

Welcome to Families on Faith Adventures @ Home!

This resource has been put together for you by the United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work team and the synod CYDOs and their equivalents.

We hope you will enjoy sharing a time of faith and fellowship together as a family through these stories, games, activities and prayers. They are designed as a 'pick and mix' of ways to experience God's message through the Bible, exploring what it means to you and express that in words and action. They are not linked to the lectionary but can be used in any order as we explore all the different parts of the Bible.

The Walking the Way challenges are one way of continuing our walk with Jesus throughout the week.

These ideas are designed to be intergenerational - maybe even to be shared with members of the family you can't see now except via the internet.

The resources are based on our non-uniformed children's groups, Friends on Faith Adventures and Pilots, but have been modified to make them suitable for all families at home.

*These activities are planned to be used together as a family and under adult supervision. Please be aware of your family's ages and abilities as some activities may need more adult support than others. **Stay safe and have fun!***

This week's Bible story is:

God Is...

1 Kings 18 verses 20-39



With many varieties of activities and things to do to help explore the theme. Look out for this 'hands on' symbol.

Get to know your Bible

The Bible is like a library made up of 66 books written by many different people over many years.

The Old Testament books were written before Jesus was born. They are the holy stories he would have grown up hearing and reading. There are 39 of these.

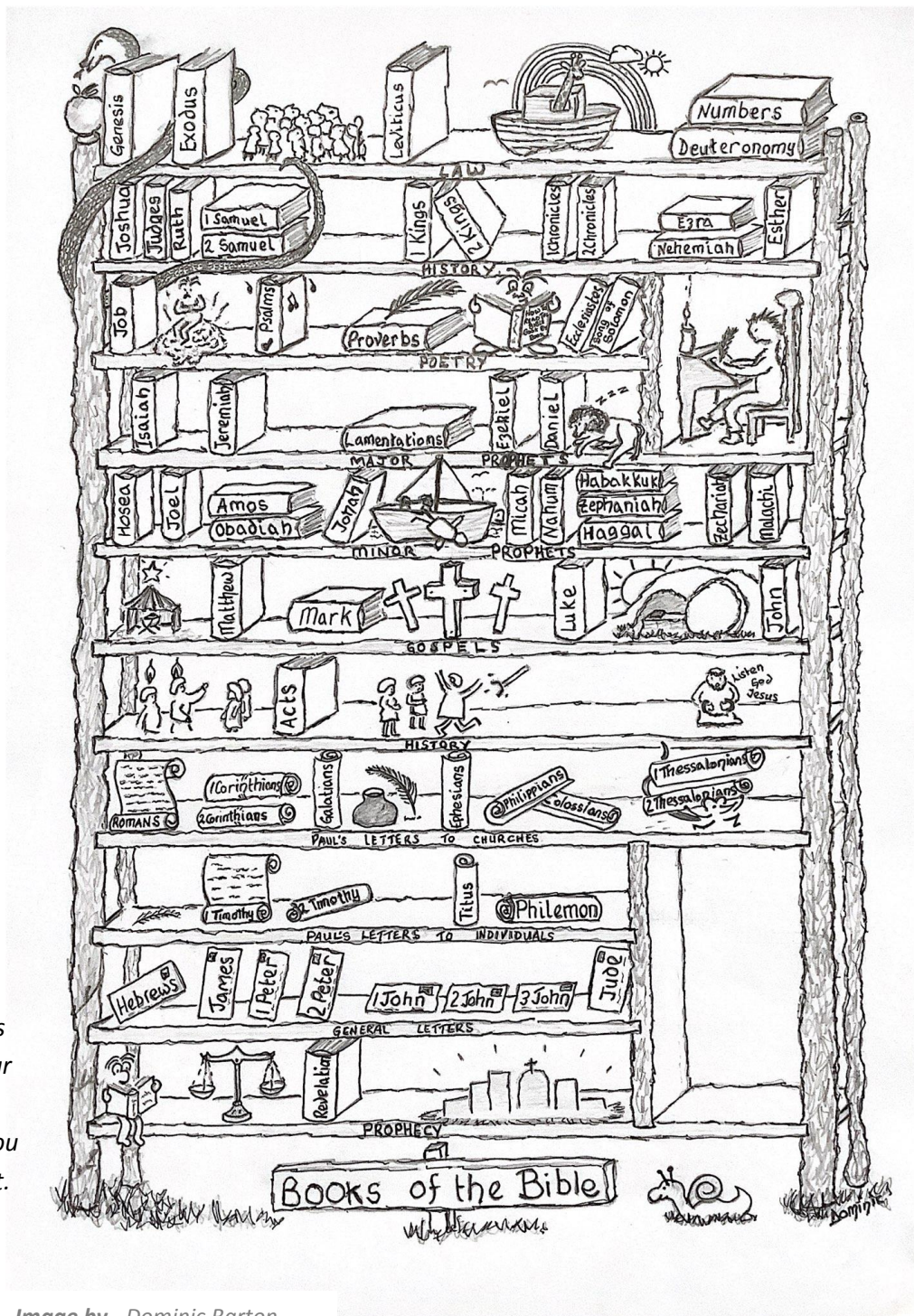
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



