

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 family or friends 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:

Set Free Too
Acts 16 verses 23-40



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.

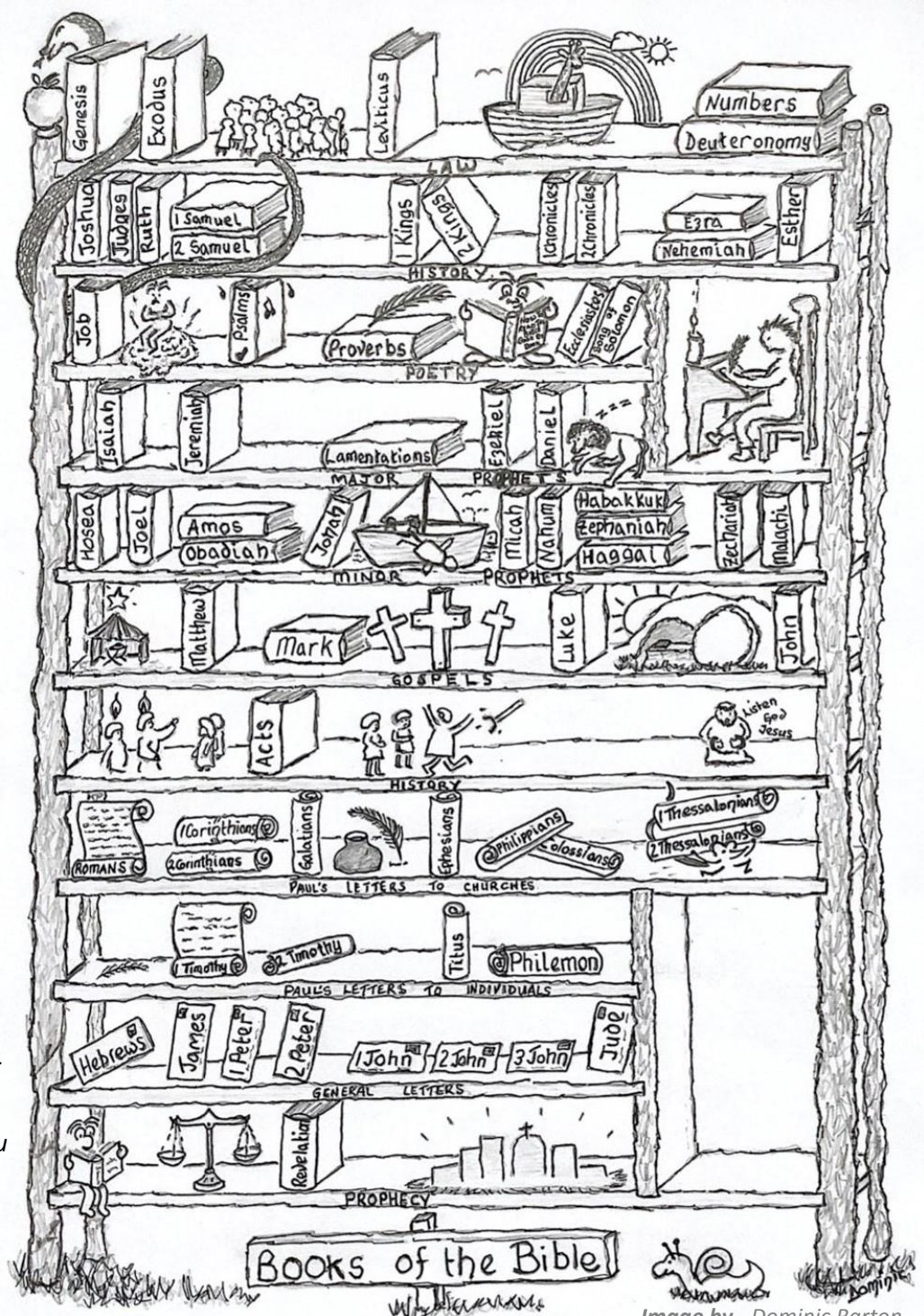
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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 –Acts

The book of Acts was written by Luke around 62 AD. It tells the stories of what the disciples did after Jesus left them. It is the only book in the bible that tells us how the early Christian church began. Chapters 1 – 12 follow the story of Peter and chapters 13 to the end follow the missionary journeys of Paul (who used to be called Saul).

