



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*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: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: Hebrews 13: 5-8

Theme: God is with us always – that's a promise.

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

The promise in Hebrews is a reminder that God is always with us; It is the same promise that was given to Moses and the Israelites and was passed down by Moses to Joshua when he became leader (Deuteronomy 31 v 8). The promise is also seen in the New Testament; Jesus gave the same promise at the great commission before he went back to heaven. It is the promise of Pentecost, God with us always.

This is one of the key relational promises throughout the whole of God's story, running through the bible like a word in a stick of rock.

This session is part of a series of God's promises, although this session stands alone you may want to look at the others.



Together – prayer and games

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

Active game - Would you rather?

This game is based on the well-known game of choices, but with an active twist. This week's passage opens with a choice that is still relevant for us all – should we be motivated by money, or be satisfied with what we have?

You will need:

- a list of *Would You Rather?* questions
- two large bowls
- enough tokens for each group member to make several choices – (you could use ping pong balls, buttons or building bricks as tokens)



After writing your list of questions (see examples below for inspiration if this is the first time you are playing the game), place the same number of tokens in each bowl. Place the bowls on opposite sides of the room.

Ask the group a *Would you Rather?* question – if they choose option A, they must run to the left-hand bowl, for option B they must run to the right-hand bowl. (You could add tension by asking the group if they are sure, or if they'd like to change their mind?) Once everyone has decided, they must pick a token from their chosen bowl, then go back to the centre of the room for the next question.

Repeat, until you have used all your questions, or one of the bowls is emptied of tokens!

Would you Rather? – Examples

- *Would you rather*.....fight a horse-sized duck or an army of duck-sized horses?
- *Would you rather*.....win a million pounds for life or £1,000 per week?
- *Would you rather*.....be a fish or a bird?

Quieter game - Shadows

A little like mirrors, a copying game. No resources are needed.

Ask the children to work in pairs. One person moves and the other copies.

The difference between this game and the game mirrors is that usually you would stand opposite each other like a reflection in a mirror, but for Shadows the person copying stands behind, like a shadow. It allows the main person to move more around the room which can add to the fun.

You could comment that shadows are with us always.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

For this story we recommend using the Contemporary English Version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2013%3A%205-8&version=CEV>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Kids Bible lesson by Catherine Meekins

https://youtu.be/28MSI9E_Dq4?si=tB9SYjuaPyIDkl8F

Five to elevens: Jesus is the same by Bible inspired kids TV

<https://youtu.be/ENsVob7cwQ8?si=DtPDbj7n5UC2Vaqs>

Songs to support the story

Under fives:

Five to elevens: Every step by worship for everyone

https://youtu.be/nZBhKp5_HwE?si=Ly7MfX1_RotArr7C



Explore – ways into the theme

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

A new way to explore the theme

Explain that the reading today helps us to think about God's promise to never leave us and to always be with us. In this letter to Hebrews, we see the writer reminding the people that God is with them. They are reminded that this is a promise God has always made. Can we think of examples of when God has been with their people?

Remembered Bible activity

This is an activity using a technique that begins with what the group already know about a story or a timeline from the Bible.

Begin by asking the children to think of stories in the Bible that show times when God has been with people, younger groups might like to have a brainstorm session together, shouting out examples. (Moses crossing the seas/ Jonah in the whale), Then invite them to draw scenes or write the titles of the stories on paper and hang them on a washing line as the remembered Bible builds. You could place them in chronological order too. This technique empowers children who have some bible knowledge and often brings a richness to the storytelling as the children recount parts you may have never heard before.

Sit back and look at your remembered Bible timeline, all the times when the Bible reminds us that God is with us.

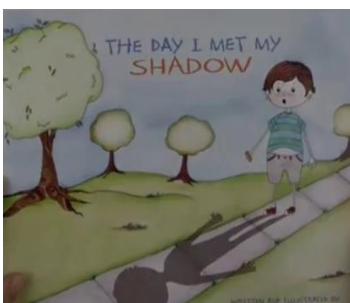
It doesn't end there though, if we were to continue the timeline to show times in our recent history or times in our own families, what stories might we add to the washing line? You could add some as you chat. When we look at this evidence, examples of God keeping the promise to always be with us, I wonder how it makes us feel?