Can you find and colour the book on the bookshelf that this week's story is from?

If you have a Bible, see if you can find the story in there.

You could print this out once and colour each new book on the bookshelf as you read stories from it.



Bible context – 1 Kings

The first book of Kings (known as 1 Kings) was written around 550 years BCE. We are not sure who wrote it, it may have been many authors, but it was probably written in Babylon during the great exile. The book continues the story from the book of Samuel and contains the stories of a prophet named Elijah.

The story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal encourages us to consider who we believe God is.

The Story – 1 Kings 18 v 20 - 39 (Adapted from The Common English Bible)

King Ahab sent the message to all the Israelites. He gathered the prophets at Mount Carmel. Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you hobble back and forth between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow God. If Baal is God, follow Baal." The people gave no answer. Elijah said to the people, "I am the last of the LORD's prophets, but Baal's prophets' number four hundred fifty. Give us two bulls. Let Baal's prophets choose one. Let them prepare it and set it on the wood, but don't add fire. I'll prepare the other bull, put it on the wood, but won't add fire. Then all of you will call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers with fire—that's the real God!" All the people answered, "That's an excellent idea."

So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of these bulls. Prepare it first since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but don't add fire." So they took one of the bulls that had been brought to them. They prepared it and called on Baal's name from morning to midday. They said, "Great Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound or answer. They performed a hopping dance around the altar that had been set up. Around noon, Elijah started making fun of them: "Shout louder! Certainly, he's a god! Perhaps he is lost in thought or wandering or traveling somewhere. Or maybe he is asleep and must wake up!" So the prophets of Baal cried with a louder voice. As noon passed they went crazy with their rituals until it was time for the evening offering. Still there was no sound or answer, no response whatsoever.

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here!" All the people came close, and he repaired the LORD's altar that had been damaged. Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. He built the stones into an altar in the LORD's name, and he dug a trench around the altar big enough to hold lots of dry grain. He put the wood in order, prepared the bull, and placed it on the wood. "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the sacrifice and on the wood," he commanded. "Do it a second time!" he said. So they did it a second time. "Do it a third time!" And so they did it a third time. The water flowed around the altar, and even the trench filled with water. At the time of the evening offering, the prophet Elijah drew near and prayed: "LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant. I have done all these things at your instructions. Answer me, LORD! Answer me so that this people will know that you, LORD, are the real God and that you can change their hearts." Then the LORD's fire fell; it consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up the water in the trench!

All the people saw this and fell on their knees. "The LORD is the real God! The LORD is the real God!" they shouted.

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Elijah and the prophets of Baal by Kids church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEEw0adshpM>

Animation by Rene Pfitzner (suitable for older children)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xiyljA9qz0>

Elijah's whole story Cartoon by Crossroads Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5qAXoerjw>

Dance and Sing

God is love by Becky and Nick Drake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRUXRQ5du90>

Fire fall down by Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZkJphhrWgq>

One True God by Lifetree Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6mNvwjFYyQ>

My God is number one by PBC Creations <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kz-x7dMUeX8>

He is God by CEF international <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8nA0zVODPs>

Dinner Table Chat Activities

This week in the style of the story, why not have some of your chat time around a BBQ or a fire pit. It could even be a homemade indoor version if you can't be outside.

God is.....

Spend some time thinking together about who God is. How would you finish the sentence? Can you do it using just one word? We can find some answers to the question in the Bible but we can also finish the sentence using our own experiences and understanding about God.

You might like to have small cards with God is..... written on them (Similar to the old Love is.... Cartoons) that each person can complete one each day, so you end up with a collection by the end of the week. Who do you say God is today?