This story sees Paul and his friend Silas sitting in prison for preaching and for freeing a slave girl. They are not forgotten; their friends are busy praying for them in a nearby house. Is this the end for Paul and Silas? Will they ever see the light of day again? How could they ever escape?

Online versions of the story

Watch and Listen

Animation by Superbook <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mX9iiR7r54q>

Cartoon by Crossroads Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y24Ak7DJZFg>

Animation by Bible Heroes of Faith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZDLJ41c6oE>

Retold by children at Pursue God Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qy1pOhkdUws&t=23s>

Dance and Sing

Sing, Sing, Sing by Kids Worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkA05wu4OAs>

I'll Praise You by Kids Worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA2SPqiuddc>

Every Praise by Hezekiah Walker <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMwTiy-nedY>

You never let go by Kids Worship https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62H_ICNRKi8

Battle Belongs by Phil Wickham

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiPNieLnt0s>

The Story –Acts 16 v 23-40(The International Children’s Bible)

After being severely beaten, Paul and Silas were thrown into jail. The jailer was ordered to guard them carefully. When he heard this order, he put them far inside the jail. He pinned down their feet between large blocks of wood.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing songs to God. The other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly, there was a big earthquake. It was so strong that it shook the foundation of the jail. Then all the doors of the jail broke open. All the prisoners were freed from their chains. The jailer woke up and saw that the jail doors were open. He thought that the prisoners had already escaped. So he got his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul shouted, “Don’t hurt yourself! We are all here!”

The jailer told someone to bring a light. Then he ran inside. Shaking with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, “Men, what must I do to be saved?”

They said to him, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved—you and all the people in your house.” So Paul and Silas told the message of the Lord to the jailer and all the people in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and all his people were baptized immediately. After this the jailer took Paul and Silas home and gave them food. He and his family were very happy because they now believed in God.

The next morning, the Roman officers sent the police to tell the jailer, “Let these men go free!”

The jailer said to Paul, “The officers have sent an order to let you go free. You can leave now. Go in peace.”

But Paul said to the police, “They beat us in public without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens. And they threw us in jail. Now they want to make us go away quietly. No! Let them come themselves and bring us out!”

The police told the Roman officers what Paul said. When the officers heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid. So they came and told Paul and Silas they were sorry. They took Paul and Silas out of jail and asked them to leave the city. So when they came out of the jail, they went to Lydia’s house. There they saw some of the believers and encouraged them. Then they left.

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

Radio Play

Use the script below to create your own radio play of the story. Gather an assortment of different things to make sounds with and have some fun.

One person reads the story whilst everyone else tries to bring it alive with sounds. The story has been written with plenty of sound opportunities. You could have a go at recording it.

Paul and Silas had been thrown into jail and the doors were locked.

They were deep in the prison walls, down many steps.

They were sat in a damp room with their feet in wooden stocks and their hands in chains.

They could hear the dripping water from the leaky roof and the cries and shouts of other prisoners and guards.

They could hear people outside the jail, walking about above their heads.

They could hear the hustle and bustle of the marketplace.

Paul and Silas spent their time singing and praying to God, loudly.

The jailer was asleep, snoring and dreaming.

Suddenly, the ground began to shake, the walls began to tumble, a massive earthquake shook the prison and the doors broke open.

All the chains fell off the prisoners, the prisoners were free.

The jailor woke up suddenly and saw what had happened.

He thought he was in serious trouble but Paul shouted, 'WAIT! Don't harm yourself, we are all here, no one has escaped.'

The jailor was amazed, and he fell to his knees.

Paul and Silas were set free the next day and ran to Lydia's house.

They knocked on the door. Lydia and all the church were praying for Paul and Silas and were amazed to see them.

They invited them in and gave them a meal.

Everybody celebrated that day; it was a great party.

Set The Prisoner Free

Last week we encouraged you to choose something from each of you to put in prison for the week. This week we will set them free. I wonder what you put into jail. I wonder how much you missed it. How did it feel to want something back? Did you find yourself thinking about it all the time and wanting it more? How did you support each other during the week? What was it like for the ones in prison, were they out of sight, out of mind? Did they lose their value because they couldn't be of use?

Discuss these things together as you decide how you will set your items free.

Could you make it a celebration or perhaps a reward for beating the escape room mentioned in games?

