



# 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>

## Matthew 17:1-9 The transfiguration

Theme: Exploring who Jesus is

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

#### Matthew

The book of Matthew is the first book of the New Testament. Most people think that it was written by one of Jesus' close friends, Matthew, who gave up being a tax collector to follow Him. Matthew shows his readers that Jesus is a great teacher, healer and leader who is the Good News that God has promised everyone.

This week's reading tells us about a time when Jesus took a few of his disciples away, to spend some time together. In spending time together, they learnt who Jesus was. I wonder how well we know Jesus.



# 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

Blindfold one of the group. The blindfolded person tries to catch one of the rest of the group and, when they catch someone, they have three guesses to work out who it is. They could feel to help them work out how tall they are, what they're wearing etc. If they guess correctly, the other person becomes the catcher, if they don't, then they carry on and try to catch somebody different. *Be aware that some children may be averse to touch or to being blindfold. An alternative would be for a child to go outside while you choose one person in the room. When the child comes in, they can ask three questions and then try to guess which person was chosen.*

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## Online game

Play "Guess Who" – one person chooses one of the people on screen and writes their name on a piece of paper but does not tell anyone who it is. The others ask 'yes/no' questions such as 'is the person wearing glasses?', and if the answer is no, all the people with glasses turn their cameras off while, if the answer is yes,



all the people without glasses turn their cameras off. The aim is to try to be the first person to guess the name written on the paper.

## Experience

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

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+17%3A+1-9&version=ICB>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under 5s story from Nicola <https://youtu.be/cA22kIJY9Ak>

Cartoon by saddleback Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfT5mInsr9A>

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: Jesus in the morning by Life Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9F-spTjIGB0>

Five to elevens: We wanna see Jesus lifted high by Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLJmRPvhgdo>

## Explore

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

### A new story to share

Naseem and Mary were walking together into school. Naseem was feeling very excited, it was Friday and Friday meant show and tell. Naseem thought of the object he had bought in for show and tell and hugged his bag a little closer to his tummy. The item in the bag was very special to him. He couldn't wait. Mary meanwhile had picked up the first thing that she had seen, she left the house in a hurry this morning suddenly remembering it was show and tell day. Show and tell was not as important to Mary, although she enjoyed it when it was her turn, she often found it boring listening to others.

The day dragged for Naseem but eventually maths came and went, so did lunch and PE and finally it was time. Naseem could hardly sit still; he was eager to show his item, but he also loved to see what else people had brought in with them, he loved it when he discovered something new about his friends.

Jessica went first, she had brought in a photo of her pet bunny, Fluffy. She explained all the things she did to look after her pet. Mrs Peters, the teacher, asked if anyone had questions for Jessica. Mina put up her hand, "Do you have any other pets?" Mina asked. Mary already knew the answer, she played with Jessica every day and Jessica talked about her rabbit all the time, she doesn't have any other pets she thought. But to Mary's surprise Jessica said that yes, she did have other pets, a hamster called Hammy. Mary leaned over to Naseem and whispered that she didn't know Jessica had a hamster. Naseem replied that he knew about the hamster and that Jessica didn't like the hamster as much as her rabbit because it had bitten her finger once so she doesn't talk about it as much.

Mary sat back ready to hear what Matthew had brought with him.....it was his favourite book. Although they often sat together at lunchtime, Mary realised she didn't have any idea what Matthew's favourite book would be. Naseem on the other hand was silently guessing that the book was one about dinosaurs as that is Matthew's favourite thing in the whole world. "Yes" he nearly said out loud, it is about dinosaurs. Mary was about to ask Naseem if he knew Matthew liked dinosaurs but changed her mind when she saw that Naseem had a knowing look on his face.

