



# 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 Chronicles 7:14

Theme: The world has made a mess of things but God can help us change things together

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

Welcome to week 1 of exploring our February theme – God's World, Our Home (although you can do it at any time!)

The focus this week is "The world has made a mess of things but God can help us change things together." We will be focusing more directly at caring for God's creation in another session, but this week's reading naturally leads to some questions about it, too.

The important word is 'change'. The passage invites us to 'repent' and it will be helpful if, at the start of the session you introduce this word and explain that it means recognising what you're doing wrong, stopping, changing your behaviour and turning around to a new way of living. A recent example of this, which older children will remember, is that during the pandemic lockdown, when we had to change our behaviour, nature often flourished in the most unexpected places!

There is often a feeling of climate dread when we talk about environmental issues but this passage reminds us that we can be hopeful and that, trusting in God's truth, we can make the necessary changes.

We have to acknowledge that it is adults that have caused some of the problems that children are now facing, and will face in the future, but their voices, and their actions, can be used to help



motivate adults to 'repent' and this will provide the opportunity for some intergenerational responses.

The passage invites us to look for God's face and be humble – and we will be asking where we see God's face today and what it means to be humble. This might raise questions about pride – and it is important to remember that Pride (LGBTQIA+ movement) and personal or societal pride are different things – and that God loves everybody.

As a starter to the session, you might invite your group to complete the eco-church questionnaire (specially written for children). It can be found at [Family-friendly church - United Reformed Church](#)

## 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 - Minute to win it Games

Your group will have some fun whilst playing lots of short games that explore different ways we can look after God's world. You will need to prepare the games and have them set up



around the room. The children individually or in small groups/pairs start at different games, they have a few seconds to familiarise themselves with what they need to do; then on a signal (whistle) they have a minute to do the task. Once the time is up, their score can be recorded before resetting the game and moving on to the next game.

### **Game 1 – Turn off the lights**

*You will need:* a black tray or paper, a set of cut out light bulbs backed on black paper, some tweezers.

*What you do:* lay the light bulbs onto the black try/paper with the yellow light side upwards. On the whistle, children must use one hand to turn the lights off, by turning them over to the show the dark side. How many can they do in a minute?

### **Game 2 – Recycle**

*You will need:* a set of cut out items showing different types of rubbish: cans, bags, cardboard, newspaper etc. A set of A4 signs showing different types of recycling: aluminum, plastic, cardboard.

*What you do:* sort the rubbish pictures into the correct piles of recycling in one minute. How many can you do correctly?

### **Game 3 – Clean up the oceans**

*You will need:* a child's padding pool, a child's magnet fishing rod, plastic magnet fishing set of fish, a load of pictures of tins and rubbish found in the oceans each with a paper clip attached. All mixed together in the pool.

*What you do:* use the magnet rod to lift the rubbish out of the ocean and put it in a bag, leaving the fish in the pool.

### **Game 4 – Clean up**

*You will need:* a set of litter pickers, some rubbish bags, a load of clean rubbish of different shapes and sizes.

*What you do:* Use the litter pickers to collect the rubbish and place it in the rubbish bag.

### **Game 5 – Heal the world**

*You will need:* a collection of small pictures of the world cut in half.

*What you do:* lay the pictures on the floor. The children must find the halves and put them together to make as many complete worlds as possible.

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### **Alternative game – Making Faces**

Split your group into teams. Each team is given a box or basket of household objects. In an agreed time, the teams must work together to make a face, using their objects. You could hold an 'art show' after the task is completed, where the teams can walk around the space to view the faces.

For smaller groups, pairs or individuals could take turns to make a different face from the same items; to make it more challenging you could add additional rules like working in silence.



