The United Reformed Church

families on faith adventures @ home

Welcome to Families on Faith Adventures @ Home!

This resource has been put together for you by the United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work team and the synod CYDOs and their equivalents.

We hope you will enjoy sharing a time of faith and fellowship together as a family through these stories, games, activities and prayers. They are designed as a 'pick and mix' of ways to experience God's message through the Bible, exploring what it means to you and express that in words and action. They are not linked to the lectionary but can be used in any order as we explore all the different parts of the Bible.

The Walking the Way challenges are one way of continuing our walk with Jesus throughout the week.

These ideas are designed to be intergenerational - maybe even to be shared with members of the family you can't see now except via the internet.

The resources are based on our non-uniformed children's groups, Friends on Faith Adventures and Pilots, but have been modified to make them suitable for all families at home.

These activities are planned to be used together as a family and under adult supervision. Please be aware of your family's ages and abilities as some activities may need more adult support than others. ***Stay safe and have fun!***

This week's Bible story is:

No Place to Call Home

Matthew 2 verses 13-15

With many varieties of activities and things to do to help explore the theme. Look out for this 'hands on' symbol.

From The United Reformed Church Children *and* The United Reformed Church Youth

Illustration by *lambsongs.co.nz via freebibleimages.com*

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Get to know your Bible

The Bible is like a library made up of 66 books written by many different people over many years.

The Old Testament books were written before Jesus was born. They are the holy stories he would have grown up hearing and reading. There are 39 of these.

The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.

Can you find and colour the book on the bookshelf that this week's story is from?

If you have a Bible, see if you can find the story in there.

You could print this out once and colour each new book on the bookshelf as you read stories from it.

