

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:

Journey to Easter
John 13 verses 4-14



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.

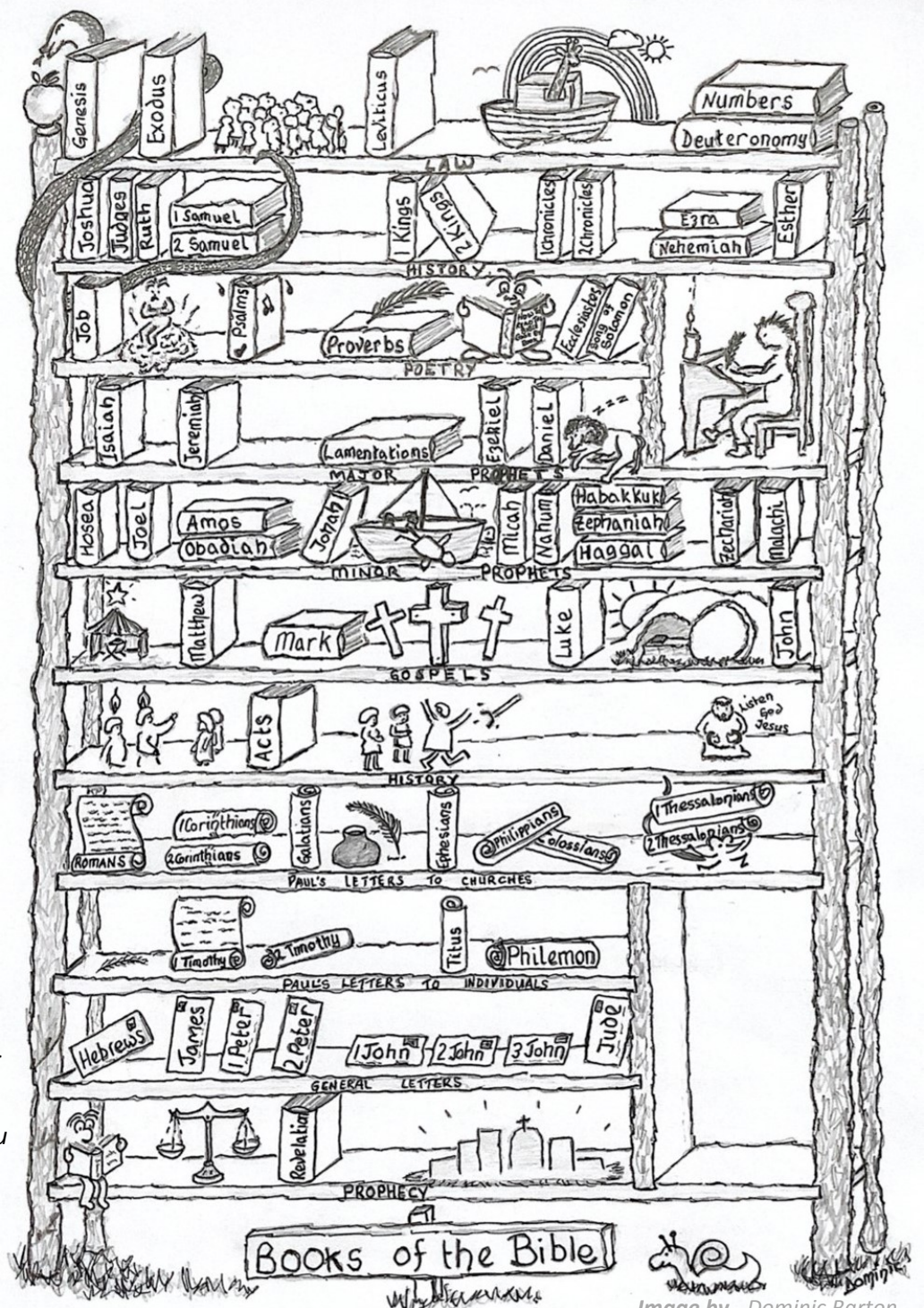
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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.

