



celebrating the  
**feast**

– welcome to the Bible Year

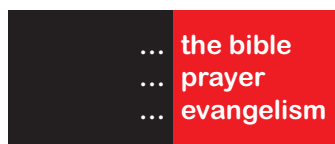
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## conversations about



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# menu

## **Introduction**

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## **Nibbles**

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~\*~

## **Starters**

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~\*~

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'And God said...' • Welcome to Corinth

~\*~

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Kennings and Cookies • Making a Bible quilt

~\*~

**If you do not see what you want on the menu  
please feel free to use your imagination!**

**All are welcome to the feast**





## Introduction

Welcome to the **Bible Year** of *Vision4Life*. The Bible Year is an opportunity for those of us in the United Reformed Church – and our partner churches – to refresh our familiarity with this basic element of church life. Since early 2008, groups have been using the introductory booklets to explore how we see the Bible, how we pray and how we share our faith stories. This special focus on the Bible runs from Advent 2008 to the end of November 2009.

Many congregations have already signed up for the Bible Year on [www.vision4life.org.uk](http://www.vision4life.org.uk) or through the link on the church's national website [www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk). Signing up is a way for a congregation to make public its decision to put time and energy into the Bible. Don't worry if your church hasn't signed up yet – you can still use the material – but please consider doing so as a way of signalling your interest in *Vision4Life* to yourselves and others. It's good to do things alongside one another because it brings us together. Signing up also means you can see if other churches near you are doing *Vision4Life*. Perhaps you can do it together.

What happens now? From Advent 2008, the Bible Year will get us talking about how the Bible relates to our lives. Does the Bible make sense in a world that's concerned about climate change, terrorism, financial instability, and how people of different faiths can live side by side? Does it help our churches to live as communities of people who want to follow Jesus? Can we read the Bible in ways that help us to make links between events in our lives now and the way God has related to people in the past? How do we help our churches to rediscover the Bible as the People's Book?



Notes to assist you  
are in the margins

### About the material

There is a menu for the Bible Year material. Some of us use menus on our computer and all of us use one when we go out for a meal or plan dinner at home. On offer there is a whole range of dishes.

Please use the material as you want, in ways that appeal to people in your church and fit in with the things they like to do. Don't feel you must work your way through everything on the menu as you may just have time for a quick nibble or a starter. Alternatively, you may choose a starter and two desserts if that's what you want. It would be good if you can fit in each of the Main Courses at some point in the year. The most important thing is to choose activities which people will enjoy.

Here's an outline of the different things on the Bible Year menu. Nibbles are short, snappy question raisers, linked to a Bible story or Bible idea. They can be included in any meeting or activity with the aim of spicing up the Bible connections and enticing people to consider another part of the Bible Year menu later on.

Starters are brief taster sessions, lasting up to 15 minutes, which help lead people into engaging with the Bible. They could be followed by a Main Course or you could go straight on to a dessert.

The Main Courses illustrate four key episodes in the big Bible story, which holds together the Old Testament, the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. In this booklet you will find a Main Course 'And God said...' on the first creation story in the book of Genesis.



You will also find 'Welcome to Corinth', a Main Course on the church at Corinth, which helps us to explore how to be a new community of Christ's people. There is a DVD that goes with this Main Course. Signed up *Vision4Life* churches will be sent it and others may be able to borrow a copy or download the material from the website.

All the material in these two Main Courses is on the website, along with that from the other two Main Courses – 'Who do you think you are?', the story of God's people as told through the family tree of Jesus, and 'Remembering him', about one woman's life-changing encounter with Jesus. These Main Courses will work best if you set aside time to savour them. The website will also have other material based on the same themes and suited to use with all age groups. To round off the menu there are desserts, which mix in discussion and creative activities in imaginative ways.

Whatever material you use you will need to set ground rules at the start – about listening to each other, respecting each other's views, encouraging everyone to speak and not letting anyone dominate. Sometimes people don't come to things they would like to do because they worry they will be put in a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable. Good, clear leadership enables more people to take part in things.

### **Other resources**

If you need more copies of this booklet these can be ordered, for a small charge, from the URC bookshop. The 2009 Prayer Handbook 'Hush the storm' is another valuable resource, with weekly prayers based on the Bible readings for each Sunday.