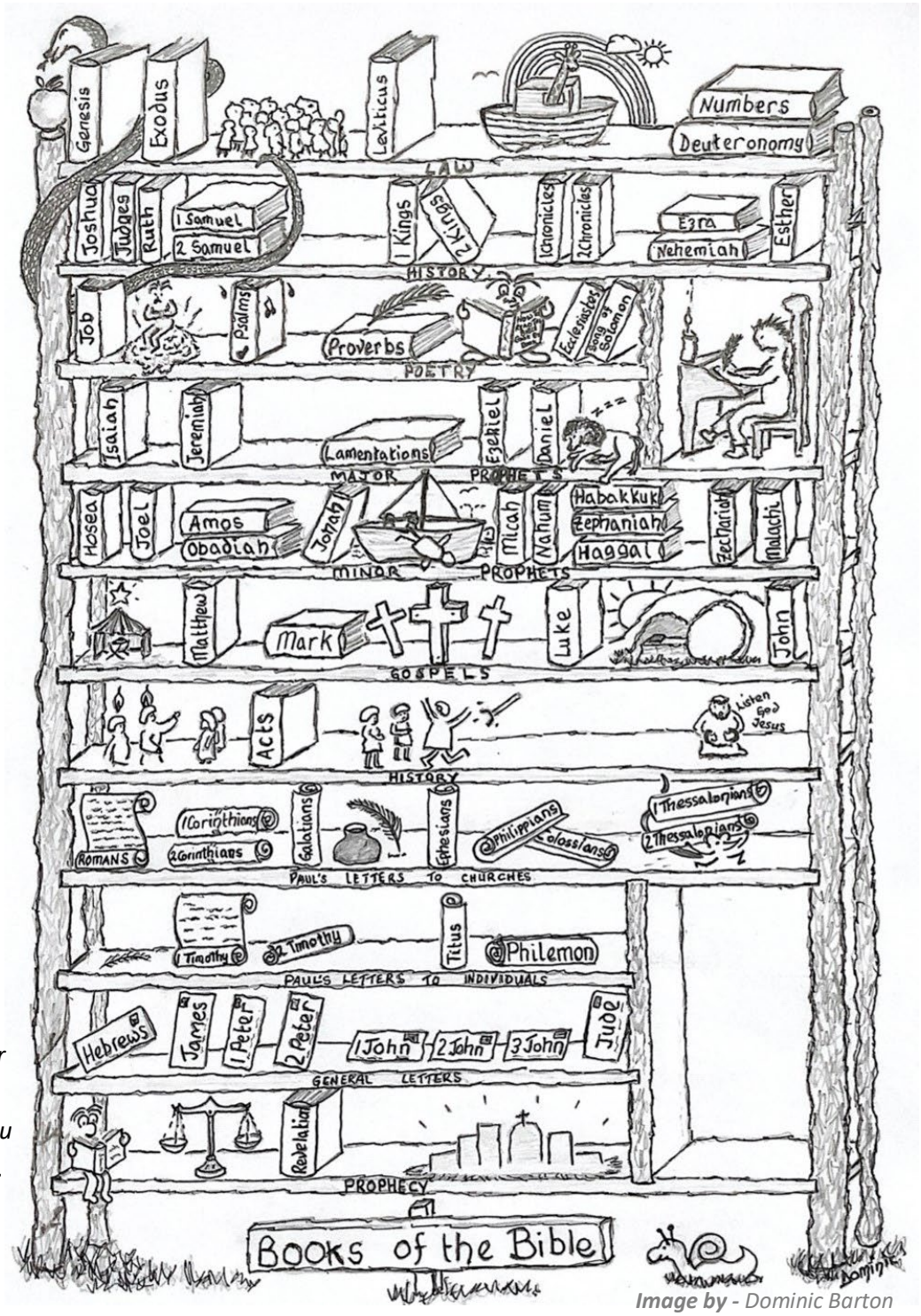

Image by - Dominic Barton

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Bible context – Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew was written around 60 AD by the disciple of the same name. Matthew was a tax collector before he decided to follow Jesus and he often writes for the Jews, showing how Old Testament prophesies are fulfilled in Jesus as the promised king. This story relates to a prophesy that was told years before Jesus was born: God said "I will call my son out of Egypt".

The Story – Matthew 2 verses 13-15 (The International Children's Bible)

After the wise men left, an angel of the Lord came to Joseph in a dream. The angel said, "Get up! Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Herod will start looking for the child to kill him. Stay in Egypt until I tell you to return."

So Joseph got up and left for Egypt during the night with the child and his mother. Joseph stayed in Egypt until Herod died. This was to make clear the full meaning of what the Lord had said through the prophet. The Lord said, "I called my son out of Egypt."

Scriptures quoted from the International Children's Bible®, copyright© 1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson. Used by permission.

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Jesus escapes to Egypt https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5ptO1NKZfI
Jesus was a Refugee by Walkersville Church https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrfkSK7-zlw
Children talk to child refugees https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctCaKH-2Wm8
Jesus kept safe cartoon https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcbi1hfxkAg

Dance and Sing

God Will Guide Us by Lifetree Kids https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQUNBTTdSd4
Home by Chris Tomlin https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIb4NC5ikYo
Refugee by Steve Bell https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kO9fgQxf5c
How Far by Matt Redman https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04hxkpk
I am a friend of God https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG1yV1bV8us

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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Misplaced Story

Here is the story again but this time some of the words have been removed or replaced. Can you see what has changed and put it right? The answers are below in red.

Luke 2 v 13 - 15

After the wise women left, an angle of the north came to Mary in a dream. The maid said, "Get up! Take the baby and her brother and escape to Tenerife. Boris will start looking for the child to kiss him. Stay in trouble until I tell you to sleep."

So Santa got up and left forgotten during the day with the child and his mother. No one stayed in Egypt until Herod laughed. This was to make clear the full meaning of what the Easter bunny had said through the telephone. The Lord said, "I called my sun out of Egypt."

Luke 2 v 13 - 15

After the wise women (men) left, an angle (angel) of the north (Lord) came to Mary (Joseph) in a dream. The maid (angel) said, "Get up! Take the baby (child) and her brother (his mother) and escape to Tenerife (Egypt). Boris (Herod) will start looking for the child to kiss (kill) him. Stay in trouble (Egypt) until I tell you to sleep (return)."