Younger groups could use picture prompts to help them remember bible stories where God promises to be with us. You could create your own pictures, or print out the examples provided, cutting them into individual pictures for younger group members to choose from.

You will find them at the end of this resource

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. If you are to use the modern parable consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



The day I met my shadow by Melissa Brun – (2017: Maple & Moth Books)

<https://youtu.be/r48N-Jb649k?si=JoMhCbbYVug67Ync> Read by Alissa Tanner

The boy is surprised that his shadow sticks with him, even when he tries to run away



- I wonder what shapes you can make with your shadow
- Is it strange that your shadow sticks so closely to you?
- Are there times when you forget that your shadow is there? Do we sometimes forget that God is with us too?

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

- How can God promise to be with everyone all at the same time?
- What does it mean that Jesus never changes, he changed from a baby to a man etc?
- When or where do you feel God with you?
- How do we know that God is with us?

Wondering reflect on the theme

- Who has been your favourite teacher and why?
- What are the things about you that never change?
- Who are the people that you can rely on?
- If you had £100 what would you do with it?

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). 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:

- Play money and a till – talk about how money is helpful but not as good as our friends and family.
- Pens and paper – draw what you have in the world that is precious to you.
- Things which share messages such as magnet letters, chalk, whispering into hands. Create some messages for each other.
- 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 – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity - Rock prayers



Decorate a rock with a simple design and the word promise, or faith or love. As you hold your rock pray about God’s promise to be with you always. Think of all the things that rock has seen over the centuries it has been around. All the people that have touched it and that God has been with them too.



Take your rock with you and keep it to remind you that God is with you always.

Spoken prayer – Each time that thank you is said move your hand from your chin away from your face.

Thank you Jesus that you are the same today as you were yesterday,
Thank you Jesus that you are the same tomorrow as you are today,
Thank you Jesus that you will be the same forever
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.

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.

Eternal biscuits

You will need:

- 250g Butter
- 125g Granulated Sugar
- 105g Brown sugar
- one and a half teaspoons of baking powder
- one egg
- two teaspoons Vanilla essence
- 440g plain flour
- red food colouring



What you do:

This recipe makes about 64 biscuits.

Before the session (or do this as a group activity)

In a large bowl beat the butter with an electric beater. Add the granulated sugar, brown sugar and baking powder and beat until combined. Beat in the egg and the vanilla essence.

Beat as much of the flour as you can with the mixer and stir in any remaining with a wooden spoon.

Divide the dough in half and put one half back in the mixer with some red food colouring and mix until the colour is even throughout the dough.

Put the dough in the fridge to chill.

In your session, divide the dough so each child has a piece of each colour dough.

Roll out the dough and then place one colour on top of the other and roll it into a log shape.

Chill the dough for 15 mins.

Cut the dough into thick slices (about 6mm) and bake for 8-10 minutes in a preheated oven at 190°

The biscuits should be firm around the edges and the bottoms lightly browned, when ready.

Put them on a rack to cool.



Here is a video which shows you how to make them.

<https://youtu.be/aj4lpmYSSPY?si=Z2aWSczYL8jwC79z>

God's promises are eternal and run through everything in our lives, just like the pattern running through the biscuits.

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:

- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell one of God's promises.
- Create your own colouring picture for someone to colour in. Can you fill the page with shapes to colour in and pictures which show how much God loves them.

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **God's promise** with us.

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

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Psalms**.

