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.

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:

Extra-Special

2 Chronicles 2: v 1 and 5 to 9

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

Illustration by
Jeremy Park via Bible-Scenes.com

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures at home

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.

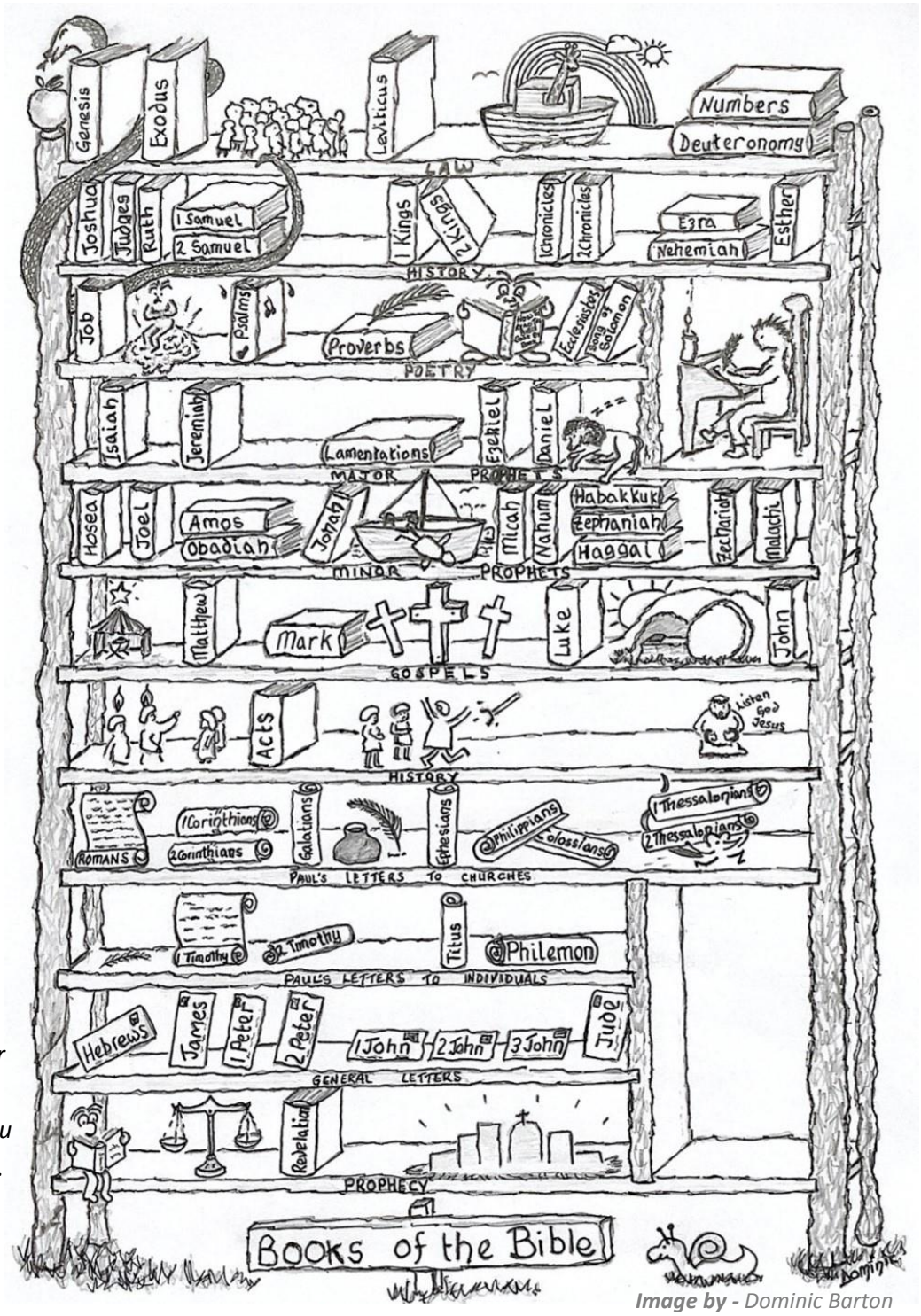


Image by - Dominic Barton

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures at home

Bible context: ***2 Chronicles***

The two books called Chronicles were originally one book but were split into two when the Christian Bible was made. They tell the history of the relationship between God and God's people over many years and draw together stories from some of the other history books in the Old Testament. Nobody knows who wrote them and it might be a number of different writers, writing at different times.