So Santa (Joseph) got up and left forgotten (for Egypt) during the day (night) with the child and his mother. No one (Joseph) stayed in Egypt until Herod laughed (died). This was to make clear the full meaning of what the Easter bunny (Lord) had said through the telephone (prophet). The Lord said, "I called my sun (son) out of Egypt."

When things are misplaced or out of order, nothing makes sense. How must Joseph and Mary have felt to have the Son of God with them and now be on the run with no place to call home?

Change Places

One of the Walking the Way challenges this week is to swap beds and bedrooms to experience sleeping somewhere else. How about taking this to the next level? Consider changing everything this week. We all have our favourite seats in the living room and at the dining table, or our favourite mugs and more. Why not change everything, experience how it feels to see someone else in your space and using your things.

Discuss how it felt. What if you lost your home and saw someone else move in? What would be the hardest thing to lose?

Modern Parables

Where children sleep by James Mollison

A powerful book that shows images of children and the places they sleep from around the world. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJx4SkDhh7I

Here is a full version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-Fg2CMsDvc

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Table Top Discussions

Here are some big questions to use over meals. You could use one a day.

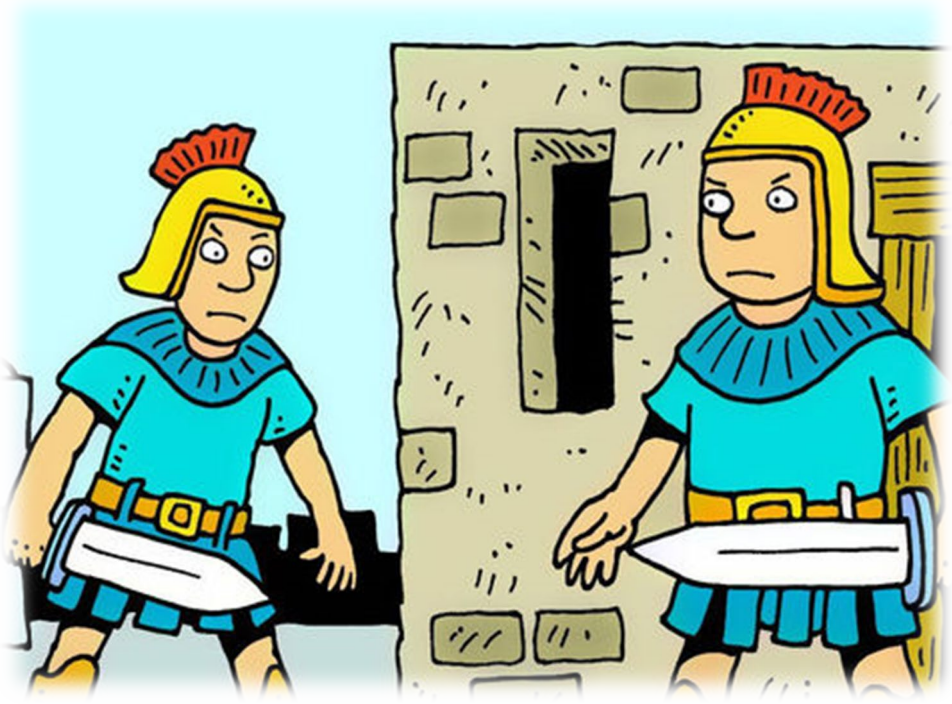
Why do you think Jesus never really had a home of his own and kept wandering?

What do you think this story has to teach us about how we respond to refugees?

Do you think Mary and Joseph doubted God's plan when they were on the run?

I wonder if Jesus ever thought he should have had better treatment - he was God's son after all?

What are some of the reasons why someone would need to leave their home/country? What can we do to help?



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What's in the box?

What treasures can you find to put in the box for your little ones to explore?