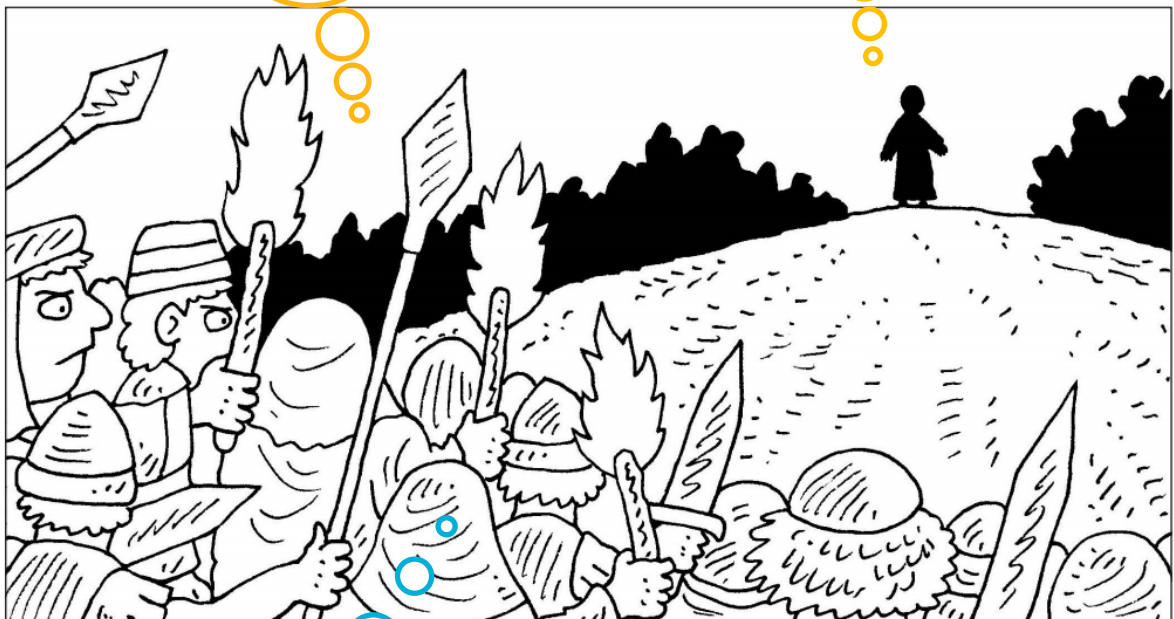


Bible context – John

This week we are doing things a little differently. In this bumper edition we will follow Jesus' last week, often called Holy Week. We will journey with Jesus from The Upper Room, where he ate his last meal with his friends, all the way to the cross and the empty tomb. We will not visit every step of the story – perhaps you can explore further by reading it in your Bible – but we will drop in on some of the main events.

Last week people were cheering Jesus. I wonder what has changed?

I wonder whether Jesus knew what was going to happen and whether he felt scared?



I wonder whether you have ever had to do something that you knew might be scary or might hurt?

I wonder what different emotions we will meet in this week's stories?

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.

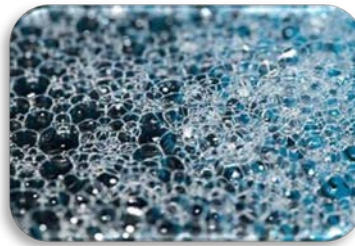


Use a box or a bag to hold the treasures and encourage any little ones to explore what's in the box/bag each week to go with the Bible story.

This time you could gradually add things to the box as you visit each part of the story.



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



A bowl with soapy water



Towel



Bread roll on unbreakable plate



Drinking bottle or beaker with juice or water



Chains – maybe from jewellery



Cross



Tissue



Nails

As nails can be sharp, please supervise children with these – preferably hammer the nails into a piece of wood (with no splinters) before giving to a child.



Spring Flower



Bandages



Stone



Crown



TO DO TOGETHER...

At the end of this resource, you will find some lovely images of the five 'drop in' moments which Hannah drew for us.

Each day find the image that matches the story or draw one of your own. Then use that image to make something that builds up day by day.

You could make some bunting, with one flag for each stage, either using paper or gluing the images onto coloured fabric. You could make a prayer tree and add your prayers and, on Sunday, some ribbons. You could make some candle holders out of empty jam jars or make a Holy Week clock. Or you could come up with your own ideas.



