

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

Title: Proverbs 30: 24–28

Theme: Small but wise

Contents:

Introduction	1
Together	2
Experience	3
Explore	4
Express	5
Handouts	9

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

Fantastic Beasts Introduction

The Bible is full of a fascinating variety of stories: family dramas and heroes overcoming unlikely odds; songs and poetry; historical sagas... Not to mention some surprisingly ordinary situations described in Jesus' parables! But not all of these fabulous tales are about humans and their relationship with the God who created them – sometimes humans don't get a look in! The Bible is full of stories and songs which delight in the created world and the animals that are a part of it. We are often reminded not to underestimate animals or the wonderful world that we share with them.

Small but Wise! Introduction

This week's passage is from Proverbs, which gathers together nuggets of shared knowledge and is part of the Bible's Wisdom literature. The verses from chapter 30 encourage us to consider four very small animals that we might easily choose to overlook – and think about their unexpected skills. These animals are amazing – they are all small but surprisingly wise! There's lots to be impressed by, and lots we can learn.

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 widgeit prayer found in Faith Adventures: Children Together, or else the Lord's Prayer found at the end of this session.

Active game – Ant, Badger, Locust, Lizard.

This game reinforces the creatures mentioned in the passage from Proverbs. It is based on the game 'North, South, East, West'.

You will need:

- a large indoor area or an outdoor space where you can mark four corners or edges
- animal labels: assign each corner or wall as either 'Ant', 'rock Badger', 'Locust' or 'Lizard'.
- place a centre spot where all players begin each round

What you do:

A leader stands in the centre and calls out a creature, e.g. "Lizard!"

Players run to the corresponding corner or edge.

Continue calling creatures in random order until players are familiar with the various spaces. When everybody is used to the instructions, play the game – you could include the following variations:

- Players choose a corner while the leader's eyes are closed. The leader then calls a creature; anyone not in that area is out. Continue until one winner remains.
- Add actions like jumping, skipping, or crab-walking to the called direction.

Quieter game – Locust Drive (but you can use any of the animals from the passage – just assign dice numbers as appropriate)

You will need:

- dice (one per player or per table)
- pencils
- locust templates or score sheets
- timer or whistle (optional)

What you do:

Start with the body: Players must roll a 1 to draw the locust's body. No other parts can be drawn until the body is completed.

Draw in order: After the body, roll a 2 for the head, 6x3 for legs, 2x4 for wings, 2x5 for eyes, and 2x6 for antennae (or follow your chosen template). Each part requires the correct dice roll before it can be drawn.

Taking turns: Players roll the dice in turn, attempting to complete their locust.

Shout "Locust!": The first player to finish their ant shouts "Locust!" to end the round, or the organiser can use a fixed time limit.

Scoring: Each player scores points equal to the number of locust parts they completed. The player with the highest score at a table is considered the winner for that round.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

This link takes you to Proverbs 30: 24–28 in The Living Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2030%3A24-28&version=TLB>

24-28 There are four things that are small but unusually wise:

Ants: they aren't strong but store up food for the winter.

Rock badgers: delicate little animals who protect themselves by living among the rocks.

The locusts: though they have no leader, they stay together in swarms.

The lizards: they are easy to catch and kill yet are found even in king's palaces!

The Living Bible copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

You may wish to research different versions of this reading on www.biblegateway.com
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Watch: Antz (1998) - You Are Insignificant Scene

<https://youtu.be/gFX14TEiBOw?si=vU-DY7zMFqYseuNr>

An opportunity for reflection

- I wonder how we can be bigger than we are when we are wise like ants.

Explore – ways into the theme

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.

Eco theology – where in nature do we learn

Interactive idea

Re-read the verses from Proverbs.

Just as Proverbs used ants and locusts, God can use the creatures in our gardens and parks to remind us how to live wisely. What creatures can we think about?



Below are some which can get you started. Encourage the children to think of some on their own and then think about each creature's character and what it can teach us.