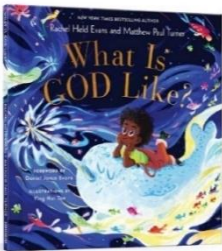
Mary started to get a sinking feeling in her stomach, she was beginning to realise that she didn't know her friends as well as she thought. It was Naseem's turn next, phew thought Mary I am bound to know what he



has brought in. Although she couldn't guess what it might be she didn't think she'd be surprised at the item Naseem was about to lift carefully out of his bag. But once again Mary was wrong...for Naseem lifted the most beautiful statue of a fairy she had ever seen, the sparkles glistened in the sunlight. It was amazing, everyone in the room gasped and Naseem smiled broadly. Mary badly wanted to ask Naseem a question but started to worry that she should surely know the answer as he was her bestest friend. Naseem told everyone about his collection of wonderful fairies explaining this was his favourite, then before they knew it show and tell was over and everyone was getting their coats ready for home time, Mary shyly walked over to Naseem, "Naseem" she said. "Yes Mary"... "how, um...you seem to know so much about everyone, you and I are best friends but yet I didn't know you liked fairies, why do you think that is?" "Well Mary, it's simple, you never asked."

## 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.



'What is God like' by Rachel Held Evans and Matthew Paul Turner  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEKMCBPsvas&t=21s>

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

- Why did Jesus tell his disciples not to tell anyone about what they had seen or heard on the mountain? Isn't our job to share the stories with others? Are there things that we need to keep to ourselves?
- How can we get to know Jesus better? What sort of things might help us? What do we already know?

## Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder what it feels like to be known or not known?
- I wonder what you'd like Jesus to know about 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:

- a battery powered candle or torch (play with the light and shine it on different things, including the child, use words like 'bright' 'light' 'dark' 'shining' 'lit up')
- a cushion (talk about how the Jesus's friends all felt sleepy, sleepy, until they all fell fast asleep)
- a kitchen set (come and have a nice cup of tea? It's nice to see you! Welcome! Talk about sharing and being kind)
- a mirror (Look, what can you see? Yes, it's you! I can see your eyes, your hair.... You're a very special person. God made you and God loves you)
- and 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!)

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?

## Creative Transforming Cloud Prayers

You will need:

- Shaving foam
- A tall glass half filled with water
- Food colouring in two or three colours
- Small dishes or saucers
- Teaspoons or droppers



Dilute a few drops of the food colouring with a small amount of water in the small dishes or saucers. Fill the glass half full of water and add the shaving foam to make a cloud resting on the water.

Think of a situation you might like to change - something you have done, perhaps, that you are not pleased with. Using the teaspoon or a dropper, add a few drops of one of the colours to the shaving foam and ask God to change that situation. Think of a person that you would like to pray for and add a few drops of a different colour to the cloud. Ask God to help them.



The colouring will slowly make its way down through the spaces between the foam and the glass, and flow down into the water. Notice how the water is changing. As this happens, you can imagine God's power breaking through and changing the situation, just as in the story.

You could choose between the creative prayer and the spoken prayer below or encourage the children to give their own suggestions for a prayer. You could pass a soft toy or object from person to person and the person holding it can either pass it straight on or say a prayer and pass it on. Leaders should sit amongst the children and model with simple thank you, sorry or please help prayers.

Think of other situations that you might want to change and use a different colour for your prayers.

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## Spoken prayer

Dear Jesus  
 Help me to take time to be with you.  
 Help me to know that you are close by.  
 I want to hear your whispers,  
 to know your surprises,  
 to share your plans.  
 Help me to talk to you and tell you about my day  
 and to know your comfort and peace

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. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

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.