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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

This is a good time of year to be exploring this story as we see our communities celebrating Hallowe'en and possibly holding their bonfire parties. The story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal helps us to explore what we celebrate and worship and what we chose not to. The materials in this pack might also offer your family the opportunity to discuss and explore together what your response is to festivals such as Hallowe'en. Think about why this can be a difficult time for some families who don't want to participate. Each family has to make their own choices about things like Trick or Treat and Hallowe'en parties, and about bonfire night. What might be the good things about these events and what might be considered not so good. Your local churches might be offering some alternatives that you can take part in and here are a few others to consider:

Download your free Light Party Pack from Scripture Union

<https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/resource/light-party-pack-2020-download>

The Scripture Union Light Party Pack contains everything you need to share the Light of Jesus. This pack holds some of the best Light Party activities from previous years, with advice on how they can be adapted and reworked so that you can use them at a physically distanced gathering, online or in public spaces.

Here's a site where people hosting light parties can advertise

<https://www.lightparty.org/united-kingdom>

A quick search on YouTube will link you to a whole load of light party videos:

https://www.youtube.com/results?sp=mAEB&search_query=light+party+2020

Retell the story using Drama

This story is a fabulous opportunity to retell it using drama. Rather than provide you with a script, we want you to have some fun. Read the story in different versions, either in different Bibles if you have them, or on YouTube, then off you go. Dress up as the King, Queen, Prophets of Baal, and Elijah. Make instruments to bang and wave as the prophets of Baal. Build two alters outside using natural resources or build them inside using cushions and boxes. Make up a fabulous dance and chants to perform around the alter as the prophets of Baal. Try to out-perform each other around your altars. Make it loud and fun as you retell the story. Bringing it to an end, bowing down in worship as you realise that God is the only God.

Smack Down Challenges

Play with the themes of the story by challenging each other to different smackdown challenges. Who will be the best in an arm wrestling match? Who can perform the best lip sync to a song? Who can bake the best cake? Who can make the best cup of tea? Who can run the fastest? You could keep a chart showing who was the best at each one. Was it who you predicted it would be? Note to Adults: don't let them win on purpose but do consider opportunities that the children can excel at.

What's in the box?



What treasures can you find to put in the box for your little ones to explore?

Perhaps older children could help find the things.



Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.

This week's Bible story is:

God Is...

1 Kings 18 verses 20-39



Tissue paper or fabric in the colour of flames

Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



Building blocks or bricks



Toy clock or unbreakable watch



Twigs



A tray of sand to play/build in

Please be aware of the risk of these being put into mouths, eyes, noses or ears. Please supervise small children!

Pray Together

God is... A Whisper

After Elijah had a great victory he ran away and, after 40 days in the desert, he hid in a cave on Horeb. God spoke to Elijah, not in the strong wind or the earthquake, but in a small whisper. God is at work all around us even if we don't see it. God is in the big things but also in the very small: even in a whisper, as Elijah discovered.



Find some leaves and leave them to dry on a piece of kitchen paper.

Take some leaves and hold them in your hand, feeling how fragile and delicate they are. Know that God is in all things.

Use the leaves to create a picture on your window. Use some cling film or sticky back plastic and stick the four corners lightly to the window so that the light can shine through. Take it in turns to add a leaf and ask God to be with you on the small things as well as the big things.



As an alternative you could make your picture on a piece of paper.

Prayer Stones



Find some stones as flat as possible so that they will stack together. Write on words that help you think about God. For example:

God is rock
God is love
God is hope
God is joy
God is peace
God is our tears



Take the stones and find somewhere quiet to talk to God. As you place each stone, ask God to be with you. When you are sad, when you need strength,

when things seem impossible, when you are confused and angry, when you are happy. God was with Elijah no matter what he faced and God is with you.

Place the stones somewhere you will see them and where others can see them too.

Pray Together

Prayer Meditation God is...

Find a place to sit quietly and watch the meditation on "God is..." or you could lie on the floor and just listen to the words and music.

<https://youtu.be/JvAz7OxZJ-Q>

A Praise Prayer with Actions

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is great,

Clap your hands! (clap)

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is good,

Stamp your feet! (stamp)

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is true,

Jump for joy! (jump about)

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is love,

Smile and wave! (smile and wave at each other)

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is kind,

Talk to him! (hands together)

Who is God?