Drop in on the Upper Room

John 13 verses 4-14

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

The Servant King narrated by David Suchet (Jesus Storybook Bible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3lnNwdYh8w&t=39s>

Dance and Sing

The Jesus song by Saddleback Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rn84AYtFUSM&t=52s>

The Story – John 13 v 4-14 (The International Children's Bible)

During the meal Jesus stood up and took off his outer clothing. Taking a towel, he wrapped it around his waist. Then he poured water into a bowl and began to wash the followers' feet. He dried them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Jesus came to Simon Peter. But Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered, "You don't understand what I am doing now. But you will understand later."

Peter said, "No! You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "If I don't wash your feet, then you are not one of my people."

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, after you wash my feet, wash my hands and my head, too!"

Jesus said, "After a person has had a bath, his whole body is clean. He needs only to wash his feet. And you men are clean, but not all of you." Jesus knew who would turn against him. That is why Jesus said, "Not all of you are clean."

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and sat down again. Jesus asked, "Do you understand what I have just done for you?¹³ You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' And this is right, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash each other's feet."

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Enjoy a special meal together and tell this story at the table. Use different versions of the Bible and perhaps watch the video clip at the table. Take your time, don't rush. Imagine being at the table with Jesus on the night of the last supper (don't forget to wash your hands – and feet??)

For more ideas to explore this story, and to respond creatively revisit our 'A Supper To Remember' issue which explores the Last Supper [https://urc.org.uk/images/Children-and-youth/Resources/Families_on_Faith_Adventures - Week 1.pdf](https://urc.org.uk/images/Children-and-youth/Resources/Families_on_Faith_Adventures_-_Week_1.pdf)

Table Top Discussions

I wonder what it was like to have Jesus wash your feet. How would you have responded? What did Jesus mean, if you do not let me clean you, you can't be my friend?

Pray Together

Foot Washing

Before Jesus and his friends sat down to share a very special meal together, Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist and washed his friends' feet. This was usually the job of a servant.

Jesus said 'I did this as an example for you. So, you should do as I have done for you.'



Cut two circles from card and cut one in half. Paint the half circle blue to represent a bowl of water. Glue around the edge of the half circle and stick it onto the circle of card making a pocket. Cut out two foot shapes. You can use a template or draw around your own feet.

On the foot shapes, write a prayer asking Jesus to help you to follow his example and ask for help to be able to be more like Jesus. Ask God to show you ways in which you can serve others. Add your prayer feet to the pocket and put this somewhere where everyone can see it. Encourage everyone in the family to add their own prayers to the bowl.



**Dear Jesus, you have taught us to serve one another,
and by doing this we are doing it for you too.
Please help us to know how to serve others,
as you were a servant for all.**

Amen



TO DO TOGETHER...

All Those Dirty Feet

You will need: A large sheet of paper or material
Colourful paint
A large tray

What you do:

Lay out the paper or material on the floor.

Place some slightly watered-down paint into a tray.

Step into the tray and then walk all over the large sheet of paper or material.

Think about what Jesus did to the disciples feet, and how he served them as he washed their dirty feet.

Remember to have a bowl of warm soapy water and a towel ready to wash each other's feet when you finish.



Drop in on the Garden
Luke 22 verses 39-46

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

A Dark Night in the Garden narrated by David Suchet (Jesus Storybook Bible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Egy2-lEtyJ0>

Dance and Sing

Wonderful Lord by Doug Horley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qZWK8ZE2Pk>

The Story – Luke 22 v 39-46 (The International Children’s Bible)

Jesus left the city and went to the Mount of Olives. His followers went with him. (Jesus went there often.) He said to his followers, “Pray for strength against temptation.”

Then Jesus went about a stone’s throw away from them. He kneeled down and prayed, “Father, if it is what you want, then let me not have this cup of suffering. But do what you want, not what I want.” Then an angel from heaven appeared to him to help him. Jesus was full of pain; he prayed even more. Sweat dripped from his face as if he were bleeding. When he finished praying, he went to his followers. They were asleep. (Their sadness had made them very tired.) Jesus said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray for strength against temptation.”

