

Faith Adventures Youth Resource

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:

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Faith-Adventures-How-To-FAYR.pdf>

Galatians 5:13-15 Love one another

Theme: Love my neighbour, but who is my neighbour?

Contents:

Introduction	1
Together	2
Experience	2
Explore	3
Express	4

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

This week's theme is "Love my neighbour; but who is my neighbour?"

And you see a theme like that and probably think "oh, it's the Good Samaritan reading." But it's not. To explore the theme we're looking at Paul's letter to the early church in Galatia (which is now part of Turkiye.)

Different translations use different words – in the translation we are suggesting, the letter begins 'Dear Christian friends...' but it's worth noting that you don't have to be a Christian to care about others and God's world. Kindness and compassion aren't exclusive to the followers of Jesus, but if you don't have kindness and compassion then you can't claim to be a follower of Jesus.

The letter reminds us that, although we have been given God's blessing, we are still human and will have human faults – we mustn't let God's blessing go to our heads. We must still make decisions that benefit others rather than be selfish. The people who will suffer most from the effects of climate change aren't always those who have caused or accelerated it. Our neighbours are not only those people who live nearby but include all of humanity.

God has given us free will – but there are still laws which we must obey in order to live in society. Sometimes we have to recognise that, even though something is not illegal, it is still wrong. This



is the freedom that God has given to us – to make our own decisions and Paul reminds us to exercise that freedom with care and compassion.

Be aware that you may have children/young people in your group who have come from places where freedom is an aspiration rather than a reality. They may still have relatives living under oppressive regimes or facing the stark reality of climate change.

Together

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

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could 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

In-person and online game

See this week's Faith Adventures : Children Together for suitable games for this theme.

Ready....aim....throw!

Follow the instructions in the FACT planning session and vary the games by adding these extra rules.

- Connect all the receivers' buckets with string so that movements impact everyone trying to catch a ball or bean bag. Can they work together to fill their buckets?
- Give each team a different colour of balls or bean bags to start the game then add an additional rule that each team must finish with at least one of every colour in their bucket.

Experience

Research different versions of this reading on <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Watch:

What is freedom for? Galations 5:13-14, Our Daily Bread Daily Devotional
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-7dHFj4>

What does freedom mean to you? – National Geographic
<https://youtu.be/8MtP8vuVoS4?si=NgmEkLgBDGnzOcbH>



Questions for discussion

- Which responses stood out to you? Did you find any responses surprising?
- Are there any responses you agreed or disagreed with?
- What does "Freedom" mean to you?

Explore

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

A new way to explore the theme

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.

In this week's passage, we are asked to consider our neighbour – just like in the story that Jesus told about The Good Samaritan. The following story explores the idea of our global neighbours and how many are impacted by changes to the climate. Older groups might like to compare today's Bible verse with the story in Luke 10:25-37.

You may find the illustrations in the appendix of this session helpful in thinking through how our actions have an impact on our global neighbours. The illustrations come from the book: *'Changing the Climate by Debbie Hawker (BRF Ministries, 2021)*

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.

Chief Seattle's speech <https://youtu.be/MuJzMu6u-pg?si=2RA74j2TUUPLd2SA> or, for a slightly easier version <https://youtu.be/milJHghldII?si=KCuUjaTKUHSpX0TJ>

Where do you see God in this Native American account of our relationship with nature? What can we learn from the wisdom of others?

Talking together: Going deeper

- I wonder what freedom looks like/means for you?
- Is there a link between vegetarianism/veganism and the environment?

Conversation starters

- What harm might some of our choices make? How can we recognise when this happens?
- Does this passage mean that only Christians can make a difference? The theme of Love Your Neighbour is common to all faiths – how can Christians work with others to love our global neighbours.

Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

Praying together

Prayer 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.

Love your Neighbour Prayer

You will need a large sheet of paper or a dry wipe board.

Write on the paper or dry wipe board

Love your..... Neighbour

Encourage everyone to add their own word until everyone had had an opportunity, depending on the size of your group you could do this two or three times. When you have completed your prayer go around the group and get everyone to read a line.



Dear God please help me to love my neighbour

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. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

Interfaith Dialogue

Interfaith dialogue can help us build relationships and welcome others by breaking down stereotypes and fostering understanding. By engaging with people of different faiths, we can discover common ground and work together to address shared challenges. Organisations like The Feast provide opportunities for interfaith connection and dialogue.

<https://thefeast.org.uk/resources>

- Find out something new about a faith that you did not know before.
- Explore local interfaith groups or initiatives in your community.

