

WISDOM QUEST



WISDOM QUEST



2026 Children's, Youth and
Intergenerational Work
Holiday Club materials



Welcome



Welcome to the sixth official United Reformed Church (URC) Children's, Youth and Intergenerational Work (CY&IW) Holiday Club – *Wisdom Quest*. Tying in with our theme for the year, *Wise Words*, we gather together on a quest on which we join together on the search for some wise words from the Bible.

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 a variety of 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 children.youth@urc.org.uk.

Credits

Main writing team: The Revd Chris Dowd, Judy Harris, Sharon Lloyd, Jess Poole, Faye Al-Hindawi, Helen Laird, Mel Saunders

Appendices: Sharon Lloyd

Songs: Roo Stewart

Proofreading: Laurence Wareing

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

Previous materials:

The Clubhouse – a place where everyone is welcome, no matter who they are, where they come from and whether or not they know they already belong.

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

Snapshots – take a stroll through God's photograph album.

Time travellers – 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. There is an appendix of ideas for the elderly and for those with dementia. This theme is an excellent one to develop with older 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. 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 and 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 basecamp area as well as doing a challenge or creative activity, engaging all learning styles.

Story/ modern parables

We have selected a few modern-day parables that you can discover by searching for YouTube videos.

Modern-day parables aim to relate the Bible story of the day to an everyday situation that people may find themselves in in today's world. Follow up the reading/ listening of the story with some I wonder questions, such as: I wonder what Jesus would say in this story? I wonder what we can learn about love/ me/etc from this story.

We encourage you to visit your local library to borrow the books. This way, children can read them independently and enjoy the illustrations. Please remember to comply with copyright and licensing guidelines when using these materials.

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/tofaadventuresathome 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 children with allergies or intolerances.

Those ingredients with a potential risk of allergies are included in brackets in the ingredients list.

Song

As well as using the themed songs found in this resource, 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

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.

Arrivals

As the 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*, are you ready for today's quest.

Why not lay a trail of footprints they need to follow to get to their groups



Team identity

Encourage each team of children to decide (democratically) on their own team name. It would be fantastic if each team had their basecamp 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.

As the children arrive, give them the each a special wise word to enter their basecamp each day.

In their groups:

- create own ID badges
- make own companion to be a companion on the quest, (you could use pompoms, pine cones or junk modelling)

Once gathered:

- begin to create maps, magnifying glasses and other objects which can be taken on their quest
- each group could have a back pack with everything they need for that day's quest, and it could be decorated with their own wise words
- encourage the children to make their basecamps their own by decorating them and giving their groups names

Ongoing activities

Arrival activities

Each session will have an arrival activity to keep everybody busy from the moment they arrive. They can be done in any order and can be added to the children's backpacks each day.

In your small groups create a catchphrase for the explorer – it must include the word 'wise'. The groups can vote to decide on the best phrase on the first day of the holiday club.

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. For example, create a new way of entering the quest, maybe a secret code, or a password.

Setting a challenge to enable the children to leave that day's quest might be fun, such as needing to build a bridge, or copying a drawing.



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 (30 minutes)

Active warm up (music and exercise routine)

Read modern day parable

Song

Game

Small groups (1 hour, 15mins)

Refreshments – recipe of the day

Challenge activity, crafts, prayer activity

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 could take on the character of an explorer, dressed a little like Indiana Jones, with a back pack, hat, compass and such like. Together with the children devise a catchphrase with the word ‘wise’ in it. This could be done as the first arrival activity of the week.

For this year’s holiday club we have replaced the story with a modern day parable and a challenge activity for small groups to do to explore the theme.

Decorate your venue

The venue should be decorated as though you are going on an adventure quest.

Decorate the entrance with an archway.

Create everything to look ancient and mysterious.

Have a large adventure map at the front to plot the journey each day. Each group is encouraged to make their own for their group.

You could have ropes and vines hanging to make the space more like a quest.

Arrivals area

The moment of arrival and registration is a really important one. Consider how you can make this area the starting point of the quest – this is where the children are welcomed to join the quest. Invite everyone to enter into the idea that they are embarking on something mysterious.

Create a poster with various different types of greeting to enter your quest journey, e.g. highfive, shake hands, thumbs up, hug, fist-bump, own choice.

Continuing craft In your small groups

Day 1: Wisdom Quest Map a treasure map showing their journey

As a group create a map with 5 stops.

Each day children unlock a new location by adding either a: sticker, stamp, mini drawing, wise word token to the stop.

At the end add a special symbol to indicate the treasure discovered (God's wisdom).

Day 2: Wisdom Compass

Using a paper plate or card circle compass

Split into sections (one per day/theme)

Add: Wise words or pictures at each compass point.

Add the message: 'God's wisdom helps us choose the right direction.'

Day 3: Wisdom Quest Journal

Make booklet (folded A4 or stapled pages)

Decorate cover and fill it with words the children have discovered.

Day 4: Wisdom Stone Collection

Provide five small stones for each child and encourage them to write on their stones one wise word e.g. Kindness; Patience; Truth; Listening; Courage. By the end they each have a bag of wisdom treasures.

Day 5: Wisdom Journey Scroll

Each child creates a long scroll that fills up with wise words over the week.

Decorate the scroll (tea-stained paper or kraft paper looks ancient!).

Add the 'wise word' or Bible verses from each day. Draw symbols or pictures showing what the words mean.

Roll up the scroll with ribbon or string.

Seal with a sticker or 'wisdom stamp'.

Add each creation into a wisdom backpack for each child.



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 has very specific copyright rules which dictate who can show one of its 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/

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 the 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 include them in the quest the children have been on during the week? Consider giving everyone a special sign to allow them entry into the church.



Essential things to think about

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 the 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 (e.g. 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 is responsible for ensuring that a leader is with them at all times. See *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

Designated photographers for the event 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 Offices of General Assembly social media pages. See *URC Good Practice 6* urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/. You are, however, encouraged to share any photographs with Offices of General Assembly Children's, Youth and Intergenerational Work (with appropriate permissions – see bit.ly/URCCYWpaperwork) for use on the website, CY&IW 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 to 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 (check your church policies in case they specify differently), 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 sign (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 to watch together. For some practical tips on supporting transgender or non-binary children and young people, contact children.youth@urc.org.uk Some advice can be found here: <https://bit.ly/LgbtqPlus>

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 Widgit 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, and 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:

There is something very inclusive about seeing all of us in the image of God. In the ancient world, most kings claimed they alone were the image of God and should be worshipped accordingly. But the ancient Hebrews saw it differently, that it wasn't just powerful rulers but everyone who deserved that dignity, no matter who they were. The ancient Hebrews at the very beginning of their sacred story, identified that we are all beautiful creations that share God's creative spark and all-encompassing love.

This week we may find people who challenge this concept for us. We are often used to the familiar at church and people we know who often look like us and think like us. The point of this week is to invite unfamiliar people in. And our invitation for ourselves is to see everyone as a child of God, even if we don't know them.

Those of us who are part of the church family know its joys and sorrows. We know that as people of faith we share a special bond because we share something special. This week, let us share that bond with everyone who comes through our doors.

Prayer (Build this prayer up as the week goes on by adding the lines under each day's reflections.)