Who is God?

God is God,

Praise his name! (hands high in the air)

I wonder what is your favourite bit of this story and why?

I wonder what the prophets of Baal thought about Elijah and God after this story?

I wonder whether you've ever waited for God?



I wonder whether God has a sense of humour?

I wonder whether you would have the courage to share your faith in a visible way?



TO DO TOGETHER...

Pumpkin Carving

It's hard to think what God might look like and I have decided to try by carving a face into a pumpkin.



First, make sure your pumpkin is clean.

Now decide what you think God may look like. Maybe you could carve a face on one side and what God means to you on the other.

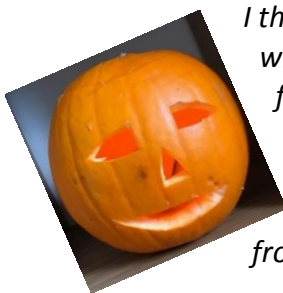
This might not be something you can rush but need time to think deeply about before you start.

As you scoop out your pumpkin, think about all the things of the story that were messy and how some of the people had moved away from God.



Any pumpkin seeds could be saved and given to the birds who are becoming hungry as berries disappear from our hedgerows. Think about how God brings good even out of messy situations. Can you make something tasty with the insides of the pumpkin for your family to eat too?

Now carve your pumpkin- it might help you to draw your face on the outside first and you may need a grown up to help you.



I think God is happy when we, just like Elijah, try to do our best and follow what God teaches us. I am also reminded that God brings love to all who follow him so I have carved a special heart symbol in the back of my pumpkin to help me remember this. I put a nightlight inside and as it shines it reminds me that, even as the evenings get darker, the love from God still shines out for us all. Hurray!





TO DO TOGETHER...

Altar Building

You will need:

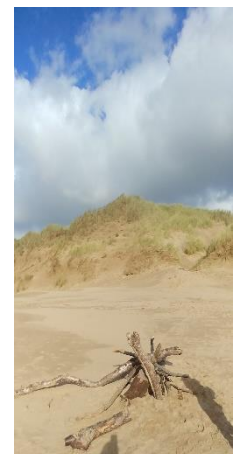
Anything you can use to build outdoors,
(or indoors if its wet, or you have no outside spaces to
go to)

Alternatively, you can play Jenga.

What you do:

Gather some things to create your altar, maybe dig a
ditch around it if you are able to.

Build it high as you can, then destroy it; tumbling it down so that it is completely flattened.
You could use your altar as part of acting out the story.





TO DO TOGETHER...

Cake Smash

You will need: Mini rolls or chocolate fingers or trifle sponges.

What you do:

Create a mighty 12 tier altar using your cakes.

Then destroy them any way you like - tumbling them, smashing them, and, of course, eating them.





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Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

**Our Walking the Way Challenge
this time is...**

At Home:

God speaks to us in the quiet times. Try to find a time each day this week to be quiet and listen to God. You might want to find a quiet place to sit. You might want to read a Bible story or say a quiet prayer first.

Outside:

This is a great time of year to wrap up warm and go out for a twilight walk as the evenings get darker. What signs of light can you see in the darkness? How do these lights make you think about God? How do they remind you of what God is to you?

For Others:

In the story, Elijah made a sacrifice on an altar. This is the way people worshipped God in the past, before they came to know God better through Jesus. God doesn't want us to kill things when we worship, but a different type of sacrifice is to give up something that has some value to you. It might be pennies, it might be a toy, it might be your time. What could you give that would help others and please God?



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Adventurers Go!

You've shared together, now share with us!

Why not send photos of your crafts, your treasure boxes, your Walking the Way challenges - or dress up to make a tableau of the Big Story and take a photo to send in.

Email your photos to: lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk
with parental permission for them to be used in publicity and online URC social media.

Alternatively, share them on our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/>

Remember you can find more resources on our website:
<https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth>

And if you've enjoyed these activities, why not see whether your local church runs Pilots or Friends on Faith Adventures (FOFA) when things get back to normal again.

Created for you by Nicola Grieves (Eastern Synod), Judy Harris (National Synod of Wales), Hannah Middleton (Northern Synod), Philip Ray (Wessex Synod, North), Lorraine Webb (Programme Officer for CYW), and Ruth White (Wessex Synod, South) on behalf of the CYDO+ and Children's and Youth Work team and Pilots.



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