



Time Travellers

2022 URC Children's and Youth Work
Holiday Club

Welcome



Welcome to the second official United Reformed Church (URC) Children's and Youth Work (CYW) Holiday Club – Time Travellers. Tying in with our theme for the year, Jubilee, we are travelling through time together to meet some of the children of the Bible and see what they can teach us about following God, listening to God, meeting with God, belonging to God and worshipping God – what can we bring back with us to the present day and our ongoing journey of faith?

This material is not designed to be prescriptive, although you may use it that way if you wish. Nor is it designed to be exclusive; feel free to swap and change the ideas included here for ones you think more suitable for your groups. It is written as a five-day plan but you may decide to do a one-day extravaganza, a club once a week through the holidays, or maybe just select a couple of the sessions to do on two or three days in the week.

At the back of this resource you will find several appendices. You may be thinking of adapting this material in a variety of ways and the appendices will give you suggestions and ideas of how to do so for various different settings.

As always, we would really love some feedback. Do let us know what you found helpful and if there is anything else you wish we had included. Should we do another such resource next year, what would be most helpful to you? And do let us know how you use it – some pictures for our Facebook page would be greatly appreciated. Contact lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk or children.youth@urc.org.uk.

Credits:

Main writing team: The Revd Chris Dowd, Lorraine Downer, Nicola Grieves, Judy Harris, Sharon Lloyd, Hannah Middleton, Jess Poole, Megan Tillbrook, Lorraine Webb, Jo West, Ruth White

Appendices: Leo Roberts, Judy Harris, Ann Davies and the Revd Carole Marsden (Shrewsbury URC Vintage Messy Church), Sam Richards

Songs: Leo Roberts (music and lyrics) and Roo Stewart (score)

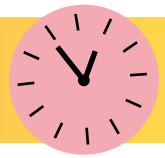
Proofreading: Heather Wilkinson and Laurence Wareing

Graphics: Laura Jones

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In this resource



Appendices

While the main resource is written with the five to eleven age range in mind, you may have some young people who are just outside that demographic or come as junior helpers. The first appendix gives ideas for extending the material to take them a little deeper. You may have some children of pre-school age within your holiday club so we have included an appendix on how to adapt the theme for little ones. Perhaps you are running a vintage holiday club and want the theme to tie in, so there is an appendix of ideas for the elderly and for those with dementia. Why not develop the holiday club as an intergenerational adventure, inviting adults and young people as well as children to participate together? There is an appendix with some ideas for running an intergenerational event, which may help in adapting these materials.

Overarching themes and activities

In the first section of this resource, there are some overarching themes and activities. Here are some ideas for decorating your hall or Zoom background and for ongoing/cumulative activities for your groups of children and adults. There are also the two songs which have been purpose-written for this material by Leo Roberts.

Reflections for volunteers

It is important for the volunteers running the holiday club to ground it in faith and sound theology and to know where the theme is taking them. For this reason, we have included some initial reflections for the team to include in a daily pre-session briefing, with discussion points to stimulate their own thinking and learning. Obviously you will also want a prayer time together, maybe focusing on your thinking and the session ahead.

Arrival activities

You will need something to keep your children busy from the moment they arrive until the holiday club session actually begins. These activities will take place in the team areas and are to encourage children to feel welcome, engaged and to start them thinking about the theme. They will be able to continue building and decorating their time machine as well as doing a challenge and creative activity, engaging all learning styles.

Story

We have chosen to deliver the stories in a variety of styles and encourage you to be experimental with different ways of presenting Bible stories. For those of you not confident with storytelling or drama, or for those of you running your holiday club over Zoom, there are videos of the stories being told by our team on our YouTube playlist www.bit.ly/Timetravellers_playlist.

There are also suggestions for YouTube videos you may wish to use to retell the story later in the session. These are chosen because they tell the story in a way suitable for this age range and are true to the Bible accounts.

Bible verse

There is also a focus on one Bible verse each day, which could be used as a memory verse.

Craft

These crafts are not prescriptive – you may substitute them with crafts of your own.

We recommend checking Pinterest for ideas or referring to past issues of Families on Faith Adventures at Home to stimulate your creative juices: www.bit.ly/fofaadventuresathome.

Do try to use recycled or eco-friendly materials wherever possible. Craft time is a good time to talk – maybe use the reflective (wondering) questions to prompt a conversation while you are engaging in the craft together, or ponder on what you have found out so far. We have included a variety of crafts and science experiments – you will probably want to choose one or maybe two, depending on your group.

Games

Two games are described here for each session, which have a link to the theme. You will undoubtedly want to include more games – probably some of the children’s favourites.

Small group prayer activity

This is an opportunity for the small groups to pray together and to encourage a bit of creativity in prayer. Prayer during this time can be far more personal and encourage children and adults alike to build their personal relationship with God. Remember to allow time to listen and be still.

Recipes

Here are suggested recipes and food activities that are themed to our days and are quick and easy for children to make themselves during the session if you choose. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cater for those with allergies are in brackets in the ingredients list.

Interview

As you travel back in time, in each session you will meet a child from a Bible story and ask them four questions. As the same four questions are asked each time, either the leader or a nominated child could carry out the interview or you could use puppets. Again, these dramas are available on our YouTube playlist.

Song

You will want to include songs in your closing worship time and probably through the session. One of our songs is about the time travelling theme in general, the other is a cumulative song with different verses to go with each of our Bible characters. You could sing just one ‘verse and chorus’ part of the cumulative song for each session or you could build up by adding a verse on each time. Your church probably has additional songs which your children will enjoy – think about the lyrics and make sure they are appropriate for this age group and theologically sound.

Closing prayer

The closing prayers are designed to be a little more active and for everyone to get involved in. Remember that prayer is for adults as well as children – this is not a time for the adults to go off and start tidying up! You might even want to encourage parents and carers to arrive slightly before the end of the holiday club session and join in the closing prayer with their children.

Bible version

For the purpose of this resource we have used the International Children’s Bible. Please make sure that you credit them using the wording on the first page of this resource if you copy the text, and please ensure that you do not change the text in any way. Obviously you may choose to use the Bible preferred by your church family but please ensure that it uses language which is accessible for your group while remaining a true translation.

A typical holiday club might run like this:

Suggestions for a daily timetable, 2.5 hours:

- **Arrivals – Here and Now (10-15 minutes)**
- Welcome to the small group – getting to know each other (suggestions circle activities)
- Arrival activities – daily activity as detailed in that day’s session instructions
- Continue decorating the time machine or do activity sheets for the session.

- **Travelling back – Upfront Session 1 (45 minutes)**
- Active warm up (music and exercise routine)
- Song/s
- Check the Bible reading for the day – could have a Bible with a bookmark in it with the details of the reading. Feed that into the time machine. Music (maybe Dr Who music) and children walk in a spiral or spin round or move into another room to experience travelling back in time. Meet the child from the past. First part of interview.
- Story – performed or video
- What are you giving us to take back with us?
- Spiral back to the present. Put the item into the time capsule and take out the memory verse
- Memory verse – what does Jesus have to say about the theme of the day?

- **Here and Now – Small groups (1 hour)**
- Refreshments – recipe of the day
- Crafts
- Reflection
- Prayer activity
- Games.

- **Travelling forwards – Upfront session 2 (25 minutes)**
- Song
- What have we learned? Review of story and memory verse. Can we add anything to the time capsule from today to teach the people of the future about the theme? What do we think being a follower of Jesus should look like in the future? Chat in groups with feedback – draw a picture or write a message to feed into your team’s time machine
- Closing song and group prayer activity
- Goodbye wind-down, and gather up ready for collection from small group.



Overarching themes and activities for the whole week



Time Travellers – travelling through time to bring messages from the past to help us grow in faith, now and in the future

Each day we will travel back in time to meet a character from the Bible who will share their experiences with us. We have offered a creative way to tell the story, as well as a link to a video if preferred. The emphasis is to introduce different elements of discipleship for the day and enable the children to truly explore the message and bring their own thoughts and ideas to it.

The personnel of the Control GMT

The Time Travellers' Lab: Holiday club leader is the professor of the lab who has invented a time travelling machine. The professor is known as "Professor". You might choose to have a sidekick in the form of a lab technician known as "Seconds". This could be another leader or a puppet. Remember, puppets can be very helpful in giving children information that you really want them to listen to as well as being used as described in the activities for the day.

The children are the time travellers, travelling with the professor back and forth in time.

Team identity/Time Labs

Designate one area of the hall for each team of inventors and get the teams to come up with their own team name.

Decorate your venue

The scene is set in a genius inventor's time lab. You may want to decorate it with keyboards, screen, machines built out of cardboard boxes and other scrap. The professor (and sidekick) may wear lab coats, have crazy hair, glasses, a compass or a pocket watch etc round their neck, and carry a clipboard. If possible, use spiral decorations around the room to indicate the passage of time. If you have PowerPoint, you may wish to prepare a slide which has a spiralling effect on it for when the group travel forward and backwards in time. The focus should be a giant time machine (use your imagination!) which includes a large time capsule and a feed where the memory verse will be taken from each day.

Decorate each Time Lab

Provide scrap materials or a large drawing area for each team to build their own time machine during the course of the holiday club. They may want to develop it further each day. Do not be prescriptive – their time machine is their invention!

Ongoing activities

Hotseat

(Optional) Arrange a time for someone from the church congregation to come and visit the holiday club and talk about their own faith journey from the past to today and into the future, answering questions from the children.

A challenge for the end of the session

Who can you track down (in real life, on TV or in a movie, in the news, in the Bible) who is an example of what we've talked about today? Bring a picture and tell us a bit about them. Add them to our time machine.

Continuing craft

Genius inventor's clipboard. These can be made by gluing a peg at the top of a square of firm card. Each day, the time travellers can add to their clipboard completed activity sheets, a copy of the Bible story, things they have found out at home etc. They could even draw a blueprint for their time machine.



Songs

One song is a theme song entitled "We're going on a journey", which would be perfect for the start of your session and possibly also for when the group travels back in time.

The second song, "Hello, hello", is cumulative. It has a general verse and chorus and then specific verses for each day. You may choose just to sing the relevant verse for the day's theme or you may choose to build this song up.

Find the sheet music overleaf.

Sing along with Leo videos available on www.bit.ly/Timetravellers_playlist or from children.youth@urc.org.uk on request.





Time Travellers theme song

Leo Roberts
Arr. Roo Stewart

With a ragtime feel (♩. = 135)

capo2(C)

D(C)

We're go-ing on a jour-ney, go-ing on a jour-ney, in our

4

G(F)

D(C)

brand-new time ma-chine. We're go-ing on a jour-ney, go-ing on a

7

D(C)

E7(D7)

A(G)

jour-ney: there are lots of things to be seen. We're go-ing on a

10

D(C)

G(F)

jour-ney, go-ing on a jour-ney: we'll be mak-ing friends.

2022 Leo Roberts

13 D(C) G(F) A(G) F#m(Em) B(A)

We'll be tra - vel - ling fast from the pre - sent to the past: this

16 Em(Dm) A(G) D(C) A(G) D(C)

jour - ney ne - ver ends.

We're going on a journey,
going on a journey,
in our brand-new time machine.

We're going on a journey,
going on a journey:
there are lots of things to be seen.

We're going on a journey,
going on a journey:
we'll be making friends.

We'll be travelling fast
from the present to the past:
this journey never ends.

Hello, Hello

Leo Roberts
Arr. Roo Stewart

Simply ♩ = 86

capo3(D)

Verse F(D)

1. We've trav-elled in our time ma - chine to
 2. My mum and dad, they woke me up, "We've
 3. As I was sleep - ing in my bed, I
 4. Just as I was a - bout to munch, dis -
 5. Went for a swim, my friends and I: the
 6. The ci - ty gates were op - en wide and

3

some - where that we've ne - ver been We've
 got to leave now. Hur - ry up!" I
 woke to words that some - one said. Though
 cip - les asked me for my lunch. Five
 riv - er close to Phi - lip pi, and,
 on a don - key he did ride. We

4 C(A)

land - ed in a dif - frent time; out
 packed a bag and crept out - side: from
 who it was I could - n't see, but
 loaves, two fish was all I had eyes but
 while we swam, be - fore our eyes some
 sang and cheered and laughed and waved be -

5

of our craft we have to climb to
 Pha - raoh's ar - my we must hide and
 what I heard was 'Fol - low me.'
 Je - sus, he seemed real - ly glad. He
 peo - ple came to be bap - tised, took
 cause we knew we would be saved. Al -

6 F(D)

see what's hap - pen - ing a - round. Now
 fol - low Mo - ses to the sea. We
 E - li said he had - n't spo - ken.
 blessed my food and said a prayer and
 off their shoes and wad - ed in, said
 though he does - n't look a king, my

7

we are safe - ly on the ground, some -
 on - ly want - ed to be free, and
 I'm not quite sure why I woke, and
 'Give it to the peo - ple there.' And
 Je - sus took a way their sin. I
 mo - ther said the stones would sing. So

8 C(A)

one my age has looked my way. I won - der what they want to say?
 Mo - ses is the brav - est man; he'll lead us to God's prom - ised land.
 then I re - al - ised with glee that it was God who spoke to me.
 when the eat - ing was all done, my pic - nic filled up ev - 'ry - one.
 won - der if that's real - ly true, is that a thing that God can do?
 ma - ny of us shout - ing out, I won - der what it's all a - bout?.

10 **Chorus**
 B \flat (G) C(A) F(D) Dm(Bm)

Who are you? Hel-lo, how do you do? The clothes

12 B \flat (G) B \flat /D(G/B) C(A)

you're wear - ing, they look ra - ther odd! Hel -

14 B \flat (G) C(A) F(D) Dm(Bm)

lo, hel - lo, Let's talk be - fore you go: I

16 B \flat (G) C(A) F(D)

want to tell you all a - bout my God.

We've travelled in our time machine to somewhere that we've never been. We've landed in a different time; out of our craft we have to climb to see what's happening around. Now we are safely on the ground, someone my age has looked my way. I wonder what they want to say?



Chorus:

**Who are you? Hello, how do you do?
The clothes you're wearing, they look rather odd!
Hello, hello. Let's talk before you go:
I want to tell you all about my God.**



My mum and Dad, they woke me up, "We've got to leave now. Hurry up!" I packed a bag and crept outside: from Pharaoh's army we must hide and follow Moses to the sea. We only wanted to be free, and Moses is the bravest man; he'll lead us to God's promised land.

Chorus

As I was sleeping in my bed, I woke to words that someone said. Though who it was I couldn't see, what I heard was 'Follow me.' Eli said he hadn't spoken. I'm not quite sure why I woke, and then I realised with glee that it was God who spoke to me.



Chorus

Just as I was about to munch, disciples asked me for my lunch. Five loaves, two fish was all I had but Jesus, he seemed really glad. He blessed my food and said a prayer and 'Give it to the people there.' And when the eating was all done, my picnic filled up ev'ryone.



Chorus

Went for a swim, my friends and I: the river close to Philippi, and, while we swam, before our eyes some people came to be baptised, took off their shoes and waded in, said Jesus took away their sin. I wonder if that's really true, is that a thing that God can do?



Chorus

The city gates were open wide and on a donkey he did ride. We sang and cheered and laughed and waved because we knew we would be saved. Although he doesn't look a king, my mother said the stones would sing. So many of us shouting out, I wonder what it's all about?



Chorus



Essential things to think about



Covid-safe

At the time of writing, the restrictions for Covid-19 have been lifted and you no longer need to use track and trace, but please ensure that you have checked the current situation before running your event in case the situation has changed in any way. It is wise to make everyone aware that if they are showing any signs or symptoms of Covid-19, then they must stay at home. Should anyone test positive or suspect they may have developed Covid-19 during the course of the event, they should inform the leaders so that, where necessary, they can inform those who have been in contact and suggest that they may wish to self-isolate etc. If regional or national restrictions have been reinstated due to a surge or recurrence of the pandemic, please see the Supersleuths holiday club material or check the website for further information about risk assessments and recommended precautions for ensuring your holiday club is as Covid-safe as possible.

