



A new beginning, shaped by hope and rooted in God's promise

Exploring how to love God, love our neighbour, and live out the Gospel with integrity, compassion and joy

LUCID RAMBLINGS

*"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness....
Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they? "*
Keats- To Autumn

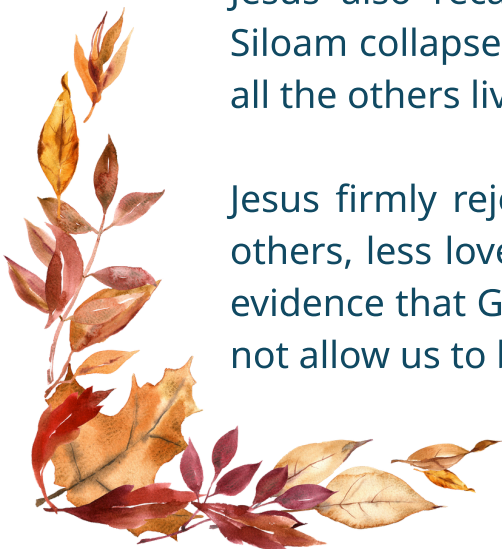


As we come into autumn and the leaves turn golden and fall, and mushrooms sprout from dead wood, it is easy for our mind to turn to the cycle of life. How often loss comes up on us. Some times it is natural (if unwanted) like the seasons. Other times unexpected.

When disaster strikes, it is natural to ask: How could God allow this? Where was God? Who is to blame? These are deeply human questions, and Jesus himself addressed them.

In Luke 13:1–5, people tell Jesus about Galileans killed by Pilate. Jesus also recalls eighteen people who died when the tower of Siloam collapsed. He asks: "Do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no!"

Jesus firmly rejects the idea that those who suffer are worse than others, less loved by God or more deserving of pain. Tragedy is not evidence that God singled out its victims for punishment. Jesus does not allow us to blame them.



LUCID RAMBLINGS

Genesis 1 shows us a loving God who created a world in which love is possible.

But genuine love requires freedom. Love that is coerced is not really love.

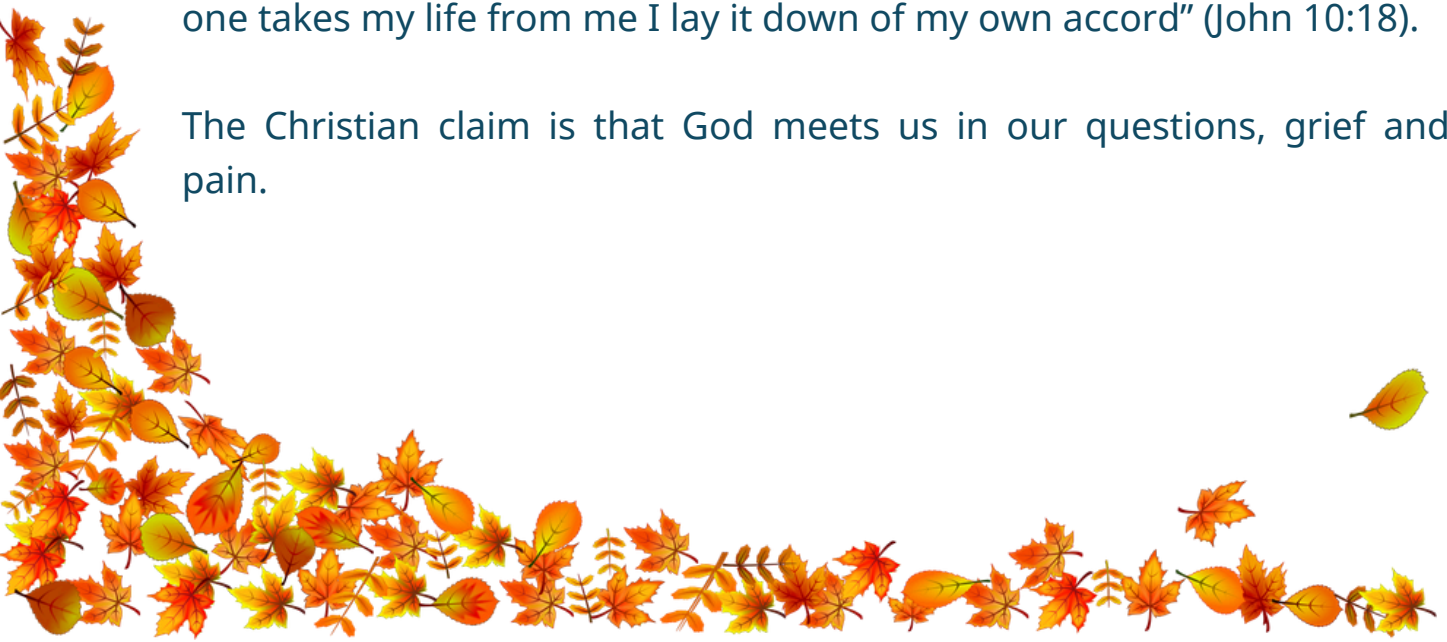
Why, then, doesn't God prevent every disaster? If God intervened whenever one person's choices might harm another, every dangerous decision would need to be overruled and every harmful consequence suspended. Meaningful human freedom and responsibility would disappear. We would become little more than puppets or pets.

