



# Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:  
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus  
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:  
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

## John 19: 16-19, 40-41 and John 20: 1-8 Easter

Theme: Nothing can separate us from God

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### Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

#### John

The book of John was written by the disciple John around 80 – 90 AD. It is often the first Gospel that new Christians read and it includes many well known verses, such as John 3 v 16. John was a fisherman before becoming a disciple and writes with 'normal' people in mind.

John was present with Jesus throughout his ministry and saw him after the resurrection. John wants the reader to understand that Jesus was more than a man, more than a prophet, Jesus was God. John begins his writing by back before Jesus' birth and recounting who God was at the beginning of time. God as three parts- the creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In these verses, John tells of Jesus death, burial and resurrection, inviting the reader to journey with the disciples through a time when they would have felt alone, scared, and left behind by Jesus but rejoice as Jesus returns to them. Do not be afraid, I am still with you.



# Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

## Gathering prayer

### Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

### Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

### As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

### Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

### Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

### And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

### As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

### AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

**Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.**

**Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.**

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,**

**Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

**Amen**

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## In-person Game

**Knots** Gather a group to play. If you're supervising this game with young children, you may find smaller groups are more manageable and the knots formed less complicated. The ideal number of players for this game is 6 – 8. You can do it in a big group but this can make it more complicated to 'undo'.

Each group should stand in a circle, facing each other. Each player should raise their right arm and link right hands with another person in the circle. They can't link hands with the players directly next to them. Players should repeat the same action with their left hands and make sure they are linking hands with a different person from their right hand.

Untie your knot: only make one move at a time. Players can step over, under, or through the linked hands – but they must not let go of each other's hands. You can have a person helping from outside the knot, they can 'cut the rope' twice. This allows two players to drop hands to complete one move. After this move, they must rejoin hands. The groups must get as far as possible towards untying their knot. Sometimes it's impossible, or there may be two loops left in the circle.



Sometimes we get ourselves in a knot and forget that Jesus is still here, and nothing can separate us from his love, not even the tangles we get ourselves in.

## Online game

**Where's Jesus?** Each person needs a small printed image of Jesus or a Lego person to represent Jesus. When meeting online, ask everyone to hide an image of Jesus in the background and see if people can spot where Jesus is. During the session, keep moving Jesus and seeing if people can spot him.

## Experience

For this story we recommend using the Children's International Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+19%3A+16-19%2C+40-41&version=ICB>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A1-8&version=ICB>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under fives story from Nicola <https://youtu.be/KIJzzarKZWY>

The Easter Story by J John [https://youtu.be/J\\_E-3BqqeiU](https://youtu.be/J_E-3BqqeiU) 10 minutes (be aware that there is a personal commitment prayer at the end of this. Depending on your group and your setting, you may want to include this or to cut the video short)

Easter Poem from the Bible Society [https://youtu.be/NF7ERi2\\_3IQ](https://youtu.be/NF7ERi2_3IQ)

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: Sing a song, sing a joyful song to celebrate <https://youtu.be/JBks3sMWDmo>

Five to elevens: For God so loved the world – John Hardwick <https://youtu.be/axvzjy8LjoA>

## Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

### A new story to share

#### Building a garden

On Monday, Ali carried a pocket of soil all the way home from school and placed it carefully on the front step - to the side where no one would tread on it. Mum raised her eyebrows but forgot to get the dustpan and brush, so it stayed where it was.

On Tuesday, Ali found enough small stones to go all the way round the outside and part way through the middle. Mum said she wasn't sure what this had to do with Easter but Ali told her that gardens took time and patience and that this one would tell a story.

On Wednesday, Ali covered the garden with two dirty crisp packets and an empty plastic bottle. Mum said it was a shame to ruin the garden when it was starting to look so nice, she didn't understand. Ali had to explain that even God's perfect garden hadn't stayed perfect, Miss Shaw had told them all about it at school. Mum would need to wait.....



