



7. Heroes of Hope – Love is....

Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community, serving the needs of our unique school contexts. We continue this term’s theme of **‘Shine Like Stars!’** with a short series based on the new publication **‘Heroes of Hope’** (which we hope all of our Church schools have a copy of, courtesy of the Church of England). Like Daniel, the 22 ‘heroes’ in this book lived in challenging times, and demonstrated in *their* actions how to ‘shine like stars’, standing up for what is right and good in a world that often didn’t reflect this. In our world today, we want to inspire resilience in our pupils to be confident in who they are and what they stand for, just like these heroes, and to be positive role models in your school community, even when it might be difficult. **This week, we introduce this new book and reflect on one of the oldest stories in it; the life of St. Monica, mother of founding church father St. Augustine of Hippo. Her life of love and perseverance is a fitting story for just after Valentine’s Day! St. Monica is the patron saint of mothers, but we are very aware that not all children’s family models or experiences will be like her story, so please do handle any such situations with sensitivity. Lent & the Year of the Horse also started during half term: we register these as part of the resources, but don’t focus on them specifically this year.**



How does this link to your school’s Christian vision & values?

This week, we create an opportunity to reflect on the famous passage about Love written by St Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 – and to think about what this might mean in your own school’s context. We hope that this will give plenty of scope for you to talk together about how your vision/values help you to show love for each other every day!

Resources:

- **NB The ‘Heroes of Hope’ book that we refer to is available for free for all Church schools: for those schools in the Diocese of Guildford who have not collected their copy, please contact jane.whittington@cofeguildford.org.uk or come into Church House and we will be very happy to give you your copy. Additional copies are available from SPCK: [Heroes of Hope - Sharon Prentis | Alysia-Lara Ayonrinde - SPCK Publishing](#) We are very grateful to the illustrators (Daniela Gamba, Neda Kazemifar, Anastasia Magloire Williams and Jen Khatun) and to SPCK for granting us permission to use some of the illustrations from the book for these resources. Please respect the artists’ rights and do not share these images other than within these collective worship resources.**
- **Please remember that the resources that we provide should be adapted where needed, to suit the context of your own school and your own pupils.**
- **This term, in addition to our usual gathering and sending slides, we are including a slide at the very start to help to ‘still’ pupils, and help them to enter into the ‘sacred’ space of collective worship, ready to think, reflect, talk or pray. You might also want to use this in your class to change the ‘mood’ for any class-based worship. Take this at whatever pace seems necessary for your pupils. It ends with a visual ‘timetable’, setting out some of the elements that will be included in our time together, which we hope may help some pupils. You can also find these as cards to print out to use in other collective worship if this helps you.**
- As always, there are also some ideas for **reflective activities / ideas** to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.
- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation.
- There are two alternatives for prayers in this resource, on slides 12 or 13: choose which you feel suits your context best. There is also an additional set of slides (21-31) which tell Jesus’ parable of the Prodigal Son, which fits very well with the story of St. Monica; you could use this during the week to help pupils to make links between the two stories.
- **Reflective prayer activity, choose from 2 ideas this week:** you will need to print the ‘Loveheart’ style circles or cut paper chain hearts for your reflective areas this week, for pupils to write / draw onto. Full instructions are found on p5-7 with the resource. Pastel-coloured paper fits the imagery best.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Rising hearts stilling exercise

Use the stilling slide if desired: the suggested words should be spoken slowly, leaving pauses inbetween to create a sense of stillness.

As you sit quietly, watch the hearts rising....[PAUSE]

Now practise slower breathing.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....keep this going as you continue to look at the hearts....[PAUSE]

You maybe notice that you are feeling calmer and more relaxed....[PAUSE]



We come into this special / sacred space and time to be still....to think deeply.....to be together as a school community.....

In our time together today, we will **think about a question together, share a story and then use it to help us to think.** But first, let's welcome one another as we begin....

Slide 2:

Leader: As we gather together today....

ALL:we bring our thoughts and our hearts into this sacred space.

Here are BSL actions for some of the words:

Leader's words:

Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video)


Today: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/today> (1st video)

Pupils' response:

Thoughts: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/thoughts> (1st video)

Hearts: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/heart> (1st video)

Engaging:

Slide 3: Before half term, we finished our series based on the life of Daniel – and thought about how his brave actions often stood out, like stars, in the dark times in which he lived. Leading up to Easter, we are going to hear more stories like this, from other people in history whose lives have also shone bright, like stars. 

Slide 4: The stories come from this brand-new book, which some of you may have in your school. It shares the stories of 22 inspirational Christians from across the world, and across history. Like Daniel, each of them had their own challenging life situations. In a moment, we will be hearing about the first of our heroes of hope, but first, a few things to catch up on.....

