



# 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: Isaiah 66:13

**Theme:** Mother God

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

This session, part of our look at festivals, coincides with Mothering Sunday. Originally, Mothering Sunday was a day where servants were allowed the day off from their duties to return to their 'mother church' – the church where they were baptised – and worship with their families but we are using the opportunity to look at who nurtures and cares for us, and particularly the idea of God fulfilling the role of mother as well as father.

We often focus on the power and might of God but the short passage we have chosen reminds us that God nurtures and comforts us, too.

It is not just people that comfort us – we can often find comfort in places and things (weighted blankets, favourite foods, cuddly toys, etc.)

It is worth remembering that in your group you might have children/young people whose experience of 'mother' is not nurturing and comforting, or whose mother is no longer with them. You will need to think in advance how to respond to this issue.

## 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 – Dressing Up games

You could choose a dressing up game from the list below. Alternatively, your group may have a favourite dressing up game to play. Each of the games requires team members to care for, and support, each other.

#### Over and under

Split your group into two teams; provide each team with a bag – or basket – of dressing up clothes. The teams must line up behind their bag of clothes. At an agreed signal, the first person in the line selects an item of clothing – it must be passed alternately, over-heads and under-legs. When it reaches the last person in the line, they must put it on and run to the front of the line. The teams must repeat the process until each team member is wearing an item of clothing. The winning team is the team which completes the challenge in the fastest time.

#### Who cares?

Split your group into teams and provide each team with a selection of dressing up clothes and a chair. Whoever sits in the chair is the mannequin; the rest of the team must decide how to 'dress' them. Have a list of people who might perform comforter roles, such as: mother, teacher, nurse, father, grandma. As you call out the name of a comforter, the group must select items from the dressing up clothes to dress their mannequin. Group members can swap to take turns as the mannequin after each completed round.

*After each round, you could ask your mannequins to freeze and allow the rest of the group members to wander round and look at the other teams' interpretations – like artworks in a gallery!*

## Arms up!

Ask your group to stand in a line. The first player in the line is given a jumper to put on. The next person in line must instruct the first player to put their arms up, take off the jumper and wear it themselves. This continues along the line until the last person is wearing the jumper. How fast can you complete the task? Are there ways to improve your team time?

## How many jumpers?

Place a large pile of jumpers in the centre of the room, then split your group into teams. Each team must nominate a team member. The nominated team members must put on as many jumpers as they can in the agreed time; other team members can help select jumpers and dress the nominated player *BUT* only one jumper can be selected at a time. The winning team is the team whose nominated player is wearing the most jumpers at the end of the allowed time.

## Quieter game – Finish my Sentence...

Sit your group in a circle and choose someone to stand in the centre of the circle. They must think of a question to ask the group by starting a sentence and leaving the ending blank. Each person in the circle repeats the sentence, adding their choice of answer.

If the person in the centre wanted to ask about favourite foods in the group, they might begin by stating:

“My favourite food is...”

Each member of the circle will then repeat the sentence, adding their own favourite food to the end of the sentence.

## Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

This link takes you to Isaiah 66:13 in The New Living translation -

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2066%3A13&version=NLT>

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

“I will comfort you there in Jerusalem  
as a mother comforts her child.”

*Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.*

### Listen:

She sits like a bird (Enemy of apathy) sung by the Choir of Lansdowne Parish Church, Glasgow

<https://youtu.be/E2e125OpOEk?si=108ickqm7gV03yEl>

The God of all Comfort by Mira Ko

[https://youtu.be/kvCjl\\_Dx6oU?si=H4pE1oQnERZpdBeB](https://youtu.be/kvCjl_Dx6oU?si=H4pE1oQnERZpdBeB) (Living Word Songs)

### Questions for discussion

- What questions does the song(s) leave you with about God?
- What comfort do you find in God? How would you describe it?

## 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.

### Reflective story

We often speak of "father God", but today we are looking at "mother God".

As we explore today's story, you can use the images from the book

*Mother God* by Kim Pecinovsky (2022: Augsburg Fortress Publishers)



[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/21639241.Teresa\\_Kim\\_Pecinovsky](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/21639241.Teresa_Kim_Pecinovsky)

<https://youtu.be/Tx9n5t12HOA?si=eBAmo9PRQ-5MsMSK> (by Munchkin Storytime)

Alternatively, you can use the images we have created to explore what God the mother is to us.

Lay out the images in a circle, placing the last image in the centre, in a reflective story telling way. If you want, you can use this adapted script of the book.

You know God the Father, but God is also your mother.



You are made in her image, the image of the one who is making all things new.



God is like a mother having a baby.  
She takes deep breaths and smiles with joy, and everyone celebrates the new little life.



All day and all night, God watches over her child.  
She holds the baby close, feeds it when it is hungry,  
and rocks it gently to sleep.



When the baby falls down, God opens her arms wide.  
The little one learns to walk because God is right there.