**It's important to have the right leaders for whatever you decide to do. Sharing the preparation is more creative than doing it alone. If you can get a group to plan a number of different events they can encourage others to attend and support one another in all they do.**

## Keeping in touch

There is far more to the Bible Year than the contents of this booklet. We also hope people will visit the website regularly, to find and use the seasonal material appearing there through the year.

The website is the place to share with the rest of us how you've used the materials where you are and the creative ideas you've come up with. If you tell us how you did things, through the website, we can try them too. It will be really valuable to hear how you've adapted things to use with children and young people.

One great hope of those on the *Vision4Life* steering group is that people will start thinking in a new way about what we all do and how it works. We often get asked for feedback in other parts of lives but we rarely ask these sorts of questions in relation to church activities:

- What was helpful in what we've done?
- What was unhelpful?
- What do we want to do next?

It is really important, at the end of each thing you do within *Vision4Life*, to ask these questions. Then you can use the answers to help you plan what to do next.

Doing things this way will enable all you do to bear fruit, even the apparent failures.



section one:  
**nibbles**

'Let me bring a  
little bread, that  
you may refresh  
yourselves.'

Genesis 18:5



Keep this activity light, short and informal for the sake of people who are not used to talking about the Bible.

### **OPTION ONE: Entertaining angels**

This could be used as a moment of worship when people share food. It would be a good way to get people talking about the Bible in a relaxed and informal way.

Read Genesis 18:1-8, when Abraham and Sarah have three surprise guests to feed. Ask people to discuss in small groups:

- How would you have felt being one of Abraham's guests?
- What is welcoming about us as a group/fellowship?
- How can we be more welcoming yet not overwhelm people?
- How do you respond to unexpected guests turning up?

*Or read this reflection*

Churches like to think of themselves as welcoming and friendly places, but few of us would take our hospitality to the lengths Abraham does. Three complete strangers pass by and he treats them as honoured guests. It's certainly not a question of a brief chat over a cup of tea and perhaps a piece of cake. He makes them comfortable, personally arranges for a substantial meal, presumably entertains them while it is being prepared, and then serves them himself.

Most of the time, such levels of hospitality are not called for, and in our society pressing strangers to stay might be considered slightly strange if not downright odd. However, there may be times when it is the right thing to do. If we strive to be open to strangers, making our welcome genuine and generous, then we will probably offer appropriate hospitality.

Even so, Abraham's response reminds us that we should not leave hospitality to those who always do it, the catering committee or whoever. Everyone can play a part in being hospitable. Don't wait for someone else to make the tea or offer a stranger a seat at your table: be ready to do what you can to entertain angels. Like Abraham, you won't regret it.

### Prayer

Generous God,  
you have promised that whenever we turn to you,  
you will be there;  
whenever we cry out to you,  
you will listen and never turn us away.  
Help us to be open and welcoming in your name.  
Give us the confidence to recognise  
that in welcoming strangers,  
we are putting our trust  
not in human nature but in you.  
So may the meals we share  
be a foretaste of the food of heaven.  
Amen.



You might ask people to think about whether we focus on the needs of our guests or set out to give a good impression of ourselves.



You may like to encourage further discussion between the groups over some food, in a relaxed way. Remember, these questions have a number of levels to them, which not everyone will see at once.

### **OPTION TWO: Heart, soul and mind**

This could be used as opening worship at a meeting. Read Mark 12:30, when Jesus says: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Divide the group into four and give each one a different theme to discuss for a few minutes.

#### **Group 1 – All your heart**

Sally has set her heart on a dishwasher;  
Ray wants a holiday.

- What did you last set your heart on?
- What would it mean for you to love God with your whole heart?

#### **Group 2 – All your soul**

Bea says your life needs rhythm to have real 'soul'.  
For Jake the essence of 'soul' is compassion.

- What is the most important characteristic of 'soul' for you?
- What would it mean for you to love God with all your soul?

#### **Group 3 – All your mind**

Jan is a dedicated soap opera fan;  
Pete loves computers.

- What most occupies your mind?
- What would it mean for you to love God with your whole mind?

