

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>

1 Chronicles 28 9-12,20 - Building the Temple

Theme: God is always looking for a home with God's people

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

Chronicles was written around 450 years before Jesus. It isn't clear who the author was but some believe it was Ezra. It tells the story of Israel from Adam to King David. King David is passing on plans for a temple to his son Solomon, who will go on to build it as God said he should. In this passage we see David instructing Solomon to keep God's commandments and follow God's instructions to build the temple well, making a place for God to call home with God's people. Up until this point, as the Israelites have been living in desert places, the Ark of the Covenant has been the symbol of God being with them, now they will have a temple.

The temple is not only a place for God, but also a place where God's people can gather together and be with God. This passage is an opportunity to think about God wanting to make a home with God's people as well as a chance to explore our own churches as a place to come together to worship God.

It would be wise to remember that this is an Old Testament story; after Jesus, God is with his people through the Holy Spirit, everywhere.

It is wise to be aware that discussions around homes may need to be dealt with sensitively, depending on the life experiences of members of your group.

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 Alternative game

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

You could download the second pack of cards for the Faith Adventures: Youth Resource. These cards show Christian churches and cathedrals from around the world and the aim is to match the church to its location. (You will want to keep a copy of the originals so that you know the correct answers!). Some have quite distinctive clues, others might be more guesswork. Groups could work in teams to see which can get the most correct.

As you explore the cards, you might discuss what the different churches look like. Incidentally, the three GB churches are all United Reformed Churches but all look very different. (You may have access to one of the old URC calendars which contained pictures of URC churches around Britain which may be interesting to look at too).

All the churches and cathedrals look very different but all serve the same purpose. What do you think that purpose is?

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: Solomons temple – Messages of Christ –
<https://youtu.be/oiF-wObznds?si=U5qWLSvPKTdo9kDY>

Questions for discussion

- Is this how you imagined the Temple might look?
- I wonder what you would include if you built yourself a temple now?

- The temple of Solomon was rather grand in size and decoration with all the gold inside. How does this make you feel?

Listen: Rend collective – Build your kingdom here

<https://youtu.be/DqZX08DDWiA?si=PnaQ7Uie2JIFIYMN>

Questions for discussion

- What do the lyrics in this song tell you about Church?
- What do you think the church of the future might look like?

