



# families on faith adventures



## 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:

Walking in Hope  
Luke 2 verses 1 - 6



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



and



Illustration by [lambsongs.co.nz](http://lambsongs.co.nz) via [freebibleimages.com](http://freebibleimages.com)





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## 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.

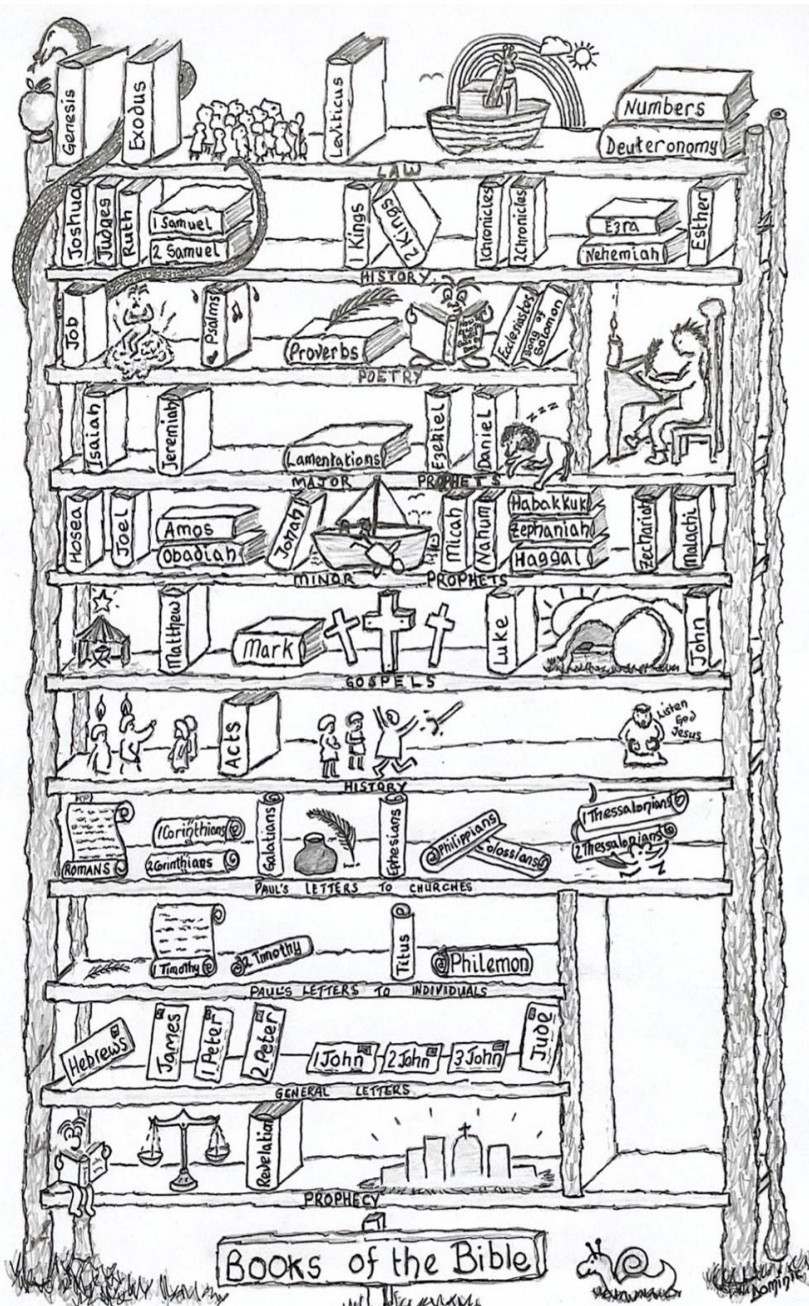
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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.



