



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:

Joy to The World
Luke 2 verses 6 - 7



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

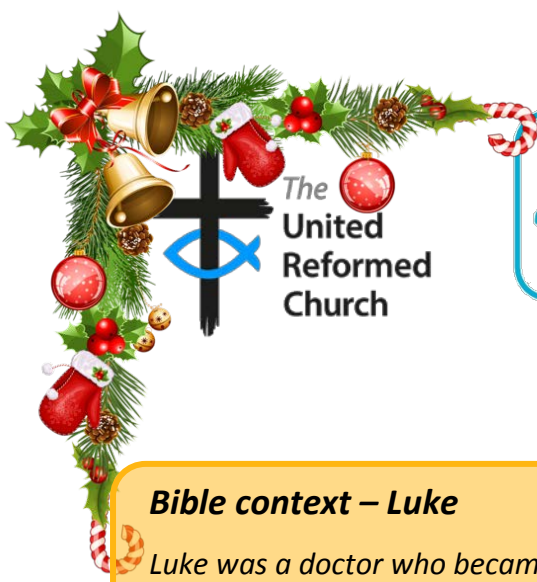


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Bible context – Luke

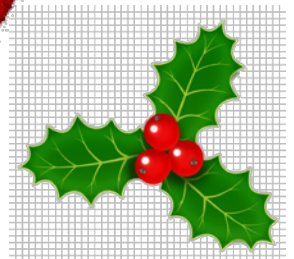
Luke was a doctor who became a disciple of Jesus and around 60 AD he wrote down many of the things he saw and heard Jesus do. In his writings he likes to follow people's individual stories and also likes to show us that Jesus came to save everyone, Jews, and Gentiles.

The Story - Luke 2: 6-7 (International Children's Bible)

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.

This was the one who had been promised for thousands of years. This was God, come as one of us, full of grace and truth. From this child we all received more and more blessings. This was Jesus Christ, Immanuel, which means God is with us. JOY TO THE WORLD !





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Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Jesus is born cartoon by Saddleback kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3656G6tWul>

The whole story told by children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suowe2czxcA>

Retooning the nativity – what is in the bible cartoon

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-4y5mK_o9E

An unexpected Christmas the story told by Children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM1XusYVqNY>



Dance and Sing

Oh what a special night <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duzZ-p6rYNI>

Hope was born this night by Sidewalk Prophets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fok1h3p1sh8>

Born is the king by Hillsong

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7i9US-qbeJE>

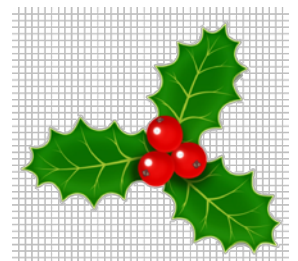
O holy night by Bethel music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNyJd94iTKE>

Calypso Carol <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKKTZqtf58Q>

Its Christmas week. Happy Christmas to you and all your family and friends.

Just enjoy spending time with each other this week, don't miss any opportunity to sit together, play together, have fun together, spend time together and celebrate. As Mary, Joseph and Jesus spent time together in those early days, getting to know each other; just enjoy lots of quality family time.





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Christingles



Instead of giving you ideas for crafts, activities and prayers this week, we would like to invite you to join us in our Christingle Service which you can find on our YouTube channel using this link:

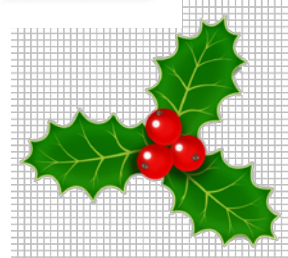
<https://youtu.be/p0XeT9Hb3J0>

Perhaps you could find a time on Christmas Eve to share it together. Get your Christmas jumpers on, get ready to make and pray and sing, and let the Families on Faith Adventures @ Home team guide you as you make your Christingle and welcome the Light Of The World.

Christingles were originally the idea of a pastor in the Moravian church in Germany in 1747 but were made popular in the UK in 1948 when John Pensom at Lincoln Cathedral introduced them to raise money for the Children’s Society which is a children’s charity in the UK. If you are able, you may like to make a donation to the Children’s Society or a similar charity such as Action for Children.

