Faith Adventures Youth Resource

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

Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home 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/How-To-FAYR**

Title: James 5: 7–8

Theme: Advent in the style of… Brick church
Patiently journeying

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning? Please use this section as a reference and information guide for leaders only – we don't expect it to be read out to the children.

This week's session in our Advent series is based on Brick Church-style worship. This uses Construction Bricks e.g. Lego, Duplo. You could use wooden blocks like Jenga or wooden coloured blocks. You might want to add stickers and pens to the resources to aid creativity.

The passage we are using is James 5: 7-8. The Letter of James was written to Jewish Christians spread throughout the Mediterranean region at a time of persecution. Even today, the letter reminds us to live out our faith daily. James 5: 7-8, talks to us about being patient. During this Advent season, we are journeying towards Christmas. This passage reminds us that we are also journeying towards Christ's return; in our waiting we are to be patient. As a farmer waits for their crops to grow, they don't just sit back, there is still work to do – watering, weeding, thinning the crop etc. – just as for us as Christians there is work to do as we patiently wait for God's Kingdom to come. We are to work faithfully, patiently and with our hearts full of hope as we journey onward.

The only identifiable trigger, we think, is that some children are told they are impatient or have no patience, in a negative way. Hopefully this session will help them explore some of their feelings around that. We pray that this session enables your group to understand more around the journeying of Advent and reflect upon the fact that Jesus' coming is "near".

Together – prayer and games

Let's start our time with God and each other well

Use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

All mighty God,

Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.

Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.

Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.

Amen

Alternatively, you may join with the widgit prayer found in Faith Adventures: Children Together, or else the Lord's Prayer found at the end of this session.

Active game – Slow, relay, build

This game, although active, deliberately slows down the journeying of the team. The teams might feel frustrated as they watch their team players, or by the fact that they are unable to start the build until all the parts are gathered in.

You will need:

- enough Lego (or substitute) sets for the number of teams

This is a team race. Place the sets of Lego at one end of the room and line the teams up at the other end.

One player at a time must travel across the room, collect one piece of Lego, and bring it back to their team. There's a catch! Players can only move by placing the heel of one foot directly in front of the toes of the other with every step, making their journey much slower.

Once all the Lego pieces have been collected, the team can begin building. The finished model can either be pre-arranged by the leader, with the teams challenged to recreate it, or participants can have a free-build challenge, depending on the resources available.

Quieter game - Pictionary Build

You will need:

- Lego or alternative
- suggested ideas to build, that link with the theme e.g. star, donkey, crib, angel, sheep, farmer, clock
- timer

The teams take it in turn to build the suggested item in 60 seconds. The other team guesses what the item is. The guessing team scores a point if they guess correctly – you could limit the number of guesses with an older group.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

This link takes you to James 5: 7–8 in The Good News version

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%205%3A7-8&version=GNT

7 Be patient, then, my friends, until the Lord comes. See how patient farmers are as they wait
for their land to produce precious crops. They wait patiently for the autumn and spring rains.
8 You also must be patient. Keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near.

*Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition) © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved. For more information about GNT, visit **www.bibles.com** and **www.gnt.bible**.*

You may wish to research different versions of this reading on **www.biblegateway.com**
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Listen: Everlasting God, by Chris Tomlin
https://youtu.be/JSHRThrP1O0?si=1wVmzu55_4LyOYfl

Questions for discussion

- This song talks about "waiting upon the Lord". What do those words mean to you? How easy do you find waiting? How do you know when God has given you the strength?

Explore

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

A new way to explore the theme

This is a new way to explore the Bible passage and the theme for this week.

Alternatively, you may wish to use the Explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

Build the answers



Explore the wondering questions by building your answers with Lego bricks. Each answer should have two parts: one representing a practical or everyday response, and one representing a spiritual response**.**

Encourage participants to be creative and use the bricks to show their ideas. Provide stickers, felt-tip pens and other materials to help them add detail and meaning to their builds.