Bees all have a job and work together – we all have gifts and everyone matters in the community.

A **woodlouse** likes to stay in damp, sheltered places; they curl up into a little ball to protect themselves – everyone has a safe place with God.

A **mouse** is tiny and quick. They are always alert to what is happening around them – pay attention to God's world.

A **hedgehog** curls into a ball and uses its spikes for protection – trust in God's protection.

If we were to re-write the proverb it might look like this:

- Bees teach us to work together.
- Woodlice teach us that God is my safe place.
- Mice teach us to pay attention and listen.
- Hedgehogs teach us to protect what matters.

Now create one for yourselves.

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.



Clip by Kareem Vertilus *Toy Story 2 A Bug's Life* (1999)

<https://youtu.be/dztLhdHQWvY?si=6dHe4IHvN7PgbwOM>

This clip from *Toy Story 2* shows a pretend out-take scene featuring the insects. This scene is in the film but can be seen from a different perspective.

- Does it seem surprising that the animals in the Bible passage are taking centre stage? Are they the kind of animals that we usually notice?
- In the clip, we see a familiar scene from a different angle – how does the Bible passage encourage us to think about these animals differently?
- Does the Bible passage change your mind about the animals it mentions?

Group discussion

- What does creation teach us about God?
- Are there humans that demonstrate being surprisingly wise?

Personal reflection

- What can we learn from the four creatures in the passage?
- I wonder if you get a second chance to make a first impression?

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.

Spoken prayers

God of wisdom,

When we read Proverbs 30, we're surprised that some of our best lessons come from some of the smallest creatures. Thank you that you can teach us through things that others might overlook.

Like the ants, help us to think ahead and make wise choices today that will shape our future. Give us the self-discipline to do what is right, even when nobody is watching.

Like the rock badgers, help us to know where our security comes from. When life feels uncertain, remind us that our strength is not in our popularity, achievements or possessions, but in you.

Like the locusts, teach us the value of community. Help us to encourage one another, support one another, and work together rather than trying to do life alone.

Like the lizard that finds its way into a palace, give us courage to go where you call us, even when we feel small, insignificant, or out of place. Help us to remember that you can use anyone who is willing to follow you.

This week, challenge us to learn from these small creatures. Show us one area where we need to be wiser, one relationship where we need to work better with others, and one situation where we need to trust you more deeply.

May we not just admire wisdom but live it.

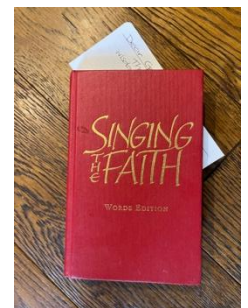
In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Hidden prayers

Write some prayers to be hidden around the church for other people to find, you could put them around the church; in the bibles, in the hymn, under the seats or cushions, in the pulpit.

Just like the rock badgers, who hide in the rocks, sometimes our prayers can be hidden and found later to bring a blessing to others.



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.

Bug Hotel

Design or build a bug hotel; or could you consider taking part in A Rocha's Church Count on Nature campaign? Recording the wildlife in and around your church can help you to appreciate how much biodiversity there is in even a small area. Are there things you could do to encourage more wildlife? Or support the wildlife that is already there?

Churches Count on Nature - A Rocha UK

This site focusses on graveyards but it can be done anywhere, so why not get outside and get exploring? <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/schools-landing-page/>

You will also find some help on these sites:



Woodland Trust <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk>

or RSPB <https://www.rspb.org.uk>

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. **How can we count for creation this week?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT Resources (jpit.uk) or *Commitment for Life* (cforl.co.uk)
- Look around where you live and do a small bug count. I wonder how many different ones you will find? If you are fortunate, you may find some new ones.

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

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on 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.

