**Jesus Cares**

**Welcome (Parents and Carers asked to stay until after The Opening Prayer)**

Welcome back to Friends on Faith Adventures. We are looking forward to going on a journey and nobody knows where we will end up. All we know is we have got our crate filled with adventure and an open path ahead. So, hold on tight and enjoy the ride!!

Let’s hear about FOFA bear and FOFA cam’s adventures this week and how everyone got on with the Walking the Way challenge. (Encourage everyone, including parents and carers, to join in.)

**The Opening Prayer**

We are friends together *(shake hands with both palms facing towards body)*

On a faith adventure (*point to forehead with thumb. Hold other hand with palm facing up and bring the side of your first hand down so that it goes across the palm of the second hand just below the fingers)*

With the Bible as our mapbook *(draw cross with thumbnail on back of hand then put hands together and open like a book)*

And Jesus as our guide *(use index fingers to point into palm of each hand in turn).*

God, be with us in all that we do *(point up, then make index finger into a hook shape and move down as though pulling down towards you)*

And go with us wherever we go *(point outwards).*

Amen *(two thumbs up with hands apart, bring hands together)*

**The Alternative Prayer**

Lord help us to be:

**P**repared for adventure

**I**n all we do.

**L**oving and caring,

**O**pen to others

**T**ogether as one community

**S**haring the love of Jesus on our way.

Amen

**Fun Together**

**Don’t laugh!**

Choose one participant to be the ‘one who is feeling sad’. The rest of the group need to make them laugh by pulling silly faces and saying funny things, but they are not allowed to touch the person. The ‘one who is feeling sad’ has to resist laughing or smiling. When they can resist no longer and laugh or smile, it is someone else’s turn to be the ‘one who is feeling sad’. If you have a large group or varying aged children, this game could be played in pairs instead.

**Balloon baby:**

What you need:

* Balloon each
* Marker pen

Before the group arrive, blow up enough balloons for everyone to have one and a couple spare. Each participant is to draw a face on their balloon to create their balloon baby. The ink can dry on the balloons while you are giving the instructions. Once ready, each participant is to bat their balloon around, taking care not to let it fall to the floor and not to bump into each other. Play for as long as you have time for. Explain that today’s story tells us about how much Jesus cared for a sad and upset woman.

**Today’s theme teaches us that Jesus sees our sadness and suffering and cares for us.**

**The Big Story- The Widow’s son – Luke ch7 v 11-17**

* Black headscarf
* Handkerchief

Reader 1: Once there was a woman who was very sad.

Reader 2: Quick, give her a hanky! (*Choose a volunteer to be the woman. Give her a black headscarf and a handkerchief)*

Reader 1: Jesus was travelling round visiting towns and teaching them all about God. Whilst he was in one town he came across this unhappy woman.

Reader 2: Look how sad that poor lady is; I can see the tears shining in her eyes.

Reader 1: The disciples looked at the woman and then at what she was looking at and they soon understood why she was so sad.

Reader 2: Why? What had happened?

*(Choose another volunteer to lie on the floor and play dead at the woman’s feet)*

Reader 1: “My son,” she said. “My beautiful son, he has died and I am so, so sad. What will I do without him?” (*Encourage the volunteer to keep crying into the hanky and shaking their head.)*

Reader 2: This is a very sad story. Did Jesus cheer her up?

Reader 1: Well Jesus stopped and listened to the woman and felt so so sorry for her.

Reader 2: Did he give her a hug and tell her everything would be all right? Maybe the disciples could help her dig a grave to bury her son in. Please tell me they didn’t tell her to pull herself together.

Reader 1: You’re right. People respond to death in lots of different ways, some ways better than others. Jesus comforted her but then he did something very strange, he actually talked to the boy.

Reader 2: That’s a bit weird. What did he say?

Reader 1: He said “Young man, I say to you, get up.”

Reader 2: He’s going to look a bit silly now, isn’t he? What a daft thing to say! What happened next?

Reader 1: (*Take the hand of the volunteer playing the dead boy and help them to stand up)* It was a miracle. The young man sat up and looked at Jesus, he looked at his mother and he started chatting to her straight away. Jesus had given him life.

Reader 2: That is a miracle! Jesus felt so strongly when he saw the woman weeping that he wanted to make things right for her. Is there a word for that strong feeling inside that you get when you see someone hurting?

Reader 1: It’s called compassion. God has come to help his people, that is what the people had witnessed - God’s compassion in action.

Reader 2: I wonder how we can show compassion too.

