



The
United
Reformed
Church

families on faith adventures

@ home

Welcome to Families on Faith Adventures @ Home!

This resource has been put together for you by the United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work team and the synod CYDOs and their equivalents.

We hope you will enjoy sharing a time of faith and fellowship together as a family through these stories, games, activities and prayers. They are designed as a 'pick and mix' of ways to experience God's message through the Bible, exploring what it means to you and express that in words and action. They are not linked to the lectionary but can be used in any order as we explore all the different parts of the Bible.

The Walking the Way challenges are one way of continuing our walk with Jesus throughout the week.

These ideas are designed to be intergenerational - maybe even to be shared with members of the family you can't see now except via the internet.

The resources are based on our non-uniformed children's groups, Friends on Faith Adventures and Pilots, but have been modified to make them suitable for all families at home.

*These activities are planned to be used together as a family and under adult supervision. Please be aware of your family's ages and abilities as some activities may need more adult support than others. **Stay safe and have fun!***



This week's Bible story is:

Sharing the Joy
Luke 2 verses 8 - 20



With many varieties of activities and things to do to help explore the theme. Look out for this 'hands on' symbol.



From

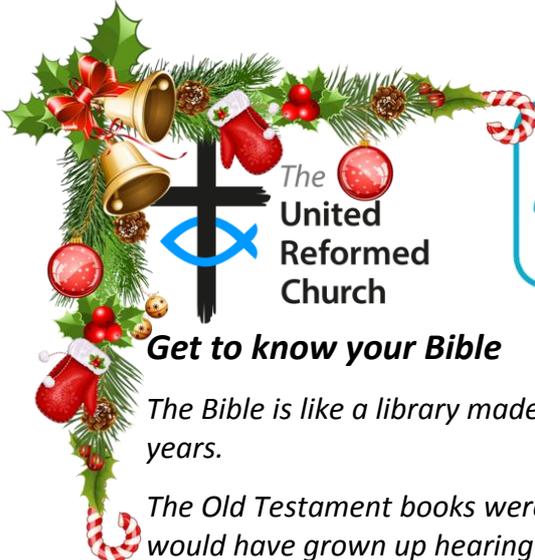


and



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Get to know your Bible

The Bible is like a library made up of 66 books written by many different people over many years.

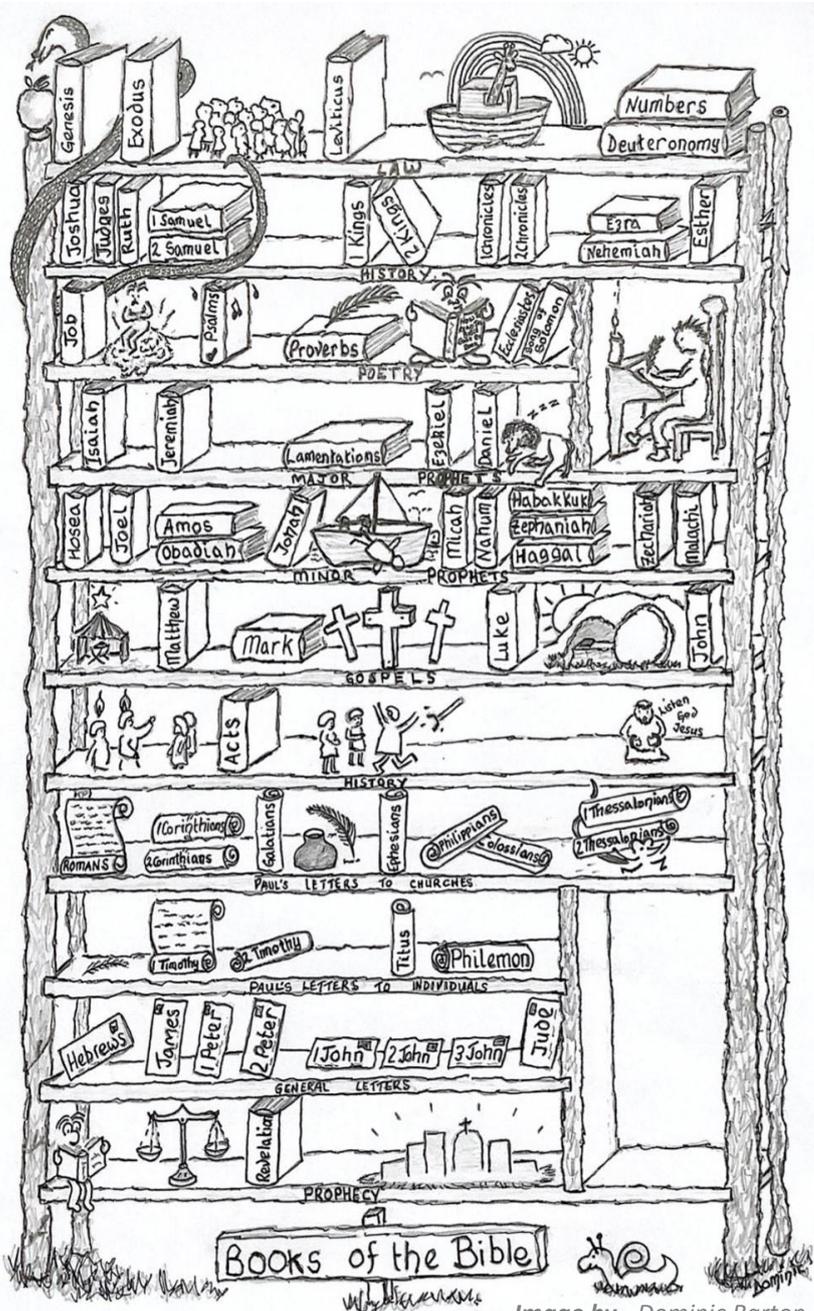
The Old Testament books were written before Jesus was born. They are the holy stories he would have grown up hearing and reading. There are 39 of these.