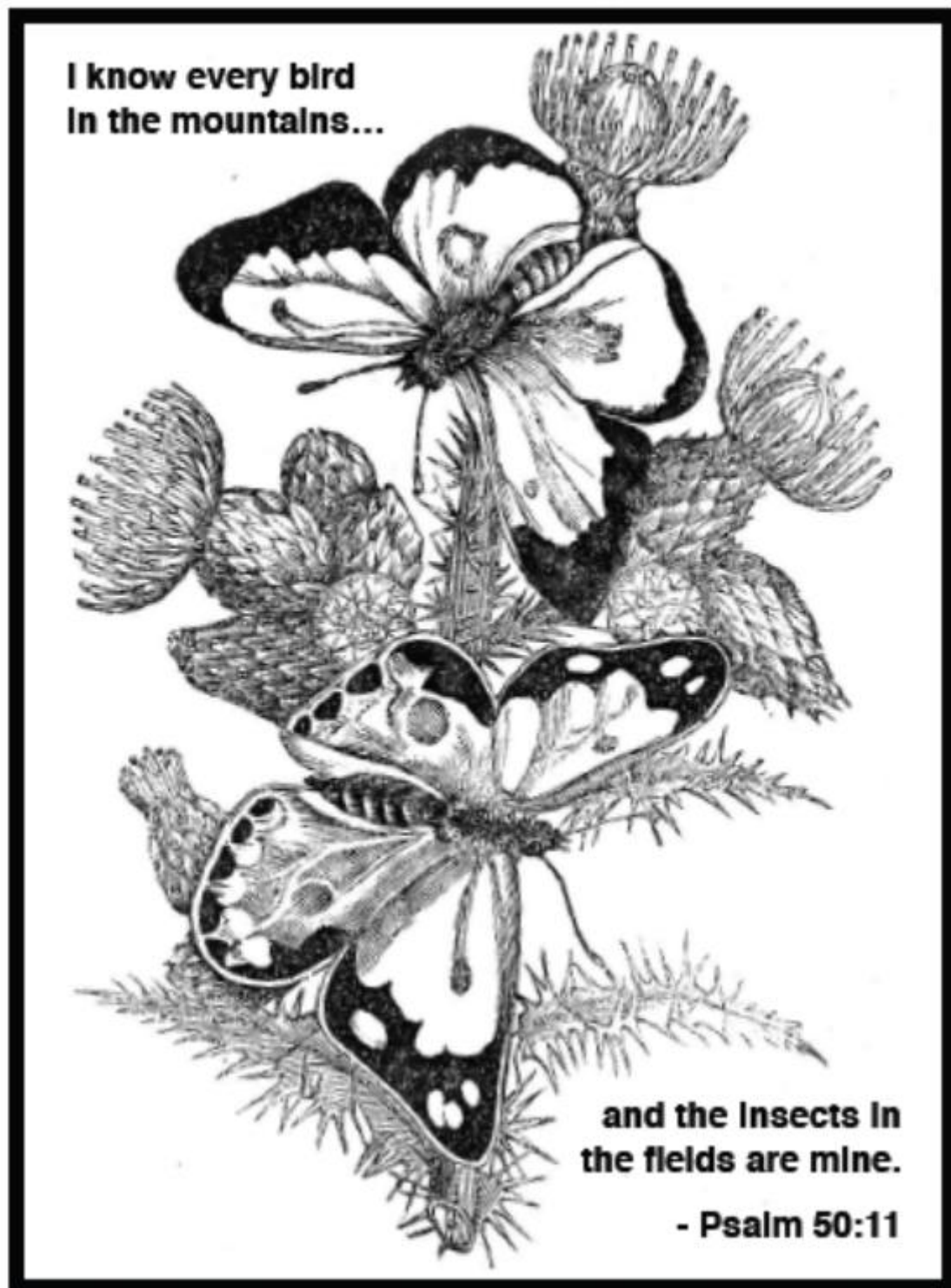
Give us this day our daily bread

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



For more free printable coloring pages, please visit www.flandersfamily.info



The
United
Reformed
Church **Children**



The
United
Reformed
Church **Youth**