Explore

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

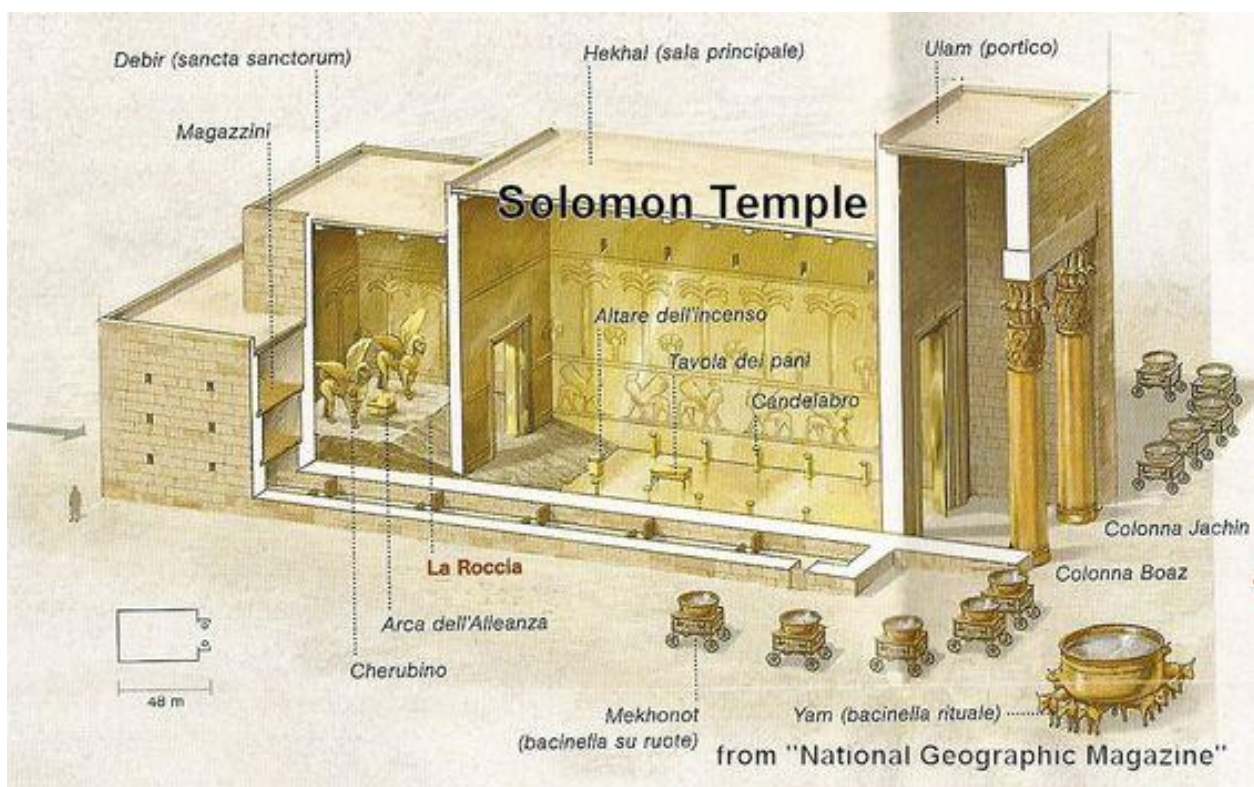
A new way to explore the theme

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.

Solomon's temple

Verses 11 and 12 of the Bible passage says:

'Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts, its inner rooms and the place of atonement. He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the LORD and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things.'



This is one person's interpretation of Solomon's temple. Is this the sort of house you think God would have had in mind when giving the plans to Solomon?



Can you build your own? What's important to consider when building a/the temple? What does God ask is included in the temple? What parts do you feel are important to include?

Take some time to discuss how to build up a temple such as Solomon's. Using any available resources, can you create a model of a temple either as individuals in pairs or in small groups. What would your design of a temple look like?

Where and how would you put God in your temple?

Or draw up simple plans for a house for God and get another team to make it.

There may be a Godly Play lending library near you which has a Solomon's temple resource. Godly Play is way of exploring the Bible story using props to reenact and explore the story in a hands-on way.

<https://www.godlyplay.uk/help-and-support/borrowing-godly-play-materials/>

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.

Watch: <https://youtu.be/L85j-wtZxQ?feature=shared> If you look on YouTube you will find lots of clips of people doing up rooms and houses, usually for themselves. This clip shows someone doing a room makeover for their friend. I wonder how successful they were! What do you think is important to think about if you are doing a room makeover for a friend or renovating an old house? How might this relate to building a temple?

Talking together: Going deeper

- I wonder why we need churches if God is everywhere?
- Do you need to meet in a church to be church? Or to be with God?
- Is God's temple ever really finished?
- What does a place need in order to be called a church?

Conversation starters

- Lots of things might take place in a church building (e.g. coffee mornings, dance classes etc.) - does that make those activities church?
- Who decides (or should decide) what can take place or be in a church and how do they make those decisions?

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.

Spoken prayer

Building God

We invite you to build a home in us

We will keep your treasures safe

Just as churches come in different shapes and sizes, so do we

But we know that you want nothing more than to be with us in our hearts

We know that with you we will not be abandoned and can be strong and courageous

We have no need to be afraid or discouraged

You created us to do your will, show us the path

That we can follow so that we can feel safe with you, and you will feel safe with us. 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.

Marble Maze

Just as God is looking for a home with God's people, let's create a game where we help the marble to find its way home.

You will need:

- cardboard boxes/lids
- things to create the maze path such as thick string
- Lego blocks
- scraps of cardboard
- marbles (at least one per maze)

What you do:

To think about finding a way home, create a maze for a marble to run through. You will need to be able to manipulate the maze (tilt it in different directions) to make the marble move.

The maze needs to have a start point and an end point (home). The end can be the opposite side of the maze to the start or even in the middle.

Allow plenty of time for the group to work individually or in pairs to create their maze.

Once complete, have fun using each other's mazes to try to get the marble from the start to home.

Research – what does the church do?

This is a chance to find out a bit more about the church that your group is part of. Have an explore of the church – the notice boards and notice sheets (if your church has them), the church website and Facebook page (if your church has them) – and see if you can find out all the activities that happen in that church during a week or during a particular season.

Which of the activities would you describe as worship, which would you describe as social action (supporting people in need), and which would you describe as purely social activities? I wonder what part social activities play in a church? What about groups that just hire the church rooms but are not part of any other aspect of the church? Would you describe these as part of the church?

Think about who the activities might appeal to. Is there anything you can think of that your church doesn't do that they maybe could do, or people who aren't catered for? Think about whether any of the activities appeal to you and what, if anything, the church might offer to people of your age. Think about which of the activities the church engages in might also be places where God is found too.

Does your group feel part of the church? If not, what would help you feel more like part of the church? What could the church members and leadership do to help and what could you do? Perhaps you could share some of your ideas with the leadership team.

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. **Have you visited different types of Churches? What were they like?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](http://Resources(jpit.uk)) Commitment For Life cforl.co.uk
- Walk around your home town visiting the different types of churches. At each one, take a moment to consider where God's presence might be sensed in that Church. Perhaps it's a window design, something on the notice board or a feeling you get. Allow these things to grow your understanding of where and who God is. What differences and similarities can you see in the different churches you encounter?
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Thank you for exploring the **Chronicles** 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