Books of the Bible

Image by - Dominic





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## **Bible context – Luke**

*Luke was a doctor who became a disciple of Jesus and around 60 AD he wrote down many of the things he saw and heard Jesus do. In his writings he likes to follow people's individual stories and also likes to show us that Jesus came to save everyone, Jews, and Gentiles.*



## **The Story - Luke 2: 1-6 (International Children's Bible)**

*At that time, Augustus Caesar sent an order to all people in the countries that were under Roman rule. The order said that they must list their names in a register. This was the first registration taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own towns to be registered.*

*So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This town was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David. Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (Mary was now pregnant.) While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby. She gave birth to her first son. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she wrapped the baby with cloths and laid him in a box where animals are fed.*

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

## **A Christingle Service**

*Available on the URC Children's & Youth Work YouTube Channel.*

*In the week leading up to Christmas Eve we will be publishing a special FOFA@Home all about the Christingle and you might like to watch it together on Christmas Eve.*





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### Online versions of the story

#### **Watch and Listen**

The beginners Bible <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kD8GqTPJebI>

Exploring Hope by children at Pursue God Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMMqSvY5vLU>

Let's Go!. The Story in song by Lifekids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ChjKSEVrck>

The story by Saddleback Kids

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

#### **Dance and Sing**

Hope by Allstar Kids Club [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r\\_t5xitQjlc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_t5xitQjlc)

Every Step by nick and Becky Drake

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZBhKp5\\_HwE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZBhKp5_HwE)

Magical Christmas Journey by Starshine Singers

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

Little Donkey Karaoke by Zoom

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CB\\_A3tryu8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CB_A3tryu8)

### **Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story**

*In this part of the story we are reminded that government rules were the reason that Mary and Joseph ended up going to Bethlehem and because the inns were full (due to these rules) they gave birth to Jesus and laid him in a manger. These are just two examples of the ancient prophesies coming true. Mary and Joseph may have thought that the government rules (to go to Bethlehem and register) were a difficult thing to do, but God used it as part of the bigger plan.*

*I wonder how God will use the situation we find ourselves in this Christmas?*

#### **Plan a walk this Christmas.**

*Do you have a step counter on your phone or wrist?*

*Did you know that it took around 140,000 steps for Mary and Joseph to reach Bethlehem? (Nazareth is roughly 70 miles from Bethlehem and the average person walks a mile in 2,000 steps). That must have been a long hard journey, with lots of time to chat and think.*

*Why not plan a walk this Christmas (a good way to burn off those Christmas treats)? You could keep a count of your steps and compare it with the journey Mary and Joseph took.*

*How many times would you need to do your walk to reach 140,000 steps?*





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## ***A bedtime story to watch together***

A Christmas journey by Susie Poole <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rf5HeoB5Hs0>

## ***Table Top Discussions***

*Our journey towards Christmas is nearly over. It's nearly here. What are we hoping for our family, ourselves, our communities, our world, our church, our friends this Christmas and the year ahead?*

*You could take one each day of the week to chat through. Asking the following questions:*

- *What are our hopes for them?*
- *What can do to help these hopes come about?*
- *How can we walk alongside them till they reach their hope/goal?*

***During Advent and Christmas we accumulate lots of paper and cardboard bits and pieces.***

***Instead of putting them straight in the bin, we are going to reuse some of them in our creative times.***

***Remember to save the insides from your wrapping paper tubes, cracker jokes and toys, all your gift tags and Christmas cards, boxes and any spare wrapping paper.***

***You may find they come in VERY HANDY!***





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## 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:

Walking in Hope  
Luke 2 verses 1 - 6



A sand coloured fabric or a tray of sand



Some boxes for buildings



A map – not necessarily of Israel



A toy donkey



Some pictures of when they were a baby



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



An unbreakable crib/nativity if you have one (image from Unsplash.com)

**As with all small things, please be aware of the risk of these being put into mouths, eyes, noses and ears. Please supervise small children!**





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## Pray Together

The third candle on the advent wreath reminds us of the journey Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem. It reminds us that God is with us on our journeys, and has a plan.



Light three candles on your advent wreath.

This candle is a light of Love.

Enjoy the light, look at the candle, watch as it flickers and lights up the room. Sit quietly as you look at the flame and talk to God about your life's journey. Thank God for those who you love and for those who love you.