Slide 5: Half term was a busy time for special days! It was **Valentine's Day** on February 14th, **Lunar New Year** on the 17th, marking the start of the year of the Horse – the same day as **Pancake Day** (also known as Shrove Tuesday), followed by **Ash Wednesday** which marks the start of Lent, when Christians all over the world begin preparations for Easter! A very busy week!!

Slide 6: Today, we're going to focus especially on Valentine's Day to link with our first story. Valentine's Day is a day when we often think about the people we love and the people who love us. I wonder who these people might be for you? We are going to think together today about a big question about Love: how might we finish the sentence '**Love is.....**'? *[you may need to give a few simple examples e.g. spending time with someone / helping them even if we don't feel like it: or maybe encourage pupils to focus on using your school's values to help answer the question...]*

Slide 7: Here's how one person talked about love: these words come from the Bible and were written by St. Paul to one of the churches that he had founded. Listen as I read them:

'Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not boast, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not become angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices over the truth. Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never ends.' *1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

I wonder what you think about these words? I wonder which most fit with your own idea of what 'Love is....?' or with our school's values? *[If time allows, you might want to leave some time for pupils to talk here, or share with a talking partner, or take it into your classroom for a time later in the week.]*

Slide 8: Our story for today comes from about 400 years after the birth of Jesus and tells of a mother, showing what 'love is' for her in the story of her life. **This is St. Monica**, the patron saint of mothers, who lived in Algeria, in North Africa and grew up as part of the Roman Empire. You can see where this is on the map....

Slide 9: World map

Slide 10: She had a son called Augustine, who became one of the most famous Christian writers in



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history.....but that's not where this story starts! – This story may, in fact, remind you of one of Jesus' parables! [NB you can find slides from Free Bible Images at the end of this presentation, to tell this story on another occasion, especially with older pupils who should be able to draw parallels between the life of St. Monica and the parable of the prodigal son.]

Slide 11: Augustine was very intelligent and wanted to learn all about the world around him. He got himself into a lot of trouble and would often go off on adventures without telling anyone, and not come home for days! Once, when he was 16, he stole pears from his neighbour's trees – not to eat them because he was hungry, but just because he wanted to smash them to smithereens to see how it felt. Imagine how your parents or carers would react if that was you!! As Augustine became a young man, he decided that he wanted to leave home for good and go and study in another country, and so left Monica behind, full of worry for what might become of him. However, just like Daniel, she turned her worry and her tears into prayer, and faithfully prayed that her son Augustine would stay safe and achieve well in his life. If you've ever worried about a family member or a friend, you might be able to imagine how hard it was for Monica, not knowing whether her son was alive and well, what he was doing, or even whether she would ever see him again..... [pause to let this sink in]

Although Augustine initially ignored all of his mother Monica's advice, at the age of 31 he read something in the Bible, some words written by St. Paul, that would change his life forever – and he finally understood the significance of Monica's faith in God. Augustine became **one of the most important Christian writers** in the whole of history and often wrote about his mother in his books, recognising the part that her faithful love and watchful prayers had played in his life, even when he was so far away from her. In Augustine's own words, she... **'planted the seeds of faith.'**

Slide 12: Looking back at the words we heard earlier about love, as well as some of our own ideas, I wonder what links you might find to the story of St. Monica and her love for her son, Augustine? I wonder which words you might pick out that make you think of her, as I read the words again? [you might want to allow older pupils to articulate their conclusions here.]

'Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not boast, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not become angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices over the truth. Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never ends.' 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Slide 13: Maybe these words are words that you linked back to St. Monica's life?.....[words are highlighted on the screen]

Slide 14: Responding and words for worship

We've heard today about the life and faithful love of St. Monica for her son Augustine. As we come near to the end of our time together today, let's ponder together.....

....I wonder what we might have learned from St. Monica's actions about what 'love is'?....

....I wonder how we might follow her example in order to 'shine like stars'?....

....I wonder which people in our own lives are like St. Monica?....

....I wonder how we might show what 'love is....' in our actions this week?....

Slide 15: Opportunity for reflection/prayer

I'm going to use the words about love from the Bible that we have been reflecting on today as a prayer, asking God to help us to show love to others.

Now, as I pray, you might like to make the words your own in some way, or join in with 'Amen' at the end.....

God who is love

As we try to show love to others, please help us to be patient and kind. Help us not to be jealous or boastful, or to be easily angered. Help us to forgive others and rejoice in what is good and true. May we always trust, always hope and always persevere.



Help us to love like you do.

OR

Slide 16: Opportunity for reflection/prayer

I'm going to say a short prayer of thanks now for people who have shown us love and faithful commitment: for a few moments before I start, bring those people into your mind now.....

Now, as I pray, you might like to make the words your own in some way, or join in with 'Amen' at the end.....