Creator, remind me daily that I am your child, loved and cherished beyond measure.

Day two:

Much of our world at the moment seems to be fearful. We are often told that everything is broken and that nothing can ever be good again. We are often told it is someone else's fault so that we don't have to take responsibility. But this isn't the way of Christ. We are called to be hopeful. In Greek, the word is *ἐλπίς* – a feeling of expectation that everything will turn out right. This hope is centred in what Paul wrote in his letters in the Bible.

We choose the voices we listen to. We can listen to the voices of doom or the voices of hope. We can point fingers or take responsibility. If we are centred in our faith, we know God's got it – even when things don't go entirely to plan. In that case, we can live a courageous life because we know we are always held in love and live in hope.

This week will never go entirely to plan, because things just happen. But don't worry, God's got it. Concentrate on the important stuff (like safeguarding) and relax and enjoy the rest.

We are created with intention and purpose. And the purpose is grounded in the certainty of *ἐλπίς*. We can be brave, bold and beautiful!

Prayer: Lord, let me see myself as your masterpiece, designed to reflect your love and grace.

Day three:

Our passages today come from the Sermon on the Mount. To put them in context, Jesus has left the crowds to teach his disciples on the mountain. These are statements directed to those who say they wish to be a disciple. This week these passages are directed towards us.

So, let's first consider salt. Salt preserves and brings out the best of what it touches. How can we be salt at this midpoint through our week? The initial excitement might have worn off, and we have three days to go! So, ask yourselves, how can you support and bring out the best in each other? And how can you bring out the best in our participants?

And let's consider the second verse, about being the light on a hill. This doesn't have to be, Look at me! but, rather, How can we help people to see things that they wouldn't normally see? How can our light illuminate what is normally hidden in the shadows? How can our actions, our words and example show people that there is something special here? How can our light illuminate something special about each other?

Today is a big ask for us disciples. We are told to bring out the best in others and to help people discover what is hidden. But you're not alone. There are those working with you, so make sure that you're also salty light to each other.

Prayer: Let your light shine through me, guiding others to you.

Day four

We are told in the Bible passage that we are chosen by God. Specifically, that we are chosen to love one another. Love is different from just being nice. Being nice can create distance and can be like a nice shiny apple that looks nice on the outside but actually is a bit sour when you bite into it. Love is different. It is about showing the lumpy, bumpy parts of ourselves. We are called to be good fruit – not perfect fruit.

This week there may have been some lumpy, bumpy parts of us shown. Our nice shiny veneers may have cracked a little. That is OK! We can't make a family if we keep ourselves at a distance. Being siblings in Christ means rubbing along together. It means being supportive, forgiving, honest and emotionally available to each other. Hopefully this week you've been these things. And families are funny things – no two are the same. The journey you have been on has been your journey with the spiritual family you have co-created. On this penultimate day, celebrate this!

Prayer: Thank you for making me part of your family. Let me love and support my spiritual family.

Day five:

You may be feeling a mixture of relief and sadness today. You've made it and this is the last day! Whatever happens in the future, this bubble of love and fun you have created is coming to an end. So, our reading from Romans is important because it reminds us that the bonds we create are never broken. Nothing can separate us from God's love, and by extension our love for each other. We are loved unconditionally!

And as we come to a close, we can look over the week and celebrate that we have completed what we have completed. Some of this will be things that we're really proud of. Some things will have been what we euphemistically call learning experiences. But you have stepped out in faith, and you have dedicated a period of time putting aside your own concerns to run this. It is now complete in Christ.

By extension, this journey you've embarked on has been part of your own journey. Take a moment to consider how this has helped you while you've been helping others.

Hopefully this time has been another piece of the jigsaw puzzle masterpiece you are!

Prayer: Lord, thank you for making me complete in you. Help me rely on you and not seek fulfilment elsewhere.

Song

God made me to be me (The beauty of God)

God made me to be me,
in a big family.
Lovingly made, called by name,
showing the beauty of God.

What is God like?
There are clues all around.
You'll see the heart of God in me.
You've got it too,
and together, it is true:
we'll show how
God calls us to be.

God made me to be me...

Suggested actions: You can find a video of this song with actions here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0dWr4cxnjTRE7PIA2dLmCzxGBybvfdUT>

Keep it rhythmic! Children can opt out or modify the actions as appropriate.

The sheet music are available as separate downloads on the website.

Song

Just a little salt (Salt and light)

Just a little salt makes the world taste right.
Just a little light makes the dark take flight.
O God, make me salt and light.

We share our flavour with the world
so all can taste and see
God's goodness and a freshness, too:
the life of God that flows through me,

Just a little salt...

We shine our light into the world
so all can taste and see
the love of God is shining through
the life of God that flows through me.

Just a little salt...

Suggested actions: You can find a video of this song with actions here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0dWr4cxnjTRE7PIA2dLmCzxGBybvfdUT>

Keep it rhythmic! Children can opt out or modify the actions as appropriate.

The sheet music are available as separate downloads on the website.

Alternative Songs to use.

Day1

Wonderfully Made, by Journey Kids

https://youtu.be/8F_LXjwOrLM?si=k0xtiCtBOFNpmwzY

Made in Your Image, by Hillsong Kids

<https://youtu.be/8AC-KtJriw4?si=C-YkDMC3HDq4Q2Df>

Day2

Be strong and courageous (Sea Shanty) - Doug Horley & Mark Read (official video)

<https://youtu.be/tiLSIIDcAVU?si=ZPIEO6x9xk-wXsn6>

King of Me, by Rend Co. Kids

<https://youtu.be/7Yt3vPANmVU?si=WkOM0VJuyXi7Q4Zd>

Day3

Jesus, You're the Light!, by Ron and Jana Alayra

https://youtu.be/2nqOQ_vtht4?si=oogSMk2DqEZPwzUt

My Lighthouse, by Rend Co. Kids

<https://youtu.be/JeJvKkBV6rY?si=xj2X4hZJEljhFRXR>

This Little Light of Mine, by Listener Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtqhyQ>



Day 4

God is the Vine, by New Vintage Kids

<https://youtu.be/gET4P4ZQsCQ?si=Rhi3O2yS7RZuAJlu>

Big Family of God, by Nick & Becky

Drake/Worship For Everyone (official video)

<https://youtu.be/UEvJzOxm6zs?si=HZYTJ3--I8r9gUKI>

Day 5

My Best Friend, by Hillsong Kids

<https://youtu.be/5fD4bCYaIEc>

God's Love, by Shawna Edwards

https://youtu.be/i4rZcN8dQpE?si=SNur-VjmDD_KGPif

Day One

Bible Reading

I AM created in God's image; I AM a child of God



Genesis 1:27

So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female.

John 1:12

But some people did accept him. They believed in him. To them he gave the right to become children of God.

Bible video

God made people
by Crossroads Kids club
<https://bit.ly/WoNdErMADE>

Arrival activity

Wisdom Quest Map: A treasure map showing their journey.

As a group create a map with 5 stops.

Each day children unlock a new location by adding either a sticker, stamp, mini drawing, wise word token to the stop.

At the end add a special symbol to indicate the treasure discovered (God's wisdom).