A prayer to say together

*As we light this Advent candle,  
may its flame be a symbol of Love.  
may its warmth be a symbol of God's love wrapping around us.  
Help us to remember that you love us, every step of our journey  
Help us to share your love with others  
We pray in the name of Jesus,  
who is the Light of the World.  
Amen*





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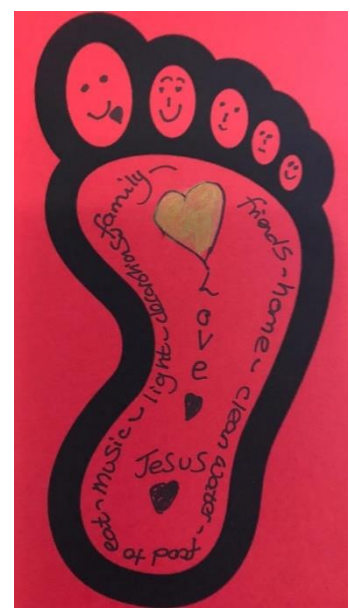
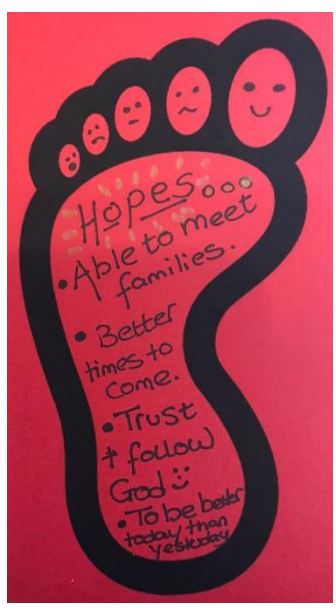
## Pray Together

### Walking in Hope and Love

You will need: stiff paper or back of wallpaper  
pens  
scissors



Draw around your own feet or draw feet onto your paper; you may wish to colour them red, this week's colour, the colour of love. Red is a warm colour so your feet can be warm too. On one foot write the word Hope and on the other Love, then doodle, write or draw the things that you love that are important to you, and the hopes you have as we walk through advent.



Now you could choose to move your paper feet around your room or home or you could cut them out and put them into your shoes and walk with your loves in one foot and your hopes in the other. Each time you put your shoes on, you will be reminded of what you have written. Thank God for all we love and the hopes we hold onto.







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## Pray Together

### Red Step Prayers

Use your steps as you take some time to pray.

Take some time to consider your life journey so far. What are the points you want to thank God for? What are the areas that you are finding difficult?

Write them on small slips of paper.

Take the slips that are thanking God for positive points in your life, stick these to the steps so that they are facing you as you walk down the stairs.

Then take the slips that are about the tough areas in your life and stick them on the steps so that you can see them as you walk up the stairs.

Each time you go down the stairs thank God and celebrate the positives.

Each time you go up the stairs ask God to help you and lead the way in the tough areas.

You could always end at the top and bottom with a final AMEN Jump.



#### Adaptation:

If you don't have any steps in your house, you could make one step, and do the same prayer activity as you step up and down on it.

### Heart bookmark prayers



Use your fingertips as you take some time to pray.

Cut a piece of card into a long thin strip, that would fit into a book.

Dip your pointing finger into red paint and place it on the card, overlapping two fingerprints to make a heart shape.

Repeat this in a pattern down the centre of the bookmark.

Each time you place your fingerprint, mention the name of someone who you love, or someone who you

want to love more.

Use a simple prayer each time, e.g. Lord, I pray for Darren

When you are finished, hold your bookmark in your hands and thank God for loving you and the people represented in the hearts.



#### Adaptation:

if you don't have any paint, you can draw around your fingertip with red pen and get the same result.





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I wonder what  
was the longest  
journey you've  
ever been on?

I wonder what  
Mary and Joseph  
expected to find in  
Bethlehem?

I wonder how Mary  
and Joseph felt on  
their journey?



I wonder how long  
the journey took  
them?

I wonder whether there is  
any part of your life which  
feels like a long journey and  
where you think God might  
be leading you?

