



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 11: 19 – 26 Barnabas’ journey

Theme: Journey of belonging

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

Acts 11: 19 – 26 – Barnabas’ Journey

The book of Acts follows directly after the gospels in the Bible and can be found in the New Testament. The book describes the events and acts of the apostles after Jesus’ death and resurrection. The book includes the start of the ‘Church’ as we know it amongst other things. This particularly story from Acts describes the first Church, the Church of Antioch to identify as ‘Christ-followers’. Today’s story tells us about Paul and Barnabas and the journey they and others took to spread the good news of Jesus, not only to the Jews but to others too to help them see that they too belong in God’s family.

Interesting fact – The Paul in this reading is also known as Saul – the character from the Damascus Road.



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

In-person game

Chain Tag

Begin the game by selecting one person to be "It", who must try and tag the other players by touching them with their hand. Any tagged players also become "It" and are required to form a human chain by linking arms. Only the players at either end of the chain can tag others. Once there are four people in the chain, it splits in half to form two separate pairs which continue to try and tag players. Play continues until all players have been tagged.

Online game

Corner Game

How to play: Everyone should have square piece of paper.

The leader should close their eyes and count down slowly and loudly from 5 to 0.

Everyone must hold their piece of paper so that it shows in one corner of their screen.

When the counter gets to 0, with their eyes still shut, they will point to a corner of their screen. Everyone whose paper is in the corresponding corner of their screen should turn their camera off – they are out of the game. The winner is the one player who is left in at the end of the game.

Alternatively you could prepare some simple multiple choice questions to ask, designating each corner as A,B,C,D. Those who go to the corner of the wrong answer turns their camera off.



Experience

For this story we recommend using the Children's International Bible
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2011&version=ICB>

Where can I find the story online?

Under five's Barnabas in Antioch – Epiphany Lutheran Church - <https://youtu.be/ynHI4JlbMDY>

Over five's The Antioch Church helped – Apollo Baptist - <https://youtu.be/fBbOdcx7knEn>

Songs to support the story

Under five's - Together by Ark Music <https://youtu.be/v2ufruc-mvY>

Over five's - Rend Co. Kids - Feels Good <https://youtu.be/PHr74n4gVas>

Explore

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

A new story to share

As you think about the story, consider places that we journey to and think about the journeys people may take that are dangerous and how that may feel.

When we journey with God, we can find a place that connects us to Jesus and to each other, so we can share God's love together.

Aisha was walking,
 Aisha was looking,
 Aisha saw a house in a street.
 She shook her head and said, "That's not my home".

Jacob was searching,
 Jacob was sad,
 Jacob saw a tent in the park.
 He shook his head and said, "That's not my home".

Priti was slowly walking,
 Priti was lonely,
 Jenny saw a cottage in a farm.
 She shook her head and said, "That's not my home".

Isla was wandering,
 Isla was wondering,
 Isla saw a flat at the top of a tower.
 She shook her head and said, "That's not my home".

Ben was running,
 Ben was worried,
 Ben saw a boat on the canal.
 He shook his head and said, "That's not my home".

Aisha, Jacob, Priti, Isla and Ben were skipping,
 Aisha, Jacob, Priti, Isla and Ben were together,
 Aisha, Jacob, Priti, Isla and Ben saw a church and a rainbow.



They smiled and said, "That's our home, where God loves us".

God was watching.

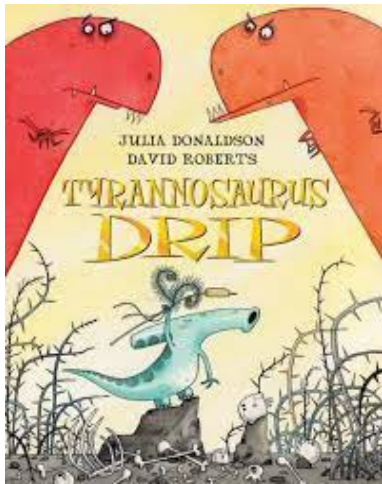
God was smiling.

God saw the children.

God said, "These are my children whom I love, and they are my home".

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.