Online Holiday Club

You may have decided to do your holiday club over Zoom or a similar online platform. Much of the material here can also be done online, with children provided with a pack of resources to use during each session, although some of the games may need to be adapted. It might be fun to dress up and/or to decorate your background. Please make sure that your volunteers have all read www.bit.ly/safeguardingappendixc.

You can do small group activities online by using breakout rooms, but remember that you must have two adults who are DBS checked in each breakout room. You might also like to watch this helpful video from Ruth White to help you think about the pros and cons of online engagement with children <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzIzkG8-H4o>.

Outdoors

You may have decided to run your holiday club outdoors. While some of this material is suitable for doing outdoors, you will need to enhance it with extra activities more appropriate for taking advantage of the outdoor space. Alternatively, you may have access to a marquee or large gazebo which you could use, or go outside for part of the session if you have the facilities for that. If you are using outside space, you will need to ensure that the area is clean and free from litter and animal faeces before and after your session and you will also need to consider how you will ensure that children do not wander off from the area. You will need to think about safeguarding – how to ensure that no adults who are not on the team engage inappropriately with the children in your care. You will also need to think about issues such as access to toilets.

Registration

It is important to keep an accurate register of the children and adults who attend on each day of your holiday club. This information will need to be kept according to your church's data protection and safeguarding policies.

Parents/carers must also fill in a registration/consent form and children should not be accepted into the holiday club without it.

The registration/consent form must include name and date of the event; child's details; details of two emergency contacts; details of any additional needs; any health needs, medication or allergies; acknowledgement of liability; consent for photographs; consent for first aid and emergency treatment; details of who will be collecting the child at the end of the session. Do not include any information which you do not actually need (eg gender).

Ensure that your registration/consent form states where parents/carers can access your data policy and safeguarding policy. These forms must be kept securely and used sensitively. Sample registration forms are available here: www.bit.ly/generalregistrationform.

Safeguarding

Make sure you are familiar with your church's safeguarding policy and that volunteers have received training. Everyone over the age of 18 who is taking part in your holiday club must have an enhanced DBS check for the church. Occasional visitors who do not have a DBS certificate must not be left alone with children, and the leadership of the club are responsible for ensuring that a leader is with them at all times. See the URC Good Practice 5 www.urc.org.uk/good-practice-policy-and-procedures.

You may find that volunteers have children at the holiday club to whom they are related or have a close bond. They should be encouraged to remember not to treat those children any differently – hugs and kisses, sitting on laps, being alone with a child, these things are fine for at home but not advisable in a church club situation.

Photographs

One or two people should be identified as designated photographers for the event and should wear a badge identifying them as such. They should use a camera rather than a smartphone where possible to take photographs and should only photograph those children whose parents have given permission. Photographs should not be used on any social media other than the church's or Church House official social media. See the URC Good Practice 5 www.urc.org.uk/good-practice-policy-and-procedures. You are, however, encouraged to share any photographs with Church House Children's and Youth Work (with appropriate permissions) for use on the website, CYW Facebook page and in URC publications.

Mobile phones

It is good practice that no mobile phones are brought into the holiday club area unless absolutely necessary.

Risk assessments

It is essential that you do a risk assessment for the venue you are using for your holiday club and also to do risk assessments for the activities you will engage in. You must also do this for the precautions you will use to reduce the spread of Covid-19, if appropriate. Your church may have its own policy and template for risk assessments but you may wish to use or adapt the ones available here: www.bit.ly/cywsupersleuths. Depending on the current situation with Covid-19, you may also wish your volunteers to complete a personal risk assessment. Risk assessments are useless if just put in a file. Ensure that all your volunteers have read the risk assessment or, better still, discuss it during your pre-session briefings. Please be aware that all risk assessments should be approved by your church leadership team.

Safety

Check the premises you use are safe, hygienic and suitable for children – think about stacked chairs, flooring, toilets, etc.

Children should not be allowed unaccompanied into kitchen areas.

Think about how to make your toilets a safe place without compromising privacy and dignity, so that you know when children have gone to the toilet and how long they have been gone. As far as this is possible, designate separate toilets for adults.

Have a routine for checking throughout the session that children have not gone missing from the group. Have a routine for the end of the session – perhaps tell the children that they are superglued to the floor until their parent or carer comes to collect them – and then get the parent and child to come to a leader to be signed out.

Although it is not compulsory to have someone on the team who is a trained first-aider, it is a very good idea. Make sure everyone on the team knows where the first aid box is and nominate someone to ensure that the box is fully stocked. Have a first aid recording sheet or book and keep clear and full records of any injury, however minor, who treated it, and what was done. Ensure that the record is dated and signed and take note of anything that needs to be done to minimise risk of that happening again. See here: <https://bit.ly/accidentincidentform>.

Behaviour

Remember that the children are at a club and it should be fun for everyone. Do not impose rules that are not necessary or enforce participation if the child feels uncomfortable. One member of the team should be the key person to speak to for any issues that arise, and this should be the only team member who liaises directly with parents or carers about behaviour. Remember that the best way of encouraging appropriate behaviour is to model it and to build positive relationships. You may want to watch the video on strategies to support behaviour that challenges, which was prepared for leaders of the Pilots organisation https://youtu.be/9XxpvUGVT_o. It is good to have a behaviour policy which all team members read and which is available for parents. An example can be found at www.urc.org.uk/holiday-club. You may also want a simple code of conduct which all participants sign, an example of which can be found at <https://bit.ly/behaviourpolicy>. It is helpful to have a short and punchy list of around five golden rules, framed positively ('we will' rather than 'we won't') and with visual cues as well as words. This can be put up in each room and referred to whenever necessary.

Additional needs and inclusivity

All we do in our churches and fellowship should be as inclusive as we can possibly make it. Nobody should be excluded due to their background, ethnicity, physical or learning needs, gender, or for any other reason. Consider what adjustments may need to be made to enable all children to take part. You may find it helpful to watch the video on strategies to support additional needs which was prepared for leaders of Pilots <https://youtu.be/usZWfOfEhm8>. Contact children.youth@urc.org.uk for some practical tips on supporting transgender or non-binary children and young people.

Timetable

Ensure that everyone is familiar with the timetable for the sessions. It is a good idea to establish a routine for your sessions and stick with it as far as possible. It is also helpful to have a large-scale visual timetable for the session up where everyone can see it, maybe with smaller

versions in any other rooms you use. If you would like help with putting together a visual timetable using Widgeit to create symbols, please do speak to your Synod CYW specialist or CYDO.

Debrief and review

Although you will be tired after an energetic session and want to clear up and go home as quickly as possible, it is good practice and helpful to have a daily debrief of how everything went, and to consider whether anything needs adapting for the next day; and capturing positives and negatives for an overall evaluation of the holiday club. You might also like to include the children and their families in your evaluation.

Feedback

The writers of this resource would greatly appreciate any feedback on how your holiday club went, which parts of this document were useful to you, whether there was anything additional that you needed. Please email children.youth@urc.org.uk. Remember, we would also love you to share with us any photographs for which you have the appropriate permissions.



Reflections for Holiday Club volunteers and leaders



Story: Exodus 13: 17-22 (International Children's Bible)

The king sent the people out of Egypt. God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country. That road is the shortest way. But God said, "They might think they will have to fight. Then they might change their minds and go back to Egypt." So God led them through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were dressed for fighting when they left the land of Egypt.

Moses carried the bones of Joseph with him. Before Joseph died, he had made the sons of Israel promise to do this. He had said, "When God saves you, remember to carry my bones with you out of Egypt."

The people of Israel left Succoth and camped at Etham. Etham was on the edge of the desert. The Lord showed them the way. During the day he went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud. And during the night the Lord was in a pillar of fire to give them light. They could travel during the day or night. The pillar of cloud was always with them during the day. And the pillar of fire was always with them at night.

Reflection

The fertile land does not suddenly disappear into the desert. In between is the wilderness, a place where it is an "inbetween" or, if we are being poetic, a liminal place.

The wilderness in the Bible is always this place of transformation. In the Exodus story, it is a place where the soft people of the Egyptian cities and towns begin to change into the warriors we see conquering the Holy Land in later books of the Bible. These changes are physical – they become desert warriors and nomadic people. We hear them wailing for what they left behind, and their comforts, as harsh weather and limited food supplies change them physically. In the challenges they face, they are also psychologically and spiritually transformed from a people longing for comfort and sophistication and worshipping many Gods to one following a cloudy and fiery pillar that is the One God in the harsh desert.

Being a teenager or young adult is another one of those liminal journeys. While we may be appealing to younger people with this holiday club, it won't be long until the children we have this week will leave the safety of childhood and move into the liminal space between childhood and "full" adulthood. This change is physical, but it is also spiritual. Teenagers and young adults are no longer satisfied with cute colouring in of rainbows, nor are they entertained by stories that lack bite or are not grounded in how they experience the rest of their lives.

Those of us who are ministers or youth leaders frequently struggle with this liminal place. We try to entertain rather than understand that this is a place of transformation.

We sometimes carry our own “bones” of nostalgia and fail to provide the manna that our young people need to feed themselves or to point to the fiery pillar that shows our young people a new way to follow God from childhood certainties. Until we do this, it is easy for us all to get lost and wander- maybe never finding our way through...

1. What are the ways we can listen to the Spirit to create a space to help equip our young people with us this week to prepare for their coming journey into their future?
2. How can we begin to equip ourselves to be their friends and guides this week?
3. We frequently base our own assumptions of what is needed this week on our own experiences (however far off!). Test those assumptions of what is needed this week with those around you of differing ages.

Guide me, O thou great redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven
feed me now and evermore.



Story: 1 Samuel 3: 1-11 (International Children's Bible)

The boy Samuel served the Lord under Eli. In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often. There were very few visions. Eli's eyes were so weak he was almost blind. One night he was lying in bed. Samuel was also in bed in the Lord's Holy Tent. The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent. God's lamp was still burning. Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "I am here!" He ran to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me."

But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back to bed.

The Lord called again, "Samuel!"

Samuel again went to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." Again Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed."

Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The Lord had not spoken directly to him yet. The Lord called Samuel for the third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli.

He said, "I am here. You called me."

Then Eli realized the Lord was calling the boy. So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in bed.

The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, "Samuel, Samuel!" Samuel said, "Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening."

The Lord said to Samuel, “See, I am going to do something in Israel. It will shock those who hear about it.”

Reflection

Samuel was a miracle baby, one his mother had so longed for after years of infertility. True to her vow, though, she gave him up to serve God as she had promised (1 Samuel 1:27). Eli also no doubt longed for a son. While he did have sons of his own, they were wicked (1 Samuel 2:12-16) and they were not suitable to follow him honourably in God’s service. So God also gave to his care Samuel, who grew to be a great prophet.

We often long for our “own” children in church, remembering full Sunday schools and glorious outings and activities from long past. We may have a few children occasionally or, if we are lucky, enough to do some meaningful work with regularly. And just like Hannah and Eli, we have great hopes for them as they grow, that they will be the people who will continue our beloved churches into the future.

But we need to make sure we recognise that God will call them into their own future – one beyond our imaginings. It is not up to us to cage and confine them by our own hopes and expectations. I suspect neither Hannah nor Eli had a glimmer of who Samuel was to become: a mighty hero of Israel, a renaissance man in both literal and figurative terms – a seer, priest, judge, prophet, and military leader. The maker and breaker of kings.

We cannot begin to imagine what the future for the children in our churches will be like when they are our age – any more than our parents and grandparents could imagine ours. Our role this week is to put them in a place where they can discern the begging of God’s whispering call in their lives – let’s trust God with their future and deal with the present and all the fun we can have this week.

1. When did you first hear God’s whispering call?
2. How much has the church changed since you were the children’s age? How does that feel?
3. The church of the future is likely to be humbler, more missional and more engaged locally in a world that is radically different to the Christendom that died sometime in the last century. How does this prediction make you feel?

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?





Story: John 6: 1-14 (International Children's Bible)

After this, Jesus went across Lake Galilee (or, Lake Tiberias). Many people followed him because they saw the miracles he did to heal the sick. Jesus went up on a hill and there sat down with his followers. It was almost the time for the Jewish Passover Feast.

Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him. He said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread for all these people to eat?" (Jesus asked Philip this question to test him. Jesus already knew what he planned to do.)

Philip answered, "Someone would have to work almost a year to buy enough bread for each person here to have only a little piece."

Another follower there was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five loaves of barley bread and two little fish. But that is not enough for so many people."

Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down." This was a very grassy place. There were about 5,000 men who sat down there. Then Jesus took the loaves of bread. He thanked God for the bread and gave it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish. He gave them as much as they wanted.

They all had enough to eat. When they had finished, Jesus said to his followers, "Gather the pieces of fish and bread that were not eaten. Don't waste anything." So they gathered up the pieces that were left. They filled 12 large baskets with the pieces that were left of the five barley loaves.

The people saw this miracle that Jesus did. They said, "He must truly be the Prophet who is coming into the world."

Reflection

This account occurs in what we normally call the Book of Signs – the early part of John's Gospel. This is the part where John provides proof through wonders and miracles that Jesus was the Messiah. Much of it operates on two levels – the literal and the metaphorical. Many of the characters Jesus meets in this early part of the Gospel, such as the Samaritan woman and Nicodemus, see only the literal meanings of Jesus' words without looking at the deeper meaning.

We can write this off as an account of mass catering via miracle or (if we struggle with the miraculous) a miracle of sharing. But of course, that's just one level that this account works at.

The crowd is not coming to be fed by this catering trick but rather by Jesus' words and actions. Their predominant hunger is not for the physical but the spiritual. Jesus doesn't spend a lot of time organising the catering – he spends most of his time praying with people and being with them.

It's easy for us to be busy this week dealing with all the practicalities a week like this entails. Indeed, there is no way we have got this far without a great deal of effort and energy. I remember after running Supersleuths last year, while the children wept it was all over, I confessed I was relieved – I was exhausted!

But if all we do this week is to be busy, we are missing the deeper and more satisfying part of this week – to form relationships with our young folk, learn from each other and enjoy ourselves. And at this midweek point, it's good to remember that.

1. How are you balancing the need to be organised with the need to spend time with our young people?
2. What are the things for you as a team that can make it easier to be busy than be relational?
3. At this midpoint of the week, how do we make sure that we have enough energy to get through the week?

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.



Story: Acts 16: 11-15 (International children's version)

We left Troas in a ship, and we sailed straight to the island of Samothrace. The next day we sailed to Neapolis. Then we went by land to Philippi, the leading city in that part of Macedonia. It is also a Roman colony. We stayed there for several days.

On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate to the river. There we thought we would find a special place for prayer. Some women had gathered there, so we sat down and talked with them. There was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. Her job was selling purple cloth. She worshiped the true God. The Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. She and all the people in her house were baptized. Then Lydia invited us to her home. She said, "If you think I am truly a believer in the Lord, then come stay in my house." And she persuaded us to stay with her.

Reflection

Here we see a very important event – the Church moving from the Near East into Europe. And for this to happen, there needed to be several things in place – the first was that church did not occur in a building but in a place that was easily accessed by the community. The second was a willingness to engage with the people who came there. The third was finding someone who could get enthused and carry it forward – Lydia the purple seller. Strangely, we know little about Lydia. There is speculation about her marital status – she was probably a wealthy widow in charge of her household. We assume she was Greek but we are not sure. All we really know is she was in the right place at the right time to do the work God needed to be

done. I am not sure Luke and Paul were expecting a Greek woman to be the person God had tasked with leading the first European community of believers. This week may have brought us new people or people only marginally known by the church into the sessions we have been doing. Their reasons may be as varied as “This is cheap childcare” to wanting the children to learn something about faith, and everything in between. It is easy to cynically dismiss them or attempt to pressure them into “coming to proper church”. But perhaps it would be helpful to see them as the people we would meet at the river if we didn’t have a more formal place to pray ourselves. This is an opportunity to have a conversation, to meet people outside “proper” church and find out how God might be working in their lives. Perhaps this week we will be lucky enough to find a Lydia (who might not be the type of person we were expecting) but we should also be grateful to be chatting to all who come to the river to be with us.