On Thursday, Ali collected sticks, moss and stones then lifted the crisp packets gently to place the items underneath. No one was allowed to see. Ali's older sister was prepared to put down her phone for long enough to see how the garden was coming along, but when Ali started to tell her about how Jesus' friends couldn't stay awake to pray with Him before He'd been arrested, she lost interest and went back inside.

On Friday, there was no school. That meant more time for gardening.

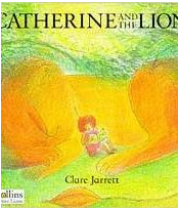
On Saturday, everyone tried to convince Ali to let them have a peek at the garden. They were all sure they'd waited long enough. Ali said that Jesus' friends had probably felt the same - and they didn't even know they had a happy ending to look forward to!

Finally, Sunday arrived! Ali let Grandma help take the rubbish off the garden and everyone came outside to see what they'd been waiting for. They all agreed it was perfect: a beautiful path of shiny stones led to a mossy cave; crosses made of broken lollipop sticks stood at the side, sharp and spiky but the empty cave was the best bit by far with its row of seeds guarding the entrance full of Hope, all ready for their new beginning!

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## Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



'Catherine and the Lion' by Clare Jarett  
[https://youtu.be/sz6fo\\_IFLbw](https://youtu.be/sz6fo_IFLbw)

### Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- When Jesus was crucified and buried, people were trying to get rid of him. In what ways do you think people try to push God/Jesus out, shut the idea of God/Jesus in a box and forget about Him?
- Do you know anyone who will always be there for you, even when you let them down or push them away? How does that feel? How does it feel to know that God will always be there for you too?

### Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder what it feels like when a friend goes away?
- I wonder why people chose to kill Jesus and what they thought he'd done wrong?

### What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- A cross shape – especially a holding cross, or two sticks joined together (watch for splinters) (A cross shape reminds us of Jesus, we see it in lots of different places. It reminds us Jesus loves us)
- A sad face and a happy face – maybe drawn on either side of a paper plate or wooden spoon (when do we feel happy, when do we feel sad? People were sad when Jesus died but happy that he lives again)
- A pack of tissues (let's make sad faces – sometimes we cry because something has made us sad)
- A picture of friends (I wonder who your friends are? Jesus is a friend – loves us, cares about us, is happy when we're happy and sad when we're sad, is always with us)



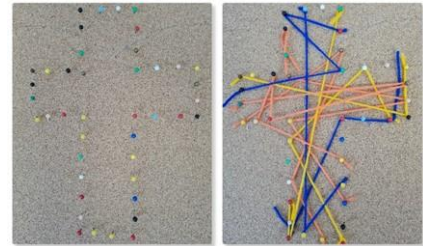
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (e.g. stones, felt, twigs etc). A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)

## Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

### Woven cross prayers

You will need:  
pinboard or cork mat  
Push pins or drawing pins,  
Wool (three colours)



A



Make a cross shape on the board with the pins and cut some lengths of wool in three different colours. Think about something that you would like to bring to God: a sorry, thank you, or please prayer. Using the different colours of wool to represent your prayers, tie the wool around a pin and weave your prayer into the cross shape. As you weave the wool, think about bringing your prayer to Jesus and putting it on the cross

### Spoken prayer

Say the words in bold together while doing the actions which are written in italics.

**Nothing, nothing, nothing** (*use your arms to make a cross over your chest, as you say nothing sweep the arms down, repeat each time the word is said*)

**can separate us** (*clap hands together*) **from the Love of God** (*hands over heart and then point in the air*)

**Whatever we have done** (*brush your hand across the palm of your other hand as though wiping something away, repeat with other hand*)

**Or will ever do** (*brush your hand across the palm of your other hand as though wiping something away, repeat with other hand*)

**God is** (*point to the sky with both hands*) **and will always** (*circle pointed fingers round in the air*) **be there** (*hug self*).

