

The Clubhouse



2025

Children's and Youth Work Holiday Club materials



Welcome

Welcome to the fifth official United Reformed Church (URC) Children’s and Youth Work (CYW) Holiday Club – *The Clubhouse*. Tying in with our theme for the year, *All Are Welcome*, we gather in the clubhouse where everyone is welcome and everyone belongs, just as everyone is welcome and belongs in God’s big family.

This material is not designed to be prescriptive, although you may use it that way if you wish. Nor is it designed to be exclusive; feel free to swap and change the ideas included here for ones you think more suitable for your groups. It is written as a five-day plan but you may decide to do a one-day extravaganza, a club once a week through the holidays, or maybe just select a couple of the sessions to do on two or three days in the week.

At the back of this resource, you will find several appendices. You may be thinking of adapting this material in a variety of ways and the appendices will give you suggestions and ideas of how to do so for various different settings.

As always, we would really love some feedback. Do let us know what you found helpful and if there is anything else you wish we had included. Should we do another such resource next year, what would be most helpful to you? And do let us know how you use it – some pictures for our Facebook page would be greatly appreciated. Contact lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk or children.youth@urc.org.uk.

Credits

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Previous materials:

Sparks and Stories – gather round the campfire to hear the Jesus stories

Snapshots – take a stroll through God’s photograph album

Timetravellers – travel back in time to Bible times and find out what the children there might want to send to the future to enrich our faith

Supersleuths – don your detective outfit and investigate the heroes and villains of the Bible.

In this resource

Appendices

11 to 14s: While the main resource is written with the five to eleven age range in mind, you may have some young people who are just outside that demographic or come as junior helpers. The first appendix gives ideas for extending the material to take them a little deeper.

Under fives: You may have some children of pre-school age within your holiday club so we have added an appendix on how to adapt the theme for little ones, including some age-specific and more sensory activities you might introduce.

Vintage: Perhaps you are running a vintage holiday club and want the theme to tie in, so there is an appendix of ideas for the elderly and for those with dementia. This theme is an excellent one to develop with elderly people as you share stories of their lives together.

Intergenerational: Why not develop the holiday club as an intergenerational adventure, inviting adults and young people as well as children to participate together? There is an appendix with some ideas for running an intergenerational event, which may help in adapting these materials.

Overarching themes and activities

In the first section of this resource, there are some overarching themes and activities. Here are some ideas for decorating your hall and for ongoing/cumulative activities for your groups of children and adults. There are also songs which have been purpose-written for this material as well as links to other songs on YouTube. Clearly it is your responsibility to ensure you have licenses for any music or clips which are not produced by our team.

Reflections for volunteers

It is important for the volunteers running the holiday club to ground it in faith and sound theology and to know where the theme is taking them. For this reason, we have included some initial reflections for the team to include in a daily pre-session briefing, with discussion points to stimulate their own thinking and learning. Obviously you will also want a prayer time together, maybe focusing on your thinking and the session ahead.

Arrival activities

You will need something to keep your children occupied from the moment they arrive until the holiday club session actually begins. These activities usually take place in the team areas and are to encourage children to feel welcome, engaged and to start them thinking about the theme from the very moment they step over the threshold. They will be able to work on their own clubhouse area as well as doing a challenge or creative activity, engaging all learning styles.



Story

We have chosen to deliver the stories in a variety of styles and encourage you to be experimental with different ways of presenting Bible stories. For those of you not confident with storytelling or drama, or for those of you running your holiday club over Zoom, there are videos of the stories being told by our team on our YouTube playlist: bit.ly/ClubhouseHC.

There are also suggestions for YouTube videos you may wish to use to retell the story later in the session. These are chosen because they tell the story in a way suitable for this age range and are true to the Bible accounts. Again, you must ensure that you adhere to copyright and licensing guidelines in using these.

Craft



These crafts are not prescriptive – you may substitute them with crafts of your own. We recommend checking Pinterest for ideas or referring to past issues of Families on Faith Adventures @ Home bit.ly/fofaadventuresathome and Faith Adventures: Children Together bit.ly/FACT_resource to stimulate your creative juices.

Do try to use recyclable or eco-friendly materials wherever possible. Craft time is a good time to talk – maybe use the reflective (wondering) questions to prompt a conversation while you are engaging in the craft together or ponder on what you have found out so far. We have included a variety of crafts and science experiments – you will probably want to choose one or maybe two, depending on your group and circumstances.

Games



Two or three games are described here for each session and these will each have a link to the theme. You will undoubtedly want to include more games – probably some of the children's favourites.

Small group prayer activity



This is an opportunity for the small groups to pray together and to encourage a bit of creativity in prayer. Prayer during this time can be far more personal and encourage children and adults alike to build their personal relationship with God. Remember to allow time to listen and be still.

Recipes

Here are suggested recipes and food activities that are themed to our days and are quick and easy for children to make themselves during the session if you choose. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cater



for those with allergies are included in brackets in the ingredients list.

Song

You will want to include songs as you gather the group to begin and also in your closing worship time, probably throughout the session too. You could easily devise some actions or movements to go along with these songs. Your church probably has additional songs which your children will enjoy – think about the lyrics and make sure they are age-appropriate and theologically sound.

Closing prayer



The closing prayers are designed to be a little more active and for everyone to get involved in them. Remember that prayer is for adults as well as children – this is not a time for the adults to go off and start tidying up! You might even want to encourage parents and carers to arrive slightly before the end of the session and join in the closing prayer with their children.

Bible version



For the purpose of this resource we have used the International Children's Bible. Please make sure that you credit them using the wording on the first page of this resource if you copy the text, and please ensure that you do not change the text in any way. Obviously you may choose to use the Bible preferred by your church family, but please ensure that it uses language which is accessible and inclusive while remaining a true translation.

Overarching themes and activities for the whole week

A typical holiday club might run like this. Suggestions for a daily timetable, 2.5 hours:

Arrivals

Arrival activities in small groups – daily activity as detailed in that day's session instructions

Upfront session one (45 minutes)

Active warm up (music and exercise routine)

Story
Song
Game

Small groups (one hour)

Refreshments – recipe of the day
Crafts
Prayer activity
Games

Upfront session two (30 minutes)

What have we learned?
Song
Closing song and group prayer activity

Goodbye wind-down and gather up ready for collection from small group.

About each session

Personnel – the leader of the holiday club is The Caretaker. They could be dressed in overalls or an apron, perhaps, with a toolbox or grip full of keys, scissors, Sellotape, tissues, snacks etc and carrying a feather duster, or a broom, or dustpan and brush etc. Catchphrase is 'you're welcome'.

Everyone is a Welcomer – volunteers and children alike.

Decorate your venue

If possible, it would be really good to involve children in the planning of what the clubhouse might look like. Get some suggestions from some of the children who have signed up, if you are able to, or from children involved in clubs and activities in your church family. Central to the decorations should be a door. You may want some easy chairs, beanbags, cushions, blankets, rugs etc. Maybe a TV made from cardboard, a pile of games on a table, comics, console controllers made out of cardboard boxes, a sign saying 'snacks' etc. Whatever would make the area look welcoming to all. Again you will want a big poster saying 'Welcome' and a sign saying 'The Clubhouse'.

Arrivals area

The moment of arrival and registration is a really important one. Consider how you can make this area welcoming and how children and their carers will be welcomed into the venue. Especially consider how the 'unexpected' child will be welcomed – try to be prepared not to turn anyone away.

Create a poster with various different types of greeting on eg highfive, shake hands, thumbs up, hug, fist-bump, own choice. As children



arrive, they can indicate on the poster what sort of welcome they would like and the greeter at the door can say 'Welcome *name*, it's good to have you here' and give the appropriate greeting.

Have some name plates– rectangles of card with Blu Tack – that children's names have been written on and stuck on the door to welcome them. Remember to have plenty of spares – unexpected arrivals should not feel they were not expected! Also have a big welcome sign, maybe in different languages.

Try to ensure that children are greeted as they enter as well as on arrival. Make this greeting as effusive as the child can cope with (be aware that some children may find a big welcome overwhelming).

Team identity

Encourage each team of children to decide (democratically) on their own team name. It would be fantastic if each team had their own den in one area of the hall. You could use boards to designate spaces or mark them out with tape on the floor. Each area could have cushions or blankets for children to sit on.

They could create their own welcome sign for that area and a welcome mat for the entry to that area. Each member of the team could create a self-portrait to stick on the wall in their den but also have a mirror on the wall so that any visitors to the den also have their face on the wall! Try to encourage the teams to welcome others into their area and to avoid things like secret passwords etc which exclude people.

Ongoing activities

Arrival activities

Each session will have an arrival activity to keep everybody busy from the moment they arrive at the Holiday Club.

Who's at the door?

Invite a different visitor to join the holiday club each day. Examples might be – the minister, safeguarding coordinator, local celebrity, the

oldest member of the church, your MP, a teacher from the local school, a parent with a baby etc.

The visitor stands outside the door. You could use a different sound effect for a doorbell/ knocking etc each day. The caretaker can say 'There's somebody at the door.. ho ho... there's somebody at the door' and encourage the children to join in then shout 'Come in, you're welcome here'.

Each day, one team should take responsibility for being welcomers for the visitor (the first day this should be modelled by members of the adult volunteer team and then children should know in advance if they are welcomers for the following day). The welcomers should open the door, say welcome and greet the visitor effusively, show them where to sit and sit with them, introduce themselves and ask the visitor questions:

- would you like to introduce yourself?
- tell us one fascinating fact about you.
- do you have a favourite welcoming story?
- is there anything we can do to help you feel welcome here today?

Encourage the visitor to stay and take part in the session if they can. You may wish to prime the visitor beforehand so they know what questions to expect.

NB: children who are nonvocal or very shy could use a Talking Tile or Talking Button (eg www.inclusive.com/uk/talking-tiles.html) with 'Welcome' recorded on it to greet visitors.

A challenge for the end of the session

You may want to set a challenge for the children to do each day for the next session. Here are some examples:

- create a new way of greeting someone
- find out how to say welcome in a different language
- find a story in the Bible where someone welcomes someone else
- ask someone you know about what makes them feel welcome somewhere

- find out about a charity in their neighbourhood that helps people feel welcome (eg Through the Roof, refugee charities, homeless shelters)
- look at the pictures books you own or that are in the local library and see if the pictures include lots of different types of people.

You may not have chance every session to hear everyone's contributions, so it is good to find a way that they can put these on display somehow, perhaps on a noticeboard.

