

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.

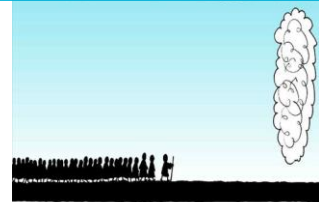
The resources are based on our non-uniformed children's groups, Friends on Faith Adventures and Pilots, but have been modified to make them suitable for all families at home.

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:

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Exodus 13 v 17-22



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.

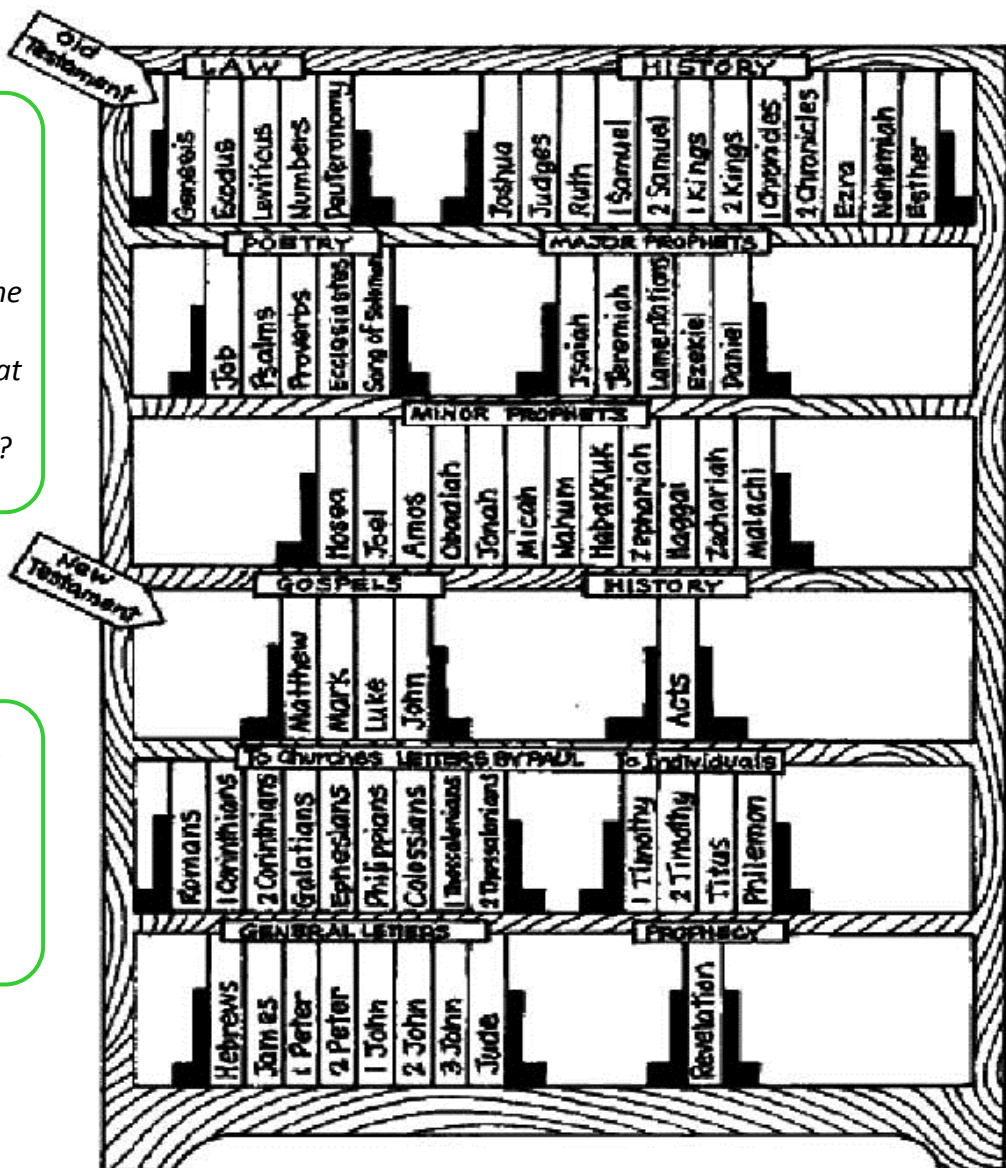
The Old Testament books were written before Jesus was born. They are the holy stories he would have grown up hearing and reading. There are 39 of these.

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 – Mark

The book of Exodus was written by Moses around 1400 BC and tells the story from his birth to the 40 years in the wilderness (Exodus). The Hebrew people have been slaves in Egypt for many years, during which time Moses was born to a Hebrew family. He is adopted into Pharaoh's family and grows up in the Palace as an Egyptian prince. He runs away to the desert and starts a new life as a shepherd. God appears to him in a burning bush and tells him that he will be used by God to free the Hebrew slaves and lead them out of Egypt into the land that God has promised them. God reminds Moses that God will be with them always, every step of the way.

