



Ezra and Nehemiah

Welcome (Parents and Carers asked to stay until after the Pilots Prayer)

Welcome back to Friends on Faith Adventures. We are looking forward to going on a journey and nobody knows where we will end up. All we know is we have got our crate filled with adventure and an open path ahead. So, hold on tight and enjoy the ride!!

Let's hear about FOFA bear and FOFA cam's adventures this week and how everyone got on with the Walking the Way challenge. (Encourage everyone, including parents and carers, to join in.)

The Pilots Prayer

Lord help us to be:

Prepared for adventure

In all we do.

Loving and caring,

Open to others

Together as one community

Sharing the love of Jesus on our way.

Amen

Fun Together

Game: Jenga.

What you need:

- A simple game of Jenga (Could use a giant game).

Play Jenga (build a tower where each layer is made of three bricks and each alternate layer is turned 90 degrees. Players take it in turns to try to remove a brick and use it to build the tower higher, without the tower toppling over).

You could make it even more fun by writing consequences on a few bricks. When the brick is pulled out the group follow the instructions. Instructions can include things related to the story such as, In Exile - miss a go, knock the tower over and start the game again, have another go.



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Game: Breakout dodgeball.

You will need:

- Three benches
- A large soft ball

A normal game of dodgeball, there is a bench in the middle and a bench behind each team. If you are hit with the ball you go and stand in exile on the other team's bench. Then the players still 'in' can throw the ball to their team members on the exile bench, if they catch it they are back in the game. The other team can try to block the balls.

Game: Building Buddies.

You will need:

- Identical sets of lego for each child in a pair

Children sit in pairs, back to back. Give each child an identical set of assorted coloured Lego bricks. The task is to build an identical shape. One child builds first, then tells the other child which brick to put where. Once complete, they turn around to see if the creations are the same; if not, they could dismantle and try building again.

Today's theme is if we trust God when things are tough, God will bring us through them and help us do amazing things for him

The Big Story Ezra and Nehemiah rebuild the Temple – Selections from book of Ezra and book of Nehemiah

You will need:

- A pile of boxes or bricks to build with
- A small money bag with gold or silver coins
- Crown
- Cloak for a king



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Gather the group around a pile of boxes or bricks (The bigger the better, or small bricks on a table), Ask the group to build a temple. Stand back and admire your creation.

This is the temple in Jerusalem. It is God's house.

The place where God's people come to meet with him.

It is a sacred place.

(As you speak, encourage the group to knock the temple down)

It was destroyed in a battle; the gold and silver were stolen, *(put the gold and silver in a bag)* and God's people were sent away to live in exile in another country. *(move the group to the other end of the room)*

God's people would often think about the temple in Jerusalem and wish to go back and put things right.

70 years have passed.

A new King is on the throne – His name is Zerubbabel *(Dress someone as the king)*

He decides to set God's people free to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple

He gave them the gold and silver that had been stolen *(give the group the bag of Gold and silver)*

Not everyone returned, but many of God's people went back *(Walk the group back to Jerusalem)*

They began to rebuild the temple *(Build the temple again)*

It was not a quick job, it took many more years

A prophet called Nehemiah and a priest called Ezra were the people who encouraged God's people to never give up, but to do the thing that God had asked them to do, and to finish it

He said, **Rise up, have faith and do it** *(this could be on a flag that you place on the temple)*

I wonder what the people felt when they returned to Jerusalem after the temple had been destroyed.

Creative Adventure

Pocket Pebble.

You will need:



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- Small smooth pebbles
- Paints or felt pens

Decorate a small pebble with paints or pens to remind you of God's love for you wherever you are.

Cooking up a temple.

You will need:

- Thin biscuits
- Twiglets
- Wafers
- Icing
- Cake decorations

Using thin biscuits, twiglets, wafers, icing and decorations; build a grand temple. The group will be frustrated each time their walls fall down or the roof falls in (It is a tricky activity) be encouraging and keep encouraging them to not give, but to keep rebuilding.

Junk modelling temple.

You will need:

- Boxes and clean junk
- Scissors
- Sellotape
- Possibly PVA glue

Time to get creative either individually or as a large group. Using boxes and other clean junk build a temple. Perhaps the group could build one large enough for us all to sit in.

