

## **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 family or friends 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!***



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

## **This week's Bible story is:**

**Just Say YES!**

**Luke 14 verses 12-24**



## 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.

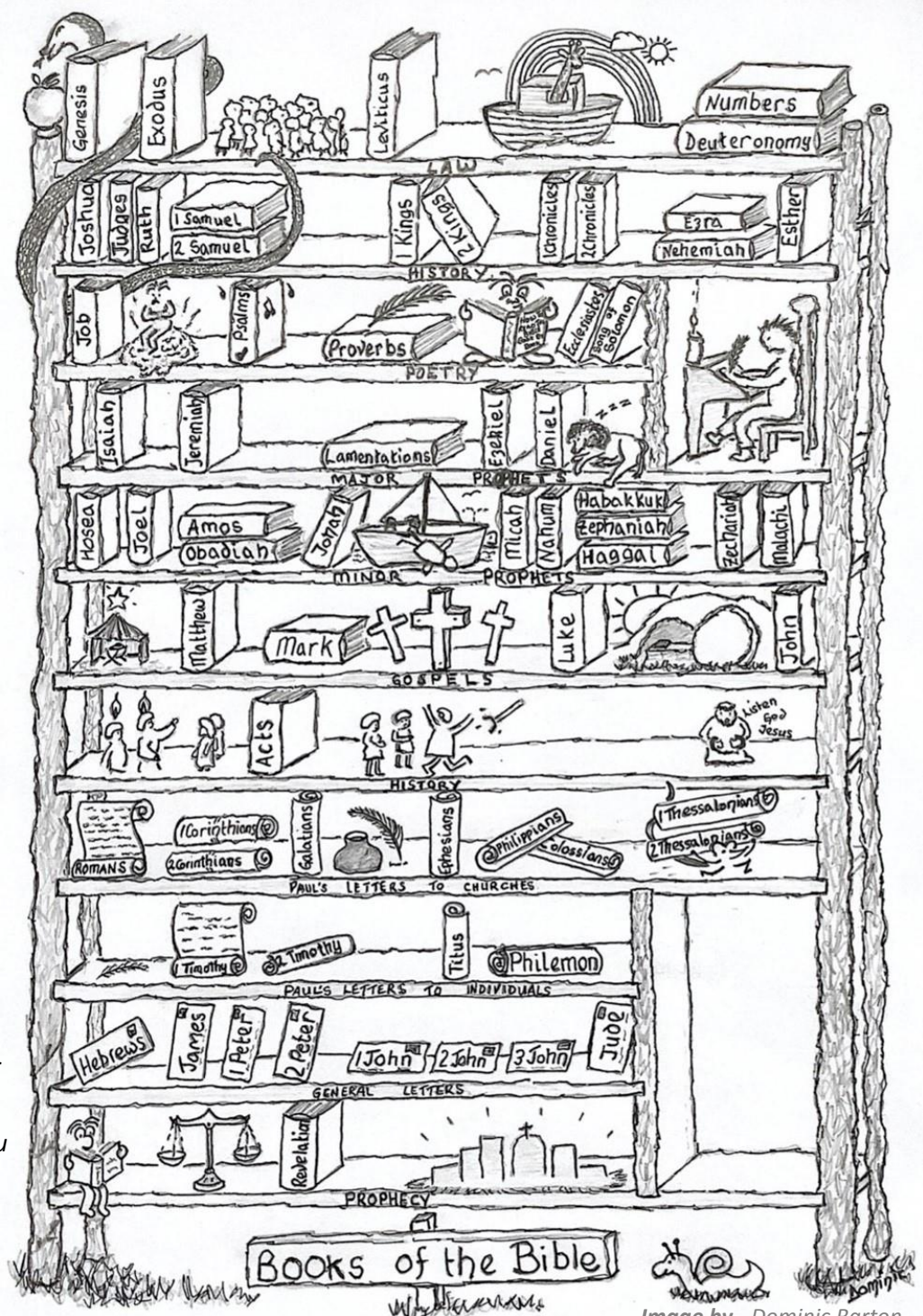
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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.



**Bible context: Luke**

The book of Luke was written by Luke the disciple around 60 AD. Luke was a Gentile and a doctor and he writes his book for all people. He wants to show that Jesus was God's son, who came to the world for everyone, Jew, Gentile, rich, poor, an extraordinary Saviour for the ordinary everyday people. This is why his books tell the stories of everyday people and their part in God's story.

In this story we see Jesus telling a parable about people giving excuses for a party and we are encouraged to remember that God has good things for us. It's up to us not to miss out.

