**Climbing the Ladder**

**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**

*What you will need:*

* Pebbles

**Games**

**Jacob’s snooze**

Everyone playing should lie down on the floor (if you want to make the game more appropriate to the story get a stone or a large pebble for everyone to rest their heads on). The game is essentially sleeping lions. The aim of the game is for the all people playing to lie as still as possible and if they move they are out. The winner is the one that can stay still the longest.

**Ladders**
All participants should pair up and sit down opposite each other, with legs flat and with feet touching. This creates a ladder effect with each side of the ladder being a team. Each pair will have the numbers 1,2,3 and so on.

The leader calls a number and that pair will jump up and run around the whole of their team and sit down. The first one to sit back in place is the winner. Continue until all pairs have had a turn.

**Today’s theme is about learning what is a holy place and how we can find a ‘holy place’ for us to meet with God.**

**The Big Story- Jacobs big dream! Genesis 28 v 10-22**

Reader 1: There was once a man named Jacob who was on his way from Beersheba to Harran, along the way he got very tired and decided to rest.

Reader 2: [Yawn] I’m very tired, I think I will just rest here for a while. Oh look I will use this rock as a pillow. [yawn again]

Reader 1: While Jacob was asleep he had a very vivid dream, not ordinary dream, but a dream from God.

Reader 2: Wow – what a dream…..there was this amazing stairway and it led to heaven, almost like a ladder, there were angels everywhere!

Reader 1: This wasn’t all. While Jacob was dreaming about the stairway, God spoke to him, God said:

Reader 3: “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. 14Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2028&version=NIV#fen-NIV-788d)] 15I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Reader 1: Then Jacob woke up afraid and thought to himself:

Reader 2: Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it…….How awesome is this place, this is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.

Reader 1: Jacob got up and placed the stone he had been using as a pillow on the ground as a pillar and poured oil on it and called the place Bethel and Jacob said:

Reader 2: “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear 21so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the Lord[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2028&version=NIV#fen-NIV-795f)] will be my God 22and[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2028&version=NIV#fen-NIV-796g)] this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”

Reader 1: Wow……what a story……….I would love to have seen Bethel, I wonder what it would have looked like?

**Creative Adventure**

**A stone where God is!**

*What you’ll need:*

* Pebbles (available from garden centers or a local beach if you are near one)
* Paints (acrylic) or Paint pens or Sharpie pens
* Waterproof varnish (Spray varnish is best)
* A map of your local area (either printed out or drawn by you and the children)

**Activity**

Using the paints/ pens to decorate two stones, make them colourful and fun, once the design has been finished write the words “this is a holy place” on the stone. Leave them to dry and if you have time spray varnish them before leaving or paint with PVA to give a varnish finish. (If this isn’t possible either leave as they are or arrange delivery/collection at a later date).

Once everyone has completed their stones, use a large white piece of paper to draw a map of the local area (or get out one that you have printed off) locate places that people consider really special to them, places that might be considered a “holy place” and mark it on the map. Encourage everyone to place their stones on a place on the map that is special place for them, marking the location on the map. Explain one stone is for them to keep and one is to hide somewhere in the community, perhaps in a place they consider holy for someone else to find – this will be the walking the way activity.

**Wondering questions to use during creative time:**

I wonder what makes a place holy?

I wonder what you would say to God if he spoke to you?

I wonder where your holy place would be?

**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: Take one of the stones which was decorated in the create activity and place it somewhere in the community that you would consider a holy place for someone else to find. Before you leave that place spend some time thanking God for the place and sit quietly for a few minutes to give God a chance to talk back to you.

**Adventurers Go!**

So, today’s story was about how Jacob was given a special place where he felt close to God and where he heard God speak to him. Maybe we can seek to find a “Holy Place” where we can hear God speak to us and know what he wants from us.

**Prayers (choose one/both)**

***Prayer***

Lord we want to hear you speak to us like you did to Jacob.

Help us to find a place that we feel is holy

So that we can listen to you and hear what you want from us,

So that we can serve you better.

Amen.

***Active Prayer***

Once everyone is assembled in the middle of the room, designate each wall of the room, North, South, East and West, then say together ‘To the west and to the east, to the north and to the south all peoples on earth will be blessed’ Run to the wall designated north when you say north, west when you say west, etc. Finish back in the middle with Amen.

**End Prayer Every Session: Altogether**

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

**Adventurers go! Amen**

***What you will need:***

* Pebbles (available from garden centers or a local beach if you are near one)
* Paints (acrylic) or Paint pens or Sharpie pens
* Waterproof varnish or PVA glue (Spray varnish is best)
* A map of your local area (either printed out or drawn by you and the children)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Possible hazard** | **Action required** | **Action taken** | **Signature** |
| **During session** | Ladders game, Trip hazard in game  | Make sure that the children a suitably spaced  |   |  |
| **During session** | Paint/ sharpies on clothing  | Supply protective clothes to children and warn of possibility  |  |  |