1. It can be hard to engage with unfamiliar people and be sure about what their motivations in coming to this week. We may also have unrealistic hopes about further engagement. How much of this has this been your experience?
2. Have there been times to interact with the people bringing the children to the activities? If so, what have they taught you about God? If not, how could you find an opportunity to interact with them?
3. How could you continue to have conversations at “the river place” after this week is over? As I went down in the river to pray Studying about that good ol’ way And who shall wear the robe and crown Good Lord, show me the way



Story: Mark 11: 1-11 (International Children’s Bible)

Jesus and his followers were coming closer to Jerusalem. They came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of his followers. He said to them, “Go to the town you see there. When you enter it, you will find a colt tied which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here to me. If anyone asks you why you are doing this, tell him, ‘The Master needs the colt. He will send it back soon.’” The followers went into the town. They found a colt tied in the street near the door of a house, and they untied it. Some people were standing there and asked, “What are you doing? Why are you untying that colt?” The followers answered the way Jesus told them to answer. And the people let them take the colt. The followers brought the colt to Jesus. They put their coats on the colt, and Jesus sat on it. Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches in the fields and spread the branches on the road. Some of the people were walking ahead of Jesus. Others were following him. All of them were shouting,

“Praise God! God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the kingdom of our father David! That kingdom is coming! Praise to God in heaven!”

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. When he had looked at everything, and since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the 12 apostles.

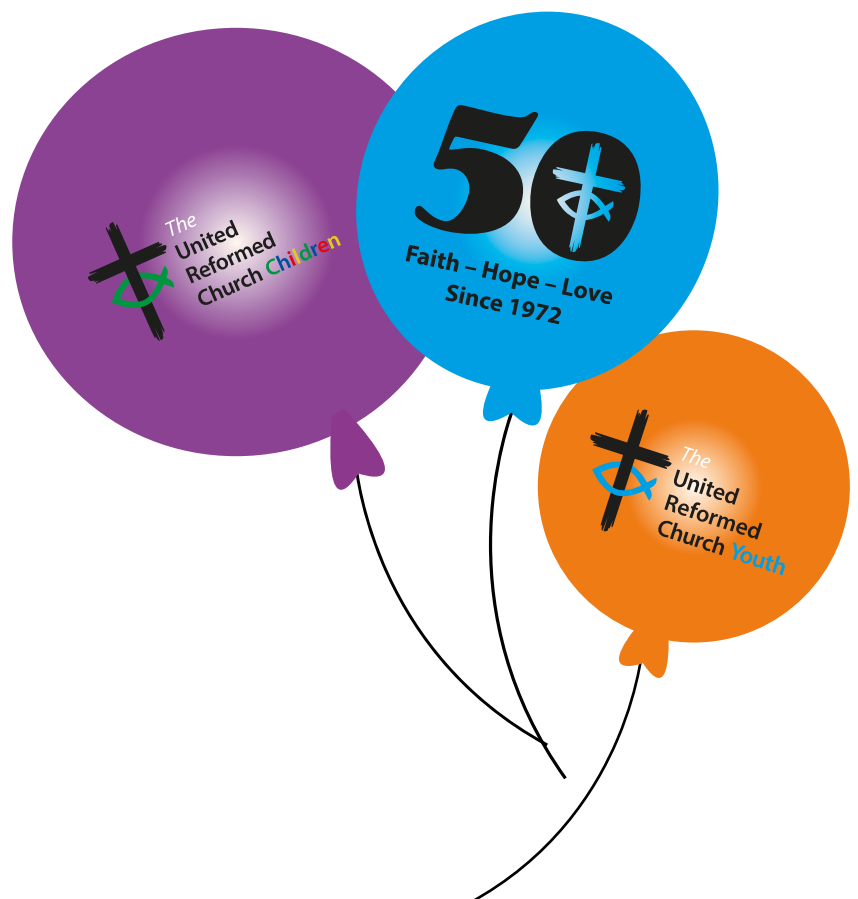
Reflection

Last Palm Sunday we had a parade of our young people coming in with palms made before the service. We broke out the percussion and had a great time. In my reflections, I spoke of the fact that it was a political act – Jesus openly declaring his messiahship into a Jerusalem that is swollen with pilgrims and seething with intrigue and unrest. This is the act that spreads alarm amongst the Sadducees (temple officials) who want to remain apolitical and maintain their aristocratic importance, busying themselves with religious duties. Their aim is to preserve the temple, keep their advantages and keep their heads down. We know that they were unsuccessful. Within 50 years of the events in our reading, the temple and the Sadducees are no more and their temple a ruin – their people dispersed.

For all of us, this week will have been different from business as usual. No doubt at times it's felt like hard work and you're tired. But hopefully you have had fun, learnt things yourselves and made new friends. Just like Palm Sunday, we should celebrate our shared discipleship together, congratulate everyone who has been part of the week on a job well done and at the very least reward ourselves with chocolate (Fairtrade of course)! Events like this give us hope for the future of our beloved communities. Hopefully this week has been a taste of what church and working with young people could be in your church... and what the future should look like. If this has been affirming and life giving, pray and dream about what could be next... But for now, celebrate! You have done a yeoman's service!

1. What has been the best things about this week? What have been the challenges?
2. What could we take from this week into the regular life of our church?
3. What is God calling for your church to be and do? What do you need to make it happen?

One more step along the world I go,
one more step along the world I go;
from the old things to the new
keep me traveling along with you.



Holiday Club material for 5-11s: Time Travellers

Are we nearly there yet?

Following God – Following with others

Meet a child who is in the crowd of Israelites as they escape Egypt and follow the pillar of cloud and fire.

Arrival

Build a time machine

You will need:

- A variety of items for junk modelling, including some large boxes.

What you do:

1. Each team builds their own time machine, which will need to include some kind of time capsule that items can be placed into.
2. Also create footprints ready for the later craft by dipping foot into paint and printing onto paper or by drawing around foot and cutting out.

Story: Exodus 13: 17-22

The king sent the people out of Egypt. God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country. That road is the shortest way. But God said, "They might think they will have to fight. Then they might change their minds and go back to Egypt." So God led them through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were dressed for fighting when they left the land of Egypt.

Moses carried the bones of Joseph with him. Before Joseph died, he had made the sons of Israel promise to do this. He had said, "When God saves you, remember to carry my bones with you out of Egypt."

The people of Israel left Succoth and camped at Etham. Etham was on the edge of the desert. The Lord showed them the way. During the day he went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud. And during the night the Lord was in a pillar of fire to give them light. They could travel during the day or night. The pillar of cloud was always with them during the day. And the pillar of fire was always with them at night.

Interview

Who are you?

Hi! My name is Sarah. I'm travelling with my family – away from Egypt. I'm trying my best to be really brave because I don't want my little sister to be scared. We don't know how long this is going to take or where exactly we're going.



Where are we?

We are in the middle of nowhere! We're walking through a wild, empty desert, probably being chased by Pharaoh and his army. It's not just me and my family but all of our people – the Israelites. We've no idea where we are going because none of us has ever been allowed out of Egypt before so we're completely lost.

Story in the form of a poem

Cloud and fire!

Running cheerfully, out of Egypt.
No more bricks of straw and sweat,
We're much too young to be working yet.
We laugh and giggle as you hold my hand,
Finally, we can play in the sand.
Soon, we'll be free at last.

Marching proudly, out of Egypt.
Carrying bowls of unleavened bread,
Bags on our backs and some on our heads.
Ready to start our brand-new life,
Waving goodbye to our sadness and strife.
We want to be free at last.

Wandering aimlessly, out of Egypt.
God keeps our journey on the right track,
With a pillar of cloud so we won't turn back.
The cloud then becomes a fiery light,
Which smokes and crackles as we travel at night.
It'll help us be free at last.

Walking steadily, out of Egypt.
Next to the flames you give me a scare,
'Don't get too close – you'll singe your hair!'
I scoop you up and hold you tight,
And sing you a song in the flickering light;
About how we'll be free at last.

Stumbling wearily, out of Egypt.
To cheer us up – a wondering game.
If I touch the cloud, will I make it rain?
Will it be icy and cold on my face?
Will it be woolly or patterned like lace?
Are we free at last?

Staggering sleepily, are we there yet?
I whisper into your sleepy ears
All about our God – who hears.
Hungry and thirsty, we should feel alone,
But He is with us – He's promised a new home.
Then we'll be free, free at last!



Interview continued

What's happened?

For years and years we've been slaves in Egypt (making the pharaoh's fancy buildings and doing all the Egyptians' horrible jobs for them – without being paid). We felt fed up, frightened and forgotten but, thankfully, God hadn't forgotten about us. He sent Moses and his family to help us escape and find a place to call home. We might not know where we're heading but God does, so we need to trust Him. He's even sent us a gigantic pillar to guide us through the desert that is made of cooling cloud in the day and warming fire at night. Amazing! I wonder what God will do next?

What can we take back with us?

Take this compass to remind you to stay close to God and keep following Him. You might not always know which way to go but if you trust in God, He will guide you and travel with you.

Bible verse

John 14: 6 "Jesus said I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Video

- 2 Fish Talks: Moses - pillar of fire and cloud: https://youtu.be/rHgGendl_Jc
- Moses And The Children Of Israel Follow The Cloud: <https://youtu.be/gYKD6QsLsVE>

Wondering together

- I wonder what a cloud feels like.
- I wonder whether the fiery pillar was hot or just bright.
- I wonder whether it felt scary or exciting to leave Egypt.
- I wonder where God took the Israelites next.
- I wonder how we can tell where God wants us to go.



Craft/creative responses

Compass making

You will need:

- A magnet
- Large sewing needle (ideally a darning needle) or a paper clip (less effective but safer!)
- A bottle lid or circle of card or a leaf
- A clear bowl
- Water
- A paper plate.

When we are following a map or a path a compass helps us to know the way. The people were following Moses who helped show them the way.

What you do:

1. Magnetize the needle: hold the needle and stroke down the length of your needle with your magnet 50 times. (If you are using a weaker magnet you may need to do this more than 50 times!)
2. Fill a shallow glass dish with water, placing a paper plate underneath it with North, South, East and West marked on it.



3. Fasten your needle onto the rim of a bottle top using some sticky tape, or fasten it onto a small circle of card or, if outside, a leaf. Slowly place the bottle top or circle of card with the needle into the water so that it floats on top.
4. Watch as the circle begins to spin around until the needle is pointing in the direction of north, just like a compass. Turn your paper plate so that north lines up with the way the needle is pointing. Now you will have a compass of your own.

If you use a lidded pot rather than an open bowl, you can even take this compass out with you on your adventures! If you want to, you can validate the direction by comparing it to an actual compass.



Remember: don't ever place strong magnets near computers, phones, or electronics.

NOTE: Don't do this activity with any child that puts things in their mouth. Swallowing magnets is extremely dangerous. The needles are sharp. Ensure you have appropriate adult supervision and children have sufficient understanding to behave safely.

Pillar of cloud in a jar

You will need:

- Glass or plastic jar or bottle with a lid
- Liquid soap
- Vinegar
- Water.



What you do:

1. Fill a jar almost to the rim with cold water. You could also add some food colouring to the water if you wish.
2. Add a few squirts of clear liquid soap to the jar of water.
3. Put about a capful of vinegar in the jar as well. Put the lid back on the jar tightly.
4. Shake, then swirl the jar to form a pillar of cloud!

Footprints

You will need:

- Paper
- Paint or footprint shapes.



What you do:

1. Draw around the footprint shapes to create some footprints and decorate them as desired.
2. Or using paint on your foot, make your own footprint. Alternatively, make a fist and dip it into paint, and then create toes using some fingerprints.
3. Place one of your footprints into a time capsule as part of your time machine.



Small group prayer

In the story, we saw how God became cloud and fire to guide all of the Israelite families out of Egypt. He kept them safe and they followed him. The people did not know where they were going but they knew they had to keep following God. It must have been incredibly scary. It can sometimes be scary for us when things happen and we do not know why, and confusing when we cannot always see God. We will think about these scary and confusing times in our group prayers.

What you need:

- White A4 paper
- Sticky tape
- Electric tea lights
- Pens.

What you do:

1. On a piece of white A4 paper, help the children to draw clouds and write their prayers into the clouds.
2. Next, roll up the paper to a diameter of approximately 10cm and secure with tape.
3. Stand an electric tea light in the centre of the 'pillar' to light up the prayers. Try to have a time of quiet and encourage the children to say one of their prayers aloud.

Games

Follow my leader

One player is chosen as the leader and the others line up behind them. They then start to move around the room, with the leader choosing movements to do as they go and everyone else following their lead. Every so often, call out "reverse" and the line turns round so that the person at the back is now the leader, or call out "change" and the person at the front runs to join the back of the line and the second person becomes the new leader.

Simon Says

Choose one player to stand in front and give the instructions to the rest of the group. They call out "Simon says..." followed by an action, for example "Simon says jump up and down". However, if they just say "Jump up and down" without saying "Simon says" beforehand, anyone who follows that instruction is out. If you want to make it more challenging, you can decide that the last person following a "Simon says" instruction is also out. Remember to give several children the chance to be the leader.

Recipes

Our suggested recipes and food activities are themed to our days. If you are using them it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

Fire and cloud pillars

What you need:

- Either butter icing spread or similar
- Either bread sticks, twiglets (rice sticks/ gluten free breadsticks/ toasted gluten free bread cut into strips)

- Small marshmallows or large ones cut up (optional – coconut)
- Strawberry laces.

What you do:

1. The method to create both the cloud and fire pillars is the same, just with different toppings. Depending on time allowed, more than one fire pillar and cloud pillar could be made by each individual.
2. Start by taking a pillar (bread stick, twiglet) and dipping it into whichever topping you have decided on (butter icing spread, chocolate spread, melted chocolate, etc). It is best to ensure about half of the pillar is covered.
3. Roll the pillar into the marshmallows to create a pillar of cloud. Wrap a strawberry lace around the pillar to create fire!



Alternative recipe

Cloud bread (Not suitable for vegans)

What you need:

- Oil or butter for greasing (use oil if dairy allergy)
- Four eggs, separated
- 50g cream cheese (dairy free cream cheese)
- One quarter tsp cream of tartar.

What you do:

1. Heat oven to 150C/130C fan/gas 2. Cover two large baking sheets with greaseproof paper and grease well.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat the egg whites until they are stiff enough to keep their shape. In a separate bowl, beat together the egg yolks, cream cheese and cream of tartar until smooth, pale and frothy.
3. Carefully fold the egg whites into the egg yolk mixture so that you keep as much of the air/fluffiness in as possible. Season with a little salt and pepper.
4. Put dollops of the fluffy mixture onto the baking sheets (don't use the last of the mixture if it's runny) and bake for about 20 minutes. Allow to cool before lifting from the paper.



Large group prayer

One person to lead the prayer, one line at a time with the suggested actions. The rest of the group will then follow the leader and repeat the words of the prayer and the actions.

Jesus (*point to the centre of your open palm, then repeat on the other hand*)
 you are the way (*make a winding pathway with your two hands*).
 Help us (*with one arm draw a large circle outwards from the centre of your chest*)
 to follow you (*lean your hand on your brow and move your head from side to side*)
 when we are happy (*draw a smile onto your face*),
 when we are sad (*draw an upside down smile onto your face*),
 and when we are scared (*use both hands to cover your face*).
 Amen (*close both hands together*).