The Story – Exodus 13 v 17 – 22 (The International Children's Bible)

The king sent the people out of Egypt. God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country. That road is the shortest way. But God said, "They might think they will have to fight. Then they might change their minds and go back to Egypt." So God led them through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were dressed for fighting when they left the land of Egypt.

The people of Israel left Succoth and camped at Etham. Etham was on the edge of the desert. The Lord showed them the way. During the day he went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud. And during the night the Lord was in a pillar of fire to give them light. They could travel during the day or night. The pillar of cloud was always with them during the day. And the pillar of fire was always with them at night.

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Online versions of the story

Watch and listen

Simple version by Gracelink for young children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQd81qbBqAq>

Full story by Saddleback kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqfVBP35U-U>

Dance and sing

My Lighthouse by Rend collective <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeJvKkBV6rY>

Wonderful God by Doug Horley (Reflective prayer)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=je66ti1DQRk>

Way maker <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQOFILny8Sq>

One Way Hillsong Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNe4HCO4SuQ>

Ideas to retell/explore the story

Exploring two journeys – Exodus and Lockdown

Do a remembered Bible activity. Talk about the story of Exodus and plot main points in the story e.g. Hebrews were slaves, they tried killing all baby boys, Moses was saved, grew up in the palace, chosen by God to set his people free, ten plagues, Passover, freedom, the Red Sea, following God in the wilderness. You could draw or write each piece as you remember it then put them together in sequence.

Next, do the same looking-back task for our time in lockdown; start in March and work your way forwards to now.

Ask some questions such as: Which parts of each story are the happy parts? Which are the difficult parts? Is there any part of each story you would like to relive?

Leading the way game

This is a fun and simple game to play as a family when you are out walking or in the car. Each time you come to a junction, one person gets to choose the direction to go, straight ahead, left, or right. Take it in turns to make the choices. Who knows where you will end up? It's an adventure. Consider together: How did it feel to be making the decisions each time? How did you decide? Were there times we were going in circles? Would it have been better with a map? How did it feel following someone else's directions?

Dinner table Chat Activities

God with us

Over a meal, take some time to chat looking back over the time in lockdown. Tell stories to each other about times when you can see that God was with you as individuals or as a family. How did you know God was with you? Did you feel it at the time or is it easier to see looking back?

You could do it every day over one mealtime, plot the significant times when God was with you. You could capture them on little cloud/fire cards on the table, or even make a display of them on the wall.

When we look back and see how God has been with us, it gives us hope to carry on in tricky times.

EDUCATION SUNDAY

2020: A Learning People in a Time of Change

Intergenerational Worship for Education Day 2020 - Sunday 13th September 2020

An act of worship created by the URC Children's & Youth Work team and friends, on behalf of Churches Together in England. Premieres on YouTube on Education Sunday, 13th September 2020, and will remain active for viewing after that date.

Watch via this link - bit.ly/education-sunday-worship

Additional Resources for Education Sunday available here: www.cte.org.uk/EducationSunday2020

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.

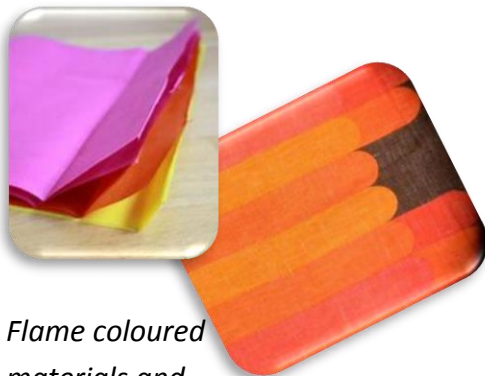


Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.

This week's Bible story is:

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Exodus 13 v 17-22



Flame coloured materials and tissue paper

An LED candle (not a real flame!), nightlight, torch or small unbreakable light



A tray containing 1 part cornflour to 2 parts water (Oobleck) to draw in (Maybe not as much as in the picture, unless you're feeling extra brave!)



Cloudlike materials such as cotton wool, shaving foam, screwed up toilet paper, soft white fabric



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



Pray Together

Pillar of Fire

During the night the Lord was in a pillar of fire to give them light. They could travel during the day or night. The pillar of cloud was always with them during the day. And the pillar of fire was always with them at night.



You will need: A battery tea light
Double sided sticky tape/PVA glue
Red and yellow paper flame shapes
A rectangle of thin white paper



Stick the flames shape around the base of the tea light overlapping them so the tea light is completely covered. Put some double-sided sticky tape or glue on top of the flames around the base. Add the rectangle of white paper to make a pillar over the top of the flames. When you turn on the light the flames will be reflected through the white paper.