Modern day parables

Elmer by David McKee

Publisher: Andersen Press

Publication date: Sept. 1990

ISBN-10: 1842707310

ISBN-13: 978-1842707319

The Same but Different by Molly Potter

Publisher: Bloomsbury Education

Publication date: July 2023

ISBN-10: 1801992304

ISBN-13: 978-1801992305

Challenges

Reflection: You are a reflection of God's creative beauty and God's nature.



Task Master challenge 60 seconds

1. Mirror, Mirror Challenge

Theme: Created in God's image (Genesis 1:27 – I am created in God's image)

Task: In 60 seconds create a self-portrait using only craft materials provided, possibly A5 sheet of paper or small canvases and a limited amount of pens; or use a drawing medium and suggest they can only use three shapes e.g. triangle, circle, etc.

Link: Just like a mirror reflects a face, we reflect God's nature – now add three words that show how you reflect God (e.g. creative, loving, kind).

Optional discussion: What does it mean to reflect God? Which part of you shows God's creativity?

2. Creation Builders

Theme: God is Creative – We reflect him

Task: In 60 seconds build something useful from Lego. It must have a name and be helpful for people.

Link: God creates with purpose. We do too because we're made in God's image.

3. Charades Challenge

Theme: Acting like God's children

Task: Act out (charades-style) one quality of God (love, forgiveness, kindness, patience). The rest of the team has up to 60 seconds to guess which quality/trait is being acted.

Link: How can we act like our heavenly Father?

4. Child of God

Theme: Being a child of God.

Task: You have 60 seconds to rip a piece of paper/newspaper into an animal shape, then a further 60 seconds to rip another piece of paper in a similar but smaller size as a baby/child of the original.

Link: We are children of God and made in God's image.

Place the items around your space, to reflect that we are all children of God.



Self portraits

You will need:

a piece of card from a cardboard box, some dried flowers, leaves, old magazines and newspapers

What you do:

Create a self-portrait using collage materials provided. Why not make a group self portrait instead? It doesn't need to look exactly like you, but maybe more of how God might see us.

Recipe

Biscuit self-portraits.

You will need:

(digestives), writing icing, edible decorations

What you do:

Create an image of yourself on the biscuits.

Stem

Mirror Play

You will need:

large child-safe mirror, a basket of translucent acrylic gems, colourful beads, small blocks, or even natural items like pebbles and leaves

What you do:

Freely arrange the items on a surface and then explore what happens when the mirror is placed vertically next to, or facing, them. You could try this with words or numbers – what happens then? Maybe even have a code to break using the mirrors.

Wondering questions



I wonder...

- what it means to be made in God's image
- if we are all made in God's image, why are we all different?
- which parts of God you most reflect
- which parts of God do you need to work harder at

Games



Naturally

You will need:

some elements from nature such as:
large sticks, twigs, leaves, small stones, flowers,
petals, earth

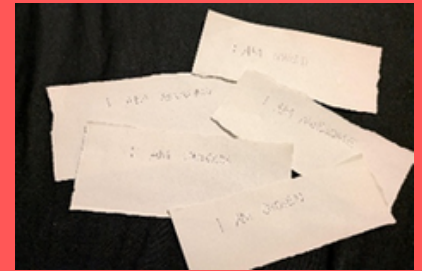
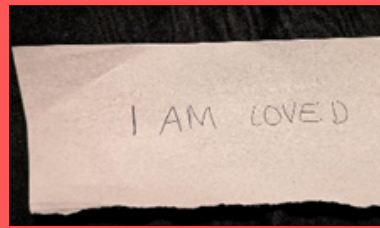
What you do:

This game can be played as a large group, small teams or individually. The aim of the game is to have access to the natural elements. On the shout of a 'thing' such as car, person, tree, cake... the team/person must create a picture from the natural objects that looks like said item. This could be done within a time limit or the winner could be the first to do it.

'God says'

This is based on the 'Simon says' game but in place of 'Simon says' use 'God says' and 'people say'. Each thing 'God says' needs to be an affirmation for the children to be able to act out. 'God says' we are beautiful, to help others, to smile at each other, to do good things with our hands etc. Use 'people say' to catch the players out. Explain that God can use people to give us messages, but we have to be sure they are from God.

Prayers



You will need:

paper or card, cut into A6 size,
pens/pencils

What you do:

Ask children to write or draw positive things on cards about the people around them – things that will help them feel good about themselves. For example: 'You are loved', 'You are awesome'.

Place the cards in the middle of the circle. Every child can then choose one and keep it with them. Or, you could have some pre-written cards for the children to choose from.

Play a bit of slow, calming music to aid a time of reflection if you wish. The children can have a few moments to meditate on God and then choose a card each. The more they read the card, the more they will take in what it says.



Day Two

Bible Reading

I AM fearlessly and wonderfully bold in Christ; I AM God's masterpiece



2 Corinthians 3:12

We have this hope, so we are very brave.

Ephesians 2:10

God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us new people so that we would do good works. God had planned in advance those good works for us. He had planned for us to live our lives doing them.

Bible video

Gizmo's daily Bible byte Ephesians 2:10

by Superbook

<https://bit.ly/MasterpieceE>

Arrival activity

Wisdom Compass

Using a paper plate or card circle compass:

Split into sections (one per day/theme)

Add: Wise words or pictures at each compass point

Add the message: 'God's wisdom helps us choose the right direction.'

Modern day parables

***The Lion Inside* by Rachel Bright & Jim Field**

Publisher: Orchard Books

Publication date: Mar. 2016

ISBN-10: 9781408331606

ISBN-13: 978-1408331606

***The Koala Who Could* by Rachel Bright & Jim Field**

Publisher: Orchard Books

Publication date: Feb. 2017

ISBN-10: 1408331640

ISBN-13: 978-1408331644



Treasure hunt.

I AM fearlessly and wonderfully bold in Christ to I AM God's masterpiece

Clue 1: God is with us in our coming and going.

Location 1: Church door

I AM statement: 'I AM brave because Jesus is with me.'

Leader says: 'Jesus is with us wherever we go, we are never alone.'

Action: Everyone takes one big step forward and says together: 'Jesus is with me!'

Clue on door mat or in letterbox etc. – **Clue 2:** Find the place where we gather to sit and listen.

Location 2: Pews/chairs

I AM statement: 'I AM part of God's family.'

Leader says: 'We sit together because we belong together.'

Action: Children sit together and give a thumbs-up to each other.

Clue on a pew/chair – **Clue 3:** Look for the place from where God's words are shared.

Location 3: Bible

I AM statement: 'I AM bold because God's words are true.'

Leader says: 'God's Word helps us be brave and make good choices.'

Action: Children place hands on ears and say: 'I can listen to God.'

Clue in front of Bible – **Clue 4:** Look for a light that reminds us God is always with us.

Location 4: Candle

I AM statement: 'I AM guided by God's light.'

Leader says: 'God's light helps us know the right way to go.'

Action: Children light a tea light.

Clue near candle – **Clue 5:** Find something representing Jesus' love as he did something for us.

Location 5: Cross

I AM statement: 'I AM loved no matter what.'

Leader says: 'Jesus loves us so much – always and forever.'

Action: Arms stretched wide like a cross, then a big hug.

Clue near cross – **Clue 6:** Find the place where we celebrate new life.