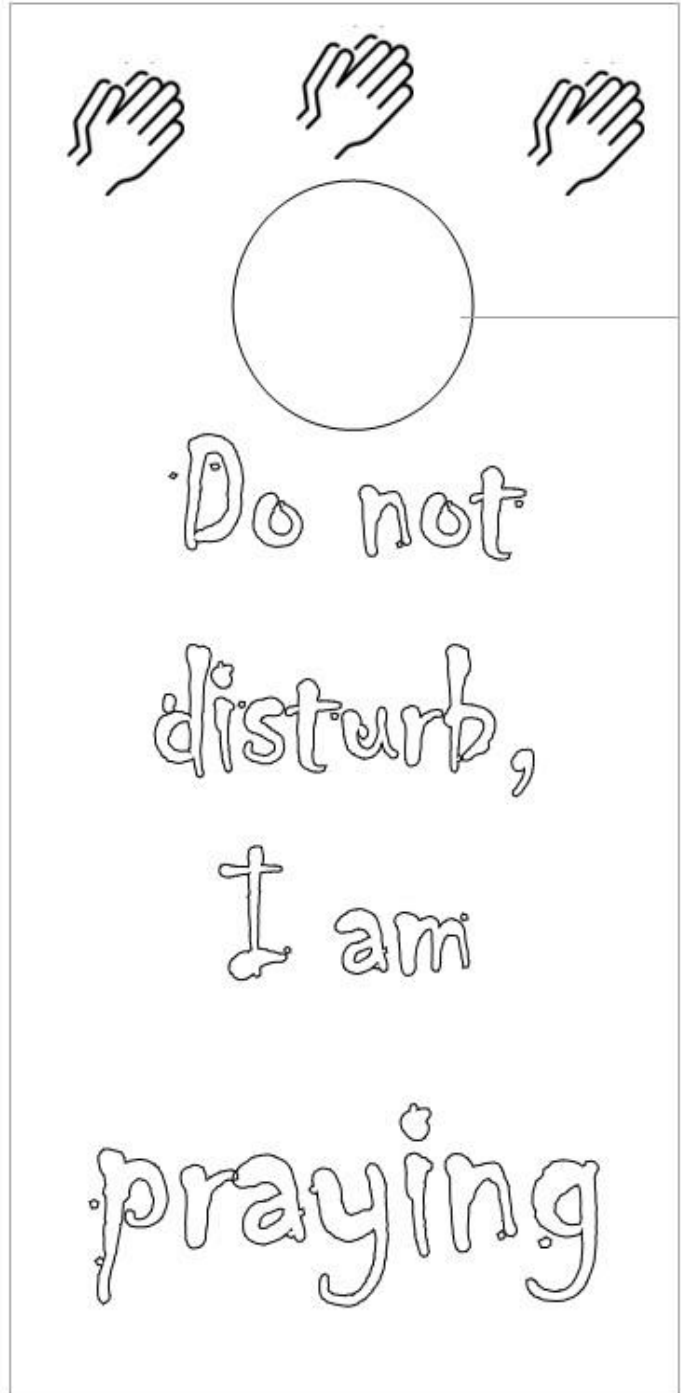
## Do Not Disturb Door Hanger

Talk about how sometimes we might talk to God or Jesus in a group and sometimes we might want to find a quiet place, just for God and us to be together. A door hanger can help others know that you're praying and don't want to be disturbed. Through our prayers we can get to know Jesus better.

### You will need:

- Scissors
- Paper/ card
- Pens

Either use the template supplied or create your own door hanger. Another option would be to use coloured foam sheets and stick-on letters and images.



## Magnifying Glass

Sometimes you need to look closely to see something for what it really is, using the light to help you. Making a simple magnifying glass can help us look at ordinary things from a different angle. Spending time with Jesus helps us to look closely at who he really is and get to know him better.

### You will need:

- An empty 2 litre bottle
- Marker pen
- Scissors
- Water
- Things to observe (such as a fruit or vegetable, a leaf or flower, a rock, and a small toy)

**What you do:**

- Draw a circle on the neck of a bottle where there is a smooth, curved edge.
- Cut the circle out of the bottle so that the cut-out shape resembles a shallow bowl.
- Choose something object to observe without water in the magnifying glass. Now look at the same object using the magnifying glass but this time with water in it. What can you see?
- Obviously an alternative would be to give the children real magnifying glasses to experiment with, if you have them, or with older children you could show them things through a microscope.



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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:

- Make a list of questions you could use to find out a bit more about someone you don't know well, then use the list to get to know someone new, maybe someone at your church or in your school.
  - 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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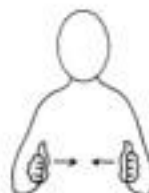
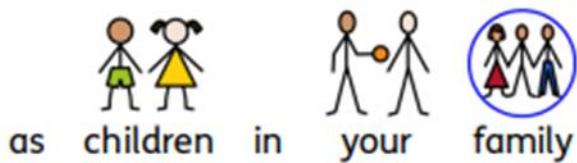
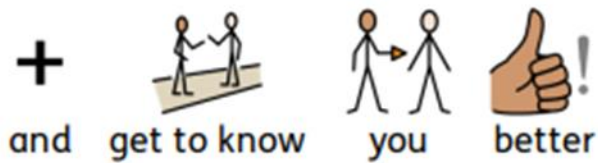
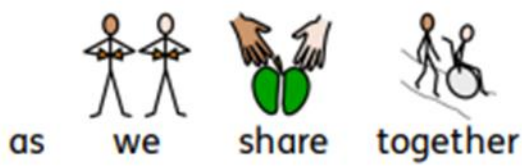
We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of the Transfiguration with us.