Continuing craft

If your church uses plastic chairs for children to sit on, they could each have a pillowcase to decorate as a chair cover. You will need to open the seams of the pillowcase or cut the sides half way so that the enclosed part slips over the back of the chair and the remainder hangs down at the back and covers the seat of the chair. These can be decorated with fabric pens or with Sharpies. The team can design welcome signs and mats for the den, make badges with their names on or to say 'welcomer'.

Songs

Sing along video for our original theme song available on the CYW YouTube channel or from children.youth@urc.org.uk on request.

YouTube have very specific copyright rules which dictate who can show one of their videos in a public setting such as a Church. It is always recommended that the owner's permission be sought before using it. You can obtain a license which allows for videos to be used. More information can be found on the CCLI website: www.uk.ccli.com/ccli-news/showing-videos-in-church/

Day one:

Song for younger, *The Blessing* – Allstars kids club
bit.ly/3P3fD8L

Song for older, *I'm So Blessed* – Allstars kids club
bit.ly/3DqJw0o

Day two:

Song for younger, *You are the body of Christ* – Vintage kids
bit.ly/3BymMLj

Song for older, *We are one Body* – Richard Osei
bit.ly/3P4itKL

Day three:

Song for younger, *God Made Me* – Believers fellowship
bit.ly/401yCH5

Song for older, *Who You Say I Am* – Community kids
bit.ly/4frC4PT

Day four:

Song for younger, *Samaritan woman at the well* – Sing Jesus
bit.ly/49QfX4j

Song for older, *Deep Cries Out* – Bethel music
bit.ly/3DoroEm

Day five:

Song for younger, *Ask, Seek, Knock* – Hillsong Kids
bit.ly/4iJRXnp

Song for older, *Song of St Thomas* – P Kel
bit.ly/3P4qa3y

Church service or end of holiday club party

Many churches hold a special service or an end of holiday club party to which families and church congregation are invited, often sharing some of the activities and stories of the week. Think about how you will extend a welcome to the families of the children who have attended your club during the week. How can you make them feel especially welcome in your church family?

Essential things to think about

(See bit.ly/ClubhouseHC for a video version of these).

Outdoors

You may have decided to run your holiday club outdoors. While some of this material is suitable for doing outdoors, you will need to enhance it with extra activities more appropriate for taking advantage of the outdoor space. Alternatively, you may have access to a marquee or large gazebo which you could use, or go outside for part of the session if you have the facilities for that. If you are using outside space, you will need to ensure that the area is clean and free from litter and animal faeces before and after your session and you will also need to consider how you will ensure that children do not wander off from the area. You will need to think about safeguarding – how to ensure that no adults who are not on the team engage inappropriately with the children in your care. You will also need to consider issues such as access to toilets and availability of a first aid kit.

Registration

It is important to keep an accurate register of the children and adults who attend on each day of your holiday club. This information will need to be kept according to your church's data protection and safeguarding policies. Parents/carers must also fill in a registration/consent form and children should not be accepted into the holiday club without it. The registration/consent form must include name and date of the event; child's details; details of two emergency contacts; details of any additional needs; any health needs, medication or allergies; acknowledgement of liability; consent for photographs; consent for first aid and emergency treatment; details of who will be collecting the child at the end of the session.

Do not include any information which you do not actually need (eg gender).

Ensure that your registration/consent form states where parents/carers can access your data policy and safeguarding policy. These forms must be kept securely and used sensitively. Sample registration forms are available here: bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork

Safeguarding

Make sure you are familiar with your church's safeguarding policy and that volunteers have received training. Everyone over the age of 18 who is taking part in your holiday club must have an enhanced DBS check for the church. Occasional visitors who do not have a DBS certificate must not be left alone with children and the leadership of the club are responsible for ensuring that a leader is with them at all times. See the URC Good Practice 6 urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/

You may find that volunteers have children at the holiday club to whom they are related or have a close bond. They should be encouraged to remember not to treat those children any differently – hugs and kisses, sitting on lap, being alone with a child, these things are fine for at home but not advisable in a church club situation where they may blur the boundaries for others.

Photographs

One or two people should be identified as designated photographers for the event and should wear a badge identifying them as such. They should use a camera rather than a smartphone where possible to take photographs and should only photograph those children whose parents have given permission.

Photographs should not be used on any social media other than the church's or Church House official social media. See the URC Good Practice 6 urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/. You are, however, encouraged to share any photographs with Church House Children's and Youth Work (with appropriate permissions – see bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork) for use on the website, CYW Facebook page and in URC publications.

Mobile phones

It is good practice that no mobile phones are brought into the holiday club area unless absolutely necessary.

Risk assessments

It is essential that you do a risk assessment for the venue you are using for your holiday club and also do risk assessments for the activities you will engage in. Your church may have its own policy and template for risk assessments but you may wish to use or adapt the ones available here: bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork. Risk assessments are useless if just put in a file. Ensure that all your volunteers have read the risk assessment or, better still, discuss it during your pre-session briefings. Please be aware that all risk assessments should be approved by your church leadership team.

Safety

Check the premises you use are safe, hygienic and suitable for children – think about stacked chairs, flooring, toilets etc. Children should not be allowed unaccompanied into kitchen areas. Think about how to make your toilets a safe place without compromising privacy and dignity, so that you know when children have gone to the toilet and how long they have been gone. As far as this is possible, designate separate toilets for adults.

Have a routine for checking throughout the session that children have not gone missing from the group. Have a routine for the end of the session – perhaps tell children that they are

superglued to the floor until their parent or carer comes to collect them and then get the parent/carer and child to come together to a leader to be signed out.

Although it is not compulsory to have someone on the team who is a trained first-aider, it is a very good idea. Make sure everyone on the team knows where the first aid box is and nominate someone to ensure that the box is fully stocked. Have a first aid recording sheet or book and keep clear and full records of any injury, however minor, who treated it and what was done. Ensure that the record is dated and signed and take note of anything that needs to be done to minimise the risk of that happening again. See here: bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork.

Behaviour

Remember that the children are at a club and it should be fun for everyone. Do not impose rules that are not necessary or enforce participation if the child feels uncomfortable. One member of the team should be the key person to speak to for any issues that arise, and this should be the only team member who liaises directly with parents or carers about behaviour. Remember that the best way of encouraging appropriate behaviour is to model it and to build positive relationships. You may want to watch the video on strategies to support behaviour that challenges, which was prepared for leaders of the Pilots organisation youtu.be/9XxpvUGVT_o.

It is good to have a behaviour policy which all team members read and which is available for parents. An example can be found at bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork. You may also want a simple code of conduct which all participants signs (including leaders and volunteers), an example of which can be found at bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork.



It is helpful to have a short and punchy list of around five golden rules, framed positively ('we will' rather than 'we won't') and with visual cues as well as words. This can be put up in each room and referred to whenever necessary.

Inclusion

All we do in our churches and fellowship should be as inclusive as we possibly can make it. Nobody should be excluded due to their background, ethnicity, physical or learning needs, gender, language, or for any other reason. Children may come with additional needs or English as a second language, they may be refugees or have experienced trauma. Consider what adjustments may need to be made to enable all children to feel welcome and take part. You can find training videos on our YouTube channel which might be useful watch together. Contact children.youth@urc.org.uk for some practical tips on supporting transgender or non-binary children and young people.

Timetable

Ensure that everyone is familiar with the timetable for the sessions. It is a good idea to establish a routine for your sessions and stick with it as far as possible. It is also helpful to have a large-scale visual timetable for the session up where everyone can see it, maybe with smaller versions in any other rooms you use. If you would like help with putting together a visual timetable using Widgeit to create symbols, please do speak to your Synod CYW specialist or Children and Youth Development Officer (CYDO).

Debrief and review

Although you will be tired after an energetic session and want to clear up and go home as quickly as possible, it is good practice and helpful to have a daily debrief of how everything went and to consider whether anything needs adapting for the next day; capturing positives and negatives for an overall evaluation of the holiday club. You might also like to include the children and families in your evaluation in some

way and encourage children to share ideas for any future holiday clubs.


Feedback

The writers of this resource would greatly appreciate any feedback on how your holiday club went, which parts of this document were useful to you, whether there was anything additional that you needed. Please email children.youth@urc.org.uk. Remember we would also love you to share with us any photographs for which you have the appropriate permissions.

Reflections

Day one:

Mark 10: 13-15 Mark 10:13-15

Like a car tyre with a slow puncture, the URC has experienced a slow, steady leak of younger people and their families, over the years. It is now not unusual for many of us to have a dusty but hope filled corner in our churches where visiting grandchildren occasionally play. Sometimes there can be the hope that a programme like this can be a 'silver bullet' and have children flooding back into your church. 

Alas, there are no silver bullets, and this includes the excellent resource you have in your hands. Running it will not suddenly reverse years of decline. Instead, you have something better. You have a resource that can invite people into a relationship with you for five sessions during their holidays. From there, you can hopefully build more long-lasting relationships that are about mutual growth and learning. The small people and their chaperones you meet are may be from an alien culture that seems bewildering, unless you have had a lot to do with children recently.

Please note that I have put the emphasis on us learning from those we meet this week. If we carefully read the scripture for today, it is not just an invitation for children to go to Jesus. It was an instruction for us to emulate them. To be open, curious, ready to make friends and learn how the world works.

This is the week's invitation to you – create a bubble between two worlds that often has little to do with each other. Create a mutually beneficial environment where everyone in the bubble may learn, grow and flourish!

Of course, you might shake your head and saying we've got a brilliant youth provision already. If so, give yourself a pat on the back before also seeing that the observations above also apply to you. Hopefully, there will be people attracted to this offering beyond your normal church group. Please learn from them as you reach and communicate God's love in all that you do.

We genuinely hope that this resource is an opportunity to learn and grow together. Relax, have fun, and let Jesus do his work in the hearts and minds of those people attracted by your Holiday Club.

Blessings and Good Luck!

Prayer (which builds all week)
Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.



Day two:
1 Corinthians 12:12-27

As a spotty, skinny, bespectacled and unsporty kid, there were many times when I felt entirely inadequate in the presence of my peers. But I remember my flamboyant and rather eccentric High School Art Teacher saying to me one day, 'don't worry about this all now, you're going to be a fascinating adult, and your life will be very interesting'. After the prediction, she then departed in a swirl of perfume and colour.



Of course, I can't comment if all her predictions came true – I'll leave that to people who know me well, but I always remember her encouragement with gratitude. As someone who didn't (and doesn't) always seem to fit in, her promise to me was something I have always remembered, and it told me there was more in life that my limited life experience had told me as an awkward teenager.

