

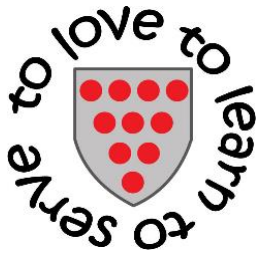
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF
WORCESTER

Prayer Area



Reflections



Prayer Table Reflections

Contents and Resources

Please see below a list of resources that you may need for each of the prayer table activities.

As a general rule, prayer tables should always have a candle, a Bible, a cross and a notebook on them, in addition to the resources needed for the activity.

Rules for prayer areas can be located on page 3.

Page	Activity	Resources
4	Pebble Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large quantity of different coloured glass stones. 6 different colours work best (readily available on Ebay) • Pots for the glass stones / pebbles • A candle
5	Advent Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A crib with straw • Strips of white cloth
6-7	Lent Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the <i>40 Acts of Kindness challenge</i>
8	Humility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible open on Luke 14 or Luke 14:7-14 printed • Pictures of children doing chores • Artefacts from jobs which may be considered lowly
9-10	On eagles' wings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of an eagle soaring
11-12	Global Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large world map • Globe • Mini star or mini dot stickers
13	Saying Sorry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain pebbles • Basket or bowl
14	Love drives out fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squares of plain paper • Paper hearts
15	Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set of balance scales • Weights labelled with things that could be considered unjust – homelessness, lack of education, no clean water, poverty • Weights with no labels • Strips of paper / luggage tags
16	Being thankful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decorated box (shoe box or printer-paper size) with a slit in it • Slips of paper
17	Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flags cut out of paper • String line put up • Pegs • Pens/Coloured pencils

18	Umbrella of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Umbrella – Suspend the umbrella securely in a place where children can sit underneath it but also where they can attach things to it. • Luggage tags with string • Pens/pencils
19-20	Where is the Love?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyrics from the Song “Where is the Love” by The Black-Eyed Peas (attached) • Battery-operated tea lights
21-23	You Are Beautiful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirror or mirrors – You could hang some cloth around the prayer area from the ceiling to make the area a little more private • Quotes about beauty (attached) cut out and placed around the mirror
24	#Liedentity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline templates of people cut out • Picture of person remove mask (attached)

Our prayer area is a special place for you to sit, think and engage with God. This space can be used think about your place in God's world and to think about how we can use what God has taught us in his word to make this world a better place.

The space is yours to use, but please treat it with respect.

After you have spent time using the prayer area, use this notebook to write down any thoughts or feelings that you have. You could write down:

- Things that you have been thinking about;
- How the activity has made you feel;
- How you might respond after the activity;
- Your own prayer that you prayed;
- A prayer request;
- A 'Big Question' you now have.

Reflecting is an important part of our development, and it is good to share our thoughts and ideas.

When you write an entry, please include the date and your name.

Pebble Prayers

We can say different prayers for different things and at different times.
These coloured pebbles can help us to focus our prayers on specific prayers.

Pick up a coloured pebble for the prayer you would like to do and hold it in your hand.

Look at its smooth edges and its beautiful colour.

Just like you, the pebble is perfectly made, ready for its perfect purpose.

The pebble is everything God wants it to be - just like you.

As you hold the pebble, close your eyes and think about how much you are loved by God.

Taking a **Green** pebble, say a sorry prayer.

What do you need to say sorry for? What things have you done that you are not proud of?

Taking a **Red** pebble, say a thanksgiving prayer.

What are you thankful for? Friends, family or anything else.

Taking a **Yellow** pebble, say for someone else.

It might be someone who is poorly? Or someone who is lonely?

Or someone who just needs some help?

Taking a **Blue** pebble, say a prayer for our world.

What places do you know that need prayer? Maybe where people are hungry?

Maybe where there is conflict?

Taking a **Purple** pebble, say a prayer for yourself.

What do you need help with? What could you ask God for?