This resource from The Interfaith Network shows examples of the Golden Rule from different religions traditions as an example of shared values.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/uploads/Golden-Rule-Poster-2021.pdf>

Discussion questions:

- What is the Golden Rule?
- How is the Golden Rule expressed in different faith traditions?
- What are the benefits of living by the Golden Rule?
- How can we apply the Golden Rule in our daily lives?
- What are some challenges to living by the Golden Rule?

Low carbon footprint Smoothie*You will need:*

- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp porridge oats
- 80g soft fruit (whatever you have – strawberries, blueberries)
- 150ml milk
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

What you do:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46459714>

<https://myemissions.co/resources/food-carbon-footprint-calculator/>

Choose ingredients which have the lowest carbon fruit print.

Put all the ingredients in a blender and whizz for 1 min until smooth.

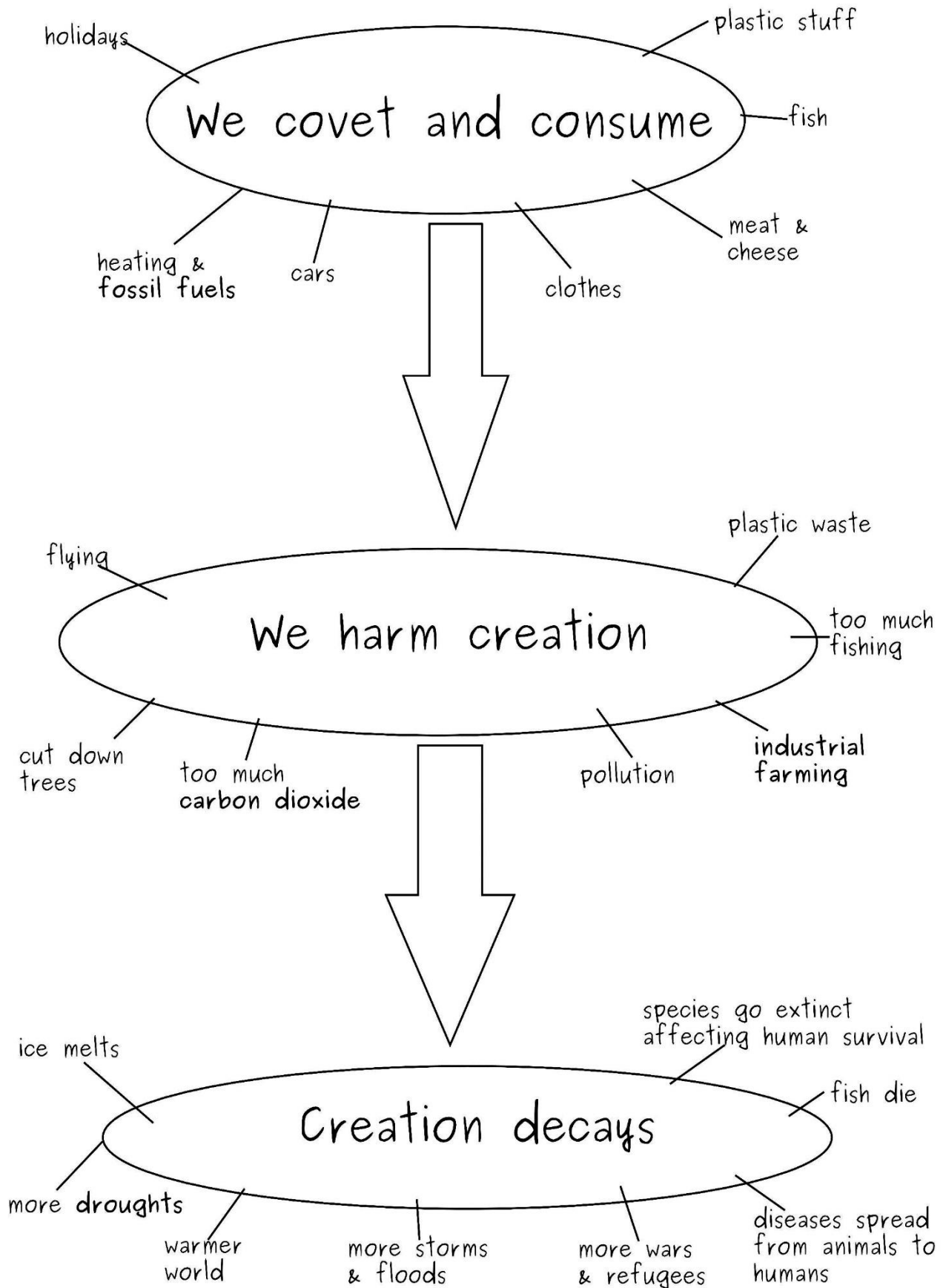
Pour the banana oat smoothie into a glass to serve, this recipe makes 2 glasses.

