

## 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:

Trust How God Sees  
Judges 7 verses 1-8 & 16-21



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.

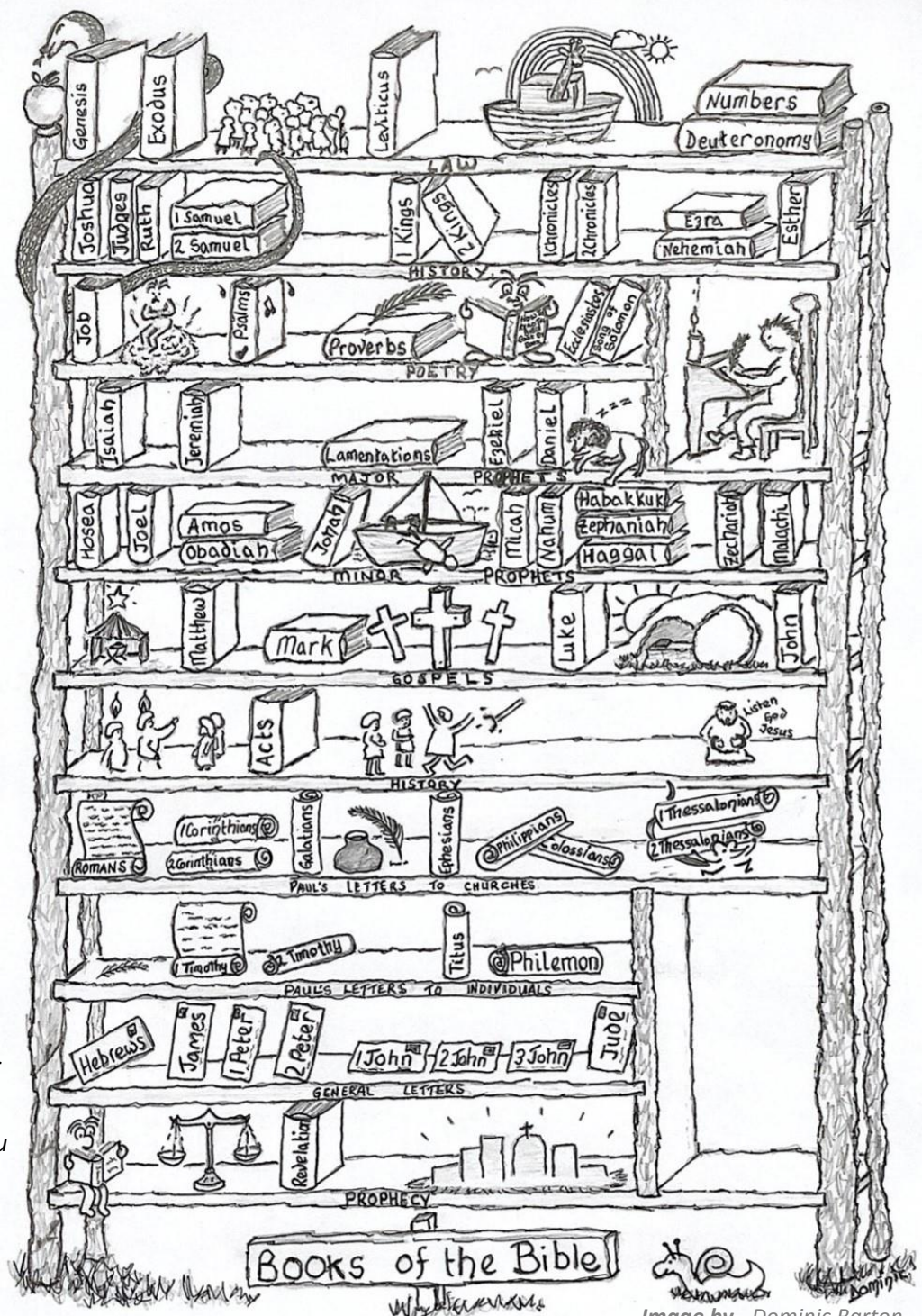
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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 named Gideon. God has called him to lead an army into Battle with the Midianites. Gideon has 32,000 men but God says we only need 100. How will they decide who to choose?*

### **Online versions of the story**

#### **Watch and Listen**

*Gideons 300 men by Slapstick theatre <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3CDZipkDKU>*

*Gideons Victory lap by Bimbam <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqVxa1uef2q>*

*Told by children <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6DFIIaT6Xk>*

*Fun story with sound effects by Kidsonthemove*

*[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za8SG8\\_bWsM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za8SG8_bWsM)*

#### **Dance and Sing**

*Strong and courageous <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t34ajxa7TCI>*

*Gideon had the Lord <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNG1bFFpSYQ>*

*Trust in the Lord <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOaB0sjiGus>*

*Stand Together <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ3VkgIkmuo>*

*We will go by Watoto Children's Choir <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCEGDkdXOcM>*



**The Story – Judges 7 v 1-8 & 16-21 (The International Children’s Bible)**

Early in the morning Jerub-Baal and all his men set up their camp at the spring of Harod. (Jerub-Baal is also called Gideon.) The Midianites were camped north of them. The Midianites were camped in the valley at the bottom of the hill called Moreh. Then the Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many men to defeat the Midianites. I don’t want the Israelites to brag that they saved themselves. So now, announce to the people, ‘Anyone who is afraid may leave Mount Gilead. He may go back home.’” And 22,000 men went back home. But 10,000 remained.