Advent Prayers

“While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.” (Luke 2:6-7)

What is Christmas all about? During Advent, Christians prepare themselves for Christmas. They prepare their hearts by stopping to think about the Christmas story and making room for Jesus in their hearts.

Be still and use the pictures to help you think about the Christmas story. Choose a piece of cloth and place it in the crib, you might want to reflect or pray about what might need changing in your heart and how you could do this.

Lent Prayers

“Love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)

Lent is a time leading up to Easter. It is a time where Christians spend time thinking about God, reflecting on the amazing things that he has done, praying more and reading the Word of God so that they may become closer to God and know him better.

As we grow closer to God, we may wish to do something to help the world be a better place. It may only be something small but it can make a huge difference to the people around us.

Have a look at these 40 ‘Acts of Kindness’, one for each day of Lent. Spend time in prayer and reflection and decide which ones you could do to show the love of God in this place. Even the smallest act can have the greatest effect.



Challenge card summary

Categories: Gratitude Care for the environment Giving School community;
 Kindness New friends Doing the right thing

<p>1 </p> <p>Write or draw a list of 10 things you are grateful for</p>	<p>2 </p> <p>Sit next to someone you don't normally sit with at lunchtime</p>	<p>3 </p> <p>Have a book swap in your class</p>	<p>4 </p> <p>Let people go ahead of you all day</p>	<p>5 </p> <p>Offer to carry someone else's bag into school</p>	<p>6 </p> <p>Start a scrap paper pile for drawing to save paper</p>	<p>7 </p> <p>Leave an encouraging note for someone</p>	<p>8 </p> <p>Clear up after someone else's lunch</p>
<p>9 </p> <p>Write a thank you note to the lunchtime or reception staff</p>	<p>10 </p> <p>Walk to school or park your car further away</p>	<p>11 </p> <p>Ask your grown-up about their day on your way home or at teatime</p>	<p>12 </p> <p>Find out the names of three people you haven't met before in school</p>	<p>13 </p> <p>Litter pick around the school</p>	<p>14 </p> <p>Leave your grown-up a surprise note or picture before you leave for school</p>	<p>15 </p> <p>Try to chat to someone you haven't spoken to in a while</p>	<p>16 </p> <p>Bring in a donation for the local foodbank from your cupboard at home</p>
<p>17 </p> <p>Say thank you to your teacher for teaching you</p>	<p>18 </p> <p>Congratulate others when they do well</p>	<p>19 </p> <p>Help return lost property to the right owner</p>	<p>20 </p> <p>Leave the classroom as tidy and clean as you can</p>	<p>21 </p> <p>Make a class introduction pack in case anyone new starts during the year or for next year's class</p>	<p>22 </p> <p>Give somebody a nice compliment</p>	<p>23 </p> <p>Be the first to say sorry</p>	<p>24 </p> <p>Try to find out about what life is like for children in a poorer country</p>
<p>25 </p> <p>Be brave by trying something you find hard</p>	<p>26 </p> <p>Hold the door open for someone</p>	<p>27 </p> <p>Say a nice thing about someone to somebody else</p>	<p>28 </p> <p>Save energy by turning off the lights when you leave a room</p>	<p>29 </p> <p>Follow instructions without complaining</p>	<p>30 </p> <p>Say thank you to someone in your class</p>	<p>31 </p> <p>Don't interrupt; listen carefully instead</p>	<p>32 </p> <p>Invite somebody new to join in with your game</p>
<p>33 </p> <p>Try to avoid using any plastic that you throw in the bin, like straws</p>	<p>34 </p> <p>Play with a child from another year group</p>	<p>35 </p> <p>Find out how your class could help a local charity</p>	<p>36 </p> <p>Find out something new about somebody</p>	<p>37 </p> <p>Give someone a nice surprise</p>	<p>38 </p> <p>Talk to people in your class about their favourite thing about school</p>	<p>39 </p> <p>Ask how you can help out at school</p>	<p>40 </p> <p>Make posters about your school values to display</p>

Humility

Read Luke 14:7-14

“For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Luke 14:11)

Have you ever thought of yourself as better than others? Have you ever told someone you are better than him or her? Humility is putting other people first and yourself at the back of the line, recognising that you are not the most important person in the room.