Perhaps older children could help find the things.

Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.

This week's Bible story is:

No Place to Call Home

Matthew 2 verses 13-15

A tray of sand

Something with rainbow colours for God's promise

Newspaper or cardboard box pieces

Little people

Bricks – e.g. duplo

As with all small things, please be aware of the risk of these being put into mouths, eyes, noses and ears. Please supervise small children!

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Pray Together

Watch this short film (highlighted in the modern parables section) of images of children and the places they sleep from around the world.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJx4SkDhh7I

Think about the places where children sleep around the world. Think about your own towns and cities near you -where do some people sleep because they have no place to call home?

Ask God to be with them in all these different situations.

Say a prayer together
A prayer for those with no safe place to stay

Thank you, God, that you sent messages to Joseph to protect Mary and Jesus and that Joseph trusted that you would protect them in their journey.
We pray for all children in the world who have to live in difficult circumstances or who have to move to another country because of poverty or a threat to their lives.
We ask that you will keep them safe and give them your peace.
Amen.

God Go and Moving Forward

Think how Joseph might have felt leaving home; perhaps sad, scared or confused. What things would be different?

Think about things that you are looking forward to and things you want to leave behind. Cut out some cloud shapes and tear up some scraps of paper. Write on the scraps of paper things you want to leave behind, things that are confusing painful and scary. Write the things that you look forward to and your hopes for the future on the cloud shapes. Place these shapes together in the centre of a table - you could do this as a family together. Sit quietly for a time and say the following prayer together

Dear God,
We thank you for the year that is past.
We thank you that you were with us in all the good things and all the bad things.
We want to leave the bad things and we ask that you would help us to let them go now.
Screw up the scraps of paper with your things to leave behind
We ask that you come close to us in this New year.
Take a few moments to be quiet and talk to God about your hopes for this year
We ask that you will help us to listen for your call, just as Joseph did.
Help us to make the right choices.
Amen.

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Pray Together

Prayers Around the House

Pray for each room in your house. Talk to God about the people who live in the house and use each of the rooms. For example, thank God for the food you have to eat and the people who cook when you are in the kitchen. In your bedroom thank God for the toys and games you have and the comfy bed you have to sleep in. Thank God for comfort and warmth. You can do this by walking around your house or you could make a prayer house to go onto the wall.

Cut out images or draw pictures that remind you of each of the rooms in your home. Cut out a rectangle from card and cut out shapes for each of the windows. Stick your pictures behind each window and then stick a sheet of paper over the back to help keep your pictures secure. Cut out a roof shape and add that to your house.

Dear God, please bless our home.
Help us to be gentle, kind, and patient.
To put up with each other,
and forgive those who do wrong
just as you forgive us.
Help us to know that love is
more important than anything else. Amen