**Online versions of the story**

**Watch and Listen**

Cartoon by Saddleback kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEbwiQvo5k4>

Animation by Kids Church [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80UhWO\\_wiHY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80UhWO_wiHY)

Retold by children with speed drawing by Kidswise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bX4iO7zjOc>

Cartoon by Kidshub TV <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f7DZZqAPpY>

A fun story song by JL Kelly <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eM2yO22rSE4>

**Dance and Sing**

Vagabonds by Stuart Townend [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p\\_k771zhwfs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_k771zhwfs)

His banner over me is love by Jeremy Riddle Bethel Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxPpOZXNL-w>

To you I say Yes by Lifetree Kids [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5OjMCpBF\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5OjMCpBF_0)

I am yours by Life church Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwrW6rZZ2fc>

Everybody's welcome here by Vineyard Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeV8qoYtDbc>

**The Story: Luke 14 verses 12-24 (The International Children's Bible)**

Then Jesus said to the man who had invited him, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, don't invite only your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbours. At another time they will invite you to eat with them. Then you will have your reward. Instead, when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Then you will be blessed, because they cannot pay you back. They have nothing. But you will be rewarded when the good people rise from death."

One of the men sitting at the table with Jesus heard these things. The man said to Jesus, "The people who will eat a meal in God's kingdom are blessed."

Jesus said to him, "A man gave a big banquet and invited many people. When it was time to eat, the man sent his servant to tell the guests, 'Come! Everything is ready!'

"But all the guests said they could not come. Each man made an excuse. The first one said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go look at it. Please excuse me.' Another man said, 'I have just bought five pairs of oxen; I must go and try them. Please excuse me.' A third man said, 'I just got married; I can't come.' So the servant returned. He told his master what had happened. Then the master became angry and said, 'Go at once into the streets and alleys of the town. Bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' Later the servant said to him, 'Master, I did what you told me to do, but we still have places for more people.' The master said to the servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes. Tell the people there to come. I want my house to be full! None of those men that I invited first will ever eat with me!'"

Scriptures quoted from the International Children's Bible®,  
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**Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story**



**Using the Jubilee Book together**

The United Reformed Church has created a special intergenerational book to help celebrate the URC's 50th anniversary.

The start of the story explores getting ready for a party and wondering who you might invite. It asks you to wonder who is invited to come to church. Check it out and enjoy the book together. Ask your church for a copy or get one free (only paying postage and packing) from

<https://urcshop.co.uk/celebrate-together-a-free-book-for-everyone/>

## Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

### **A New Story To Enjoy – Emily’s Amazing Excuse-O-Matic**

*Emily was exhausted. She has been very busy, attending friends’ parties, helping others with their to-do lists, playing with friends and so much more. You see, Emily has a problem. She doesn’t know how to say no. She can’t seem to say no to anyone. So, she never stops, she never slows down, she never finds time to rest. If someone asks her to help them out or go out to play, she always says yes.*

*But Emily has made a discovery. Emily might just have found the answer. Her nan has been very worried about her for some time and so has given her a very special gift. The label said, “Sometimes you need to know when to say no, so I hope this helps you.”*

*Inside the package was a round disc, with two smaller discs attached. It had a slice missing and when you turned the discs it showed different words. The first showed a person/thing, the second showed a situation and the last showed someone/something. It sounds confusing, but it was the best gadget she had ever been given. This was an Excuse-O-Matic. A wonderful creation for those who find it hard to say no. Now, when Emily needs a reason to not do something, she gives her Excuse-O-Matic a spin and off she goes. It means her excuses are fabulous too.*

*When her friend asked if she wanted to come for a sleepover, Emily gave it a spin and said “I’m sorry I can’t come because my Dad has eaten the toilet.” When her mum asked her to do the dishes: SPIN! “I’m sorry I can’t do that because my cat was abducted by the prime minister.” When her teacher asked her to help with the cake sale: SPIN! “I’m sorry I can’t because my brother has eaten my legs” (She doesn’t even have a brother). When her mum said she had to get up for school: SPIN! “I’m sorry mum, I can’t because my elephant has frozen my pet dinosaur.” When her best friend invited her to go to the cinema: SPIN! “I’m sorry I can’t come because my rainbow has pooped on my pet alien.”*

*At first it was a lot of fun and her amazing excuses made people smile and giggle. But now Emily has a new problem. People are not finding it as funny anymore, some are finding it rude or cheeky. Her friends have stopped inviting her to things and she is getting into trouble more and more.*

