



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>

2 Kings 4: 18-20, 32-37

The Shumamite woman's son

Theme: God uses us to share his love and care with others when they need it

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

2 Kings

The second book of Kings was written around 550BC. It is not clear who the author was but it was written during the Exile in Babylon. This story is about the Prophet Elisha and his raising of the Shumamite woman's son. He had previously promised the woman that she would have a child, but the child later died in her arms. This is a difficult passage, but it is important that we don't just avoid passages which are harder to talk about. They form part of our Scriptures and it is important to tackle these in a safe environment.

IMPORTANT: Be aware that this story may be a trigger for a child or children in your group in some way. Some may have been bereaved. You may want to look at Winston's Wish ahead of running this session for some guidance on ways to support children who are grieving. <https://www.winstonswish.org/> You may need to reinforce that not everyone who dies can be brought back to life and the conditions need to be just right, it happens very rarely, but that Jesus promises that death is not something to fear. Do not avoid talking about death with children.

Also be aware of safeguarding as this story could be a trigger if children have experienced abuse. The recommended version has the most suitable wording, so look carefully if you choose a different version. Be ready to explain that when people are very sick, they don't need lots of onlookers, so Elisha sent everyone away and closed the door to protect the dignity of the dead boy and so that he could pray without distraction for God to help him – but you should not be alone with adults you don't know well with the door shut. When it says Elisha lay on him, suggest it was more



that he sat alongside him and leaned over him. Putting his hands on the boy's hands, he was probably moving the boy's arms from across his chest where they would have restricted any CPR, and he was breathing into the boy with his own breath to revive him. You may want to have looked at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

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

In-person Game

This is a team relay. One member of the team stands at the other end of the hall while the rest stand in line. The first person in the line holds a crepe bandage. As the race begins, the first person runs to the person at the far end and bandages their foot. The bandaged person runs back to the team, removes the bandage and hands it to the next person in the line, who runs to the new person at the far end of the hall and bandages their knee. And it continues – finger, hand, elbow, head until all members of the team have been bandaged and have bandaged someone else.

Online game

Kim's game first aid box - use the powerpoint or actual items from a first aid box to play a memory game. Look at the items for one or two minutes then try to remember what was in the box. Or see who can be first to spot which one item has been removed.



Experience

For this story we recommend using the Living Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+4%3A+18-20%2C+32-37&version=TLB>

Where can I find the story online?

Under 5s story - God and Elisha help a child <https://youtu.be/jqz5vYAMDBc>

Cartoon by Kids on the Move <https://youtu.be/W72gCrUy-s>

Songs to support the story

Under fives: Give a little kindness by Orange Kids <https://youtu.be/q9jYAbNdDp0>

Five to elevens: Love one another by Yancey <https://youtu.be/LYIkcoAfLU4>

Explore

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

A new story to share

Love's the best medicine!

When you're not well, things don't feel right,

The house feels strange, my tummy tight.

I wish you were better, I wish you weren't ill,

I can't make you well again, but still,

Is there anything I can do at all?

I'm not a doctor, I'm not a nurse,

I'm worried, I'll only make things worse,

But I can hold your hand and cool your head,

Or bring you a nice cup of tea in bed.

I wonder if love is a medicine, after all.

I don't know what to do, I feel so small,

I can't give you tablets or give the doctor a call;

But I could read you stories or play a calm song,

And make sure the waiting doesn't feel so long.

Could love be a medicine, after all?

This stillness and quietness doesn't feel like us,

How can I help and not make too much fuss?

I could lie still and hold you, I won't be a bother,

And of course I won't wriggle and steal all the cover.

Perhaps love is a good medicine after all.

It feels really strange, you're not up and about,

I can't wait 'til you're stronger, so we can go out,

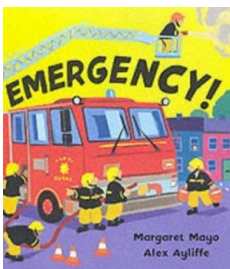
When I'm eating a biscuit, I'll offer to share,

And keep thinking of ways, to show you I care.

Yes, sometimes love can be the best medicine after all.

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.



'Emergency' by Margaret Mayo and Alex Ayliffe

<https://youtu.be/DjiQBbPMMf0>

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

- Elisha knew what to do, even though it was an emergency. Do we know what to do in emergencies? Are there people we can ask to help us? Who do you know, who is really good at staying calm in difficult situations?
- How do you think the family might have felt when the boy got better? Why do you think they trusted Elisha to help them?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder why Elisha prayed to God before he did anything to help?
- I wonder why the mother was cross with Elisha?