Jesus never said, "Follow me and nothing terrible will happen to you." The first Christians experienced persecution, shipwreck and death. Christian faith does not promise immunity from suffering. It offers something deeper: God's presence within it, redemption through it and, ultimately, its defeat.

"The LORD is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18).



At the heart of Christianity, is not a God who watches suffering from a safe distance, but Jesus Christ, described as "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Jesus willingly enters suffering: "No one takes my life from me I lay it down of my own accord" (John 10:18).



The Christian claim is that God meets us in our questions, grief and pain.

LUCID RAMBLINGS

When the tower falls, Jesus does not blame the victims. Instead, he turns those who remain towards their own lives: You have seen how fragile life is, so consider how you are living yours.

Tragedy confronts us with questions we often postpone: What truly matters? Where is my hope? What happens when everything I thought was secure suddenly is not?

Jesus invites us to live in the light of eternity.

Bring your questions, your pain and your hopes—explore how Jesus can make a difference in your life. Join us at South Calder Parish Church and explore these questions together.

This is abridged from the commentary at
<https://amyorrewing.substack.com/p/when-disaster-strikes>



NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The Nomination Committee (Vacancy Committee) was nominated and voted in on 16th of August 2026, at Allanton SCPC joint service.

Since then the committee have had several meetings, and has been hard at work on a range of tasks -

- Finalising our Parish Profile and Vacancy Advert
- Discussing how we look for and approach potential ministers
- Discussing ministers that may be of interest
- Reviewing applications
- Listening to Ministers preach, in person and online
- Meeting to pray for God's will and our discernment in the process

Rev. Ross Blackman will update in more detail at the next joint service

Jack Alexander
Nomination Committee Chair





USEFUL INFORMATION

Locum- Lynette Jardine, lpjardine4757@gmail.com

Session Clerk - June Irvine, june.irvine@icloud.com

Deputy Session Clerk – Fay Parker

Hall Lets – Fred Hill (Newmains) and Tom Gormill (Allanton)

Pastoral Care – See Contact Us on webpage

Website - <https://southcalderparish.church>

FaceBook - <https://tinyurl.com/SCPCFBP>

YouTube - <https://tinyurl.com/SCPCYT>

Streaming - <https://southcalderparish.church/services/>

Prayer Link - See Prayer request on webpage

OUR PEOPLE - My Christian Journey – Rhona Bell

Let me introduce myself. My name is Rhona Bell. I live in Shotts and I am one of the four Trustee Elders from Shotts.

I was brought up in Ayr and lived there until I married in 1973. I was the youngest of three girls and, like most of my friends, my family attended church every Sunday and we all went to Sunday School. I enjoyed many of the usual church activities, including Brownies and Guides, and when I was 16 I felt ready to attend communicants' classes and became a member of my church in Ayr.

When I married, we moved to Allanton and I transferred my church lines there. We lived in Allanton for 16 years, and that is where we brought up our two sons. Later, we moved to Shotts, where I attended what was to become Calderhead Erskine Parish Church.

There is nothing particularly dramatic about my journey in Christianity. Looking back, I would probably describe myself as a passive Christian. Yes, I attended church regularly and enjoyed being part of the church community, but I did not become involved in much else. I had a busy life as a wife and mother, running a home while working full-time, and I was quite happy to leave the church work to others.