**Amen** (*do thumbs up with both hands and bump knuckles gently together*)

### Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. [See here for more suggestions.](#)

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.



## Hunger cloth collage

Before you start the activity follow this link for inspiration:

<https://www.resourcescentreonline.co.uk/the-miseroer-hunger-cloth-from-haiti-image/>

### You will need:

A3 piece of paper/ card if doing one as a group or an A4 for each person if making their own (Could use the side of a cardboard box)

Scissors

Glue

Magazines/ newspapers

Coloured pens and pencils



Have a brief discussion about what can be seen depicted around the tree, what sorts of things they represent or show. The pictures that can be seen are the sorts of things that Jesus forgave from the cross; these bad things in life try to push God away but Jesus died and rose again so that we could have a strong relationship with Him, even killing Jesus did not separate us from God's love. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, no matter what we do. God says....I'm still here.

Draw a large cross shape/tree in the middle of your paper. Either draw Jesus on the cross or cut out body parts from the magazines and glue them on to represent Jesus. Cut out any pictures from the magazines and newspapers which show the kind of things that try to break our relationship with God: war/ violence/ fraud/ lies/ gossip etc. Stick these around the edge of the cross or draw your own.

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## An edible Easter garden

As we remember the death and resurrection of Jesus, you might want to construct an Easter garden, like in the story. But a simpler way of creating an Easter garden is to make an edible one. You can discuss the symbolism of the different parts and encourage the children to recall parts of the story, wondering together about what the story tells us.

### You will need:

Rich tea biscuit

Icing sugar

Green icing

A jam and cream biscuit or Jammy Dodger

A mini egg

Some sprinkles

### What you do:

- Mix the icing sugar and green colouring to make green icing for grass.
- Cover a rich tea biscuit with green butter icing.
- Cut the bottom of a "jam and cream" biscuit and stand it upright on the green icing to represent the tomb, then place a mini egg to represent the stone rolled across. Add some coloured sprinkles for flowers, to represent the new life in Jesus.





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## Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Find out more about Easter happenings – can you find out about Maundy Thursday, the Last Supper, Jesus' arrest? [https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/1638/09/Families\\_on\\_Faith\\_Adventures\\_-\\_Week\\_52\\_-\\_Journey\\_to\\_Easter\\_Holy\\_Week\\_.pdf](https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/1638/09/Families_on_Faith_Adventures_-_Week_52_-_Journey_to_Easter_Holy_Week_.pdf) might help, or find a book to tell the story.

Think of all the different places you go this week. Can you make a cross shape everywhere you go? You could make it out of things you find, or decorate a cardboard cross and leave it there, or chalk a cross on the pavement. Wherever you are, leave a mark to show God is there too.

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We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of Easter with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk](mailto:lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk)

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Romans 8: 31-32, 34=35**

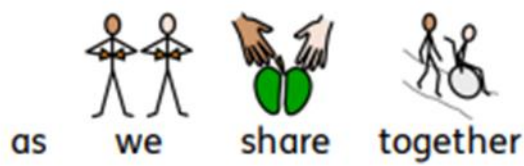




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



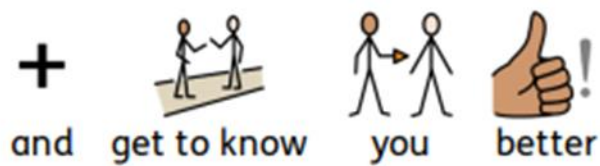
as we share together



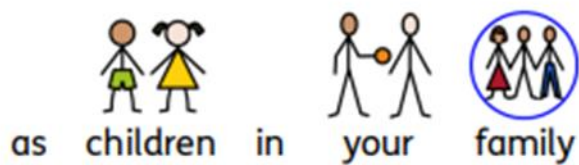
pray together



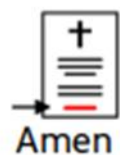
play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



Amen



Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, repeat with left hand



Alternate hands back and forth







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