



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>

Proverbs 24: 30-34

Theme: Balance equals healthy growth

Contents:

- [Introduction](#) 1
- [Together](#) 2
- [Experience](#) 2
- [Explore](#) 3
- [Express](#) 4

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

Proverbs

It is believed that Wise Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs, although there were other contributors. It is often called the book of Wisdom and it is still quoted as wise words for today. Amazing to think that wisdom has been passed down to us from 950 years before Jesus was born. In this passage the writer paints a picture of a garden that has been neglected by its owner. It could be used as a metaphor for faith, it is God who grows the seed of faith but we still need to do our part. Nurturing our faith, supported by others who help our faith to grow and develop. We have also used this passage to consider how we ensure there is balance in our lives. Time to rest is good but also time to get busy and do what needs to be done.

Be careful that this isn't about saying you are not allowed to rest it's more about ensuring that the things you are caring for and nurturing are always cared for; Even if someone else helps with that. Take care that the session isn't a guilt trip, there is a lot of burnout amongst Christians.

Be aware that many children will be very busy with extracurricular programmes etc and this isn't always their choice. How do we enable children to consider how they get some balance back in their lives. The aim of the session is about getting a good balance, where can God help all areas to grow well.



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.

Cabbage or drop relay

Simple fun game based on the old crackerjack game of cabbage or drop, playing with the ideas of carrying too much. <https://youtu.be/GktZgeOQWUk?si=nzahXGiQtSuh1TfH>

You will need lots of toys and familiar items of different weights. A box of cabbages or similar booby prize. Some items to create an obstacle course.

Put your group into two or more teams.

One person from each team is nominated to be the one who will hold all the items.

The rest of the team take it in turns to run the obstacle course returning with one item from the pile that is given to the 'holder' to hold.

If the holder drops an item, it is returned to the take pile and the holder is given a cabbage in its place.

At the end of the race, the group with the most items wins (take away a point for each cabbage)

Juggling

Playing with themes of the passage, this could be a good time to teach the group to juggle, or to help others to learn if any of the group can already do it.

Experience

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

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:

Explore

Encourage participants to think about their typical weekly schedule, and the different activities that they do throughout the week. (Eg School, clubs, family, church)

Create a timetable for the week and write down each activity on different cards/sticky notes. (The template below may be helpful.)

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning							
Midday							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Night							

Discuss the questions below:

- How did you find this activity? What did you learn about the ways you use your time throughout the week?
- Do you feel that you have a balanced timetable throughout the week?
- Which activities do you enjoy the most?
- Which activities are the most important to you?
- Is there anything that you would add/remove to help make your schedule more balanced?
- Which activities help you to rest/relax? Do you make time for rest/relaxation within your weekly schedule?
- Which activities help you to connect with God or grow in your faith?

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.

Balancing your teen years, Hailey Meyers, TEDxGoshen
<https://youtu.be/V0dReBD3FFI?si=hHLunWXLuALrWhZb>

Discussion Questions:

- What stood out to you from this video?
- What do you think about the phrase “more is not better?” Do you agree with this phrase? Why/why not?
- What activities/things motivate you? What are you passionate about?

Talking together: Going deeper

- The Bible passage refers to losing everything, what do you think the author is referring to? What is that in the context of your life today?
- What do you think God is saying to you in this story?

Conversation starters

- When have you misunderstood how important something is? What or who helps you understand that?
- If you were the person walking past/ the gardener/ the garden how would you feel?
- In what ways could you be called lazy?

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.

Have a go at designing some prayers that you can use in your everyday life to help you grow in your faith. For example:

A prayer for when you tie your shoes:

God, Go with me today, guide my footsteps and help me to stay on the path you put before me, Amen

A prayer for when I look in a mirror:

God, I am yours, I am called, I am in your hands. Thank you, 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.

Watch this video which describes 'The wellbeing café in Skipton' the winner of the 2022 URC community project awards. This video describes a church in Skipton that saw a need in the community and rose to meet that need. A wellbeing café strives to help grow a healthy community, a healthy mind, a healthy life balance.

https://youtu.be/C_dPBSwJUEM?si=ICmuLCZSZVCH1kzX

- What really struck you about the work this church does?
- What do you think is meant by 'the café was an accident'?
- I wonder what you have in your church or community that meets this kind of need?

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. **How do you make room for God each day?**
 - Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](https://www.jpit.org.uk) Commitment for Life [cforl.co.uk](https://www.cforl.co.uk)
 - At the end of each day reflect on all the activities and things you have been involved in, did you get a good balance? Was God included in your day? How can you ensure a good balance tomorrow and what ways could you include God?
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Thank you for exploring the **Proverbs** 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