Sometimes we all feel like fish out of water. We don't always fit in, and it's sometimes easy to feel insignificant and overlooked. It's important to remember that feeling because there may be young people (or indeed a parent or a fellow volunteer) feeling like this during this week. This may be your chance to be like my art teacher, of blessed memory giving encouragement where it is sorely needed.

Paul writes to the squabbling Corinthians in our scripture for today. He tells those who are giving themselves airs and graces that we are all important. We are wanted, needed, loved and included in the body of Christ- even when we don't feel it or see it in others. It's important that we behave in ways that are inclusive and loving. So please think about how you can reach out to someone this week who may need some encouragement. Think about how you can model the inclusion Paul is writing about. Remember that we are all part of the Body of Christ. May all your words and actions embody encouragement and respect as the week goes on.

Prayer (which builds all week)
Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.
Help us to be inclusive and encouraging to all we meet this day.



Day three:
Luke 5:17-26

Let's call our friend on the mat, Matt the Mat Guy. Matt must have been a special person because most disabled people in New Testament times were objects of pity, if not scorn. It was considered that someone who was as severely disabled as Matt had done something wrong to deserve it. Or their parents had been even worse. As such, disabled people weren't so much people as issues or moral object lessons.



But Matt the Mat Guy was more than that. He had friends who were determined to help him. He was a person. And it is with his friend's help that he meets Jesus and is healed. It is important for us to see that Matt and his friends looked at what they needed to do and were ingenious in doing it. Taking tiles off a roof is lateral thinking at its best.

This week we may need to be a bit ingenious ourselves. There is always the temptation to see the person with additional needs as a problem to be solved. Instead, we need to focus on the barrier that is preventing that person from participating and work out how to remove it. Inclusion can't be discarded when it is inconvenient. This week is an opportunity to show that God loves everyone equally. Our values are what we do, not just nice things we say.

I'd like to think that Matt the Mat Guy was the person who came up with the plan, but we don't really know. Certainly, I would suggest that when we are trying to deal with any participation issues, we ask the people who are the experts – the parents and the young person themselves. What, in their experience, can they suggest? And more importantly, what do they want to do?

It often seems easier to try to solve the 'problem' and make ourselves feel better rather than asking what is needed by the person involved and doing what they ask. Let's make sure we

work together and do what is needed so we can all get the most out of the week together.

Prayer (which builds all week)
Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.



Help us to be inclusive and encouraging to all we meet this day.

Help us to listen to the needs around us and work together to meet them.

Day four:
John 4:1-26

It is true that Jews and Samaritans hated one another for many reasons, but mostly because they shared a religion that differed in a few details that somehow become more important than their shared humanity. When Jesus thought about the most despised person he could think of, he came up with the Samaritan in the Good Samaritan parable.



We often hear stories and half truths about groups of people we don't understand or have little direct experience of. It's a bit like a stalagmite- little drips of misinformation and misunderstanding creates a pillar of untruth and negative stereotypes. Sadly, it often feels like we haven't moved much further than the people of Jesus's day. If we look at the state of the world, there seems so much distrust and barriers to peace and understanding. We all have more in common than we admit. While we can't necessarily fix the whole world, we can try our best to be part of the solution in our neighbourhoods and our churches.

Being part of an antiracist church means more than just tutting over people we feel are less enlightened than us on matters of race and culture. It means taking a good and hard look at ourselves and recognise that we all have growing and learning to do. It means speaking up and acting when we find there is prejudice, whether it is in ourselves, in the acts of others or barriers in institutions. Isabel Wilkerson, in her excellent book *Caste*, uses the image of an old house to explain being an antiracist. She says

we might have not built the house, but we have inherited it and are responsible for mending it while we live in it. We have the obligation to mend where it is broken otherwise we are passing on the problem to yet another generation.

This week may involve a clash of cultures- anything from not understanding the customs or language of some of our participants to maybe them not understanding what 'our' church culture is and how it works.

Consider this a gift from the barrier breaking Christ who once chatted to a foreign woman at a well. Many people hearing the story of their encounter in the Early Church would have felt that she was very different from Jesus and beneath his notice. But as Jesus shows us in John's account, these cross-cultural encounters are one of the places where God reveals God to us.

Prayer (which builds all week)

Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.

Help us to be inclusive and encouraging to all we meet this day.

Help us to listen to the needs around us and work together to meet them.

And welcome all as your children and marvellous creation.



Day five:

John 20:24-29

I always feel sorry for Thomas. He always gets bad press because he asked for a bit of proof that the disciples were not in some kind of PTSD situation and hallucinated the resurrection. I like to think Thomas as an 'every person'- he stands in for many of us who need more than someone insisting they are right to accept what they are saying is true. Doubt is not a bad thing when it is coupled with openness to explore and the ability to change our opinions.



This week there may have been many reasons for people to have come to the sessions- everything from a budget-friendly way to entertain their children to a parent or grandparent hoping that this is the grounding for a life informed by Christian belief. You may feel you have had many conversations about faith- or none at all.

But even if you don't feel those conversations have been had, you will have been speaking about faith all week. How you have dealt with the inevitable challenges, how you have dealt with a recalcitrant child, or the generosity of provided food and activities will have communicated to those who have participated. All these things will have spoken more loudly to the people who have experienced the week than anything you could have said.

This last session may be the occasion for a little sadness. After all, you have come to the end of the journey. You may not see some of these people again for a while. But hopefully, the relationships you have started to build will continue. Think about what you can offer the people you have met. Is there something you could now do monthly as a way forward? Whatever commitment you make, make sure that it is sustainable long term for you and them. But take this moment to be thankful. Take this moment to celebrate that you have managed to do something wonderful! Just remember now to take a little time to rest and recoup- you've earned it!

Prayer (which builds all week)

Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.

Help us to be inclusive and encouraging to all we meet this day.

Help us to listen to the needs around us and work together to meet them.

And welcome all as your children and marvellous creation.

May that our deeds speak of your love and kindness so that your love is mirrored in all we do.

Amen.



Everybody's Welcome!

Words and music: Roo Stewart

Welcome, you're welcome:
everybody's welcome.
You and me and everyone:
everybody's welcome.
[repeat]

God so loves the world:
everybody's welcome.
He gave his only son:
everybody's welcome.

No-one is outside your love:
everybody's welcome.
It's the reason we believe:
everybody's welcome!

Welcome, you're welcome...



Suggested actions [keep it rhythmic!]:

Children can opt out or modify the actions as appropriate.

- Teach the line 'everybody's welcome' first
- **Everybody:** sweeping gesture to include everyone in the room
- **Welcome:** BSL [youtube.com/watch?v=le00apsPcSQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le00apsPcSQ)
- **You and me and everyone:** pointing at anyone in the room (choose a different person each time!), then yourself, then 'everybody' gesture again
- **God so loves the world:** point up to the sky, cross hands on top of chest, then make the outline of a small circle with your flat hands
- **He gave his only son:** two flat hands held high to the dominant side, palms towards body, dominant hand higher, then both brought diagonally lower and closer to the body
- **No-one is outside your love:** If standing, feet together, jump to the left, then gesture with two hands to the space where you were standing. If sitting, gesture to the left and then to the right with two hands
- **It's the reason we believe:** First, if standing, feet together, jump to the right. If sitting, do a choo-choo-train action. Second, BSL [youtube.com/shorts/AegrqVew1d4](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/AegrqVew1d4)

Song

Part of the Body

Words and music: Roo Stewart

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
heads and shoulders, knees and toes,
they're part of the body,
they're part of the body.

Jesus' body grows and grows
stronger, wiser, when we know
we're part of the body,
we're part of the body.

Everyone brings something different,
everyone brings something new.
God has put us all together,
you and you and me and you!

Eyes and ears...

Everything that we can offer,
everything that we can do,
do it for the one who made us,
you and you and me and you!

Eyes and ears...

Suggested actions [keep it rhythmic!]:

Children can opt out or modify the actions as appropriate.

- **Eyes and ears:** point to the appropriate body part with both hands
- **They're/we're part of the body:** rotate each arm with bent elbows to make a big 'waving' action in opposite directions with each hand at the same time. Lean the body to one side then the other (twice) along with the music. Advanced: jump to the left on the first line, jump to the right on the second line
- **Jesus' body grows and grows:** mime expanding with two hands
- **Stronger, wiser, when we know:** flex biceps (two arms at once) then tap your temple twice with one forefinger (dominant arm)
- **Verses:** lines one-two: each child is invited to make up a dance move or do their favourite dance move. The 'floss', the 'robot', the 'locomotion', or something brand new! Line three: place one fist on top of the other, repeatedly; line four: point to different people and yourself as appropriate.



Day one

We are all different ages, and all are welcome

Bible reading

Mark 10:13-15

International Children's Bible



Jesus Accepts Children

¹³Some people brought their small children to Jesus so he could touch them. But his followers told the people to stop bringing their children to him. ¹⁴When Jesus saw this, he was displeased. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them. The kingdom of God belongs to people who are like these little children. ¹⁵I tell you the truth. You must accept the kingdom of God as a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it.'

Bible video

youtu.be/VPUMDVBO7dY?si=fu1__I5XKc_G6ax3

Saddleback Kids (1:17)

Arrival activity

Sharing The Welcome

Make some welcome bracelets to swap with others. Beads on elastic, paracord friendship bracelets, or slap bands (blanks available from Baker Ross to colour or put stickers on).



Story

You will need someone to play Jesus, some disciples, some people coming to see Jesus, and parents and children. Please make sure before you do this that the children in the play know exactly what to expect so they are not taken by surprise, as this may cause upset.

[Jesus is talking with his disciples. Someone walks past and looks at them. They turn round and pass the group again. They then get excited and run up towards the group. The disciples move to meet them, acting as a barrier to Jesus.]

Fan: Excuse me, excuse me! That's him, isn't it? That's Jesus?

Disciples: Yes it is but ...

Fan: I'm his biggest fan, I mean like, really his biggest fan! I know of all the stories he's told and all the miracles. Can I meet him, please? Please can I meet him?

Disciples: *[to each other]* Do you think Jesus wants to see them? Do you think they'll be welcome to see Jesus? Um ... let's ask that crowd *[pointing to the children]*. What do you think? Do you think this person is welcome to meet Jesus?

[Jesus to nods to the children. Get the children to shout 'yes'.]

Disciples: Well there you go, come on and meet Jesus.

Fan: Oh thank you, thank you. *[Runs to talk to Jesus and acts super-excited the whole time].*

[Someone in posh clothes walks towards the disciples. Speak in a posh voice.]

