**Diocesan Education Service**

**Prayer and Activities to Support**

**Silver Linings Community Crisis Response Programme - (Rainbows Bereavement Support GB)**

*‘The Silver Linings Programme is an outlet for children in the form of a peer support, crisis response model based on six sessions in which participants share their personal stories, express their feelings, and reconcile the crisis event using their coping skills and move on to the future – knowing that they will be supported by people who care for them. The closing session allows a participant to select a Personal Goal, which they can control and strive to achieve. To implement the Silver Linings Programme, teachers, classroom assistants and other professionals will lead the activities and guide the discussions to work through the specific topics in each of the Silver Linings Programme sessions.’*

The Silver Linings[[1]](#footnote-1) Community Crisis Response Programme has been created by Rainbows Bereavement Support GB to help children and young people respond to crises such as the current pandemic. It is a resource aimed for use in all schools and therefore does not include a faith dimension.

This resource has been produced by the DES to be used alongside each of the six sessions of the programme so that prayer and reflection are incorporated into it and, in this way, the programme is integrated into the Catholic life of the school. Copies of the Leader’s Handbook and the Participant Booklet can be found both on the Rainbows website and on the Diocesan webpage.

**Prayers and Activities to support Silver Linings**

Each Silver Linings session is divided into four parts: Gathering, Focus, Connecting and Closing. This is not unlike the ‘Gather, Listen, Respond & Go Forth’ structure of liturgy. For ease of use with the programme their headings are used in this document and have been colour-coded to match with the colour-coding used in liturgy planning.

In this resource each Silver Lining session begins and ends with prayer and reflection as outlined below. Suggested prayers, scripture and hymns are included for each session. In the notes below you will find copies of the relevant scripture readings. You may wish to use alternative age/ability versions of these passages. Please feel free to adapt this resource to suit the needs of the different classes within your school.

A focus for prayer should be created using the appropriate liturgical colour cloth, a crucifix or cross, a candle and an enthroned Bible open on the page of the scripture passage. You may also want to include a box or basket and sticky-notes should children wish to offer up any prayer intentions.

**Before you start the programme:**

Do share the sample letter with parents/carers so that they too can be ready to talk with their children about the Silver Linings Programme and support them as they process their experiences and feelings.

You will need to explain to the children what the programme is about and how it is designed to help them. It would be helpful to explore the proverb ‘*Every cloud has a silver lining’* with the children so that they understand the title of the programme. The children also need to be reminded that in the midst of this difficult and sad situation, not only do we have friends, family and staff who can offer comfort and hope, but that we all are able to turn to God. Through prayer we can talk to God at any time, knowing that he is always listening. We need to remember the love of God the Father who has given us his son, Jesus, to show how great his love is for each and every one of us. We can use scripture in our prayer to recall how Jesus offers us both comfort and guidance when we are in need. And we can also turn to the Holy Spirit and ask for him to strengthen us and to bring us peace in our hearts and hope for the future.

**Session One: Feelings and Me**

**To begin Session One:**

Gathering: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Read the scripture passage:

**Matthew 5:1-12 The Sermon on the Mount**

**Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

**Response: *Glory to you O Lord.***

(When saying ‘Glory to you O Lord’, with your thumb make the sign of the cross, first on your forehead; then on your lips; then on your heart)

Jesus saw the crowds and went up a hill, where he sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them:

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them! Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them! Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised! Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully! Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them! Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God! Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children! Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them! Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven.

**Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Response: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***

Focus: Mary, the first disciple of Christ was the first person to hear the Word and ponder many things in her heart, she is therefore our perfect role model. Pope Francis teaches us that Mary kept the word of God in her heart. We too must keep the words in our hearts no matter where we are or whatever is happening. Along our path of welcoming God’s word into our hearts, the Mother of the Lord accompanies us. She is the one who was called blessed because she believed in the fulfilment of what the Lord had spoken to her at the Annunciation.