The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.




Can you find and colour the book on the bookshelf that this week's story is from?

If you have a Bible, see if you can find the story in there.



You could print this out once and colour each new book on the bookshelf as you read stories from it.



Image by - Dominic Barton



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Bible context – Luke

Luke was a doctor who became a disciple of Jesus and he wrote many of the things he saw and heard Jesus do around 60 AD. In his writings he likes to follow people's individual stories and also likes to show us that Jesus came to save everyone. The shepherds in Bible times were often on the edge of society, living away from the towns on the mountains and hills with the sheep, often uneducated and potential misfits. And God chose to tell the shepherds first. Once they had seen the Baby Jesus for themselves, they couldn't keep the news to themselves and they ran through the town shouting the good news; perhaps this was why God told them first.



The Story - Luke 2: 8-20 (International Children's Bible)

That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ, the Lord. This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box."

Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying:

"Give glory to God in heaven,
and on earth let there be peace to the people who please God."

Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about."

So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them. Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. Then the shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.

Scriptures quoted from the International Children's Bible®, copyright© 1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson. Used by permission.





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Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Cartoon by Saddleback kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJIC57EvYFo>

Shout for Joy by children at Pursue God Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuzowcyfNUo>

He chose the shepherds by Friends and Heroes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McaM1YMXOyE>

Dance and Sing

All the angels sing by Doug Horley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j9VXnHC-u0>

Singing with the Angels by Vineyard Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6fUpINc-SI>

Go and tell it on the mountain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udVFjTYp9tM>

It was on a starry night in Makaton

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCHL2t7xxus>



Table Top Discussions

Christmas is not over, we have spent a week celebrating Jesus' birth as a family; now, just like the shepherds we need to leave the stable scene and go out into all the world and tell others that God is with us.

Consider, who do you as a family want to tell? Who do you want to share the good news with?

Once you have someone in mind, consider how you can do it, try to think of ways that will involve the whole family. E.g. you could write them a poem, make, and send them a card, make some fabulous treats to take to them.

We cannot keep the news to ourselves, we need to share it. Be brave, be creative and go for it.





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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Play a Game of Pass The Story On

Play a quick game of pass the parcel that also tells the story. Cut the strips below and insert them into each layer of a pass the parcel, don't forget to add treats if you want to. Remember to put the end of the story in the middle of the parcel and work backwards as you wrap further layers, to make sure the story is in the right order.

1. This story is found in Luke 2 v 8 – 20
2. The night Jesus was born, some shepherds were in the fields watching their sheep.
3. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord stood before them. and they were very frightened.
4. The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid because I am bringing you some good news. Jesus has been born. You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."
5. Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God,
6. Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven.
7. The shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box (manger).
8. Then they told others what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them.
9. The shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard.



You could also add extra tasks or questions in amongst the story layers, for example, Do you know a joke about sheep? What's the best good news you have ever heard? Do an impression of the scared shepherds. Sing a song loudly like the angels.

Shout It Out

Using the loud hailers that you have made; go out into a place where there are other people, it might be on a walk, or in a shopping centre, depends how brave you are. Then shout out that "Jesus is born" or similar good news. What reactions did you get? How did it feel to do it?