Posh: Did I hear you say that was Jesus? Well, I simply must meet him. I am very important and I'm sure he'll want to meet me.

Disciples: *[Disciples mutter to each other, then look to the crowd].* What do you think? Should we let ol' fancy pants here is welcome to see Jesus? *[Jesus nods and beckons to Posh.]*

Crowd: Yes!

[Posh goes and meets Jesus, shaking his hand and chatting with him and Jesus' biggest fan].
[A beggar, dressed in tatty clothes, walks cautiously towards the disciples. The beggar does not speak in a loud or confident voice.]

Beggar: Um, excuse me. I... I wondered if I might see Jesus. I've heard a lot about him and I, um, hoped that I could, um, see him?

Disciples: Hmm, I don't know. You're not very rich or important are you? *[Beggar slumps forward, hurt by their words.]* What do you lot think? Are they welcome to meet Jesus? *[Asks the 'crowd'.]*

[Jesus nods vigorously towards the children.]

Crowd: Yes!

Disciples: Wait, what did you say?

Crowd: *[Louder]* YES!

[Beggar runs towards Jesus and Jesus hugs him and they all start talking.]

[Parents and children approach the disciples. The disciples cross their arms and stare at the parents and children. The fan, Posh and the beggar stop talking, and stare at them.]

P&C: Hi, we've bought our children to meet Jesus. We hoped that he would bless them.

[Disciples look to the crowd.]

Disciples: Ha! Look at them, all sticky and small and snotty. Do you think they're welcome to meet Jesus?

Crowd: Yes!

Disciples: Say again?

Crowd: YES!

Disciples: Ha! Wrong! No they're not. *[Jesus looks shocked]*

The fan, Posh and the beggar: No! Children are not welcome.

[Jesus looks to the crowd and waves his hands at them. Get the crowd to shout.]

Crowd: Oh yes they are!

Disciples and F,P, B: Oh no they're not!

Crowd: Oh yes they are!

Disciples, F, P, B: Oh no they're not!

Crowd: OH YES THEY ARE!

Disciples, F, P, B: OH NO THEY'RE ...

[Jesus steps forward and breaks through the disciples, towards the children and parents.]

Jesus: Enough! You should listen to these children [*points to the crowd*], they can teach you so much! [*Disciples look shocked.*]

Disciples: What? But they're just ... children! They're not important.

Crowd: Oh yes we are!

Disciples: Oh no you're not!

Crowd: Oh yes we are!

Disciples: Oh no ...

Jesus: Shush. They are important. You must let all the children come to me.

[Jesus steps forward and places hands on children's heads (actors).]

Jesus: Don't stop them, because God's kingdom belongs to people who are like these little children. The truth is, you must accept God's kingdom like a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it.

[Turns to the crowd.]

Jesus: Who is welcome to come and see me?

Crowd: Everyone!

Jesus: Exactly, you make sure you tell people that, especially if they're like this lot and they say someone isn't welcome to come and see me! Will you do that for me? Great, thank you. Now, I've got to be on my way, still so much to teach this lot and lots more wonderful children to meet, just like you. Bye for now.

[Everyone leaves still in character – fan gushing over Jesus; Posh acting important; Beggar happy to be there; children walking next to Jesus; disciples looking thoroughly confused.]



Wondering questions



- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?

Small group prayer

Initials



1. Make the initial of someone else in the group, using some foil.
2. Place all the initials in the middle of the space you are using, and then pray over them with the following prayer:



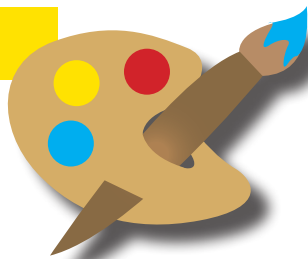
Thank you, God, that you welcome us all, especially (go round the group saying the name of the person they created the initial for. Sign in Makaton the sign for "bless", which is: in the air, lay your hands face down in front of you, pull them back towards you and make fists and push fists down slightly)
Bless each of us as we learn about you,
Bless each of us as we make new friends this week
Bless each one of us when we sleep tonight.
Amen

Activity/craft

We're All Welcome With God

You will need:

- paper
- paint for finger painting
- pens.



What you do:

1. Make an outline of a doorway, with the doors open and a welcome mat at the door.

2. Using either finger paints or slightly diluted poster paint, pass the individual pictures around the group so everyone can put their fingerprint into the pictures.
3. When the paint has dried, make a face on each of the fingerprints, and decorate the mat and doorway.
4. You should end up with a very colourful doorway full of smiling fingerprints. By using fingerprints to make the faces, you can talk about how each person is unique and precious to God.



STEM activity

Jigsaw Faces

You will need:

- plain jigsaw pieces (please see the template provided)
- colouring pencils.

What you do:

1. Give each child a jigsaw piece, and ask them to draw a picture of themselves onto it.
2. Create a jigsaw to show how we all fit together with Jesus.



Recipe



URC Children Biscuits

You will need:

- round biscuits or mini gingerbread people
- writing icing.

What you do:

You may choose to decorate round biscuits with the Children Together badge. Clearly, you will not be able to do the multicoloured circle or the writing as it is on the badge, but you could do the cross and the fish and have a go at writing Children Together. Alternatively, you could decorate two mini-gingerbread people, and use icing to join their hands together.



Games



Children's Party Games

Jesus welcomed the children just as they were, and also talked about entering the kingdom of Heaven with childlike hearts. Have some fun playing some classic children's party games. Here are a few to get you going:

Pin The Tail On The Donkey

You will need:

- a large picture on the wall/door of a donkey
- a few paper tails with Blu-Tack/sticky dots
- a blindfold.

What you do:

Children take it in turns to wear the blindfold and try to place the tail on the donkey in the right position. Points or a prize for the one who comes the nearest.

Other versions of this game could be to place the eyes and nose on a face, or place the hat on the person.

Pass The Parcel

You will need:

- a parcel with distinct layers, possibly with a consequence or small treat in each layer
- music.

What you do:

1. Children sit in a circle and, while the music plays, they pass the parcel round.
2. When the music stops, the person holding the parcel tears off one layer. They do the consequence or keep the prize.
3. The music starts again, and the parcel moves on.

Duck, Duck, Goose

What you do:

1. The children sit in a circle on the floor. Someone is chosen to be the first player.
2. They walk around the outside of the circle, gently touching each person on the head and saying Duck.
3. When they are ready, they say Goose and the person they chose has to get up and chase them round the circle.
4. Can the player get back to the goose's seat first, or will the goose catch them? Play then continues.

Hide And Seek

What you do:

1. The children go and hide anywhere in the area you have designated, and then the leaders go and seek them out.
2. Once found, they return to home base.
3. Who will be the last person to be found?

Chocolate Game

You will need:

- a dice
- a set of scarves, gloves and hats
- a large chocolate bar on an unbreakable plate
- knife and fork.

What you do:

1. The children sit in a circle with the chocolate etc in the middle.
2. They pass the dice round, rolling it in turn.
3. When someone rolls a six, that person goes to the centre, puts on the hat, gloves and scarf and, using the knife and fork, they begin to unwrap the chocolate and eat as much as they can before another person rolls a six and takes their place.

Musical Statues

You will need party music.

What you do:

1. When the music plays, the children dance.
2. When the music stops, the children freeze into statues.
3. Anyone who moves is out.

Islands

You will need:

- sheets of newspaper
- music.

What you do:

1. When the music plays, the children dance around.
2. When the music stops they must run and stand on a piece of newspaper or the sharks (leaders) will get them out.
3. Each round, the leaders remove pieces of the paper and rip them into smaller islands to make the game trickier.

Large group prayer

A Web of Welcome and Blessing



You will need a ball of wool.

What you do:

1. Get everyone to sit or stand sit in a circle.
2. Give the ball of wool to one of the adults to begin the prayer.
3. Throw the ball across the group, holding firmly onto the end and say, 'You are welcome. God bless you.'
4. Depending on the size of your group, it would be good to include the person's name.
5. The person across the circle catches the ball of wool and then, holding onto the wool at the point where they caught it, throws the ball to another person in the circle, saying 'You are welcome. God bless you'.
6. Ensure that, as the ball of wool is passed around, each person continues to hold the wool when they pass the ball to someone else.
7. Continue until everyone in the circle has hold of the wool. The more that the wool is passed across the circle, the more it will look like a spider's web.
8. Then each person can look down the lines of wool to the two people their thread is linked to and say 'God bless you' to each.
9. Finally, all chorus, 'God bless us all, AMEN.'



Day two

We may wonder if we fit in, but all are welcome

Bible reading

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

International Children's Bible



The Body of Christ

¹² A person's body is one thing, but it has many parts. Yes, there are many parts to a body, but all those parts make only one body. Christ is like that too. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, and some of us are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some of us are free. But we were all baptized into one body through one Spirit. And we were all made to share in the one Spirit.

¹⁴ And a person's body has more than one part. It has many parts. ¹⁵ The foot might say, 'I am not a hand. So I am not part of the body.' But saying this would not stop the foot from being a part of the body. ¹⁶ The ear might say, 'I am not an eye. So I am not part of the body.' But saying this would not make the ear stop being a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, the body would not be able to hear. If the whole body were an ear, the body would not be able to smell anything. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹ If each part of the body were the same part, there would be no body. But truly God put the parts in the body as he wanted them. He made a place for each one of them. ²⁰ And so there are many parts, but only one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the foot, 'I don't need you!' ²² No! Those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are really very important. ²³ And the parts of the body that we think are not worth much are the parts that we

give the most care to. And we give special care to the parts of the body that we want to hide.

²⁴ The more beautiful parts of our body need no special care. But God put the body together and gave more honour to the parts that need it. ²⁵ God did this so that our body would not be divided. God wanted the different parts to care the same for each other. ²⁶ If one part of the body suffers, then all the other parts suffer with it. Or if one part of our body is honoured, then all the other parts share its honour.

²⁷ All of you together are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of that body.

Bible video

youtu.be/uFSY-41pVzw?si=-BQQwsg-Z84xyPCI

New Vintage Kids (2:35)

Arrival activity

Different Drawing

Try creating a drawing with your non-dominant hand, or with your feet.



Story

Body Parts Poem

Hello, I'm a hand, and I don't like to boast
I'm the most important body part, more vital than the most.
It's handy to have a pair of hands to make and give and do.
To wipe your bum and blow your nose and open biscuits too!

