

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:

Clothed In Love
Colossians 3 verses 12 - 17



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.

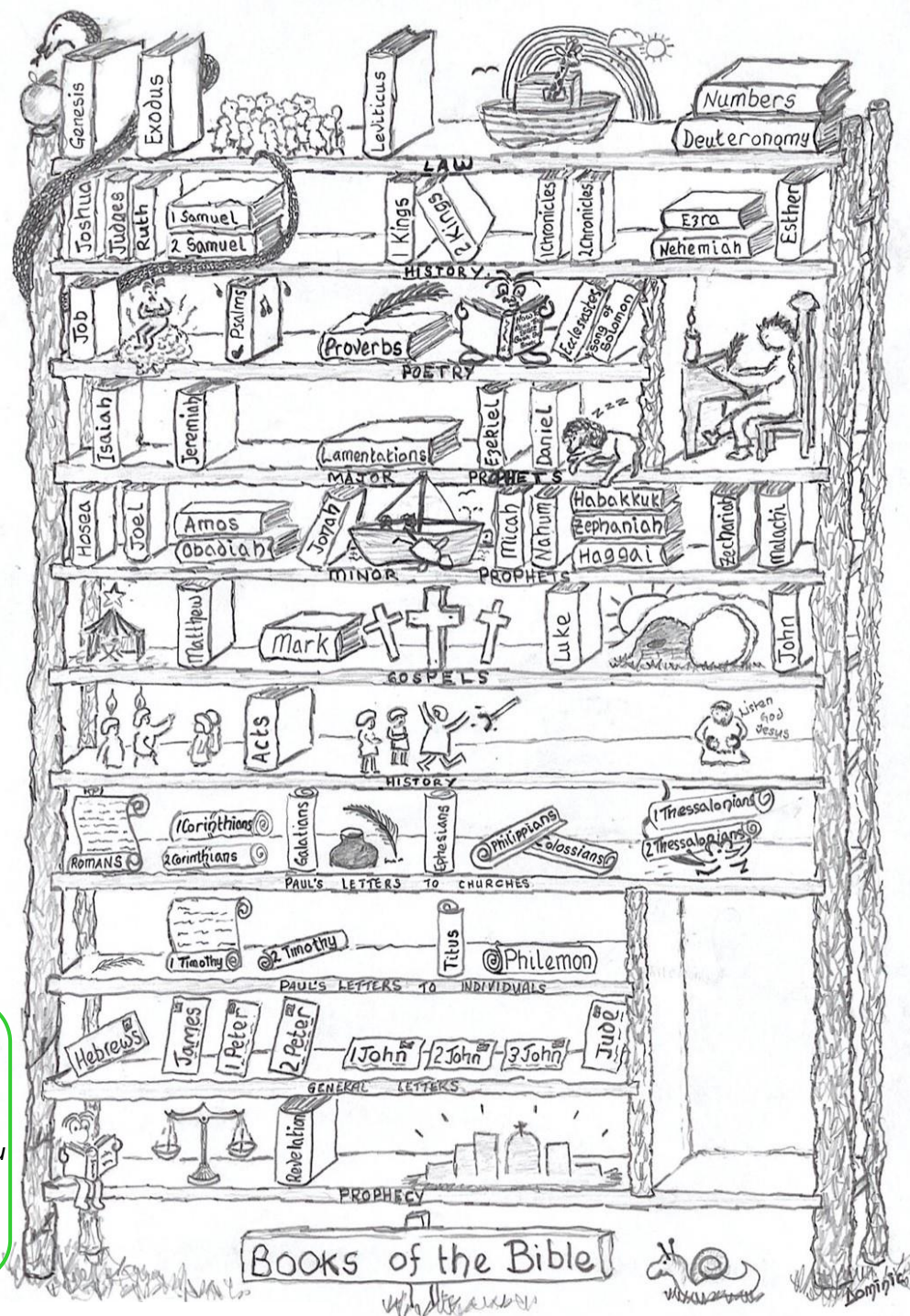
The New Testament tells us the stories of Jesus and his followers. There are 27 books in the New Testament.



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 – Clothed In Love

The book of Colossians was written around 60 AD by Paul, one of Jesus disciples. It is a letter written by Paul to the church in Colossi. The church had started to mix their Christian beliefs with other Greek beliefs and it was complicating things. Paul wants to remind them that Jesus was more than a prophet, Jesus was God's Son. He wanted them to clothe themselves in God's love and this would help them to make wise choices and follow God's ways.

