

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.

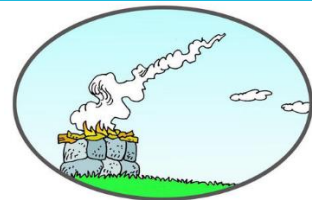
These ideas are designed to be intergenerational - maybe even to be shared with members of the family you can't see now except via the internet.

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:

See Yourself as God Sees You
Judges 6 verses 11-24



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.

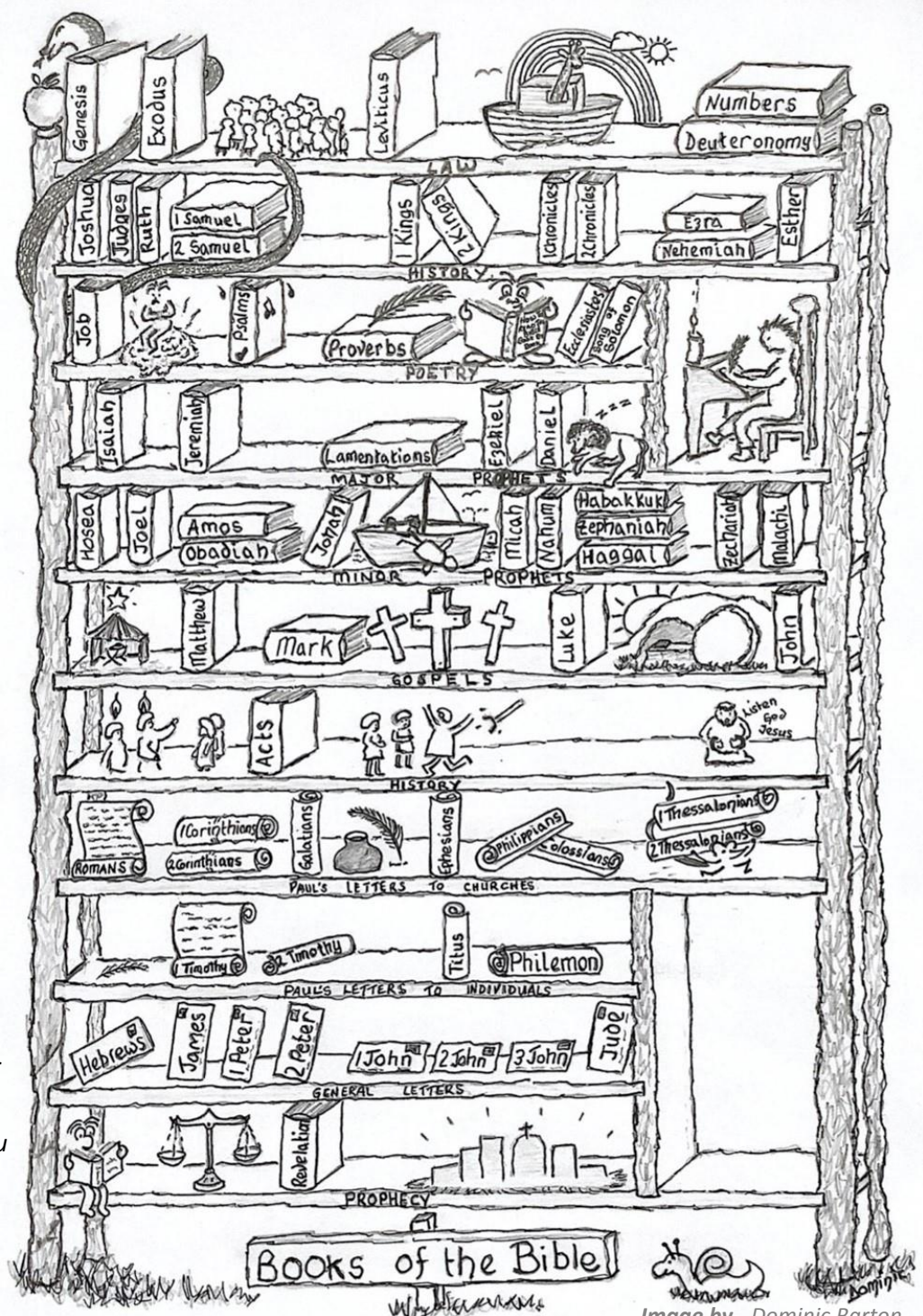
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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 – Judges

The book of Judges was written around 1050BC by Samuel the Prophet. The book tells the story, covering 300 years, when Israel was served by 15 different judges, including the most famous female judge, Deborah. Some of them were good judges and others were not. God was king over all the judges but not all of them listened to God.