## Experience

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

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Chronicles%207%3A14&version=NLV>

### Where can I find the story online?

**Under 5s** – Park family kids

<https://vimeo.com/534645363>

**Over 5s** – Purpose House Church

<https://youtu.be/pfHuzfekGtl?si=nlOvfEM75rWNcPEV>

### Songs to support the story

**Under 5s** - 2 Chronicles 7v14: By All stars kids club

<https://youtu.be/m6RZ-9TElo8?si=djNyT9soljF1QiAC>

**Over 5s** – 2 Chronicles 7v14: Celebration LVCC

<https://youtu.be/E2epqSN3lcE?si=8jfb1o6WUvgl8kN>

## Explore

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

### A new way to explore the passage

Show a handmade picture of the world as you explain how God made the world just like someone made this picture for you. Isn't it a lovely picture? Isn't it a fabulous world? God said that the world was 'good'. God gave the world to us and said that our job was to look after the world and care for it.

I wonder how we do this well – take examples.

But there are some things we do that are not good for the world, take some examples of what these things are.

As children give examples of how we 'harm' the world, rip the picture up with each example.

The children might begin to react and comment as you tear the picture. You could reply with phrases such as 'It's ok, I didn't draw it' or 'It's ok, we can always draw another one'.

Finally notice that the world picture is now quite damaged.

Oh dear! What can we do now?

Take suggestions and perhaps try some of them to fix the world picture.

Then move on to some of the response ideas to explore further.

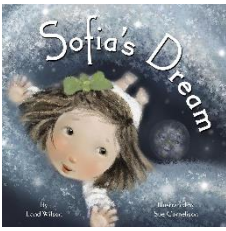
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### Modern parables

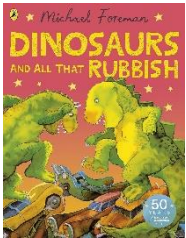
Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way



as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



**Sofia's Dream** by Land Wilson – LuLu's Storytime  
<https://youtu.be/NbQuCS17uQc?si=8eitmsFNkbsbWhd->



**Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish** by Michael Foreman – Daddy Bear Reads at Bedtime  
<https://youtu.be/l4yNutBvcmg?si=cb1RbxAwaZnfXta4>

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

- What would it look like if God healed our land?
- Where do you see God's face in creation?
- What difference does seeing God in creation make?
- I wonder how we can encourage others to be good guardians of the world?
- We know that God hears us – how do we make the adults around us hear us too?

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

- I wonder what God feels about God's world today?
- I wonder what you want to say to God today, knowing that God hears?
- I wonder what small thing you have done today and could do tomorrow to help heal the land?

### 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. *Please note – you can choose from the items listed here or choose your own, you do not need to use them all unless you choose to.*

This week's box could include:

- An old newspaper or magazine and a birthday card or notebook made of recycled paper. We can think about how rubbish can be made into new things.
- A wet wipe and a cloth. To think about how we can avoid making rubbish.
- A plastic single use water bottle and a refillable bottle. They can guess the message about this pair.
- A normal tea bag and a compostable tea bag or loose tea. To talk about how some things are bad for the environment that we didn't realise, but now we do, and can make changes. Some of the damage to our world was by mistake, but now we can see it and change what we do.
- Something broken that can still be useful. For example a broken flower pot that can be used to protect drainage holes in other pots. Or broken china or tiles used to make mosaics. God can take broken things and give them new ways to be used.
- A bag of fruit and vegetable peelings (fresh) and a small bag of potting compost. To talk about how nature can turn what looks like rubbish to us into beautiful soil for plants to grow.



- Something mended such as jeans with a patch. To talk about choosing to repair rather than just getting a new thing. Mending things is a way we can help look after God's creation.
- Something broken, like a toy or book, that the children can help safely mend with sticky tape. Or something they can watch you mend with superglue. God can help us mend broken things.
- A before and after photo of a place or space that has been brought to life. Talk about how bringing God's love and creativity together with people working as a group changes things. (There is an ideal pair of photos in the Spring/summer A Rocha magazine of a car park at St John's Methodist Church Settle.)

