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 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:

God's Name
– Woven into Everything
Psalm 8

From The United Reformed Church Children *and* The United Reformed Church Youth

Illustration by
Good News Productions Int'l and College Press Publishing via freebibleimages.com

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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.

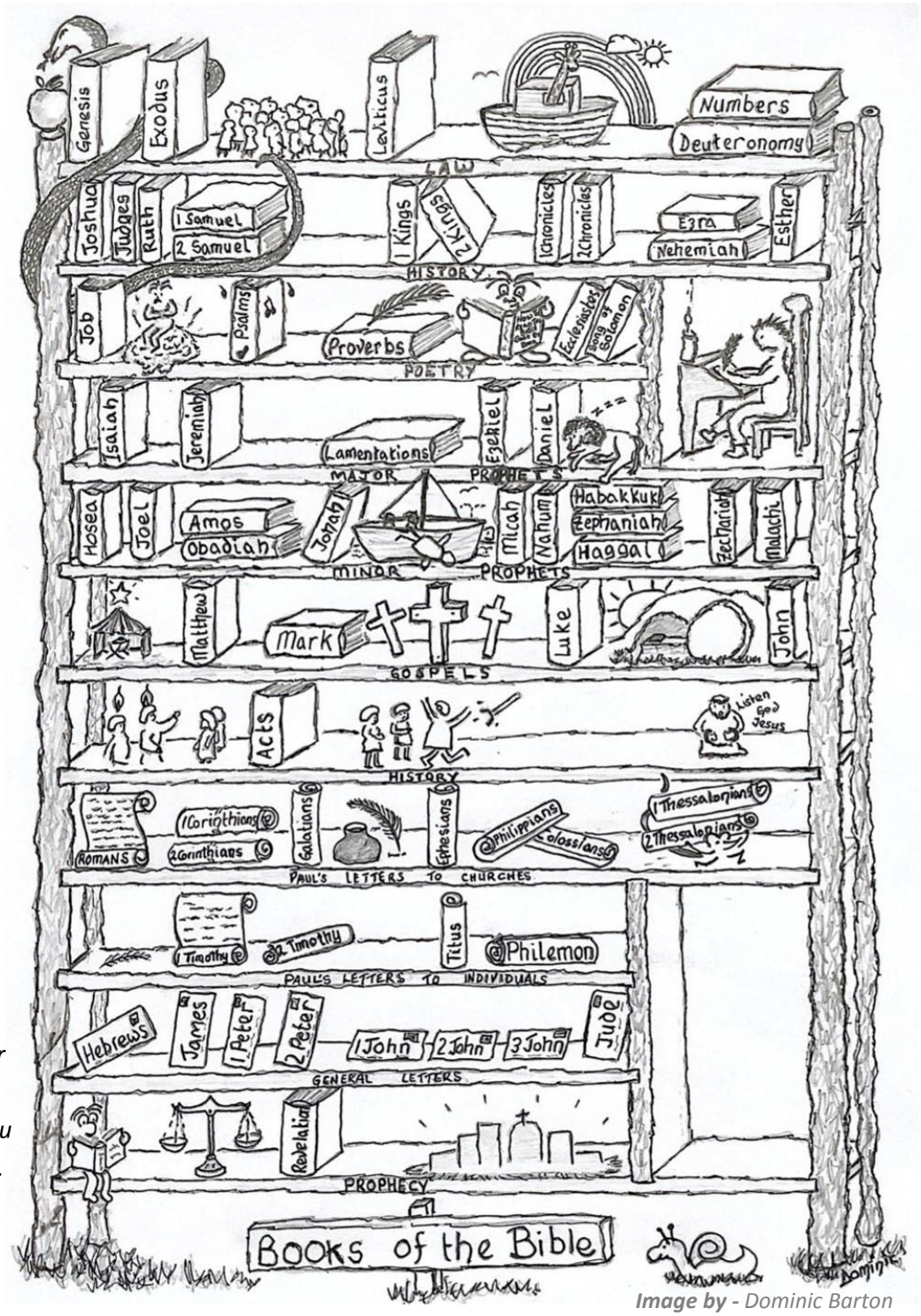

Image by - Dominic Barton

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Bible context: ***Psalms***

The book of Psalms was written between 1400 and 450 BC. King David wrote over half the 150 Psalms and he wrote Psalm 8.