This story is about one of the judges called Gideon. He is often called the greatest Judge of Israel. However, he is not what you might be expecting... he isn't from a fabulous tribe, he isn't the biggest or the bravest - in fact, when the story begins, we find Gideon hiding.

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Gideon by Crossroad Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U68clMZSqvQ>

Lego story of Gideon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jvSQxB9Als>

The Story for Toddlers https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqyCnk_r-AM

Told by children at Harbor Kids https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hT8a5td_UVw

Outrageous Gideon told by children <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWF19SMMQII>

Dance and Sing

Mighty Warrior <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wL7l104-ksw>

Looking at my heart toddler praise <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AS0Dqv-iJPo>

The God who sees <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sz81dlfwf4Y>

Be bold, be strong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRvCUz6KFB4>

Giddy up Gideon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWv0q-GdkkM>

The Story – Judges 6 v 11-24 (The International Children’s Bible)

The angel of the Lord came and sat down under an oak tree at Ophrah. The oak tree belonged to Joash, who was one of the Abiezrite people. Joash was the father of Gideon. Gideon was separating some wheat from the chaff in a winepress. Gideon did this to keep the wheat from the Midianites. The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!”

Then Gideon said, “Pardon me, sir. If the Lord is with us, why are we having so many troubles? Our ancestors told us he did miracles. They told us the Lord brought them out of Egypt. But now he has left us. He has allowed the Midianites to defeat us.”

The Lord turned to Gideon and said, “You have the strength to save the people of Israel. Go and save them from the Midianites. I am the one who is sending you.”

But Gideon answered, “Pardon me, Lord. How can I save Israel? My family group is the weakest in Manasseh. And I am the least important member of my family.”

The Lord answered him, “I will be with you. It will seem as if you are fighting only one man.”

Then Gideon said to the Lord, “If you are pleased with me, give me proof. Show me that it is really you talking with me. Please wait here. Do not go away until I come back to you. Let me bring my offering and set it in front of you.”

And the Lord said, “I will wait until you come back.”

So Gideon went in and cooked a young goat. He also took about 20 quarts of flour and made bread without yeast. Then he put the meat into a basket. And he put the broth from the boiled meat into a pot. He brought out the meat, the broth, and the bread without yeast. He brought the food to the angel of the Lord. Gideon gave it to him under the oak tree.

The angel of God said to Gideon, “Put the meat and the bread without yeast on that rock over there. Then pour the broth on them.” And Gideon did as he was told. The angel of the Lord had a stick in his hand. He touched the meat and the bread with the end of the stick. Then fire jumped up from the rock! The meat and the bread were completely burned up! And the angel of the Lord disappeared! Then Gideon understood he had been talking to the angel of the Lord. So Gideon cried, “Lord God! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!”

But the Lord said to Gideon, “Calm down! Don’t be afraid! You will not die!”

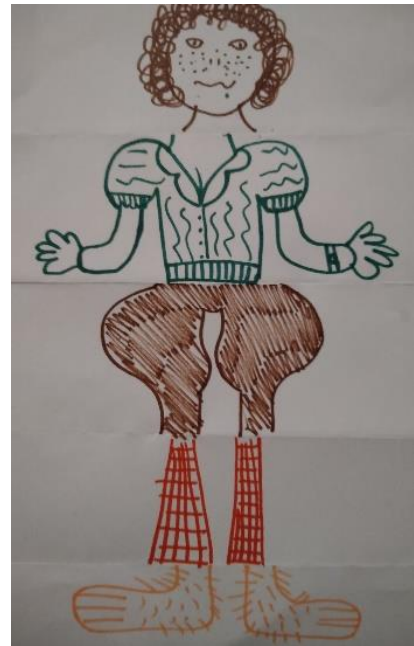
So Gideon built an altar there to worship the Lord. Gideon named the altar The Lord Is Peace. It still stands at Ophrah, where the Abiezrites live.