Can you hear something?

Listening to God – Having ears to hear

Meet a child named Samuel. God spoke and Samuel learned to listen.

Arrival

Big ears on a headband

You will need:

- Pipe cleaner
- Marker
- Clip art ears (optional)
- Paper plate
- Scissors
- Glue.

What you do:

1. Cut a paper plate in half and shape one half into an ear shape, place it face-down on the other half and use it as a template so that you've got a right ear and a left ear.
2. Colour if you wish and tape a pipe cleaner to top of paper plate ears to create a headband for the ears.



Story 1 Samuel 3: 1-11

The boy Samuel served the Lord under Eli. In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often. There were very few visions.

Eli's eyes were so weak he was almost blind. One night he was lying in bed. Samuel was also in bed in the Lord's Holy Tent. The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent. God's lamp was still burning.

Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "I am here!" He ran to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me."

But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back to bed. The Lord called again, "Samuel!"

Samuel again went to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." Again Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed."

Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The Lord had not spoken directly to him yet.

The Lord called Samuel for the third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, "I am here. You called me."

Then Eli realized the Lord was calling the boy. So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in bed.

The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel said, "Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening."

The Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am going to do something in Israel. It will shock those who hear about it."

Interview

Who are you?

My name's Samuel, Hannah's son. I work in the temple with Eli the priest and his sons. I quite like it, but I really miss my mum sometimes 'cos I only get to see her once a year. But then again, I'm learning a lot about how to serve God.

Where are we?

Well, obviously we're in the temple in Jerusalem, the one Solomon built. It's MASSIVE! I hope you have noticed that everything's very clean and highly polished. That's my job, that is, amongst other things.

Story in the form of a pantomime

This is a sketch for three people – a child or young person to play Samuel, someone dressed as an old man in a nightshirt and nightcap and with glasses and an ear trumpet to play Eli, and a man dressed up as a dame to play Hepzibah. You will need some bedding on the floor, a shiny cup or plate and a duster.

Dame: *(Looking over shoulder as though speaking to someone in the wings.)* What do you mean, there's no dame in the story of Samuel and Eli? *(Shakes head at the audience.)* Honestly, that Bible misses out all the most important characters. Let me introduce myself. I'm *(adjusts dress)* Hepzibah and I'm here to tell you the story. Now, let's get started – where has that Sam got to?

(Samuel has come into the scene while Hepzibah was talking, cleaning a temple cup. By her final words, he has come up behind her and as she turns to look for him, he moves to stay behind her)

Audience: He's behind you.

Dame: *(Looking behind her.)* Oh no he isn't!

Audience: Oh yes he is!


Dame: Oh no he isn't!

Audience: Oh yes he is!

(Samuel taps Hepzibah on the shoulder and she turns round to see him and jumps in the air in surprise.)


Dame: Oh, you silly boy. I'm all discombobulated now *(fans her face with her hand to calm herself down)*. What are you supposed to be doing anyway?

Sam: Well, I'm the temple boy, so I serve Eli the priest and do all the jobs that need




doing around the temple. See that shiny gold cup there? I polished that, I did. You can see your face in it.

Dame: *(Looking at herself in the cup.)* You've done a lovely job there. Look – how very beautiful! *(Obviously referring to her reflection rather than the cup, maybe flicking her hair or applying some lipstick.)*



Sam: I can't stand here talking to you all day. I need to catch up on my beauty sleep. And by the look of it, you really need to catch up on yours too!

Dame: Well, I... *(looks indignant, but is interrupted by Eli wandering in. He is dressed in nightshirt and nightcap and clearly has difficulty seeing.)*



Eli: Samuel, Samuel. Where are you, lad? *(Stumbles up to Hepzibah and starts to feel her face and shoulders, thinking she's Samuel.)* Ah, there you are, my boy! Goodness, your hair's been growing... and what's this? You're a bit young for growing a beard, aren't you? And... *(hands start to move to Hepzibah's chest area, but she slaps his hands away just in time.)*

Dame: Hands off! I didn't come here to be insulted.


Eli: Why, where do you usually go?

Dame: Harumph! *(Stomps off in a huff.)*




(Samuel taps Eli on the shoulder from behind. Eli turns round and jumps in surprise.)

Eli: Ah, there you are. Come on boy, it's past your bedtime.



(Sam takes off his little linen apron and settles down to sleep on the floor, resting his head on a pillow and pulling a blanket over himself. He yawns and sleeps while Eli sings a lullaby, encouraging the audience to join in. Eli then wanders off to the other side, puts his teeth in a glass by the bed, straightens his nightcap and settles down to sleep some distance away.)



Voice: Samuel, Samuel. *(Samuel mutters in his sleep, turns over and goes back to sleep. The voice calls his name again, slightly louder. Samuel turns over and goes back to sleep. The voice calls his name a third time, this time really loud, and Samuel wakes and sits bolt upright.)*

Samuel: I'm sure I heard Eli calling me. Poor old fellow, he probably wants a glass of water. I'd better go see what he wants.

(Samuel goes to Eli and shakes him and Eli wakes with a splutter.)



Eli and Samuel: What do you want? *(Said at the same time.)* After you. No, after you. No...

Eli: Spit it out, boy.

Samuel: You called me.



Eli: Oh no I didn't.

Samuel: Oh yes you did!

Eli: Oh no I didn't.

Samuel: Oh yes you did!

Eli: Oh no I didn't.

Samuel: Honestly. You really are getting forgetful in your old age, Eli. But if you don't want anything, I'll just get back to sleep.

(Both return to sleep.)

Voice: Samuel. Samuel! *(Same routine as last time. Samuel could mutter something like "I want to ride the pony" in his sleep as he turns over.)*

(Samuel goes to Eli and shakes him and Eli wakes with a splutter.)

Samuel: You called me.

Eli: Oh no I didn't.

Samuel: You did, you did, you did.

Eli: I didn't, I didn't, I didn't.

Samuel: Oh yes you... hold on, I'm not doing all that again. You definitely called me. I heard you.

Eli: I didn't call you, child. You must have been hearing things. Now get off to sleep and leave me in peace. I was just having a lovely dream ... It's OK, unicorns, I'm coming... *(the last sentence in dreamy voice.)*

(Samuel heads back to bed muttering, "YOU were having a lovely dream? YOU want to be left in peace? What about me? What about poor Samuel? Don't I deserve a good night's sleep too?")

Voice: Samuel. Samuel! *(Samuel wakes straight away this time and storms over to where Eli is asleep. He shakes him none too gently and Eli wakes with a splutter.)*

Samuel: Look, this is getting silly. You called me. I know you did. I heard your voice calling "Samuel, Samuel" *(imitating the voice.)*


Eli: Hmm... I know that voice.

Samuel: You don't think it's Hepzibah, do you? She sounds a bit rough when she's had ...

Eli: No, no, no. That mysterious voice isn't Hepzibah and it certainly isn't me either. Sounds to me like it might be God calling.

Samuel: God? As if! You're just taking the Michael!


Eli: Go back to bed, and if you hear the voice again, just say: "Speak, Lord, your



servant is listening.”

Samuel: Speak Lord, your servant is listening. Ok, got it.

(Eli goes straight back to sleep. Samuel makes his way back to bed, repeating “Speak Lord, your servant is listening” over and over to help him remember it. He gets into bed, pulls up the covers.)




Samuel: That old fool thinks I was born yesterday. But I’ll play his little game. I’ve learned my lines so let’s see what happens when he calls me again. *(Goes back to sleep.)*

Voice: Samuel, Samuel.

(Samuel opens his eyes wide.)

Samuel: Hey “God” *(does air-quotes as he says the word God)*, I can hear you but I can’t see you. Where are you?



God: I’m behind you.

Samuel: Oh no you’re not.


God: Oh yes I am. Behind you, in front of you, in fact all around you. But never mind that, you’ve gone off script. That was not what you were supposed to say. Let’s try this again, shall we?




Samuel: Ah yes, sorry. Take two. *(Returns to sleep.)*

God: Samuel, Samuel.

Samuel: Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.




God: That’s better. Samuel, you may only be a young boy, but I’ve seen how you serve me in the temple and how you care for Eli now he’s such an old man. Even though he can’t see too well, you shine the cups in my temple until you can see your face in them. You are really devoted to serving me well and I have important things to say to you.




Samuel: Oh my! It really is God. I’m actually listening to God. And God is actually speaking to me. I can’t wait to see Hepzibah’s face when I tell her. Talk about discombobulated! Nobody will ever believe this!

God: Samuel, they will hear what I tell you and it will make their ears tingle. You are going to be my spokesperson. I have chosen you.



Samuel: Your servant is listening, Lord. Tell me what you want me to do.

(Samuel puts his hand to his ear as though listening intently, nodding and then suddenly gasping. Hepzibah wanders in.)



Dame: So, why did God choose Samuel? What did God say that made Samuel gasp in surprise? What lies in store for Sleepy Sam? Find out in the next instalment of ... dum dum DUM... THE BIBLE.

Interview continued

What's happened?

It was quite funny, actually... or would be if it weren't so amazing! I had just gone to bed when I heard someone calling me, and naturally I thought it was Eli. He's blind, you know, so he relies on me a lot and I like to help him if I can. I heard the voice a few times and each time I went running to see what Eli wanted, but it turned out it wasn't Eli at all. Goodness, I hardly dare tell you who it was – you'll never believe me. It was. Actually. God! It was God... It wasn't a big boomy voice like you imagine – it was more of a ... I don't know... It was more like I heard it with my heart more than my ears. I felt sort of hot, but then also sort of shivery and frightened and proud all wrapped up into one. Can you believe that? God spoke. To me. And I listened.

What can we take back with us?

You can listen to God anywhere, but I think lots of people do hear God's voice when they're sleeping or resting so why not take my pillow with you. Oh, and I think you should take Eli's ear trumpet. It helps him listen so it might help people in the future listen to God too!

Bible verse

John 10: 27 "I am the good shepherd; my sheep know my voice and I know them."

Video

<https://youtu.be/P13ulsFW7OA>

Wondering together

- I wonder what God's voice might sound like.
- I wonder whether God has ever spoken to you.
- The people listened to Samuel when he shared God's message – I wonder how you can share what you know about God with everyone in the church.
- I wonder why God chose Samuel instead of Eli.



Craft/creative response

Model eardrum

The eardrum vibrates when soundwaves hit it and the brain interprets the vibrations as sound.

You will need:

- A container such as a mixing bowl or bin etc
- Stretch a sheet of plastic wrap firmly over it, if necessary securing it with a plastic band.

What you do:

1. Place 20-30 grains of rice or sugar on the surface.
2. Now make a loud noise nearby, such as banging on a baking tray etc, and watch those grains dance with the vibrations.
3. Alternatively, put a phone playing loud music inside a large cup or bowl before stretching the plastic wrap over the top and sprinkling rice or sugar on it.

Decorate a pillowcase

God can very often speak to us through our dreams or during that sleepy time when we are just drowsing between being awake and being asleep. Make a pillowcase that can remind you to listen for God's voice.

You will need:

- Sharpies or fabric pens
- Plain pillowcase.

What you do:

1. Put a sheet of cardboard or white paper inside the pillowcase so that the colours do not go through to the other side.
2. Decorate your pillowcase using Sharpies or fabric pens. Sharpies will bleed slightly into the fabric, which can create a nice effect, whereas fabric pens will give a sharper image, which is ideal if you want to write something.
3. What are you going to draw or write? How might you decorate your pillowcase to remind yourself to listen for God's voice? Maybe you could write the words, "Speak, Lord, I'm listening" – the words Samuel used when he was listening to God.



Paper straw panpipes

(Quiet sounds to listen to)

You will need:

- Paper straws, preferably thick ones
- Decorative 'washi' tape or ribbon
- Two lollipop sticks
- Double sided Sellotape
- Glue
- Scissors.

What you do:

1. Begin by laying a lollipop stick down and measuring how many straws are needed to fill the length of the stick.
2. Next, glue the individual straws together and then use the double sided tape to stick the lollipop sticks onto the straws.
3. You can decorate the lollipop sticks with decorative tape and/or stickers.
4. Finally cut the straws diagonally to create your panpipes!



Small group prayer

Listening for God – listen and think

You will need:

- A recording of various sounds – maybe chosen from online
- A sand timer (two-three minutes) or digital timer
- Small group.

Get everyone to find a comfy spot where they can sit in a space of their own and close their eyes if they feel comfortable. Create some space for them to listen to the sounds around them and be still, use the timer so that those who struggle with being still will be able to watch the sand or numbers. Ask everyone to be still and listen carefully. Using the sound file or your own sound effects, play each sound for a few moments. Pause between each one and leave space for silence.

Wondering questions

- I wonder, what did you hear?
- I wonder, how did the sound make you feel?
- I wonder, how did you feel in the silence?



A prayer to end

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you speak to us through what we see and hear. Help us to listen, as well as speak, in prayer. Amen.

Games

Listening Eggs

You will need enough plastic eggs for the players to have one each. Sort the eggs into pairs (not necessarily of the same colour) and into each set of eggs put something small which will make a noise when the egg is shaken – eg rice, lentils, macaroni, beads, paper clips, sand, small stones, tiny bells, washers, bird seed etc. Think about the age and ability of your group as you choose the different items, as younger children may need things that are easier to distinguish, while older ones could be given more of a challenge. Mix the eggs up and give one to each player.

The aim is to find the person who has the same item inside their egg purely by listening when you shake the egg. How quickly can the group match all the pairs?

Blindfold Fetch

Place beanbags or small balls randomly around the hall. Each team chooses a volunteer to be blindfolded. By following the directions shouted to them by their fellow team members, the blindfolded person has to go and pick up a beanbag or ball, bring it back to their team and drop it in a bucket. You may choose to make the rule that someone different has to put the blindfold on and go next or that the same runner can go each time, but you will want this rule to be consistent through the game for all teams.

The aim is to be the first team with five beanbags/balls in their bucket. With everyone shouting at once, the blindfolded people will need to listen very carefully to decide whose instructions to follow! After the game, you could discuss how we hear lots of different things which can distract us from listening to God, but we need to focus really hard on blocking those things out and listening to what God is saying to us because that is the most important thing we can ever hear.

Recipe

Our recipes and food activities are themed to our days. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

How noisy is your snack?

You will need:

- Biscuits (gluten free biscuits)
- Crisps/pretzels (gluten free pretzels)
- Marshmallows (or something similarly quiet)
- Apple
- Carrot.



What you do:

1. Lay out an array of snacks which create different, or no, sound(s) when eaten. See suggested foods above.
2. Encourage everyone to try each snack and to listen and really think about what sort of noises occur while eating them. Perhaps there is no sound. Be aware of whether the noise changes as you chew the food.

Whole group prayer

You will need a fairly large ball of wool or string.

John 10: 27 I am the good shepherd; my sheep know my voice and I know them.

In the Bible verse, Jesus the good shepherd knows his sheep. God knows each of us by name.

Standing in a larger circle, using the ball of wool or string holding firmly onto the end, pass it to someone in the group and say: "God knows you (name) and loves you." That person then holds the wool and passes the ball onto someone else in the group and says: "God knows you (name) and loves you." Continue until everyone has had a turn; this will create a spider's web across the group. As you finish, the leader should say, "God knows us and loves us all" and add a simple blessing as they continue to hold the wool and then say together Amen.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and give you peace. Amen.



You'll never guess what happened?

Meeting God – Amazing things happen when we meet God

Meet a child who gave their lunch.

Arrival

Paper chain people

What you need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- Colouring pens/pencils.

What you do:

1. Before the children arrive, cut the paper in half so you have two long rectangular strips of paper, and prepare some card templates of the 'paper doll' to draw around.
2. Demonstrate to the children how to fold the strips 'accordion style'.
3. Next, the children will need to draw around the template you have provided and cut out the shape.
4. Finally, encourage the children to decorate their paper chains.