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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Go outside to tell this story - try to relive the garden at night. Perhaps you could go into your garden or outside space at night and tell the story together. You could recreate the garden at night in your home, sitting on the floor, with a pretend firepit. Create a still, calm, dark atmosphere and experience this part of the story.

Table Top Discussions

I wonder what Jesus could hear in the garden of Gethsemane that night? What could he smell and see? How did he pray? Was it out loud or in his head? Have you ever been frightened and prayed to God? Do you prefer to pray alone or with others?

Pray Together

Big Question Prayers

Jesus knew he faced a difficult challenge, and he went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Jesus was worried about what was going to happen to him and he prayed a 'Big Question' prayer to God. "Father, if it is what you want, then let me not have this cup of suffering. But do what you want, not what I want."



We all have big questions about life.

God is OK with our questions, even our angry, painful ones and difficult ones. Write your big question or something that is troubling you onto a lolly stick or plant label. You can just write the word prayer and talk to God quietly about what you want to ask or say. Plant the stick into some soil or into the grass. This is a great prayer activity to do outside, remembering Jesus in the garden, but it also works with a pot on the window sill.



If you do not have lolly sticks or plant labels, you could use twigs and wrap cotton around them to represent your prayers.



TO DO TOGETHER...

Weaving Emotions



You will need: A sheet of card and some different things to weave into it (plastic bags, ribbon, pipe cleaners, leaves, material and newspaper)

What you do:

Cut slits into the sheet of card - these do not need to be even or straight. Weave your materials (see above) in and out of the slits and push it down to the end of the slits before starting your next row. On the next row go under the strip of cardboard where you went over it last time, and go over where you previously went under, to create a woven pattern. Use tape to seal off the ends.

As you weave different colours and materials, remember the emotions Jesus felt in the garden as he prayed. Don't worry that it looks messy, Jesus had lots of messy emotions that evening.

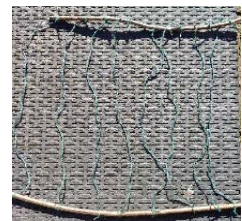


 **Alternative**

You will need: 2 sticks
Some garden string

What you do:

Cut several pieces of string, all the same length. Tie each piece of string to the two sticks to create a frame to weave through, with the sticks at each side and the strings going across between them. Weave your materials in the same way as described above, tying or sticking them to the first and last string to secure them.



Drop in on the Temple Courtyard

Matthew 27 verses 15-26

Watch and Listen

Retold by children by PursueGod Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkOKRes9Ps8>

Dance and Sing

Lord I Lift Your Name On High (dancelong) by CJ and Friends

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfxtmpsT-2k>

The Story – Matthew 27 v 15-26 (The International Children's Bible)

Every year at the time of Passover the governor would free one person from prison. This was always a person the people wanted to be set free. At that time there was a man in prison who was known to be very bad. His name was Barabbas. All the people gathered at Pilate's house. Pilate said, "Which man do you want me to free: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Christ?" Pilate knew that they gave Jesus to him because they were jealous....

But the leading priests and elders told the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be freed and for Jesus to be killed.

Pilate said, "I have Barabbas and Jesus. Which do you want me to set free for you?"

The people answered, "Barabbas!"

Pilate asked, "What should I do with Jesus, the one called the Christ?"

They all answered, "Kill him on a cross!"

Pilate asked, "Why do you want me to kill him? What wrong has he done?"

But they shouted louder, "Kill him on a cross!"

Pilate saw that he could do nothing about this, and a riot was starting. So he took some water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. Then he said, "I am not guilty of this man's death. You are the ones who are causing it!"

All the people answered, "We will be responsible. We accept for ourselves and for our children any punishment for his death." Then Pilate freed Barabbas. Pilate told some of the soldiers to beat Jesus with whips. Then he gave Jesus to the soldiers to be killed on a cross.

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Have a go at holding the trial. Choose someone to be Jesus and hold a trial. Is he really who he said he was – the Son of God? Who would you call to give evidence? What questions would you ask him? We know that it was all part of God's plan but let's explore what the trial could have looked like.

