

LOVE IS ADVENTUROUS

CALLING THE DISCIPLES



Bible reading



Matthew 4:18-22

Jesus calls his first disciples

<https://bit.ly/3GmCsAh>

Jesus was walking by Lake Galilee. He saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and Simon's brother Andrew. The brothers were fishermen, and they were fishing in the lake with a net. Jesus said, "Come follow me. I will make you fishermen for men." At once Simon and Andrew left their nets and followed him.

Jesus continued walking by Lake Galilee. He saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets to catch fish. Jesus told them to come with him. At once they left the boat and their father, and they followed Jesus.

Matthew 9:9-13

The calling of Matthew

<https://bit.ly/3KjvkG4>

Jesus chooses Matthew

When Jesus was leaving, he saw a man named Matthew. Matthew was sitting in the tax office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And Matthew stood up and followed Jesus.

Jesus had dinner at Matthew's house. Many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with Jesus and his followers. The Pharisees saw this and asked Jesus' followers, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

Jesus heard the Pharisees ask this. So he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor. Only the sick need a doctor. Go and learn what this means: 'I want faithful love more than I want animal sacrifices.' I did not come to invite good people. I came to invite sinners."

Bible video

Jesus calls Levi by CartoonBible

<https://youtu.be/-Mv7mVcqJaQ>

Jesus calls ALL the disciples by Crossroads

Kids <https://youtu.be/j1N6YNFhpp4>

Arrival activity

Big entrance challenge – As children arrive at the front door tell them that the floor is lava, so they must get to their group without stepping on the floor. You can add paper islands and objects like chairs along the route to help them.

Group activity: design a giant adventure map. You could add details in 3D using Lego, for example perhaps a dragon that flies over the map, or create the mountains on top of the map. What is the adventure map leading to and what challenges are along the way?

Big Question:

- ♥ If you were to go on an adventure, where would you go and who would you take with you?

Drama

Out of the album (Andrew)

Well, whoever would have guessed that the moment that photo was taken would be the very moment that my life changed beyond all recognition? You know, there I was, having a bit of a break from fishing while I mended my nets. They're always getting snagged on things, fishing nets, you know, and they're not much use for catching things if they've got a great big hole in them, are they? So that was my life really – sleeping, eating, fishing on the lake with my

family, and mending my nets ready for it all to start again.

That was until Jesus came along, not that I knew it was Jesus at the time. It was just this chap on the lakeside making the most outrageous proposition. He walked up, took one look at me and my brother, and said, "Follow me". Follow me! I ask you, what sort of a thing is that to say to a stranger who's hard at work, earning an honest crust to keep the wolf from the door for himself and his family? I looked up from my nets to send him on his way, and not too politely either, if I'm honest. But one look at this man and I knew he was calling me on an adventure and I just couldn't say no.

I've not looked back since – even during the tough times – and the same can be said for the others who joined our merry band too. When Jesus calls you, you don't know what adventures are in store, but you know he'll be in there, right along with you. He's so full of love, you just have to say yes!

