



# 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>

## Psalm 121 A Traveller's Prayer

Theme: Everyday journeys with God - one step at a time

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

#### Psalms

Psalms is a collection of sacred songs and poems written over many years. There were many writers in the Book of Psalms but David, the shepherd boy chosen to be king, wrote over half of them. Psalm 121 is one of David's psalms. The Israelites would have sung this song at many festivals and occasions as a reminder that God goes with them, each step of the way. It was sung by pilgrims who were making their way on the road to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. This is how it became known as the Pilgrim's Prayer. Can you imagine hearing hundreds of pilgrims singing it on the road? As a pilgrimage song it might remind us that the journey can be as important, if not more, than the destination. Later its name was changed to the Travellers' Psalm.



# 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

### Laser Room Game

Use string to setup a laser maze obstacle course. Setup lines of string at different angles running from wall to wall around the room. Challenge participants to make their way across the room without touching any of the "laser beams."

Alter the difficulty by: Increasing the number of laser beams

- Setting a time limit to cross
- Providing a range of different sized objects that must be successfully carried through the maze – eg football, broom, chair
- Blindfold team members and get others to guide them using verbal instructions.



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## Online game

### I-Spy Game

One of the things we are encouraged to do on our journeys is to be aware of things – to keep an eye out for where we might spot signs of God. This easy game invites us to be observant...

Group members take it in turns to be 'spy'.

The spy needs to choose an object that everyone can see. As this is online, it needs to be something that can be seen on their screen. The spy will say, "I spy with my little eye something beginning with..." Other players need to guess what it is.

### Alternative: What's Changed

Players take it in turns to turn off their camera and change something about them or their background. Other players must try and guess what has changed.

## Experience

For this story we recommend using the The Message

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+121&version=MSG>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: God knows all about me by Clare Page <https://youtu.be/InvQKp4rcpg>

Over fives: Psalm 121 explored by a child by Pursue God Kids <https://youtu.be/j9haoH4WUAM>

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: Going on a journey by Vineyard Kids <https://youtu.be/tZl6o-F32Ko>

Five to elevens: Movements by Rend Collective <https://youtu.be/ICYgQWLO8vY>

Extra silly song <https://youtu.be/GxxEDRimVps>



# Explore

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

## Annotated Bible Reflection

Provide printed copies of the Psalm and pens/highlighters so that everyone can annotate and add notes. Read the passage out loud, reflect on the questions below and encourage everyone to draw and write and highlight the psalm with their responses. Read the Psalm a few times, allowing space for reflection. Invite everyone to discuss together as a group.



Lightbulb – What things stand out for you?



Questions – What questions do you have? What are you unsure about?



Surprise – What surprises you?



Thumbs up – What do you agree with? What do you like?



Thumbs down – What do you not like? What do you find difficult?



Déjà vu – Does the passage remind you of anything similar elsewhere in the Bible?



Sharing – What would you like to share with others?



Action – What will you do in response?

## Taking this session outside on a walk

As this is a travelling prayer there is an opportunity to take your session outside, perhaps including a walk, especially if you have more than 30 mins in your mid-week group or Messy Church for example. Many of the activities and ideas in the session can be easily incorporated into an outdoor 'travelling session'. Plan a route with plenty to see and that leads to a place of interest or somewhere you can spend some time as a group e.g. a field, park, another church, ruins and so on.

You could still begin with your gathering prayer and outline the plan to the group, including anything the group need to be aware of and ways to stay together and stay safe. (Don't forget to have received consent to take the group off site)

Share the Psalm with the group before leaving, as a foundation to the outdoor session. You could use the wondering questions provided for discussion in pairs along the way or stop at set points on the route to tackle them as a group.

Perhaps there is a song that your group like to sing on journeys that you could all sing along the route.



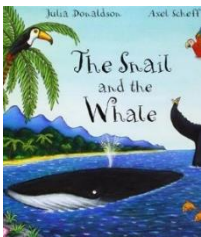
You could grab some clipboards and use the I spy chart game as you walk, giving attention to the final question when you reach your destination – What did you see along the route that reminded you of God?