OUR PEOPLE - My Christian Journey – Rhona Bell

However, that was about to change. The church asked for volunteers to help run a crèche for the Sunday School during the summer months. As they were only asking for a few weeks of commitment from each volunteer, I felt I could manage that. Little did I know that this would open a door to much greater involvement. It led to becoming a Sunday School teacher, helping with Holiday Clubs, and taking part in many other church activities.

That was the time when I really began to grow as a Christian and as a member of the church.

Becoming involved in different activities and meeting new people deepened my understanding of what the church truly is—a community of people working together for the good of others with *Christ* as their leader.

Through these experiences, I made many friends and learned so much. My faith grew stronger, and I came to see myself as an active member of the church.

My church family became especially important to me when my husband fell ill and subsequently passed away during the Covid pandemic. The phone calls, cards, messages, and support I received carried me through that very difficult time and gave me the strength and encouragement to move forward.

For that, and for the friendships, faith, and sense of belonging that the church has brought into my life, I will always be grateful.

Rhona Bell



OUR CHURCHES - Newmains

Newmains Guild

Convenor : Elizabeth Smith

Secretary: Margaret Wyper

Treasurer: Kay Rodger

The Guild meets weekly from Monday 5th Oct @ 1.45



The guild is a movement within the Church of Scotland which invites both women and men to commit their lives to Jesus and enables them to express their faith in worship, prayer and action and it is also so much fun!

We have a very varied syllabus with interesting speakers, quizzes, games day and Bible study. We also have a Burns lunch with entertainment, a Valentine's lunch and quiz when we invite other Guilds to attend, a St Andrew's day lunch and Scottish quiz and of course our Christmas dinner - which is delicious - served here in the hall by Sherlocks.

We support at least two Guild projects each year from the four we get to choose from but this year we have supported all four because they are all such good causes.

1. Scottish Bible Society Bibles for Bairns
2. Bear Necessities Build my Church Bulgaria
3. Voice of Persecuted Christians Operation Hope Egypt
4. Crossreach Playful Beginnings Scotland

To fund these projects we fill Smartie tubes with £1 coins or whatever you can afford and we have monthly bring and buy sales with all the proceeds going to the projects.

OUR CHURCHES - Newmains

Newmains Guild

On Monday 14th September, the Guild met to celebrate the start of Guild week. We had a well attended meeting where we joined in a short worship service with hymns, bible readings and prayers. The members gave donations of food and money to support the Livewell Foodbank.



We always finish our session with afternoon tea in the Clydeside and have a summer outing. In June this year we went to Gretna and Carlisle with dinner in the Chase Hotel.

We would love for you to come and join us and have all the fun and fellowship that we do.



OUR CHURCH SERVICES - Newmains & Allanton

Joint Services

- **18th October, SCPC Newmains -**

Joint Harvest Service. This will be followed by a lunch of soup, cheese, biscuits and home baking.

- **15th November, SCPC Allanton -** Joint service.

- **6th December, SCPC Newmains -** Joint Communion Service.



Remembrance Services

- **8th November**

- **10:30am SCPC Newmains**
- **12:30am SCPC Allanton**

OUR YOUTH GROUPS

1st Bonkle Guides and Rangers - Newmains

We've had a wonderful start to our new session and are loving our new home in Newmains!

The girls were delighted to be surprised with treats on our very first night, the Guides have jumped right into working hard on their badges and Rangers are already making full use of having a kitchen for their activities.

Everyone has made us feel so warmly welcomed and we are looking forward to building a happy union together as we share this wonderful space.



STUFF WE DO!!

Live Well Foodbank



The foodbank continues to see a high demand. In the year so far to early September, we have had 332 referrals, which helped 435 individuals with 384 parcels. Our main sources of referrals are the Scottish Welfare Fund; North Lanarkshire Council Social Work departments; the council's Tackling Poverty Team, and church/CAP clients.

We have changed our opening times to 2pm to 3.30pm each Wednesday, in order to better accommodate the amazing volunteers at the foodbank and to ensure enough are available to help the users of the foodbank.

Donations of all non-perishable foodstuffs can be made at the designated trolley behind the tills at Asda Newmains, or brought along to each church on a Sunday. There is also a jar for cash donations. We are planning using the joint services as a time to bring along any donations, so if you can bring along an item or two at each of these services that would be great.



The church Social Group are planning to organise a Reverse Advent this year: details about this, and what items will be required will be announced in due course.

Thank you to all who have contributed so far this year: your help is greatly appreciated and is absolutely essential to ensuring the most vulnerable in our community aren't forgotten and can access help, and thank you of course to all our wonderful volunteers!

