

Connect



We all have connections with others through family, neighbourhood, shared history, shared interests and shared values. We are connected to and through the natural world we share. We are affected by the actions of others, and we all impact this interconnected world in some way. Over Lent we can choose to connect with others.

Connect with your local church, or whoever gave you this diary – you could join in their Easter activities, share what you have been doing during Lent, or just ask them to keep in touch with you.

Connect with someone who shares a hobby or interest with you – perhaps join a group and work on a project or activity together (you could use some ideas from this diary).

Connect with one of the stories in the diary – perhaps you have something in common, or you think you would get along with this person.

Connect with someone else using the 'Walking towards Easter together' resource – agree a regular time to make contact, and share something from your journal or your week.

Connect with someone you know but have not been in touch with recently – give them a ring, send a text, email or card.

Connect people you know with each other – introduce one person to someone else you know that they have something in common with, that you think they might appreciate getting to know.

Dream

Our dreams are important – they reveal our hopes. When we imagine a different world, we start to find ways to bring it into being.

What do you daydream about when you are doing nothing?
Where does your heart and mind go when it is free?

What are your hopes and dreams for the people close to you?
Can you share those with God in prayer?

What are your hopes and dreams for this year, for next year, for the future?
What little thing could you do now towards those dreams?

Write or draw some of your dreams and put them somewhere you can see them every day – record on them whenever you see any sign of them being realised in any way, however small.

What are your dreams for our world? What change do you most wish to see? How might you enable this, or support those who can?



Play



It is important to keep playing! When we play, we are enjoying God's world in some way. We open ourselves to new things, make space for creativity, find different ways to think about things, and change how we feel. Playfulness is next to Godliness, it connects us to the Holy Spirit, and enables us to sing a new song of praise.



Play a game on your own – patience, a jigsaw, computer game, imaginative game with your toys.



Play a game with others – set up a game and invite people to join you! People play chess by post, scrabble on the internet, do crosswords over the phone, play board games together, play active games outside. Choose a game you like and think of who to invite, and how you can play together.



Play with words – write or speak playfully. Enjoy words with different meanings (puns), rhymes, repeated sounds (alliteration), discover new words, tell jokes, invent limericks – find ways to have fun with words.



Play with sounds – play an instrument, sing a song, make a noise with household items, play your favourite music and join in somehow. Find ways to have fun with sounds.



Play with images – cut things up and makes a collage, set things up to create playful photos, photoshop images, draw or paint freestyle, create a video. Find ways to have fun with images.

Smile



Make the effort to raise a smile! Smiling is good for everyone – it reduces stress, tension and pain, boosts your immune system, releases positive emotions, and connects us to others as smiles are infectious in the best possible sense.

What makes you smile? Count how many times you smile today.

Who can you smile at today? In person, as you pass on the street, via a screen, or through the window?

How might you bring a smile to someone else's face today? What could you do or say or share that might brighten their day?

How smiley is your face? Practice in the mirror smiling, so that even with a face mask on, you look smiley.

Can you laugh at yourself today? Try to catch yourself doing or thinking something silly.

How smiley is your voice? Try smiling before you say something in person or on the phone – does it change how you sound?

Thank



Being thankful is an attitude, a choice we can make whatever our circumstances. It can be a habit to foster during Lent. Here are some suggestions to help you be more thankful:



Start each day by thanking God for today!
*This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)*



End each day by giving thanks for three things from the day, three things you have appreciated, however small. If you wrote these down each day you would have a record of over 1,000 blessings each year!



Remember to say thank you to everyone who does anything for you today. Think about the past week, month, year – who would you most like to thank for their support or help? Make or write a card to send them, expressing thanks.



One way to thank is to ‘pay it forward’ – to do for someone else what you have appreciated someone doing for you (rather than give back to the person you have received from). This can spark a chain of blessing.



Learn how to say thank you in other languages, (particularly those spoken by people in your local community) or in sign language or Makaton.



Give thanks before each meal, drink and snack you have today. Think of all the people who have been involved in growing, packing, transporting, selling and making what you are eating and drinking. Pray for them as you thank God for sustaining you through this food and drink.



Think

Look at the I wonder questions. How do they speak to you?



Give

What could you give today? Who could you give to? How will you give – secretly, as a surprise?



Do

Have you put your faith into action today? What could you do to make a difference?



Discover

What have you discovered about yourself, about others, about the world, about God, today?



Share

How could you share some of your time, your energy, your resources, yourself with others today?