

# 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](http://www.bit.ly/How-To-FAYR)

## Title: Psalm 81: 1–4

**Theme:** Any excuse for a party

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

Welcome to our session looking at celebrations. To explore the theme, we are using Psalm 81:1-4.

Celebrations are an important part of all our lives today, and that is true of the Jewish faith too. Scripture tells us that the people of Israel were celebrating on the new moon and on the full moon. The new moon signified the first day of the Hebrew month. There were special meetings on these days when the people shared fellowship offerings as part of their worship to God. The full moon is also the middle of the Hebrew month. Many of the special meetings and festivals started at the time of a full moon. These meetings and festivals were times that people gathered together – just like we do on Sundays, and at other times, to celebrate our relationship with God.

The passage refers to “the God of Jacob”. It shows the relationship that God had with Jacob (who would later be re-named “Israel”) and speaks of God’s care, love and protection for the people, and reminds them that they can trust God.

There are special festivals in the Christian calendar when we come together to celebrate God's love and care for us, but we don't need to wait for a special date – we can do it whenever we want, and as often as we want! Maybe you would like to think about agreeing a date with your group for your own church's celebration.

In this session we will explore why, what and how we celebrate – there might be some noise (can you celebrate silently?) so be prepared for that – and make sure the congregation (if you're meeting on a Sunday) are prepared for that, too.

## 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.

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### Active game – Musical statues

Even the bigger kids love musical statues. Use fast-paced music but with the added jeopardy of standing on one leg when the music stops.

### Finish the lyric

Or why not try "Finish the lyric". Start a well-known hymn or song and then stop it and someone has to finish the song correctly. If they get it right they can have a celebration; if they fail then it is forfeit time – maybe some starjumps depending on ability, or something else fun.

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### Quieter game – Charades or pass the charade parcel

Pre-make slips of paper showing names of biblical characters and get people to act out the character. If they do not know the character, allow them two minutes or so to research first.

This can be also be done in a "Pass the parcel" game – you either get celebration sweets or a charade to act out.

## Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

This link takes you to Psalm 81: 1–4 The Living Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm%2081%3A%201-4&version=TLB>

You may wish to research different versions of this reading on [www.biblegateway.com](https://www.biblegateway.com)  
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

1 The Lord makes us strong! Sing praises! Sing to Israel's God!

2 Sing, accompanied by drums; pluck the sweet lyre and harp. 3 Sound the trumpet! Come to the joyous celebrations at full moon, new moon, and all the other holidays. 4 For God has given us these times of joy; they are scheduled in the laws of Israel.

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### Listen:

Praise, by Elevation Worship

<https://youtu.be/raFnjGVkHe8?si=Lfhip5n7M8-N8CxA>

### Questions for discussion

- I wonder if you agree with the lyrics that you praise when surrounded, outnumbered, etc – what does that look like?
- What are your thoughts over the song lyric "Cause praise is the water, my enemies drown in"?

### Watch:

Worship – God's story, by Crossroads Kids' Club

<https://youtu.be/EJZ6iHMMF6M?si=SJShMMKEIknEXybE>

### Questions for discussion

- How do you like to worship God?
- What's the strangest way you've seen someone worship God?

## 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.

## Celebrations and festivals

Read the passage again together – you might like to print it or write it out on large paper.

Look for sections of the passage which describe what the celebration will be like, and why the people of Israel are celebrating.

What is God like?

## 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.



*Wreck-It Ralph* party scene (2012: Disney)

<https://youtu.be/78Y529pTelw?si=H-Arj25eySwI1TyQ>

In this scene, all the other game characters are dancing, eating and partying together while Ralph watches from outside, aware there's a big celebration but that he isn't invited in. Despite being part of the same community, Ralph is treated as an outsider, left longing at the party door while everyone else enjoys themselves.

- I wonder how we can make sure other people are included in the parties and celebrations we have.

## Group discussion

- Why is God referred to as the God of Jacob? Who else is God the God of?
- Does church always feel like a celebration? (If not, leave time to chat about how it could be)

## Personal reflection

- I wonder if it's best to celebrate with other people.
- What other characteristics of God do people want to celebrate?

## 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.

## Psalms

Psalms are beautiful songs and poems dedicated to God. They talk of God's love, God's character and the things people want God to know. Have a go at writing your own psalm. It could be made up of sentences, single words or just pictures. Once created, decorate the edge of the paper as a frame for your psalm.



## Spoken Prayer

God,

we come together grateful for the chance to celebrate your love.  
Sometimes life feels busy, loud, or confusing, but your love cuts through all of it and reminds us of who we are and who we belong to.

Help us to find real joy in you – not just the quick happiness that fades, but the deep-down joy that comes from knowing we're held, known, and valued.  
Teach us to lift our voices, our hearts, and even our doubts to you with honesty and courage.

When we gather to worship, let it be more than songs or routines.  
Let it be a moment where we remember your goodness, where we celebrate the ways you've carried us, challenged us, and shaped us into people who reflect your light.

Show us how to bring that same joy into our friendships, our schools, our homes, and the places where we feel unseen.  
Give us the confidence to share your love in ways that are real, kind, and grounded in who you've made us to be.

As we pray, sing, and listen together,  
help us to celebrate – not just with noise,  
but with lives that speak of your faithfulness.

Thank you for loving and caring for us,  
and for inviting us to respond with joy.  
Amen.

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## 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.

## Remembered Bible

Throughout the Bible there are many examples of people celebrating festivals and even throwing impromptu parties (look at the “Lost...” parables in Luke Chapter 15.)

How many celebrations and festivals can your group remember from the Bible? How many can they find out about which they might have forgotten or not known about?

Which of these does your church celebrate? How do you celebrate them?

## 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 and insights together. **What is the best celebration you've ever been to?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT Resources ([jpit.uk](http://jpit.uk)) or *Commitment for Life* ([cforl.co.uk](http://cforl.co.uk))
- Every day of the year has a celebration. Celebrate your Dog Day, celebrate Chocolate Day, etc. Search the internet for what today's celebration is. What could you do to mark it?

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

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk](mailto:sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk) or by sharing it on [www.bit.ly/FACT\\_FB](http://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



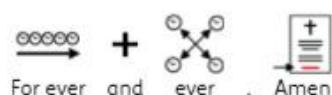
and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us



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

