

## Louisa's thoughts for parents

Did you know that 13kg of turkey is eaten per person in Israel each year?

Did you know that 230 costumes are involved in each performance of 'Phantom of the Opera' in the West End?

Did you know the lifespan of a bowhead whale is 200 years?

We often find that we need to know these random facts for quizzes, or when we read them we think it is interesting, but we soon forget the fact as we carry on with everyday life. But there is one 'did you know' fact that is important and needs to be remembered by everyone. That fact is:

'Did you know, it is OK not to be OK?'

People ask how you are, and the most common response is 'I am fine.' We are very reluctant to show our emotions and how we feel. We perhaps think that if we do it shows failure, or we feel guilty because others are in a worse situation than we are. It is, though, not alright to say 'I am fine', when it is not the truth. A parishioner in one of my previous churches used to tell me that if someone says they are 'fine', in actual fact is that they are 'For In Need (of) Encouragement.'

As adults we always ask children to be honest and to tell us why they are upset or why they are a bit quiet. We still need to do this as adults. Not only do others want to help, but so does God. As Christians we can believe that we should get over things quickly and often compare our wounds to others and that we shouldn't be sad when other people are sadder for better reasons. We often do what I call 'sanitize' our feelings, when really we require healing. All this does is keep those feelings bubbling away, which can reappear when you least expect them. Sometimes we don't show feelings as we are scared of being judged, or we see it as a failing.

So what can we do to help ourselves? We can show our vulnerability. It is often when you share your own story and feelings, then someone else says I feel like that, thank you for telling me as I don't feel so bad either now. Others will want to help because they love you. No one wants to see their friends suffering. Friends want to rebuild others with love and grace, they do not want to tear you down.

We now know that friends want to help, but what about God? In Psalms we are told that God is close to the broken hearted and He desires a broken spirit. You alone do not have the strength to move what feels like a mountain, but with faith in God you can. God sent His Son to heal your heart and mind. God is there to walk with you, to carry you when you feel you can't carry yourself. He wants you to pour out your heart, to be honest with Him. In Matthew we are reminded, 'If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say this to a mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.'

If we can think of ourselves as a mustard seed, knowing that God is with us every step of the way, hearing our woes and ensuring that we get through the 'non fine' times, then our faith will grow and we will be able to move not just our own 'mountains', but help move the 'mountains' of others. Parenting is not easy, and it doesn't come with a manual. What it does come with is the love of God and the love of the people that surround you.

## Louisa's thoughts for the young people

Did you know that the 10<sup>th</sup> July is National Teddy Bear Picnic Day?

Here is a song that you all can sing:

<https://youtu.be/uxFIGWm9M6w>



So why don't you see if you can ask Mum or Dad if you can take your teddy bear out for a picnic.

Think you are too old to have a teddy? It doesn't matter how old or grown up you feel, everyone is allowed to have a teddy bear. I still have my teddy that was given to me the day I was born. He is called Blue Ted and still often goes on holiday with us.

One thing that's special about teddy bears is that they are with you through the happy times and the sad times. When you think no one else listens to you a teddy always will. Did you know that God is like that? He is always with you and loves you no matter what. He loves you and is always there if you need to talk to Him. He loves to hear what you have been doing, but He also wants to hear from you if you are upset. Just like parents and teddy's He wants to make things better as well as be there to enjoy the times when you do exciting things.

*Here are a couple of facts so you can impress the grown-ups!!!!*

### *Fact 1*

*The first teddy bear was made in 1903 and they are named after US President Theodore Roosevelt, whose nickname was Teddy*

### *Fact 2*

*The music for the song "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" dates back to 1907*

Hopefully they are so impressed they will take you all on a picnic.

So what to do on the picnic – here are some ideas:

- Why not play hide and seek with your bears.
- Why not go on a bear hunt. You can watch the story here: <https://youtu.be/0gyl6ykDwds>
- You could play pin the tail on the teddy (a drawn one, not a real teddy bear of course).
- You could take some paper and pens with you and draw your own teddy bear.
- Remember to make lots of yummy sandwiches and cakes to take with you.

That's a thought, are you ready for another fact to impress the adults?

*The story goes like this...the Earl of Sandwich was too busy playing cards with his friends that he asked his servants to bring him a slice of meat between two slices of bread so he didn't need to stop playing. This food was then called a 'sandwich'.*

I hope you manage to go on a Teddy Bears Picnic and if you do, remember to send in your photos for us all to see.