



## Palm Beach Fellowship of Christians & Jews 2019 Essay and Creative Arts Competition

### Essay Honorable Mention

Ella Hayes, The Benjamin School (Grade 9)

Everyone has had hope, some more frequently than others. People interpret hope in different ways, but I believe hope is the feeling of wanting something or wanting it to happen in your favor. Although we hope for something, it doesn't mean it's going to happen the way we desire. A lot of people hope for silly, little things, but you can also hope for a miracle. I hope for things quite often, usually for an object or toy, until about three months ago.

On October 10, 2018, I lost a loved one. At 71 years old, my grandfather passed away. He had been battling cancer for 18 years but it finally caught up to him. This was the first time I remember experiencing a terrible loss. Before his death, my family and I knew he was going to leave us soon, and that's when I hoped he wouldn't have to go away. I realized what it meant to hope for something so much that it hurts to think you will be so affected if your hope doesn't work out. My hope didn't work and it sucked, but there's nothing anyone can do. Some may say why hope for something if there's a chance it won't work out. My response to that is because there's always a chance it will work out. Even if it doesn't, that doesn't mean you should stop hoping. If you study for an exam and still fail, are you going to stop studying? Most would say no, I would. Just because it doesn't happen the first time, doesn't mean it won't happen the second, third, or fourth time. Hope isn't a feeling that goes away, it stays with you forever and that's why you don't give up on hoping. Being hopeful helps people stay sane and gives them something to look up to. I know when my grandfather was days away from leaving this world, my hope turned into something else. From first just hoping that he would survive, I ended with the hopefulness that he wouldn't feel pain as he left and that he wouldn't be lonely or upset. My hope helped me realize that there was nothing I could do to change his fate, only hope that his fate was good enough for him. From this experience I learned that hope develops faith, faith turns into character, and character is who you really are. My character shined through as my hope changed.

It is now four months later and when I think of my grandfather, I think of the hope I had and how it has helped me and how it will continue to help me. Hope showed me how to get through a tough situation and that although it doesn't seem like it can get any worse, you can always hope. I now know that one can always hope for the better.