Story John 6: 1-14

After this, Jesus went across Lake Galilee (or, Lake Tiberias). Many people followed him because they saw the miracles he did to heal the sick. Jesus went up on a hill and there sat down with his followers. It was almost the time for the Jewish Passover Feast.

Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him. He said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread for all these people to eat?" (Jesus asked Philip this question to test him. Jesus already knew what he planned to do.)

Philip answered, "Someone would have to work almost a year to buy enough bread for each person here to have only a little piece."

Another follower there was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five loaves of barley bread and two little fish. But that is not enough for so many people."

Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down." This was a very grassy place. There were about 5,000 men who sat down there. Then Jesus took the loaves of bread. He thanked God for the bread and gave it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish. He gave them as much as they wanted.

They all had enough to eat. When they had finished, Jesus said to his followers, "Gather the pieces of fish and bread that were not eaten. Don't waste anything." So they gathered up the



pieces that were left. They filled 12 large baskets with the pieces that were left of the five barley loaves. The people saw this miracle that Jesus did. They said, "He must truly be the Prophet who is coming into the world."

Interview

Who are you?

My name's Joshua, son of Gad. I was supposed to be helping Dad on the farm but he said I could go off and play for a bit and mum packed me a picnic and told me to get from under her feet for a while, so here I am.

Where are we?

This is Galilee. You are on the hillside near Lake Tiberias, with pretty much everyone from around here – though nobody who's dressed quite like you! I mean, what are you wearing???? But sorry, that was rude, I guess. We're here because Jesus is here. I've heard all about him but wouldn't it be wonderful actually to meet him?

Story

Reflective story out of a picnic basket. Elements of the story coming out.

You will need:

- Picnic basket/hamper/rucksack
- Blanket
- Picnic food and drinks
- Five small loaves and two fishes.

NB. These may be paper fish you have prepared; alternatively you may use two tins of tuna fish.

As you are talking to the children, begin to take each item out of the picnic basket slowly. Allow time for them to view each item and respond to your questions. You may want to present items out of a deep bag, in the style of Mary Poppins. You may choose to do this part of the session outdoors. You do not need to use all the questions. Select what you think will work for your group.

The story:


Walk together to where you are going to tell the story. As you take a blanket out of the picnic basket and spread it on the floor for the children to sit on or round, start to tell the story using these words or similar:

At last, we've arrived. It's taken us a long time to get here. Gosh, there are so many people. Let's get a good spot away from the crowd.


Let's close our eyes and imagine...we have been on a long journey and climbed a big hill. Are you tired? You must push through lots of people to get to the front of the crowd. Imagine people brushing against you as you find a space to sit. Let's open our eyes.

Phew. I'm glad we decided to have a picnic today, but all that walking has made me thirsty. Hmm... What should I have to drink?

Begin to remove drinks from the basket – possibly even have small drinks cartons for the children to drink.




A long time ago a young boy sat on a hillside with his lunch listening to someone special speak. Do you know who that someone special was? That's right, it was Jesus. The boy had heard that Jesus performed great miracles and told great stories. He was wondering what might happen and whether he might actually get to meet Jesus and experience some of the amazing things that happen when Jesus is around.




I'm hungry. What's your favourite food to eat at a picnic? What do you think is inside my basket? Let's see...

Begin to take out food items. You may want to include a couple of foods you would not usually take on a picnic eg, baked beans, a cabbage.



But look – nobody else has thought to bring a picnic. *Let's close our eyes and imagine...* Can you see the people around you starting to look a bit tired, a bit hot, a bit hungry? Can you hear them muttering? They want to hear Jesus but they're also ready to eat and they are wondering what to do about the fact they have no food. Can you see the boy, sitting over there? He looks a bit embarrassed. What's that he's got in his hand? A cloth bag with something in – do you think he's the one person who's actually got something to eat with him? *Let's open our eyes.*




I wonder what you would have done if you'd been there? All those hungry people – you can't feed them all, can you? I wonder what was in the young boy's picnic anyway? Do you know what he had for his packed lunch?

Finish by taking out five small loaves of bread and two fishes.

Look, this is what the boy in the story had, though I suspect his fish were fresh fish, not tinned! It's a very ordinary packed lunch. Not enough to feed five people, let alone 5,000. And it can be difficult to share with others, especially when it's something we really like. I bet he started by wondering how he could nibble away at his lunch without anyone noticing.




Mime surreptitiously nibbling at a loaf of bread.




But now an amazing thing is happening. There's a feeling growing in the boy's heart, the feeling that he wants to help, he wants to share, he wants to do what he can. He grabbed the cloak of one of the disciples and showed him his packed lunch, and the disciple took him to Jesus. Amazing – just imagine meeting Jesus face to face, actually talking to him!

Hold the bread and fishes up so that everyone can see them.



Close your eyes and imagine... Can you see the hungry crowd around you, muttering and nudging one another? Maybe some of them are even laughing at the boy for offering his small picnic lunch. I wonder what the boy looks like. Is he scared and nervous, proud, embarrassed? Can you see him handing his packed lunch to Jesus? And can you see Jesus lifting the food up and blessing it? *Let's open our eyes.*



The boy gave his food to Jesus who blessed it, and a miracle happened. When the disciples shared the food out amongst the crowd, all the people were fed until they were completely full! There was even enough left over to fill twelve more baskets! Amazing things happen when we meet with Jesus – I wonder what amazing things Jesus has in store for you?

Interview continued

What's happened?

Everyone's been talking about this Jesus fellow for months, how he does amazing things and teaches about God and love and peace and everything. Well, the news spread that he was in town and, like, everyone wanted to see him. I followed the crowd 'cos I wanted to see him too. He just sounded so amazing and so kind too. He was teaching us but then he realised that everyone was getting a bit hungry. Thank goodness mum had packed me a picnic. Anyway, I wasn't too sure what to do with it but I gave it to Jesus and what do you know? A. Ma. Zing! He thanked me and he blessed it and started sharing it around. Five bread rolls and two little fish and he not only fed everyone who was there, thousands and thousands of them, but he even got his disciples to gather up the leftovers and there were twelve whole basketsful left. That's some miracle!

What can we take back with us?

You can take my lunchbox if you like. It's only small but then I'm only small too and meeting Jesus was simply amazing for me. Maybe my lunchbox can help you remember that Jesus wants to meet with you, no matter how small you are.

Bible verse

Matthew 19: 14 "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like these children."

Video

Jesus Feeds 5000 – Sketch – PursueGODkids: <https://youtu.be/EGVHZRtbkrk>

Wondering together

This story shows us amazing things can happen when we meet Jesus.

- I wonder if you can think of a time when you have felt too small or powerless to do something.
- I wonder how it felt to be in the crowd and witness this miracle.
- I wonder what the child told his friends about he witnessed. What would you have told them?



Craft/creative response

Make your own playdough and then use it to model your own basket of loaves and fishes. Alternatively you could use ready-made playdough or salt dough.

Edible playdough

You will need:

- Two cups plain flour
- Two tbsp vegetable oil/baby oil/coconut oil
- Half cup salt
- Two tbsp cream of tartar
- One-one and a half cups boiling water (added a bit at a time until the consistency feels right)
- A few drops of glycerine (optional, but makes it more stretchy and adds shine)



- Optional – gel food colouring, flavourings (eg ginger), textured substances like lavender flowers, glitter, rolled oats etc).

What you do:

1. Mix together the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil. If you want to add dry powdered flavouring such as a little ginger or cinnamon, add it at this point.
2. If you're adding food colouring, add it to the boiling water before you add this to the dry ingredients. Add the water a bit at a time and keep stirring until it all sticks together to form a sticky dough. At this point you may choose to add a few drops of glycerine to make it shiny and more pliable.
3. Once the dough has cooled a little, take it out and knead it until all the stickiness has gone. This may take several minutes of quite vigorous kneading. If it remains sticky, you may wish to add more flour. While kneading your dough, you could add textures such as lavender flowers etc. Remember, this playdough is non-toxic but anything you add to it may not necessarily be edible so consider whether it is suitable for the children in your group before making it available to add!

Mentoes experiment

(illustrating an amazing thing – something small causing a big reaction)



This must be done outside in an area that is ok to get covered in coke.

It should also be done very carefully – probably by an adult.

You will need:

- Cardboard (enough to make a tube the size of a packet of Mentoes)
- Tape
- A packet of Mentoes
- A new bottle of Diet Coke.



What you do:

1. First, create a tube of cardboard by wrapping it around a packet of Mentoes and sealing the join with tape. Cut a circle of card and secure it to the end of the tube to make a closed end. Now take the packet of Mentoes out again, remove their wrapping, and place them back in the tube.
2. Go outside and find a safe place to stand your bottle of Diet Coke. It needs to be a level surface and you need to make sure that the area around it is clear. Do not shake the bottle before doing this experiment or you will not be able to get the desired effect. Stand well back unless you are the person doing the experiment.
3. Open the Coke and put a piece of cardboard over the open top. Turn the tube of Mentoes upside down over the cardboard, lined up with the top of the bottle. Now pull the cardboard out of the way and allow the Mentoes to fall out of the tube, straight into the open top of the Coke bottle. Step back VERY QUICKLY! The Mentoes will react with the Coke and create a high fountain of bubbles that will shoot out of the top of the bottle like a geyser!

Small group prayer

Making the lunch: basket, loaves, and fish

You will need:

- Card
- Paper plates
- Pipe cleaners
- Glue
- Scissors
- Colouring pens.



What you do:

There are two styles of basket you could make.

1. The first needs two paper plates. You can colour them and add a pattern if you want too. Stick the plates together round the edges and don't forget to cut out a handle.
2. The second style needs one paper plate. Colour and make two pairs of holes along the rim, one pair opposite the other. Put your pipe cleaners in to make handles.
3. Now make your two fish and five bread rolls any shape you like – remember, they need to fit inside your basket.
4. Think about those people who are often ignored, not included, and left out of things. It might be people you know, people you see when out and about, or see and hear about in our country and in other countries. Write the places or people on the loaves, eg a new person at school who has come from another area/country, a homeless person, someone who supports a different football team to you. Then write on the fish how you might help, for example you might donate to a food bank, make a new person at school feel welcome, do not judge by what a person wears, has or where they live, or what hobbies they have.
5. Place your loaves and fish in your basket and keep them as a reminder, look at them during your prayer times.



Games

Come to me

One child is chosen to be Jesus and stand at the far end of the hall; the other children are all at other end of the hall. Two or three young leaders, leaders or a couple of older children are chosen to be the disciples and stand in the middle. Jesus calls, "Let the children come to me, I call...", followed by the name of a child, and that child has to try to dodge the disciples and run to Jesus. Jesus can call another child straight after calling the first. The aim is for all the children to get to Jesus. If tagged by a disciple, they go back to the start. (If particular children struggle to get through, leaders can run interference)

Meeting and Greeting

Everyone walks around the room to the music saying hello to everyone as they pass. When the music stops, a leader shouts out "High five" or "Fist bump" or "Elbows" or "Bum bump" and everyone has to find a partner and do the action together in a pair. Last ones to do it are out. You could get the partners to find out one thing about each other before moving on.

Recipe

Our suggested recipes and food activities that are themed to our days. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

Fish sandwich

You will need:

- Bread – sandwich thin (squares of gluten free bread)
- Tuna mayo or a filling of your choice
- Edible icing eyes
- One slice cheddar cheese (vegan cheese, if needed).



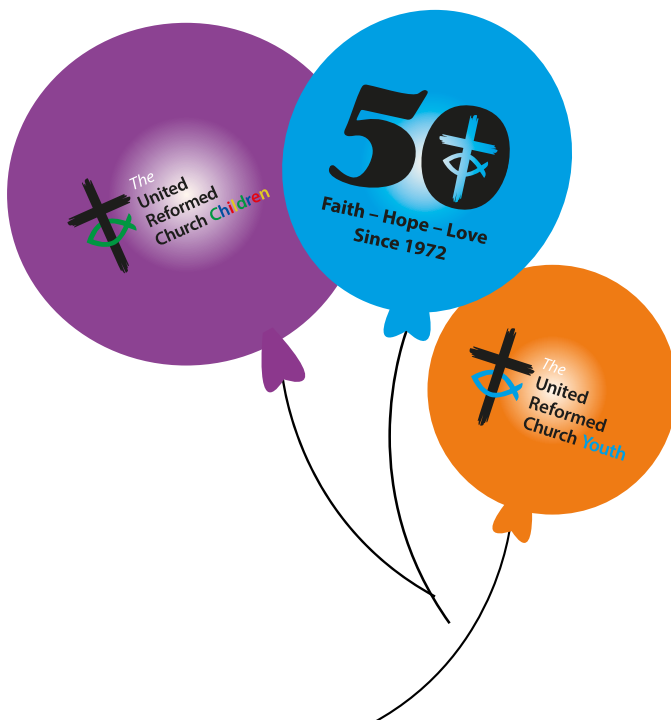
What you do:

1. Make a square sandwich, using the filling of your choice. Cut off the two opposite corners to make triangles, then cut one of those triangles in half to form two smaller triangles.
2. Arrange the triangles on the plate as in the illustration – the larger triangle forming the tail and the two smaller triangles forming the fins. Add an edible icing eye to complete your fish shape.
3. Cut some circles from the slice of cheddar cheese to make bubbles and a small piece of cheese to form a smiley mouth for your fish.

Whole group prayer

All sit in a circle.

A large plate with pieces of bread well spread out is displayed. A leader hands each person a piece of bread and, when they receive it, they can say one thing that displays/ shows God's love to them. They can eat all together or as they receive bread. Finish with a final: "We thank you God for all your love and the love we share today. Amen."



Does anybody love me?

Belonging to God – We are all part of God’s family

Meet a child who was by the river with Lydia as they worshipped and baptised people.

Arrival

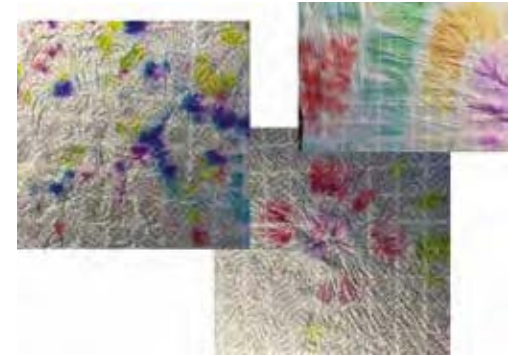
Tissue tie-dye

You will need:

- Kitchen towel
- Coloured markers
- Elastic bands.

What you do:

1. Wet your kitchen towel, but do not get it too wet.
2. Tie some elastic bands around the kitchen towel – the way you put the elastic bands on will affect the pattern.
3. Colour it with markers, dabbing it with any colour to create a pattern.
4. Take the elastic band off and unfold.
5. Let the kitchen towel dry.
6. Now you have made your own tie-dye napkin!!!



Story Acts 16: 11-15

We left Troas in a ship, and we sailed straight to the island of Samothrace. The next day we sailed to Neapolis. Then we went by land to Philippi, the leading city in that part of Macedonia. It is also a Roman colony. We stayed there for several days.

On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate to the river. There we thought we would find a special place for prayer. Some women had gathered there, so we sat down and talked with them. There was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. Her job was selling purple cloth. She worshiped the true God. The Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. She and all the people in her house were baptized. Then Lydia invited us to her home. She said, “If you think I am truly a believer in the Lord, then come stay in my house.” And she persuaded us to stay with her.

Interview

Who are you?

My name’s Zamira but my friends call me Zami. I’m ten years old and I live here in Macedonia with my aunt Lydia.

Where are we?

This is our river; well, it belongs to the whole town but a few times a week it is our river. These are our trees, our grass and our river. We like to come here to play, to wash our cloths and to pray. We have no synagogue in our city, so this is our special place.