*Emily’s nan decides to have a quiet word. She explains to Emily that the excuse-o-Matic was only meant to help her with difficult situations, it wasn’t meant to be used every time she was asked to do something. She told Emily that she was using it too much and was missing out on opportunities. Emily felt sad; she had enjoyed having more time to herself and not being tired all the time. There again, at first she had enjoyed being able to say no to things but now she knew she was missing out. Nan explained that she gave Emily the Excuse-O-Matic to help her practice the skill of saying no, to see that she does have a choice and can sometimes put herself first. She also explained that there are things we don’t have a choice over, such as school.*

*Emily knew what she had to do. She found a box and placed her wonderful Excuse-O-Matic inside and hid it under her bed. From now on Emily would make her own, true excuses when she needed to and would make the most of opportunities, whilst also being able to say no when needed. The Excuse-O-Matic has helped her to practice the skill of saying no but now it was time to move on. A bit of balance would be good. But Emily knew that if she ever needed it, the excuse-o-Matic would be right there, waiting; .....SPIN! Unless my pet mermaid has eaten my granddad's underpants.*

### **Table Top Discussions**

*Each day over a mealtime, have a quick conversation. Here are a few questions to get you going:*

- Do you remember getting excited for a party/feast as you receive the invitation and then look forward to going? In the story we hear how some who had accepted the invitation now gave excuses as to why they wouldn't attend. I wonder why they changed their minds? Why didn't they want to go?*
- Have you ever missed a party? Perhaps you were not free to go, or perhaps you were not invited. How did it feel to miss out? What was it like to hear about the party afterwards?*
- The Bible tells us that God's invitation is for everyone, including you. I wonder what your answer is to God? Will you go? Would anything stop you?*
- There will be many different opportunities that come our way so how do you decide what to say yes to? Do you find it easier to say yes or no to things?*
- Is there anything that you have regretted not saying yes to? Have you ever felt that God was providing you with an opportunity and you missed out?*

# families on faith adventures

at home

## 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.



Toy tea set or unbreakable plates, cutlery and beakers

Toys for a toy's tea party



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise

A pretend party invitation in an envelope



Party accessories – maybe a party hat, party blower, balloon (if child is not afraid of balloons) streamers or things to wave



## Pray Together

### Missing

**You will need:** Pipe cleaners.

Think about people who may need to know that they are invited to God's celebration. Maybe people who are not sure about church or God, people who don't know how exciting it is that they are part of God's family.



Make a pipe cleaner stick figure and think about one of those people who you would particularly like to talk to God about. As you twist the pipe cleaner into shape and hold your stick figure in your hands, talk to God and ask God to bless that person and take care of them, filling them with good things.



Here is a prayer to say

**Lord God, thank you that you love everyone  
and want them to share all the good things you prepare for them.  
I think about... (the person you have made).  
Give me the courage to talk to them and tell them about you.  
Amen.**

### Instructions for making a simple stick figure

Cut a pipe cleaner in half. Take one of the pieces and bend it in half. In the centre, make a loop and twist it around to make the head and the legs. To make the arms, take the other half of the pipe cleaner, fold it in half and then wrap it around the other pipe cleaner just under the head to make the arms.



## ***Pray Together***

### ***Noticing God in the Everyday***

*God is all around and in everything but sometimes we are too busy to notice. Take some time to notice God in the everyday things that you do.*

*Where do you notice God?*

*in a conversation*

*someone who helps you*

*an unusual cloud*

*the first signs of spring*

*through people who love you*

*You could draw a picture or write in a book to help you remember the things you notice.*

*Sit in the quiet and just rest in God's presence. Say thank you to God for all the times you have noticed God in the ordinary every day.*



## Pray Together

### Setting the Table Prayers

*This prayer is an opportunity to say thank you to God for the feast that we are invited to.*

*The guests were all invited to a great feast in the bible story. There is an invitation to all to come and share in the feast of good things that God has given us.*

*Here is a creative prayer idea that you can do when you are setting the table or sitting at the table together to share a meal. If you don't have a table where you eat, maybe you could lay them out on a tray instead.*

*Thank you, God, for the feast of life.*

*For starters: our family and friends.*

*(Lay out a knife and side plate)*

*For the main course: your love and the beauty of creation.*

*(Lay out a dinner plate and a fork)*

*For the pudding: fun things to do and games to play.*

*(Lay out a dessert spoon)*

*Thank you, God, for everything.*

**Amen.**

*Adapted idea from ROOTS for Churches*



### An alternative

**You will need:** a large sheet of paper and pens

*Place a large sheet of paper in the middle of the table. On the paper write 'FEAST' in large letters.*