When you get to the destination, the group could respond to the Psalm in whatever way you chose, artistically or using the story exploration idea above. If you have the bits and pieces with you to make the walking feet, it could be a fun activity on a slope perhaps.

After a prayer together, it's time to travel back, perhaps exploring one final big question as you walk.

## 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.



'The Snail and the Whale' by Julia Donaldson  
<https://youtu.be/EmMnaSkeKqQ>

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

- What did that song sound like when it was originally sung by the pilgrims?
- What do you think is more important to the pilgrims, the destination or the journey?

## Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder where you find your strength?
- I wonder if there is there any song you like to sing or listen to when you are travelling?

## 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 map (look at the map, maybe track a journey on it, think about what the children may see on the journey)
- A compass (a compass helps us on a journey by pointing us in the right direction, God helps us to go in the right direction)
- A backpack (what do we need to take on a journey? What do you like to have in their backpacks when going on a journey?)
- A walking stick (a walking stick can help us when going on a long walk, it stops us from stumbling, God helps us too when we are travelling)
- Binoculars (what can we see when we go on journeys, sometimes we need to look really carefully where we are going and spot anything which may get in our way)
- 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?

## Small World Journey Prayer



As a whole group, or in smaller groups of two or three, create a road for small world figures to travel. Stop regularly on the journey, to share a simple prayer or follow the spoken prayer below, if you'd prefer.

You will need:

- A selection of small world animals or people such as; Lego, Playmobil or small animals
- Materials to make a road such as; play dough, blocks, cards, paper or fabric
- Obstacles to place on the road
- An object or picture to represent your destination

What to do:

- Make your road together then place one or two obstacles on your journey. You could use wooden blocks or toy dinosaurs.
- Choose your travellers and pray before starting your journey.
- Stop at the obstacles. Pray for God's help with things we are finding hard.
- As you arrive at your destination, thank God for always being with us.

## Spoken prayer

### The Start

God of Beginnings and Fresh Starts,  
Help us to trust you,  
Knowing that you have travelled this road before,  
And will be with us all the way.

Amen

### Obstacle 1

God of Care and Compassion  
Help us to trust you,  
When our journeys feel too hard.  
Amen

### Obstacle 2

God of Mystery and Wonder,  
Help us to trust you,  
When unexpected things happen.  
Amen

### We're here!

God of Peace and Refreshment  
Help us to rest and relax,  
With you.  
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: <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.

## Journey journal

### You will need:

4 pieces of A4 paper  
Ribbon or wool

### What you do:

Create a book using some A4 paper folded in half and tie some ribbon around the fold to hold it together.

Create a front cover for your journal.

Encourage the children to note down things they see and maybe things that have happened on their journey.

There may be something funny they see e.g. a car with eyelashes or something which makes them worried. e.g. a dog without an owner.

Use the I-spy chart (see the template) or make your own to help the children observe things on their journey.

Ask these questions on their journey:

Which one of these things have helped us on our journey?

Where did you see God on your journey?

Draw or write your response into your journal.

Encourage the children to continue with their journal on other journeys they take.

## Walking toy



### You will need:

An old Sellotape roll or cylinder (a small Pringles tube with the end cut off would work)  
2 wooden sticks  
A sheet of card  
A straw cut in half

### What you do

On a sheet of card draw round the child's feet and cut them out. Tape the straw pieces on to the under side of the feet, just below the big toe.

Tape a short stick on each side of the cylinder.

Note on the picture how the sticks are not placed at the same level, one is higher than the other. This will allow for the feet to walk.

Insert the sticks inside the straws. The sticks roll inside the straws, to create the walking movement.

Put them on a flat surface, give it a slight push and watch it walk away! Play around with slanted surfaces.



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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:

- Create a journey journal. Over one week, record all the journeys you make – where you went, how you travelled etc. You could use words and/or pictures and decorate the journal too. What visual signs did you spot on each journey that reminded you of God?
  - A pilgrimage is a special journey to a special place that reminds you of God. Where could you travel to in your local area that would be a good place to talk to and listen to God? It could even be the bottom of your garden or the local shops. Find a way to make your journey there special.
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We hope you enjoyed exploring Psalm 121, a traveller's prayer 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 **The Good Samaritan**?