Connecting: We trust in God and the Holy Spirit to guide us through this crisis, ask Mary to protect us, and be accompanied by Jesus along the way.

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&url=https://www.catholicireland.net/lent/our-lady-in-lent/&psig=AOvVaw2BCgX95iHhjadSk5kGEa7d&ust=1584623070423000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCKj0npOLpOgCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAD)

***Share the image to reflect upon:***

Provide the opportunity for some quiet reflection time on the words of scripture and how we too can keep the word of God in our thoughts, words and hearts.

Make the sign of the cross.

*The Virgin in Prayer*

*Sassoferrato*

*The National Gallery (London)*

**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session One**

**To end Session One:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

We pray especially for those who have been affected by the Corona Virus.

May the Lord bring them comfort, strength and peace:

*Pray:*

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples,  
‘I am with you always’.  
Be with me today, as I offer myself to you.  
Hear my prayers for others and for myself,  
and keep me in your care. Amen.

Open prayer: This is a time for children to share their personal prayer intentions.

Pass around a holding cross, prayer hands etc. and invite children in turn if they so wish to say their prayer aloud or in the quiet of their heart. Respond after each prayer intention with ‘Amen.’

*Please see explanation below* *and for other examples see Practical Prayer Ideas booklet):*

**Holding Cross**

This idea gives the children an understanding of turn taking in prayer.

You will need a holding cross.

This works best if the children can be seated in a circle.

Having set the focus for prayer (e.g. thank you, praise etc.) pass the holding cross to the first child. They may either pray aloud or say a silent prayer before passing the cross on: ‘As I hold this cross…’

You can use other religious objects or ordinary objects e.g. a palm cross (especially if you are focusing on sorry), or a smooth pebble, a beautiful autumn leaf.

Alternatively, children could write their prayer intentions on a folded star and place in water. The star will unfold in the water.

**Star Prayers**

You will need star shaped paper (ordinary photocopying paper works fine) and a shallow tray or dish of water (a plastic drawer works well or a water tray from EYFS), pencils.

If you wish in the centre of the star you may have already written what is to be the focus for the prayers e.g. We pray today for…

Let the children write an intention on each point of the star. If working in groups they can take it in turns to write on a different point.

As each prayer is written, fold over each point at the base where it meets the centre of the star (if you are using a five pointed star when folded it will look like a pentagon).

Gather the children together so that the tray of water is at the centre and can be seen.

In turn the children place their stars upon the surface of the water (the stars will unfold to reveal their prayers).

Explain to the children that if they allow God into their lives, he will shine out from them.

Once everyone has shared their prayer intention, conclude by praying the ‘Our Father.’

Sing Christ be beside me or pray the words:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me.  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,  
Christ in hearts of all that love me,  
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Amen.

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Session Two: Changes For Me**

**To begin Session Two:**

Gathering: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Read the scripture passage:

**Luke 5: 1-11 Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

**Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

**Response: *Glory to you O Lord.***

(When saying ‘Glory to you O Lord’, with your thumb make the sign of the cross, first on your forehead; then on your lips; then on your heart)

One day Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret while the people pushed their way up to him to listen to the word of God. He saw two boats pulled up on the beach; the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. Jesus got into one of the boats-it belonged to Simon-and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and taught the crowd.

When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let down your nets for a catch.” “Master,” Simon answered, “we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets.” They let them down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break. So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full of fish that the boats were about to sink. When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, “Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!” He and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish they had caught. The same was true of Simon’s partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” They pulled the boats up on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.

**Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Response: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***

Focus: Jesus called each of the disciples to be his followers which brought about great change to their lives. We too are called by God, we each have a special vocation or mission in life.

Connecting: St. John Henry Newman once said ‘[To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.](https://www.azquotes.com/quote/213443)’

Reflect on these words and think about what Newman meant by them.

How can I bring about change in my life to be the best I can be?

Play quiet music in the background during this time of silent contemplation.