Table Top Discussions

Someone once said If they put you on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to prove it? Have a conversation about this and perhaps with older children talk about countries where it is still illegal to be a Christian.

Pray Together

Temple Courtyard Prayers

You will need a piece of cloth - this could be from an old item of clothing or you could use a disposable washing cloth.

In the temple courtyard, Pilate felt many emotions including powerlessness, anger and frustration. Sometimes we find ourselves cross and angry and the feeling makes us wound up inside.



Take a piece of cloth, sit and hold it in your hands. Look at the weave - are there any fraying edges? Now, as you look at the cloth, think about the feeling of anger. Imagine the colour, the sound, the taste and the texture.

Hold the fabric up and rip off a strip. Hold the strip of cloth you have torn off between your fingers. Tie a knot in it. Close your eyes and feel the knot. Slowly untie the knot, imagining God changing your anger and frustration into love. Ask God to help you turn anger into love.



Dear God

Thank you that you are slow to anger and swift to love.

**Thank you that you heal and make us whole,
with a love that is so great we cannot measure it.**

**Help us to turn our anger into love and
give all our worries and sadness to you. Amen.**



TO DO TOGETHER...

The soldiers in the temple courtyard made fun of Jesus when they brought him to Pilate. Because the people had called Jesus their king, the soldiers made a crown out of sharp thorns and placed it on Jesus's head.

Crown of Thorns

You will need: Some twigs or stiff pieces of long grass.

What you do:

Twist and weave the twigs and grass together to form a crown shape and then bind them together using garden string.

When this is made, it will also resemble a nest, which can remind us of the new life which Easter brings.

As you make it, remember the story of Jesus in the temple courtyard.

Keep your crown of thorns – we will be using it again on Easter Day.



Drop in on Skull Hill
Luke 23 verses 26-46

Watch and Listen

The Sun Stops Shining narrated by David Suchet (Jesus Storybook Bible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUv-zMnWSR0>

Dance and Sing

Jesus gave it all by LifeKids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLZwSre8Odw>

The Story – Luke 23 v 26-46 (The International Children’s Bible)

The soldiers led Jesus away....

There were also two criminals led out with Jesus to be killed. Jesus and the two criminals were taken to a place called the Skull. There the soldiers nailed Jesus to his cross. They also nailed the criminals to their crosses, one beside Jesus on the right and the other beside Jesus on the left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.”

The soldiers threw lots to decide who would get his clothes. The people stood there watching. The leaders made fun of Jesus. They said, “If he is God’s Chosen One, the Christ, then let him save himself. He saved other people, didn’t he?”

Even the soldiers made fun of him. They came to Jesus and offered him some vinegar. They said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!” (At the top of the cross these words were written: “THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”)

One of the criminals began to shout insults at Jesus: “Aren’t you the Christ? Then save yourself! And save us too!”

But the other criminal stopped him. He said, “You should fear God! You are getting the same punishment as he is. We are punished justly; we should die. But this man has done nothing wrong!” Then this criminal said to Jesus, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!”

Then Jesus said to him, “Listen! What I say is true: Today you will be with me in paradise!”

It was about noon, and the whole land became dark until three o'clock in the afternoon. There was no sun! The curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, I give you my life." After Jesus said this, he died.

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Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

There are lots of stunning books that retell this story in sensitive and gentle ways for children. Perhaps use this week to revisit some of your favourites together.

Table Top Discussions

What difference would it have made if Jesus had not died? How does the story make you feel? What does it make you think about?



Pray Together

Cross Forgiveness Prayers

You will need: A4 White paper
Scrap card or paper
Masking tape
Pens
Paint

Talk about Jesus dying on the cross for us to take away our wrongs. When we say sorry to God for the things that we have done, we know that he will forgive us and give us a new start.



Cut out a cross from A4 paper. The simplest way to do this is to fold the paper in half lengthways and draw half the cross.