Heads and shoulders, knees and toes, (touch each)
That's the way the old song goes (Makaton 'sing')
But we all play a part in the body of God
(Point to everyone in turn)
And everyone's important. (Double thumbs up)

Hello, I'm a toe, and I don't like to boast
I'm the most important body part, more vital than the most.
You need me when you stand or walk or balance on one leg,
Or kick a football or tin can or dance in a discotheque.

Heads and shoulders, knees and toes, (touch each)
That's the way the old song goes (Makaton 'sing')
But we all play a part in the body of God (Point to everyone in turn)
And everyone's important. (Double thumbs up)

Hello, I'm a nose, and I don't like to boast
I'm the most important body part, more vital than the most.
I sniff out when the dinner's cooked or nasty smelling gases,
I help you breathe and speak and taste and even hold your glasses!

Heads and shoulders, knees and toes, (touch each)
That's the way the old song goes (Makaton 'sing')
But we all play a part in the body of God (Point to everyone in turn)
And everyone's important. (Double thumbs up)

Hello, I'm a kidney, and I don't like to boast
I'm the most important body part, more vital than the most.
I take out all the nasty stuff that's in with your blood cells
And pour it down the toilet so's to keep your body well.

Heads and shoulders, knees and toes, (touch each)
That's the way the old song goes (Makaton 'sing')
But we all play a part in the body of God (Point to everyone in turn)
And everyone's important. (Double thumbs up)

Hello, I'm an elbow, and I don't like to boast
I'm the most important body part, more vital than the most.
I bend and stretch to drink and eat and lift a heavy weight.
You pull the door, you lean on me or high-five with your mate.



Heads and shoulders, knees and toes, (touch each)
That's the way the old song goes (Makaton 'sing')
But we all play a part in the body of God (Point to everyone in turn)
And everyone's important. (Double thumbs up)

Just like we need our body parts to work together well,
And each of them is different, with a different tale to tell,
So God needs everybody to make up God's family
And share their strengths and weaknesses – including you and me.
Including me and YOU!

Wondering questions

- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?



Small group prayer



Button Body Prayers

This prayer activity helps to think about how, even though we are all different, everyone is precious to God, and makes up part of the body of Christ.



You will need:

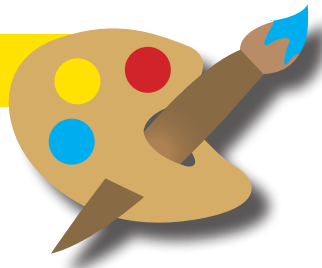
- assorted buttons in different colours and sizes
- a cut-out shape of a person in card.

What you do:

1. Lay the buttons out on the floor or table, and encourage the children to choose a button each. Place the card cut-out person in the centre of your group. Ask everyone to hold their button and say thank you to God for making them unique, just as they are.
2. Encourage everyone to place their buttons onto the body template. Talk about how there is a place for everyone in God's family.
3. Light a candle, and place it on the body cut-out, and get everyone to focus on the candle.
4. Invite one of the children to say a prayer, or say this short prayer to end:

**Dear God, thank you that you made each one of us different.
Please help us to feel welcome and part of your family.
Amen**

Activity/craft



Choose Your Welcome Door Hanger

You will need:

- a piece of card
- some rectangles of coloured paper
- a piece of ribbon.

What you do:

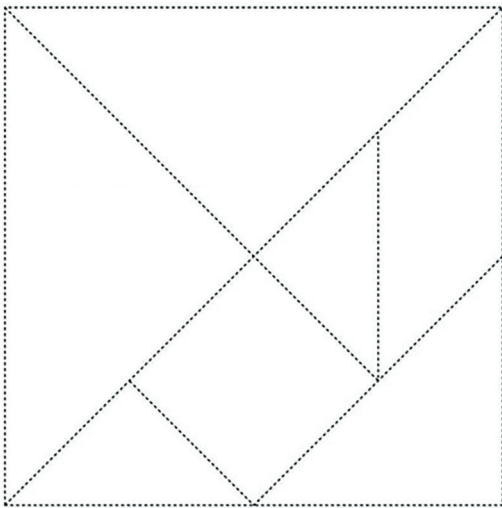
1. Create your choice of greeting on the rectangles of coloured paper.
2. A wave; a high five; say hello; a hug; a handshake; a fist bump.
3. Stick your choices of greeting onto the large piece of card.
4. Attach the card to the ribbon, leaving a loop at the top for it to hang on a door.



What you do:

1. Cut out the tangram shapes as carefully as you can with scissors.
2. Can you arrange the shapes to form the pictures given as examples? Some are harder than others! You need to use all the pieces, they must all touch, and the pieces cannot overlap.
3. When you've had a go at making some of these pictures, see if you can create a picture of your own using all the pieces of your tangram.
4. Stick your finished picture down onto the backing paper (or stick the pieces down to form one of the example ones if you prefer).
5. The shapes are varied (five different sized triangles, a square and a parallelogram) but you can combine them to make one picture that could not be made if any were missing or changed in any way.

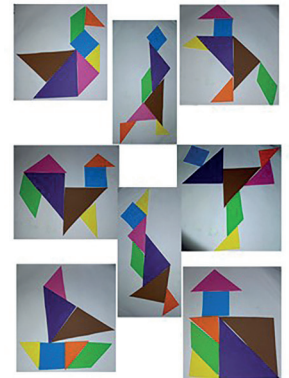
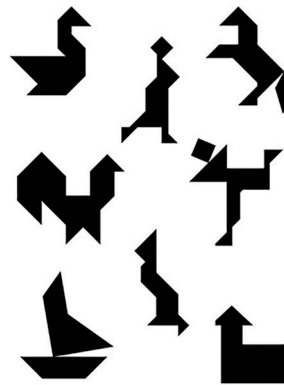
STEM activity



Tangram

You will need:

- a printed tangram template on card
- scissors
- glue
- backing paper
- a copy of the sample pictures to make.



Recipe



Edible Person

You will need:

- tortilla wrap (free from)
- variety of food bits
- something to wrap it up in if not to be eaten straight away.

What you do:

1. You can make this edible person out of whatever you can source that is suitable for your group. The only requirement is for the people to be made up of lots of bits to fit the Bible verse, one body, many parts.
2. You could cut cucumber for arms or legs, use crisps or cereal hoops for a face, and cheese or ham for the body. Providing a range of different foods will open up creativity and exposure to new foods.
3. Use a wrap as a base – you may want to coat this with cream cheese or hummus to help the bits stay in place.



Games



Team Game

We can all work together to ensure everyone has a part to play and is valued, just as they are.

You will need resources for the relay task game.

What you do:

1. Choose an activity for the children to do in small groups as a relay race. For example, take it in turns to go to the other end of the room to collect the bricks and then build the tallest tower you can build. There are rules to follow. Most importantly, everyone needs to be involved, and no one is to be left out.

2. Each child in the group will be told one body part that they will not be allowed to use, for example hands, feet, eyes (blindfolded), voice. The groups see how quickly they can do the task with these restrictions in place.

Parachute Game, Fruit Salad

There are things that we have in common with others and things that make us different.

You will need a parachute.

What you do:

1. All stand in a circle holding the parachute at waist height.
2. The leader shouts out criteria, such as all those who like reading and all those who it relates to run under the lifting parachute and swap places.
3. Leaders keep hold of the parachute so that it remains under control.
4. As the game continues, children might like to shout out the criteria.

Jigsaw Game

Everybody has a part to play in God's family, just as every piece of a jigsaw is vital if the picture is to be complete.

You will need a jigsaw for each team, each having the same number of pieces. Alternatively, you could use old Christmas cards, birthday cards or photographs and cut them into randomly shaped pieces – again, the same number of pieces for each picture.

What you do:

1. Mix the pieces, face down, in the middle of the room. The challenge for the teams is to find the correct pieces for their picture, and be the first to put it together.

2. You could give the team one piece of the

jigsaw as a starter piece, or you could be really mean and just set them to find pieces that fit together.

3. If you only have a small number of children, add some extra pieces into the mix to make the game sufficiently challenging.

Large group prayer

Skeleton Image



For this prayer activity, you will need a large skeleton which is in pieces. Alternatively, you could draw around a person and separate the arms, legs, head, tummy etc.

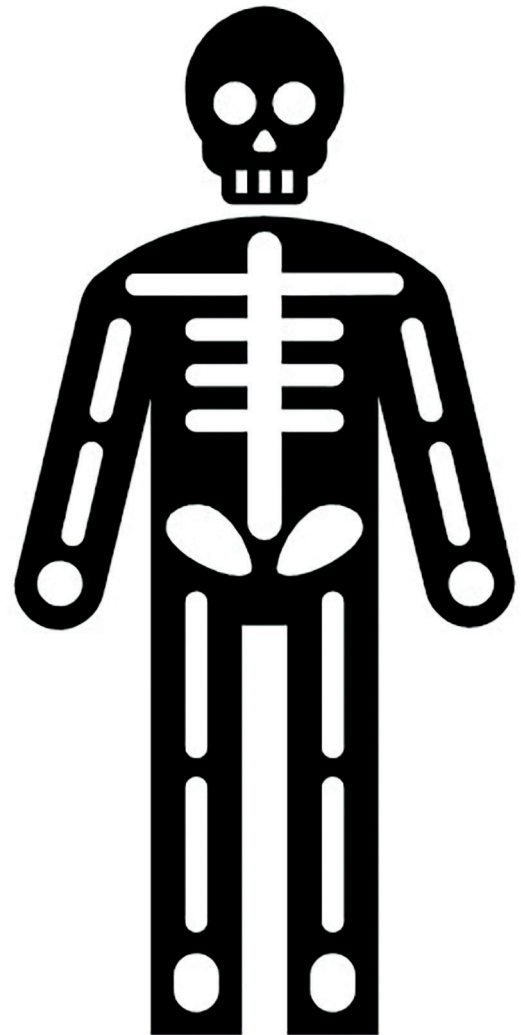
Allow the children time to locate the body parts or bones and make the skeleton or body complete.

Alternatively, smaller individual jointed bodies or skeletons could be created, allowing the children to think about what their own amazing bodies allow them to do.

Dear God,
We thank you for making us as amazing as we all are,
(Children can build their skeleton or point or move their own bodies)
With arms, hands, legs, feet and heads.
Help us to use all we have to dance, move and work together
as your family here on earth.
Amen.

Individual prayer:

Dear Jesus,
You love me and you know me,
Help me to use my feet
to walk with you,
and follow your example in all I do.
Amen.



