



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>

Luke 15:1-6 The lost sheep.

Theme: The story of the caring shepherd.

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know before we begin?

Luke

The book of Luke was written by Luke, a doctor by profession and later one of Jesus disciples. It is one of four gospels and chronologically retells the life of Jesus, what he did and said and how others reacted to him. Many of Jesus stories were in parable form, a story with a meaning. Today’s parable explores the role of the shepherd as he cares for his sheep and looks at what it means to be cared for and to care for others. Some people’s experience of being cared for may be of a positive nature but for many this isn’t the case, therefore be aware of this session being a possible trigger for those who are displaced from their families. Others may find themselves as young carers themselves. The role of caregiver looks different depending on the individual, what works for one may not for another so your group may have wide ranging answers and thoughts on this subject. It is good to focus on holistic care, not just the human basics of food and water but also spiritual, emotional and loving care. Caring for someone includes being alongside them when good things happen as well as in the sad times.



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 game – Bean bag steal

You will need:

- beanbags
- chairs

Place a pile of beanbags in the centre of the room. (If three teams are playing use nine bean bags, if four teams are playing use 12 beanbags.) Split the group into three or four teams and give each team member a number. When their number is called, each player tries to gather four of the beanbags from the centre of the room and return them to their chair. They can only hold one beanbag at a time and place it down on their chair, before returning to collect a new beanbag. As well as collecting beanbags from the centre, opposing teams can steal beanbags from other chairs. The first player to gather four beanbags on their chair wins a point. Repeat the game by calling different numbers. As the game progresses you can increase the difficulty by reducing the number of beanbags in the centre.

Alternative game

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

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: An ancient sheepfold near Bethlehem – by Jay McCarl
<https://youtu.be/QOmphohQZws?si=-zpDdMI6RIund57q>



Questions for discussion

Watch the YouTube video

- Is there anything new or surprising in this video?
- Why would the fold need to have a wall?
- What does the video tell us about how Jesus cares for us?

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.

Alternatively:

Watch this video together: The lost sheep – Trent Vineyard

<https://youtu.be/yUjpxwN4dfM?si=6E1C87RyE5P8WTE5>

The sheep got lost, he wandered off and ended up in danger. The shepherd didn't give up until he found the sheep, going to great lengths to find him and celebrated when he found him.

Explore how easy it is for us as humans to get lost, not just physically but mentally too. (People may disclose difficulties they are having – ensure you have the youth leaders/ minister's details to hand should that person need to speak to someone further about what is bothering them.)

Explore what lengths humans go to, to care for others.

How do the two things come together, being lost and caring for others.? What does the video tell us about the lengths God will go to, to care for us, to save us if we are lost and what it means to God when we are found?

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.

Sometimes caring for another means stopping and looking at what that person needs in that moment. This clip from Patch Adams highlights this.

Patch Adams – children's ward https://youtu.be/byPJ22JDFjI?si=Ru05oSwgb_eiRaWZ

- Have you heard of Patch Adams? He had a particular caring style when it came to people and patients.
- Is there a difference between caring and helping?
- Why do you think the nurse who came in seemed cross? How do you think she shows her patients she cares?



Talking together: Going deeper

- I wonder what things you would never stop looking for if they were lost?
- How does it feel when you are not cared for?
- Does God care for everyone? What about those who have never heard about God?

Conversation starters

- Who do you think is the most caring person in the world? And why? Past or present.
- Are there levels of importance when thinking about caring for others? For instance is making sure someone has food the same as making sure they have shelter?
- I wonder sort of status shepherds would have had in Bible times? Does that make a difference to the story and the message that's within it?

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.

Prayer poem

Come up with your own Acrostic Prayer. Take the word CARE or CARING and write a prayer where each line begins with a different letter from the word. Invite participants to share their prayers with the group if they wish to.

Here is an example for the first letter:

Compassionate God,
A
R
E

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.

A **young carer** is someone under the age of 18 who helps to care for a family member, relative or friend. Spend some time finding out more about the role of young carers.

Check out the information and stories on the following websites:

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/young-carers>

<https://carers.org/about-caring/about-young-carers>



Watch the videos below:

A day in the life of a young carer, BBC London

<https://youtu.be/6bZ5hneos24?si=Rnhl2JtjTyGpXaRI>

Supporting young carers like Zuhair from the Surprise Squad, BBC Children in Need

<https://youtu.be/gNnRd0nZPhE?si=1qRYtnkl-aINwBor>

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:

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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. **Who do you think is the most caring person?**
 - Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](https://www.jpit.org.uk) Commitment for Life [cforl.co.uk](https://www.cforl.co.uk)
 - Many companies and places have a charter or policy of care such as Christian Aid's here <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/christian-aid-supporter-care-charter> Write your own charter of care of record it as a voice note, it could be for the world, your school, your household or church.
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Thank you for exploring the **Luke** 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