Location 6: Font/baptism bowl or pool

I AM statement: 'I AM chosen and special to God.'

Leader says: 'God knows your name and loves you.'

Action: Children invited to dip finger in font and draw a cross on the back of their hand.

Clue in font/baptism bowl or pool – **Clue 7:** Now go to the place God is worshipped through art.

Location 7 (final stop): stained Glass/artwork/flower arrangement

I AM statement: 'I AM God's masterpiece.'

Leader says: 'Just like this artwork, God made each of you carefully and with love.'

Action: Children point to themselves and say together: 'I AM fearlessly and wonderfully bold in Christ because I AM God's masterpiece.'

Clues to be printed:

Clue 1:

God is with us in our coming
and going.

Clue 2:

Find the place where we gather
to sit and listen.

Clue 3:

Look for the place from where
God's words are shared.

Clue 4:

- Look for a light that reminds us
- God is always with us.

Clue 5:

- Find something that represents
- Jesus' love as he did something
- for us.

Clue 6:

- Find the place where we celebrate
- new life.

I AM statements you could print:

"I AM brave because Jesus is
with me."

"I AM part of God's family."

"I AM bold because God's words
are true."

"I AM guided by God's light."

"I AM loved no matter what."

"I AM chosen and special to God."

"I AM God's masterpiece."

Clue 7:

Now go to the place God is
worshipped through art.



Cut out art

You will need:

a piece of card with a cross or heart cut out of it, some fabric, paper, or shiny sweet wrappers

What you do:

Stick the colours onto the card to highlight the cross/heart.

This is God's masterpiece.

How strong?

Test the strength of paper folded into different shaped columns by piling books on top.

You will need:

three pieces of normal thickness paper
tape, stack of books

What you do:

Fold some paper into different shaped columns.

Square column – Fold a piece of paper in half and then fold each end in half again towards the centre fold, so the paper is split into four even segments. Fold the paper into a square and secure with tape.

Triangular column – Fold a piece of paper into thirds to create a triangular column

Circular Column – Tape the edges together to form a circular column.

How many books can each column hold?
Remember to use books that are roughly the same size and weight.



Masterpiece sandwiches

You will need:

(bread), (butter), sandwich fillers – (ham), (cheese), lettuce tomatoes etc.

What you do:

Encourage each child to create their own masterpiece sandwich, using the fillings provided.



Obstacle Course

A fun way to explore the masterpiece that God has made (ourselves) is to dress up, as we think about our appearance and what that means to us and God.

You will need:

three or four of the following obstacle objects/something similar: hoop(s) to jump over/climb through, cones to dribble ball through or weave in and out of, bench to walk along, chair to crawl under, tunnel to crawl through

What you do:

Two teams. Create two identical obstacle courses that allow the children to race and be competitive. At the end of the course, they can get dressed up in the clothing that has been provided. The first one fully clothed is the winner.

Feely Bag

This is a bold thing to do, with eyes closed.

You will need:

something for a blindfold, e.g. scarf or (cotton) headband, some sensory items, e.g. (this could be anything that feels funny!) something with sequins on, dry pasta, feathers, stress balls (or similar), pom poms, Blu Tack, small zip lock bag of slime, seashell(s), sticks/leaves

What you do:

Place one item in a bag each, so you have multiple bags. Ask someone who is feeling brave and bold to put their hand in a bag and feel the item – see if they can guess what it is. Sometimes we need to be bold and can be surprised by the results.

This is a sung response prayer. After a few lines of prayer all can sing:

Be bold, be strong for the Lord your God is with you.

Set some actions to the words, some suggestions are:

Be bold – fists on hips and legs apart, standing tall

Be strong – show muscles

For the Lord – point to the sky and look up

Your God is with you – point to each other and self

Here is a link to the song for your reference : Be Bold, Be Strong (Song Actions), by Hope Kids

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9Vjvc-WdRI&list=RDK9Vjvc-WdRI&start_radio=1



Wondering questions

I wonder...

- how it feels to be God's masterpiece
- do you ever feel guided by God?
- how it makes you feel knowing that others too are fearfully and wonderfully made

Day Three

Bible Reading

I AM the salt of the earth; I AM the light of the world



Matthew 5:13-14

You are like salt and light

13 'You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its salty taste, it cannot be made salty again. It is good for nothing. It must be thrown out for people to walk on.

14 'You are the light that gives light to the world. A city that is built on a hill cannot be hidden.'

Bible video

The salt and the light
by Kids Point
<https://bit.ly/LIGHTsalt>

Arrival activity

Wisdom Quest Journal

Make booklet (folded A4 or stapled pages)

Decorate cover and fill it with words the children have discovered

Modern day parables

Sofia's Dream by Land Wilson & Sue Cornelison

Publisher: Little Pickle Press

Publication date: Dec. 2010

ISBN-10: 0982993811

ISBN-13: 978-0982993811

Be Kind by Pat Zietlow Miller & Jen Hill

Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books

Publication date: July 2020

ISBN-10: 1529041902

ISBN-13: 978-1529041903

Challenges

Mud Hunt



You will need:

paper with the individual words: *salt, of, the, earth* (laminated or covered in tape to keep them waterproof), pots or containers filled with soil (more than four), tarpaulins or newspaper to protect the floor (or do this activity outside), a sheet of clear acrylic (Perspex) inside a frame, such as a photo frame with the back removed, books to raise frame up on, or anything that can raise it from the table so that a light can be placed underneath to light it up, salt to pour on top of the glass

Task:

This task is completed by the children finding the words hidden in containers filled with dirt. Once found, they then decide which order the words go in and write them using their fingers into the salt that has been poured onto the frame (watch that no one eats the salt as it is very dangerous in large quantities). A light will then be shined from under the frame, highlighting the phrase.

What you do:

This activity could take place outside in an enclosed church garden, or inside. If this activity is taking place inside, place the containers on newspaper or tarpaulin to minimise mess. Have several containers: jam jars, pots, buckets etc with soil inside them. Inside some of the containers have the laminated words. The children are asked to locate the containers and then discover the words hidden in just four of the containers. When all the words have been found, the group decides what order they go in, writes the words into the salt and then uses a torch (or similar) to shine a light through the words.

Take it to the next level?

Create a treasure map for the children to follow around your chosen area, locating where the pots of soil are.



Salt dough lamps

You will need:

- one cup of salt
- two cups of plain flour
- food colouring
- one cup of water



For a basic guide, you create the dough two parts flour to one part salt and water

What you do:

Add to a bowl and mix well. If you need more flour or water, add as needed. You do not want very sticky dough.

Give each child a piece of dough, to roll into a ball and then flatten to create a lamp base. This can be done at the beginning of your session if you are baking it.

Bake the lamp: Place the shaped dough on a baking sheet and bake in a preheated oven at 200°F (93°C) for about 20-30 minutes until hard.

Cool and decorate: Allow the lamps to cool completely, then paint or decorate them as desired. If you are not baking the dough but leaving it to air dry, ask the children to decorate their lamps by pressing in sequins or adding glitter to the dough; they can even engrave patterns into the lamp.

Make sure they have a container to take it home. It will take about two days to completely dry out.

Recipe (cont.)