Psalms is meant to be a timeless book with words that speak into all situations and eras. Psalms are poems that are meant to be put to music.

In this Psalm, David is celebrating creation and reminding us that every part of creation has God's name threaded throughout it, including us.

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Cecil and Psalm 8 by Grace Anglican Network
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYfHOuXDKLA
5 minute family devotion on Psalm 8 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ElfMB1eOIA
The whole of Creation tells of God Animation by Latter Day Kids
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-kOhFX6rkg
A young man called Adam tells us how he cares for creation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnsHcu-F7u4
A Perfect Home from the Jesus Storybook Bible read by David Suchet
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LN-pV4yYIek&t=66s

Dance and Sing

Psalm 8 by Shane and Shane https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPSv8vredVs
Psalm 8 v 1 by the Rizers https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XQ5e0Uhqh4&t=54s
Psalm 8 by Kingdom Kids https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdLIR-lvLDA
Oi Oi We are gonna Praise the Lord by Doug Horley
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5XlSKryUcE
Earth by Lil Dicky (song starts at 1;45) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2SMvfGe72U

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The Story: ***Psalm 8*** ***(New Living Translation)***

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens.
You have taught children and infants to tell of your strength,
silencing your enemies and all who oppose you.

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—

what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them?
Yet you made them only a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honour.
You gave them charge of everything you made,
putting all things under their authority—
the flocks and the herds and all the wild animals,
the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and everything that swims the ocean currents.

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!

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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

The Teddy Game

Using the photos at the end of this edition, play a game that explores where we find our value.

Display all six teddy bears and take some time to get to know them all.

Some are soft and cuddly, others are solid and rough. Some make noises, some have costumes, others hide secrets.

All are different in some way, and all are loved by their owner.

Feel free to name them all.

I wonder which one is your favourite and why?

Which don't you like and why?

Would these teddies be good for different people at different times? For example, which one would you like with you on a long car journey? Which would you take to a hospital appointment with you?

Finally, which teddy bear do you think is most valuable?

Explore this question together, giving reasons for your answers.

The answer is Hamish, the hard, white polar bear with a strange growl.

Can you guess why Hamish is the most valuable?

The answer is due to who made him. Hamish has a little gold button in his ear that shows us he was made by Steiff. The world's best teddy bear maker. This is what makes Hamish a very important and special bear. I wonder whether anyone chose Hamish as their favourite before they knew this?

Things often find their value in who made them.

We are made by God, all of us, each made differently, all of us special. We are important, we are valuable, not because of what we can do or what we know or how popular we are, but because of who made us.

We are made by God, and we are special.

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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Psalm 8 Tabletop Interactive Reading

Share this adaption of Psalm 8 together, perhaps round the meal table.
There are opportunities in the psalm for everyone to be involved.
When the main reader says the words "Lord our God" everyone joins in together with the words in bold ***"Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth".***

Let's begin:

Lord our God

Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth.

You are our God, and we shout out your praise
Take turns to shout out your name, followed by "…shouts out your praise."
For example " Lorraine shouts out your praise," "Hannah shouts out your praise."

Lord our God

Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth.

Consider the earth and all of God's wonderful creation.
When we look around we catch glimpses of God.
Take a look around you and call out where you see God.
Call out – "I see God in ……."

Lord our God

Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth.

I wonder why you bother caring for us.
We are small, compared to creation we are tiny, and yet you care for us.
We make mistakes, and yet you care for us.
We damage your creation, and yet you care for us.
Spend time acknowledging the things you want to say sorry for and be reminded that God still cares about you. Call out something you want to say sorry for, followed by "… and yet you care for us." For example, "We forget to recycle and yet you care for us"

Lord our God

Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth.

I wonder why are we here, what is our purpose?
We were made to have a relationship with God and the whole of God's creation. God puts creation under our care.
All creation, everything in the earth, the sea, and the sky is under our care.
Spend time listing things from creation that we can care for, followed by "… is/are under our care and we will cherish it/them"
For example, the flowers and trees are under our care and we will cherish them.

Lord our God

Your great and powerful name is found in all the Earth.

You are our God and we shout out your praise
And we all shout together AMEN.

