



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>

Psalm 16: 1-3

Theme: Remembrance Day – safe spaces

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

Psalms

We are continuing on our November theme of 'Saints' – this week fitting it in with the calendar entry of 'Remembrance Sunday'.

It can be a difficult topic to address with children and young people and you can expect lots of questions along the lines of "If God keeps everyone safe, why do so many people die in wars/conflict?" There are no easy answers – we are suggesting that it is approached from the idea that you can feel safe because of the presence of God even when you are not physically safe.

There are many potential triggers in this week's theme – children who are being bullied or who live in angry homes, who have lost family or friends due to violence or war. We are encouraging members of your group to think about where they feel safe, with whom they feel safe, and to whom they can turn (as well as God) when they feel unsafe. Help them to explore the idea that a safe space is not necessarily a place where you will be physically safe, it's a space you can be open and honest, express your feelings, be listened to and given pastoral support. Is that your group?

We might wonder what is our role in creating places of safety for those in dangerous or scary situations now? To link with Remembrance Sunday, we can wonder how members of the Armed Forces can feel 'safe' when they're in the middle of a conflict or war and whether those who go to help others in dangerous or difficult situations are 'saints'.



We have suggested two different translations of the passage we are using. Read them both and decide which would be most useful for your group. Remember, if there is a different translation that you think will work better: use that!

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.

Experience

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

Listen to the song 'Protector' by Beyoncé and reflect on the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4xrbll8Tvw>

Discussion questions

- Are there any particular lyrics that stand out to you from this song?
- What are the people, places, things that help you to feel protected?

Not Gonna Worry, Common Hymnal, Kanjii Mbugua

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSxgEd3_e3U



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:

This is an opportunity for you to explore some of the violence and unrest that we have encountered on our streets and in the news.

The recent riots which took place across the country following the Olympics caused a lot of people to feel unsafe and provoked fear.

- Why did people respond with violence?
- How else could they have responded?
- I wonder what Jesus would have said in response?
- Where are the safe places in this situation?

Were you aware that in response to the violence many other gatherings happened? These were ones in peaceful protest to the violence, putting their thoughts of 'we don't want this' into action. People see Britain as a safe space but there are people in Britain who don't want it to be that way – peace is not just the absence of war.

- What happened once these peaceful gatherings happened?
- What can we learn from this situation?
- Where are the safe places in this situation?

There are many groups who strive for peace and for their community to be a place of safety. Spend some time researching Quakers and Moravians. Feed back to the group all you have discovered, especially about the ways they cultivate safety in their context.

You may have some people in your group or church who have encountered this kind of violence or fear, asylum seekers, refugees.....they may be willing to share their story and what helped them to feel safe.

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.

Little Red Riding Hood. We are talking about the modern 'fairytale' version of the story, not the original gruesome Grimm story! Little Red Riding Hood goes to visit her Grandmother. It's interesting that red is often the colour associated with danger. To get there she has to walk through a place of danger, the wood, before she gets to the refuge of her Grandmother's house. Later in the story, we find out that her Grandmother's house is not the safe space she imagines it to be...

There are many versions of the story on YouTube (such as <https://youtu.be/RT-EwqgHqCk?si=wvkoHNOHiYa4r5Kr>) Choose the one that you think is most suitable for your group.

Talking together: Going deeper

- How can we share God's love as a safe space for others?
- How can God be a safe space if sometimes horrible things still happen to you? Some people even suffer more because of their faith (some of the saints, for example, died unpleasantly).

Conversation starters

- Who were the saint stories from the war? What does it take to be a saint in that situation?
- Some countries stay neutral during wars and are a safe place – is it right not to take sides?

Express

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

Praying together

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.

The Psalms can often be read as prayers and, in this session, we invited you to choose between two different translations of the same passage: Psalm 16.1-3. Invite the group to listen (and pray) to the version you chose not to use.

Perhaps your group could use both passages (and any other translations they like) to write their own version of the prayer, either re-wording or amalgamating the words that resonate with them.

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.

Researching Patron Saints

Set the task of researching some different patron saints. You could provide some suggested categories (eg soldiers, Navy, nurses, Airforce, doctors, teachers, charity workers etc) or allow them to choose and select an area of particular interest to them. Allow time for them to research online, and an opportunity for participants to share their findings if they wish to. You could use the site www.themodernsaints.com to help with research.



Questions to explore:

- What is their history and background?
- Why might they have been chosen as this patron saint?
- What do you think they would care about if they were alive today?

Create a poppy

Provide a range of different craft materials (eg paints, felt, tissue paper, coloured pens, wool, felt, fabric) and invite participants to design and create their own poppy. Lay the completed poppies out in a wreath shape and allow time for reflection and prayer. You could use this reflective prayer activity from The Church of England website - <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christenings/after-christening/things-do-children-autumn/prayer-poppies>



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. **Where's your safe space?**
 - Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](https://resources.jpit.uk) Commitment for Life cforl.co.uk
 - There are many ways to commemorate Remembrance Day other than attending a Church service. One of which is to watch and be informed about why we have a commemoration in the first place. An online search will provide you with many soldiers 'life in war' stories often shown in the letters they wrote home. Could you read one and write something for the church magazine or the Facebook page of the Church about the person, your thoughts and the relevance to today? What would your letters contain, I wonder, if you had to write a letter home like they did?
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Thank you for exploring the **Psalm** 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