Tyrannosaurus Drip by Julia Donaldson

<https://youtu.be/tfvv9GLmaUM>

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

- Where do you feel you belong?
- Where is God asking you to be?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder how you welcome and include others? I wonder who'd like to bring?
- I wonder what helps you feel you belong? I wonder what your safe space is?

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:

- Lego (create buildings/ people/ a town – talk about belonging)
- Things which belong together (socks/ hat and gloves/ knife and fork – talk about what makes them belong together)
- 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?

Ribbon Prayers – Belonging

You will need some lengths of ribbon, wool or string about 20cm

Give out the ribbons to each person. By the end of the prayers, each piece of ribbon will be linked together representing we all belong in God's family.

Start by asking each person to hold their own ribbon and quietly think about themselves.

Pause and pray... Thank you God that you love us just as we are. Amen

Tie your ribbon to the person next to you. Think about that person.

Pause and pray... Thank God for each other, help us to show friendship and love. Amen

Find two other people and join your ribbon with theirs you will now have four ribbons tied together. Pray for your community, church, schools....

Pause and pray... Thank you God for our Community may your light shine in all the places that we meet together. Amen

Join all the ribbons to form a big circle and think about the world.

Pause and pray... Dear God please help us to care for your world, we pray for people who feel excluded, those who are lonely, hungry sad... please bring them peace. Amen

Spoken prayer

God gives us a safe place.

Let's be faithful (*bring your hand down onto the other palm as if cutting it in two*) **to the Lord with all our hearts** (*cross both hands over your heart*)

God gives us a place to be together.

Let's be faithful (*bring your hand down onto the other palm as if cutting it in two*) **to the Lord with all our hearts** (*cross both hands over your heart*)

God love us, help us to show your love to others.

Let's be faithful (*bring your hand down onto the other palm as if cutting it in two*) **to the Lord with all our hearts** (*cross both hands over your heart*)

God journeys with us to discover a place called home

Let's be faithful (*bring your hand down onto the other palm as if cutting it in two*) **to the Lord with all our hearts** (*cross both hands over your heart*)

Amen (*do thumbs up with both hands and bump knuckles gently together*)

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

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.



Badge making

You will need:

- Circles of card
- Safety pins
- Sellotape
- Coloured pens

Just like the believers, we all come from different places, each of us different, but when we come together all belong and are one.

Decide together on a logo or colour scheme for your badges which represents the group and the reason you meet together. Every badge should include this to show that you are all part of the same group. Then, using the circle of card, create a badge that represents you. What makes you unique?

Draw a picture of yourself and include something that is special to you: your favourite food, colour, hobby etc. When you have completed the badge, attach a safety pin on the back with the Sellotape. Everyone can wear their badge, joining together as a community but recognising that each one brings something different into the mix.

Alternatively, you could create a who's who board of your group after each person has completed a pen portrait.

STEM Activity

For this activity you will need some magnets (fridge magnets will be fine).

The believers were scattered across the land – but some, from Cyprus and Cyrene travelled to Antioch to be with others...

Place your magnets away from each other (at opposite ends of the table, for example). Slowly bring them together and mark on a piece of paper (or measure with a ruler) how far apart they are when you can first feel them pulling together. Try it again with different magnets.

Is it the same distance with different magnets?

The early believers were drawn together, like magnets. I wonder why that was?

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:

- Refugeeweek.org have a pack for children/young people that contain some simple acts to help connect with others - <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts/>
- Look for things at home and around the community which reflect belonging.

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Barnabas' journey** with us.

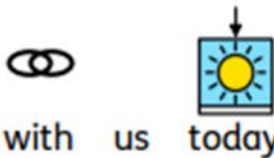
Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **The Lord's Prayer**.