Day three

We all have different abilities, and are all welcome

Bible reading

Luke 5:17-26

International Children's Bible



Jesus Heals a Paralysed Man

¹⁷One day Jesus was teaching the people. The Pharisees and teachers of the law were there, too. They had come from every town in Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. The Lord was giving Jesus the power to heal people. ¹⁸There was a man who was paralysed. Some men were carrying him on a mat. They tried to bring him in and put him down before Jesus. ¹⁹But because there were so many people there, they could not find a way to Jesus. So the men went up on the roof and made a hole in the ceiling. They lowered the mat so that the paralysed man was lying right before Jesus. ²⁰Jesus saw that these men believed. So he said to the sick man, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.'

²¹The Jewish teachers of the law and the Pharisees thought to themselves, 'Who is this man? He is saying things that are against God! Only God can forgive sins.'

²²But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said, 'Why do you have thoughts like that in your hearts?' ²³Which is easier: to tell this paralysed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to tell him, 'Stand up and walk?' ²⁴But I will prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.' So Jesus said to the paralysed man, 'I tell you, stand up! Take your mat and go home.'

²⁵Then the man stood up before the people there. He picked up his mat and went home, praising God. ²⁶All the people were fully amazed and began to praise God. They were filled with much respect and said, 'Today we have seen amazing things!'

Bible video

youtu.be/SWDgdPiNpz0?si=RbCvpVSNfFhdIHh6

Crossroads Kids Club (3:39)

Arrival activity

Tabletop Football

Play it with one hand behind your back, or with your eyes closed, or one minute in silence, or without the straw, or with instructions in a different language, or move the goal posts.



Story

Man Through The Roof

We all have different abilities, and are all welcome.

Before the story, use tape to mark out a square on the floor. Make it just big enough to fit all your group in tightly, and leave a space where the door would be. The children's responses and actions are in red.

I want to tell you a story, but I need your help. Let's imagine that we are living in a town called Capernaum by the sea of Galilee, more than 2000 years ago.

And in the town today there is a lot of excitement because Jesus is here, and we know he is in the house nearby.

Excited noises and mumbles.

I say we all go and see him, there's always a story to listen to or something amazing to see with Jesus – come on.

Lead the children in a line out of the room and back again to the house on the floor.

When we got to the house, we all went inside to see Jesus. It was a small house, and there were lots of people. Look!

Show the square on the floor and invite the children to enter the door and sit in the house. Welcome them all at the door, and encourage them to find a space to sit down. One leader stands in the middle as Jesus. Once all the children are in the house, begin again.

Are we all in? It's a very tight squeeze – can you all see Jesus OK? So Jesus began to talk to them.

Jesus begins to welcome everyone, but gets interrupted by a leader.



Sorry I'm late, oh is there room for me?

Encourage the children to shout NO MORE ROOM! Then encourage them to budge up and welcome the leader into the house. Repeat this a few times until there is definitely no more room.

Jesus continues. Welcome everyone, it's so good to see you all. I want to tell you all about God and how much you are loved.

But as Jesus was speaking, some more people arrived at the house. Can you see them? What is it that they are carrying?

Four leaders appear with a stretcher or duvet, carrying it by the four corners. Have a child or teddy on the mat.

The four friends had heard about Jesus and how he helped people, and wanted to bring their friend to him. Their friend could not walk; he was born like this. They wanted Jesus to help him. But when they got to the house, they couldn't get him to Jesus because of the crowds. NO MORE ROOM!

Leaders begin to try to shuffle their way in, others can be shouting watch out! Be careful! We are full! Come back another day! NO MORE ROOM.

The friends were desperate, so they hatched a plan.

Four friends tie ropes to each corner of the blanket, and spread out around the house. Then they lift the bed over the top of the children and place it by Jesus' feet as the narrator says ...

The four friends went up onto the flat roof and they removed the straw and mud ceiling, making a hole above the heads of the people inside. They then gently and slowly lowered their friend into the house and placed him at Jesus feet.

When Jesus saw their faces, he said to the man:

'Your sins are forgiven.'

Some people who were watching thought, 'Who does he think he is? Only God can forgive sins.'

Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said to them, 'Why do you think these things? So that you will understand just what I can do, watch this.' He said to the man, 'Get up, take your mat and go home.'

The people were amazed as they watched the lame man get up, pick up his bed and walk out. Lame man acts it out and leaves the house, saying, 'Excuse me please,' as he budges past the children.

Everyone was amazed by what they saw that day.

NO MORE
ROOM!

Wondering questions

- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?



Small group prayer

Release Prayers

Each person takes one cup, and in felt tip writes or draws something on it that gets in the way of us doing things in our lives (lies, disability, age, other people, fear). When everyone has written or drawn something, create a tower with them. Then take it in turns to throw a soft ball at the cups, knocking them down. Shout Amen as the cups fall to show that you'd like God's help in breaking down the barriers that stop people living their lives to the full.



Activity/craft

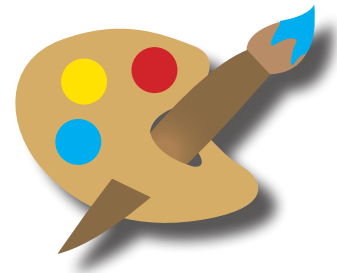
Embossed Collage

You will need:

- a piece of card from an old cardboard box about 20cm x 20cm
- items to create an image – string, buttons etc
- foil
- glue.

What you do:

1. Draw a design on the card. Keep it simple, like geometric designs, fish, sun and stars.
2. Go over the drawing with some glue and lay the string or buttons along the line of glue. Try and make sure everything is glued down securely.
3. Give each child a sheet of foil that is a bit larger than their picture. Carefully crumple up the foil and then open it up again. Cover the cardboard with some glue – you can use an old brush for this if you have one. Place the foil on top of the picture with the shiny side facing up.
4. Gently press the foil down over the surface of the cardboard, pushing it down between the string and things with your fingers so that it shows the image clearly. Fold the extra foil on each side of the cardboard over to the back of the project. You can use a bit of glue to secure it to the back if you want.
5. Close your eyes and feel the picture you have created, and maybe even feel some of the rest of the group's pictures too.



STEM activity

Accessible Housing

People with a disability, whether seen or hidden, can find getting around spaces a challenge for a variety of reasons. Could you create a house that is accessible? It might help to think about who you are going to make it welcoming for, perhaps someone in a wheelchair, perhaps someone with sensory challenges. Use the resources provided to make your own house. When finished, you could each showcase your house to your group, explaining who it's for and how you have made it accessible.



Recipe

Edible House

You will need:

- cream crackers
- cream cheese
- mini Jelly Babies.



What you do:

1. Using four cream crackers, create a box to be the walls of the house. Use cream cheese to 'glue' the crackers together.
2. Take another cream cracker to create the roof, and carefully snap the cracker in half so that the roof can be split apart.
3. As an alternative for the roof, you could use bread sticks laid across the walls to create the roof, and these can be removed to make the hole in the roof.
4. Use the house to retell the story, and split the roof apart so you can lower the jelly sweet into the centre of the house.
5. Enjoy eating it.

Games



Caterpillar Relay Race

We may not all have the same abilities, but we can find a way for everyone to participate.

You will need a few sleeping bags.

What you do:

1. The children sit at one end of the room in small groups.
2. They then race one at a time to the other end and back again until their whole team has completed it. The difference is that they do it in a sleeping bag.
3. The child gets fully into the sleeping bag, lies on the floor head first, and then crawls like a caterpillar across the floor.

The Four Helpful Friends

(Remember to do a risk assessment before playing this game.) The four friends were not put off by the barriers in their way – they knew that Jesus would welcome their friend, so they simply found a way to get him there.

You will need:

- a low-level simple assault course
- a few bed sheets.

What you do:

1. In groups of five, the children undertake the low-level assault course whilst carrying one of their friends in the bed sheet.
2. Ideas for the low level assault course could include chairs or obstacles to go around, a net to crawl under, a soft play obstacle to go over.

Bring A Friend To Jesus

The friends had to be inventive in finding a way to bring their paralysed friend to Jesus to be healed. Just like in the story, teams will have to be inventive in getting past the barriers that stand in their way.

You will need:

Each team will need something slightly fragile. If you are inside, you could use a small paper bag filled with rice (you will need dustpan and brush handy!) or if outside you could use a water balloon. This represents the team's 'friend' and they can carefully draw a face on it.

What you do:

1. Choose a leader to be Jesus, and stand them in the centre of the room or in a space outside.
2. Use chairs or a rope to create a fairly large circle around Jesus – nobody but Jesus is allowed inside this space.
3. The aim is for each team to find a way to get their friend as close as possible to Jesus' feet without it bursting!

Large group prayer

Makaton Signed Prayer
youtu.be/0vPxhYIzKI4



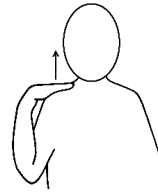
God



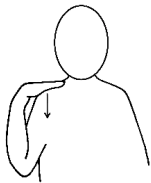
Thank you



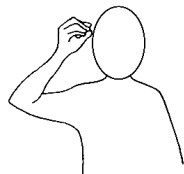
love



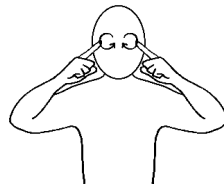
tall



small



hair



glasses



not

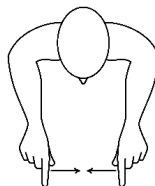
Repeat brushing movement twice



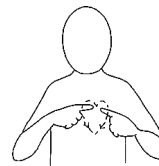
young



old



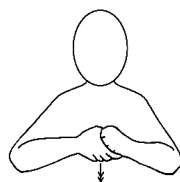
same



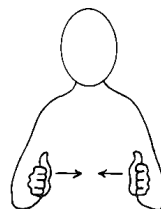
heart



happy



friend



amen

Dear God,
 Thank you that you love us,
 Whoever we are
 Whether we are tall or small,
 If we have long hair or short,
 Wear glasses or not.
 If we are young or old
 You love us all the same.
 You do not judge by how we look,
 But you know our hearts
 And that makes us happy
 To have you as our special friend.
 Amen

Day four

We come from different backgrounds and are all welcome

Bible reading

John 4:1-26



Jesus and a Samaritan Woman

¹The Pharisees heard that Jesus was making and baptising more followers than John. ²(But really Jesus himself did not baptise people. His followers did the baptising.) Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard about him. ³So he left Judea and went back to Galilee. ⁴On the way he had to go through the country of Samaria. ⁵In Samaria Jesus came to the town called Sychar. This town is near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his long trip. So he sat down beside the well. It was about noon. ⁷A Samaritan woman came to the well to get some water. Jesus said to her, 'Please give me a drink.' ⁸(This happened while Jesus' followers were in town buying some food.)