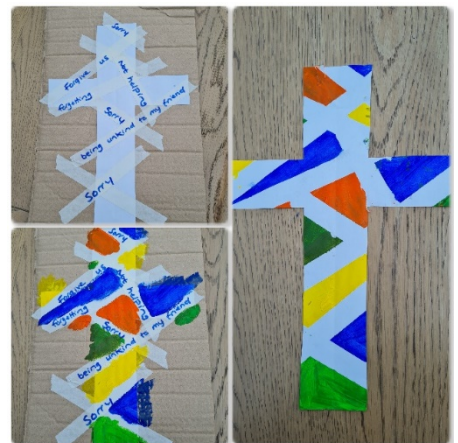
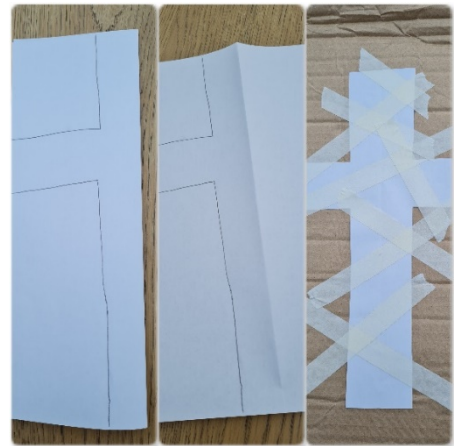
Cut the cross out and place it on some scrap card or paper.

Using masking tape, make a random pattern of lines over the cross, sticking it down to the card.

Get together as a family and write on the tape the things you want to say sorry to God for. You can just write the word sorry and keep things just between yourself and God.

Select some different colours and paint in the shapes that the tape has made. It does not matter if you paint on the tape as you are going to peel the tape away.

When the paint has dried, gather together as a family and slowly peel away the tape that you have written on. Take it in turns to take off the tape. As you do this you will reveal the clean white paper underneath. This reminds us that Jesus died on the cross for us. As we say sorry to God, our wrongs are taken away and we are given a new start.



Put this cross somewhere to remind you all of your prayers and the new start God gives each of us.



TO DO TOGETHER...

Cross Collage



You will need: *A piece of card or paper
An old newspaper or magazine
Masking tape or strips of paper
Glue*

What to do:

On your piece of paper or card, mark out a cross shape using strips of paper or masking tape (if you use masking tape take some of the stickiness off it by sticking it to something and peeling it off again before you stick it on the piece of card or paper you're going to use)

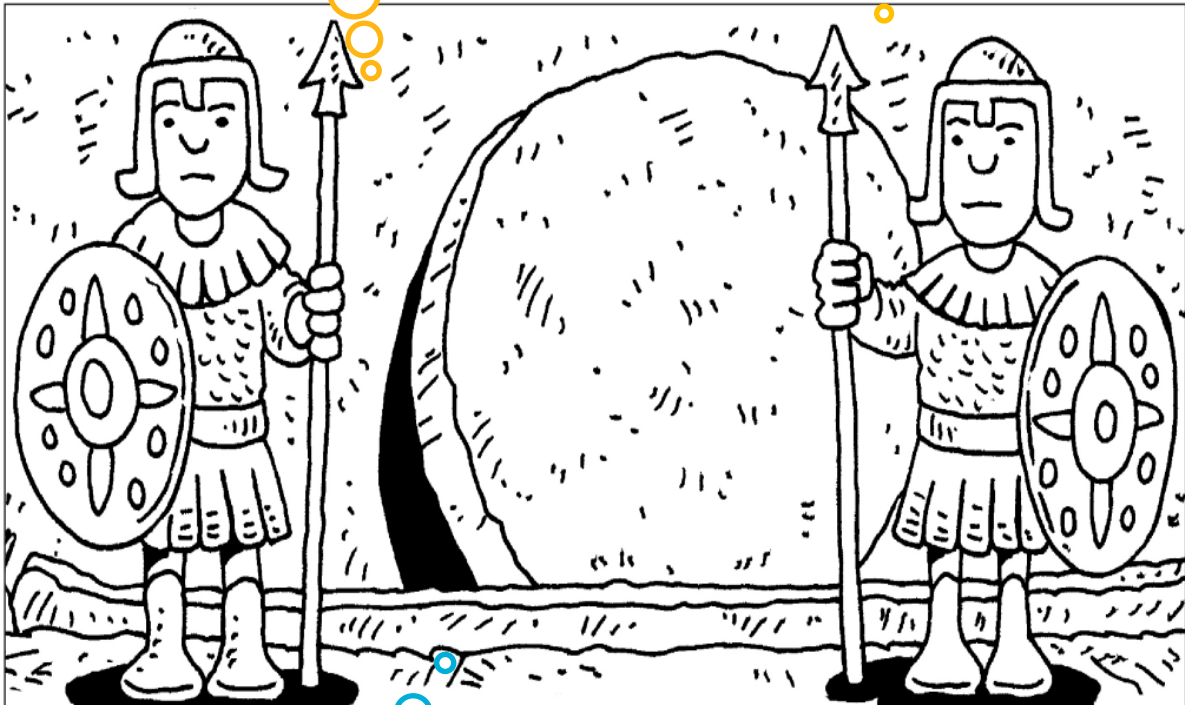
Spread glue all over your paper and collage using ripped up pieces of newspaper or magazine. If there are words or colours which reflect the feelings or thoughts of Good Friday, use them. When all the white is covered, you can seal it with another coat of clear glue.