Faithful God

Thank you for those people in our lives who have loved us even when we have been difficult to love, who have watched out for us when we have gone our own way and have waited patiently for us to return. May we show love for others as we have been loved.

Slide 17: Amen.

Sending: Slide 18

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: May we shine like stars!



Pupils' response:

Shine: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/shine> (4th video)

Stars: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/stars> (4th video)

To listen to / sing:

[Chain of love](#) (BBC) or [Let our love show](#) (NBD)

Slide 19: Reflective areas



Print off the shapes on p4 onto pastel-coloured paper and cut them out. Create a class display across the week to keep the reflection going!

Think: Think about what 'love is....' for you, or something you could do to show love for someone else.

Do: Take a shape and write or draw your idea into the heart, then add it to your class display.

Talk: At the end of the week, look at all the different ideas that you have collected. Which ideas are most common?

We also encourage you to explore the full story of St. Monica from the book during the week, or use the extra slides (slides 21-31) in the presentation to tell the parable of the prodigal son.

Slide 20: Alternative or additional reflection idea: Paper chain hearts



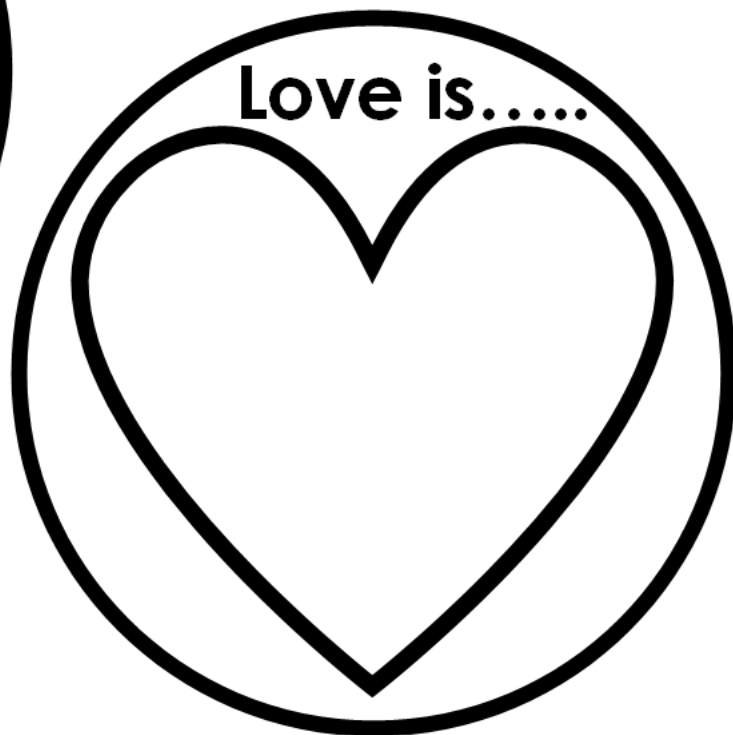
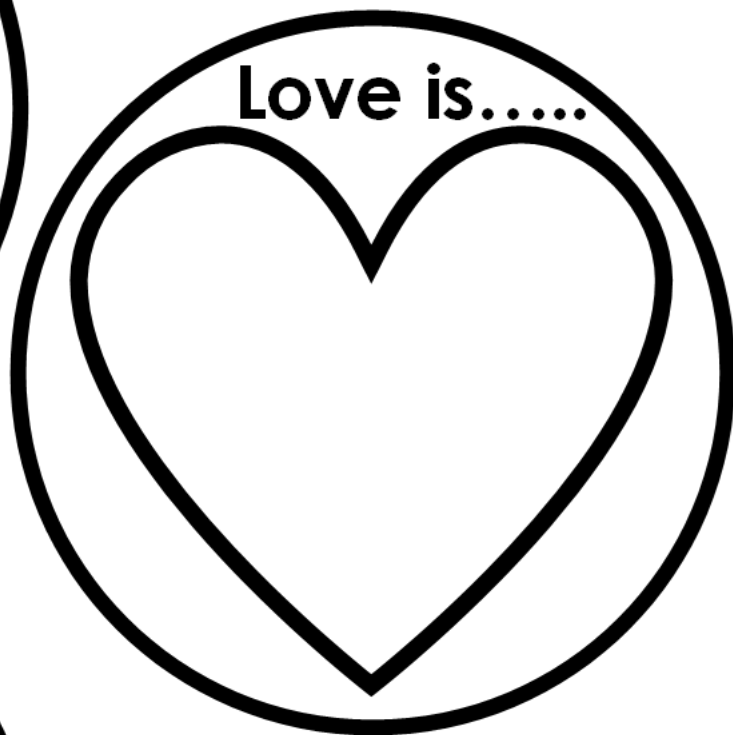
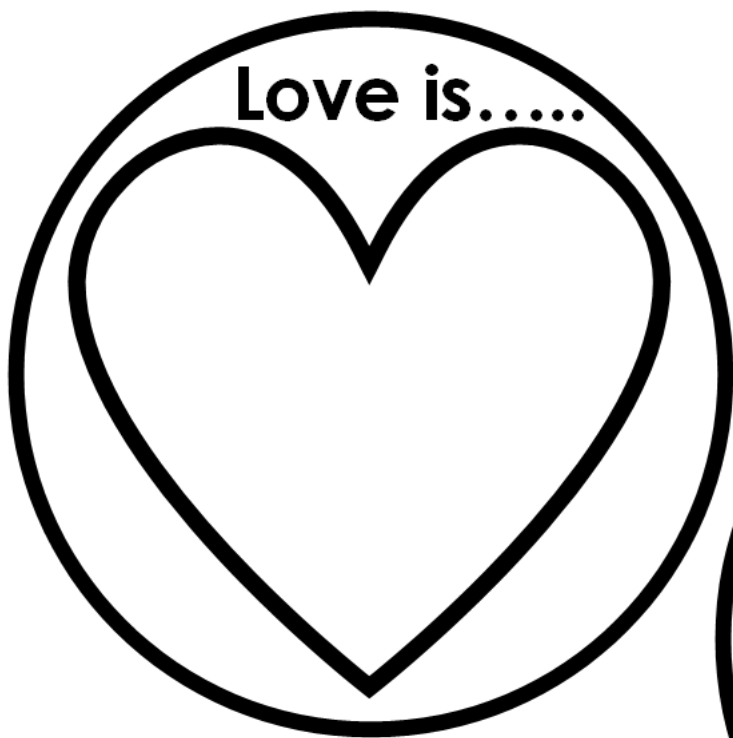
Make a chain of hearts (video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITYPM8B04Hs>)