Continue microwaving at 50% power in 30-second intervals until the chocolate is melted and smooth. Add a few drops of your choice of food colouring to the melted chocolate.

Use the stem and leaves of the strawberry as a holder and dip the clean, dry strawberries in the melted chocolate. Try to cover as much of the strawberry as you can. Allow any excess chocolate to drip off.

Place the chocolate-covered strawberry on a lined parchment paper to set.

Once the chocolate has set, gently remove the stem and leaves by twisting them off.

Use a little dab of melted chocolate to attach the Mini Rolo to the top of the strawberry.

Use Strawberry laces to create the cord and attach it with melted chocolate. The bulb spacing on the plate is up to you.

Recipe



Edible lights

You will need:

- (strawberries), (white chocolate), food colouring (Mini Rolos) or similar, strawberry laces, parchment paper, paper plate.

What you do:

Wash your strawberries thoroughly and dry them as well as you can with a paper towel. Keep the tops (or stems) of the strawberries intact. Place the white chocolate melts in a bowl that is safe for the microwave. Microwave for one minute at 50% power and stir.

Stem

Salt Paint

You will need:

- a variety of type of salt,
- dark coloured card,
- hot water, bowls and
- paint brushes



What you do:

Add one tablespoon of table salt to a small bowl. Add three tablespoons of hot water to the bowl. (An adult should boil water in a kettle and pour in three tablespoons to dissolve the salt.)

Mix the salt in the bowl until the majority of the salt has dissolved.

Use a paintbrush to paint whatever you like! You may want to do two or three coats. You can use a hair dryer to help the picture dry, or wait overnight to see what happens.

Games



Relay the earth

You will need:

earth, cups

What you do:

At one end of a room create two lines. Next to the line needs to be a table with a bowl of earth in it and some empty cups. At the other end of the room needs to be a table with an empty bowl. The goal is to transfer the earth from one bowl to the other the quickest. The person at the front of the line takes a cup, fills it with earth, carefully crosses to the other side of the room and empties it into the empty bowl. They run and join the back of the line. The next person goes, and so on. If you have a very small group you could do this in one team and time yourselves. Then do it again and see if you can get quicker.

Light

You will need:

torch, space to play that can be darkened if possible

What you do:

The aim of the game is to be caught *in* the light as opposed to be caught *out* by the light. The person with the torch moves the light around the room. If you get caught in the light you get a point, how many times can you get caught in the light?



I wonder...

- what food you add salt to, and why
- what crisps would taste like without salt
- how you can be like salt to your family and friends
- where in the world right now needs God's salt and light

Prayers

Salt prayers

You will need:

bowl of water, table salt, calming music



What you do:

Play some calming music and use this as a response prayer. Salt can be dangerous for children, so a leader needs to be in charge of the salt bottle. Pour some into your hand and then allow each child to take a pinch of salt and drop it into the water.

Each time the child could say something like, 'Dear God, help us tell others about you. Amen.'

Pray for God to show the children how they can bring God's flavour (salt) into the world (water). The salt will spread out and 'reach' all areas of the bowl. Together, united – we are the salt of the world and God can use each one of us to add to the growth of God's people. This is a time of reflection on what God wants from us.

Wondering questions

Day Four

Bible Reading

I AM called to bear fruit; I AM part of God's family

John 15:16

You did not choose me; I chose you. And I gave you this work, to go and produce fruit. I want you to produce fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you anything you ask for in my name.

Ephesians 2:19

So now you non-Jews are not visitors or strangers. Now you are citizens together with God's holy people. You belong to God's family.



Bible video

Vine and branches Bible story

by Lifekids

<https://bit.ly/FRUIT>

Arrival activity

Wisdom Stone Collection

Concept: Collect wisdom like treasure.

Provide five small stones for each child and encourage them to write on each stone one wise word e.g. Kindness, Patience, Truth, Listening, Courage.

By the end they have a bag of wisdom treasures.

Modern day parables

***One Good Deed* by Terri Fields & Deborah Melmon**

Publisher: Kar-Ben Publishing

Publication date: Aug. 2015

ISBN-10: 1467734799

ISBN-13: 978-1467734790

***The Smartest Giant in Town* by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler**

Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books

Publication date: April 2016

ISBN-10: 9781509812530

ISBN-13: 978-1509812530

Challenges

Food Relay Race



I AM called to bear fruit (John 15:16).

Reflection: Your life is meant to produce good works that reflect God's love and truth.

I AM part of God's family (Ephesians 2:19).

Reflection: You belong to the household of God, with brothers and sisters in Christ.

Ideally, two or more teams. The team that wins each round gets the word. Teams should then be encouraged to come together to put all the words together to figure out the sentence representing that we are all one family, despite differences (being on different teams). The words should not be given in order, so tasks should be mixed up.

Items needed:

grapes, apples, grapefruits or similar food-related item (orange), peach, spoons, string, chopsticks; items to make an obstacle course e.g. chairs, books, cones, tables etc.

Word: *Called*

Each child has an apple on a string; they take it in turns to run up and try to take a bite of their apple without using their hands. They get 20 seconds to get a bite before running back to their team for the next person to try. The first to successfully take a bite gets to take the word back to their team. (This game has a risk of choking, therefore ensure that either each child spits out the apple before running back to their group, or that they have completely chewed it first.)

Word: *To*

Each team has a grapefruit or similar that they need to dribble around a make-shift course. Place items in the way that they kick the fruit between or go around. The first to successfully complete the course gets to take the word back to their team.

Word: *Bear*

Each team gets a spoon and a peach and must complete a course with obstacles they need to manoeuvre around, with a halfway point where they need to tip the peach onto the spoon of another team member, who will complete the course. The first to successfully complete the course gets to take the word back to their team.

Word: *Fruits*

Each team will share a pair of chopsticks. Each person in the team needs to move five grapes from one plate to another. Once one team member has completed the task, the next team member will take over moving the five grapes back, and so on until all team members have completed the task. The first team to successfully complete the task wins the word.

The teams are now encouraged to work together to figure out the sentence; representing that we are all one family, despite our differences (being on different teams).



Pipe cleaner family tree

You will need:

assorted pipe cleaners (various colours), cardboard or a sturdy base for support, scissors, craft glue or tape; (optional for decoration) beads or buttons, markers or pens (for labelling), coloured card

What you do:

Start by cutting a piece of cardboard into a heart shape to make a base.
 Take a long pipe cleaner and twist it to form the trunk of the tree.
 From the trunk, cut and attach additional pipe cleaners to form branches. Bend them at different angles for a realistic look.
 Use different coloured pipe cleaners for each family member, by twisting or making a loop or even a spiral, and attach them to the branches.
 Optional:
 Add beads or buttons to the pipe cleaners for a unique touch. If you want to label each branch of your family, use some card as a label and attach it to your tree.
 Glue or tape your tree to the heart base to help it to stand.

Recipe (cont.)

Before the chocolate sets, add candy eyes and chocolate sprinkles as hair or eyebrows.
 Let the marshmallow set before removing from the wax paper.