For more ideas to use check out the environmental Sunday service here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1vyNrWb0w8

Table Top Discussions

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

- *The psalm reminds us that we are responsible for God's creation. What does this mean for the way we live each day?*
- *Where do we see God threaded in our lives and in others?*
- *What is the part of creation you like the most and why?*
- *Which part of creation would you uncreate if you had the chance and why?*
- *If you were to write a psalm, what would it be about?*

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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.

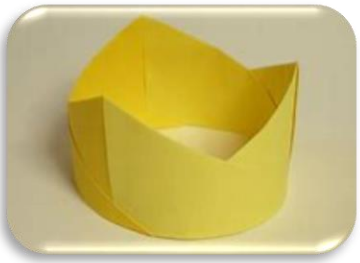
Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.

A sensory tray with moon and stars – try to make a dark background and either use glow-in-the-dark stars, toy stars, or make stars out of cardboard and foil.

Image from Christian Montessori Network

Something with rainbow colours for God's promise

A paper crown



A children's atlas or picture of creation

A sensory tray – maybe fill with coloured green pasta or with oats or lentils – with toy animals

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Pray Together

Star Prayers

In our psalm it says…When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place—

Make some stars and write your message on them. What might this Psalm say to you? Place your stars together and share your prayers. Amen

You will need: *Scraps, card, glue, scissors, clean foil (recycled is great, watch out for sharp edges if using foil packaging), and a blunt pencil or biro*

Cut out star shapes from card and glue foil onto them, leaving a border of foil so when you cover the other side you can overlap your edges.

**If you do not have foil or prefer to do it differently, you could decorate your stars in a different way and still use them in the same way.*

Write your prayer onto your star. Gather in your stars with those around you, your family, or your group of friends. Place your stars together and share your prayers, praising God just as David did. Amen

When you have finished, you might use the stars to make a display or a mobile or hang them from the branches of a tree as a beautiful reminder of your prayers and God's amazing creation.

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Pray Together

Praise prayers

Look around you and think about big things, small things, fragile things, fast things, slow things, quiet things and loud things. Find pictures or draw pictures of the things you think of; if you have a camera you could take photographs. Make a collage of the pictures.

Here is a prayer you can say together

Praise God for: mountains and oceans, planets and stars
Praise God for big things
Praise God for: seeds and spiders, petals and drops of dew
Praise God for small things
Praise God for: rolling thunder and the crashing waves
Praise God for loud things
Praise God for: a breath of wind and a whispered prayer
Praise God for quiet things
Praise God for: soaring eagles and hairy gorillas
Praise God for strong things
Praise God for: snowflakes and cobwebs - a tiny baby
Praise God for fragile things
Praise God for: the flash of lightening and a humming bird's wings
Praise God for fast things
Praise God for: the growth of a tree and the erosion of cliffs
Praise God for slow things
Praise God for: the moon, the sun, other worlds
Praise God for far away things
Praise God for: the person sitting next to me, my own heartbeat
Praise God for close-by things

Thank you that though you are so big,
you become small enough to meet us here on earth
though you are so strong, you show your love in gentleness
though you are loud as thunder, you speak to us in the sound of silence.
Thank you that though you could be faster than the speed of light
You choose to walk at our pace and to hold our hand.

Taken from ROOTS for Churches

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Pray Together

Your name fills the earth

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth! Psalm 8v1

Draw a picture of a scene; it could be a picture of your garden or local park, the seaside, or your favourite holiday destination. Mountains, hills, rivers and lakes. The psalm tells us that God's name fills the earth. When you have drawn your picture, write God's name into the picture. You could find some words from verses in the psalms about praising God and write those in too.

Thank you, God, for making the world,
with all the animals, the seas and mountains and everything that's so amazing.
Our God, you're fantastic!
Thank you, God, for making people.
Thank you for our families, for our friends, and for everyone in our community.
Our God, you're fantastic!
Thank you, God, that you came to earth in Jesus, to be our friend.
Our God, you're fantastic!
Thank you for loving us and giving us your beautiful creation.
Our God, you're fantastic!
Amen