Then the Lord said to Gideon, “There are still too many men. Take the men down to the water, and I will test them for you there. If I say, ‘This man will go with you,’ he will go. But if I say, ‘That one will not go with you,’ he will not go.”

So Gideon led the men down to the water. There the Lord said to him, “Separate them. Those who drink water by lapping it up like a dog will be in one group. Those who bend down to drink will be in the other group.” There were 300 men who used their hands to bring water to their mouths. They lapped it as a dog does. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

Then the Lord said to Gideon, “I will save you, using the 300 men who lapped the water. And I will allow you to defeat Midian. Let all the other men go to their homes.” So Gideon sent the rest of Israel to their homes. But he kept 300 men. He took the jars and the trumpets of those who went home.

Then Gideon divided the 300 men into three groups. He gave each man a trumpet and an empty jar. A burning torch was inside each jar.

Gideon told the men, “Watch me and do what I do. When I get to the edge of the camp, do what I do. Surround the enemy camp. I and everyone with me will blow our trumpets. When we blow our trumpets, you blow your trumpets, too. Then shout, ‘For the Lord and for Gideon!’”

So Gideon and the 100 men with him came to the edge of the enemy camp. They came just after the enemy had changed guards. It was during the middle watch of the night. Then Gideon and his men blew their trumpets and smashed their jars. All three groups of Gideon’s men blew their trumpets and smashed their jars. ... They held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands. Then they shouted, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!” Each of Gideon’s men stayed in his place around the camp. But inside the camp, the men of Midian began shouting and running away.

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

### **Who would you choose?**

*The Bible is full of stories of people being chosen by God to do amazing things, for example God chose a shepherd boy to be King (David). What other examples can you think of? Why not research some others in the Bible and share the stories with each other?*

*The URC celebrate the stories that they hear about normal people doing amazing things. Here is one example of a young man named Henry, who used his passion for street lights to make a difference to people far away.*

<https://urc.org.uk/news-from-the-lundie-memorial-award/3440-may-2020-henry-stapleton-east-midlands-synod.html>

### **The Haka**

*Gideon's men were told to smash their lamps and shout loudly. This was to confuse and frighten their enemies. If you have ever watched professional rugby, you will be familiar with the Haka.*

*Here is an explanation of what it is and what it looks like.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnlFocaA64M>

*How to do the Haka <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5cHEID5cf8>*

*Why not have a go at creating your own warrior Haka? What movements will you use to show how strong you are? How will you make noises to show your power? What facial expressions will you use to intimidate your enemies?*

## **Table Top Discussions**

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

- *In this story, we see Gideon the Judge needing to listen and follow God's judgement instead of his own. God is the ultimate judge and we can trust his judgments. But how easy is it to do this?*
- *I wonder what this story says to you as a family and as individuals at the moment?*
- *I wonder what Gideon's army were thinking before they broke their lamps? Were they scared? Were they doubting? Have you ever been in a situation when you have been scared/nervous but had to simply trust God?*
- *Whose judgments/opinion do you take notice of? Who do you go to when you need help with a decision and why?*

## 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.

A trumpet or something to make a noise



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



A toy to represent Gideon and his army



A toy sword and shield or similar made of cardboard



A torch or LED candle to make light



Dark fabric for night and bright fabric for the light of the army



## Pray Together

### Stand Firm

*I wonder what Gideon's army were thinking before they broke their lamps? Were they scared? Were they doubting? Perhaps there are things that make you feel scared, worried or nervous. Gideon might have felt afraid but he trusted God and he followed God's instructions.*

*When we need to feel brave, even though inside things make us feel wobbly, we can stand firm with God just as Gideon did.*

*Say this prayer together with actions:*



*When people try to push me, (Move body from side to side)*

*Jesus, I'll stand firm. (Stand straight)*

*When I feel frightened, worried or nervous, (Curl down into a ball)*

*Jesus, I'll stand firm. (Stand straight)*

*When I don't know where I'm going. (Raise hand over your eyes as if looking into the distance)*

*Jesus, I'll stand firm. (Stand straight)*

*When people upset me or say unkind things, (Turn head to one side as if ignoring someone)*