Games to Play Together

The Jailor's Keys

Everyone sits in a circle and one person is in the centre on a chair. Under the chair are the noisiest bunch of keys you can find.

The person on the chair is the jailor who pretends to be asleep (blindfolded).

Someone in the circle is chosen and must try to creep forward, steal the keys, and return to their seat without being caught.

The blindfolded jailor listens for movement and points to where they think the escapee is.

Everyone can have a go at being jailor and escapee.

Escape Room

Why not set up an escape room and challenge each other to escape from it? You could set up some challenges or questions that need to be completed to win your freedom. Or how about a 'laser room'; use string to make a web in a room and challenge people to escape from it without disturbing any strings.

Table Top Discussions

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

- *I wonder what Paul and Silas were singing in the jail? What is your favourite worship song and why? You could sing a song together each mealtime this week as a loud celebration of God's love.*
- *Paul and Silas refused to leave the prison in secret, they wanted the magistrates to come and publicly set them free. Why do you think this was important to them?*
- *Where do you see God in this story?*
- *What are the things that imprison people today? How can God help them?*
- *Lydia and the church were praying for Paul and Silas, they never gave up asking God to be with them and help them. Who are the people that support you in this way?*
- *The jailor and his family all became Christians that night. What difference has it made in your life, to be a Christian?*

families on faith adventures

at home

What's in the box?

What treasures can you find to put in the box for your little ones to explore?

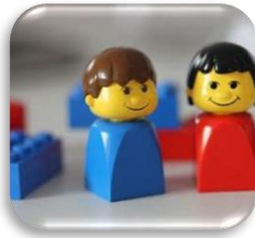
Perhaps older children could help find the things.



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.



Something with
rainbow colours
for God's promise



Small toys to
represent Paul
and Silas

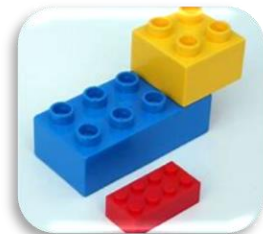


Chains – maybe jewellery
chains, paper clip chains or
even paper chains, depending
on what's available



A bag with
coins in

A hard surface to
rattle chains on



Bricks to build a prison



A padlock and key,
or just some keys

Please supervise small children! Watch out for chain or string getting caught around fingers, wrists or neck etc, for children putting small items in their mouth or nose, for sharp edges

Pray Together



Paper Chain Prayers



Cut strips of paper to create prayer 'strips'.
Think about different things that you would like to pray for.

Here are some prayer ideas for your paper chain:

- A person who you would like to pray for. This could be someone close to you or someone you don't know very well or even know at all.
- A place in the world that needs our prayers (you may need to discuss this together).
- Something that needs to change so that the world can be a better place for everyone.

Join your prayer strips together to make a paper chain.

A prayer to say together holding the paper chain:

***Loving God, we join together to give our prayers to you,
for people, for places and for problems.
May we be filled with your love and strength,
to make a difference in the world. Amen***

As you end your prayers, break open the chain just as Paul and Silas's chains were broken.

Praise Prayer Songs

In the prison Paul and Silas sang their praise to God. Here are two short praise prayers to sing together to the tune of 'Frere Jacques':

*Singing praises, singing praises,
to our God, to our God.
Thank you that you love us,
thank you that you love us,
You are great, Thank you God.
Amen*

*Worship God, Worship God
With your voice, in your heart:
Singing alleluia
Singing alleluia
Thank you God, for your love.
Amen*

As an alternative you could make up your own words together.

Pray Together

Unlocking Key Prayers

Keys can make us feel safe by either locking or unlocking. Choose a key to hold and sit quietly looking at the key. Think about things you would like to unlock. Perhaps there is something that you want to do but are not sure if you can. What gifts and talents do you have that you want to develop? What challenges do you face that you would like to unlock? How can you open the way for others to get to know God?



As you look at the key, talk to God about what you want to unlock and imagine the key opening a door.

***Lord Jesus,
you are the key to our joy, and we praise you.
You are the key to our healing, and we worship you.
You are the key to our future, and we trust you.
You are the key to our uncertainty.
Come into our hearts
to unlock within us all that needs freeing.
Amen.***

(from Roots)

Place the key down somewhere where you will see it as a reminder of your prayers.