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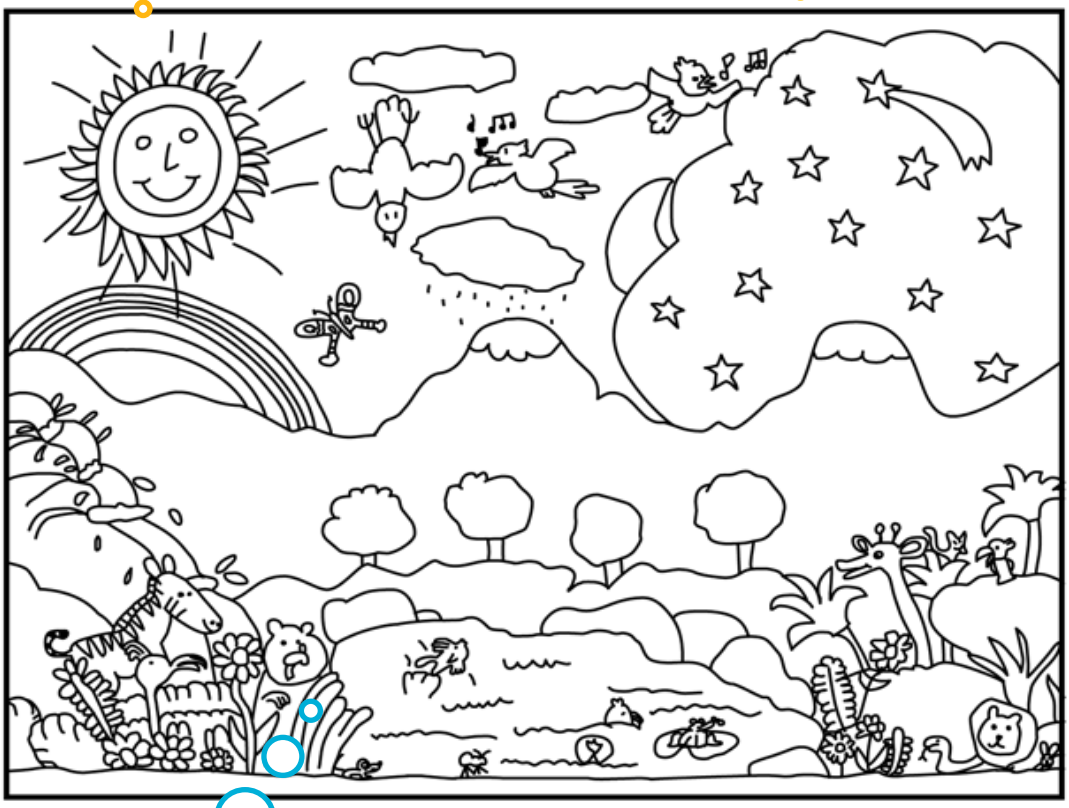
I wonder how many things you can name that God created?

I wonder where you see God around you and where you find it hard to see God?

I wonder why children's praise is so special to God?



No two things God creates are the same. I wonder how God made you different and how God made you special?

I wonder what the Psalmist meant when he said we are crowned by God and given authority?

Illustration by

Margarita Alexander Age 7 via https://www.bestcoloringpagesforkids.com/creation-coloring-pages.html

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To Do Together…

Painted Earth

You will need: *Green, blue, white, and brown (optional) paint.*
Circle of card, an old pizza board, or the top of a tissue box
String, beads or cord

What you do:

Place four or five pieces of beads/cord/string on a tray.

Pour strips of blue green and white paint on them.

Carefully position them on the card shape and then pull them off around the circle to create an image of the world from space. You may want to dip the string into the paint again and repeat the process until you get the desired effect.

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To Do Together…

Woven Goodness

You will need: *Milk, white, and dark chocolate*
Some utensils

What you do:

Choose which chocolate you want as the base of your image. You could create a cross or a heart or, if you're really clever, the word 'God'.

Break up the chocolate and melt it in the microwave.

You can line a baking tray with baking parchment or use a clean foil food container, a clean glossy plate or saucer, or even a piece of plastic (e.g. from inside a cake box etc). This will be where you form your chocolate goodness.

Create your base by using an icing piping set, or an old medicine dispenser, dripping the chocolate from a spoon, or writing like paint with a very clean paintbrush or a knife would work well too.

Try to get it quite thick and put it in the fridge to set hard.