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Consequences – Draw A Person

Have some fun and play a game to explore what you 'see' as a mighty warrior. We would all describe it in different ways. But what happens when we merge all our ideas together. Take turns to draw your mighty warrior.

A simple game that can be played around a table. Each person has a piece of paper that has been folded into five equal sections. Start by unfolding the whole sheet and draw a head and a neck. Make it as crazy or detailed as you can. Fold your paper over so no one can see the head but a bit of the neck is still showing, then pass it to the next person. On the paper you are given, you now draw the torso and arms to the waist, fold it so that just the edge of the waist is showing and pass it on. Next draw the waist to knees, then the knees to ankles and finally the feet, folding over and passing round each time. When complete, unfold and admire your crazy creations...



People Shadows

Have some fun with shadows. Simply find a place where you cast a shadow, then add lots of random items to yourself, e.g. broom handles, colander hats, large pieces of paper and so on. You will look very silly but your shadow can look amazing, you can make yourself look like a mighty warrior. What else can you turn your shadow into?

BBQ and Story Time

Gideon and the angel of the Lord set fire to some meat and flat breads. Does this sound like a BBQ to you? Why not have an impromptu BBQ outside and enjoy telling this story around the fire. Don't chargrill your meat as much as Gideon did though.



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Table Top Discussions

Each day over a mealtime, have a quick conversation. Here are a few questions to get you going.

- *The angel of the Lord in the story is actually God. God met and talked with Gideon. What do you think the angel of the Lord looks like? Can you think of other stories in the Bible where the angel of the Lord appears to people?*
- *You might want to take some time to find out about Gideon. He wasn't the usual 'mighty warrior' and yet God used him. Can you think of any other people in the Bible who were not the obvious choice but God used them in mighty ways?*
- *Many of us have had lessons online, work online, we are all able to see everyone at the same time on the screen and be seen and heard in different ways. Some of us are comfortable looking at ourselves, others don't like it so much. How has it been for you?*
- *This story reminds us that God often sees us in ways that others don't. I wonder how God sees you?*

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.



Stones (preferably)
or building bricks



Something with
rainbow colours
for God's promise



Bread



A small toy to
represent Gideon



Flame coloured
fabric or tissue
paper



An angel –
Christmas
decoration, toy
dressed etc



Child-proof mirror

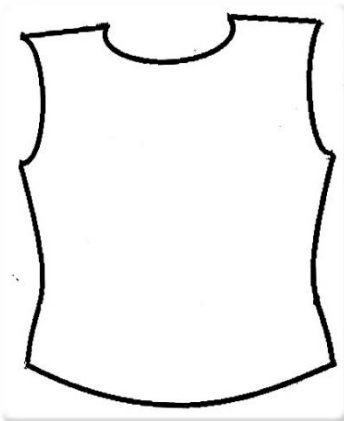
Pray Together

St Patrick's Breastplate Prayer

Gideon was not perhaps what you think a mighty warrior might be like, but God was with him and sent an angel to give him a message 'The Lord is with you mighty warrior'. We, like Gideon, do not always feel strong and brave, but God is always with us. Here is a prayer you can say that has been used for many centuries asking God to be with us.



St Patrick's breastplate is ancient Celtic prayer of protection. A breastplate is part of a suit of armour and gives protection to the body. Cut out a breastplate using the template and write the prayer of St Patrick on it or you could cut the prayer out and decorate it.



Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and
stranger.