⁹The woman said, 'I am surprised that you ask me for a drink. You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan.' (Jews are not friends with Samaritans.)

¹⁰Jesus said, 'You don't know what God gives. And you don't know who asked you for a drink. If you knew, you would have asked me, and I would have given you living water.'

¹¹The woman said, 'Sir, where will you get that living water? The well is very deep, and you have nothing to get water with. ¹²Are you greater than Jacob, our father? Jacob is the one who gave us this well. He drank from it himself. Also, his sons and flocks drank from this well.'

¹³Jesus answered, 'Every person who drinks this water will be thirsty again. ¹⁴But whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give will become a spring of water flowing inside him. It will give him eternal life.' ¹⁵The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty again. And I will not have to come back here to get more water.'

¹⁶Jesus told her, 'Go get your husband and come back here.'

¹⁷The woman answered, 'But I have no husband.'

Jesus said to her, 'You are right to say you have no husband. ¹⁸Really you have had five husbands. But the man you live with now is not your husband. You told the truth.'

¹⁹The woman said, 'Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshipped on this mountain. But you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people must worship.'

²¹Jesus said, 'Believe me, woman. The time is coming when you will not have to be in Jerusalem or on this mountain to worship the Father. ²²You Samaritans worship what you don't understand. We Jews understand what we worship. Salvation comes from the Jews. ²³The time is coming when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. That time is now here. And these are the kinds of worshippers the Father wants. ²⁴God is spirit. Those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.'

²⁵The woman said, 'I know that the Messiah is coming.' (Messiah is the One called Christ.)
'When the Messiah comes, he will explain everything to us.'

²⁶ Then Jesus said, 'He is talking to you now. I am he.'

Bible video

youtu.be/6Vf3rqnoG5c?si=5sWWk8VZsPmFTagR
Lifekids (2:39)

Arrival activity

Wreath Of Welcome

Make different flags from around the world decorated with tissue, flowers or anything else.



Story

We Come From Different Backgrounds And Are All Welcome

You will need:

- blocks in different colours, shapes and sizes
- a small circle block for the well
- a neutral coloured mat or rug to tell the story on.

The actions the storyteller makes are in red.

This is a story of a man named Jesus. Jesus was a Jew born in Bethlehem where his dad Joseph came from, became a refugee in Egypt, grew up in Nazareth where his mum was from, and he was God's own Son come down from heaven to show us how to live and share God's love with everyone. **Place a multicoloured block in the middle of the story mat.**

Jesus went to many places, cities and towns, and everywhere he went he met people who came from different places, cultures, and backgrounds. Jesus welcomed them all. **Place many different coloured blocks all over the mat.**

One day, Jesus was on his way to Galilee, and he passed through a town called Samaria. It was a long journey, and Jesus was hot, tired and thirsty. **Remove all people blocks, and place Jesus at the centre of the mat.**

Jesus came to a well that was in the fields given to Joseph by his dad Jacob. It was Jacob's well. People would come to the well to get their water for cooking, washing and drinking. They would often come and meet at the well, to chat and meet friends while getting water. But it was midday, when the sun was at its hottest, and no one was there. **Place the well block by Jesus.**

Jesus sat by the well. So thirsty. A woman also came to the well. This woman was a Samaritan, Jesus was a Jew, and Jews and Samaritans usually did not mix. **Bring the woman to the other side of the well.**

Jesus said, Please can I have a drink of water? **Move Jesus to the side of the woman.**

The woman was shocked, saying, 'How can you ask me for a drink? You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan.' Jesus answered, 'If you knew who I was, you would be asking me for water and I would give you the freshest coolest water of life.' She said to him, 'You don't even have a bucket, where are you going to get water to give to me?'

Jesus answered, 'If you drink the water from the well you will be thirsty again, but if you drink the water I give to you, you will never be thirsty again.'

The woman said, 'Please give me this water.' Jesus told the woman who he was, and he also told her all he knew about her life.

As you speak each narrative, simply place your hand over the block speaking.

As they were talking, Jesus' disciples returned, and they were amazed to see Jesus talking with a Samaritan. 'What are you doing?' they asked. 'You shouldn't be talking to people like her.'

Bring 12 blocks to join Jesus at the well.

The woman left them quickly, and went to tell others about the one she had met at the well and all the amazing things he had said to her. **Place more blocks around the mat and have the woman go to each one for a second and move on.**

The people came to see Jesus for themselves. Jesus welcomed them all, and many began to believe in him that day. **Bring the blocks around the mat to where Jesus is.**

After two days, Jesus and his disciples left that place and moved on. **Move Jesus and his friends blocks away.**



Wondering questions

- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?



Small group prayer

World

For this prayer, you will need pipe cleaners to make the people, and a small map of the world printed out for each child. Once the children have made a figure of themselves, allow them to place it on the world map.



Alternatively, this could be a prayer as a group you choose to do together – if so, all the figures could be placed on a country where a child has visited, has relatives, or feels connected to.



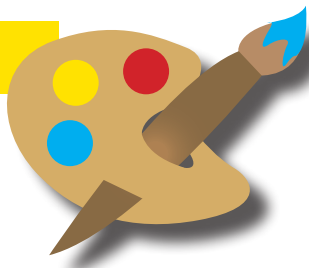
Dear God,
The world is a big place,
Help me to know I belong and have
much to offer,
Whether I am small or tall,
Young or old.
We are loved by You.
Help me to remember children in
other countries,
Where it is hot or cold.
Where there is clean water or not,
Where there is danger or peace.
You are with us all around your world.
Amen

Activity/craft

Well Of Welcome

You will need:

- pieces of card cut into bucket shapes, or a template for bucket shapes to use on card
- string or wool
- clean, empty yogurt pot, small Pringles pot, paper cup or similar
- card to cover outside of yogurt pot
- reference sheet of 'welcome' in different languages.



What you do:

1. Cut out bucket shapes from the card.
2. On one side of the bucket shape, write the word 'welcome' in a language of your choice. On the other side of the bucket shape, write the name of the language you used.

3. Draw a brick pattern on the card to cover the outside of the yogurt/Pringles pot/paper cup and fasten on with glue or tape.

4. Make holes around the rim of the pot – ask an adult to help with this. One way is to use the point of a pair of scissors, placing a ball of Blu-Tack or Plasticine underneath for the point to go into. In some cases, a hole-punch may do the trick.

5. Tie pieces of wool of different lengths to hang down from the holes and tie the other end to the handles of the bucket-shaped cards.

6. Make a hole in the top of the yogurt/Pringles pot/paper cup and put a string or piece of wool through to make a hanger.



STEM activity



Rainbow Welcome

You will need a packet of Smarties or Skittles.

Think about how the Smarties are all different colours, and remind us of how we are all different.

What you do:

1. Get each person to add a sweet around the edge of the plate.
2. As they do this, get them to think about people from a different country, race or culture. This can be either spoken or silent. Repeat this until you have a full circle of sweets around the edge of the plate.
3. When you have added all the sweets, gently pour some warm water into the middle of the plate until it reaches all the sweets.
4. Sit quietly and watch as the colours combine with the water, just like Jesus welcomed the woman at the well even when she felt left out.
5. When the colours all join up, say 'Thank you that we are all welcome and united in God's love.'

Recipe



Multicoloured Fruit Salad

You will need:

- a variety of colourful fruits
- bowls or, if you prefer, a jar for each child.

What you do:

1. Chop up the fruit into small chunks and add them together to make a multicoloured fruit salad.
2. Maybe as you are doing it chat together about what countries the fruits come from.



Games



Games From Other Cultures

This is a fabulous opportunity to get others involved. If you have other cultures in your church, ask them what games they play in their cultures, and perhaps invite them to come and run some.

Protect The World Parachute Game

As we think of people all over the world, of different backgrounds and cultures and ethnicities, we can remember how important the world is to God and how we need to protect it.

You will need:

- a parachute
- an inflatable globe
- ball pit balls.

What you do:

1. The group stands in a circle, holding the parachute at waist height.
2. Place the globe and small balls on top of the parachute.

3. Now shake it hard, with the aim of bouncing the small balls off the parachute, but protecting the globe by not letting it drop off the parachute.

Global Minute-To-Win-It Games

These minute-to-win-it games use materials from all around the world.

What you do:

Chopsticks and Smarties: How many Smarties can you pick up in a minute and place in another bowl using only chopsticks?

Pick up sticks spaghetti: Drop a pile of uncooked spaghetti randomly on the table. How many strands can you pick up in a minute without moving any other strands? Each time another strand of spaghetti moves, there's a five-second forfeit.

Dorito house of cards: How tall a house of cards can you build in a minute using Doritos instead of cards?

Move grains of rice with a slotted spoon: Use a slotted spoon to move as many grains of rice as possible from one bowl to an empty bowl. How many grams can you get in the other bowl?

Find things in a washing up bowl of rice using feet: Fill a washing up bowl with grains of rice to create a lucky dip. Use feet to find the hidden items. Who can find the most and lift them out onto the floor with their toes?

Doughnut on a string: Hang ring doughnuts on strings from a pole. With hands behind backs (older children could also be blindfold!), how many doughnuts can you eat in a minute?

Large group prayer

Footprints



You will need:

- different coloured card (card that is a variety of shades of skin colours would work well for this)
- scissors
- pens/pencils.

What you do:

1. Begin by getting each child to draw around their foot. They could keep their shoes on, and draw around that. Cut out each footprint.
2. Gather all the footprints together, and either lay them in a circle or scatter them all over the middle of the room.
3. Ask the children to go and stand on a footprint and say a prayer for that person (give them examples as they won't know who's foot their standing on – 'Lord, please bring this person happiness'; 'Thank you God for this person being here' etc).
4. You can encourage children to pray for two or three (or more) footprints.
5. You can also make a game of it – musical prayers, similar to musical chairs. Get the children to dance around to the music, and then run to a footprint when the music stops. Give them enough time to say a prayer and then start the music again. Don't take any of the footprints away though!
6. This shows children that they can have fun while they talk to God.



Day five

We all have doubts and questions and we are all welcome

Bible reading

John 20:24-29



Jesus appears to Thomas

²⁴Thomas (called Didymus) was not with the followers when Jesus came. Thomas was 1 of the 12.

²⁵The other followers told Thomas, 'We saw the Lord.'

But Thomas said, 'I will not believe it until I see the nail marks in his hands. And I will not believe until I put my finger where the nails were and put my hand into his side.'