Take the pillar of fire and light it up. Place it somewhere where you can see it, perhaps by your bed. See how the light makes the flames stand out when the tea light is lit. Just as the Israelites knew that God was with them in the fire and the cloud. God is always with us to guide us and protect us. Spend some time quietly looking at your pillar of fire and talk to God.

*Dear God, help us to know that you are always with us.
Even when the going gets tough, you will never leave us.*

Amen

Arrow Prayers

Arrow prayers are a way of talking to God at when you are in the middle of any situation. They are quick short sentence prayers asking for God's help while we are in the middle of a problem or daily activity. Your prayer can be as simple as 'God please help me'.

Paint an arrow onto a rock to remind you that God is your guide and your protector. Put the rock in your pocket or pencil case or bag and it will help you to know that God is always with you. You can place your hand on it and pray an arrow prayer to talk to God at any time no matter where you are.



Pray Together

Cloud Prayers



Fill a glass two thirds full of water.
Spray shaving foam onto the water to make a cloud.
Add drops of food colouring onto the top of the foam and watch as they slowly fall through the foam.

When the Israelites set off on their journey out of Egypt and slavery, they were full of joy, hope and excitement.

When the going got tough, they lost heart, they became angry and discouraged.

It can be like that sometimes in life, and we can feel that we are on our own.

As you watch the drops of colour slowly fall through the cloud know that even if we can't see God, God is always with us and will never leave us. As the colour of the water is changed, say the Journeying Prayer together:

A Journeying Prayer

*When the path you walk is full of pebbles and thorns,
God will be walking with you and will ease your feet.*

*When you can't quite figure out where the road you are following is going,
and you can't see its edges, God will be there with you, lighting your way.*

*When your journey is so difficult you can't see how you will complete it,
God will hold your hand and give you courage.*

*When your destination seems so far away
that you wonder how you will ever reach it,
God will stay by your side until you do.*

*Remember that in the darkness, God will be your light;
that when you fear the future, God will protect you;
that when all seems just too hard a battle to undertake, God will give you strength.*

*Remember that when you feel alone, afraid and uncertain, God is nearby,
ready to hold you close whenever there is need. God will never let you go.
Wherever you go for God, God will always go with you.*

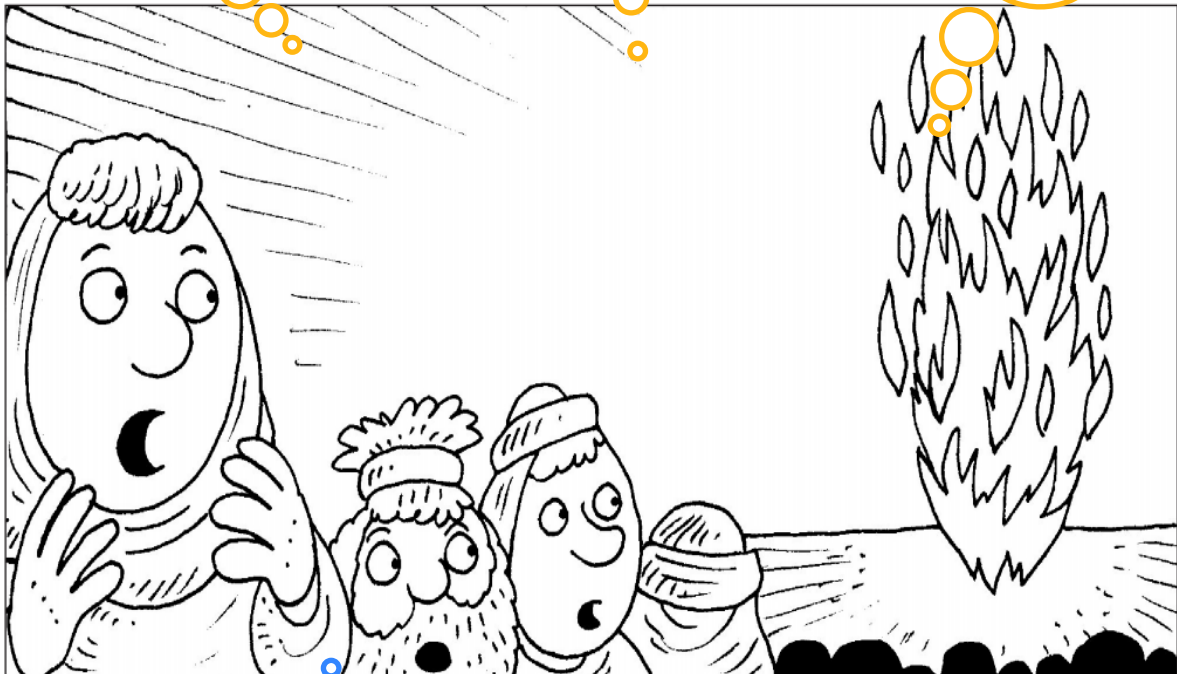
Amen.