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Solomon Builds the Temple PursueGODKids https://youtu.be/sReySjHUkEs
Superbook - Solomon's Temple https://youtu.be/f4_7F0nbSqM
Solomon and God's House | Bible Story | LifeKids https://youtu.be/lU2EqsWBiVE
Solomon Built the Temple - Brooke Raymond https://youtu.be/T27x1r1R5qA

Dance and Sing

Our God is an Awesome God https://youtu.be/PP9BjKnDaFk
The Joy Joy Joy Joy Down in my heart! Listener Kids https://youtu.be/imK7pAMf61E
Build My Life WinShape Camps https://youtu.be/0_3__THApR8
My God is so big – Go Fish https://youtu.be/2_eRnF0oXaE

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

The Story: 2 Chronicles 2 verses 1, 5 to 9 (from The International Children's Bible)

Solomon decided to build a temple as a place to worship the Lord. He also decided to build a palace for himself….

"The temple I build will be great. This is because our God is greater than all gods. But no one can really build a house for our God. Not even the highest of heavens can hold God. How then can I build a temple for him? I can only build a place to burn sacrifices to God.

Now send me a man skilled in working with gold, silver, bronze and iron. He must know how to work with purple, red and blue thread. He must know how to make engravings. He will work with my skilled craftsmen in Judah and Jerusalem. These are the men my father David chose.

Also send me cedar, pine and juniper logs from Lebanon. I know your servants are experienced at cutting down the trees in Lebanon. My servants will help them. Send me a lot of wood. The temple I am going to build will be large and wonderful.

Scripture quotations are taken from the International Children's Bible®, copyright © 1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson. Used by permission.

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

It was Nanna Birch's birthday and Tasha and Joshua were in a grump. They looked at each other and shrugged the biggest shrug and sighed the biggest sigh.

It wasn't that they didn't love Nanna Birch – in fact, the opposite was quite true. She was such a special person. She wasn't their real nanna, of course, but everyone in their street called her Nanna Birch because she felt a bit like she was everybody's Nanna. She lived in the little house with the blue door, right in the middle of the street, and it was as though the heart of the street was right there. She knew everybody by name and just everybody knew Nanna Birch. But that meant that everyone in the whole street would be doing something for Nanna's birthday and Tasha and Joshua just didn't know what to do.

"Whatever we do," Tasha said, "has got to be extra special. She's such a special person."

"Yes," agreed Joshua, "she always remembers our birthdays and special days, and she always helps us if we're worried or upset or hurt. Remember when I fell off my bike and she put a plaster on my leg and helped me get home again? She even slipped a chocolate in my pocket without me noticing. We must do something special, but what can we do that's special enough?"

"You're right", Tasha replied, "Remember when I got locked out of the house when Dad had gone shopping and she took me in and made me hot chocolate and let me help her bake biscuits for the church coffee morning until Dad got home? And when she helped you with your fractions homework and explained it so clearly that you got 10 out of 10? And how Mum always goes to visit her if she's feeling a bit stressed and comes home looking calm and relaxed?"

"I've got it," shouted Josh, leaping to his feet. "Let's bake her a cake. Everyone likes a cake for their birthday!" Tasha wasn't so sure this was a good idea, but she found a recipe in her mum's recipe book and together they gathered together the ingredients. They weighed and they measured, they stirred and they baked…. They opened up the oven door and……oh no! The cake hadn't risen at all and had definitely overcooked. In fact, it looked more like a COWPAT than a birthday cake!!!!

"Oh no!" exclaimed Tasha, "we can't give her that!"

Hmmm… it seemed they weren't going to win the Great British Bake Off any time soon. So what else could they do?

