



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>

Acts 4: 32-37

Theme: God blesses us when we share with others.

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

ACTS

There's a bit of a shift in this week's material. Whilst we're still looking at the theme of 'home', we are moving away from looking at home as a physical space, and looking at the way people behave and respond to each other that might make us think of a place or situation as 'homey'.

In the passage in Acts 4, Luke tells us about how the early Christians cared for one another. We hear how those who had more than they needed shared it with those who didn't have enough. People sold houses and lands to raise money for their friends and neighbours ensuring that everybody's needs were met. And we learn that God blesses those who are generous with what they have.

There is, of course, a balance to be made between sharing what you have and giving everything away. Whilst Jesus tells the rich young man that he must give away everything he owns (Mark 10:17-22) the early Christians were a bit more pragmatic. They raised money, or shared what they had, to make sure that everyone had what they needed – and that is not the same as making sure everyone had what they wanted.

The passage also shows us just how welcoming, and widespread, this early community of Christians was – we learn that Joseph was from Cyprus and was a Levite (Levites had special roles in the Temple). What communities are your group part of (family, school, town, church, etc.)? Are those communities like the early church described in the passage from Acts?



What might your group think about the inequality of wealth in our own society? We know that the UK has 171 billionaires (to help explain the difference between a million and a billion: 1 million seconds is about 12 days, 1 billion seconds is about 32 years) and yet 12 million people, including 3.6 million children, live in 'absolute poverty' in the UK (March 2024 [300,000 more UK children fell into absolute poverty at height of cost of living crisis | Poverty | The Guardian](#))

How can you be generous if you don't have anything? We can encourage those in our group to think about sharing time that they have, or knowledge or wisdom that they have. Sharing a smile or a joke with someone is also a generous act.

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

Both of these games focus on teamwork skills – working together with a single purpose

In-person Game – Bean bag relay

Split your group into two teams and stand them in lines. Give the person at the front of each line a bean bag. The bean bag must be passed alternatively overhead then between legs until it reaches the end of the line. The person at the back runs to the front of the line and



the process is repeated. When the original line leader gets back to the front, the whole team must sit down with their hands on their heads. The first team to complete the challenge are the winners!

Alternative game – Beetle Drive

Split the group into teams. Each team needs a piece of plain paper, a pen or pencil and a dice. Take it in turns to roll the dice, rolling different numbers mean that you can draw different sections of your beetle. You must roll a six first for the body and then a five for the head. You can then roll fours and threes for legs (you need 6), twos for the antennae (you need 2) and ones for the eyes (you need 2). The winners are the first team to complete their beetle.

Experience

For this story we recommend using the Easy-to-read version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%204%3A32-37&version=ERV>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Sharing is delicious! – Marin Miller

<https://youtu.be/VIPjMQn-VxM?si=eaqcE39mjYfpd-hq>

Over fives: What is the Church? – Lifekids

https://youtu.be/rms6KePjZ8?si=bl_R-82H6QVwi2Ax

Songs to support the story

Under fives: Share Share – Little Worship Company

<https://youtu.be/09hsYEgqDS4?si=yCQPU2vozZgjc8bf>

Five to elevens: Love One Another

<https://youtu.be/09hsYEgqDS4?si=MU9KrRq1fxdbWC2H>

Share – Lantern Music

https://youtu.be/3uzPCeqS8zg?si=KwX_pnWEctyaUS8Y

Explore

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

A new way to explore the passage

Spreading God's love by sharing what you have

This Explore activity sets a challenge for your group to share what they have equally with one another. It will give opportunity to talk about how difficult this might be and the challenges it brings.

You will need:

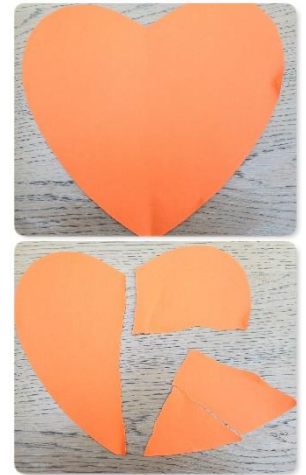
- A cup filled with rice
- An empty cup for each person
- A large heart cut out of paper



What you do:

Sit in a circle. Give one person the full cup of rice and give everybody else in the group an empty cup. Challenge the group to share the rice equally between each person as the cup with the rice is passed from one person to the next around the circle. This will mean that the first person will have to give away almost all of their rice at the beginning and the amount shared will reduce as the remaining amount of rice in the cup goes down. The aim is for each person to have the same quantity of rice in their cup at the end. This might be an activity that you can do a number of times, chatting about what it means to share what we have in between each attempt.

To explore further the idea of spreading God's love and sharing what you have, take a paper heart and explain that the heart represents God's love for everyone. Tear the heart in two and give one half each to two other people in the group, asking them to share their half with someone else. Continue this activity until each person including yourself has a piece of the heart. If each of us share's a little bit of God's love, everyone has some to share with others. The only difference being, of course, that God's love is not finite in size and never gets any smaller, no matter how far you spread it.