A Bedtime Story to watch together

Come to Bethlehem and see by Gail Marsh and read by a child
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NI-ijK2iGn0>





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What's in the box?

What treasures can you find to put in the box for your little ones to explore?

Perhaps older children could help find the things.



Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.



This week's Bible story is:

Sharing the Joy

Luke 2 verses 8 - 20



Toy Sheep



Angel toy or ornament



Green fabric and dark fabric



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



Tea towel and headband for dressing up



Unbreakable nativity set if you have one

Walking stick, shepherd's crook, stick

As with all small things, please be aware of the risk of these being put into mouths, eyes, noses and ears. Please supervise small children!



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Pray Together

Paper Chain Shepherds- Spread the Good News!

Fold the paper and cut out those who spread the Good News!



Cut out the template below along the dark black lines.

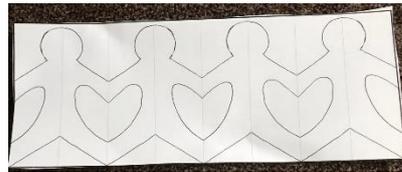
Fold the paper on the faint grey lines and cut out.

Now you have people to pass on the Good News!

Begin by decorating the first as a shepherd.

Decorate the second person as yourself, getting the good news the shepherds shared.

Decorate the other people as the people you want to spread the good news to, the news that God loves us so much that Jesus was sent to live among us. You could decorate them as family members or friends, detail then colour in too.



Make as many chains of people as you want. Spread the Joy the Good News - Jesus has been born, bringing love to us all - Hurrah!

Praying with Angels and Sheep

Create simple angel and sheep shapes from some card or felt.

Place the angels onto a dark blue background and as you place them, think of the things we are happy about and the good news want to share with others.

As we place the sheep, think of the things which we may be frightened of, things which we make us wonder and things which make us skip with happiness.





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I wonder what an
angel actually looks
like?

I wonder how you
would react to a
message like this?

I wonder what the
shepherds did after
they had visited the
newborn Jesus?



I wonder why God
chose shepherds
to share the news
with?

I wonder who the angel
would share the news with if
Jesus were born today?

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TO DO TOGETHER...

During Advent and Christmas we accumulate lots of paper and cardboard bits and pieces. Instead of putting them straight in the bin, we are going to reuse some of them in our creative times.

Remember to save the insides from your wrapping paper tubes, cracker jokes and toys, all your gift tags and Christmas cards, boxes and any spare wrapping paper. You may find they come in VERY HANDY!



Loud Hailer

You will need: A large square piece of card or stiff paper (the inside of a wrapping paper roll is ideal)
Kitchen roll

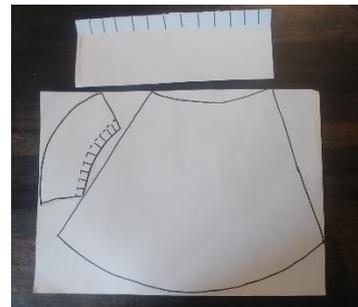
What you do:

Mark out a cone shape for the main body of the loud hailer, and a much smaller one for the mouthpiece. Cut out the large cone shape and tape together.

To make the mouthpiece, cut out the small cone shape and fold the inner edge, snipping around the edge to create tags to secure the mouthpiece to the body. Roll it into a cone and measure it in the body before taping together. Once it is the correct size, place tape to the tags and secure in place, tape it to the main body inside and out for security.

Cut out a rectangle of card and roll it up to create a handle. Snip down about 1cm to create tags, and secure to the main body with tape by flattening the tags against the body and taping it in place.

Decorate it and then go and share the good news of Jesus to the world.





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TO DO TOGETHER...

Thank You Cards

- You will need:**
- Old Christmas cards
 - or a Folded piece of card
 - Scraps of wrapping paper
 - A sheet of colour paper



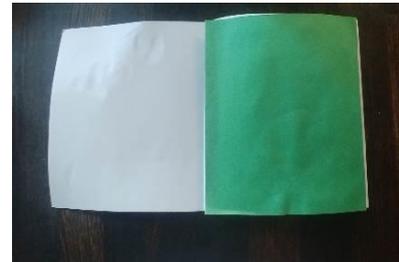
What you do:

Decide on the design for the thank you card, this one has the word Joy on to reflect the joy of spreading the message of Jesus.

Using the wrapping paper scraps, collage the word on the front of the card, and then write the word Thank You and maybe decorate it with some glitter if you wish.

Stick a sheet of coloured paper inside the card to cover up the writing from before.

Now send a card to say thank you to someone and share the message of joy to other people.





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TO DO TOGETHER...