"I've got it," shouted Tasha. "Remember we planted some seeds in the garden this spring? Why don't we dig up one of our plants and put it in a plantpot to give her?" Grabbing a spade, they ran out into the garden to the little patch of ground Dad had set apart for them.

"Oh no!" exclaimed Josh. "I think we must have forgotten to water them. They look more like straw than sunflowers! The only things that are growing well are the weeds. We can't give her weeds!"

"I've got another idea! She loves books," said Tasha. "Why don't we make her a really lovely bookcase? Remember we got that toolkit for Christmas? There was a hammer and a saw in that."

Josh rolled his eyes. It was no use. Neither of them really knew how to set about making a bookcase. They'd had one go using the saw to cut a bit of wood and then had lost interest, hidden the toolkit under the bed and forgotten all about it. There was no way they were going to manage to make something good enough for Nanna Birch to use – and they'd probably end up needing her first aid skills again too!

With a sigh, the children decided to pool their pocket money and buy her a present instead. Maybe some lovely jewellery as she always spent her money on others and never seemed to buy anything shiny for herself. But even when they searched through their pockets and the bottom of their school bags, they found only a few coins. 47p probably wasn't going to be enough to buy a nice shiny necklace for their special friend. It wouldn't even buy one of those beautiful fancy birthday cards that play a tune when you open them.

There was nothing for it, they would just have to do what they usually did. They looked at each other ,shrugged the biggest shrug and sighed the biggest sigh, then grabbed their pencil cases and some paper and started to make a birthday card each. Nanna Birch loved flowers, so Josh drew a garden of flowers of all different shapes and colours. And Tasha had noticed that Nanna Birch had lots of hippo ornaments and thought that maybe her special friend had a soft spot for that particular animal, so she found a picture of a hippo and very carefully copied it onto the paper. And when the cards were finished, they set off round to Nanna Birch's house, where all the neighbours were gathered.

On the table were gifts and presents from everyone. There was a fantastic cake with candle in the shape of an eight and a zero; there were cards of all shapes and sizes including several that played a tune when they were opened; there were bunches of flowers of every colour under the sun and a brand new jewellery box with a shiny necklace in it. Everyone wanted to help Nanna Birch celebrate her eightieth birthday with a special special gift.

Nanna Birch looked up and the most ginormous smile lit up her face. "Tasha, Joshua, I thought you weren't coming and I so wanted you to be here for my special birthday. Oh, and what wonderful cards. I will put them here, in pride of place, on my mantlepiece where I can see them all day. You knew I loved flowers, and hippos too - they're my favourite animal and not everybody knows that. You are both such good friends and I love you very much. Thank you for brightening my day!"

Table Top Discussions

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

- *If you were building a special place where you could meet with God, what would it look like?*
- *What are your most precious things and why?*
- *God didn't let Solomon's dad, David, build the temple because he was a man of war, even though he was God's chosen king. Do you think this was fair?*
- *Why do you think we don't tend to build temples for God to live in these days?*
- *How do you like to show people how special they are to you? How do they show you that you are special too?*

The United Reformed Church

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.

Building bricks or duplo/lego

Something with rainbow colours for God's promise

Shiny and sparkly things – jewellery, shiny card or foil, gems

Pieces of smooth wood

A special box to put the shiny things in

Scraps of fine fabric such as shiny designs, velvety fabrics etc

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures at home

Pray Together

Precious Gems

You will need: *Something to represent precious gemstones*
(wrap small stones or buttons in silver foil or use marbles or glass beads)
A small box covered in shiny paper for a treasure box.

Take your precious gems and place them in the treasure box. Take one out at a time and hold it in the palm of your hand.

Think about the most precious gift or gifts you have been given. Say thank you to God.

Think about the people who are precious to you or who have helped you. Take one gem for each person. As you hold the gem, say their name and thank God for them.

Take another gem and think about people who need help. Ask God to bless them and show you how you can help them.

Return your gems to your treasure box and use it to help you pray. You could continue to add prayers or different treasure to the box.