Think of something you can do for someone else. You could do a job for someone or simply to tell them how important they are. Say a prayer to ask God to help you and then place a stone by the cross to show your commitment to putting others before yourself.

On Eagles' Wings

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.” (Isaiah 40:31)

Look at the picture of the eagle soaring in the clouds. He soars effortlessly because he doesn't use his own strength but rather the strength of the wind and air currents around him. The Bible says that when we put our trust God we too can soar like eagles because we soar in God's strength and not our own.

Are there times when you need a little more strength? Where might you find it hard and need God's help? Where might other people need God's strength today?

Spend some time thinking and praying. Maybe you could hold a pebble to remind you that you are in God's hands, and/or write your reflections in the reflection book.



Global Prayers

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5)

Look at the map. Which countries do you know about? Can you think of any countries where bad or sad things are happening? For example... war, or sickness, or people trying to escape from danger, or fear, or hatred. Or you might have family or friends, who live in that country that need some help or comfort.

Take a sticky dot and put it on the country that you've been thinking about. If you want to, as you place the sticker, you can say a quiet hope or a wish or a prayer for 'light' and goodness instead of 'darkness' and bad.



Saying Sorry

Have you been unkind or unfair towards someone? Have you said, done, or thought mean things about someone?

If you want to, pick up one of the stones and think about saying sorry to that person. If you want to, you can also say sorry to God.

Take your stone over and put it in the bowl beside the cross as a way of saying sorry. (When you see them next, you might want to say sorry to the person too).

Love drives out fear

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.” (1 John 4:18)

We can all become a little afraid from time to time. Fear can be a positive emotion as it can protect us from harm; however, fear can also feel overwhelming. Fear comes in many disguises: spiders, heights, illness, or even failure.

Jesus came so that we can have life in all its fullness. When fear becomes overwhelming it can prevent us from living life to the full. The Bible tells us that the one thing that can drive out fear, is love.

If you would like to, write down a fear that may be overwhelming you at this time on a square of paper. Then as you give that fear to God in prayer, cover it with a paper heart as a sign of hope that God is helping you to conquer that fear through his love.

Justice

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5:24)

There are some things in our world which could be considered unjust. Justice is about fairness; it involves everyone being treated in a way that is equal and balanced no matter who you are.

Look at the scales, they are unbalanced. Have a look at some of the things that are keeping the scales unbalanced. These are all examples of injustice. How do some of these things make you feel? How could you help?

If you would like to, write something on a piece of paper that you could do to help stand against one of these injustices. It might be a prayer, so to help a friend who is upset. As you write it say a prayer asking God to help you. Take the piece of paper, attach it to a free-weight and place it on the other side of the scale as a commitment to help stand up

Being Thankful

***“I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.”
(Psalm 9:1)***

Thank you! It's an amazing little phrase. It is a phrase that can put a smile on someone's face as you show appreciation for all the things that they have done for you. Sometimes it can feel really hard to say thank you, as sometimes we can think that nothing good is happening, but sometimes the most amazing things are happening right under our nose.

The Bible tells us that all good things come from God. Stop for a moment, look around you and think about all the wonderful things that you can see. It might be friends, teachers who care about you, trees, flowers and the beauty of nature, someone who helped you.

Take a piece of paper and write down something that you are thankful for today and place it in the box. If you wrote down the name of a person, why don't you thank them personally as well. What else could you do to say thank you?

Transitions

“Cast all your anxiety on to him, for he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

Moving on to a new place can be exciting but it can also be really worrying. Whether we are moving to a new school or just moving to a new class, we can have a range of emotions.

We may feel nervous about making new friends or leaving behind a school that we know really well. We may wonder if we will get lost or forget something and get into trouble. If we are moving to a new class, we may wonder about what our new teacher is going to be like. We may also be excited to start a new challenge and feel more grown up. All these emotions are acceptable, and we should not be ashamed of them.