Peel away the masking tape or strips of paper to reveal a white cross. Remember the story of Good Friday as you display it, maybe put it into a window for others to see it.



*I wonder what happened
on the Saturday between
Good Friday and Easter?*

*I wonder how many
different emotions the
people in this story
experienced?*



*I wonder whether you ever
have times when it is
difficult to believe God's
promise?*

*I wonder what
happened next for the
soldiers who had been
guarding the tomb?*

Drop in on the Resurrection
Luke 24 verses 1-12

Watch and Listen

God's Wonderful Surprise narrated by David Suchet (Jesus Storybook Bible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ur3PZoQEGGk>

Dance and Sing

Jesus Is Alive by Lifetree Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpZJ-39IT1k>

The Story – Luke 24 v 1-12 (The International Children's Bible)

Very early on the first day of the week, the women came to the tomb where Jesus' body was laid. They brought the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance of the tomb. They went in, but they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, two men in shining clothes suddenly stood beside them. The women were very afraid; they bowed their heads to the ground. The men said to the women, "Why are you looking for a living person here? This is a place for the dead. Jesus is not here. He has risen from death! Do you remember what he said in Galilee? He said that the Son of Man must be given to evil men, be killed on a cross, and rise from death on the third day." Then the women remembered what Jesus had said.

The women left the tomb and told all these things to the 11 apostles and the other followers. These women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and some other women. The women told the apostles everything that had happened at the tomb. But they did not believe the women. It sounded like nonsense. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He looked in, but he saw only the cloth that Jesus' body had been wrapped in. Peter went away to be alone, wondering about what had happened.

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

It's Easter Day, a time for celebrations and parties. Jesus is alive and he loves us. So hang up the bunting, put on the music, wear your best party clothes and sing, dance, feast and celebrate.

Table Top Discussions

What difference does it make to us that Jesus is alive? What signs of new life do you see in the world today?

Pray Together

The Empty Tomb

After Jesus died, his body was put into a tomb. Jesus' friends were afraid and confused; it was a dark time, but three days later, the tomb was empty, and Jesus was alive!

There are many signs of spring that are used to represent new life at Easter: chicks, lambs, eggs and flowers. Daffodils are bright yellow, helping us remember that at sunrise Mary went to the tomb and found it empty. They are a sign of spring and new life.



Cut out six yellow petals and a strip of darker yellow or orange paper to make the centre of a daffodil.

Stick the petals onto some card. Cut small slits in either side of the strip of paper and use the blunt edge of a pair of scissors to make the edges of one side curl. Form the strip into a tube, folding the tabs on one edge into the centre. Stick this edge to the petals to form the middle of the flower. The outer edge should now curl to make the trumpet part of the daffodil.



Each of us has hopes and dreams. Write or draw on each of the petals a prayer to God for your hopes and dreams and for things you want to thank God for.

A prayer to say together with your Daffodils:

Dear God, We praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus.

We praise you for the light of new life that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy, will live in us each day.