A prayer
We give thanks for the precious things we have.
We give thanks for the precious friends and family you have given us.
Help us not to be selfish with possessions, with family, with friends.
Remind us not to be jealous,
but to be willing to love, help and share with others.
Amen

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures at home

Pray Together

Spiral Prayers

Build a spiral using bricks, or you could use counters or buttons or something similar. Place one brick in the centre to represent God. Decide on the people places and situations you want to talk to God about and walk your finger around the spiral as you think, bringing all those things to God. When you reach the centre, take some time to pause and talk to God. Slowly work your way back to the end of the spiral, listening to what God might be saying to you, and then say Amen.

A prayer you can say when you reach the middle of the spiral:

We are precious to God
who knows and loves us.
God, we praise you for your love and care.

God is with us,
and promises never to leave or abandon us.
God, we praise you for your love and care.

God is with us in the good and the bad,
and will help us in times of need.
God, we praise you for your love and care.

God is faithful,
and overcomes our fears with hope.
God, we praise you for your love and care.
Amen.

Adapted from Roots

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

Pray Together

Wood Prayers

You will need: *A piece of rough wood (not splintery, though)*
Sandpaper
Cooking oil

Pick up your piece of wood and carefully run it across your hand. Notice the texture, feel any rough edges, and look at the grain. With some sandpaper, smooth the rough edges on the wood. As you do this, think about things you would like God to help you with that might be difficult. Ask God to smooth away any rough edge that you might have.

Think about the situations in the world that are difficult and challenging and ask God to be in those situations. As you smooth the wood, ask God to bring peace.

When you have smoothed the wood, take some oil and rub it gently into the wood. I wonder, how does that change the wood? Does the grain become clearer? Ask God to help you to shine and show your gifts.

The United Reformed Church

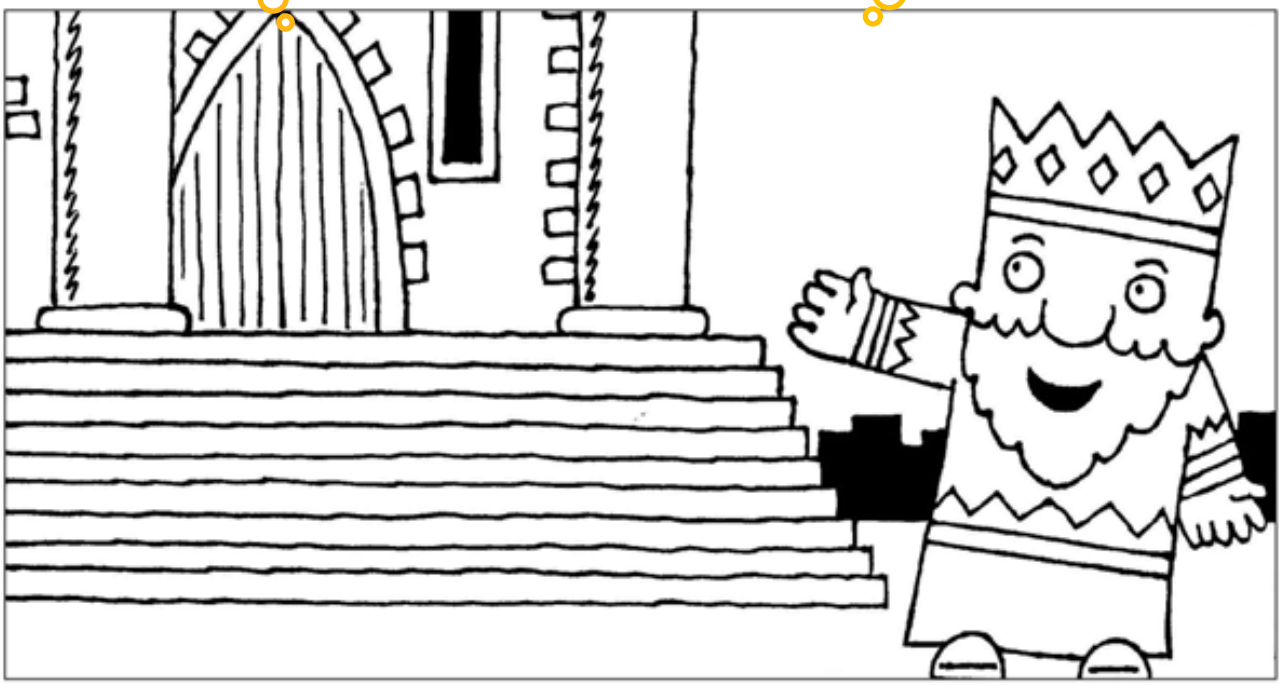
families on faith adventures

at home

I wonder where you find it easiest to be with God?