*I wonder whether
Paul and Silas
were scared?*

*I wonder what the
other prisoners thought
and did when they
found themselves free?*

*I wonder which was
your favourite bit of
this story?*



*I wonder why Paul
and Silas didn't just
run away when they
got the chance?*

*I wonder how life
changed for the
jailer's family?*

To Do Together...

Paul and Silas in Jail

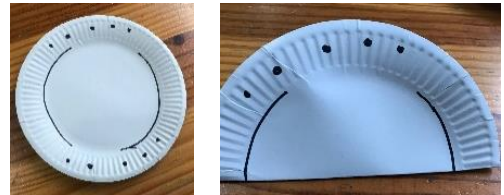
You will need: Circles of card or two paper plates
 Template of Paul and Silas
 Hole punch or sharp pencil to make holes
 Wool/string
 Scissors

What you do:

Using the template, colour and stick on card or onto the middle of one paper plate, and cut as shown.



With the second piece of card or paper plate, cut along black lines as shown (the dots are where you will put holes to make prison bars). Top tip: easy way to cut card circle/plate - fold in half!



Place the first piece of card/paper plate through the second card/paper plate.



Add holes and attach wool/string bars. Do not worry if your prison bars are not stright, don't forget there had been an earthquake! (the back of your card might look like this, which is fine. Cut wool/string and knot or fasten to card using stickytape.



Now you can realese Paul and Silas from jail - Hurray!

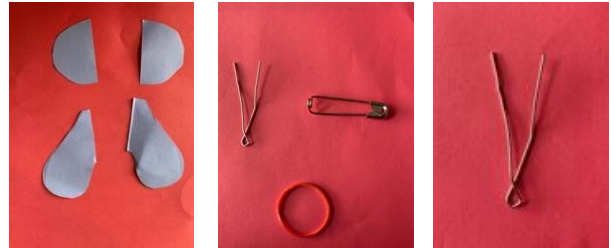




To Do Together...

Fluttering Butterflies

You will need: Large safety pin
Paper clip
Small elastic band
Thin coloured paper
(or origami paper)



What you do:

Open a paper clip, and twist in half to create a loop.

Using pliers, bend the loop at the closed end of the safety pin 90 degrees.

Attach an elastic band to the loop of the paperclip.

Feed the rubber band through loop at the end of the safety pin and push the loop of the paperclip through too (see pictures).

Attach the rubber band to the other end of the safety pin by slipping it through the fastener and then squeeze it tight with pliers so that the rubber band cannot come off.

Cut out 2 small semi-circles and 2 larger semi-circles to create wings. Decorate as you wish.

Tape wings to the device, the larger wings taped around each of the two sides of the safety pin and the smaller wings taped to the two lengths of paperclip.



Wind it up by turning the two lengths of paperclip to create a twist in the elastic band as tightly as you can. Trap it in your hands, then set it free and watch it fly!

As you trap the butterfly, think of the story and how God set Paul and Silas free.



To Do Together...

Earthquake Jelly

You will need: Jelly
Chocolate fingers
or thin chocolate sticks
(eg Mikado or long Matchmakers)
Kinder Cards (chocolate)
or wafers
Jelly babies or similar



What you do:

Make some jelly according to the instructions and allow it to set in a flat container.

When it is set, transfer it to a big plate or tray.

Take the kinder cards and create a room for two jelly babies to be trapped inside.

Place the chocolate fingers or chocolate sticks across the top to trap the jelly babies in.

Retell the story of Paul and Silas in jail. Then shake the plate to create a jelly earthquake to let them out.



Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

At Home:

Being a jailer is a tough job and doesn't make you very popular. Are there other jobs that people do that are not popular but someone has to do them? Maybe things like traffic wardens, funeral directors, refuse collectors. You can probably think of many more. Find a way to thank them for doing their job.

Outside:

Paul and Silas didn't keep quiet about their faith, even in prison, and when they were free they continued to follow Jesus very publicly. What can you do outdoors to show people you follow Jesus or that Jesus can set people free from the things that hold them back from living life to the full?

For Others:

After the earthquake, the jailer's first action was to tend Paul and Silas's injuries and wounds. This week, maybe you could learn some first aid so that you can help people too. This page might help you <https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/primary/first-aid-skills/> or you could watch this Operation Ouch special https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNxNIsQ_SzY



The
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**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
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