Once it is set, you can put another layer on top using a different kind of chocolate - this can be repeated as many times as you want. If you have animal or star or person shaped cutters, you can use these, or create the shape of a leaf or a tree.

Let it set in the fridge and then peel off the base to get a creation chocolate with God's name in it. Enjoy all the good things God has given to us, including the cocoa bean.

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To Do Together…

Reduce Reuse Recycle Repurpose

You will need: *An old disposable mask,*
some can ring pulls,
an old pen outer tube
or
Some containers with lids, rice or popcorn kernels
or
Plastic bags and tape

What you do:
Take a disposable mask and cut along the top so that just you have the metal nose band encased in fabric and the two pieces of elastic for the ears. Dispose of the rest of the mask.

Thread the ring pulls onto it so that they can jangle loosely. Then thread the ear straps through the pen and fasten in place at the bottom. Decorate with tape or stickers.

Alternatives
Fill a container with rice or popcorn kernels and use as a shaker.

Make a streamer flag by cutting strips of plastic bag and taping the ends together to make a handle.

Wave the streamers and shakers to praise the Creator God.

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Walking the Way
Living the life of Jesus today

Our Walking the Way Challenge this time is…

If God's name is woven into everything God created, and if God made us as part of creation but with responsibility for it, how does this affect how we treat the world around us? This week, intentionally think about how you might take better care of God's creation or better care of other people. Talk to God about it and listen too. Every small change you make can contribute to making a big difference.

Everyday Faith:

Why not take your camera or phone on a walk around your local neighbourhood and get some snaps of signs of God around you – maybe bits of nature that you see, maybe people taking care of others or of God's creation, maybe something entirely different. When you get home you could print out some pictures for your scrapbook or, better still, have a go and drawing, painting or collaging a picture in response to the things you have seen.

Scrapbooking:

Your church might be an eco-church or your school might be an eco-school – find out whether or not it is and, if not, maybe suggest to the leadership that it might be something to investigate. As we go into the period called Lent, the time between Pancake Day/Ash Wednesday and Easter, the organisation A Rocha which runs the eco-church award has produced a really good resource with some thoughtful and fun ideas to help you engage with the environment and God's creation. Find them here: https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/W1_1-Get-outside-for-lent-Salisbury-Diocese.pdf

Take it Further:

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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 Teddy Bear Game

Daisy (11 years old)

Daisy is a large and very soft cuddly bear wearing a ribbon round her neck.

She loves cuddles and is very good at keeping secrets. She has a cold leather nose that is good to stroke and looks fabulous with her messy hairstyle.

She loves to sit in the armchair and wait for you to come and share a good story or just watch a film.

She is very good company.

Button Bear (12 years old)

A very soft large teddy with a happy grin.

Buttons likes to cuddle and keep you warm on chilly days.

Buttons has no special skills and is becoming a little baggy in places from being hugged too tight.

Buttons is a cheery bear who likes to be taken to the park and thrown about.

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Pops (22 years old)

A very small teddy, not too soft and not too hard.

Pops is wearing a T shirt and a leather flying jacket with matching hat; he lost his goggles years ago.

Pops used to fly on the planes and still likes to go on holiday to keep you calm on the plane ride.

Pops is looking shabby now and is the smallest of all but is special as he was a gift from Grandad who used to fly helicopters.

Hugsy (2 years old)

Hugsy is a large penguin who loves warm hugs.

He is very famous and used to be in a TV show called Friends.

Hugsy is a good friend and likes to go on adventures with you. He is dressed in his winter skiing clothes and ready for action.

When it's time for bed, you can remove his clothes and hold him tight.

He is very soft and cheeky.

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Hamish (25 years old)

Hamish is a medium sized hard bear with movable arms and legs.

He likes to sit and be admired.

He has a strange sound like a grumble that comes out of him if you tip him upside down (but he doesn't like being handled too much).

We think he is a polar bear, but we are not sure.

He doesn't do much, but he is a very handsome bear.

Flopsy (10 years old)

Flopsy is a very soft bear with long floppy ears, She came from Build a Bear workshop.

Flopsy is very good at giving you comfort when you feel unwell or scared.

She has a secret: when she was built, she had a beating heart placed inside her (a plastic one). Also the little girl who made her had her dummies with her and one is still inside Flopsys tail.

Although her heart no longer beats, she loves you very much