#### **Group 4 – All your strength**

Chris puts all his effort into work; Beulah is trying to get their daughter into the top local school.

- What would motivate you to spend that much effort?
- What would it mean for you to love God with your whole strength?





section two:  
**starters**

'Better is a dinner of  
vegetables where love is  
than a fatted ox and  
hatred with it.'

Proverbs 15:17



Keep this short and sparky, so it can lead into a fuller discussion if that's what you plan to do. The idea is to stir up thinking that will go on after the activity ends.

**OPTION ONE: How to read a newspaper**

This could last up to 15 minutes and lead into a main course or dessert. The idea is to get people recognising the skills they use to understand everyday writing and how this can be applied to seeing the different sorts of writing in the Bible.

You need three newspapers – a mixture of tabloid and broadsheets. Read them through and cut out examples of some of these different sorts of writing:

- a news story
- an advert
- a death notice
- a problem page letter
- a letter to the editor
- a political cartoon
- an obituary
- a list of stocks and shares
- a list of horse races
- a crossword
- a celebrity story

Give some cuttings to several small groups of people and ask them to identify the sorts of writing and where you would find them in a newspaper. After a few minutes ask someone from each group to summarise the different types of cutting they have been given.

With the whole group, point out how this shows the way we all distinguish between different styles of writing every day without realising it. This is an important skill for us in interpreting what we read. Mistaking one form of writing for another can seriously damage someone's chances of understanding a text.

Ask the group what forms of writing there are in the Bible. Gather their responses without worrying about the terms people use. The list may include history, biography, poetry, miracle stories, sayings, parables, prophecy and laws amongst other things.

Ask the question: Is it important that we recognise the different forms of writing in the Bible, as we do when reading a newspaper? If so, why?





This is fun for a group of all ages to do.

### **OPTION TWO: The Jesus lifeline**

This activity can be done with a group of almost any size – a larger number takes longer. The aim is to get people thinking about the life of Jesus as they remember it. This is a good activity for people of all ages and abilities to do together. They will have to move around and enjoy some creative chaos.

You need a long piece of string and a clothes peg for everyone.

Get two volunteers, one to hold each end of the string. Explain that this represents Jesus' lifeline, with his birth at one end and his death, resurrection and ascension at the other. Ask each person to think of a moment in the life of Jesus. Then they can put their peg on the lifeline at the point when they think this happened and say what it represents.

Carry on until everyone who wants to has added their peg. Then try to run through the events of Jesus' life by going along the string and calling out the things that have been remembered. Together, the group will remember a lot more than they expect.



section three:

# main courses

'And all ate and  
were filled.'

Luke 9:17



Remember to look again at the website for more main courses. There are also regular monthly Bible studies in Reform which may provide a good starting point.

### **OPTION ONE: And God said...**

Here are some ways into Genesis chapter 1. The aims are:

- to explore a familiar biblical passage in a new way
- to think afresh about how we live in God's world
- to take Genesis seriously without taking it literally

It is best to keep the session short and lively, finishing within the agreed time. Aim for no more than an hour and a half, perhaps including a mid-session drink. Leave people wanting more rather than being worn out. You will find other discussion ideas on the website.

### **Think about making things**

Introduce the group to the idea that creating things is part of our nature – something we have an inbuilt desire to do. Ask them to think of things they have created:

- a meal
- a piece of art work, a garment, some furniture
- a piece of original writing
- a plant they have grown
- a room they have decorated.

Invite them, in twos or threes, to share some of things they each create. Then ask them to discuss these questions:

- why do they make things?
- how do they feel when something is finished?
- how do they feel about the way people treat things they've made?