The bible says that we should give all our worries and anxious thoughts to God because he cares for us and wants us to enjoy the challenges that we face.

Take a flag. On one side write something that worries you about moving on and on the other side write something that you are looking forward to. When you have done this, thank God for what you have written and ask him to help you with the things that worry you. You can decorate the flag and hand it up on the string.

Under God's Umbrella

“I will say to the Lord, ‘You are my place of safety and protection.’” (Psalm 91:2)

Sometimes we all get a little afraid and frightened of things. This is perfectly normal and natural.

Umbrellas are great because they protect us from getting wet in the rain. The bible tells us that God's love for us is a little bit like an umbrella, it covers us and protects us.

Sit under the umbrella. Can you think of a time when you needed someone to look after you or even protect you? Who was it? What did they do? Maybe it was a parent, or a friend, a family member, or a teacher.

As you sit under the umbrella, thank God for the person that looked after you. Maybe you could ask God to look after that person and protect them too. You could even thank God that he looks after you too.

If you would like to, take a tag with a piece of string attached. Write a thank you or draw a picture of the person you are thank you for and then tie it to the umbrella.

Where is the Love?

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it” (John 1:5)

Sometimes tragic things happen in the world that make us a little afraid or sad. We may even feel scared or angry. It may make us feel that there is no love in the world at all. It's OK to feel like this.

Have a look at the lyrics of the song by the Black-Eyed Peas. It's a song about how sometimes the things that we see in the world don't show love. Sometimes there are so many other things that take over and seem to be more important.

What are the things that worry you, the things that make you scared or angry? Maybe it is something that you have seen on Newsround or that you have heard others talk about. It's OK to be afraid sometimes, but we don't want to stay afraid.

As you reflect on the things that worry you, take a candle and turn it on. Remember that Jesus is the light of the world. Where could you be a light that shines love in the places where you live?

Where is the love?

People killin' people dyin'
Children hurtin', I hear them cryin'
Can you practice what you preachin'?
Would you turn the other cheek again?
Mama, mama, mama, tell us what the hell is goin' on
Can't we all just get along?
Father, Father, Father help us
Send some guidance from above
'Cause people got me, got me questioning

(Where's the love?)

I feel the weight of the world on my shoulders
As I'm gettin' older y'all people gets colder
Most of us only care about money makin'
Selfishness got us followin' the wrong direction
Wrong information always shown by the media
Negative images is the main criteria
Infecting the young minds faster than bacteria
Kids wanna act like what they see in the cinemas.

You Are Beautiful?

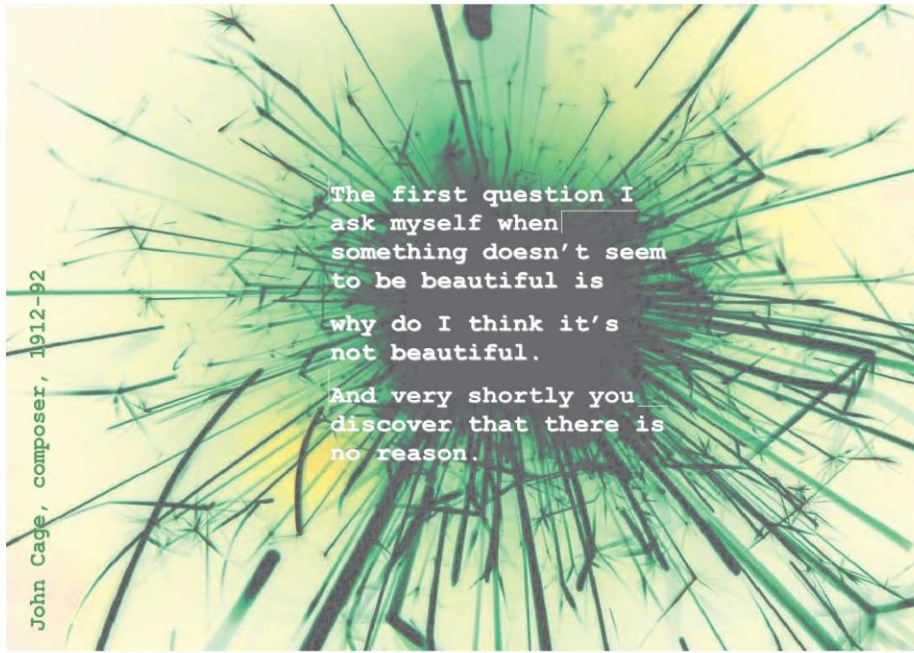
“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, I know that well.” (Psalm 139:14)