Try saying the prayer with actions:

Christ be with me, (hands down by sides)

Christ within me. (cross arms over chest)

Christ behind me, (push hands back behind you)

Christ before me. (hold hands out in front of you)

Christ beside me, (hands down by sides)

Christ to win me. (raise arms in praise)

Christ to comfort (hug yourself)

and restore me. (bend over and then stretch arms up and out)

Christ beneath me, (squat down)

Christ above me, (reach up)

Christ in quiet, (finger on lips)

Christ in danger. (hands up in fear)

Christ in hearts of all that love me. (cross hands over heart)

Christ in mouth of friend and stranger. (fingertips on mouth then take them up and out)

Pray Together

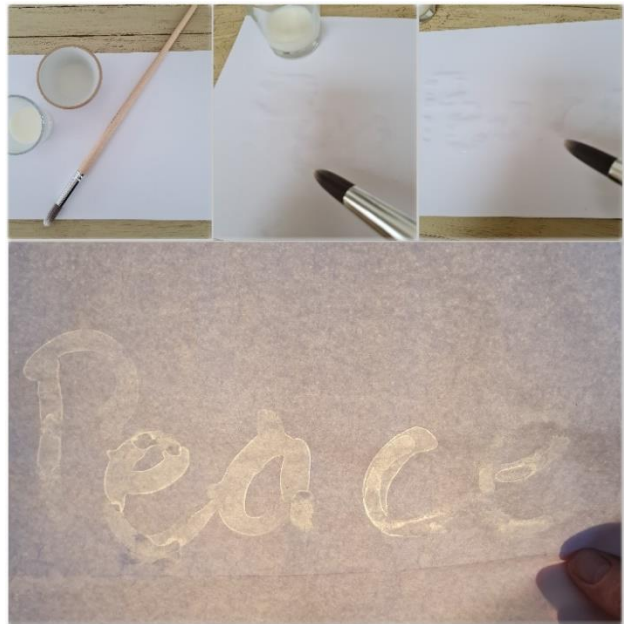
Invisible Prayers

Gideon did not see himself as God saw him, a mighty warrior. We do not always see ourselves in a positive way but God knows us and loves us. God sees what we cannot see ourselves.



Using milk or lemon juice, write a word of encouragement (for example: Love, peace, hope, be strong) on a sheet of plain paper. Allow the milk or lemon juice to dry and the words will become almost invisible.

Give this message to someone in your family or you could write message of encouragement to each other. Hold the message up to the light and as the light shines through the message will become visible.



Pray Together

Flat Bread Prayers

Gideon made flatbread (bread without yeast) and offered it up to the angel of the Lord. Because Gideon still did not see himself as the brave warrior that God said he was, the angel of the Lord burned up the food so that Gideon believed what God was saying to him.

Make some flatbread or you could buy some flatbread to share together. Place the flatbread in the centre of the table and each tear off a piece.



Once you all have a piece, pray for those people who live in places that are torn apart by war and for families that are torn apart and separated. Pray for those people who are ill and ask for healing. Pray for those with broken relationships.

Tear off a second piece of bread and this time pray for all those who need to know that God is with them and that they are not alone - those who have lost someone close to them, those who are lonely, those who are sad, those who are worried.

Tear off a third piece of the bread. Thank God for the food we have. Pray for all those who are hungry and don't have enough food to eat. Pray for those who help to run food banks and feed the homeless. Pray that we will all be people who help those in need.

I wonder what you think
God saw in Gideon to
make God call him a
mighty Warrior?