- What are you waiting patiently for?
- What does it look like to wait for Jesus?
- When is it OK to be impatient?
- What does it feel like to lose hope?
- How can we keep our hopes high?
- What is it worth waiting patiently for?
- I wonder if you ever think about the Second Coming?
- What will it look like when the Lord comes again?

Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.



Each day, Emmet follows the instruction manual until one morning when he starts to wonder what else life might have in store for him. He is pursued and found by Lucy, who believes Emmet is the one they have been patiently waiting for, the someone who will save the world. She believes Emmet is an example of how to be who we are called to be.

The LEGO Movie, by LJR Animations 2010
https://youtu.be/7OisrTX8Qco?si=JF2rE31Px4nkB7Js

- Sometimes we have to wait patiently for our hopes and dreams to be realised and for the right time for them to happen. Christians sometimes call this "God's timing". I wonder what hopes and dreams you have that you are patiently waiting to be realised.

Group discussion

- I wonder if waiting seems easier when you can see progress on the thing you are waiting for
- What does it feel like to lose hope?
- How can we keep our hopes high?

Personal reflection

- What is it worth waiting patiently for?
- I wonder if you ever think about the "Second Coming"
- What will it look like when the Lord comes again?

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Praying together

Prayers Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively, use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below. Alternatively, light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

Prayerful activity – Prayer Bricks

Using building bricks or blocks, write the words "Bless", "Sorry", "Thank you" and "Help" on the bricks, or write on stickers you can put on the bricks. This works with Jenga bricks too.

Put the bricks in a bag and shake them up. Take it in turns to take out a brick. Pray a prayer for each of the different bricks that you take out:

Dear God, please bless…
Dear God, I am sorry for…
Dear God, thank you for…
Dear God, please help…
Amen.



As you pray each prayer, add your brick to those already used to make a prayer wall. You may just want bricks and stickers for people to write their own prayers. This activity still works using paper bricks and pens to write. Once people have written/drawn on their brick, create a wall with them.

Spoken prayers

Creator God,

As we read your words, in James 5 we are reminded to wait patiently.

We thank you for your patience with us when we lose hope or when we are impatient. We thank you for your wonderful creation and your ability to build us back up when we fall. We thank you, God, for Jesus who we patiently wait for to come again.

We ask you to help us as we wait patiently for your world of peace. We ask you to help build us up like the bricks we use, filling us with patience. We ask for your help when we have moments of impatience. We ask you to remind us of the waiting we experience through the Advent season.

This week, God, challenge us to be patient. Show us a time where we have to wait. Show us friends and family who need your help to be rebuilt in your love. Challenge us to help rebuild the world around us as we continue to wait in patience, hope and love.

Amen.

Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

Come again?

Spend some time focusing on this question alone.

- What will it look like when the Lord comes again?



Create your own PowerPoint or stop animation video to answer this question. You could use bricks as illustrations/props. Once completed, share the video where you can, such as in church and/or on the church socials.

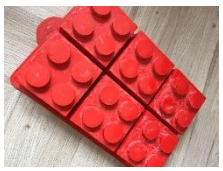
Edible Lego bricks (Be aware of allergies)

You will need:

- cake rectangles with the icing cut off (such as angel cakes)
- icing (different colours)
- smarties
- blunt knife

What you do:

Ensure everyone has two cake rectangles to start. Take one of the rectangles and smother with icing. Use smarties to decorate the top to look like the top of a piece of Lego.



With the second rectangle, cut into smaller bricks and use the icing to "cement" them together to make an edible wall.

If you have a Lego cake mould, then use this to create cakes and decorate once cooked. Here is a basic cake recipe: **https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/spongecake_1284**

Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today. If not, here are some suggestions:

- Use one of the "conversation starter" questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **What about Christmas have you been successful at patiently waiting for?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT Resources (**jpit.uk**) or *Commitment for Life* (**cforl.co.uk**)
- Play a game with someone using bricks, Lego, Duplo, e.g. Who can build… (Christmas tree, manger, person, etc.) the quickest?

Thank you for exploring the **James** passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on www.bit.ly/FACT_FB**


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



The United Reformed Church Children

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