Story

This is an immersive story recreating the sights, sounds, smells and more of the scene in Acts 16.

Setting the Scene

Begin by explaining that this story takes place by the banks of a river just outside the city of Macedonia. There are not many Jews living there and so there is no synagogue. I wonder where the Jews would go to worship God? Let's get a place ready by the banks of the river.

Encourage the group to create the scene using blue cloths for the river, green fabric for the bank, perhaps a tree with handmade branches and leaves. Encourage the group to bring their own ideas as to what we could use and what we might need to turn it into a place to worship God.

Time to dive in

Once the scene is ready, invite all the children to find a comfortable spot in the scene and lie down or sit comfortably. Then begin the meditation. Read slowly and intentionally, leaving time and space for the children to use their imaginations and enjoy their own meditation journeys.

Close your eyes and be still. Listen to my voice and relax. Sometimes we get a giggle during relaxation; this is OK but try not to disturb the people around you as we are all concentrating.

Take a few deep breaths as you begin to relax. Breathe in long and deep to the count of five, hold it for three then release it slowly to the count of six.

Breathe a few times until we are all relaxed and calm.

Now picture, right before you, a large door, standing all alone... Go to the door, push it open, and walk through...

You are by the banks of the river in Macedonia.

It's a warm day and the sun is warming your face, your neck, your shoulders. You are happy here. Where are you sitting? Perhaps on the grass or a rock, or perhaps a blanket. What can you feel under your body or feet?

What can you hear? ... Birds in the trees? The breeze rustling the leaves? The water bubbling and running in the river? Perhaps you can hear voices.

You are here with your family, with Lydia's family. Who are you sat with? Can you see their faces? I wonder what you are talking about together.



You like to come here as a family to wash the purple cloths that you make and to spend time with each other and with God.

You walk into the shallow water to wash the cloth; it is cold and makes your toes and fingers tingle. You see the purple ink from the cloth running into the clear water, and you watch it snake its way out into the river.



Perhaps you splash each other to cool off in the water. Now, you are lying or sitting on the riverbank; perhaps you are dangling your feet into the water. What are you thinking about today? You come here to talk to God, to pray. Take some time now to tell God what is on your heart and mind...

As you are praying, you notice a few men on the other side of the river. Lydia is talking to them. Can you hear what they are talking about?



She is telling them that she sells cloth. She is telling them all about your family and how you come to the river each week to pray.

You hear that one of the men is called Paul. You watch as Paul is walking into the deep part of the river with Lydia. He is pouring water over her head. She is smiling, her arms lifted high into the air, as though she was praying. They begin to sing, songs about God. Can you hear them?

Lydia comes and tells you that she has been baptised. This is to show that she is Jesus' friend, a Christian. She is asking if you would like to be baptised too, as part of her family. You follow her into the deeper water; the water comes up to your waist. Paul asks you if you believe in Jesus and want to be baptised.



How do you respond? He takes handfuls of water and pours it over your head. You feel the cold water run over your head, down your face, over your shoulders and down your back. You lift your arms to the warming sun; you smile as you know that you are God's child, Jesus is with you.



Today has been a good day by the river but now it's time to leave.

You turn to go, and you see the door is still standing open... As you walk up to it, you take one last look and remember that you can return at any time. You go through the door, closing it behind you... and find yourself back here in this room. Slowly you wiggle your fingers and toes ... stretch your arms and legs ... and, when you are ready, open your eyes.



This is a good time to ask how children found the experience and what they would like to share as a result.

Adaptation

For obvious reasons this meditation could easily be led Forest Church style, outside.



Interview continued

What's happened?

Well, it was like any other day, really. We had fun splashing around, we got the cloths rinsed in the water and we did what we always do here. But then, these men appeared. They said they

were Christians, travelling around from place to place and telling people about Jesus and building the Church. I thought this was fabulous, because we need our own church built. But that's not what they meant. They told us that we are the Church, the people ARE the Church. Wherever we are, God is there. So, they meant that they are travelling around encouraging people to become part of Gods big family, to be believers, to be Christians. We already believe in God, so it was an easy thing for us to do. We prayed together, we sang to God, and then the best bit of all: Paul, the main leader, baptised every single one of us, the whole family. He poured water on our heads and said that we were now part of Gods big family.

What can we take back with us?

Take back a piece of our purple cloth and a bottle of river water. Do you think people will still get baptised in the same way in the future?

Bible verse

John 15: 5 "I am the vine and you are the branches."

Video

Lydia is baptised by Share Faith Kids: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g6yRNTKyP4

Wondering together:

- I wonder why Lydia and her family decided to be baptised if they were already believers.
- I wonder what it means to be baptised? Why do you think people feel it is important?
- Lydia went to the river to pray as there was no synagogue in the city. I wonder where you like to go to spend time with God.



Craft/creative response

Purple heart weaving

You will need:

- A piece of card in a heart shape
- String
- Scraps of purple fabric/ purple foliage and petals.



What you do:

1. Cut out a heart shape and make holes around the edges.
2. Using string, create a web across the heart, then weave a variety of purple things through to create a purple design.

Plant pots

You will need:

- Recyclable, cardboard plant pots
- Compost
- Seeds to plant
- Paint
- Paint pots
- Water pots
- Paint brushes.



What you do:

1. Give each child two or three plant pots to paint.
2. Then help the child to half fill their plant pot with compost before giving them seeds to plant. I chose indoor seeds that would grow relatively quickly. Help each child to put more compost on top of their seeds and add a few drops of water.
3. Belonging to God is a bit like the way seeds grow. They do nothing just sitting in the packet – they need to be rooted into something that will nourish and build them up and help them grow and bear fruit. In God’s family, we can grow our relationship with God and with God’s people, knowing that we’ve got our roots firmly planted in something really good. Jesus said: “I am the vine and you are the branches.” Our plants can help us remember that.

Wiggle experiment

You will need:

- A white plate or tray
- Whiteboard pens
- Water.



What you do:

1. Draw a simple figure on the surface of the plate or tray. A stick figure is a good one to start with. Slowly pour water onto the plate. Alternatively, draw onto a spoon and very gently lower the spoon into the water. The image should separate from the surface and float on the water.
2. Gently swirl the water around to make the figure dance.

In the story, Lydia and all her family were baptised, being lowered gently into the water to show that they were ready to be disciples and follow the way of Jesus. I wonder how this experiment helps us think about the difference that baptism makes; that belonging to God lifts us up and sets us free, allowing our hearts to dance.

Small group prayer

You will need:

- White paper
- Purple ink pad or purple paint
- Pens.



What you do:

1. Thinking about all belonging to God’s family, get everyone to create their own bunch of grapes using finger or thumb prints.
2. As an alternative, you could use a cork to make the prints.
3. As you do this, think about who you want to pray for (eg friends, family, school, church etc) and write each person’s name on a grape.
4. When you have done this, cut out the bunches of grapes and place them together.

5. Spend some time in quiet as you look at all the names and then ask God to bless the people who contributed to the bunch of grapes and the people that they wanted to pray for.

Games

Happy families

Create cards of families of animals, eg Mr Cow, Mrs Cow, Master Cow and Miss Cow; Mr Pig, Mrs Pig, Master Pig and Miss Pig, etc. Shuffle the cards up and give each player a card. They should look at the card but not show it to anyone. Then their task is to find the other three members of their “family” – but to do this they can only make the sound of the animal.

Numbers

Get the players to run or dance around the room, keeping a good distance from each other. A leader suddenly shouts out a number – eg six – and the players have to get into groups of that number, everyone in the group holding hands to form a circle. Any that are left over and unable to make a group of that number are out. Remind the children after the game that it’s very different in God’s family, because in God’s family, everyone is included and nobody is left out who wants to be in. It would be like playing the game but always calling out exactly the same number as there are people playing!

Recipes

Our suggested recipes and food activities are themed to our days. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

Purple punch

You will need:

- Mint leaves
- Fresh blueberries or blackberries
- Lemon slices
- Ice cubes or crushed ice
- Lemonade.



What you do:

1. Mix the ice, lemonade and fruit together and garnish with mint leaves and lemon slices.

Lydia’s gingerbread

You will need:

- Gingerbread person – either shop bought or prepare your own before the session – www.createbakemake.com/easy-gingerbread-recipe/ (gluten free biscuits). If you make your own, please bear in mind that you will need a person shaped biscuit cutter
- Blackberry/ blackcurrant jam (optional – as an alternative you could use purple coloured fondant icing to lay over the jam)
- Icing pens/ tubes/ cake decorations such as hundreds and thousands.



What you do:

1. Spread some jam over the gingerbread person’s body; the aim is for the jam to represent Lydia’s purple clothing. If using fondant, spread the jam thinly as a glue; otherwise it can be a slightly thicker layer.

2. The icing pens/tubes and cake decorations can be used to highlight the facial features of the gingerbread person and to decorate the dress.
3. If using the purple fondant, take a small ball and roll it out (not too thin) to lay over the biscuit. Cut round the edges and shape the fondant into a dress.

Whole group prayer

(Need long piece of string)

John 15: 5 Jesus said “I am the vine and you are the branches.”

Place a piece of string or paper on the floor to represent the vine and ask everyone to bring their own bunch of grapes (see above) and add them to the one vine in the centre. Remind everyone of the Bible verse and say that we are all connected to the vine – God.



Say the action prayer together.

Action prayer

We come from different places (point to each other). But now, with one voice, we say (cup hand around mouth like a megaphone), thank you, Jesus, for joining us together in your love (link hands) and rooting us in your ways (stamp feet) where we can grow and play and learn (start crouching and grow tall). Amen.



Can I have a go?

Worshipping God – Love God with your whole life

Meet a child who was in the crowd, shouting and singing Gods praises on Palm Sunday.

Arrival

Flag making

You will need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Sellotape
- Craft sticks.



What you do:

1. You may wish to have the triangle pieces of paper prepared for when the children arrive, or at least have the outline drawn out ready for the children to cut.
2. Invite the children to decorate their flags. Depending on the ages of the participants, you might suggest that they include words of praise and celebration. Once both sides of the flags have been decorated, use Sellotape to secure the craft stick along the long side of the triangle.

Story Mark 11: 1-11

Jesus and his followers were coming closer to Jerusalem. They came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of his followers. He said to them, “Go to the town you see there. When you enter it, you will find a colt tied which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here to me. If anyone asks you why you are doing this, tell him, ‘The Master needs the colt. He will send it back soon.’”

The followers went into the town. They found a colt tied in the street near the door of a house, and they untied it. Some people were standing there and asked, “What are you doing? Why are you untying that colt?” The followers answered the way Jesus told them to answer. And the people let them take the colt.

The followers brought the colt to Jesus. They put their coats on the colt, and Jesus sat on it. Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches in the fields and spread the branches on the road. Some of the people were walking ahead of Jesus. Others were following him. All of them were shouting,

“Praise God! God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the kingdom of our father David! That kingdom is coming! Praise to God in heaven!”

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. When he had looked at everything, and since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the 12 apostles.

Interview

Who are you?

I'm Asher, Ash for short. I'm here with my mum – she's over there somewhere in the crowd, can you see, the one with the blue shawl? Oh, and with my sister Hannah who's gone off somewhere with her friends, probably giggling together about some boy or something. She's supposed to be looking after me, but I don't need anyone to look after me. I know what I'm doing!

Where are we?

Bethphage, I live here. That's my house over there, see – the one with the donkey tied up outside and the chickens strutting around like crazy things. I think all the noise has disturbed them a bit – don't expect we'll get many eggs in the morning!

Story: Can I Have a Go?

Matthew 11: 1-11

Preparation:

- Each child to have palm leaf (or old shirt/t-shirt) to throw on the ground
- When seating the children, place them into two groups, creating an aisle down the middle of them
- Someone to play Jesus
- Some people to follow Jesus as the disciples/crowds (be prepared to be really excited and dancing!)
- A donkey (toy stuffed donkey or the old fashioned wooden horses will work if you're unable to get a live one!)

Music:

Either "The Greatest Show" from The Greatest Showman or do the beat to "We Will Rock You" by Queen, changing the lyrics to "We Will Praise You" (NB: You can buy a Christian re-write of "We Will Rock You" from One Way UK www.onewayuk.com/product/listen-2-him-parody-music-vol-8/. It is based on the scripture Hebrews 13:15 and mentions Jesus' death in the first verse but from then on it's about praising him).

Narrator:


(Narrator comes to the front.)

Welcome to Jerusalem on a special Passover Festival Day.


It was a hot, sunny day. Everyone was out in the street, waiting. Excitement and anticipation filled the air! The adults were chatting excitedly, the children played while they waited. "Today's the day!" said adults, excitedly, gathering palm leaves. "Jesus is coming to town," laughed the children as they played. He was coming! He was coming! Oh, but when? When would he get there? Wait... listen...

(Go quiet and listen, crane your neck as if trying to see in the distance.)

No, not yet. The sun climbed higher in the sky. The day grew hotter. Children huddled under their palm leaves, trying to stay cool. Adults stood in the shade, fanning themselves. The excitement in the street grew. Surely, he would be here soon. They waited. And they waited (pause and sigh). And they waited. "Perhaps he isn't coming," cried a child.



Let's use the time to get ready, shall we? You see, today is the day when the one we have waited for is coming to town. Our Messiah, our new king, the one who is going to save us all from the Romans.




What shall we do to welcome him when he arrives? *(Encourage the children to give suggestions about what we can wave and what to shout but don't be too prescriptive; they might suggest Mexican waves etc.)*

What shall we shout? Let's practice it now *(practice the shouts and chants and whatever else the children have suggested.)*


I think we are ready now, so now we just wait...

(You could have a leader, or child, enact this part by running down the aisle between the children.)
After a while, someone ran into the street, shouting: "He's coming! Jesus is coming! He's on a donkey, he'll be here soon. He's coming!"



Everybody jumped onto their feet and looked *(get the children to stand up.)* Everyone went quiet as they watched and listened, waiting for Jesus to arrive.

(Pause for a few seconds to listen.)




"Sshh, listen!" someone shouted. *(Play either the first eight seconds of "The Greatest Show"; the first second of the "We Will Praise You" re-write or, if not using music, have someone do the beat once to "We Will Rock You".)*

The crowd went silent.

(Continue playing music.)




HE WAS HERE!



(Have some people come down the aisle clapping, singing, dancing. Encourage the children to do their planned welcome. If using "The Greatest Show", have Jesus appear at 54 seconds. If you're not using music, get the children to join in with the chant "We Will Praise You". Get children to join the crowd and follow Jesus and followers, dance and sing all around the hall. Really go for it and celebrate and have fun.)

As Jesus leaves, waving goodbye, have the children return to where they were seated.)



Jesus left, continuing on his journey to Jerusalem but nobody went indoors, everyone was still too excited. They had seen Jesus, God's son! The adults sang praises and the children danced and waved their palm leaves until the sun went down and it was time to go inside. It had been a great day, an amazing day, the day Jesus came to town.

Interview continued

What's happened?

Well, Jesus came here. He was on a donkey. We were all waving our leaves and shouting. I was shouting "Hosanna" like lots of people were – that means "please save us" but we shout it like you'd shout "hooray!". Some people were shouting other things like, "Praise to God in heaven!"

or “The king is coming”. I’m not sure what that means, ‘cos he didn’t look much like a king. Some of the grown-ups put their coats on the ground for the donkey to walk on. (Giggles) I wonder if it pooped on them.

What can we take back with us?

You can have my palm leaf if you want, then you can wave it and shout “Hosanna to the king” like I did. My dad’s donkey is there too, it’s kind of like Jesus’. You can take that as well if you want, I’m sure he won’t mind.