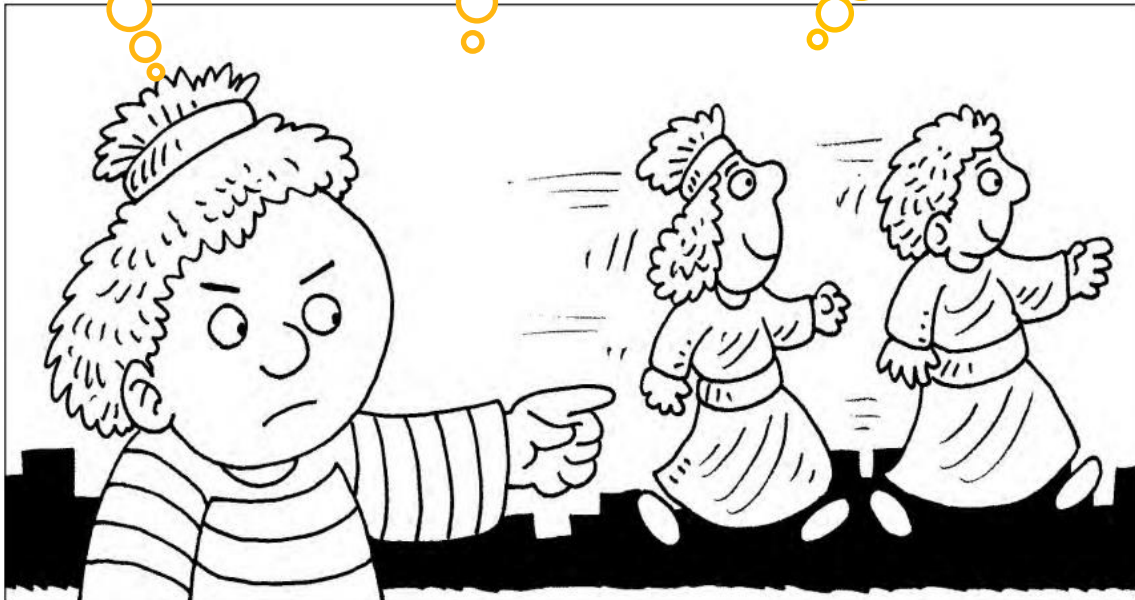
*Around the letters draw or write things that you want to thank God for beginning with the letters in the word. For example for F – friends, family, fun!*

*When everyone has written on the paper say a huge **Amen***

*I wonder how you  
would choose who  
to invite to a party?*

*I wonder what it feels  
like not to be invited  
to things?*

*I wonder what good  
things God has in store  
for us if we say yes to  
God's invitation?*



*I wonder how the people  
who were invited first  
would have felt by the  
end of this story?*

*I wonder what makes  
us sometimes say no  
to good things?*



## To Do Together...

### Come to My Banquet

**You will need:** A tea set or some real plates and cups  
Some play food, imaginary food or some real food  
Some figures or soft toys



#### What you do:

Set your table with plates, knife, fork, spoon, glass or cup etc. Make it extra special with a napkin, tablecloth. Set it out like a banquet.

Lay out all the food on special plates and have a fancy bottle (you could decorate a drinks bottle to make it extra special). Take care in laying it all out, it's exciting getting ready for special guests.

Remember that you can use your imagination too – that will help you have some really extravagant food and drink for your guests 😊

Think about the toys you want to come and join in your banquet. Maybe they are toys you don't play with very often. The people who came to the banquet were the people who said yes, to the invitation to come, but there were lots of people who made excuses.





To Do Together...



**Piñata**

**You will need:** An old gift bag  
Masking tape  
Some things to decorate it  
Something to put inside.



**What you do:**



Use an old gift bag. Tape it closed, keeping the handles as a way to hang it up.

Open the other end before filling it and remove any cardboard base inside. Then tape it loosely up again.

Fill up your bag halfway with goodies. You can fill it with sweets, small toys or even some bird seed for a wildlife piñata. Fill the rest with tissue paper to give your bag some more strength.



Decorate your bag as you want. Have lots of fun playing with your piñata. Hang it up in a safe space where you're not going to hit things that might break. Blindfold one person who then has a go at hitting the piñata with a stick to release all the goodies held inside.



Make sure it is hanging up where you want the things inside to fall out. If you have created one with birdseed, make sure it is in a good place for the birds to come and feast on the seed.