Wondering questions to use during creative time:

I wonder why it was important to build a house for God?

I wonder what is it that You need to do, that you are putting off or finding difficult?

I wonder why you can do to encourage others to not give up, and to finish what they have started?



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The Adventure Map

Explain the Adventure Map and how a lot of the books were written hundreds and thousands of years before Jesus came to Earth. However, a lot of the stories in the Bible before the birth of Jesus, talk of his coming and set out how God wants us to live our lives.

Take the young people to the Adventure Map that you have created on the wall. Get the children to find where on the Map today's story came from. Choose one or some of the things created by the children to be photographed and attach this to the wall to create a visual reminder of where the story came from and your adventure together. The aim is that in a year you will have lots of reminders of the stories and where in the Bible they come from. Use a piece of string or ribbon to connect the photo of the craft work to the book of the Bible.

Walking the Way

This is a time to invite the parents and carers back in to share what the children have been up to during the session. They will also be here to hear about the Walking the Way challenge and the tasks (should they choose to accept them) that the children (and parents) are about to undertake.

For the Younger: FOFA the bear

This is FOFA. FOFA likes nothing more than to go on an adventure; FOFA is a little more adventurous than me. FOFA believes that faith is a journey and that's why FOFA would love to take you on a journey with him and walk the way of God in our everyday lives. Each session FOFA would like to go home with one of you and add to FOFA's scrapbook of things you do together. FOFA doesn't mind if you draw a picture of what you have done, take a photograph or just write a story about it. FOFA also doesn't mind if you just come and tell the rest of us what you got up to together. But because FOFA's memory isn't very good as FOFA's brains are made of stuffing, it would be better to save the memories in the book if you can. At the end of our time together we can always remember the great adventures we have been on together with FOFA and hopefully you will walk a little closer with God.

For the Older: FOFA cam

This camera is your window on the world. You have one shot at this, so choose carefully. You will be given a very precious piece of equipment – a FOFA cam. You have one photo to take with the camera, that records one thing – a way you have met the challenge. If there are other people in the photo, please ask their permission first and explain this photo will be put on display here. Bring back the



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camera and your photo next time to share your moment - and remember you only have ONE shot at this!

Every time we will choose someone to take FOFA bear and someone to take FOFA cam to help them with the challenge – but we can all have a go at the challenge!

Our Walking the Way Challenge this time is: Find something small enough to fit in your pocket that will help you remember that God loves you and has great plans for you. Hold it in your hand whenever you are worried or nervous or sad.

Adventurers Go!

So, today's story was about the people whom God chose to rebuild his temple which had been destroyed during the bad times.

Prayers (choose one/both)

Spoken Prayer Dear God, we are sorry for the times when the things we do spoil your creation. Help us to make things better instead of worse, to build things up instead of breaking them down, to encourage others instead of making them feel bad about themselves. Keep on leading us back to your way. Thank you for being there during the tough times and the good times and always being by our side. **Amen**

Active Prayer Hold your prayer stone and move it back and forth between your hands as you ask God to be with you everywhere you go. Feel every bit of the surface, the rough and the smooth and ask God to be with you in the easy times and the difficult times. Move the stone between your fingers and ask God to be with all those you love or who need God's help.

Amen

End Prayer Every Session: Altogether

We are Friends on Faith Adventures, travelling together with God.

Adventurers go! Amen



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What you need for this session

Games:

- A simple game of Jenga (Could use a giant game).
- Three benches
- A large soft ball
- Identical sets of lego for each child in a pair

Story:

- A pile of boxes or bricks to build with
- A small money bag with gold or silver coins
- Crown
- Cloak for a king

Craft:

- Small smooth pebbles
- Paints or felt pens
- Thin biscuits
- Twiglets
- Wafers
- Icing
- Cake decorations
- Aprons (optional)
- Boxes and clean junk
- Scissors
- Sellotape
- Possibly PVA glue



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Location	Possible hazard	Action required	Action taken	Signature
Craft	Damage to clothing from materials used in craft	Aprons should be offered to the children and adults	Supervision by responsible adult	
	Allergic reaction to ingredients	Check allergies and dietary requirements from consent forms, and check ingredients of items used in cooking activity. Replace any unsuitable foodstuffs with appropriate alternatives	Supervision by responsible adult	