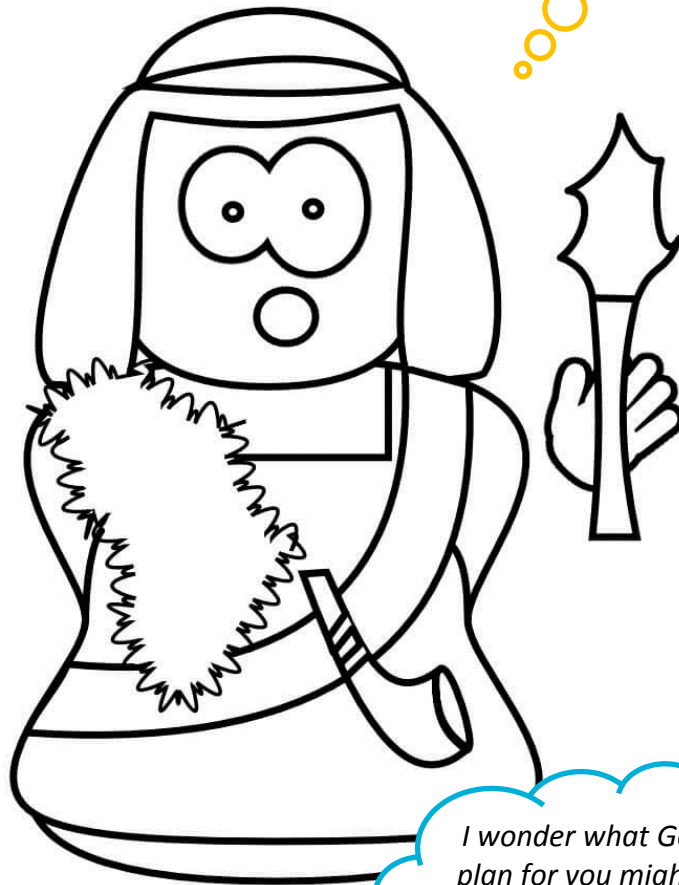
I wonder if you can think
of a time when you've
done more than you
thought you were capable
of??

I wonder what God's
plan was for
Gideon?

Gideon

I wonder which is
your favourite
part of this story?

I wonder what God's
plan for you might be
and how easy you will
find it to say yes?





TO DO TOGETHER...

Transformers

You will need: Paper
Pencils
Scissors



What you do:

Draw an image of someone ordinary, someone who may seem like they can't do much.

Make sure they have a hat on to make the transformer work.

Colour them in and cut the face out.

Carefully fold over the hat shape, to make a superhero mask and colour it in.

Gideon was the youngest child in the smallest tribe in the WHOLE of Israel but God transformed him into a mighty hero.





TO DO TOGETHER...

Magic Pictures

You will need: Clear plastic pouch
2 pieces of paper
Small rectangle of card
Fine black permanent marker

What you do:

Draw a picture in pencil on your first piece of paper.

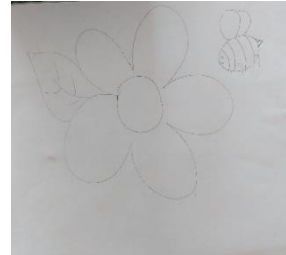
Colour it in without an outline.

Place the sheet of paper with your picture on it into the plastic pouch and draw the outline of your image onto the plastic pouch with permanent marker.

On the short edge of the blank piece of paper, attach a small rectangle of card to create a pull tag.

Insert the plain paper into the pouch on top of the first piece so that it hides the colour drawing.

Slowly pull back on the tab. It will reveal the coloured image, transforming the black and white image into a beautiful piece of art. God doesn't see us as just a plain image, God views us in all our beautiful colours.



<https://youtu.be/jLWMWihq8qg>



TO DO TOGETHER...

Toasting Marshmallows

You will need: Marshmallows
Skewers
Some source of heat (candle, BBQ, fire pit, Gas stove)

What you do:

Before you start soak your skewers in water if you are using wooden skewers.



Place your marshmallow on the tip of the skewer and carefully hold it over the heat source you are using.

We recommend that an adult should supervise or help with this to avoid burning or fire risk.

When it is golden brown, eat and enjoy. *Be careful as it may be hot!*

Think about the story of Gideon and the angel of the Lord while you are waiting for your marshmallow to toast.





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families
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Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

At Home:

Take some time to look in the mirror and remember how much God loves you, just as you are. I wonder what God sees and smiles about when looking at you and how God might use you and ask you to help with God's plans? I wonder what you've done this week that only God has seen?

Outside:

Gideon built a pile of stones and dedicated it to the God of Peace. Can you find somewhere outside where you can make a small pile of stones and say a prayer to God? Maybe it would be a good place to have a picnic, too! Eating together is one of the ways God gives us to share as disciples.

For Others:

Sometimes people find it difficult to see what's good about them, to see themselves how God sees them. This is where you come in – share with other people and tell them what you see in them that is good.



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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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Templates