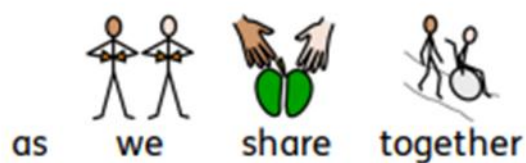




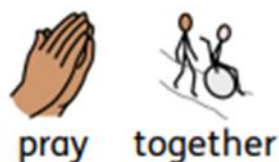
Jesus our friend,



be with us today



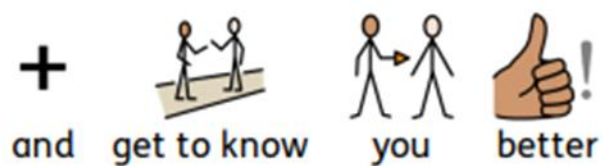
as we share together



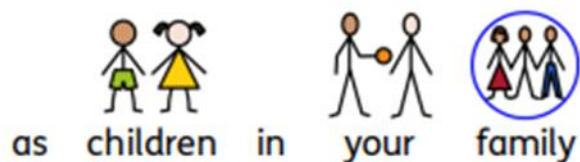
pray together



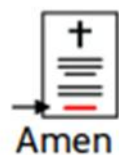
play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



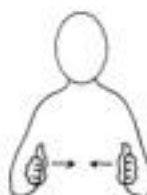
Amen



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



Alternate hands back
and forth





The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

For ever and ever . Amen

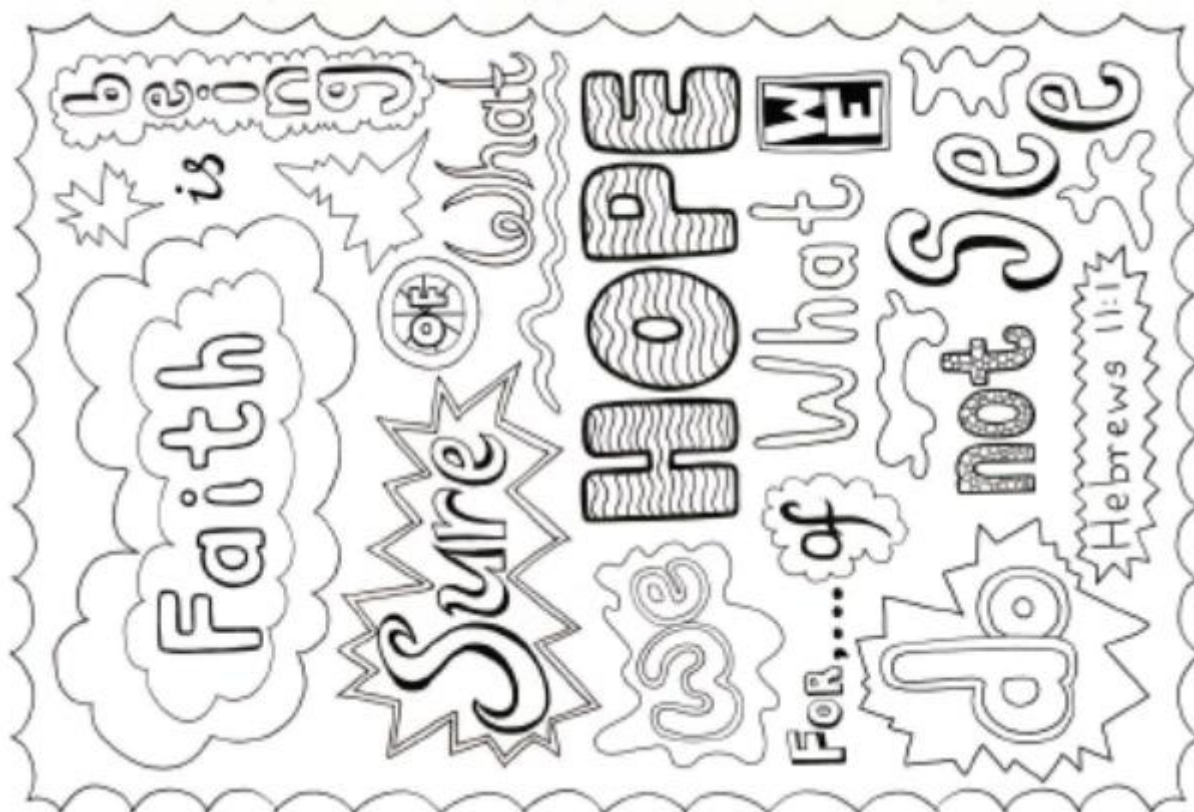


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