Stem

Bath bombs

You will need:

Dry ingredients – two cups bicarbonate of soda, one cup cream of tartar, OPTIONAL biodegradable glitter
 Wet ingredients – one or two tablespoons of olive oil or coconut oil or plain oil, food colouring, water in a spray bottle (a cleaned-out cleaning bottle works well), silicon ice cube trays, large mixing bowl

What you do:

Mix your bicarbonate of soda, tartar, oil, and food colouring until you have a colour you are happy with. Keep giving it a good stir. It will still look quite powdery. Give it two to three sprays of water. It will start to sizzle and fizz a little as the bicarbonate of soda reacts with the water. But start mixing it and it will feel a little more 'solid', a bit like wet sand. When you can indent your spoon on the mixture and leave a nice shape behind without it crumbling too much you are ready to transfer to your ice cube trays. You can add a couple of sprays of water, if it isn't lumpy enough yet.
 Using a SPRAY bottle really is important, as this disperses the water evenly and avoids the bicarb just sizzling away in one part of your bowl!
 When taking the bath bombs home, remember to tell the children that they take one to two days to dry out and get harder.

Recipe



Marshmallow families

You will need:

(white chocolate – melted), food colouring, large marshmallows, candy eyes, (chocolate sprinkles)

What you do:

Melt the white chocolate and add in your chosen colouring.
 Stand marshmallows up on a piece of wax paper.
 Use a spoon to spoon the melted chocolate over the marshmallows so that the chocolate drips off the top of the mallow.

Games



Fruit Salad

You will need:

a large space, a leader to shout out, music



What you do:

Music is played. Everyone has to run around until the music stops. When the music stops, the leader shouts out a fruit. The children have to respond in a freeze frame as follows:

GRAPES – groups of children huddled together

BANANA – lie down

APPLE – as short as you can

PEARS – two children together

You can add more to this list if you wish.

The last one to respond is out of the game. The last two people standing are the winners.

Prayers

Love ourselves



You will need:

either a large mirror or small hand held ones

What you do:

Ensure everyone can see themselves in a mirror. Guide the children through a prayer.

Look at your eyes: see the beautiful colours they are. Thank you, God, for our eyes.

Look at your ears: what wonderful shapes they are. Thank you, God, for our ears.

Look at your mouths, your teeth, your tongue: what wonderful sounds they make. Thank you, God, for our wonderful mouths.

And so on... You might also want to leave a period of silence so the children can look at themselves for a while and think of how they are made in God's image.

Say 'Amen' together at the end.

Wondering questions



I wonder...

- which fruit you might be and how that might help others see God's love
- how we treat friends and strangers like brothers and sisters
- what makes God's family special

Day Five

Bible Reading

I AM loved unconditionally; I AM complete in Christ



Romans 8:38-39

Yes, I am sure that nothing can separate us from the love God has for us. Not death, not life, not angels, not ruling spirits, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us, nothing below us, or anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Colossians 2:10

And in him you have a full and true life. He is ruler over all rulers and powers.

Bible video

Jesus loves everyone
by Crossroads kids
<https://bit.ly/JesusLoveS>

Arrival activity

Wisdom Journey Scroll

Each child creates a long scroll that fills up with wise words from over the week.

Decorate the scroll (tea-stained paper or kraft paper looks ancient!)

Add the 'wise word' or Bible verses from each day

Draw symbols or pictures. Roll the scroll up with ribbon or string and seal with a sticker or 'wisdom stamp'

Modern day parables

No Matter What by Debi Gliori

Publisher: Bloomsbury Children's Books

Publication date: Jan. 2024

ISBN-10: 1526665158

ISBN-13: 978-1526665157

Oh, The Places You'll Go! by Dr. Seuss

Publisher: Harper Collins Children's Books

Publication date: April 2020

ISBN-10: 9780007413577

ISBN-13: 978-0007413577

Code Breaker



You will need:

electronic device linked to the internet, Bible, four boxes that can be locked (this could be any box with a chain around it or a lockable box), two x four-digit numerical locks, one x five-disk WordLock, model PL-004 (or similar with the correct letters to spell BREAD).
'Keeper' – an adult identified by a badge (or not, depending on how tricky you want it to be) who will confirm if the answer to Clue sheet 4 is correct.

Clue sheet 1

On the card: 'I AM loved unconditionally' (Romans 8:38-39)
Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God, and his love sustains us.
Clue: To find the next wise words, use chapter and verse.
First lock box answer: 0838

Clue sheet 2

On the card: John 6:35 – It was declared by Jesus, 'I am the...'
Clue: His wise words feed your soul
Let the children help you reach your next goal
'I am the _____ of life'
Second lock box answer: BREAD

Clue sheet 3

On the card: 'I am the light,' Jesus said
Clue: Seek John 8 to be led
Find chapter and verse to unlock what's ahead
Third lock box answer: 0812

Clue sheet 4

On the card: On our journey we've established Jesus is our bread of life and his light leads the way
Clue: Now you seek the path that sets you free, John fourteen holds the key:
'the way, the... and the life'
Share the good news with the keeper to move ahead
Fourth lock box answer: TRUTH

Final Sheet

On the card: I am complete in Christ, and in Jesus you are made whole
Search the Bible for our final message
Colossians 2:10 will explain it all

Clues to be printed:

Clue 1:

To find the next wise words, use chapter and verse.

Clue 2:

His wise words feed your soul
Let them help you reach your next goal

Clue 3:

"I am the light," Jesus said
Seek John 8 to be led
Find chapter and verse to unlock what's ahead.

Clue 4:

Now you seek the path that sets you free, John fourteen holds the key:
"the way, the... and the life"
Share the good news with the keeper to move ahead.

Card 1:

I AM loved unconditionally (Romans 8:38-39)

Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God, and His love sustains us.

Card 2:

I AM loved John 6:35, it was declared by Jesus "I am the..."

Note: there is no card for Clue 3, electronic devices will be used to identify the Bible verse

Card 4:

On our journey we've established Jesus is our bread of life and his light leads the way

Card 5:

I am complete in Christ, and in Jesus you are made whole
Search the Bible for our final message
Colossians 2:10 will explain it all

Craft



Pendulum painted hearts

You will need:

a paper cup, string, paint, paper

What you do:

Punch two holes either side of the rim of the cup and thread some string through them, then tie the ends of the string together to create a handle for the cup.

Make a small hole in the bottom of the cup to allow the paint to drip through.

Position some paper cut into heart shapes on the floor.

Put some paint into your pendulum and swing it to create a pattern on your hearts.

Recipe

Strawberry heart kebabs

You will need:

(strawberries), bananas, grapes or any other fruit you wish to add; wooden skewers



What you do:

Cut the strawberries in half. Cut a small V-shape in the stem-end of the strawberry.

This will create a heart shape.

Put a strawberry on the skewer and then alternate the other fruits and the strawberries to create your kebab.

Wondering questions



I wonder...

- is there anything that could stop God loving you?
- what it means to be complete
- how you feel that you are enough, just as you are

Stem

Magic milk

You will need:

a cup of whole milk, food colouring, washing up liquid, a plate.

What you do:

Pour a glass of milk onto a wide shallow plate. Add drops of food colouring around the plate, you can make it in a pattern. Place a little washing up liquid (you'll only need a drop) in the middle of the plate. Watch what happens.

Without food colouring, we wouldn't be able to see this movement. By adding in some colour, we can see how the molecules in the milk move around, causing tiny little currents for the food colouring to follow.