Think: Think about what 'love is....' for you, or something you could do to show love for someone else.

Do: Draw or write your ideas onto the hearts.

Talk: At the end of the week, look at all the different ideas that you have collected. Which ideas are most common?

Print these shapes onto pastel-coloured paper and cut out



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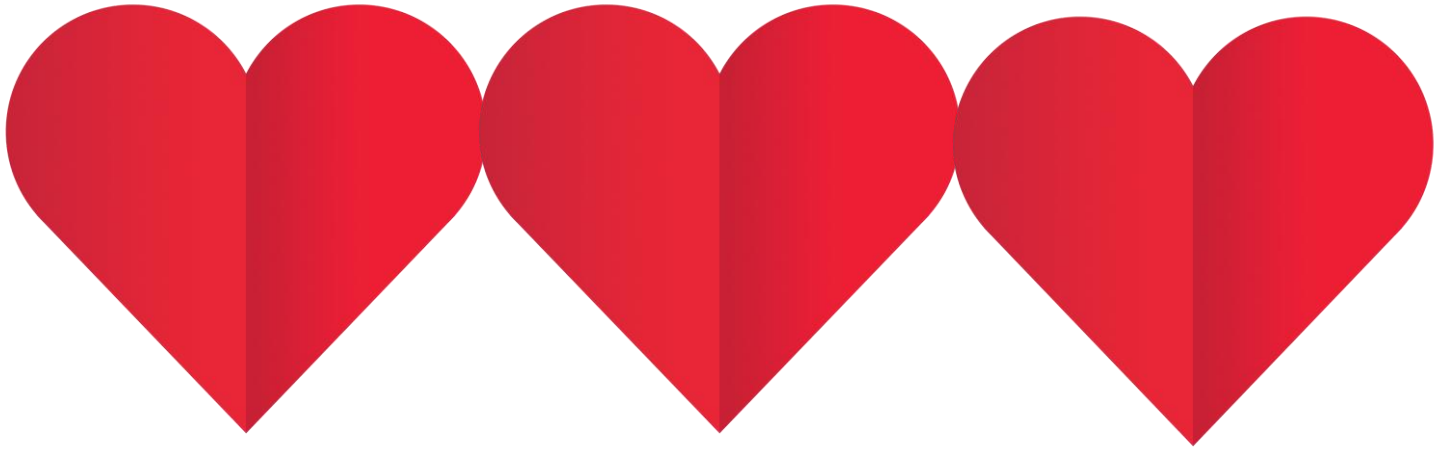
Love is.....



Think about what 'love is.....' for you, or something you could do to show love for someone else..

Take a shape and write or draw your idea into the heart, then add it to your class display.

At the end of the week, look at all the different ideas you have collected. Which ideas are most common?



Love is.....



Think about what 'love is.....' for you, or something you could do to show love for someone else..



Make a chain of paper hearts, and draw or write your ideas onto the hearts.



At the end of the week, look at all the different ideas you have collected. Which ideas are most common?