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I wonder what the people thought when they saw the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud?

I wonder which is your favourite bit of the story?

I wonder why God didn't choose the easiest route?



*I wonder who leads you and keeps you safe?
Who do you trust?*

I wonder what experience you have of God leading you in ways you did not expect?



TO DO TOGETHER...

Pillar of Cloud and Fire Messy Play...

Tin Can lantern

You will need:

- A tin can
- A large nail and a hammer
- A small bag of sand or rice
- A towel/ newspaper



What you do:

Fill the empty can with water and put it in your freezer. Once it is almost frozen, take it out and let it slightly defrost. Alternatively, you can fill your can with newspaper or a towel, to stop it from losing its shape.

Mark out a design in the can. This could be an arrow to remind us of God guiding us, a flame shape or a cloud shape, or just some random dots.


This next part is something a grownup will need to do:

Place the can, lying down, on a bag filled with sand or rice. This will hold the can steady for you.

Carefully hammer the large nail through the tin can to make a hole and repeat to create your design.



Remove the ice block and dry your can, or remove the filling.

 Be careful there might be sharp edges

You could decorate the outside if you wish.

Light a nightlight candle in the tin can and remember that God is with us as we move forward. If you use an LED candle, you could have it by your bed at night.

Remember that you must never leave real candles unattended and need to be really careful where you light them and where you stand your tin if you're using a real candle in it as it will get hot.





TO DO TOGETHER...

Shaving Foam Pictures

You will need: *Half a cup of shaving foam
Half a cup of PVA glue
A small amount of food colouring*

What you do:
*Mix the shaving foam and glue together.
You can then divide it up into smaller amounts if
you wish.*

*Add a small amount of food colouring to your
mixture to create the colour you want or even
sprinkle some glitter in to make your white paint sparkle*

*Use your mixture to create some pictures of a fire
and clouds, reminding us that God's spirit guides
us as we walk the way of Jesus today.*



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TO DO TOGETHER...

Pillars of Cloud and Fire Sticks

- You will need:** Bread sticks
Cream cheese, some peppers or tomatoes
- Alternatively:** Chocolate spread
mini marshmallows
fruit winders



What you do:

Dip one bread stick in just the cheese spread so the end looks light and fluffy. Then dip another into the cheese spread and roll it in the chopped-up pieces of peppers or tomatoes. Now you have a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire.



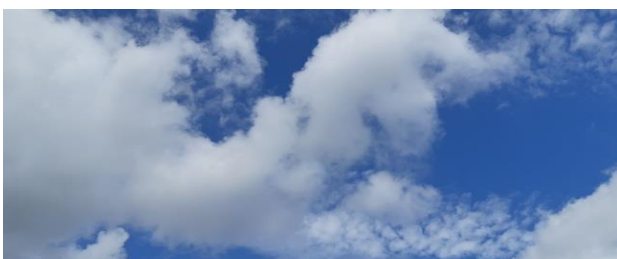
Alternative: you could also dip one bread stick into icing and stick on mini marshmallows to create a pillar of cloud, and then dip the other breadstick into some chocolate spread and roll it in pieces of fruit winder or wrap the fruit winder round to create your pillar of fire.



Cloud Gazing



Lie on your back or look up: what do you see in the clouds? Watch them change in front of your eyes. They are always moving and changing.



Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

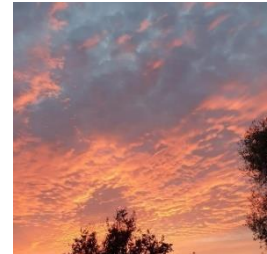
**Our Walking the Way Challenge
this time is...**

At Home:

Remember the “arrow prayer” in the Pray Together section? Seize the opportunity to say some arrow prayers each day this week. They can easily become a fantastic habit. Send a message to God about the things you see and hear and experience and feel at any time of the day or night. It’s like sending a friend a quick text message when you think of them.

Outside:

It’s the time of year when the skies start to get a bit cloudier. Find a day when it’s not completely overcast but has plenty of clouds scooting across the sky. Gaze up and watch them, like you might have done last week with the stars. What shapes can you see? Let your mind relax as the clouds go by and think of the winds that move them. Remember all this is in God’s hands. God’s spirit fills us and guides us just like the winds move the clouds. A sunrise or sunset can add an extra something to it too.



For Others:

Can you build up a picture on your window each day with pictures of clouds and flames and arrows which can encourage people as they go past. On each cloud, flame or arrow, write a prayer or a word of encouragement or a few words from the Bible story. Remind people that they are not alone but God is with them to guide and protect.



The
United
Reformed
Church

**families
on faith adventures**

at home

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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