Illustration by [lambsongs.co.nz](http://lambsongs.co.nz) via [freebibleimages.com](http://freebibleimages.com)





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## TO DO TOGETHER...

*During Advent and Christmas we accumulate lots of paper and cardboard bits and pieces. Instead of putting them straight in the bin, we are going to reuse some of them in our creative times.*

*Remember to save the insides from your wrapping paper tubes, cracker jokes and toys, all your gift tags and Christmas cards, boxes and any spare wrapping paper. You may find they come in VERY HANDY!*



### Felt Path and Play Set

**You will need:** Felt/ Card/Paper  
Glue  
Template

**What you do:**

Create Mary, Joseph and a donkey figure using the template provided.

Create a background using navy blue felt as a background, green for a hill, red for the path and some black houses with yellow windows.



**Alternatively** You can use paper or card to create this play set. Take the figures on the journey of love to Bethlehem to await the arrival of Love into the world.





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## TO DO TOGETHER...



### Sensory Journey

**You will need:** Wellies and Warm Clothes.

**What you do:**

Go on a walk and explore the journey using your senses: splash in the puddles, crunch through the fallen leaves, run up and down hills, feel the cold on your faces and the warmth in your bodies.

Think of the journey of love Mary and Joseph made travelling to Bethlehem.





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TO DO TOGETHER...



### Magnet Maze

- You will need:**
- Paper plate
  - Paper clip
  - Old fridge magnet
  - (the magnet needs to be strong enough to work through the cardboard)
  - Some scraps of red and white paper
  - Colouring pens
  - Wooden barbecue skewer or lollypop stick

#### What you do:

Glue or draw a big heart with a smaller heart inside in the middle of the plate.

Draw the maze journey to Bethlehem on your paper plate.

Print out or copy the template of Mary on the donkey and stick it onto a piece of card. Once you have coloured it in, stick a paper clip onto the back of it.

Now take a barbecue skewer or lollypop stick and fasten an old fridge magnet onto the end of it.

Then, by moving the magnet behind the plate, guide Mary on her journey of hope and joy to the heart of God.





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# Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

**At Home:**

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*It's getting close to Christmas now. I am sure there are lots of things you are hoping for this year – maybe presents, maybe something special to watch, maybe time with family or a special meal. Sometimes this time gets quite busy, busy, busy, especially for parents and carers trying to make sure everything is ready in time. Take some time each day to help each other with the business and some time each day to be quiet together, maybe reading the Christmas story again from a different book or watching it on a video.*



**Outside:**

*Let's share some of the hope of Christmas – make some Christmas decorations or use some old ones that you don't want any more. Go on a walk in your neighbourhood and hang up some decorations on a bare tree somewhere to brighten it up.*

**For Others:**

*The homeless have an especially hard time during the winter. See if you can find out more about a charity which helps the homeless – a national charity like Shelter or a more local one near you. What can you do to support that charity? Alternatively, can you drop off something for a local foodbank and put a card with it to share a Christmas wish with whoever receives it? Do not put any personal details in the card and think carefully about what you might write.*





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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](mailto: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>

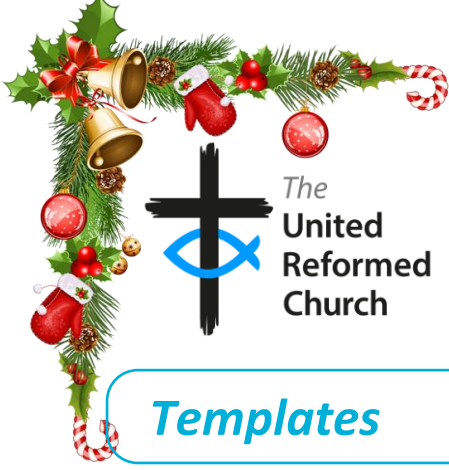
And if you've enjoyed these activities, why not see whether your local church runs Pilots or Friends on Faith Adventures (FOFA) when things get back to normal again.

*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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## Templates