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- 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 makes it hard to love each other?**
 - Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](https://resources.jpit.uk) Commitment For Life cforl.co.uk
 - Is there a special way you could show your love/ friendship for someone else this week? Choose someone who you like and know well and choose someone who you don't know very well.
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Thank you for exploring the **Galatians** passage with us.

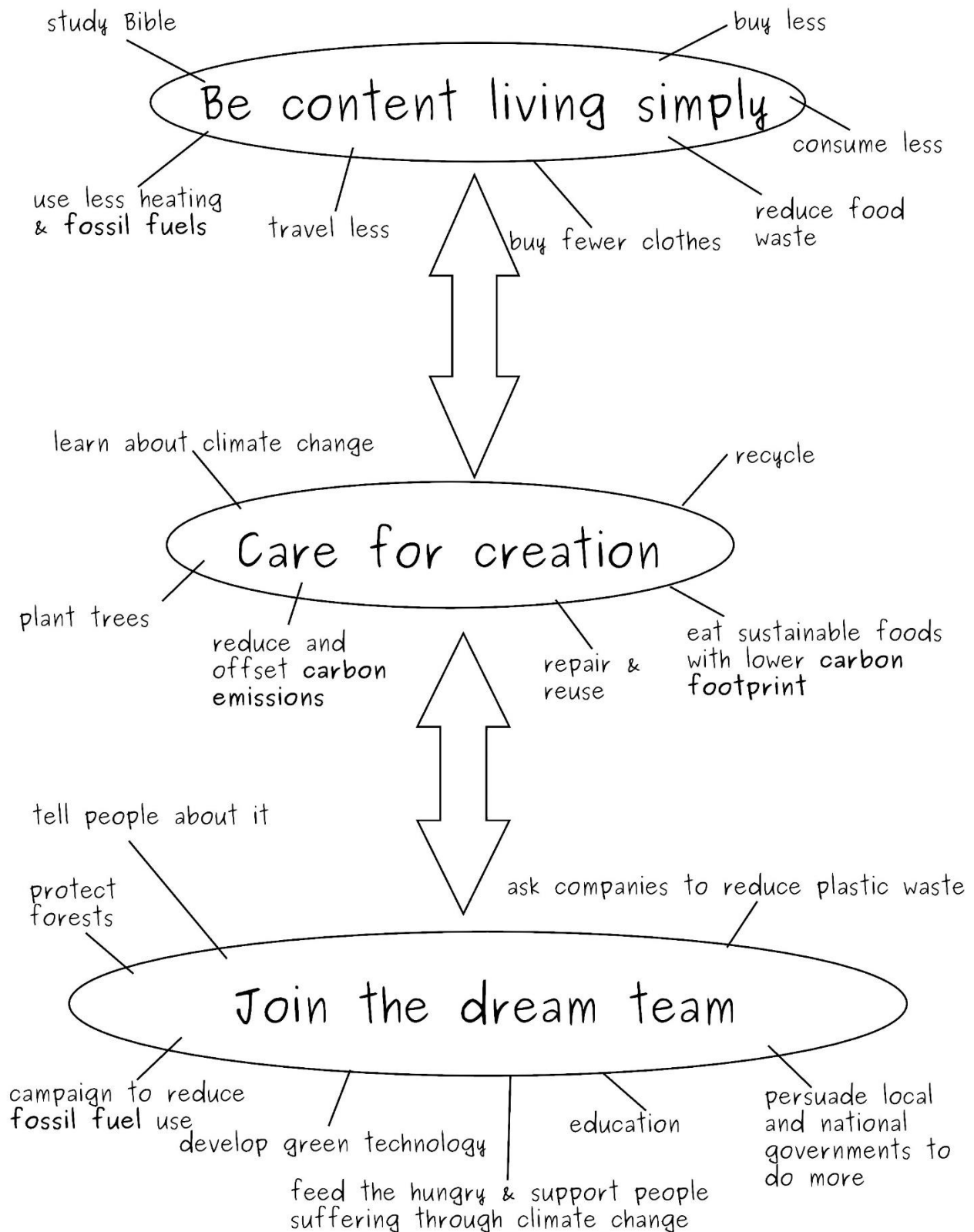
Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing children.youth@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on https://bit.ly/FACT_FB

Figure 1: Creation in crisis



'Changing the Climate' by Debbie Hawker (BRF Ministries, 2021), Used with permission

Figure 2: Creation awaits the children of God



'Changing the Climate' by Debbie Hawker (BRF Ministries, 2021), Used with permission