God is like Sophia – Wisdom – who teaches what is good and true.  
She builds, creates, imagines, and plays, and she invites us to learn with joy.



At the very beginning of the world, God's Spirit hovered over the world.  
She made the earth soft like a bed and the sky wide like a warm blanket.



God is like a mother hen who gathers her chicks under her wings.  
She plays with them in tall grass and near quiet streams.



God is like a mother bear – strong and gentle.  
She protects her cubs and keeps them safe in her care.



God is like a clever leopard – quiet, brave, and strong.  
She teaches her little ones to climb and swim, and they follow her wherever she goes.



God is like a baker with a big bowl of flour.  
She makes warm, yummy bread and feeds the whole neighbourhood  
until no one is hungry.



God is like a seamstress sewing colourful threads together.  
She makes clothes for rainy days, snowy days, and sunny days,  
caring for us in every kind of weather.



God is like a grandmother – with soft grey hair.  
She tells old stories while rocking in her chair.



God is the one who sees you.  
When you cry, God sits with you.  
She stays awake through the long night and holds your hand until morning.



God sings sweet lullabies and wraps you up in gentle moonlight.



God is our loving Mother.  
You are made in Her image too.  
She calls you beloved.  
She is making all things new.

I wonder which of these ways of seeing God you like best.

I wonder which one helps you feel God's love the most.

I wonder which picture of God your mind keeps thinking about.

What do these images say about comfort?

Once you have completed the reflective story, ask the young people to find the imagery in the Bible.

Here are some verses to help if your group finds it difficult.

Revelation 21:5; Isaiah 42:14; Isaiah 66:13; Isaiah 49:15; Hosea 11:3–4; Psalm 37:23–24; Hosea 11:3; Proverbs 8:30; Proverbs 3:5–6; Matthew 23:37; Psalm 91:4; Deuteronomy 32:11; Psalm 145:15; John 6:11; Matthew 6:30; Genesis 3:21; Psalm 34:18; Psalm 121:4; Zephaniah 3:17; Isaiah 43:1; 1 John 3:1

I wonder which fits the best. Can you recreate the story using the verses and the images?

### 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.

### Group discussion

- Has your experience of mothers affected your understanding of mother God?
- Who is the comforter in your life?

### Personal reflection

- I wonder if you are a comforter or the comforted.

# 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.

*You will need a blanket for everyone.*

*Invite everyone to wrap themselves up in their blanket and get comfortable: “Close your eyes and let us pray.”*

God,

We feel this blanket around us, warm, secure, held,  
and it reminds us that you wrap us in your arms and offer your  
comfort to us.

As a mother comforts her child, you hold us, you are near.

*(In the silence, under your blanket, tell God your prayers)*

God thank you for being near to us.

Thank you for hearing our prayers.

Keep us close to you and help us to share your love and comfort with others.

Amen.

## Spoken prayers

God of compassion, thank you that you promise to comfort us like a mother comforts her child. When life feels overwhelming, when we're stressed, hurt, confused, or carrying stuff we don't know how to name, remind us that you are near. Help us to believe that your comfort is real, not just words. Teach us to come to you honestly, without pretending we're fine when we're not. And as we receive your comfort, help us to pass it on to others who are struggling too. 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.



## Hug in a mug

*You will need:*

- plain/all-purpose flour
- sugar – caster, granulated or brown sugar
- baking powder
- fine salt
- milk
- sunflower or vegetable oil
- any relevant additional ingredients

*What you do:*

Measure the dry ingredients – the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt – directly into a microwave safe mug.

Stir to mix well.

Add the oil and milk and stir to mix.

Cook in the microwave on high for 1 minute. Leave to sit for a further minute before eating.

## Comfort hug

*You will need:*

- strips of felt or fabric
- Velcro self-adhesive dots or strips
- fabric glue
- a button and a loop
- a mug
- hot chocolate
- flavoured essence (mint or orange)
- squirty cream
- small marshmallows
- a bar of chocolate grated



*What you do:*

Depending on the shape of the mug you may need to make a template from paper and then use that to help cut your felt to the right shape.

Decorate your strip of felt with hearts, a smiley face or something else you choose.

Wrap it around your mug and join it together by sticking the Velcro dots/strips to the end and wrapping it around the mug. Making sure the join is by the handle. Alternatively, you could sew a button and a loop of felt on to it, to join the ends together.

While that is drying, make your hot chocolate. Make it luxurious, using hot milk and chocolate, or a spoonful of Nutella spread. You could even add flavours to the hot chocolate if you have some.

Pour it into your cup and top with marshmallows, squirty cream and some grated chocolate. Yum!

Add your decoration (if dry enough) to the cup.

## 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. **How do you like to be comforted?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT, Resources ([jpit.uk](http://jpit.uk)) or *Commitment for Life* ([cforl.co.uk](http://cforl.co.uk))
- Could you watch out for people who may need comfort this week? Also be aware of situations you are a part of and see if you can spot the comforter and the comfortee.

Thank you for exploring the **Isaiah** 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