I wonder how you like to show how special God is for you?

I wonder if you can share a story of why God is awesome for you?



I wonder whether anything is this story surprised you?

I wonder what it means to give your best for God?

Illustration by *lambsongs.co.nz via www.freebibleimages.com*

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures at home

To Do Together…

'Egg-stra' Special Box

You will need: *An egg box or a small box*
Some foil or some old sweet wrappers
Some lovely fabric to go inside
Some things to decorate it with

What you do:

Decorate your box with foil & fabric, both inside and out, to make it look really special. You could add stickers or paint or sequins – anything that makes it look amazing!

This beautiful box is the perfect place to keep your egg-stra-special tiny things, or you may even want to use it as a gift box to give to someone else.

When things or people are special to us, we want to keep a special place for them. Our special things we can keep in a box but our special people are kept in our hearts. Solomon wanted to make a special place for God, who gives us all the best things.

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

To Do Together…

God's Got Talent

You will need:

Just your God-given skills and talents – everybody has these!

What you do:

Think of something you are good at.

Share your talent with your family or a group.

Solomon employed the people who were skilled at making and building, and they used the best materials to create a magnificent temple for God.

How could you use your talent to worship God?

It doesn't have to be perfect, just something you are really good at because God doesn't expect us to be perfect. God loves it when we just give of our best.

It might be playing football, cooking, singing, telling jokes, building Lego, or simply making funny faces.

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

To Do Together…

Special Gift Pots

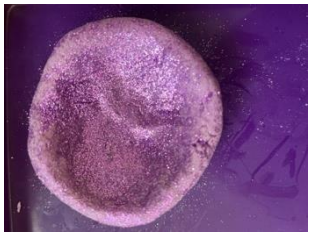
You will need: *Salt dough ingredients:*

- *½ cup of flour*
- *¼ cup of salt*
- *¼ cup of water*
- *Glitter and food colouring*

What you do:

Mix all the ingredients together to make your salt dough, form it into a little pot and cook in the oven. Cook on a very low heat for 3 hours.

Before you cook it, you could sprinkle more glitter on the pot to make it really special. Or, once it is hard, you can decorate it by gluing gems on it.



If you want to make a pot in another way, roll up strips of paper and create a coil pot by gluing the coils together and leaving it to dry. Alternatively, if you have access to needle felting, you might choose to make a felt pot.

Put something special into your pot and give it to someone as a special gift.

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

Walking the Way
Living the life of Jesus today

Our Walking the Way Challenge this time is…

Everyday Faith:

Solomon wanted to build somewhere extra special to be a place for God to live amongst God's people. We believe that after Jesus lived on earth, he sent the Holy Spirit to be with us always and everywhere – all around us and inside us – which means that God lives in us, no matter where we go. Each morning when you wake, remember that you are extra special because God lives in you. Remember it when you're getting ready for the day, when you're in work or school, when you're relaxing, when you're choosing what to eat, when you're playing, when you're doing your homework or tidying the house.

Scrapbooking:

Why not design your own special place for God – maybe a place where you might go to talk to or to worship God, maybe your own church or temple. Think carefully about what's important to you, what is this place for, what do you know about God and God's people? You could draw or paint or collage, or even build and take a photo for your scrapbook.

Take it Further:

You might like to find out more about the temple. You can see a model of what it might have looked like and a 'video tour' of it here: https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/metkids/2020/solomons-temple-model-judaica . Perhaps you could do something special for a church in your neighbourhood – donate some flowers, do some litter picking or gardening in the church grounds, draw a poster for their noticeboard etc.

The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ 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***
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.

The United Reformed Church