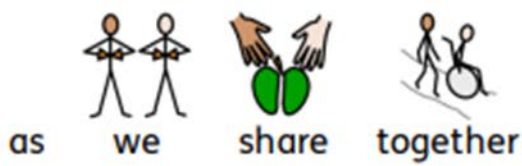




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



as we share together



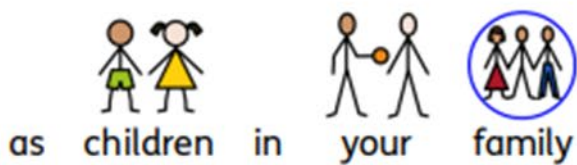
pray together



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



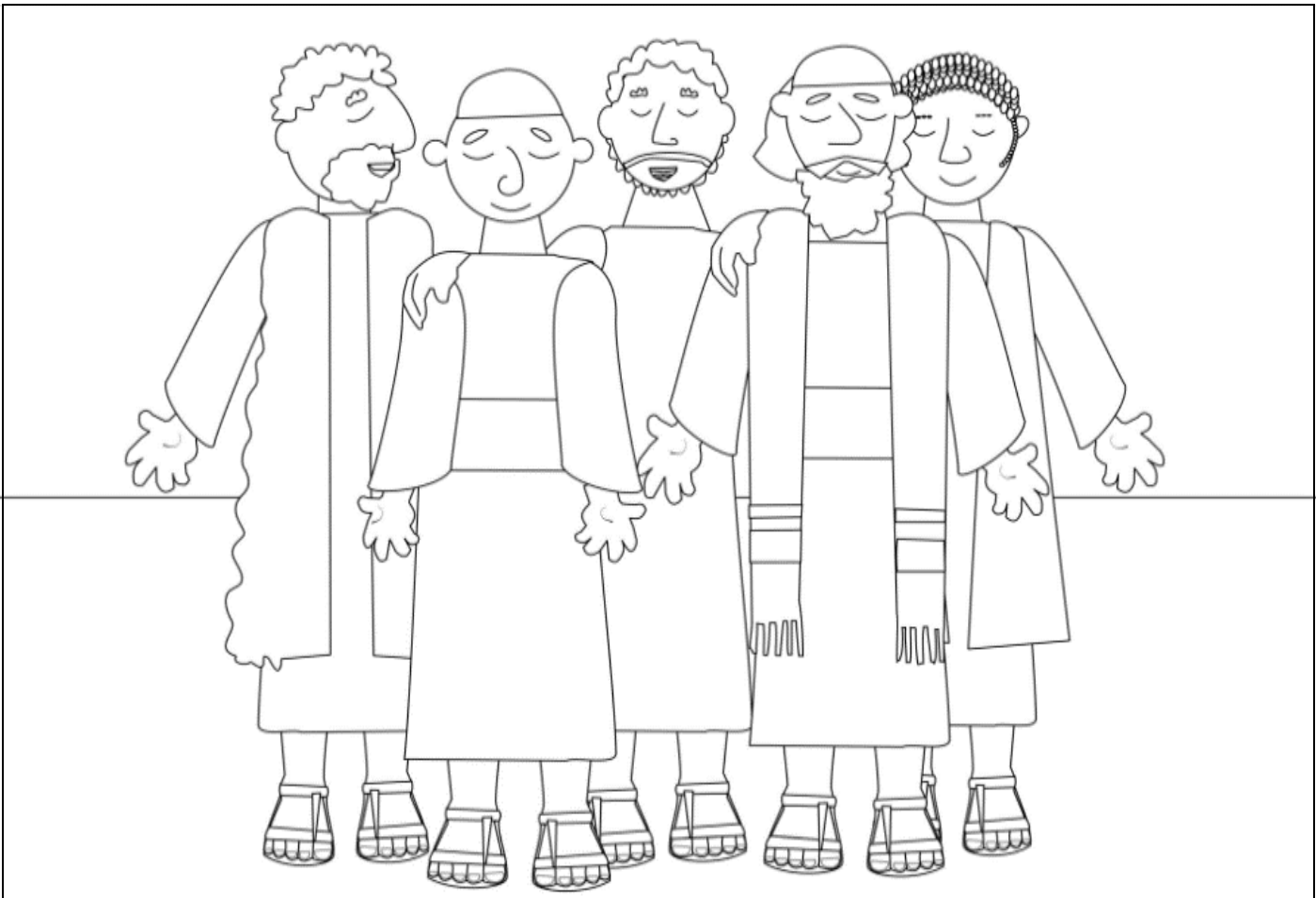


Illustration by Sue Bentley 2015 via freebibleimages.com





My name is _____

I am _____ years old

My favourite thing to do is

What are your dreams and hopes for your community and the world.



This is me!

My self portrait

My name is _____

I am _____ years old

My favourite thing to do is

What are your dreams and hopes for your community and the world.



This is me!

My self portrait