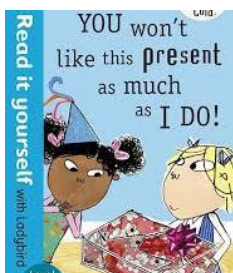


This activity would also work well in an all-age service with the whole congregation taking part.

The music recommendation given with the creative prayer activity for this session would fit well with this activity too.

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.



Charlie and Lola – you won't like this present as much as I do.
<https://youtu.be/owaCBVRN-Pg?si=wAmuH5rvZyEAYp7R>

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

- How hard is it to give things away?
- How does God bless us when we share?
- What are the positives and negatives of sharing what you have?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder where those who sold their houses lived?
- I wonder what you would find hardest to share with others?
- I wonder how it feels when people don't share with you?



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:

- Heart shaped objects –To think about how the early Christians shared God's love and looked after each other.
- Play people – Use play people, or natural objects such as pebbles or sticks, to help re-tell and explore the story together.
- Building bricks or blocks – Can you build a house for the people from the story to live in together?
- Playdough – Share the playdough equally so everyone has some to play with.
- Play money – To think about the kinds of things we need to buy with money. Think about what you would choose to buy, to share with the group.
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric – A cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!

Express

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

Sharing God's love

This activity will help to pray for those we want to share Gods love with.

You will need:

- some strips of kitchen paper
- water soluble pens
- a small glass with about an inch of water in it

On the strips of paper, about five centimetres from the bottom, draw a heart. Above the heart, write the initials or draw the face of someone you want to know God's love.

Put the end of the strip in the water and pray that God will help you to show that person that you love them and God loves them.

Watch as the water slowly climbs up the paper and the ink in the heart spreads out to cover and absorb the initials. This is a symbol of how you want your love and God's love to reach out to that person. You could play some reflective music while you watch the hearts dissolve into the water.





A great song for this creative prayer is Graham Kendrick's 'A little bit of love'.
<https://youtu.be/auwgDr2BA7E>

Spoken prayer

Generous God

Look at all we have!

Even when we think we don't have much

We know that there are others who have much less.

Open our hearts to your generous love

And help us share what we have with those who need it.

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. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf> _However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Making together

Nurturing a sense of community and having a willingness to share what we have with others requires us to work together. For this activity, provide a variety of resources for teams to make their own creations by working together. You could give the group a challenge, for example to create a new animal, to design a garden, to invent a new form of transport etc.



You will need:

Items such as Playdough, junk modelling equipment, construction play



Sharing cakes

Ahead of this session, you might choose to invite the guardians of your group (or someone from the wider church if appropriate) to come to collect their children a little earlier than normal, or offer to provide cakes for the after-service coffee if your group meet during the service. This will give an opportunity for the children to share some of the cakes which they have decorated. Additionally, you could ensure each child has a cake to take home to share with someone they know like a friend or neighbour.



You will need:

- Fairy cakes (gluten and dairy free)
- Icing
- Toppings such as hundreds and thousands, smarties, buttons



What you do:

Cover the top of the cake with icing and decorate as desired, making sure that each child has enough cakes to enable them to share with others.

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:

- As a group, host a swap shop either at the church or for within a session of your group. There are likely to be unwanted items at home that could be brought in which could be reused by someone else. A table is laid with the items, as you place something down you could swap it for something you need.
 - Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you something you might not already know about Jesus.
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We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of disciples and sharing with us.

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

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **the wise and foolish builder**.



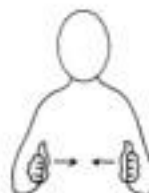
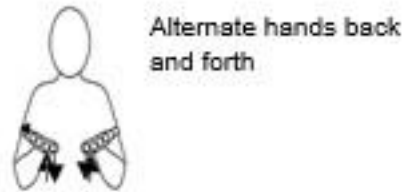
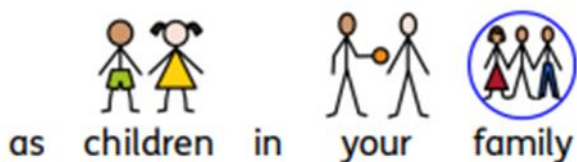
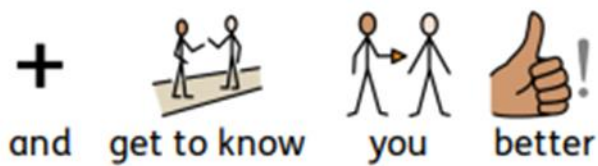
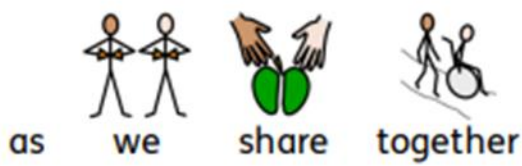




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