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:

- Bandage (talk about making people better when they're hurt)
- Heart (talk about love, God's love and being loving to others)
- Toy stethoscope (Doctors can help us feel better when we're sick. They check how we're doing by listening to our hearts. I wonder what your heart sounds like)
- A doll (use the doll to role-play looking after someone, wiping their tears, bandaging them up, listening to their heart)
- A pack of tissues (we use tissues to wipe our eyes when we're upset – talk about times when the children might have been upset and cried and role play drying tears)
- 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)

Express

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

Healing Prayer

Use a bandage or several shorter pieces of bandage and some permanent pen.



Encourage the group to think of people they know who are ill or need healing – if they can't think of anyone, they could pray for the people who are in the local hospital or hospice. Give them opportunity to write onto the bandage the names of the people they want God to bless, as a symbol of asking God to help that person get well or be comfortable.

Depending on the age of the children, you could place the bandage around the foot of a cross or you could take it in turns to bandage a teddy bear or soft toy as you talk to God quietly about the people you know who are poorly or worried and need God's help, and ask God to show the group how to help and encourage others.



Spoken prayer

Dear God

Please help me to notice people who are in need or hurting (*pointing to your eyes*)

Help me to use my hands to help people and show your love through my actions (*holding out your hands*)

Please help me to speak kind words and tell others of your love for them (*pointing to your mouth*)

Dear God through my eyes, mouth and hands help me to show your love to others.

Amen

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.

Ask an expert

If you have time, it would be good to bring in a first aid expert to give a demonstration of CPR (if your group are old enough) or other simple first aid skills. Perhaps someone in your congregation might have skills they could share, or you could ask the Red Cross, St Johns Ambulance or Heartstart.

Tissue box cover

Talk about how we may not be able to do CPR or anything that would save someone's life or bring them back after they have died, but we can all do things to help and care for people in need and we are like God's hands and feet when he calls us to help people. It is always good to have a pack of tissues with us, so we are ready to show love and care for others wherever we are.

You will need:

- An old small sock
- A button
- A pack of tissues
- A darning needle and a small piece of wool

Use a small old sock and place a pack of tissues inside it. Trim it to size and, using a darning needle and a small piece of wool, create a small loop on the edge of the sock. Fold over the top of the sock to find the right position for the button, and mark it with a pen. Sew the button in place.

Place your tissues into the cover and button it up.



First Aid Role play

Encourage the children to think about how they would care for someone who is ill, and how they would show love to them.

You will need:

- Bandages, sling, thermometer, medicine spoon and empty medicine bottle, etc
- Blanket
- Mask
- Gloves

What you do:

Set up some scenarios for the children to role play e.g., a cut that needs bandaging; a sore arm; feeling unwell. Encourage the children to think about what they may do to help the person and act it out. This could be done in conjunction with some basic first aid training.

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:

- Do you know someone who is sick or in hospital? Make a card with an encouraging message or, if appropriate, go and visit them. If you don't know anyone, why not send a card or picture or bake some cakes for your local care home?
- Why not find out about the Mercy Ships (mercyships.org.uk) and the work they do caring for people around the world. Take some time to pray for them and the people they help.



We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of the Shumamite woman's son with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk

Why not have a look at next month's resources on the theme of Celebrations

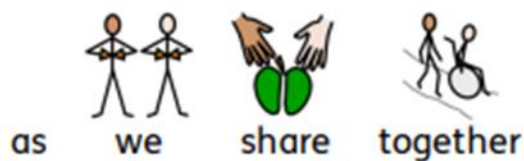




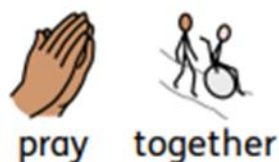
Jesus our friend,



be with us today



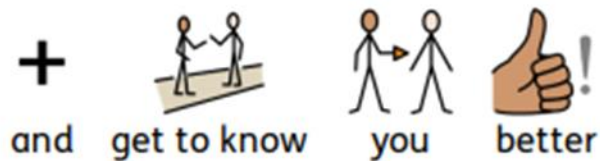
as we share together



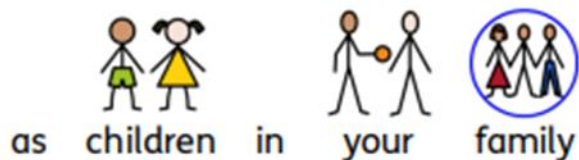
pray together



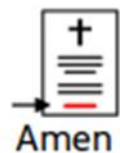
play together



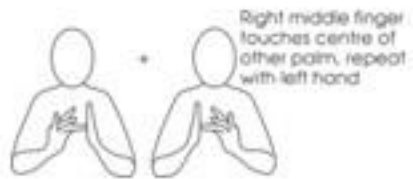
and get to know you better



as children in your family



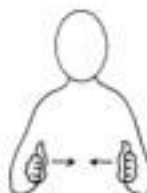
Amen



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



Alternate hands back and forth



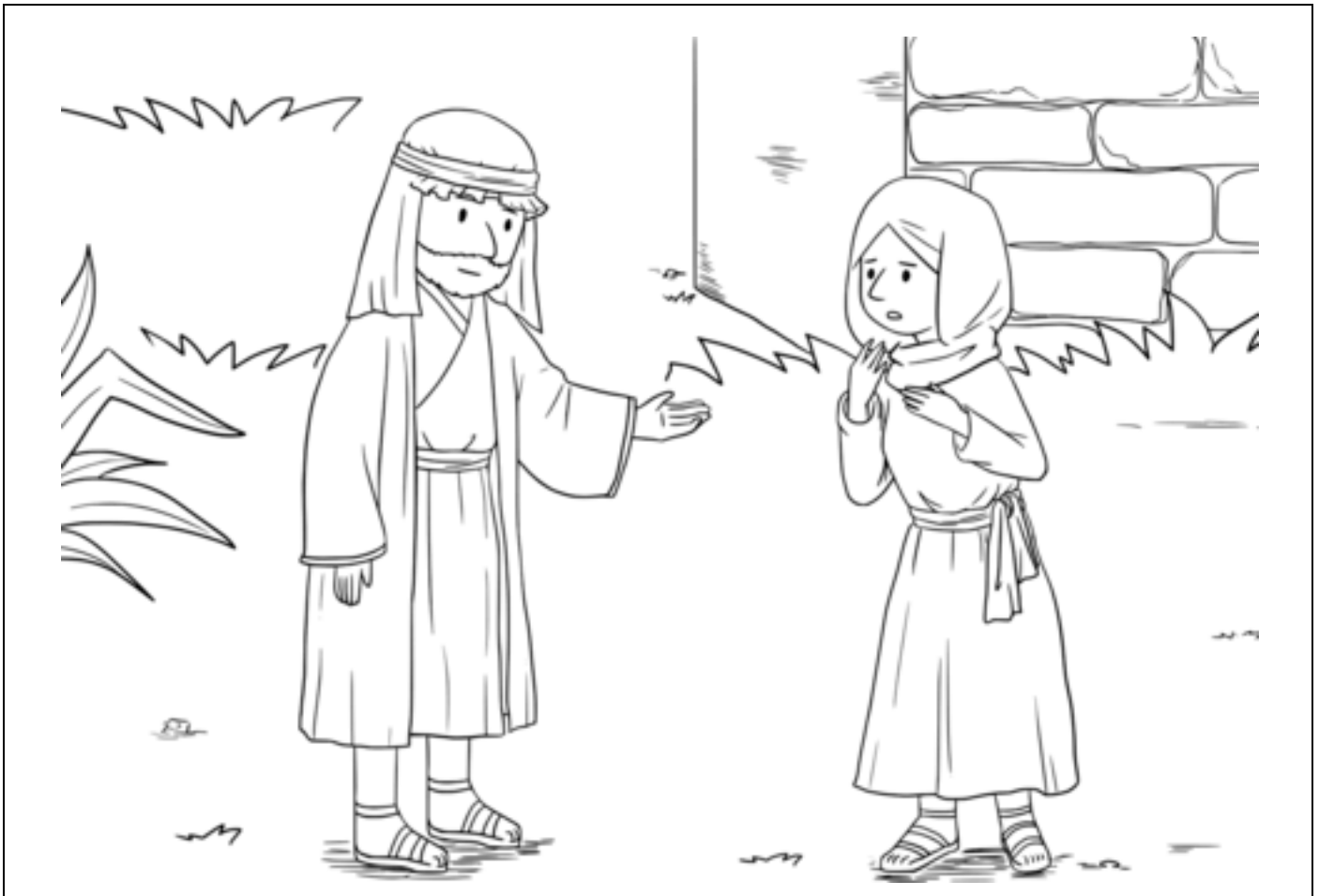


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