Human Knot



We are complete and whole in Jesus. Even when things are tangled in life, we are wholly loved and accepted by God.

This game needs to be played with more than two people.

It can be played in teams and in your own timing.

Stand in a circle, reach in; everyone is to grab the hands of two different people across from them (not neighbours) to form a tangled knot. The goal is to untangle into a circle without breaking hand contact, using teamwork and communication. The game ends when the knot is untangled. This can be done in the children's own time or within a time limit, to make it more fun and competitive.

Minute to win it!

You will need:

two bowls per team, pair of tweezers per team
items to move from one bowl to the next, such as: pom poms, dried peas, pasta, cut pieces of tissue paper

What you do:

Children can be in teams (and take turns) or this can be a chosen task for all to watch/cheer their team mates on. Children need to move the items from the full bowl to an empty one using only tweezers. This needs to be done within a 60 second time limit.

You are loved

This prayer time is in the style of a dance.

Stand in a circle (an even number works best). Play some music, turn to face a partner, take their opposite hand so your right hand takes their right hand and dance past each other. Keep doing this, passing by each person until the music stops. When it does, say to the person, 'God loves you unconditionally'. The music starts up and the dance continues.

Older children who may not be keen to join with this prayer could use this alternative prayer time.



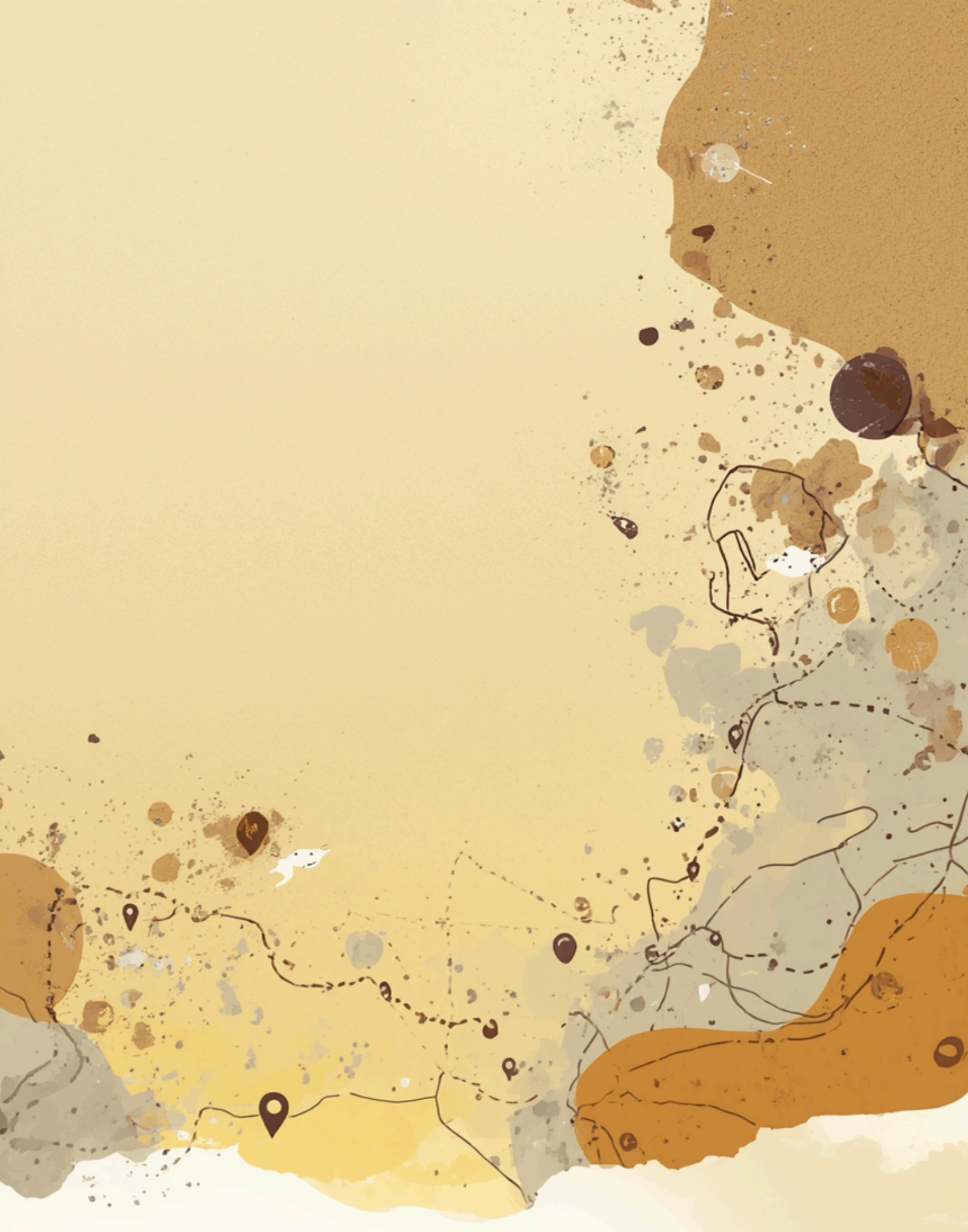
Forgiveness

You will need:

bits of paper, pens, bin

What you do:

Give everyone time to think of things they want to say sorry to God for. You may need to give examples. Encourage everyone to write or draw these things onto a piece of paper. Just holding the paper as you think of the thing you want to say sorry for would work too. When all are ready, together, screw up the paper to show we have been forgiven by God and throw screwed-up sheets into a waste paper basket (recycle them after) to show we can leave them behind and start again. Shout 'Amen!' when the paper reaches the waste paper basket.





WISDOM QUEST

Under-fives appendices

The United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
020 7916 8637 www.urc.org.uk

Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth

Visit our YouTube channel: URC Children's and Youth Work: www.bit.ly/CYWyoutube

Sign up to our bi-monthly newsletter here: www.bit.ly/CYWnewsletter

This appendix includes materials for 0-5s and can be used alongside the activities in the holiday club resource or independently. Some of the activities in the main body of *Wisdom Quest* will be easy to adapt for little ones, but this appendix includes some extra suggestions which are tailor made for this age group.



TUFF TRAYS

Sensory play is important in stimulating the five senses, but also allows children to explore and be creative. This can be by using bags filled with different textures, or a variety of shapes cut out of different textures, or playing with objects which smell or taste. This can be something they touch, or smell, something they put on, or something that makes sounds. Tuff trays are a great way to contain sensory bases. The accessibility variations of them also allow babies and young children to sit in them and be immersed with the sensory elements. Materials that are good to be used in tuff trays:

- edible sand can be made from a variety of foods – oats, Cheerios, crackers – anything that is ‘sand coloured’ blitzed down in a blender
- rice, pasta
- soapy water
- mud
- shredded paper

MODERN PARABLES

This is a story that a child might have on their bookshelf at home or in toddlers/playgroup/nursery which ties in with the theme for the day. There are some questions to help you link to the theme too.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

This is a fun way of developing the theme. Use the same box each time (a bag would work equally well).

As you get the box out, sing (to the tune of ‘The Farmer’s In His Den’) ‘What’s in the box, what’s in the box? Let’s see, let’s see, what’s in the box.’ Then draw the items out one at a time and let the children explore them while you chat with them about the objects and their links to the story or theme.