The Story – Colossians 3 v 12 - 17 (The New International Readers Version)

You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient. Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. And over all these good things put on love. Love holds them all together perfectly as if they were one.

Let the peace that Christ gives rule in your hearts. As parts of one body, you were appointed to live in peace. And be thankful. Let the message about Christ live among you like a rich treasure. Teach and correct one another wisely. Teach one another by singing psalms and hymns and songs from the Spirit. Sing to God with thanks in your hearts. Whatever you do, do in the name of the Lord Jesus. Always give thanks to God the Father through Christ.

Online versions of the story

Watch and listen

Putting on love by CM Bible <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXIk5AZzWVg>

The reflection in me by Fable vision (exploring what you reflect)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9OOXCu5XMg>

Reflecting Jesus by Children's ministry deals

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzUN1iq4Tno>

Whatever you do, do it for God by Douglas Talks (puppet)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZQUbs3A9VE&t=65s>

Dance and sing

Put on Love by Seeds Family worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN5sdqms2Lg>

Shine from the inside out by Nick Jackson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFplX5o754Y>

Whatever you do by Seeds Family Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpA24k6256l>

Shine a light by Kids on the move <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdUO54dM-ls>

This little light of mine by Listener Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkbIZtghyQ>



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at home

Ideas to Retell/Explore the Story

This episode comes after three others where we have explored God being our light that never goes out, always with us, speaking to us. This week, we are encouraged to light and love further (especially written for release round Halloween) and to consider how God's love in our life means we are protected; we have peace and we can shine God's love to others.

Your family might be considering what is right for you to do around the time of Halloween. We hope this resource will help you to explore together and make your own decisions. For some, they will run something alternative for their children and friends, others will go out with the crowd but in a way that they are sharing God's light and love with others. The message of the reading is clear; Whatever you choose to do, represent God in everything you do.

Mirror moments

Place a question on your mirrors asking, "How are you reflecting Jesus today?" or "Do you see Jesus today?"

Keep it there all week as a challenge to everyone who looks into the mirror.

Jesus often turned people's beliefs and attitudes on their heads, turned them inside out and back to front. For example, he ate with people that no-one important would normally be seen with. He healed people on the day of rest. I wonder what Jesus would be doing on Halloween in your community?

Explore this theme using the two ideas below.

Backwards writing

Challenge each other to write your name or even a sentence backwards, then place a mirror by the side to see how you did. You could try writing some of the words from the reading e.g. Peace, Compassion, Love. Talk about how we are meant to be reflecting God and God's love to others, what does that mean?

Opposite's game

Take the key words from the reading and play a game of opposites. The group have to come up with as many examples for each word and then as many opposites for the word. For example:

Peace. Examples could be calm, centred, still waters, quiet, bird song etc

Opposites of Peace could be anger, noise, loud, scared, and so on

Perhaps think about how God offers to do a swap with us. If we give God our anger or fear, God will give us peace and love. If we give God our sadness, God will give us gladness and comfort.

What does it mean to show the opposite of Halloween?

Positive messages for trick or treaters

One church gave all their members a brightly coloured poster to put in the window for Halloween it said:

We don't celebrate Halloween but we do celebrate you. Please knock for a treat.

And when people knocked the door, they were given brightly coloured sweets and treats with blessings and God's love.

Here's a link to the episode from last year for more ideas:

https://urc.org.uk/images/Children-and-youth/Resources/Families_on_Faith_Adventures-Week_30-God_Is.pdf

Modern parables - stories that explore the theme further

Patch the pumpkin story (share your light and warmth)

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

Pumpkin Patch Parable by Liz Curtis Higgs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LafNU7MQ948>

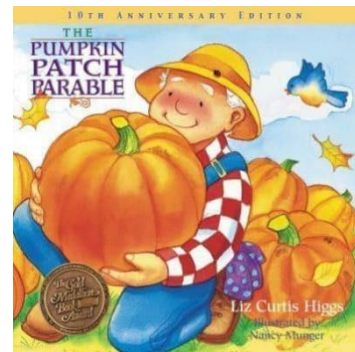


Table Top Discussions

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

- Paul was writing to a church that had got its beliefs mixed up. Discuss what Halloween is about and how your beliefs might be different. How might your beliefs differ from your friends or neighbours?
- What does it mean to reflect God's love into the world? What would that look like?
- Can you think of a time when you needed to forgive someone? What steps did you take? Why is it important to forgive?
- What does it mean to have a heart that's filled with God's peace?
- Paul tells us 'whatever you do, do it for God' – I wonder what that means to you?