Nicky McLaughlin, on behalf of all at the Live Well Foodbank

STUFF WE DO!!

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Wishaw Debt Centre- The Fight Against Poverty

The centre continues to be really busy, with high demand, and has been fully booked this year. We are currently supporting 45 clients and their families, providing them with additional support and signposting while we help them resolve their money issues. The brilliant news is that 3 more people have gone debt-free recently!

We are now covering Larkhall, with our new debt coach, Maureen Young, having now completed her training. This is in partnership with the Larkhall Christians Together group, and means we can provide our free service to a wider area, with Fiona Lamont already covering East Kilbride, so we now have two satellite hubs in South Lanarkshire. Tony Sykes and myself are continuing to cover Wishaw, Motherwell, Airdrie and Shotts areas.

CAP as an organisation celebrates its 30th birthday this year, and there will be a celebration event in early November in Bradford, where the charity began. More information about what CAP does can be found on the website at www.capuk.org. The service involves home visits, and we are always looking for people to accompany us on the visits and support the clients, so if this is something you are interested in, please get in touch. If you know of anyone who needs help with debt or money issues, please encourage them to call 0800 328 0006 to book a home appointment.

Thank you for all your support and prayer

Nicky McLaughlin
CAP Debt Centre Manager



STUFF WE DO!!

Social Group

We have had a quiet summer but we are back looking to organise some of the proposed events mentioned in our June Report.

We held a meeting in July with a view to organising the catering for the Fun Days which were being held in Newmains on 29th August and Allanton on 5th September. It was agreed that we would purchase the food etc required, this consisted of Hot Dogs, rolls, fruit shoots, cold meat, cheese slices and crisps along with sauces, milk and paper plates most of which was kindly donated by Asda. Baking was provided in the form of tray bakes, truffles and ginger breads.



Our proposed events for the remainder of year are as follows -

- Quiz Night in the church hall on Thursday 22nd October 2026 from 7pm, refreshments included.
- Taylor Fashions on Thursday 26th November 2026 at 7pm

Ticket prices for both these events will be £4

Our Harvest Festival Sunday Service is the 18th October and it is hoped we will be able to organise a lunch in the hall after the service.

Looking forward, we are planning to hold a Christmas Fayre in Allanton Church, and a Reverse Advent on the the run up to Christmas to help Live Well food bank. More information will be provided in due course.

We look forward to your support and as always anyone wishing to volunteer their help will be made most welcome!

Your Social Group

OUR EVENTS

Family Fun Days

Over recent weeks, volunteers from across South Calder came together to host two Family Fun Days, at Newmains and Allanton, as one of the first steps in our plans to develop and encourage our ministry with children, young people and families.

Both days were filled with fun, creativity and, most importantly, good fellowship. It was particularly encouraging to have representatives from all our youth organisations in attendance at both buildings, giving them an opportunity to meet, share ideas and get to know one another better.

Families were able to take part in a range of activities, including a treasure hunt, tours of the churches, stained-glass window crafts, hand prayer crafts and a Creation collage. Children also enjoyed making rainbow biscuits after hearing the story of Noah through a Godly Play presentation. Of course, the hotdogs and home baking were also very popular!

Although we had only a small number of children at Newmains, it was a lovely afternoon and provided a valuable opportunity for those who came along to meet members and discover more about what's going on in our church. Allanton was particularly encouraging, with several local families joining us. It was wonderful to see some of those families then come along to our joint Communion service the following day.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped in any way — those who planned, prepared, baked, welcomed, organised activities, told stories, served food and simply came along to support the events.

These Family Fun Days are just the beginning, and we look forward with enthusiasm to building on what we have started in, developing new ideas and creating more opportunities to welcome children, young people and families into the life, worship and fellowship of South Calder Parish Church.