Bible verse

Mark 12: 30 “Love the Lord your God. Love him with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”

Video

- Palm Sunday in Lego by Bible Builders: <https://youtu.be/rYZMhaRepJk>
- The Story of Easter (The Triumphal Entry) – Saddleback Kids: <https://youtu.be/z-39h0xYqdE>

Wondering together

- I wonder whether you’ve ever had the chance to welcome someone special. How would you prepared for it?
- I wonder what you would shout if you knew Jesus was coming to town.
- I wonder what your favourite way is to celebrate who Jesus is.



Craft/creative response

Jumping Jack celebrating puppets

You will need:

- Strong cardboard
- A bottle top to draw round/measure with
- Pen or pencil
- Scissors
- Four paper fasteners/split pins
- String.

What you do:

1. Draw round the bottle top onto the cardboard to make the head of your puppet, then draw onto it a torso that is about three bottle tops long. Cut this shape out. Now draw two leg pieces that are about four bottle tops long and cut these out. Finally draw two arm pieces that are about three bottle tops long and cut these out.
2. Using the template as a guide, put small dots in the corners of the arms and legs and when you are sure these are in the correct position (check the direction of the feet!), make a small hole by piercing the cardboard with a sharp pencil, scissors or needle. An adult will need to help/supervise this and it is a good idea to place the cardboard on a ball of Bluetack or wad of cardboard so that the point of the pencil goes into this as it pierces the template. Then put larger dots as shown in the template into the tops of the legs and arms and in the four corners of the torso. Make holes at these points but use the point of a pair of scissors to make them a little larger. Again, an adult will need to help/supervise.



3. Using the paper fasteners/split pins, fasten each limb to the torso, again making sure the feet point the right way first! Put the pin through the larger holes and then spread the two pieces of metal to secure it at the back. Make sure the limb can move freely – you may need to make the holes a bit bigger.

4. Knot a fairly short piece of string through the small holes on each arm, joining them together loosely. Do the same with the legs. Knot a third piece of string to the centre of the piece joining the arms. Knot it again at the centre of the piece joining the legs. Then let the end of the string stretch below the puppet to give you something to pull on.



5. Make a small hole in the head of your puppet and tie a loop of string in place that you can use to hold the puppet or that you could loop over a door handle etc.

6. Now decorate your puppet.

7. Hold the puppet up by the loop on the head and pull the string to see your puppet celebrate and dance.

8. To make it slightly more complex, you could split the legs at the knee as well and join with another split pin/paper fastener so that the lower half of the leg hangs free.

9. Why not give your puppet a palm leaf to wave?

10. The people celebrated when Jesus came to town. They jumped up and down and waved. Help your puppet to do the same!

Finger pathways

You will need:

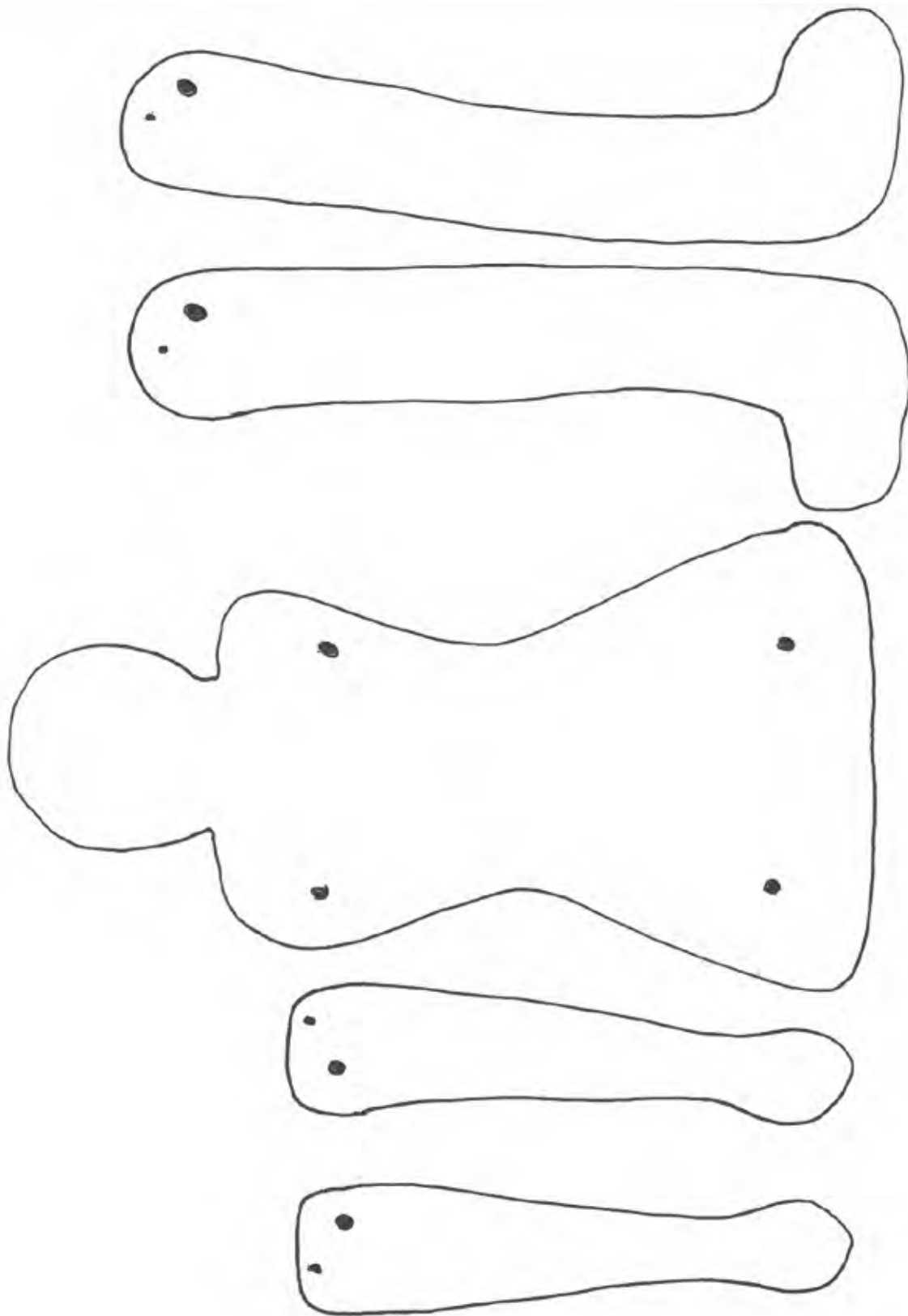
- Different textures of paper or fabric
- A strip of paper.

What you do:

1. Cut some small rectangles of paper or fabric.
2. Glue them to the strip of paper in a pathway.
3. Take your fingers for a walk along your pathway and see what the different textures feel like.



Template for Jumping Jack celebrating puppets



Tin can drum

(for a parade/celebration or to praise God).

You will need:

- Tin can (can be substituted for cardboard gravy cans for younger children)
- Decorative 'washi' tape or ribbon
- Hard wearing tape such as duct tape
- Two paper straws
- Two small craft pom poms
- One balloon
- Scissors
- Glue gun.



What you do:

1. Begin by making sure that the tin can is clean and dry.

! Please note that following instructions must be done under close supervision of an adult to ensure that children do not injure themselves.

2. Cut the balloon in a straight line across the widest part of the circle (diameter) and then stretch the top half of the balloon over the opening of the tin can. Secure in place with hard wearing tape. The more taut the balloon is pulled, the easier it will be to play the drum.
3. Decorate the tin can with tape, ribbons and any other materials that you have. To make the drumsticks, glue the pom pom to the end of the paper straw.



Small group prayers

Love God with mind and strength

During our time at Time Travellers, I am sure we have all had great fun and tried new games and crafts, and maybe made new friends. We have also shared and learned lots more about how amazing God really is. The people in our story today were excited when Jesus rode into town. They waved and cheered, they were so happy.

Activity:

Thank you praise prayers.

Children paint hands and print onto paper, or draw around their hands. This can be in any colour, to make the final poster as bright and cheerful as possible.

Children write on hand prints something they have really enjoyed about the holiday club. It might be a new skill, making a new friend, learning a new song, loving the games etc.

Cut out all the hands and stick them onto a large piece of paper.

Header: We thank and praise you God!



Display your collage in church so that the community can see all the fun and energy that has been generated. It is a great way of sharing with the Sunday congregation who may have heard of, but not seen, the holiday club in action.

Games

Celebrate

Each team has piece of ribbon and Sellotape. Scatter around the room eight triangles for each team with the letters of HOSANNA! Written on them. One runner at a time runs to the letters, collects one and returns to team. Team members fasten triangles to ribbon in correct position by folding end of triangle over the ribbon and sellotaping into place while next runner goes for next triangle. When the bunting is complete, whole team hold it high (all must be touching the ribbon) and shout “Hosanna”. This is the winning team. Bunting can be used to decorate the hall.

Cheerleaders

Split into pairs for a round of rock, paper, scissors. Each player holds their hand behind one back for the count of three and then on “GO” brings their hand in front of them either as a fist (rock), a flat hand (paper), or a scissoring movement (scissors). The winner is chosen thus – rock beats scissors, scissors beat paper, paper beats rock – and if both have the same then they play again until someone wins. The winner then moves on to challenge the winner from another pair, while the loser becomes their cheerleader, cheering them on and encouraging them to win. The winner from this group of four then moves on to compete against the winner from another group of four, this time each with three cheerleaders. Continue until you get to the last round, with the whole group cheering on one or the other of the two final competitors. Then everyone exuberantly celebrates the overall winner.

Recipe

Our suggested recipes and food activities are themed to our days. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

Palm leaf cakes

You will need:

- Clean leaves
- Cooking chocolate (lactose free/vegan chocolate)
- Pre-baked cakes or biscuits (gluten free cakes)
- Clean brushes
- Greaseproof paper
- Icing (optional).

What you do:

1. Ensure the leaves are thoroughly cleaned and left to dry. Place the leaves onto some baking paper.
2. Melt some cooking chocolate and, using a paint brush, paint chocolate onto the leaf to cover it. Allow the chocolate to set – in the fridge or freezer for roughly ten minutes.



3. Then peel the leaf off to leave a leaf-shaped piece of chocolate, including the veins etc.
4. Using a little melted chocolate or icing, stick the leaf onto a pre-baked biscuit or fairy cake.

Whole group prayer

Build a tower of praise

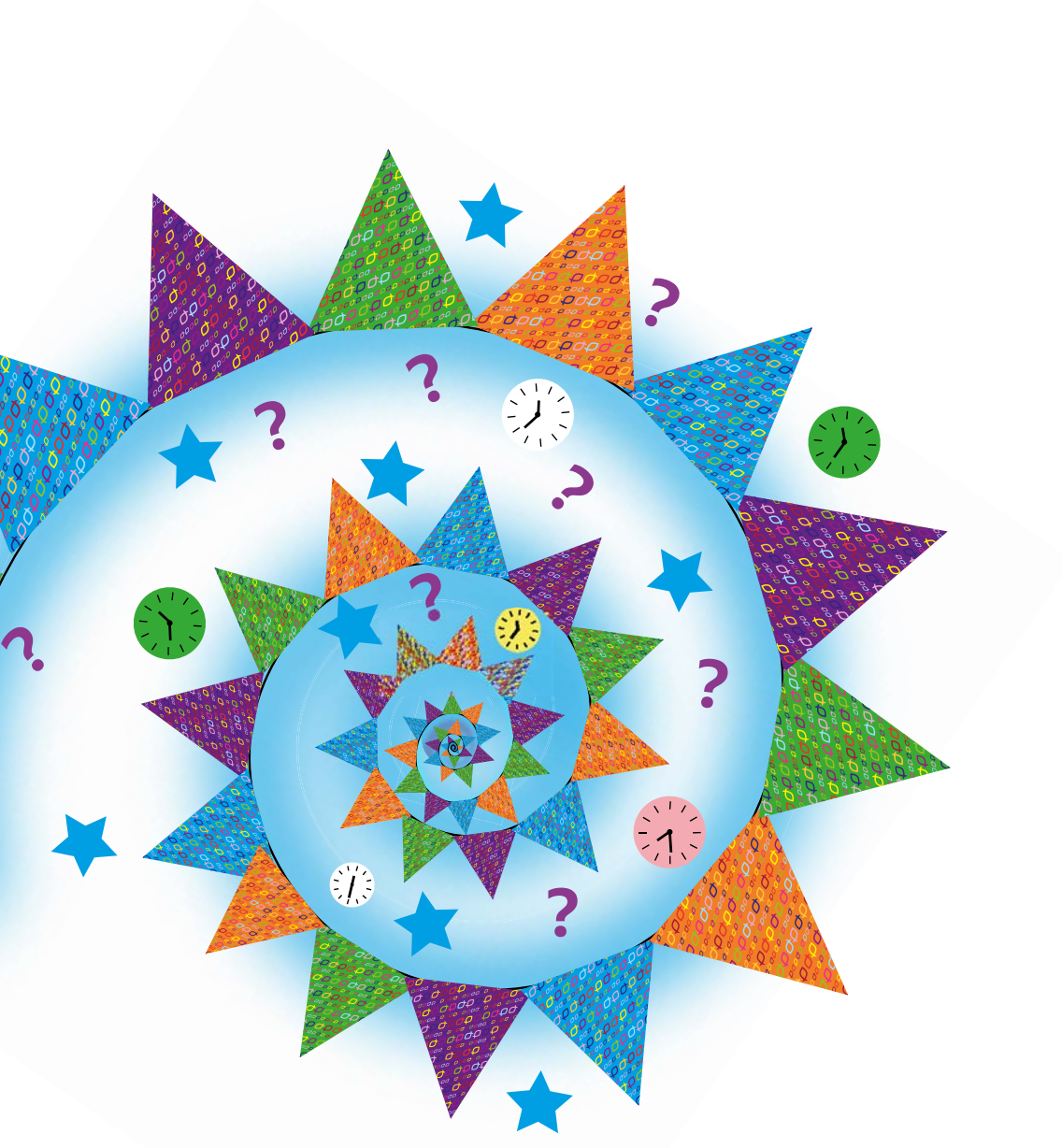
Chant: “We will, we will, praise You!”

Using Mega blocks, Duplo, Lego, Jenga, wooden bricks, or cardboard boxes, build a tower of praise.

As each person adds their part to the tower, everyone says, “We will, we will, praise You!” and they can add their own words of praise eg creator, amazing friend, you’re the best etc.

When everyone has added their part:

“Dear Jesus, it’s good to shout and sing and celebrate that you are our king and our friend. We will, we will, praise You! Amen.”



Appendix 1: 11 to 14s

Going deeper

Following God – Following with others

You are getting ready for a long trip to an unknown destination. What are the absolute essentials you are going to take with you? Make a list.

Can you carry it all? Are you travelling light?

The Bible passage doesn't tell us what the Israelites took with them (apart from the bones of Joseph) – what items are on YOUR list that might have been on the Israelites' list?

Game

Obstacle course

Whilst a volunteer is out of the room, arrange the room so that there is a pathway through, but put some obstacles in the way that must be climbed over/around. The volunteer is then blindfolded and brought into the room and the group must shout instructions to help him/her get to the end of the course safely.

Questions for the volunteer:

1. How much did you trust your group to give you correct instructions?
2. Whose voice did you hear most?
3. How did you feel not being able to see where you were going?

Question for group:

1. What was it like being responsible for the safety of someone else?
2. Did you get frustrated at the pace of the volunteer?
3. Do you think it's easier to be someone giving instructions or following instructions?

Question for all:

1. How do you think Moses felt with the responsibility he had been given by God?

Listening to God

Play a game of 'Chinese Whispers'.

Sometimes, when adults call us to do something ("Dinner's ready", "Tidy your room") we pretend not to hear because we're doing something more interesting or fun.

Samuel heard that he was being called – but it wasn't who he thought was calling him! It wasn't Eli, it was God.

