



FISHING FOR HOPE!

In the Southern & Islands Region of the Methodist Church

A prayerful challenge for this era of lock-down, sent to Methodists in The Southampton District, The South East District and The Channel Islands District...although all are welcome and invited to take part!

Initiated in March 2020 by a group of people, lay and ordained, from across the three districts who are already beginning the challenge!

The Challenge:

Create a fish prayer object.

Or, create a shoal!

Use your talents and whatever creative resources you have available in your home to make your fish!

You could make a fish by:

- Knitting (pattern included with this challenge!)
- Crocheting (pattern included with this challenge!)
- Cutting, sewing, sticking, scrap materials
- Painting it on a stone
- Paper Mache
- Lego
- Iron-on beads
- Clay
- Or any other creative means you can think of!

Why a fish prayer object?

The fish has long been a symbol of Christian identity, hope and salvation.

At times like these, perhaps it is good to hold on to our Christian identity, hope and salvation!

Literally! With the fish we create, we can hold them in our hands and we can hold what they represent symbolically in our hearts and minds.

Why do this?

The fish could be an object for **prayer** during this time.

They could also be **gifts for others**; whether they can be gifted now, if there are others in your household, or later, when the time is 'right' (according to governmental health and safety instructions and advice).

If you plan to gift your fish, consider what story your fish might tell its new owner!

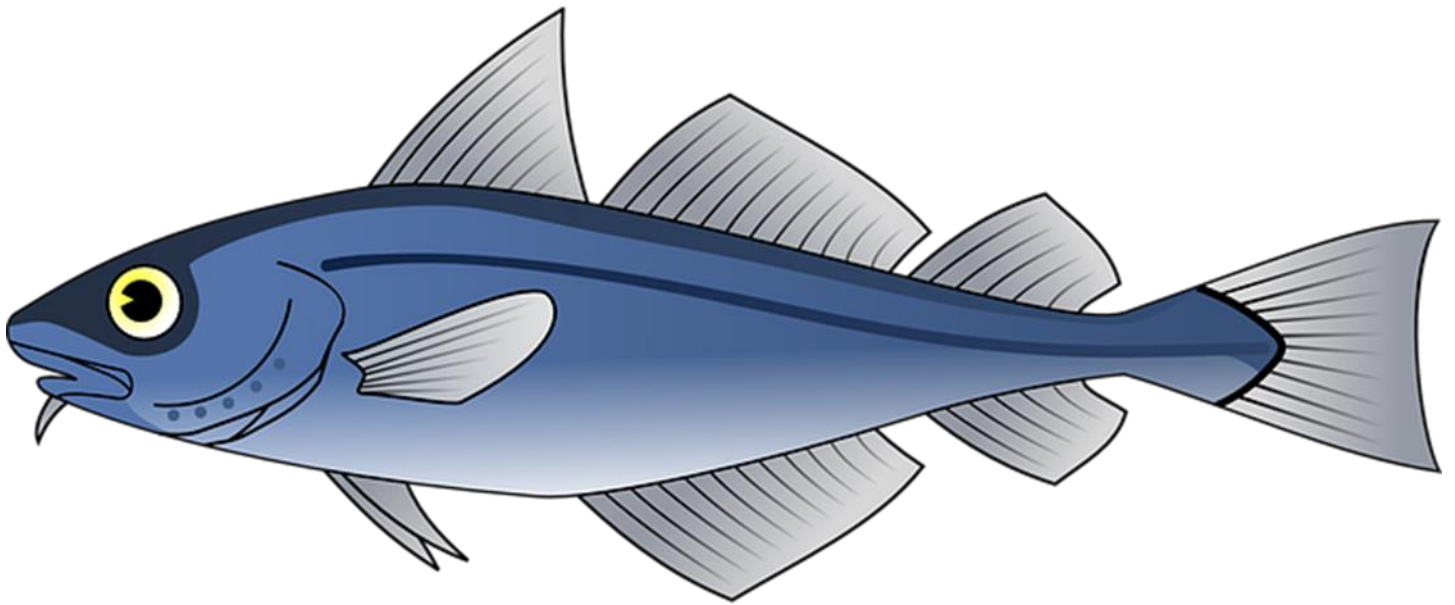
Your fish could be a **tool for evangelism**. Consider the fishy stories in the Bible, like The Miraculous Catch of Fish (Luke 5:1–11) and the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Matthew 14: 13-21).

Your church, circuit or district might, at a later date (when the time is 'right'), request to gather in all the fish created, **to be presented as a whole**, to a wider audience. **To reflect our prayers and hopes**, while we were all being 'alone together' at this time; **united** in our identity, hope and salvation.

The fish may then be requested to be offered as **gifts for the local community** – to be used in a similar way as, for example, knitted angels at Christmas time.

You could **document your fish making**, and or the prayers that you've said in this time. You could record these in a notebook, in photographs, or if you're online, you could share them with your online communities via your social media platforms. If you share them online, it'd be great if you could include the hashtag **#fishingforhope2020** so your content can be easily searched for and found.





How to Knit a Fish

First find some brightly coloured yarn and a pair of knitting needles. 3mm needles are ideal, but it will work with any needles.

Starting at the tail end, cast on twelve stitches. If you want a wider tail cast on more stitches in multiples of two.

- 1.) Knit in stocking stitch (1 row plain, 1 row purl). Decrease one stitch at each end of the plain rows only, until you have 6 stitches left.
- 2.) Knit three rows in stocking stitch without decreasing.
- 3.) If you want to change colours, now might be a good time.
- 4.) Increase one stitch at each end of every plain row until you have 24 stitches on the needle.
- 5.) Now decrease one stitch at each end of every plain row until 2 stitches remain. Knit these two stitches together and bind off.

You need two pieces to make a fish. Sew them together (inside out) but leave the tail end open. Now turn them right side out and stuff – how much stuffing you use depends on how fat you want your fish to be! Sew up the tail.

Feel free to add patterns or fins if you want!

How to crochet a fish

This pattern was created using a size 4 hook and double knit wool.

Change in wool and /or hook size will just make a different size fish!

The whole thing is crocheted in uk treble stitch

- Make a chain of 15 stitches
- Row 1 1 treble in third chain from hook then 1 treble in each chain to end, turn...
- Always begin each row by crocheting 2 chain instead of crocheting into the first hole whether increasing or decreasing as this counts as the first treble
- Now Decrease one treble at each end of next 3 rows by missing a stitch (ie. Make 2 chain and then crochet a treble into 3rd stitch and don't crochet into the 2 chain from the preceding row)
- Increase one stitch at each end of next 6 rows by crocheting 2 stitches in one hole at either end
- Work 2 rows without increasing number of stitches.
- Decrease one stitch at each end of next 7 rows. Tie off
- Make a second fish, join the two together leaving one side partly open