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

Next month's resources will be launched on 1 March 2023 and will be on the theme of Easter Happenings









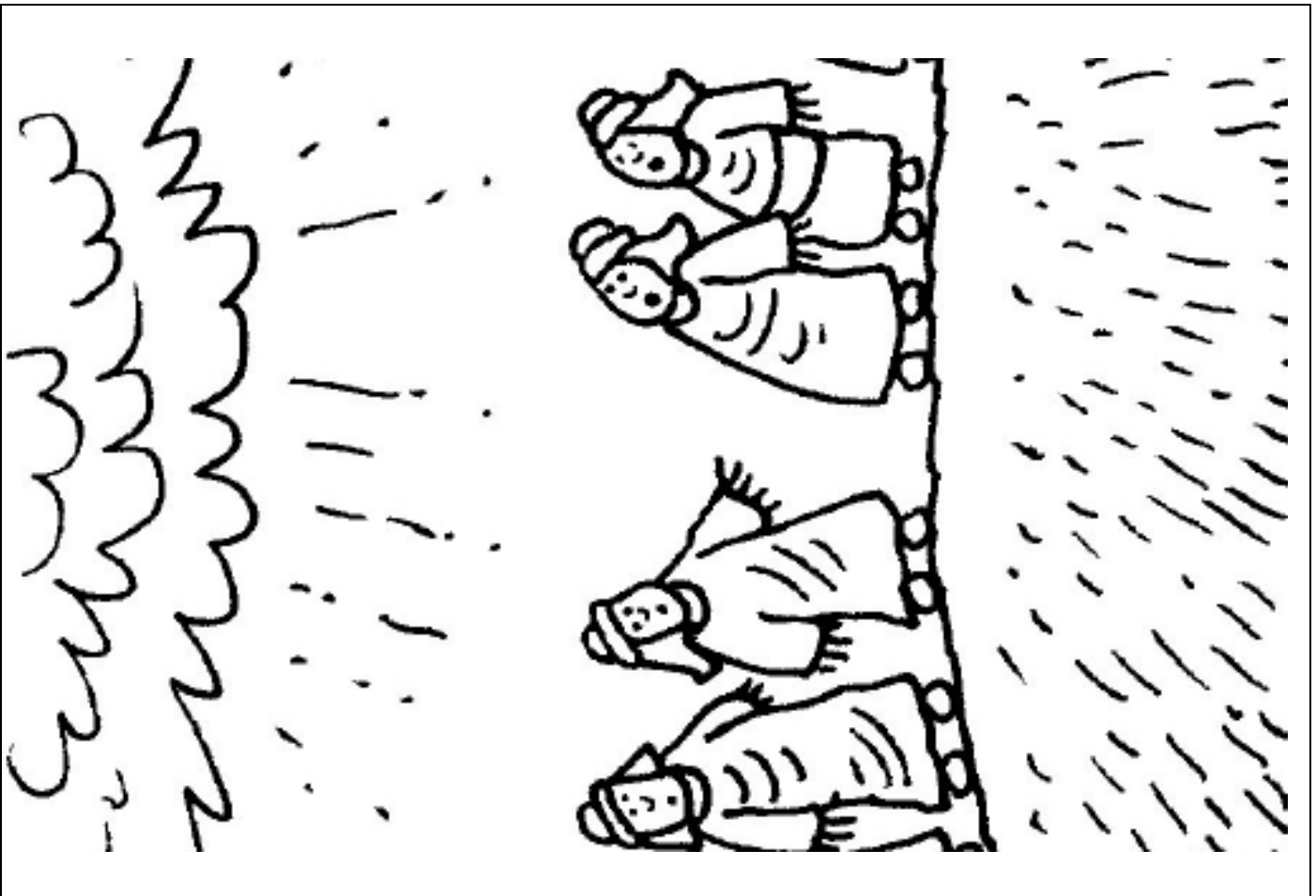


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