Look in the mirror. What do you see? Are there things that you like? Perhaps there are things that you don't like.

We may have moments when we don't like what we see in the mirror and may feel that we should look like someone else. Christians believe that each person is created individually, special, and unique. The bible tells us that God created us in his image and when he looks at us, he sees something that is fearfully and wonderfully made. When you look in the mirror can us see this too.

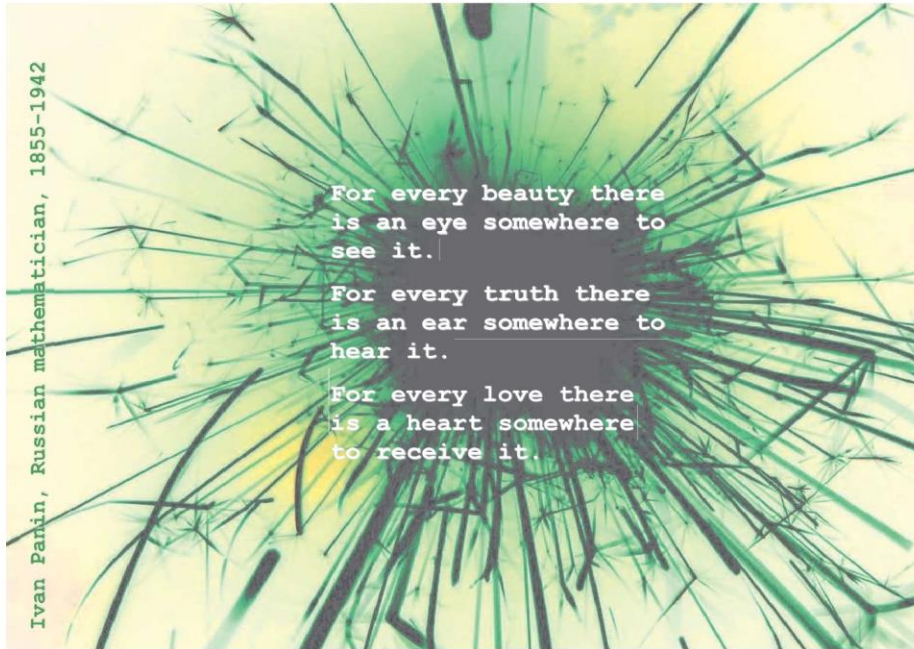
Spend a few moments reflecting on the fact that you are a unique individual. Have a look at the quotes around the mirror, do any of them speak to you? What would happen if we truly believed how amazing we are?

As you reflect, you may want to write something in the reflection book or say thank you for being created special and unique. Also remember to talk to a trusted adult if you would find this helpful.