Story

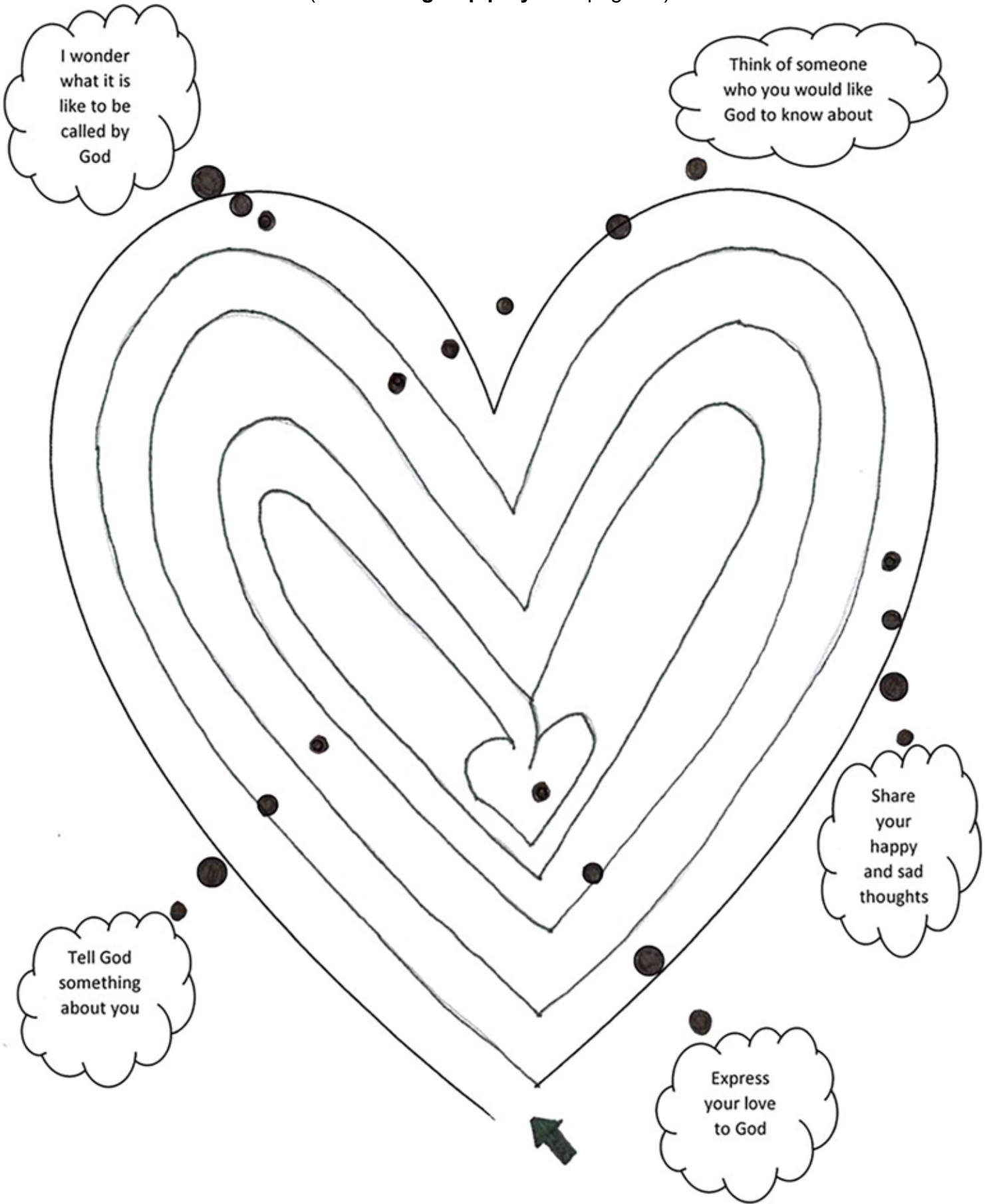
Come with me, let the adventure begin

Jesus came to show God's love,
To bring glimpses of heaven, down from above.
He came to heal the sick and help the poor,
To stand up for others left outside the door.
He came to tell stories about widows and kings.
He also did miracles and such amazing things,
But he didn't want to do this on his own.
He knew it wasn't good to do it all alone.
So, he went on a search for a group of new friends
To join in an adventure that would never end.
He wanted to find people who would leave all they had
And follow him, watching and learning from the good and the bad.
His plan was to build a team, kind and strong,

To continue his mission when he would be gone.
So, where did he go and who did he choose?
Did he go for the best, strongest people who never lose?
NO! Jesus didn't want to choose the bravest or most clever,
Or the wealthiest people or the best looking ever!
He chose Simon, renamed him Peter, and Andrew his brother,
But this wasn't enough, he wanted another.
He chose the fishermen, James and John, the sons of Zebedee;
He met them on the beach and said, "Come follow me."
He chose Philip, Bartholomew and the one called Thomas,
He chose Matthew the tax collector and James (son of Alphaeus).
Nine chosen so far, but Jesus wanted more.
He chose Thaddaeus (son of James) and Simon who was keen,
And chose Judas Iscariot to complete his team.
To each of these people he said, "Leave what you know
And come follow me, Oh the places we will go!
The adventures we will have and the things you will see
If you just take a step, and come, follow me.
Together we'll go and together we will stay.
You will see that I am the Light, Truth and the Way.
I will be your teacher and you will be my friends;
We will show God's love to others, the love that never ends."
So they joined his adventure, they answered his call,
And they each had a part to play, something for all.
You can read of their adventures if you come take a look
In the stories of Jesus that are found in God's book.
And Jesus hasn't finished, he still invites people to join in –
Jesus says to you now, "Come with me, let the adventure begin."

Heart labyrinth

(See **Small group prayer** on page 33)



Wondering questions

- ♥ I wonder how Jesus chose his friends ?
- ♥ I wonder what the disciples thought life as a follower of Jesus might be like?
- ♥ I wonder what adventures God might have in store for you ?

Small group prayer



Heart labyrinth

One purpose of a labyrinth is to have the opportunity to focus time and attention on prayer and God.

Jesus calls his disciples, which includes us, to follow him through the adventure of life and faith.

One way to enable us to focus our hearts and minds on this prayerfully is to use a finger labyrinth, as you slowly and mindfully follow the path with your finger from the arrow to the heart in the middle. You will find a template on page 32.

As you use the labyrinth, intentionally take deep breaths in and out. At the speech bubbles, stop for a moment and think about what is written. When you reach the middle, close your eyes for a few seconds while you think about your love for God and God's love for you. Then slowly follow the path back the way you came.