**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session Two**

**To end Session Two:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

We recognise that we like the first disciples are called to be followers of Christ and to respond to his teachings. We pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us in this mission and in the words of St. Ignatius of Loyola, to “Go Forth and Set the World on Fire” by going out into the world and sharing the Good News.

**Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

This is a way of getting children to reflect on WWW (what went well) and EBI (even better if) in their own lives.

* You will need three pieces of paper (or one piece of paper with three columns) labelled Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.
* This can be done as a shared activity or individually.
* You could get the children to suggest questions to go on each page/column

e.g. In what ways did you show Jesus’ love?

These questions should prompt others to reflect on their words and actions, on everything they have said and shouldn’t have, or didn’t say when they should.

* Once there are enough prompts allow the children time to reflect on each column. They may decide to pray aloud or silently. As each prompt is prayed about it can be ticked off.

Sing ‘Gather, Gather, Gather in the Light of His Name’ or ‘Follow Me, Follow Me.’

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Session Three: Angry and Scared**

**To begin Session Three:**

Gathering: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Read the scripture passage:

**Acts 2: 1-4 The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

**Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.**

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

**Reader: The Word of the Lord**

***Response: Thanks be to God***

Focus: Sometimes we may feel alone and frightened, but it is important to remember that God is always there for us.

Listen to the words of the poem ‘Footprints in the Sand.’

*This could be used in the form of a guided meditation with quiet music and a picture of footprints displayed.*

**Footprints**

One night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along the beach with God. Across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand - one belonging to me, and the other to God.

When the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed many times along the path of my life there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of my life.

This really bothered me and I questioned God about it. "God, You said that once I decided to follow You, You'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed You most, You would leave me."

God replied, "My precious, precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Connecting: Allow time for children to reflect on these words.

Pray the Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

O Come, Holy Spirit,

fill the hearts of your faithful,

and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful

by the light of the Holy Spirit,

grant that by the gift of that same Spirit

we may be always truly wise

and ever rejoice in his consolation. Amen.

**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session Three**

**To end Session Three:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

We turn to God in prayer as we place any fears and anxieties at the cross.

**Paper**

* You will need small pieces of paper, pencils and erasers
* Children can write in pencil what they are worried about and fold it up.
* During the prayer service let them place their paper around the cross. Once it is all over they can retrieve their paper and rub out what they have written or alternatively they can place their bits of paper in a waste paper basket.

Sing ‘Be not afraid’ or sign whilst singing ‘God hears me when I pray.’

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Session Four: Endings and Beginnings**

**To begin Session 4:**

Gathering:In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Read the scripture passage: **Matthew 28: 1-10 & 16-20 The Resurrection**

**“I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”**

**Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

**Response: *Glory to you O Lord.***

(When saying ‘Glory to you O Lord’, with your thumb make the sign of the cross, first on your forehead; then on your lips; then on your heart)

After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled.

The angel spoke to the women. “You must not be afraid,” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly now, and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!’ Remember what I have told you.”

So they left the tomb in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Peace be with you.! They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. “Do not be afraid,” Jesus said to them. “Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him, even though some of them doubted. Jesus drew near and said to them, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Response: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***

Focus: The two Mary’s and Jesus’ disciples were devastated that they would not see their friend again. It was hard for them to believe that Jesus was alive after hearing the news that Jesus had risen from the dead. Because of the work of his first disciples, we know about Jesus today. The disciples’ special mission was to go and tell everyone about him and his teachings.

Connecting: We believe that Jesus is risen and is always with us. We can turn to Jesus at any time through prayer; he wants to celebrate with us in our times of joy and comfort us in our times of sorrow. We too are sad when people die, but we can take great comfort in knowing that we will be raised to new life after we die, this is joyful news. Jesus wants his followers today to bring people to him. We can do this by talking about Jesus and by following his teachings through our actions.

**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session Four**

**To end Session Four:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

We turn to God in prayer as we reflect on the many blessings that we have in our life:

**Counting Blessings**

You will need a piece of paper for each person carrying out this activity (you might let a different child do this each day in turn).