**Creative Adventure**

**Mirrored box**

**What you will need:**

* Craft matchboxes [Search results for: 'matchboxes' (bakerross.co.uk)](https://www.bakerross.co.uk/catalogsearch/result/?q=matchboxes)
* Mirrors [Acrylic Mirrors - Baker Ross](https://www.bakerross.co.uk/acrylic-mirrors)
* Double sided sticky tape
* Paint
* aprons
* Felt tips

Use the paint or felt tips to decorate the match box, perhaps decorate with patterns, a picture or perhaps some words like ‘Jesus cares for me’

Open the matchbox, remove one of the strips from your tape and place it on the inside of the box, on the bottom. Remove the cover from the double sided tape, then place the mirror on top of the tape to stick it down. Each time the box is opened you can see yourself inside.

Wondering questions to use during creative time:

I wonder whether you’ve ever experienced compassion?

I wonder what ways you show others that you care when they are sad or suffering?

I wonder how we can know that Jesus cares about us?

**The Adventure Map**

Explain the Adventure Map and how a lot of the books were written shortly after Jesus’s time. They tell us about what Jesus said and did and how his friends lived their lives, sharing with others how to be good followers of Jesus.

Take the group to the Adventure Map that you have created on the wall. Get the group to find where on the Map today’s story came from. Choose one or some of the things created by the group to be photographed and attach this to the wall to create a visual reminder of where the story came from and your adventure together. The aim is that in a year you will have lots of reminders of the stories and where in the Bible they come from. Use a piece of string or ribbon to connect the photo of the craft work to the book of the Bible.

**Walking the Way**

**This is a time to invite the parents and carers back in to share what the children have been up to during the session. They will also be here to hear about the Walking the Way challenge and the tasks (should they choose to accept them) that the children (and parents) are about to undertake.**

For the Younger: FOFA the bear

This is FOFA. FOFA likes nothing more than to go on an adventure; FOFA is a little more adventurous than me. FOFA believes that faith is a journey and that’s why FOFA would love to take you on a journey with him and walk the way of God in our everyday lives. Each session FOFA would like to go home with one of you and add to FOFA’s scrapbook of things you do together. FOFA doesn’t mind if you draw a picture of what you have done, take a photograph or just write a story about it. FOFA also doesn’t mind if you just come and tell the rest of us what you got up to together. But because FOFA’s memory isn’t very good as FOFA’s brains are made of stuffing, it would be better to save the memories in the book if you can. At the end of our time together we can always remember the great adventures we have been on together with FOFA and hopefully you will walk a little closer with God.

For the Older: FOFA cam

This camera is your window on the world. You have one shot at this, so choose carefully. You will be given a very precious piece of equipment – a FOFA cam. You have one photo to take with the camera, that records one thing – a way you have met the challenge. If there are other people in the photo, please ask their permission first and explain this photo will be put on display here. Bring back the camera and your photo next time to share your moment - and remember you only have ONE shot at this!

Every time we will choose someone to take FOFA bear and someone to take FOFA Cam to help them with the challenge – but we can all have a go at the challenge!

Our Walking the Way Challenge this time is: As a family think of someone who is feeling a little sad, lonely or upset and invite them round to either have dinner with you/ lunch with you/ play board games/ watch a film/ take a walk/ day trip out.

**Adventurers Go!**

So, today’s story was about how Jesus was really sad to see a woman weeping for her dead son and did something about it. He felt compassion. He cares for us too when times are tough and calls us to care for others. We may not be able to heal them, but we can comfort and help them and pray for them.

**Prayers (choose one/both)**

Prayer

Compassionate Jesus, help us to:

Care for you,

Care for others,

Care for our friends,

Care for our families,

Care for ourselves.

Amen

**Active Prayer**

What you need:

* Bin or similar container
* Small pieces of paper
* Pencils

Write or draw down all the things that are making you or sometimes make you feel sad, upset or cross. Separate pieces of paper could be used for each word/ picture. Once all feelings have been written on the pieces of paper, screw them up and throw them into the bin. The leader then says:

Caring Jesus, thank you that we can give you all the things that make us sad, angry and lonely because you care for us and want to help us. Amen

**End Prayer Every Session: Altogether**

**We are Friends on Faith Adventures, travelling together with God.**

**Adventurers go! Amen**

**What you will need:**

* Balloon each
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* Craft matchboxes [Search results for: 'matchboxes' (bakerross.co.uk)](https://www.bakerross.co.uk/catalogsearch/result/?q=matchboxes)
* Mirrors [Acrylic Mirrors - Baker Ross](https://www.bakerross.co.uk/acrylic-mirrors)
* Double sided sticky tape
* Paint
* aprons
* Felt tips
* Bin or similar container
* Small pieces of paper
* Pencils

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Possible hazard** | **Action required** | **Action taken** | **Signature** |
| **During session** | Marks on clothes due to use of marker pens | Consider wearing aprons. |   |  |
| **During session** | Risk or bumping into each other during balloon game | Play the game in a room with plenty of space.Supervise the game and intervene of it seems as though 2 people are going to bump into each other. |  |  |
| **During session** | Risk of getting paint on clothes | Consider wearing aprons. |  |  |