Bag of Giggles

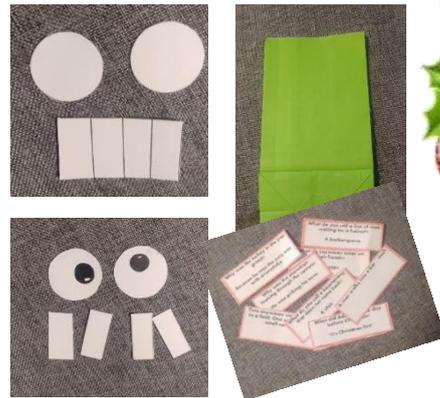
You will need: A paper bag
or old envelope
Some card
Jokes from Christmas Crackers

What you do:
Draw two circles and a rectangle on some card
and cut them out. Draw some lines on the
rectangle and cut them out to make teeth. Draw
two big dots on the circles to make eyes.

If you are using a paper bag, fold over the top and stick the
teeth to the inside of the bag, and the eyes on the fold. If
using an envelope, stick the teeth to the flap and eyes onto
the top.

Put your old cracker jokes inside and share the joy with
others throughout the year.

Here are some jokes to get you going.



**What do you call a line of men waiting
for a haircut?**

A barberqueue

**Why was the snowman looking through
the carrots?**

He was picking his nose

Why was the turkey in the pop group?

Because he was the only one with
drumsticks!

**Two snowmen were standing in a field.
One said, "Can you smell carrots?"**

**What do you call a boomerang that
does not come back?**

A stick

A man walks into a barouch

**What do snowmen wear on their
heads?**

Ice caps

**What did Adam say the day before
Christmas?**

"It's Christmas Eve"





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Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

**Our Walking the Way
Challenge this time is...**

At Home:

Today's story is about sharing the joy. Sometimes it is difficult after Christmas because things suddenly go a bit quiet – a bit of an anti-climax. How can you carry the joy over to keep your family focused on the good things that the New Year might hold? Try not to get down about the continuing pandemic – find something joyful to share together each day this week.



Outside:

The Shepherds lived outside most of the year, looking after their sheep, no matter what the weather. Can you do something for the wildlife that lives in your neighbourhood while the weather is wintery? Maybe put some food out for the birds or build a hedgehog home.

For Others:

I wonder whether you've ever tried knitting or crocheting? It's quite easy to knit or crochet a square out of some spare wool. Have a look at this website and see whether there is a charity which might use your knitted square to help make a blanket to keep someone warm. Or if you can already knit quite well, how about making a hat for a premature baby?

<http://www.eparenting.co.uk/knitfest/charityknitting.shtml>





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Adventurers Go!

You've shared together, now share with us!

Why not send photos of your crafts, your treasure boxes, your Walking the Way challenges - or dress up to make a tableau of the Big Story and take a photo to send in.

Email your photos to: lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk
with parental permission for them to be used in publicity and online URC social media.

Alternatively, share them on our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/>

Remember you can find more resources on our website:
<https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth>

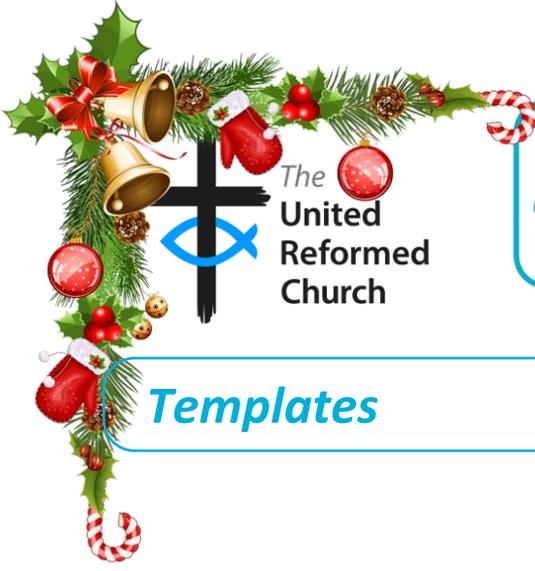
And if you've enjoyed these activities, why not see whether your local church runs Pilots or Friends on Faith Adventures (FOFA) when things get back to normal again.

Created for you by Nicola Grieves (Eastern Synod), Judy Harris (National Synod of Wales), Hannah Middleton (Northern Synod), Philip Ray (Wessex Synod, North), Lorraine Webb (Programme Officer for CYW), and Ruth White (Wessex Synod, South) on behalf of the CYDO+ and Children's and Youth Work team and Pilots.



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Templates