You will need:

- An orange – any size will do, but a big one is best
- Red ribbon or tape (if you use ribbon you will need a pin to secure it)
- Cocktail sticks
- Small goodies – dried fruit, small sweets etc
- A sharp knife
- A small square piece of aluminium foil
- A candle
- Some matches





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Christingles

First take your orange.

Touch it, feel it, smell it, (maybe even have a second orange so you can taste it).



Our orange represents the world.

Take a moment to think about the world God created.

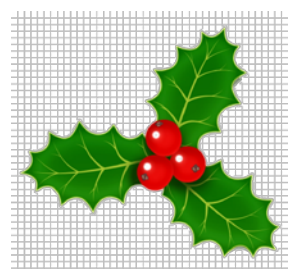
God's world is not perfect, any more than your orange will be perfect, but God loves it.



Jesus came into our world, just as it was, to share God's love through his birth, his life, his death on the cross, and then his resurrection (coming back to life). God's love is for all people and all time.

We use a red ribbon or glittery tape and wrap it right round our orange, thinking about the fact that God's love goes right round our world. If you are using ribbon, carefully push a pin through and into the orange to secure the ends.

Isn't it funny that, although our world is a sphere, we talk about all four corners of the world when we want to describe all the different parts of it.





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Christingles



Our next step is to stick four cocktail sticks into our orange and think about all the different countries of our world.

Think of the hot countries and the cold and the temperate; think of the mountainous countries, the desert countries, the rainforest, the plains.



Every part of the world is full of good gifts from God. Maybe things to eat or drink, maybe natural resources such as metals or oil or minerals.

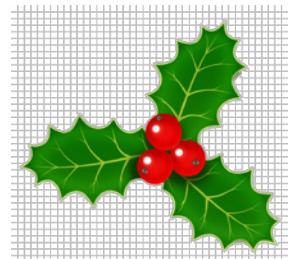
If we all shared our resources, nobody would ever need to go cold or hungry.

Carefully fill the cocktail sticks with sweets and dried fruits and thank God for all these good gifts. Think about the countries your food comes from.

Once your cocktail sticks are full of good things, you will need to prepare your orange for the next step. Take a sharp knife, but make sure that this step is supervised or carried out by a responsible adult.



Either cut a circle in the top of your orange, digging down a bit into the flesh underneath the peel, or pull off the top of your orange where it was attached to the tree and cut a cross shape in the peel. Enjoy the sudden release of scent!





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Christingles

The next step is the aluminium foil.

Maybe play with the foil a bit first and see how it reflects the light. Then push it firmly into the hole in your orange so that it lines the hole but also sticks out over the top.



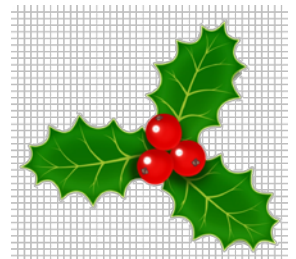
Our job, as friends of Jesus, is to be like that aluminium foil. We can reflect God's love and light around the world in our words, our actions, our attitudes, and our prayers.



The final addition to our Christingle is the candle, standing tall and straight over the world and bringing light to all four corners of the world. This is the Christ candle.

Ruth and Hannah, Judy and Lorraine, Nicola and Phil, all wish you a Christmas filled with the light and love of Jesus.

We'd love to see photos of your finished Christingles – perhaps you could send them to us: email lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk





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Pray Together

Advent Wreath Prayers

The fourth candle on the advent wreath reminds us of the joy – the joy in the hearts of those who first heard of the birth of Jesus: reminding us that when we meet God, we are filled with His joy and have to share it.

Light four candles on your advent wreath.

Enjoy the light, look at the candles, watch as they flicker and light up the room. Sit quietly as you look at the flame and talk to God about how you are feeling at the moment. Ask God to fill you again with His joy.



A prayer to say together

*As we light this Advent candle,
may its flame be a symbol of Joy.
may its warmth be a symbol of God's
good news and joy.*

*Help us to remember that you are our
hope and joy*

*Help us to share your good news with
others*

*We pray in the name of Jesus,
who is the Light of the World.
Amen*

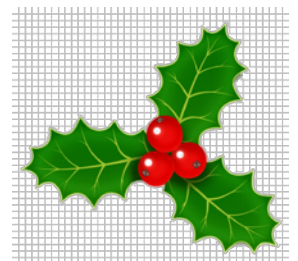


And on Christmas Day we get to light the final candle on our advent wreath, the centre candle which reminds us of the birth of Jesus. Jesus is the light of the world.