*Jesus, I'll stand firm. (Stand straight)*

*Amen.*

*Adpated from Roots*

*Here is a song that you can use with this prayer – have a go at making your own actions to the song. You could march like Gideon and stand firm, just as in the prayer.*

*Stand Together <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ3Vklkmuo>*



## Pray Together

### Lapping Water Prayers

*Gideon led the men down to the water. The Lord said to him, "Separate them. Those who drink water by lapping it up like a dog will be in one group. Those who bend down to drink will be in the other group."*

*Sometimes we are faced with decisions about what is the right thing to do.*



*As a family or group, get a bowl of water and place it in the centre of the table or floor. Take it in turns to cup the water in your hand and let it run through your fingers.*

*As you do this, talk to God about the decisions that you find difficult to make. Ask God to be with you and guide you.*



### An alternative

*Get your favourite mug and fill it with something to drink. Hold the cup in your hands, wrapping them around the mug. Sip gently from the drink and, each time you lift it to your lips, think about what you want to say to God. Just like having a conversation, let the cup rest in your hands for a while between sips and make space to listen to God.*





## Pray Together

### Trust In The Lord

Think about times when things can be difficult and when we'd really like to know God is with us, or even times when we are on our own and feel lonely. God is always there ready to hold us up.

**Trust the Lord with all your heart. Don't lean on your own understanding.**

**Remember the Lord in everything you do.**

*Proverbs 3:5&6*

This bible verse helps us remember that we can trust God and do not have to do things on our own. God is always with us, just as God was with Gideon.



Write God on a piece of paper and stick it to something strong and solid like a wall. Press hard against the word with all your weight and say the bible verse, remembering that you do not stand alone because you can lean on God.



*I wonder why God  
sent most of the  
army home?*

*I wonder what is your  
favourite bit of this story  
and why?*

*I wonder whether  
the army felt silly  
doing what God  
asked?*



*I wonder why Gideon  
trusted God?  
Has there ever been a  
time when you've  
needed to trust God?*

*I wonder whether God has  
ever called you to do  
something which you've  
only really understood  
afterwards?*



**TO DO TOGETHER...**

**Chatter Box Choosing**



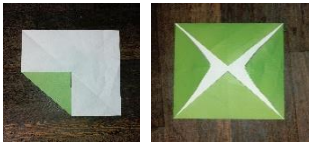
**You will need:** Square piece of paper



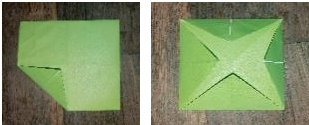
**What you do:**

*Fold the square piece of paper across the diagonals.*

*Turn it over and fold the corners into the middle.*



*Turn it over and fold the corners into the middle once more.*



*Fold the square in half.*

*Place your thumb and index finger of each hand in each flap.*



*Write inside some different choices - we used numbers, colours and activities. Play with the chatterbox toy and think about how you make choices, just like God helped Gideon choose his Army.*







## TO DO TOGETHER...

### Portraits

**You will need:** A cardboard frame and a plastic pocket.  
Permanent marker pens

**What you do:**

Create your frame by attaching the plastic pocket to the frame shape.

Ask the person you want to create a protrait of to hold the frame in front of their face.

Using permanent marker pens, draw in their eyes, nose, mouth, eyebrows and other features they have.

*I wonder if your protrait looks like the person?*

*God see us as others see us, not always how we think we look.*



### Alternative

You could use a cake box lid.

Clean and dry the cake-box lid to use first.





## PLAY TOGETHER...

### Guess Who

**You will need:** Family photos



**What you do:**

Lay out the range of family photos and one person chooses a photo without telling the others which one they have chosen. The other players take turns asking yes or no questions to try and guess the correct photo. Do they have a beard? Are they in a garden?



God chose the army for Gideon by selecting them like a game of Guess Who – choosing the ones who fit with God's plan.

If you are playing this game with lots of people over Zoom, instead of using photos you could all dress up and play it with the pictures you see on the screen. As people are eliminated, they can turn off their camera.





The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

**families  
on faith adventures**

*at home*

# Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

**At Home:**

*What good can you do that only God sees this week? Each evening in your prayers, ask God to use your skills and talents as part of God's plan.*

**Outside:**

*Gideon and his tiny army made a big noise in praise of God. Outdoors is a perfect place for making a big noise. It's not always easy to make a big noise for God where everyone can see and hear you – you need to be brave and it's easier once you start. How might you make a big noise for God?*

**For Others:**

*Often making a big noise for God is about making a big noise about injustice. There are many things that happen in our world which need us to make a big noise about them. Racism, discrimination, the environment, poverty, and so much more. How can you raise awareness of something in God's world that is unfair or simply wrong in God's eyes? What can you do to make a difference?*





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](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.*



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