## Read Genesis Chapter 1

One way of doing this is with four voices. Voice 1 opens and closes the passage, Voice 2 reads about light, Voice 3 about sea and sky and Voice 4 about life on earth. If you can give the readings out before the group begins the readers will be ready to read well and alternate smoothly:

Voice 1 reads Genesis 1.1-2

Voice 2 reads Genesis 1.3-5

Voice 3 reads Genesis 1.6-8

Voice 4 reads Genesis 1.9-13

Voice 2 reads Genesis 1.14-19

Voice 3 reads Genesis 1.20-23

Voice 4 reads Genesis 1.24-31

Voice 1 reads Genesis 2.1-3

## After reading the chapter

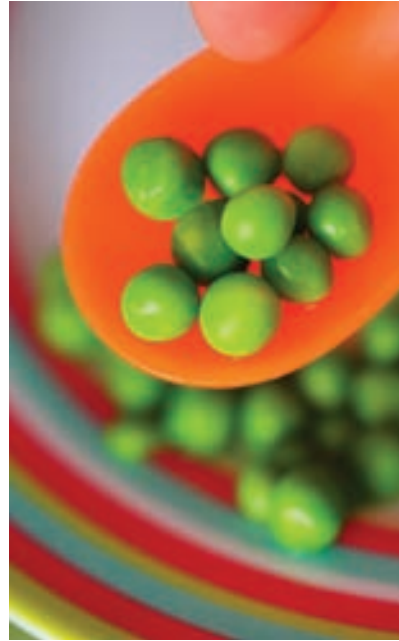
Here are some questions you might want to think and talk about. There is a lot of material here and you may not decide to use it all. Other options are on the website.

## Image is everything!

What does it mean to say, as Genesis does, that we are made 'in God's image' (1.27)?

Ask people to talk in their twos or threes about which of the following ideas make most sense to them:

- people look like God does. If God came into creation, God would look like one of us.
- people can think like God can. We can reason, plan, decide, reflect.
- people can know the difference between right and wrong, as God does.
- people can relate to God, just as a glove is in the image of a hand. We are made to belong.



Remember that people hold a wide range of differing views on this story. Some of them may not have discussed it before or be prepared for the approaches others hold.



Be aware of people's sensitivities about this passage. Help them to listen to one another respectfully, especially if some of them hold very strong views.

- people represent God on earth, and have a responsibility to be like God
- people can create and care for things, as God does.

With the whole group, ask how these ideas might connect to the idea of 'having dominion', which comes just before and just after the verse about God's image (1.26, 28).

Remind people of the way our culture focuses on 'image' – the brand you buy supposedly tells others the sort of person you are. The church projects an image too, but not always one that welcomes new people with their questions and needs.

Invite people to discuss, in their smaller groups, what sort of image they should be projecting to the world around them, both as individuals and as a local congregation.

Does this image need to change, in the light of what they have read about God in Genesis 1?

### **Litter, literal or something else?**

Describe how some Christians read Genesis 1 literally: the world was created in exactly six days. If science teaches otherwise, they say, something is wrong with science.

Some people think this text is litter – rubbish – because creation took much longer than six days and science proves it.

Ask people to talk in small groups about other ways of looking at this text which neither take it literally nor see it as something worthless, like litter.

### House-keepers for God

Introduce the idea that the bit of the universe we call Earth is our home.

We hear a lot today about 'the environment'. Is that the best name for it?

Ask people to get into twos or threes to discuss these ideas:

- Is there anything in Genesis 1 that might influence our attitude to the planet?
- Should our beliefs about creation affect the way we treat the earth?
- How might God feel about what people do with creation?
- How does this relate to our attitude towards the things we have made?
- How does what we have read suggest we should act now, as individuals and as a local church in relation to our environment?

Invite people to share their thoughts with the whole group. Decide if you would like to do a group action or activity centred on creation, in response to what you have talked about. Identify what your local church might do today or tomorrow to make a difference to where you live.





There is a DVD of the three scripts available. Signed up churches are sent one and others can borrow a copy. The video clips can be downloaded from the website, which has full instructions as to how you do this. The website also has a template for photocopying the Bible passage.

### **OPTION TWO: Welcome to Corinth**

This Main Course explores the quality of welcome of the early church in Corinth and asks if we do any better. The aim is to challenge people to look carefully and critically at the signals they give to outsiders and those on the edges of their fellowship.

As leader, you will need to read through the material first. If you have the DVD or have downloaded the video clip of the three scripts from the website, make sure to view them beforehand and check they are playing properly. You will also need:

- enough large sheets of paper for each smaller group, pens and a way to display the sheets
- a copy of 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 for everyone
- a copy of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, with a gap to fit in verses 23-26, for everyone
- equipment to show the DVD or the video clips, or people to read the scripts.