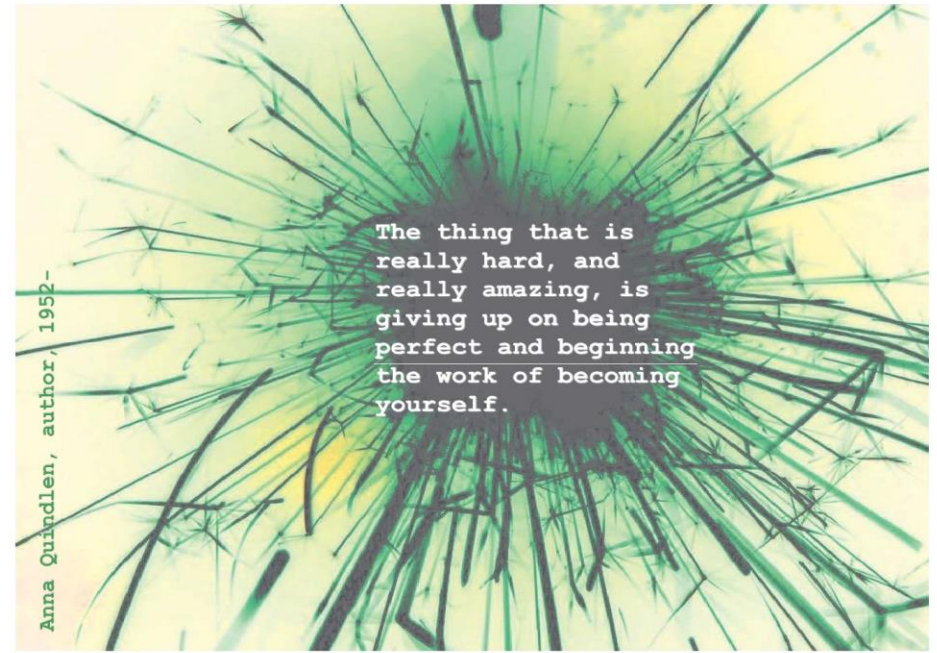
John Cage, composer, 1912-92

The first question I
ask myself when
something doesn't seem
to be beautiful is
why do I think it's
not beautiful.
And very shortly you
discover that there is
no reason.



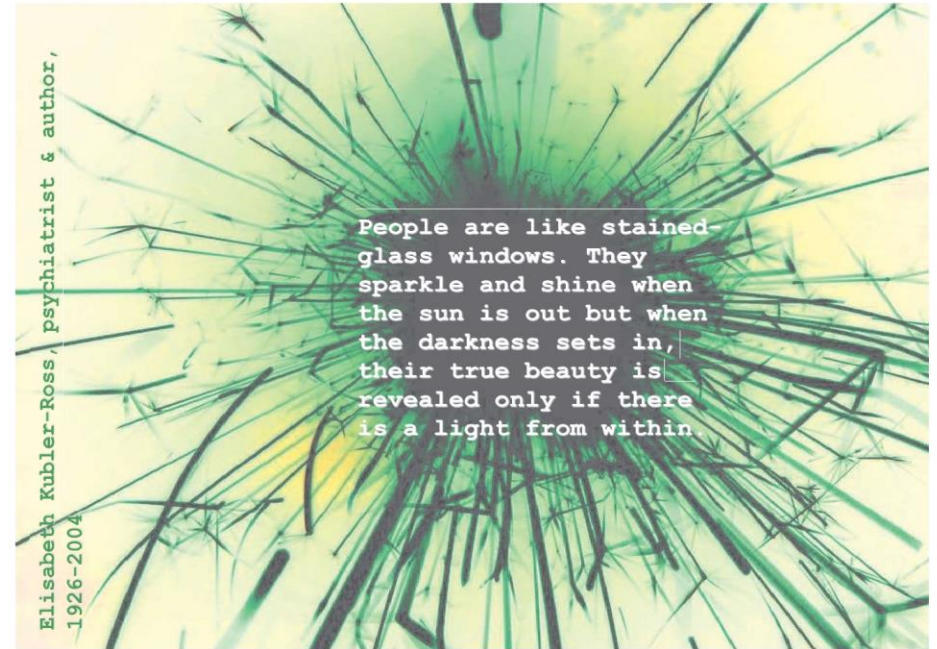
Ivan Panin, Russian mathematician, 1855-1942

For every beauty there
is an eye somewhere to
see it.
For every truth there
is an ear somewhere to
hear it.
For every love there
is a heart somewhere
to receive it.



Anna Quindlen, author, 1952-

The thing that is
really hard, and
really amazing, is
giving up on being
perfect and beginning
the work of becoming
yourself.



Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, psychiatrist & author,
1926-2004

People are like stained-
glass windows. They
sparkle and shine when
the sun is out but when
the darkness sets in,
their true beauty is
revealed only if there
is a light from within.



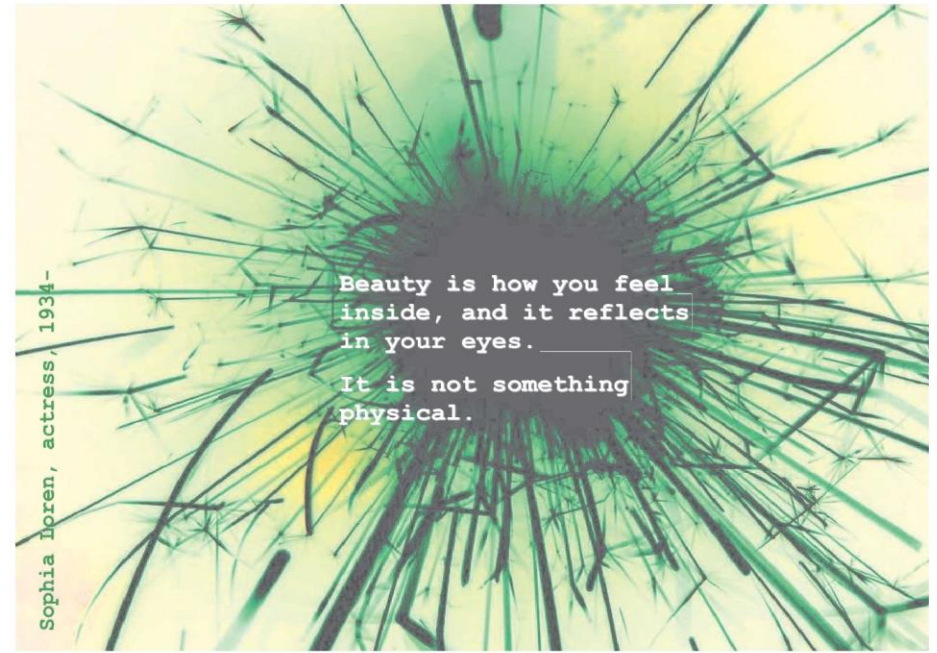
Confucius, philosopher, 551-479 BC

Everything has its beauty
but not everyone sees it.



Kahlil Gibran, philosopher, 1883-1931

Beauty is not in the face.
Beauty is a light in the
heart.



Sophia Loren, actress, 1934-

Beauty is how you feel
inside, and it reflects
in your eyes.
It is not something
physical.



Christina Aguilera, singer, 1980-

You are beautiful
no matter what they say.

#Liedentity

“He has made everything beautiful in its time.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Our world is full of images of ‘perfection’. Everywhere we go we see images of the perfect person. What they should look like, how they should dress, how they should do their hair. The celebrity culture seems only to emphasise these messages and peddle the myth that one’s physical appearance is everything. These appearance ideals follow us wherever we go and are unhelpful.

Christians believe that God doesn’t love people because of the way they look, but rather he loves people for who they are. Real beauty is not defined by our appearance but rather by the person that we are. It is the qualities that we have that make us beautiful, but most of all Christians believe that we are beautiful because we are created in the image of God.

Have a look at the picture of the person putting on a mask. What mask have you felt that you need to put on for certain people? Take a few moments to reflect on everything that you are – your internal qualities rather than the exterior appearance. Perhaps you would like to write these things down on a person template to remind you that you are beautiful. Or perhaps you would like to say a prayer of thanks or just say thank you for making you, you – a wonderfully unique individual.

Who do you think you are?

“Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.”
Dr. Seuss

Sixty per cent of girls opt out of everyday activities because of how they think they look. Around half of adolescent boys are unhappy with their bodies, and young people's happiness is at its lowest since 2010.¹ Jonathan Richardson explores what shapes our sense of identity.