## Express

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

### Repentance Prayer

*You will need:*

- a laminated picture of the world (This can be done individually using A4 laminated sheets or using a giant one as a large group)
- some dark poster paint
- a bowl of water
- a towel
- some cloths
- cleaning spray



*What you do:*

Sit back and look at the laminated world picture. Think about how God made it and it was good. What would you like to thank God for now?

Now dip your hands/fingers in paint and make marks on the laminated world, as you think about the ways we might leave our mark on the world/ things we do that might not be good for the world.

Sit back and see the marks on your world. Think about how its inevitable that we will leave our marks on the world we live in but our job is to look after the world as much as we can, cleaning up after ourselves as much as possible. Take a cloth and spray and spend some time cleaning the world again as we pray about the things we want to do better.

Now wash your hands as you say Amen, remembering that God helps us to make wise choices and care for God's planet.

*Alternatives:*

This can be done using a rubber ball world. Put paint on your hands and pass the world around as we speak our prayers out loud. Then clean the world and pass it round again to pray once more.

### Spoken prayer

The spoken prayer section this week offers the opportunity to write prayers with your group which can be used during your session together. They could also be shared with the wider church.

Talk with your group about their favourite parts of creation. Choose five aspects of creation to thank God for. Then talk about ways in which we could look after God's world more positively and choose five examples to include in the prayer. You could use the template below or create your own.



Dear God,

Thank you for your beautiful creation,

Thank you for:

- .
- .
- .
- .
- .

Help us to be better at taking care of your world,

Help us to:

- .
- .
- .
- .
- .

Amen

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## 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.

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.

## Mud Faces

*You will need:*

- Leaves
- Twigs
- Seeds
- Mud
- Trays- if you have no outdoor spaces



### What you do:

If you have a space outdoors, find a space with some mud. Create a face using the items you have found from nature.

If you are feeling adventurous create a mud spot on a tree or wall and create a face in the spot.

If you don't have an outdoor space, use a tray and some soil and water to create mud and create your faces indoors.

Remember to wash the children's hands well after this activity. You may want to provide them with old shirts to put on to protect their clothing.

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## Cleaning Coins Experiment

### You will need:

- Copper coins (1p or 2p)
- Cups
- Paper towels
- Cleaning substances (water, lemon juice, cola, washing-up liquid, ketchup, vinegar, milk)



### What you do:

1. **Prediction:** Discuss which substances you think might clean the coins best.
2. **Experiment:** Place a coin in a cup with a cleaning substance. Let the coins soak for a few minutes and then remove and wipe the coins.
3. **Observation:** Compare the cleanliness of the coins.
4. **Conclusion:** Discuss the effectiveness of each substance. Did any of the substances surprise you?

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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:

- When you're out and about and see that someone has dropped some litter, use gloves and/or a litter picker (or cover your hands with a bag) and pick it up and put it in the bin. Tell God you're sorry that someone's spoiled God's beautiful world and smile to see the space look a bit tidier.
  - When you wake in the morning, thank God for the wonderful world we've been given as our home and ask God to help you take care of your little bit of the world.
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We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **2 Chronicles** with us.

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

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Psalm 119**





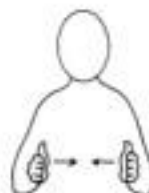
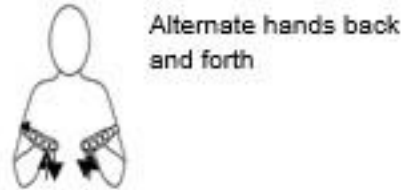
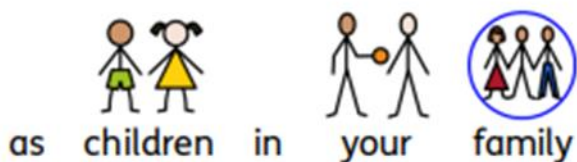
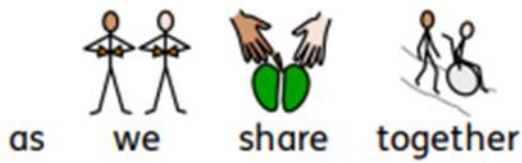




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