DAY ONE

(I am created in God's image/I am a child of God)
You are a reflection of god's creative beauty and his nature/You are a beloved member of God's family through faith.



MODERN PARABLE

This book explores and celebrates all the different types of people that are all made in God's image.

All Kinds of People written by Sheri Safran & Emma Damon

Published by Tango Books in May 1995

ISBN-10 1857070674

I wonder what you like best about how you have been made

SENSORY PLAY

Use some playdough to create people. Then have a little showcase of what everyone has made. If you have Mr Potato Head or similar with body parts these could be provided too.

GAMES

If you have the game Misfits, play this or create your own version: print and cut out a few people such as a clown, police officer, teacher, doctor, rubbish collector, cleaner, and cut them in half and let the children create new people using each half.

CREATIVE

Using some sweets or fruit and either (biscuits) or (cake), create an edible person.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

- Mirrors to look in and explore own face
- Lots of different types of play people so that you can discuss how we are all different but God loves us all just as we are
- Cameras (pretend or, even better, Polaroid) to take pictures of each other
- Photos of the children or of the leaders – have fun looking at them and talking about how our bodies change as we grow but we stay the same inside
- Dressing up stuff to explore how we can be anything we want in this world
- Skin-coloured crayons and paper to encourage mark making and to enable drawings of each other to take place

PRAYER

Encourage everyone to point to bits of body as a leader reads the following prayer.

Thank you God for my hands
Thank you God for my eyes
Thank you God for my ears
Thank you God for my tongue
Keep adding as you see fit and end with:
Thank you that I am a child of God.
Amen

Be aware of those children who may have limited use of certain body parts.

TUFF TRAY

Provide some pasta/rice/twigs/leaves to make people. You may find it useful to have laminated paper with an outline of a body shape on it (it's good practice to have the shape as gender neutral as possible) for the children to fill with the items.

DAY TWO

(I am fearlessly and bold in Christ/I am God's masterpiece) You can be bold and courageous because of your hope in Christ/You are God's handiwork, created with intention and purpose.



MODERN PARABLE

This is Me! celebrates our differences and is perfect for every child and every family. It's a beautiful, heartfelt and positive story.

***This is Me!* written by Claire Taylor & George Webster,
and illustrated by Tim Budgen**

Published by Scholastic in Mar. 2023

ISBN-10: 0702319147

I wonder how you are bold and fearless

SENSORY PLAY

Hide some things in the sand and put hands in and find them. Some of the things could feel a bit spiky and rough. Can the children be brave enough to find them? You could use a bag and hide the things in there for the child to reach into.

GAMES

Have fun encouraging everyone to use their body and face to recreate an emotion – include fearless and bold.

CREATIVE

Using paint or skin-coloured crayons, encourage the children to draw/paint each other.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

- Provide some superheroes to play with. Talk about how they have to be bold
- Self-portraits of famous people or people from long ago and talk about what's similar and what's different, but all are masterpieces
- Heart and rainbow and a feather (God's masterpieces)

PRAYER

(You could add actions or noise effects to any of the words)

I am bold

I am brave

I am God's child

Amen

TUFF TRAY

Lego for the children to each build their own masterpiece.

DAY THREE

(I am the salt of the earth/I am the light of the world)
You bring God's flavour and preservation to a needy
world/You shine with the light of Christ, illuminating
the darkness around you.



MODERN PARABLE

My Bright Shining Star is a touching story about finding hope in the toughest places.

***My Bright Shining Star* written by Fatima Whitbread & Rhian Wright**

Published by words & pictures in Oct. 2024

ISBN-10: 0711296235

I wonder how you shine

SENSORY PLAY

Different foods to taste and see.

Check allergies, dietary requirements
when providing food.

GAMES

Lay a few, maybe four or five, different types of
light on a tray.

Give everyone time to see what is there. Then, so
they can't see, remove one item. Can the children
guess which is missing?

Play a few times.

CREATIVE

Plant some seeds in some soil. Decorate a
label to go on the pot.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX

- Different sorts of lights, torches, LED candles, light switch in the room, phone torch
- Play food
- Salt and pepper shakers (either empty or with flour in – do not provide salt because, in large quantities, this is dangerous for children)

PRAYER

Give each child an LED light or torch. Go round the room shining the light into dark places and say, 'Light up the dark, God. Amen'

TUFF TRAY

Have some items from nature to explore and use.

DAY FOUR

(I am called to bear fruit/I am part of God's family)
You belong to the household of God, with brothers
and sisters in Christ/Your life is meant to produce
good works that reflect God's love and truth.



MODERN PARABLE

A lift-the-flap book exploring homes from around the world
– discover diverse cultures and ways of living.

***A place called home* written by Kate Baker & Rebecca Green**

Published by Lonely Planet Kids in July 2020

ISBN-10: 178868933X

I wonder where you live and who lives with you

SENSORY PLAY

Having lots of (fruit) to feel, taste, smell
and to look at. Explore the textures and
tastes. I wonder what is good about fruit?
I wonder what is good about God?

GAMES

Match up pairs, either using two-piece puzzles or
some cards with pictures on. Examples could be
matching a parent animal with a baby animal or
pairing same colours or shapes together.

CREATIVE

This could get messy, so you may want to provide aprons. Using
fruit cut in half and plates with paint on create some fruit pictures.
You may want to experiment with fruit beforehand to ensure it
prints. Apple may work better than kiwi, for instance.
Check for any known allergies beforehand.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

- Provide some play fruit and play knives to have fun with
- Toys which get bigger and longer such as chain link toys or Lego, to explore the idea of family
- Houses and people to explore creating households of people
- Farm animals and different sections to group the different families into

PRAYER

Share some (fruit) with each other and say,
'You are God's good fruit.' Amen

TUFF TRAY

Provide play fruit that can be cut up with a play knife. I wonder what happens if you mix the fruit up.

DAY FIVE

**(I am loved unconditionally/I am complete in Christ)
– nothing can ever separate you from the love of
God/In Jesus, you lack nothing. He makes you
whole.**



MODERN PARABLE

This picture book is all about love and kindness.

***Love: with love we can do anything*, illustrated by Sophie Cashell & Axel Scheffler**

Published by Alison Green Books in Jan. 2026

ISBN-10: 0702343846

I wonder how you show someone you love them

SENSORY PLAY

Dried or synthetic flower petals, or make some. Use them to create flowers. We are all part of God's family and together we complete it.

GAMES

Draw a large Jesus and cut into as many pieces as there are children. Hide the pieces around the room. Everyone looks for one piece and then together recreate and complete Jesus.

CREATIVE

Make something out of construction toys or junk modelling.
Go round saying something nice about each other's – this is what it is like to be unconditional and loving towards a friend.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

- Pizza or things in sections which make up one whole
- Go round the group saying something about yourself
- Hearts to talk about love

PRAYER

Make some heart bunting making marks on each piece. Children could draw themselves too. The leader could add the words, 'God always loves me' as the prayer and all shout 'Amen!' together. Hang the bunting up.

TUFF TRAY

Provide some two, four, six-piece puzzles and/or inset puzzles.