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@ 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.

This week's Bible story is:

Clothed In Love
Colossians 3 verses 12 - 17



Something with rainbow colours for God's promise



Heart shaped cushions or soft items



A safe mirror



A cross which is nice to hold, smooth and tactile



Toy people, representing 'the Holy People' who God loves

Pray Together

Wrapped in God's Love

'clothe yourselves with love' Colossians 3:14

Here is an active prayer to start the day or as you leave the house. You can pray to be wrapped in God's love. Take it in turns to say the different things and have a go at making up your own ideas for being clothed in God love.

Dear God

Help us to clothe ourselves in your love.

You care for us;

you wrap us up in your love

and keep us safe:

like a warm jumper;

(mime putting a jumper on)

like a soft blanket;

(mime wrapping yourself up)

like a long, knitted scarf;

(mime putting on a scarf)

like warming mittens;

(mime putting on gloves)

Like thick socks and winter boots

(mime putting on socks and shoes)

like a big hug-

(cross arms)

Thank you that we can wrap ourselves in your love

every day

Amen.

(Idea adapted from Roots)



As an alternative, you could use this prayer as you get dressed.

Crumpled Paper Prayers

Take a sheet of paper and screw it up as tightly as you can. Unscrew the paper and lay it flat. The paper is full of creases. Look at all the creases and think about the things that you sometimes get wrong, things you say or do that might hurt others. Then look at the creases again and think of the things that others have done to you that have hurt you or made you sad.

Colossians 3:13 *'Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you'*

Take a wax crayon or a thick colouring pencil and Rub over the creases and they will pick up the colour. Think about how God is with you in everything, even the bits that feel very crumpled.



Scratch art prayers

You will need:

- dark coloured poster or acrylic paint
- bright coloured card
- washing up liquid

Mix one part washing up liquid with three parts paint and mix it well together (the washing up liquid helps to stop the paint flaking off when it dries). Paint over the bright coloured card with two coats of the paint so the card is covered and allow it to dry completely.

From the scratch art card, cut out an item of clothing eg. a t-shirt and then scratch out some of the words or images from the bible passage. You can make your own mini slogan t-shirt. Place this somewhere where you will see it often and then each time you see it, use it as a reminder to talk to God.

A prayer to say together:

Dear God, please let there be peace in our hearts,

Help us to forgive one another

And show your love in all that we do.

Amen





TO DO TOGETHER...

Peace and love sweets

You will need:

- 1 egg white
- 340g Icing sugar
- a few drops peppermint extract
- a few drops food colouring (optional)



What you do:

Line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper. Whisk the egg white lightly in a bowl until frothy but not stiff.

Sift the icing sugar into the bowl and stir it into the egg white with a wooden spoon until the mixture is stiff. As you mix the egg white and the icing sugar, think of the people you are giving them to and put extra love, peace and hope in the mixture.

Knead in the peppermint essence and the food colouring if required. Thinking of all the people who will feel the love poured into these sweets.



Roll the mixture into balls or roll it out and use cutters to make the sweets. Put them on a baking sheet. Use a fork to flatten them. If the fork sticks to them, then dip the fork in icing sugar before pressing down.

Refrigerate for 24 hours. Wrap them up in love and share with someone.

Other ideas: Instead of peppermint, you can use orange essence, lemon juice or strawberry essence. Or to make them extra yummy, once they are set, you can melt 55g chocolate in a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Dip the sweets in.



We have made these sweets with lots of love, peace and hope and as we share them, we pass this on to the people who receive them. Colossians reminds us to reflect and share Jesus' love in the world we live.



Pumpkin Messages

You will need:

- pumpkins (any size and shape)
- paint
- marker pens (optional)
- words to stick on (optional)



What you do: Paint your pumpkin with a base coat of white primer (if you have it you could spray paint them). Paint your pumpkins with a bright cheerful design.

While this dries, think about the message you want to share with people, this could be one word or a phrase from the passage in Colossians. Using a contrasting colour, add your word using marker or paint. Write your message on the top of the design, alternatively cut out and glue the words onto the pumpkin.

Place your pumpkins for all to see, on the garden wall, doorstep, in the street, or give them to someone you want to share the good news of Colossians with. Sharing the light of Christ with the world.