Questions:

1. How do you think Eli felt when he kept getting woken up by Samuel?



2. How do you think Samuel felt when Eli kept saying it wasn't him who was calling Samuel?
3. Why do you think Samuel didn't recognise God's voice?
4. I wonder what God's voice sounds like? Do you think God has an accent?
5. Do you think God still calls and talks to people today? To whom does God talk?

In the Middle East, shepherding is very different to how it is in the UK. The flocks are much smaller (because there isn't enough grass to support big flocks) and, whilst shepherds in the UK stand behind the sheep and use dogs to get the flock where they want it to go, in the Middle East the shepherd leads from the front and the sheep follow. Imagine if Jesus had said: "I am the Good Shepherd. If you don't do what I want, I'll set the dogs on you!"

Meeting God

There is a lake in northern Israel. It's where Jesus began his ministry – he would have been well known around there. The lake has many names: Lake Galilee (named after the region in which it is), Lake Tiberias (named after the biggest town on its shore – established AD20), Lake Gennesaret (Gennesaret is the Hebrew word for "harp" and the lake is shaped a bit like a harp), The Sea of Chinnereth (Numbers 34:11) and it's even called the "Syrian Sea" in the hymn "Dear Lord and Father of mankind".

Activity

Find the lake on a map of the Middle East. What other inland bodies of water can you find (the Dead Sea, for example)?

In Jesus' time, the lake was a good source of food for the fishermen (like James and John) who would sell their catch in the local towns and villages. What sort of activities do you think take place on the lake nowadays?

In 1986, after a severe drought, archaeologists discovered the remains of a boat in Lake Galilee dating from Jesus' time. The boat is preserved in a specially built museum at Kibbutz Ginosar (which is the Hebrew pronunciation of the name of the ancient town Gennesaret). You can learn more about the boat here: www.thegalileeboat.com/the-boat/

Loaves and Fishes

Questions:

1. Which do you think was more expensive – the five loaves or the two fish? Why do you think that?
2. How do you think the boy felt when he first met Jesus?
3. Did his feelings change when Jesus asked if he could take his lunch?
4. Do you think the boy was there on his own, or was he with his family?

Activity

Get a bag of Maltesers and bag of M&Ms. Split the group into three smaller groups. One group can only have Maltesers, one group can only have M&Ms and one group can have both. How do you share the sweets out equally? Is one M&M equal to one Malteser?

Belonging to God

Activity

Using a map, trace Paul's journey from Troas to Philippi.

Question:

1. Why do you think the writer mentioned that the cloth Lydia sold was purple? (Purple cloth was a very expensive colour. It was the colour of royalty and to wear purple meant that you had status). The dye is extracted from the shells of thousands of snails! You can find out more about how they would dye cloth purple in the Roman Empire here: <https://bit.ly/ancientromepurpledye>.
2. Why do you think Lydia invited Paul and his friends to stay with her?
3. People in the UK are inviting refugees from the war in Ukraine to stay in their homes. Is this the same thing as Lydia did? Are there differences?

Activity

Using some plain white cloth (t-shirts?) use a tie-dye method to spice them up a bit. You can get instructions on how to do this here: www.vogue.co.uk/article/how-to-tie-dye.

Worshipping God

Palm Sunday is a joyous day in the church calendar. We wave palms to commemorate the way Jesus was received in Jerusalem by the people who lived there. We often get palm leaves that have been made into crosses.

Activity

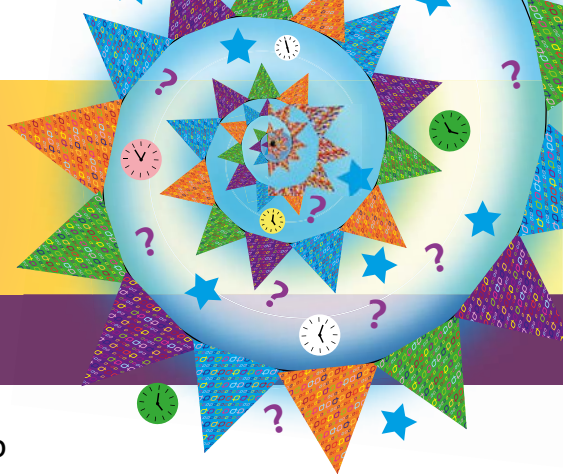
Make your own palm cross.: https://media.acny.uk/media/How_to_make_a_paper_cross.pdf

Of course, over the next few days the mood changed. It changed so much that less than a week later the people who had been welcoming Jesus to the city told the people in charge that they wanted him to be executed.

Questions:

1. What do you think it would be like to see somebody who was your hero riding on a donkey?
2. Why do you think people turned against Jesus so quickly? (The people thought he was going to free them from Roman occupation and those in charge thought he was a threat to their power and prestige).
3. Can you think of a modern comparison where someone is a hero one week and a villain the next? (eg politicians, football managers).

Appendix 2: Under 5s



Create a space for the under 5s which is part of the holiday club but also a safe place for them to play and explore the themes.

If you do have under 5, then encourage them to be part of the stories each day, where possible. Have some simple games or action songs for them to play with. For example:

- Ring a ring a roses
- In and out the dusty bluebells
- Head shoulders knees and toes
- Teddy bear teddy bear touch your toes, etc.

The following activities are to explore the themes. You can also have some things such as Duplo, large building bricks, some playdough, crayons and paper and some small world figures to play with. Try to use natural materials for them to explore too, and to avoid toys which do not fit with the idea of Bible times (so avoid toys such as toy cars etc).



Day 1

Sand play with footprints

Create a sand box or bag and place into it some footprint shapes as a starter. Encourage the children to make footprints in the sand and maybe make a path of footprints. You could have other things which will make footprints in the sand, such as small figures and animals.

While the children are playing, remember to talk with them about the story and about journeys in general. Can you play "Follow my leader" with the small figures in the sand with you following their lead and them following your lead?



Day 2

Listening and musical sensory play

Have some quiet musical instruments and things to listen to. Encourage the children to play and explore the sounds. You might want to encourage the children to make a shaker with a tight-lidded plastic pot or the egg shape from inside a Kinder surprise chocolate, filling it with rice. Chat with the children about listening to things, especially things that are very quiet where you have to listen extra hard.



Day 3

Picnic role play

Lay out some play food and let the children play with it, recreating a picnic.

Remember to talk with them about the story and about picnics and about how Jesus loved eating with his friends. Talk together about amazing things and God being amazing!



Day 4

Purple sensory play

Gather lots of purple things together in a treasure box and let the children play with them. Try to find things of a variety of shapes and sizes, materials etc. Be careful not to include anything sharp, breakable or small enough to be put in a mouth or up a nose.



Talk about all the things belonging together because they're all purple, even though they're all different, just like we are all different but belong together as God's family. Chat about the story and about when a baby is baptised in church.

Day 5

Sensory paths

Lay out different textures onto large trays and let the children play on them by walking and feeling what they are like.

Use things in a tray like pompoms, water, carpet, sponges, leaves, plastic bags. With some materials you may need to hold the children's hands to ensure that they don't slip.

Remember to chat with them about the story and about how people put their cloaks down for the donkey and Jesus' disciples to walk on. Talk about whether they've ever seen a parade, about how they cheer and shout when something's really special or exciting, and about their favourite songs to sing or dance to in church.



Appendix 3: Intergenerational approach



Introduction

“Intergenerational” is a growing way of approaching all areas of church life, including ministry and mission. Intergenerational, or IG for short, is more than all ages being together in the same place, doing the same thing (great though that can be!). IG is about fostering interaction between the generations, enabling relationships to blossom that enrich everyone. Building friendships with people of different ages and at different stages to ourselves helps us to see the world and our faith from some very different perspectives. Sharing experiences, interests, skills and stories helps us grow each other up as we grow closer to each other. Being together binds us together. And having fun is one of the easiest places to start this habit!

“As a church community we must learn to do only those things in separate age groups which we cannot in all conscience do together” - URC Charter for Children in the Church 1990.

People are now used to the idea of a household bubble, a support bubble (for childcare or those living on their own) and joining bubbles together. You could draw on this idea. However, some people have spent too much time with their own household and will want to be with others, so think about how to create diverse and safe groups for everyone.

It is OK to have some time in age/peer groups but make this the exception rather than the norm.

Expect more chaos and embrace the randomness of who chooses to do what with whom. Expect things to take longer as people have to translate across the generations and negotiate more with each other. The benefit is the relationships being developed and the co-learning and forming of community.

An Intergenerational Holiday Club

This could be offered as a ‘fun day’, a weekly get together (early evening; bring your picnic tea), or a holiday club over a few days.

Principles

The aim is to enable people to build relationships with those of other ages and generations. To do this they need opportunities to spend time together doing things together and talking together.

Groups

Organise into small groups that mix up the generations! Difference is an asset. You give groups things that not everyone in that group can do, but they can share out the tasks between them – like reading instructions, running to find things, drawing on previous knowledge, accessing new information, creating things from junk. Help them be a team – give points for how many

different things each person contributes to. Include things that draw on everyone's knowledge – eg a quiz that includes current culture, kids' TV shows, history, Bible knowledge, local information, your church etc. Picture rounds are good too.

Give specific tasks to the oldest, youngest, tallest, shortest, sportiest, most stylish, silliest, wisest member.

Pairs

Challenge people to find a partner at least 15 years older or younger for a listening exercise, or to each share something about themselves (eg favourite thing to eat/place to go/person to travel with/thing to wear/way to be brave etc – link to the story).

Response styles

Organise people by their preferred activity (rather than age) – construction, art/craft, discussion, drama – and ask each multi-generational group to prepare something to share with everyone else linked to the character/story. When you get to the sharing time, encourage people of all ages to share/present their group's work and to give feedback on the other groups.

Immerse in the story

Grill the character – invite people of different ages to play the character and sit in the hot seat and be asked three questions about themselves, ensuring questions come from different ages – don't worry about biblical accuracy in the answers – the aim is for people to experience the stories from the inside imaginatively, to play with being the characters. Swap around to give a few people a go for each story, even different characters in that story.

Crafts and recipes

Encourage different ages to work together and help each other, sharing skills.

Games/songs

Invite different ages to choose and say briefly why they like their choice.

Prayers

Invite different ages to work together to create and lead prayers; set up prayer stations and invite people to go with a partner at least 15 years older or younger.

Memory verses

Encourage everyone to work on ways to remember the verse together – could the group think of actions or another way to help them remember the verse. Can they share tips on how to remember things? Encourage different ages to test each other on the verse from the day before.

Things to do together

Telling the stories, watching videos etc; eating and drinking; playing games (*NB keeping score and being referee are key roles for the less mobile*); collective art projects; singing and dancing.

Time Travellers

This theme provides lots of opportunities for intergenerational engagement.

Younger participants can use the opportunity to learn more about the lives of older participants and together travel back in time to when they were young. Build in a slot each day

when someone is asked about when they were X (pick an age under 18 – if possible the age of a child or young person present) – and invite everyone to ask them questions eg:

- When you were X what was your favourite thing to wear?
- When you were X what was your journey to school or work like?
- When you were X what was the best present you received?
- When you were X what did you want to be when you grew up?
- When you were X was church and faith part of your life?

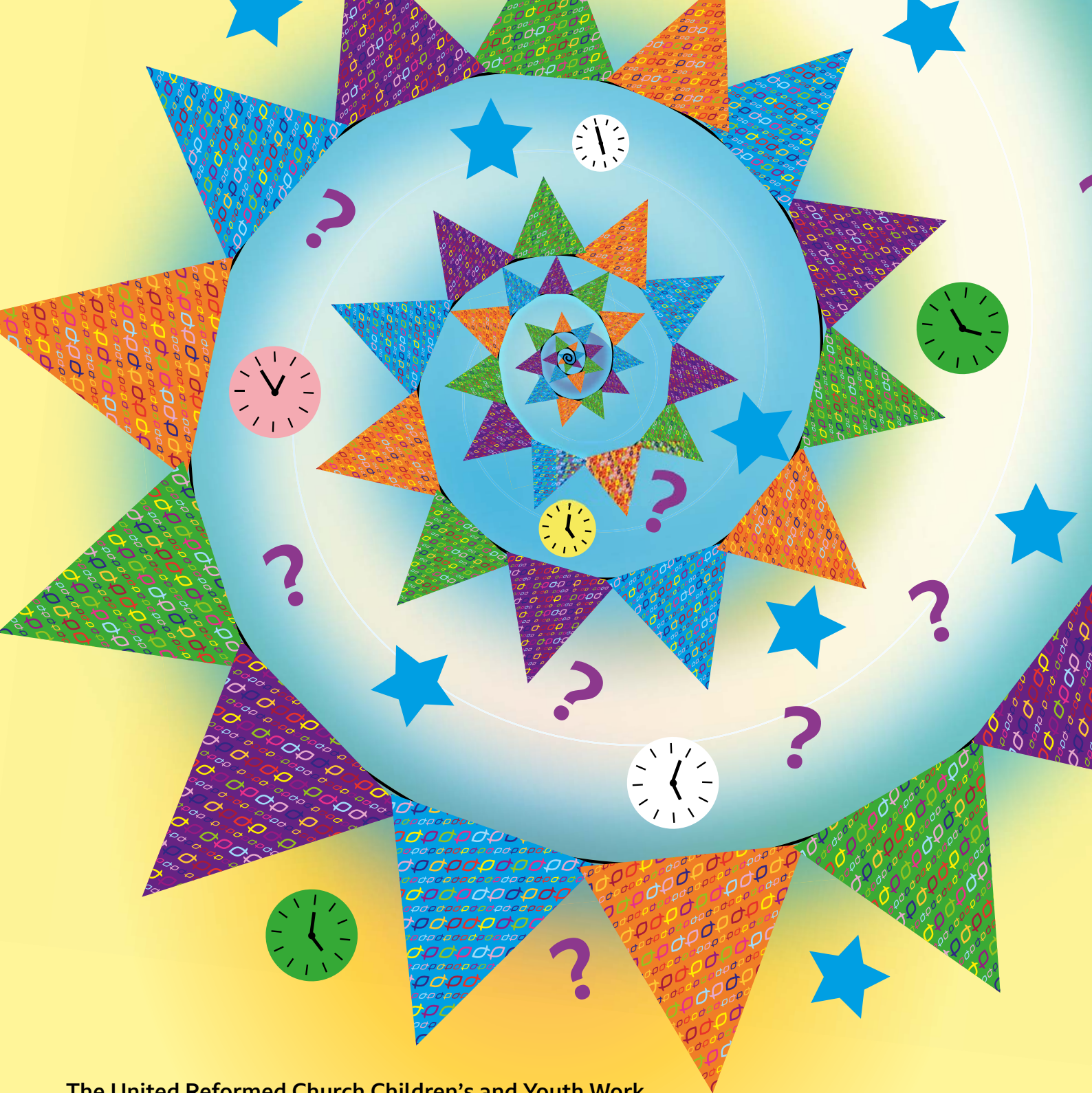
Encourage IG play with the time machine that each group has built – let different members of the group each day pick the time they would most like to travel back to in history and then everyone act out a scene from that time (might be dinosaurs chasing you or being servants in a big house or fighting in a famous battle etc) – think Mr Benn’s adventures!

Encourage an IG conversation each day linked to the story – encourage everyone to be curious together – you could find some creative ways to record the group conversation on a large sheet of paper and display this:

- Exodus – have you ever felt that God was showing you the way to go? What different places has God led us as a group?
- Samuel – how do you hear God talking to you? How many different ways do we hear God in our group?
- Feeding 5,000 – have you ever known God provide something you need just at the right time? What different things has God provided for us as a group?
- Lydia’s baptism – has someone surprising every invited you to their house? What surprising invitations have we had in our group?
- Palm Sunday – have you ever wanted to shout and sing about something or someone? When have we ever joined in with a crowd celebrating something or someone in our group?







The United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
020 7916 8637 www.urc.org.uk

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