Give a child the piece of paper. Each time something good happens to them during the day they write it down. Alternatively, you might let them record everything on a whiteboard.

At the end of the day they will have a record of everything which they can then give thanks to God for.

You could let them draw instead of writing.

You could put up a large piece of paper where anyone can go and record something good which has happened and then gather round it at the end of the day to offer up thanks to God.

Sing: ‘I will be with you wherever you go’ or ‘Christ be our Light.’

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Session Five: Weathering the Storms**

**To begin Session Five:**

Gathering:In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Read the scripture passage: Matthew 8: 23-27 Jesus Calms a Storm

**Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

**Response: *Glory to you O Lord.***

(When saying ‘Glory to you O Lord’, with your thumb make the sign of the cross, first on your forehead; then on your lips; then on your heart)

Jesus got into a boat, and his disciples went with him. Suddenly a fierce storm hit the lake, and the boat was in danger of sinking. But Jesus was asleep. The disciples went to him and woke him up. “Save us, Lord!” they said. “We are about to die!” “Why are you so frightened?” Jesus answered. “What little faith you have!” Then he got up and ordered the winds and the waves to stop, and there was a great calm. Everyone was amazed. “What kind of man is this?” they said. “Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

**Reader: The Word of the Lord**

***Response: Thanks be to God***

Focus: There are many sayings about storms: a storm in a teacup, facing stormy weather etc. Ask children for their own suggestions or their explanations about what images are conjured up by a storm.

It’s like we are in a storm when something bad happens and we can feel scared and helpless just as the disciples did in the boat on the sea. We can take great comfort that Jesus calmed the sea as we know that God is looking after us and is with us in times of trouble.

Connecting: You may like to watch this animated version of Jesus Calms the Storm: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uJflsmQJ1Y>

Pause for a few moments to imagine yourself in the boat on the stormy sea with the disciples. How would you have felt?

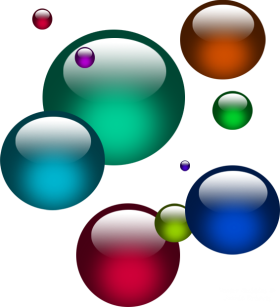
Acknowledge that it is ok to be scared sometimes but remember that Jesus is with you always.

**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session Five**

**To end Session Five:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

We turn to God in prayer as we ask God to strengthen us during times of trouble:

**Bubble Prayers**

* You will need bubble blowing kits and a dry, not too windy, day.
* Get the children to focus upon someone they wish to pray for. – Thank them for helping through the storm.
* As they blow a bubble they can pray for that person ‘Jesus be with…’, ‘God our Father help…’, Holy Spirit protect….’.
* The bubble rising into the air is a visual reminder that we offer our prayers up to God.

Sing: My Lighthouse-Rend Collective which includes the line: “You are the peace in my troubled sea.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reAlJKv7ptU>

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Session Six: My Own Goal**

**To begin Session Six:**

Gathering:In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Read the scripture passage: Matthew 7: 7-8

**Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

**Response: *Glory to you O Lord.***

(When saying ‘Glory to you O Lord’, with your thumb make the sign of the cross, first on your forehead; then on your lips; then on your heart)

“Ask and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to those who knock.”

Jesus teaches us to ask God for the things we need. Jesus says that God will answer the way any loving father would. Jesus wants us to turn to God. In three ways, we can ask, seek and knock on God’s door. As God knows everything, God knows what we need. It is through prayer that we put our needs into words and God will give us the best answer.

**Reader: The Word of the Lord**

***Response: Thanks be to God***

Focus: Listen to and/or sing: Build Your Kingdom Here- Rend Collective

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

Reflect on these lines of the song:

‘Build Your kingdom here  
Let the darkness fear  
Show Your mighty hand  
Heal our streets and land.’