LOVE
peace
HARMONY
kindness

A Bright Wreath Craft

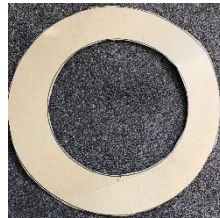
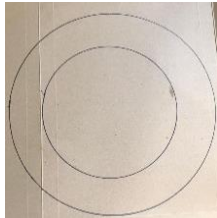
You will need:

- card - a large recycled carton or packaging would be best for this
- images from coloured paper (re-cycled paper) or coloured in images
- glue, scissors, and string for loop to hang



Method:

Cut out a large doughnut-shaped piece of card – you could use a dinner plate and a tea plate as templates



You may want to cover the card with coloured paper to make the card stronger and more colourful.

Cut out people, decorate and place messages from our Bible passage onto their tummies, using words such as love, patience, follow Jesus, peace, wisdom, forgive, love in action etc. Decorate hearts with coloured paper. Make one large heart to place into the middle of your wreath which could read the following: The Love of Jesus binds us together!



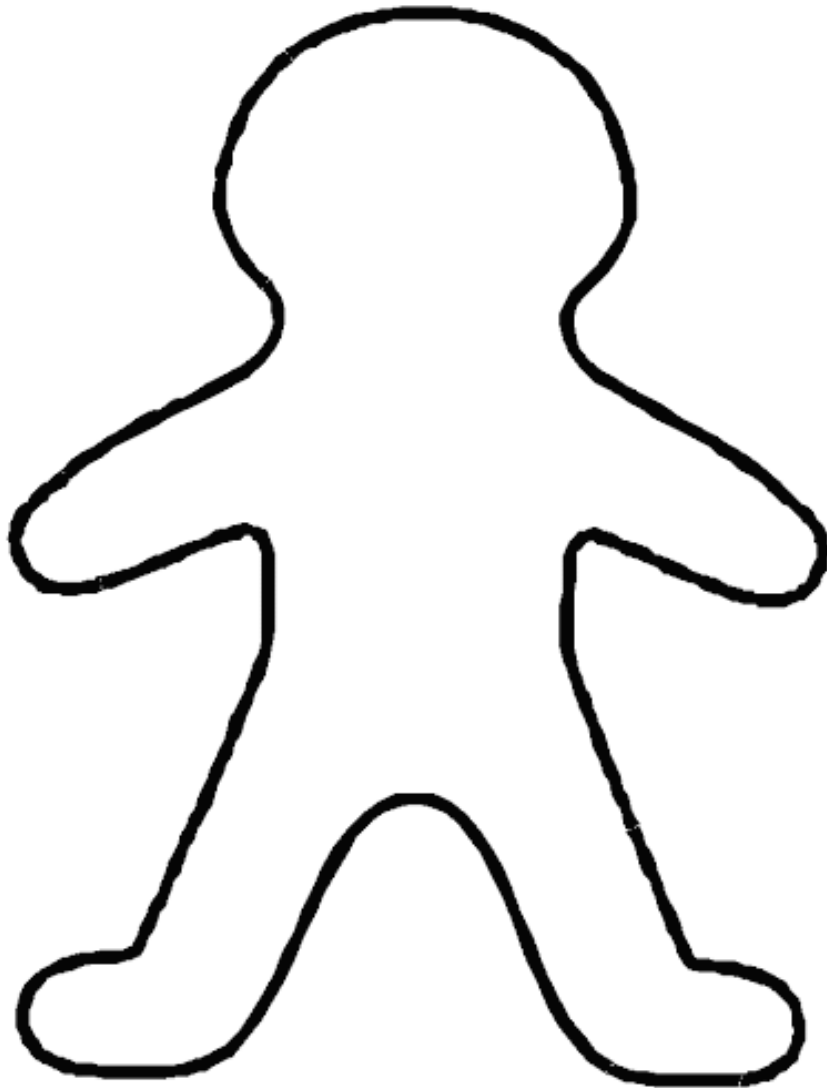
Stick the figures and the hearts onto your wreath. Stick a good strong loop of string onto the back and hang in your window or your front door for all to see.



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Template





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at home

Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

At Home:

This edition is all about reflecting God's love, particularly at the time of Halloween. Consider trying to do the opposite to things and activities people often do for Halloween. Rather than scaring people, try reflecting the opposite.

Outside:

'Clothe ourselves...', not to hide or blend in but to stand out and reflect Christ's light through your presence and approach.

For Others:

During this season at the end of October, consider what the practice of 'Trick or Treat' is, and try an alternative approach to reflect God's love – 'Serve or Gift' perhaps.



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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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