It may help to play some music as you do this. <https://youtu.be/t68StIVbLBA> (Peace of God – children's melodies – Marcus Stanley)



Activity/craft

Follow me sensory bag

Jesus called the disciples to leave what they were doing and follow him.

You will need:

- Zip lock bag
- Cheap hair gel
- Small figures made from recycled yogurt pots or milk bottles (four per person)
- Permanent markers
- Strong tape
- Paper
- Felt tips



Colour in and draw faces onto the small figures, making one of them obviously represent Jesus (Maybe draw a big letter J on them or make them slightly bigger.) Use permanent markers and allow them to dry completely. Fill the zip bag with the hair gel and put the figures inside, making sure they are all facing upwards. It is a good idea to seal the bag with strong tape to prevent the bag from opening whilst in use.

On a sheet of paper, draw a landscape including a lake with boats, town and countryside, and put this on the table underneath the bag or tape it to the back of the bag. Spread the gel and the figures out across the bag then have some fun moving Jesus around the bag and getting the other figures to follow. Remember the story of how Jesus called the disciples to follow him.



STEM activity

Magnetic hearts

(Be alert to children who might put the magnets in their mouths.)



What you need:

- Heart shaped coloured card
- Strips of card 4" by 1"
- Magnets <https://www.bakerross.co.uk/large-self-adhesive-magnetic-discs>
- Sellotape/ glue
- Scissors

What you do:

The aim of this activity is to bring together two halves of a heart using a magnet.

Each child needs a heart shape and two strips of card.

Cut the heart in half from bottom to top.

Fold the little strips of card into five equal squares, secure to create a little box shape.

Secure a magnet onto the outer edge of the box on each half of the heart.

Sellotape the boxes to the edge of each half of your heart with the magnet side facing out so that the two magnets meet when you bring the two halves of the heart together.



Experiment with moving the two heart halves together and apart. Jesus calls us to be his friend and follower and this requires us to respond.



Recipe

Chocolate Krispie hearts

You will need:

- 200g white chocolate
- 75g Rice Krispies
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup
- Red food colouring

What you do:

1. Carefully place 12 cupcake cases on a tray and set to one side.
2. Melt the white chocolate: this can be done over a pan of simmering water or in the microwave in short bursts until it is all melted. Remember to stir it. The bowl will be hot so be careful!
3. Add some red food colouring into the chocolate and mix well.
4. Stir in the golden syrup and Rice Krispies.
5. Divide the mixture into 12 portions and press into a heart shaped cookie cutter before placing into the cupcake cases. Add sprinkles (optional).
6. Put in the fridge for 15 minutes to set.

Games

Send me the best

This is a fun team game that plays with the theme of being chosen when not really knowing what for.

Place your children into smaller teams, around six to eight children works well. The leader will ask for each group to choose one person to send, with special criteria each time. The challenge is, the teams will only know half the criteria. The leader might say "Send me the person with the longest..." but won't say any more. The team need to guess what the sentence ending is and choose someone to come forward. It could be anything: longest toenails, longest hair and so on.

Once every team has sent their chosen person, the leader then reveals the full sentence e.g. it was the longest tongue. Each person then shows their tongue to see who was really the best to choose and we see who wins. They return to their group and the leader continues asking for someone with new criteria. Lots of silly fun.

Criteria could include someone with the longest tongue, shortest sister, hairiest ears, loudest laugh, silliest walk... the world is your oyster.

Parachute game

This game is a mix of Fruit basket and Follow my leader combined with a parachute for that extra bit of silliness; if you don't have a parachute it can be played in a circle as a run around game.

All children and adults gather around the parachute, standing holding the parachute at waist height. The leader will choose someone who will be the leader, but who will follow them?

As we all raise the parachute up high above our heads the adult leader shouts everyone wearing red, or something that connects two or more of those around the parachute. At that point the child leader and all those wearing red have to

swap places before the parachute comes back down. BUT they also have to do it in the same way the child leader does, for example the child might belly crawl, or hop, or walk like a chimp. Those around the parachute steady the bringing down of the parachute to allow time for the swap to happen. And the game continues.

Large group prayer



Love is an adventure – calling the disciples

All sit on the floor to start and a leader reads the following, encouraging everyone who fits the criteria to stand up and shout "We're ready for adventure" and then everyone together to shout "Amen". Adapt what you call out in order to ensure that everyone is included and stands up at least twice, including the adults.

Jesus calls us on an adventure. On the team, Jesus needs some people with brown eyes. (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

On the team, Jesus needs some people who are nine years old or younger. (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

On the team, Jesus needs some people with glasses. (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

On the team, Jesus needs some people who are older than nine. (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

On the team, Jesus needs people who have curly hair. (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

On the team, Jesus needs everybody here! (We're ready for adventure. Amen)

Jesus, you call us to follow you, whether we are old, young, tall or small, no matter where we are or what we're doing. Help us be adventurous enough to go where you lead us, to do what you call us to do, and to be the people you know we can be. Amen.