

Under 5s



Much of the holiday club materials are easily adapted to include the under fives, especially those who are nearing the older end of that age range. Sometimes it will be a case of an adult or older child/young person assisting a younger one, though making sure that they do not take over doing the activity and allow the younger child to take ownership of what they are doing.

Make sure you make the area where your younger ones are a safe and welcoming space. Maybe have blankets and cushions on the floor and an appropriate size table for activities.

Parts of the material could be used to give a theme to a session for younger ones, but interspersed with free play, sensory activities, and songs and games which are familiar to the little ones, and maybe with access to a storybook corner with copies of the modern parable books and other Bible-based picture books. Remember to ensure that these reflect diversity, are inclusive and reflect the world that children see around them.

Stories from the Bible can best be told to little ones from a version such as the *Lion Storyteller* or *First Bible* or *The Beginners' Bible* or stories by authors such as Sally Lloyd Jones, Steph Williams, Nick Butterworth or Bob Hartmann. A modern parable is a children's story that links to the theme of the Bible stories but is not actually a story from the Bible – it is one that children might know and recognise from everyday life. We do not need to make the link explicit – children, even little ones, are surprisingly good at doing that for themselves.

What's In The Box is an opportunity for children to explore items, especially multi-sensory items, which are linked to the story. Bring the items out one at a time, with a sense of expectation and awe, and share them with the children. As the children play with the item and explore it with their hands and eyes, and possibly their mouths (have some Milton or similar available to wipe them clean after each child's use), use the hints that are written in this resource to talk with the children about the item. Another option is to put the items in a sensory tray for children to explore for themselves.

Small children often like songs – either set songs or ones you make up as you go along. Each day you could use the songs from the main resource – the themed ones and the campfire songs – either taking the children to join the rest of the group while they're singing them or by singing them just to/with the under fives group.

For very little ones, the prayer activities here may not be appropriate.

Why not gently massage hands or feet, perhaps using some baby lotion, if the children allow, or just sing "God loves me. God loves you. And we both can love God too. Thank you, Jesus, for showing us God's way. Help us know you every day"

Starting small

What's in the box?

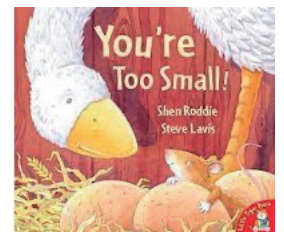
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- Building blocks (to create a temple)
- Scrolls of paper and pens (children could make marks on the scrolls)
- Blanket to hide under (where's Jesus? Here he is!)
- Tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

Modern day parable

Refer to the parable of the day from the main book.

You're Too Small by Shen Roddy and Steve Lavis:

<https://youtu.be/G8JiBdNk8EE?si=GQdM6Ue7vW1JtSHy>



Game

Find Jesus in sand bag

You will need:

- sand in a tray or a sand bag if you have one.
- a play figure or image of Jesus (optional: have multiple figures)

What you do:

Hide the figure and ask the children to feel in the sand to find Jesus.



Creative

Refer to main book for activity 'Things in a matchbox' and 'Popcorn' .

For very little ones, make fingerprints in playdough to which an adult can add arms and legs and a head by drawing with a cocktail stick to make a tiny person. Alternatively, if children don't mind getting fingers dirty, do the same with finger paints to create fingerprints on paper which can be turned into tiny people by drawing with a pen.

Questions

- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories?
- I wonder if you have ever got lost?

Prayer

Refer to main book for the prayer 'movement prayer' substitute the words God, I'm only small but help me grow in your love' for 'I'm small, but God's big'.

Shining bright

What's in the box?

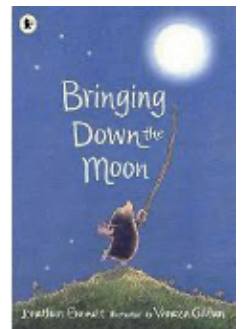
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- A happy/sad face (Jesus came to turn the world upside-down and change people's sad faces to happy faces)
- Something with child's name on it or some letters to spell it out (we are sometimes given our name at baptism, what's your name? God said he loved Jesus very much when he was baptised. God knows your name and loves you too)
- Feathers (God's spirit is a like a beautiful bird, soft and gentle like a feather)
- Small bowl of water and waterproof characters
- A torch to shine a light around the room (God's love is like a light shining in the dark – we can be like lights too, making people feel warm and happy)
- Tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

Modern day parable

Refer to the parable of the day from the main book.

Bringing Down the Moon by Jonathan Emmett:

<https://youtu.be/YE7j5ba2EiM?si=2wGRDmYbdgb7E4k2>



Game

Musical lights

Arrange the same amount of containers round the room as there are children and place a light under one of them (while the children are not looking). Play some music and let the children dance around the containers) – when the music stops everyone looks under a container to see if they have found the light. Keep playing and moving the light around so that everybody gets a chance to find the light.

Creative

Pillar of light

You will need:

- battery operated tea lights
- some thin paper.

What you do:

1. The children can draw on the piece of paper to decorate it.
2. Carefully wrap the paper around the battery-operated tea light and stick it with Sellotape.
3. Light the candle and see the paper glow.



Questions

- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories?
- I wonder if you have ever seen anyone being baptised?

Prayer

Refer to main book for large group prayer, Use one candle to pass round from person to person, substitute the words 'Let's shine for Jesus together' to 'Jesus shine'

Day three

Love God, Love Others

What's in the box?

- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- A bandage (Jesus liked to help people. We can help people too. How can we help them?)
- An arrow (how do we know we are going the best way, the way that matters to us)
- Pictures or toys reflecting a group of people who are different from each other (we all are different but we are all special to God)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

Modern day parable

Refer to the parable of the day from the main book.

Kindness is my Superpower, by Alicia Ortego:

https://youtu.be/JAIPkJm3wh4?si=VihdQmFtRAX_Wssk

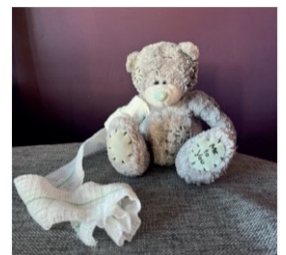


Game

Pass the teddy and bandage

You will need:

- a teddy
- some bandages
- music.



What you do:

1. Play this game like pass the parcel. Pass the teddy, around the circle.
2. Each time the music stops, ask the child to wrap some of the bandage around the teddy.

Creative

Decorate a biscuit

You will need:

- biscuits
- writing icing.



What you do:

Give the children each a biscuit and ask them to draw on a face from the story. Alternatively, they could draw a big heart on the biscuit. Some of the very young children may need more help to do this.

Questions

- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories?
- I wonder how it feels when you see someone you love?

Prayer

Tents

Prayer using a tent or two.

When stood inside the tent think of people who are sad and hurt, when stood outside of the tent think of people who are left out (an example to help might be when you are not asked to play with someone). When all hold hands think of how friends help us.

Amen.

Day four

The Way Back

What's in the box?

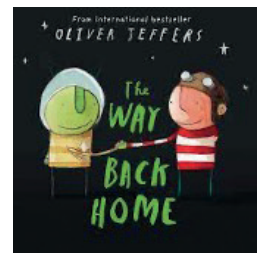
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- Tissues or handkerchiefs (people felt sad in the story – what do you do when you're sad?)
- Bandages (to wrap the play characters in – when Jesus died, he was wrapped up in bandages but when he came to life again, all his bandages fell off)
- A crown (Jesus is king. Some people made him wear a crown that hurt him because it was all spiky, but he should really have a shiny crown like a king because he is so special)
- Flowers (Jesus was buried in a beautiful garden. He rose from the dead, just like flowers appear from closed up buds. Can we make our hands like flower buds then open them up like flowers?)
- Tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

Modern day parable

Refer to the parable of the day from the main book.

The Way Back Home, by Oliver Jeffers:

<https://youtu.be/xgGVJmPLNS4?si=Ta8jrgrOCmgWuYM7>



Game

Refer to the main book for the game 'Save Me'. Play as a simplified version of stuck in the mud.

Creative

Refer to main book for 'cardboard roll shuttling rocket' and 'pig swill'.

For younger children, you could make a hand print with green paint or draw around a hand on green paper and cut it out. Have some flower shapes (foam, stickers, pictures cut from magazines etc) that could be glued onto the tip of each finger and thumb to make a bunch of flowers to remind us of the garden where Jesus was buried.

Questions

- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories?
- I wonder what if today's story made you feel happy or sad or something else?

Prayer – sensory

Using mats for children to walk on, create a sensory prayer walk. Lay the mats in a line so children can walk over them with bare feet or in socks. These are just suggestions not prescriptive ideas, you may think of your own.

- A rough mat (think of things which are difficult)
- A bumpy mat (think of things which make you feel scared)
- A soft mat (think of things which make you feel safe)
- A wet mat (think of things which make you happy and giggle)
- A towel.

While drying your feet say, "Thank you God you are with me all the time."

Day five

Go out and be

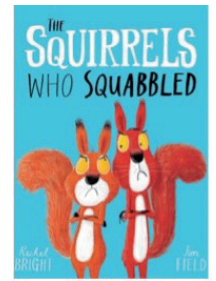
What's in the box?

- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- A battery powered fan or hand fan (feel the breeze on your hands and face, you can't see it but you can feel it. Can you see it making things move? It's like God's spirit moving)
- Bubbles (let's blow some bubbles – where do they go? They're filled with air – look how pretty they are)
- A torch (see the light from the torch shining on your hand and lighting up things around the room. God's spirit lights us up and warms us)
- A toy medal or sticker (we get a medal or a sticker when we're brave. God helps us to be brave. When are you brave? What makes you a bit frightened sometimes?)
- A feather (feathers are very gentle and soft to touch. God's spirit is gentle but strong)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

Modern day parable

Refer to the parable of the day from the main book.

The Squirrels Who Squabbled by Rachel Bright:
<https://youtu.be/8q3GFXricMo?si=OrQ0tu7J0P6G1YUI>



Game Balloons

Have fun with blown up balloons, bopping them back and forth with a friend, counting how many times you can bat them in the air before they drop, doing the under, over game with a balloon.

Creative

Refer to main book for 'party popper' and 'rainbow wrap'

For very little children you could make a streamer to wave using a cardboard tube to hold and sticking strips of paper or foil to one end. Children could put stickers on the outside of the tube to make it bright and colourful.

Questions

- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories?
- I wonder what sort of parties you have been to?

Prayer – puzzle

You will need:

- large puzzle pieces (preferably ones which are plain on the back)
- marker pens.

What you do:

1. Ensure everyone has a puzzle piece.
2. Everyone can use the marker pens to draw an image of themselves, remember this can be a scribble as a representation of themselves.
3. This will show that we are all a part of the big picture that is God's kingdom.
4. Make up the big jigsaw. As you add each piece, say together as a prayer:



"We are all part
of God's big picture."