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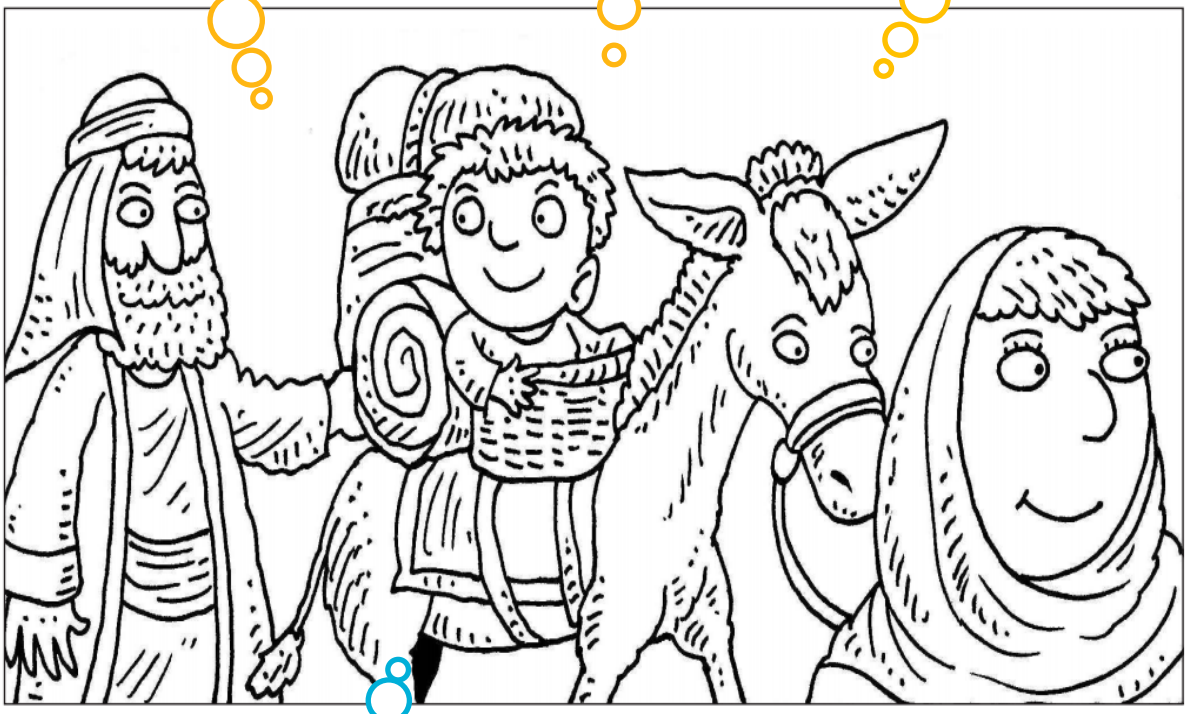
I wonder whether the family had any idea where they would live when they got to Egypt?

I wonder what it feels like to have to leave your home and run away to another country to be safe?

I wonder whether their faces would have really looked this happy?



I wonder what each person in this picture is really thinking?

I wonder why God allowed Jesus to be so often without a home and to be born into such a hostile environment?

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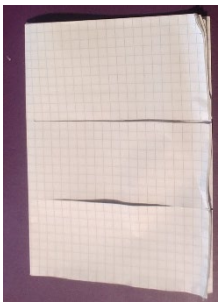
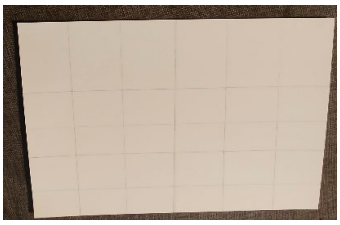
TO DO TOGETHER...

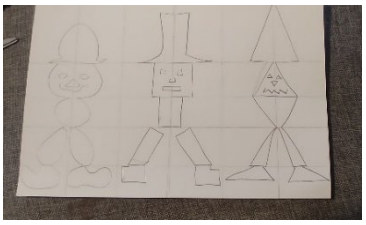
Misfits

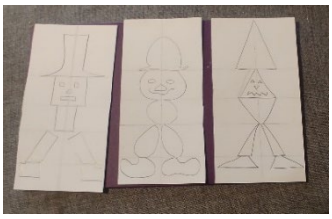
You will need: *Card or an old notebook*
Magazine images

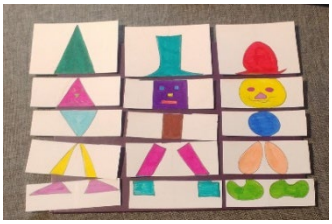


What you do:
Cut some figures from magazines and glue them onto a notebook which has the pages cut into three. Alternatively, draw some figures on card, draw lines across them and cut the cards along the guidelines. Now you can match different heads to different bodies and legs to make your misfits.









Alternative
You could also play a game with your family using a strip of paper each. The first person draws a head at the top of the piece of paper then folds the paper so that only the neck is showing. They pass the paper on to the next person who draws a body from the neck to the waist and draws the top of the arms, then again folds the paper over so that the waist and two bits of arm are showing. The third person (or the first person again if there are only two of you) then draws the lower half of the body to the top of the legs and draws the rest of the arms and puts hands on, again folding the to leave only the top of the legs showing. Finally the paper is passed on again and a set of legs and feet is drawn. Now open up your strips of paper and see what amazing misfits you have drawn.