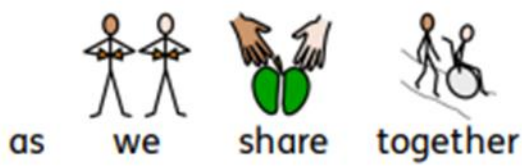




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



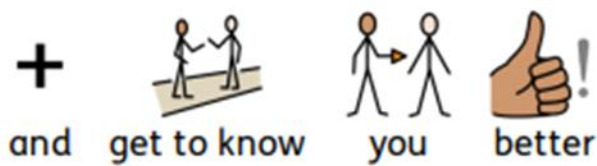
as we share together



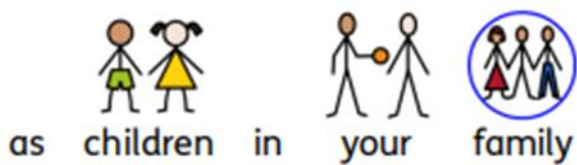
pray together



play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



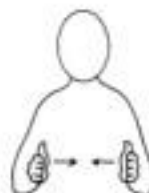
Amen



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

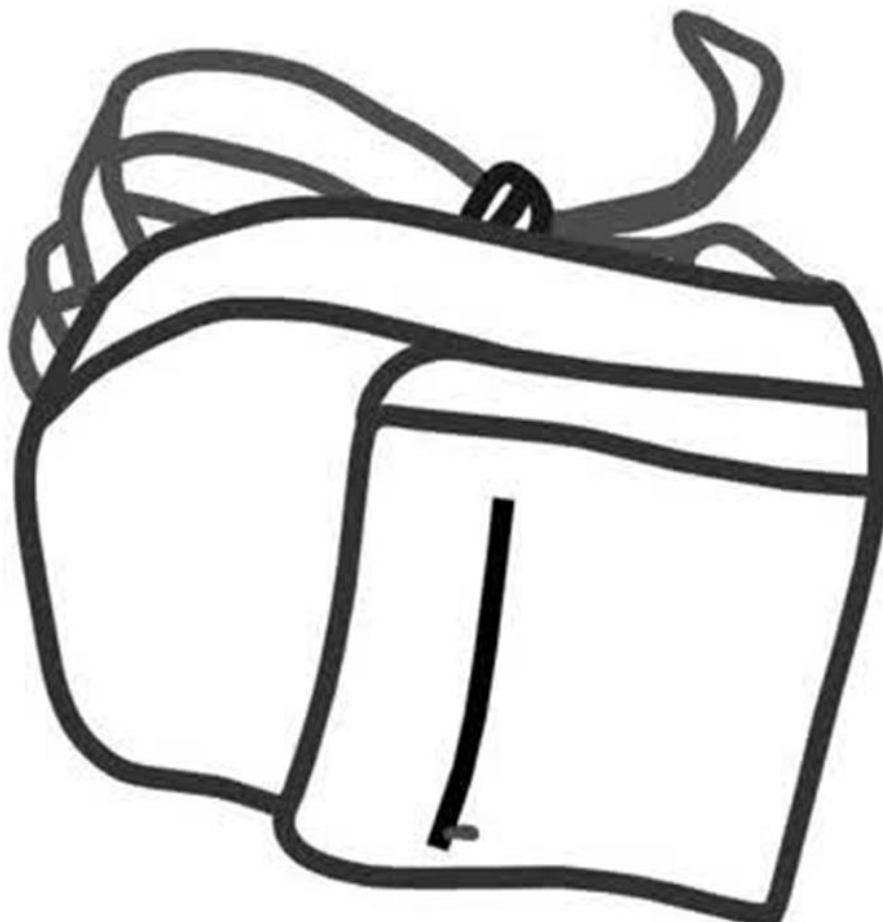


Alternate hands back and forth





Design your own  
prayer week bag



Design your own  
prayer week bag



## I-Spy on my journey

A flower growing somewhere unusual



Someone helping someone else



A walking stick



A dog



A tree where you can see the roots



A pushchair or pram



A cat



A post box



A road sign



A living thing smaller than your little finger



A police car



A plane



Something that reminds you of God