Anne McGowan

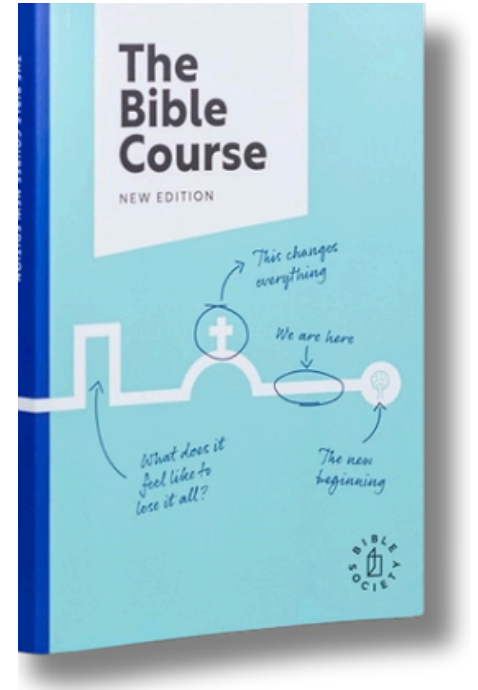


OUR EVENTS

The Bible Course

The Bible Course by Andrew Ollerton is an eight-session study designed to provide a “bird’s-eye view” of the entire scriptures. It aims to help both beginners and long-time readers of the Bible understand how the individual books, characters and events fit together.

On 3rd August this course was started by over 30 people drawn from our congregation and a few others. In addition to these people meeting in Allanton Hall regularly, 3 people decided they wanted to access the course online from home. Some of their evaluations appear below. These are typical of those submitted and because of the positive response, it is likely that South Calder Parish Church will offer more studies, using a similar format.



'This course was wonderful for bringing everyone together. There was a real community spirit in sharing our understanding and learning from each other. Fellowship is so important, being together and supporting one another and looking at the Bible afresh together.'

'I enjoyed the video content. I thought Andrew Ollerton presented it very well ... I really liked the format of video with some revision, new work, then discussion in our groups and a round-up.'

'On signing up for the course, I thought I might struggle to keep up! Personally, I thought the delivery of the course worked for me. I'm delighted to say I learned and understood the connection between the Old and New Testaments.'

'This course is an absolute revelation for those new to Christianity and those who have been Christians for many years. It had so many "Ah! Now I get it." moments.'

OUR EVENTS

Prayer Brunch, Newmains

"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work."

Oswald Chambers

On Saturday, 12th September we held our second Prayer Brunch as a united church, this time in SCPC Newmains. The weather outside may have been miserable but the joy inside was palpable!

Just as with our previous prayer brunch, it followed a simple structure of 5 hymns, 5 readings and 5 prayers led by members of our congregation. Some hymns were rousing redemption songs; others were contemporary Gospel songs. Some of the leaders have confessed they were apprehensive but it was clear on the day that every one was Spirit-led.

At the end of each section, participants were encouraged to spend five minutes in silent prayer and (if they so wished) to write a few words on a post-it to be placed on a simple, cardboard cross on each table. Prior to the actual day, we had received prayers on post-its from some of our youth organisations and it was such a privilege to leave these with others 'at the foot of the Cross.'

Afterwards as expected, our Newmains Catering Team provided a delicious brunch for us all.

We're now looking forward the next Prayer Brunch in the new year.

Margaret Byrne



OUR EVENTS

Jesus: The Evidence – An Evening of Questions and Discovery

What do we really know about Jesus – and is there good evidence for believing that he is who Christians say he is? These were some of the questions explored at our “Jesus: The Evidence” evening at the Newmains building on 25th August.

Presented by Derek McIntyre, the evening attracted *54 people*, many from outside SCPC, and provided an opportunity to look at the evidence surrounding Jesus of Nazareth and the reasons why Christians believe He is God’s son. Derek explored the historical and rational evidence for Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, encouraging everyone to think, question and reach their own conclusions.

There was a very positive atmosphere throughout the evening, with good engagement from those attending. This was particularly evident during the question-and-answer session, when a number of thoughtful and relevant questions were raised. It was encouraging to see people willing to explore some of the big questions surrounding Jesus and the Christian faith.

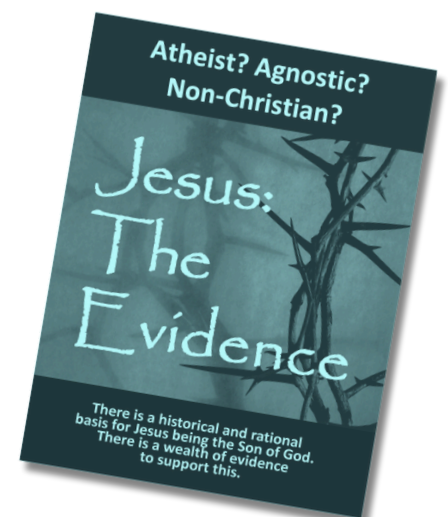
Derek also provided free booklets for those attending which go into the evidence discussed in more depth - several spare booklets are available for anyone wishing to find out more.