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 celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Thank God for keeping his promise and sending his son Jesus to our world.

A prayer to say together

*As we light this Advent candle,
may its flame be a symbol of Hope, love, Peace and Joy.
may its warmth be a symbol of God's presence.
Help us to remember that you are with us always
Help us to share this good news with others
We pray in the name of Jesus,
who is the Light of the World. Amen*





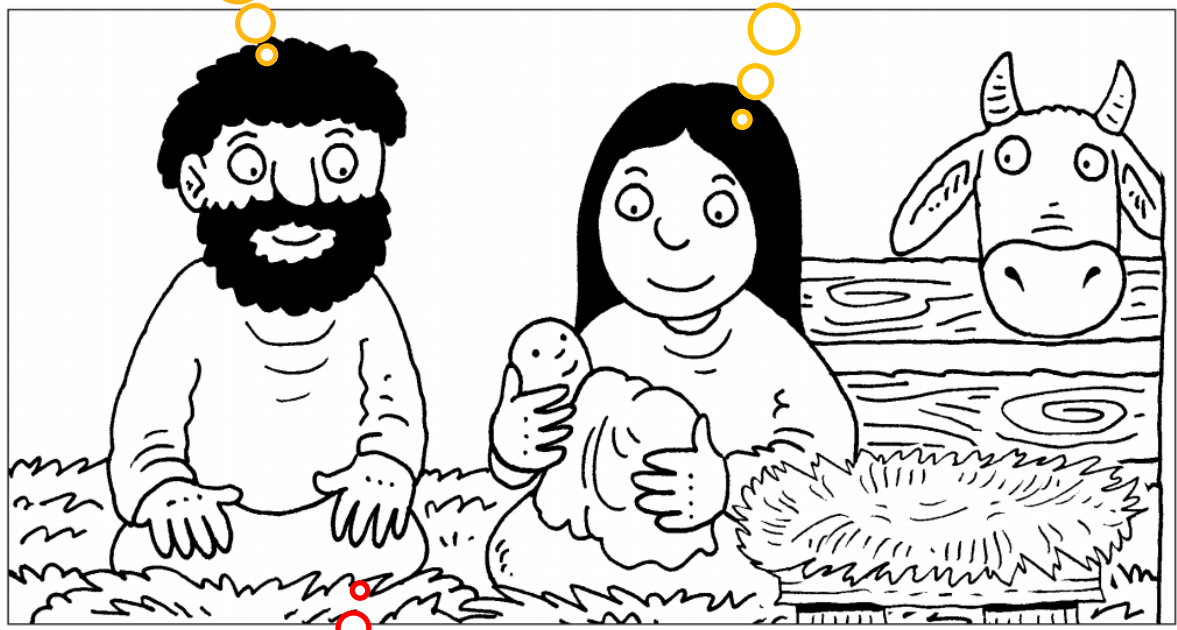
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I wonder what thoughts went through Mary and Joseph's minds when they saw their new baby?

I wonder what hopes and dreams the parents had for their newborn child? What hopes and dreams do people have for you?

I wonder why God chose for Jesus to be born in the place where animals were sheltered?



I wonder what is the most amazing part of this story for you?

I wonder how many lives were changed because of the birth of this one child?

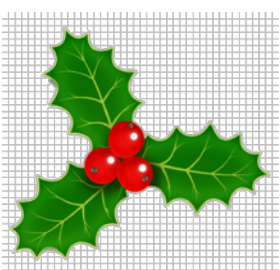


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Adventurers Go!

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.

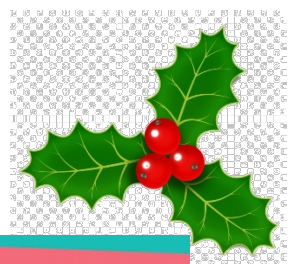
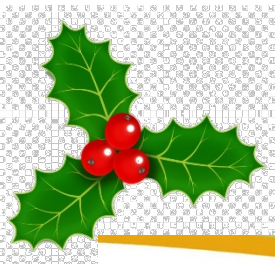
Alternatively, share them on our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/>

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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