could we mix some 'old songs' and some 'new songs' to make vibrant worship in response to God? In other words, what are some old resources, traditions and practices that we can mix with new songs, ideas and approaches to revitalise the legacy of hope we carry? How can we *cross-pollinate*, mixing old and new, to make our worship — both true to itself and resilient and thriving?

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#### Read Haggai 1: 15b-2:9

God's spirit abides among us, God is *with* us. How does that knowledge shape our lives?

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#### Read John 15: 1-11

Where do we want to see new life and new fruit growing in our communities, churches and across society?

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### Part 3: Drawing from the well

SEEDS TO SOW: REFLECT, WHAT NEEDS TRANSFORMED?

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#### Read Isaiah 12

Why is water such a prominent metaphor and analogy used in the Bible?

Wells may not be as regular a feature of our daily life as they were at the time Isaiah was written, but they are still a vivid and instantly recognisable one. Reflect on what other water based metaphors we could use to talk about our faith, perhaps thinking about things we encounter in our daily lives?

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#### Read John 4: 1-6

Jesus was tired.

Here we don't see a superhero or a cypher, a hologram or a shadow trick. We see a human being, weary and tired, a thirsty human like us.

What does it mean for our faith that Jesus knows what it is like to be tired and thirsty?

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#### Read John 4: 7-29

Consider all the things that were transformed after the events of this day. How many things can you think of?

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### Part 4: The precipice of hope

SEEDS TO SOW: CONSIDER DOING A REFLECTIVE *LECTIO DIVINA* READING

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**Read Luke 1: 67-79**

How do you think Zechariah felt as he prophesied these words?

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**Read Colossians 1: 15-20**

How does it feel to be part of the ongoing reconciliation of all things?! Does it affect how you see the world?

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**Read Luke 23: 33-43**

We close this month with a beautiful legacy of hope spoken from the cross.

What do you think it meant to Jesus to hear the request in verse 42 in that moment?