²⁶A week later the followers were in the house again. Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, 'Peace be with you!' ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand here in my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

²⁸Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

²⁹Then Jesus told him, 'You believe because you see me. Those who believe without seeing me will be truly happy.'

Bible video

youtu.be/A_QcGnwilXI?si=ROT9n8AmJia3qxLG

Saddleback Kids (2:34)

Arrival activity

Come up with questions about the leaders, so the children can guess which leader it may be. For example:

- do you know which leader has lots of animals?
- do you know which leader doesn't like spaghetti?
- which leader fears flying?
- which leader has run a marathon?
- can you match a baby picture to the right leader?



Story

Thomas' Questions

I don't believe this. Honestly, what is going on? The gang (or disciples as they like to be called) have all gone crazy. They're saying he's alive, that Jesus is alive! He's not, he's dead! The Romans killed him, he was buried in a tomb. Dead. Done. Finished. And now they're saying he's alive? I don't believe them, and I told them so. I told them that I wouldn't believe Jesus was alive unless I actually put my fingers into the wounds on his hands and side.



I think that was a bit of a rash statement. Eugh. It makes me feel queasy to think about doing that but... I had to get them to stop. Stop telling lies, stop making out he's still alive. He's just not, he... died. My friend has... gone and he's never coming back: that's how death works. It hurts, so much, and they're just pretending that he's still here, like it doesn't hurt at all. What is up with them?

But what if?... What if he is alive? What if they are telling the truth? What does that mean? Could Jesus be alive? Dare I to hope it? No. That's just nonsense. No one comes back from the dead... apart from Lazarus, but that was different. How was that different? Jesus called him, Jesus can't call himself if he's dead, or can he? We call him the Messiah, so maybe he can...

Could it be? Maybe Jesus didn't actually die, maybe he had passed out or something, and that's how he's alive. Yes, that must be it... hang on a minute, the tomb. Can you breathe in a tomb or do you run out of air? They wrapped him in linen, would that suffocate him? Would the people who buried him not have noticed that he was still breathing or that his heart was still beating? Surely they would have noticed so... he must have been dead?

Anyway, even if they were right, how did he get out of the tomb? He was badly hurt, and it takes more than one healthy person to roll the stone over the tomb. Though they didn't say he looked hurt, just that he had the scars on his hands and side. How does that work? How can you go from being beaten up and so very badly hurt to being OK in just a few days? And how did he get out? Well, I guess if he is the son of God, he can do anything? Maybe God zapped the stone out of the way, or maybe he sent some angels or something?

What if he is alive? What if he did die, was buried and actually came back to life, what does that mean?! I... can't even think! So many more questions! Does it mean Jesus can never die? Do we still have death, and if so, is it different now? Jesus spoke of his father's house having many rooms, do we get to go there when we die? Is it like Jesus had to die to go and fetch the keys to that house, open it up and then come back and make sure we had keys to get in as well?

If he's alive, what happens now? What do we do? Things are going to be crazier than before! I need to go and meet the disciples again, I need to know what's going on. Are they delusional? Is someone pretending to be Jesus? Or could it be... him? Time for some answers.

[Some time later] I can't... I just can't believe it... He. Is. Alive.

Wondering questions

- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?



Small group prayer

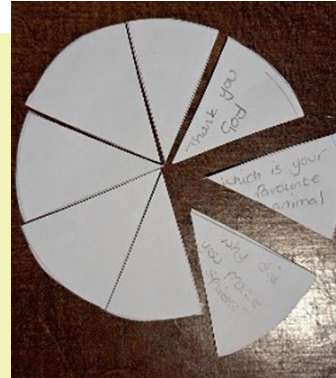
Pizza/Cake Prayers

You will need:

- scissors
- pens/pencils
- a large circle of card or thick paper.

What you do:

1. Print the cake/pizza on card or stiff paper, and cut the pieces beforehand.
2. In the group, hand each child a piece of cake, and ask them to write or draw the one question that they would like to ask God.
3. Once all the children have done this, put the cake pieces together, and say, 'Thank you God that we can ask you anything.'



Activity/craft

Question Headband

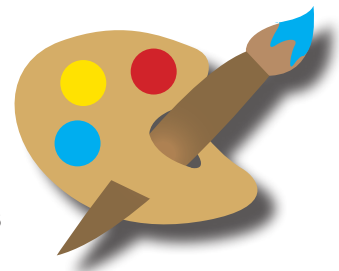
Thomas doubted and questioned whether Jesus had risen from the dead. We all question and sometimes doubt things around us. Jesus encourages us to question, but to ensure we listen carefully for what God might be telling us, and to try to make good decisions based on what we hear.

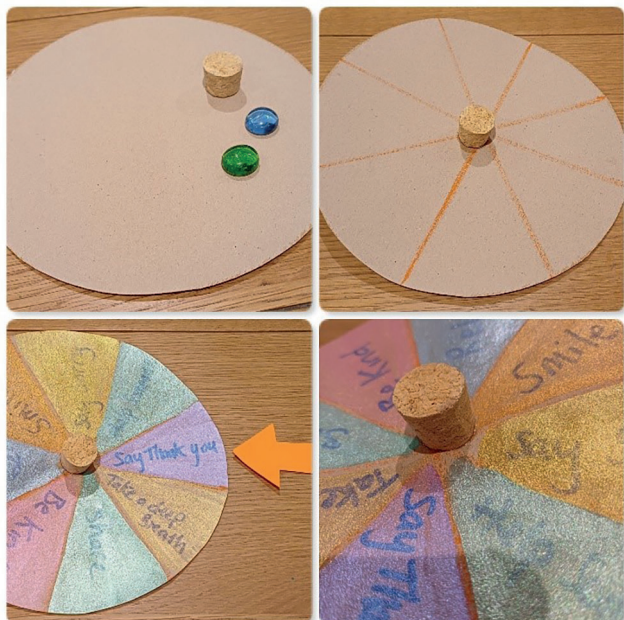
You will need:

- two different colours of card
- scissors.

What you do:

1. Create a headband using one colour card; measure it, and secure with sticky tape or staples.
2. Cut a question mark out of the same card. This could either be decorated first, or you could cut a slightly smaller question mark out of the other colour card on it, as in the picture, and stick that on top.
3. Then stick that onto a piece of card of the contrasting colour.
4. Staple the card to the headband.





- Relax
- Take a deep breath
- Smile
- Help someone
- Stay positive
- Say sorry
- Thank you
- Be kind
- Share.

Recipe



STEM activity

Positive Spinner

You will need:

- a circle of card (recycled packaging)
- glass beads
- cork or milk bottle top
- Blu-Tack/glue dots/strong glue.

What you do:

1. Divide the circle up into sections and paint or colour in each section. When the paint or pen is dry, write or draw a positive suggestion or decision in each section.
2. Use strong glue, a glue dot or Blu-Tack to secure a glass bead in the centre on the back. This will enable the circle to spin.
3. On the front of the card, fix either a milk bottle top or a piece of cork to make the spinner.
4. Make an arrow to place on the floor or table; this will be the marker for the section the spinner lands on. Take it in turns to spin and give each other positive suggestions.
5. Here are some ideas for the sections to get you started. Encourage everyone to come up with their own ideas, too!

Hidden Treasure Cakes

You will need:

- ready-made cupcakes/fairy cakes
- ready-to-roll icing or spreadable buttercream icing
- small sweets/chocolates/jam/chocolate spread.

What you do:

1. Take a cupcake and a round-ended knife or spoon, and cut out a piece from the centre to leave a hollow. Try to keep the piece you cut out intact.
2. Place something in the centre – a small sweet or chocolate, or a little dollop of jam or chocolate spread (check for allergies in your group to ensure that they can eat these, or you may need to designate a specific cake for any child with an allergy).
3. Use the top of the piece of cake you scooped out to make a lid, removing any excess sponge to let the lid sit on smoothly.

- Now either coat the top of the cake with butter icing or spread a little jam on it and cover with a circle of ready to roll icing so that the hole in the cake is completely hidden. You could decorate it with a question mark on top.
- Mix the cakes up, and then pick one each. You never know what might be in it!

Games



Two Truths And A Lie

Thomas was not sure that his fellow disciples were telling the truth as what they said about Jesus being alive didn't seem likely to him. This game is about deciding whether something is likely to be true or not.

You will need:

- leaders need to prepare two truths about themselves and one lie.

What you do:

- The children gather in small groups. Each leader takes it in turns to present two truths and one lie about themselves.
- The groups then have a few moments to discuss which one they think is least likely to be true.
- Points can be given to the groups who guess the lie correctly.

True or False Runaround Game

Another game about deciding whether you think something is likely to be true or not.

You will need:

- the list of questions below (or make your own)
- a large letter T
- a large letter F, on separate pieces of card.

What you do:

- Children stand in the centre of the room. A leader reads out each fact one at a time.

- The children then run to either T for True or F for False.
- Once the children have all decided, the leader can shout 'Runaround' to give them chance to change their minds before revealing whether the answer is True or False.
- You can play it that children who guessed wrong are out each time.

FACTS

- Dung beetles are the strongest creature relative to their size** – TRUE
- Tomatoes are a fruit** – TRUE
- Buzz Lightyear's original name was Lunar Larry** – TRUE
- In a whole lifetime you spend 45 years sleeping** – FALSE, it's 25 years
- Human teeth are as strong as shark teeth** – TRUE
- All fruit have seeds inside** – FALSE, strawberries have them on the outside
- There is no butter in peanut butter** – TRUE
- Tug of War used to be an Olympic sport** – TRUE
- Snakes cannot smell** – FALSE, they smell with their tongues
- A camel's hump is full of water** – FALSE, it is full of fat that is used for nourishment when the food is scarce.

Feelie Bag Game

Thomas needed to touch in order to believe. This game is about using your sense of touch.

You will need:

- a selection of pillowcases that have different items inside, with the pillowcases tied and labelled
- choose some items to hide in the pillowcases that would be easy to identify, and some that are more difficult to guess.

What you do:

1. The children pass the pillowcases round and try to guess what is in each one.
2. They could write their answers on an answer sheet, and then have the answers revealed at the end.

Large group prayer

Wear the question headband made in the craft session earlier.



Find a comfortable position (for example sitting, lying down or walking in a set space) and invite people, in silence, to think of questions they have for God or perhaps to thank God for answers they have had to prayers previously asked. Some children will struggle with this so set a timer – a minute is probably long enough.

End with this prayer:

God of knowledge, we have lots of questions about you and the world. Help us remember we don't need to have all the answers for you to love us. Help us listen, and say thank you when you help us know you a little bit more. Amen





Welcome

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