*Piñata is used as part of a celebration coming traditionally from South America, but they really originated from China where they were filled with seeds, so why not fill yours with birdseed?*

*Remember the celebration in the story and think about the surprise the people who went might have had.*

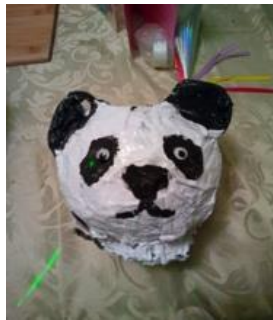
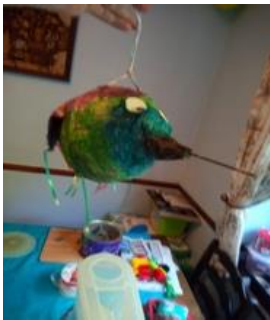


To Do Together...



**Piñata Alternative** (This alternative takes more time)

Why not create some amazing creatures by papier-mâché on balloon and let your imagination go wild. Once it is dry, remember to add in your goodies and create a way of hanging it up by creating some holes at the top and threading some string to make a loop.



**An easier alternative**

Use a cardboard box, open up both the ends and cut the two small flaps off. At one end, create two small holes in the corner and thread some string through them; this will create something to hang it up with. Loosely tape that end up again. Leave the other end open until you have finished decorating it and are ready to fill it up. Then decorate it as you wish. Fill up your piñata and tape the end, covering the join with some more decoration.



## To Do Together...



### Excuse-o-matic

**You will need:** White card  
A split pin

#### What you do:

Cut out four circles - two large ones, a middle sized one and a smaller one. Mark the centre of each of them and pierce a hole.

Draw lines to create eight sections on each of the circles.

Take one of the largest circles and cut out one of the sections. This will be the covering circle for your Excuse-o-matic. Position the other three circles in decreasing sizes on top of each other and then put the covering circle on top. Then match up the centre holes. Joining them together using a split pin.

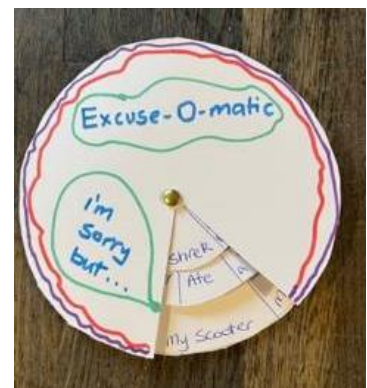
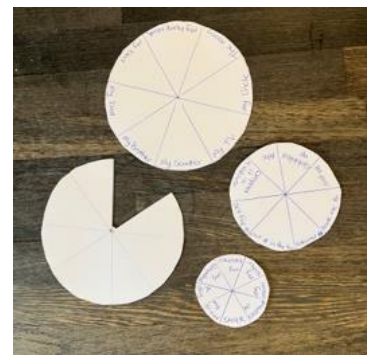
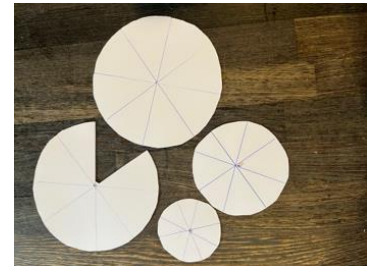
On the smallest circle, write a person or a thing (a princess, an elephant, Shrek) on the edge of each section.

On the next sized circle, write a situation/action (Ate..., flew to the moon with..., sat on...)

On the biggest circle, put on what or who it happened to (my sister, my homework, my grandad).

Now you can spin the circles and come up with some crazy excuses to use!

I wonder what excuses were used by the other people for not going to the banquet in the story? Look at the story again – were they good reasons for not going or just excuses?



# Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

*Everyday Faith:*

*The invitation from God goes out to everyone, not just the popular people. Think about who gets left out among the people you know. Could you invite someone a bit different from usual to play with you, to have a cup of coffee with you, to come round for a meal, to work with you? This week try extra hard to invite those who do get overlooked, those who might not be able to invite you back.*

*Scrapbooking:*

*Sometimes an invitation asks RSVP – Repondez s'il vous plait – which means that the person inviting you would like you to reply. You might write a letter or send a message, or you might send a card to accept the invitation. Why not think about what God is inviting you to, and design a card or letter to say whether or not you want to accept that invitation? Put your response in your scrapbook.*

*Take it Further:*

*This story is from a longer passage in Luke's book. Use your Bible or look on [biblegateway.com](https://www.biblegateway.com) which is a website where you can search for passages in a range of different versions of the Bible. This link will take you to the passage in the International Children's Bible:  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+14%3A+1-14&version=ICB>  
What do you learn about the setting when Jesus told this story? Does it change or influence your thinking about the story or about how you share God's love with others? Alternatively, why not find out about Foodcycle <https://www.foodcycle.org.uk/> . Is there a project like this in your area? Could you make a poster to advertise it?*





The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

**families  
on faith adventures**

at home

### **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](mailto: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.*



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church