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TO DO TOGETHER…

Homes

You will need: *Lego bricks*
or wooden blocks
or cardboard boxes

What you do:
Using Lego, wooden blocks or cardboard boxes, build some houses and create a home for Lego figures. If you are using cardboard boxes draw or paint them to create some houses. See how imaginative you can be when creating the homes and, whilst doing this, consider your home and the many people who have no place to call home.

You could do this on a larger scale if you have the space and resources – build a den in the garden or in your house, or put a tent up. You could sit in your den to have a drink and a snack, perhaps. If your den is outside, remember to wrap up warm. You can't meet with your friends in your den but you could send them a photo and challenge them to make a den of their own.

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TO DO TOGETHER…

Displaced Game

You will need: *A set of figures*

What you do:

This is like a game of hide and seek. Someone needs to place the figures in strange places. Start with them outside their home and then someone takes them and hides them for another person to find.

Alternatively, through the day, move them to places they shouldn't be. See how long it takes for people to find them in their displaced homes. Think about where they ended up and how uncomfortable these new places may be.

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Walking the Way
Living the life of Jesus today

Our Walking the Way Challenge this time is…

At Home:

In normal times, it's quite usual for each person in the family to have a bed they call their own, a place they normally like to sit, even their own mug. To help you understand what it feels like to be displaced (a word which means moved from your usual place or forced into the wrong place and made to move away from home to find somewhere safe), try swapping beds with someone else in your family for the night. Think about how it feels. (Adults please note: children who have experienced the trauma of displacement or who have ASD may find this too difficult a challenge. Please use discretion)

Outside:

This is a challenging one: as you walk around your local area, think about those who live and sleep on the street. Where might they find shelter? Can you find evidence of their presence in your community? There are people who are homeless in every part of the UK. You may not be able to do anything to help them directly, but you can recognise that they are there, you can ask God to watch over them, you can inform your local council or https://www.streetlink.org.uk/ and you can donate to a local national charity such as https://england.shelter.org.uk/.

For Others:

Make a Blessing Bag for someone who is homeless. Use a waterproof bag with a zipper if you can, but a drawstring bag will do. Include in it warm gloves and thick socks, plasters, deodorant, wetwipes, chewable multivitamins, lipbalm, tissues, toothbrush and paste, feminine hygiene pads for a woman, some munchies that are easy to eat such as crackers, chocolate, breakfast bars. And make a card or write a letter of encouragement and put it in there too (don't put personal contact details). You could give this to someone – make sure you're with an adult (Homeless people are no more dangerous and scary than any other people but many have mental ill health which may affect how they interact with you) – or you could pass it to an organisation who distribute them. This list was drawn up by someone who was homeless and includes the main things that they would have loved to receive.

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Adventurers Go!

You've shared together, now share with us!

Why not send photos of your crafts, your treasure boxes, your Walking the Way challenges - or dress up to make a tableau of the Big Story and take a photo to send in.

Email your photos to: ***lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk***
with parental permission for them to be used in publicity and online URC social media.

Alternatively, share them on our Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/

Remember you can find more resources on our website:
https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth

And if you've enjoyed these activities, why not see whether your local church runs Pilots or Friends on Faith Adventures (FOFA) when things get back to normal again.

Created for you by Nicola Grieves (Eastern Synod), Judy Harris (National Synod of Wales), Hannah Middleton (Northern Synod), Philip Ray (Wessex Synod, North), Lorraine Webb (Programme Officer for CYW), and Ruth White (Wessex Synod, South) on behalf of the CYDO+ and Children's and Youth Work team and Pilots.

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FRIENDS ON FAITH ADVENTURES F.O.F.A U.R.C

PILOTS