Connecting: Reflect upon the virtues from the Catholic School Pupil Profile by asking: How can we demonstrate these virtues in our day to day thoughts, words and actions?



**Use the activities from the Silver Linings Booklets for Session Six**

**To end Session Six:**

Closing: *Make the sign of the cross.*

Write a prayer to say how you will help to build the Kingdom of God by living out the virtues.

We join our prayers together in the form of a paper chain prayer:

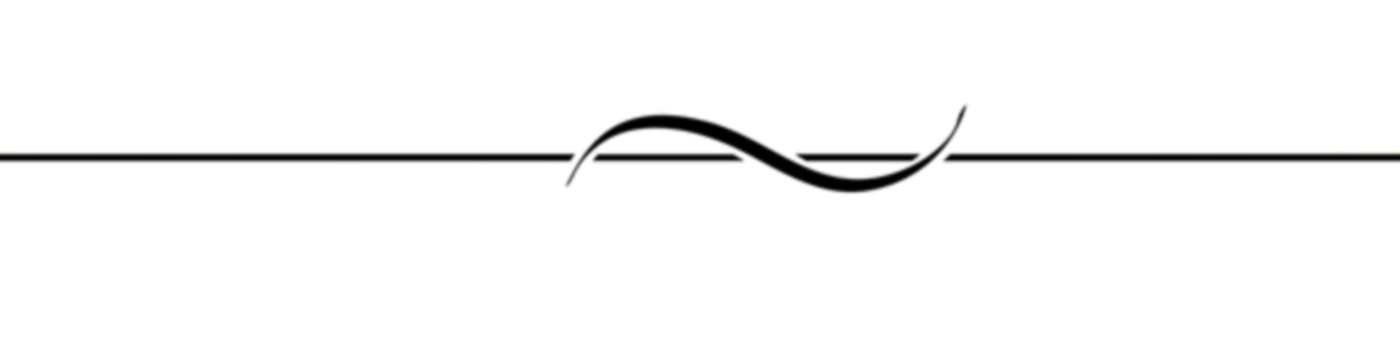
**Paper Chain Prayers**

* You will need strips of coloured paper and glue or a stapler (you can buy pre-gummed paper strips).
* Get the children to write their prayers on a strip of paper. Try to focus on a specific type of prayer (thanks, praise etc.) or give them something specific to pray for.
* Join the prayers together to make a chain and place them about the prayer area.
* You could build up a chain over a period of time by adding to it gradually.
* Each child could have their own prayer chain which they add to over time.
* You could have different coloured strips to symbolise different types of prayer
* This idea gives children a tangible way to help them understand how our prayers can be joined together as an offering to God.
* With older children you can talk about the work of Blessed John Henry Newman who spoke about us all being links in a chain.

Sing ‘Seek ye first the Kingdom of God’

Or Shine Jesus Shine <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3iB30gCqAc>

*Make the sign of the cross.*



**Additional suggestions for scripture and songs:**

**Scripture**

The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised. Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd’s rod and staff protect me. You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim. I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live.

Matthew 11: 28-30 “Come to me, all you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

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| The Lord is my Shepherd | Psalm 23 |
| Come to me, all you who labour…and I will give you rest | Matthew 11:28-30 |
| The Road to Emmaus | Luke 24.13-35 |
| Jesus comforts the disciples | John 14 |
| Jesus rises from the dead and appears to various people | John 20 - 21 |
| Paul and Silas in prison | Acts 16: 16-40 |
| The Christian spiritual life | Romans 8 |
| Faith and good deeds | James 2 |
| Sharing Christ for future generations | 1 John 1-7 |

**Songs**

All who are thirsty- Vineyard Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=coWRDjX02pU>

Like the Dewfall

BSL version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVQ-Cjde5bM>

1. Silver Linings Community Crisis Response Programme (Rainbows Bereavement Support GB) [www.rainbowsgb.org/corona-virus-how-rainbows-can-help/](http://www.rainbowsgb.org/corona-virus-how-rainbows-can-help/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)