The evening was part of our *Mission programme* for this year. We want to provide opportunities for people to ask questions and discover the truth about God as explained in the Bible – without pressure or expectation.

Our hope is that events like this will help someone who has never explored Christianity to take the first steps on a journey of faith, while also encouraging those who have perhaps drifted from their faith to revisit it.

Above all, we pray that people will not simply hear about Jesus, but will become curious enough to discover who He is for themselves – and the difference He can make in their lives.

George Scott



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SCPC Newmains

- **Quiz** on 22nd October
- **Fashion Show** on 26th November
- **Decorate a Christmas Tree.** It is hoped to celebrate our first Advent and Christmas as South Calder Parish Church with a mini-festival of Christmas trees and lights. All church organisations and groups are invited to take part in a carnival of Christmas Creativity. It is planned to have the trees in place for Sunday 29th November.

Further details available nearer the time

SCPC Allanton

Details will be included in the intimations.

SPECIAL EVENTS

If you are having, or know of anyone having, a special birthday or anniversary, please let Rhona Bell or Fay Parker know. We would love to celebrate it in the next edition of the newsletter.



AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Lord's Prayer Word Search

B	C	F	J	F	O	H	F	A	T	H	E	R	U	C	D	H
S	Q	L	D	O	Z	D	A	I	L	Y	U	K	V	P	S	T
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O	W	I	H	G	J	I	H	C	W	D	U	L	O	R	C	A
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Y	Y	X	O	D	T	O	U	M	O	D	G	N	I	K	I	T

amen
thine
lead
daily
name

forever
evil
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heaven
hallowed

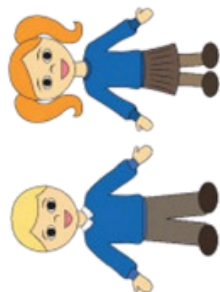
glory
deliver
forgive
earth
Father

power
temptation
bread
kingdom

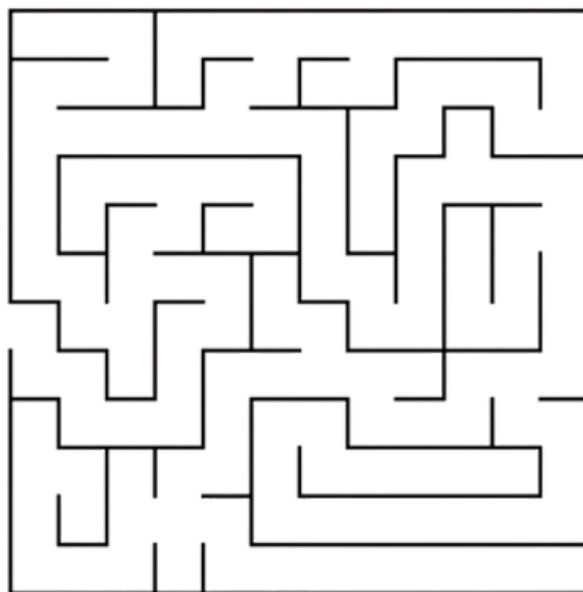
AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Childrens' Page

Harvest Maze



Can you help the children find their way through the maze to collect the harvest basket?



Activity
village

© www.ActivityVillage.co.uk

Have a go at
colouring in this
Harvest picture.

Harvest



babysavers.com

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AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Make your own Sunflower Picture



What you need:-

Coloured paper (yellow, green and brown) or white paper with crayons or pens. Scissors, a pencil and glue.

What to do:-

- 1.If you are using only white paper colour some brown, lots of it yellow and some green.
- 2.Take a cup or glass and use the rim to draw a brown circle. Don't stick anything down until it is all ready.
- 3.Draw round your four fingers (not your thumb and cut it out carefully being sure to leave the hand part below the fingers. You will need 6.
- 4.Put the circle on your paper. But do not stick down yet. Place the hands around the middle piece evenly, the middle piece goes on top of them.
- 5.Now cut a thin long piece of green paper for the stem, it sits below the sunflower petals.
- 6.Take your green paper and fold a piece in half, draw the shape of half a leaf on it. Fold that in a zig zag pattern. Now stick all your pieces on being careful to look at the picture carefully.

You will have a lovely picture of sunflowers to remind you of warm sunny days.