We lift our hopes and dreams to you and pray that we can shine your light into the lives of others. Amen



TO DO TOGETHER...

Crown of Butterflies



You will need: Your crown of thorns
Small squares of colourful paper
Double sided Sellotape

What you do:

Fold the square of paper in half and carefully rip a butterfly shape into it. You may want to draw a butterfly shape as a guide to help you.

Using double sided Sellotape or normal tape, attach to your crown of thorns to create a crown of butterflies. Add as many or as few as you wish.



Caterpillars wrap themselves in a cocoon of silk and transform into butterflies and so they are a good way to represent and remember the transformation which happened on Easter Sunday. Jesus had died and his body had been wrapped in cloth and placed in a tomb. But on Easter Sunday he rose and lived again and frowns were turned upside-down.

As an alternative, you could use the scraps of fabric from our prayers to make the butterflies, either cutting the shapes out or tying a piece of wool or thread round the middle to gather them together.



Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

At Home:

Try to take a little time out each day this week to remember that Jesus knows what it's like to be happy, to be sad, to be scared, to be hurting, to feel alone, to be made fun of, and to be loved. However we are feeling, Jesus knows what that's like. Take some time each day to share with God just how you're feeling.

Outside:

Lots of things die back during the winter months but spring into new life as spring arrives. Go on a daffodil hunt – in some parts of the country daffodils will just be appearing while in other parts of the country they may be nearing the end of their life. Can you find any? When you see them, thank God that Jesus is alive and lives with us for ever.

For Others:

Spread that Easter joy far and wide. Can you make some Easter cards for others?



The
United
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Church

**families
on faith adventures**

@ 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.



Illustration by Lambsongs.co.nz
via Freebibleimages.com

The Families on Faith Adventures @ Home team - Phil, Ruth, Nicola, Hannah, Judy, Heather and Lorraine - wish you and your family Easter joy. Jesus is alive!

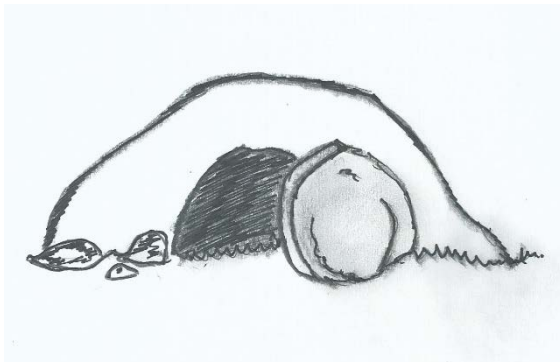
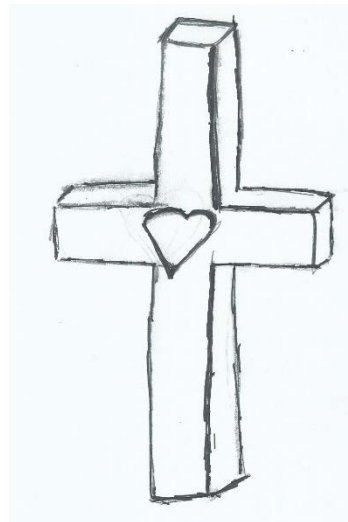
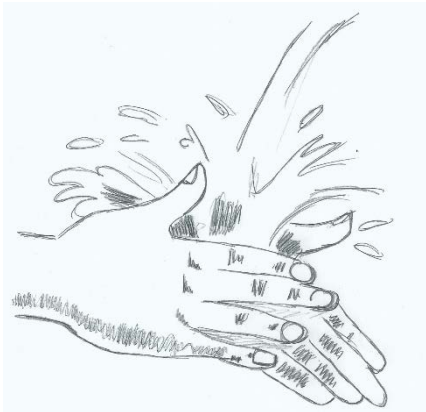
Created for you by Nicola Grieves (Eastern Synod), Judy Harris (National Synod of Wales), Hannah Middleton (Northern Synod), Philip Ray (Wessex Synod, North), Lorraine Webb (Programme Officer for CYW), and Ruth White (Wessex Synod, South) on behalf of the CYDO+ and Children's and Youth Work team and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



The
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Templates



Templates