### Communion as we know it

People give signals to one another all the time and know how to read them:

- clothes... 'You can't go out dressed like that!'
- cars... 'I'm not going to be seen driving that.'
- houses... 'They must be doing well to live there.'

Looking at the local church's story, it's clear that signals are sent out there too:

- steps... 'I can't get my wheelchair in there'
- silence... 'People frowned at me and my toddler'
- writing... 'It was all written down and I couldn't read it'

Communion is one of the most important things we do in church. What signals does our communion give about us?

In twos or threes, for 10 minutes, ask people to discuss:

What does our church's communion service say about us and our God?

Invite some of the groups to share their answers with the whole group.

Now give everyone a copy of 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 with no indication of where it comes from. Many will recognise it from the communion service.

Ask the whole group if this reading fits with what they've been saying about communion in their church? Take a few moments to see what people think about this. Do people recognise the passage? Explain to them it's from one of Paul's letters to the church in Corinth.





Choose readers who will enter into their character and put over the material well. The character Gaius is a self-confident person with whom it's not easy to disagree.

### What they're really proud of in Corinth

The group is now moving back to the early church in Corinth. Watch the DVD or video clip of Gaius or hear someone read his story. He is a church leader in Corinth and the whole-church assembly meets in his house.

'I'm Gaius Flavius Maximus – when all the house-churches in Corinth assemble in one place, it happens in my house. I think these whole-church assemblies are very special. I think they are the single best way of demonstrating the new relationship with God and with one another that we've all found by following Jesus.

Corinth is a very divided city, with lots of different ethnic groups and people of vastly different status, all separated out into specific groups and sub-groups. Most people here only get to know other people of similar background and status. But, as Christians, we don't have any of these restrictions.

We all belong together, rich and poor, householders and slaves, male and female, Jew and Gentile – all made one in Christ Jesus. And our whole-church assemblies, where we all eat and drink together and share the one sacred loaf and the one sacred cup, show more clearly than anything else we do that we are united in one holy fellowship, bound together in the love of Jesus. I consider it a very special privilege to host these gatherings in my house. I truly love these wonderful celebrations of the one, undivided people of God.'

With the whole group, take five minutes to discuss Gaius' view of whole-church assemblies in Corinth:

In what ways is his account attractive?



### What passes unnoticed in Corinth

Watch the DVD or video clip of Junia, the young slave woman who struggles to get to church, or hear someone read her story.

'I am Junia. I don't know why any of you would want to listen to me. Yes, I'm one of the people God has called together in Corinth in the name of Jesus, but I'm really struggling to feel I belong. You see, I'm a slave. I *belong* to Antonius, a trader with a big villa near the Temple of Apollo. Antonius and his wife Livia are not Christians. So, when the whole church meets in assembly at Gaius' house, I can never get there on time. I have to serve the evening meal before my mistress Livia will let me leave. Then I have to find my way across town down streets lined with taverns filled with half-drunk sailors and travellers. If I am not to be impossibly late for my dear Lord Jesus, I have to set off on my own, missing even my meagre supper, and run the gauntlet of unwanted attentions almost all of the way.

I know that the big assembly is a special celebration of our togetherness in Jesus, but by the time I arrive, it's a struggle even to get into the courtyard of Gaius' house and none of the food that has been served in the dining room ever seems to reach us. All the time we can hear the sounds of jollity and laughter coming from the dining room where Gaius and those who host house-churches in their homes have been eating and drinking all evening.



The character Junia is an intelligent, sensitive young woman, who sees what is happening around her clearly but has little power to change things.

I know this love feast is supposed to show our togetherness, but when I walk home hungry after being left unnoticed at the edge of the gathering I still love my Lord Jesus and the welcome he gives me... but I'm not so sure that I love the church and all the people in it. It doesn't feel fair. It doesn't feel Christian.'

In twos or threes, for 10 minutes, consider Junia's story:

- Can people share any experiences where they have been left out or on the edge? How did it feel?
- Why is Junia's story of church life in Corinth so different from what Gaius says?



Paul, the apostle, is a strong-minded individual, who gets easily frustrated by the behaviour of other people. He's running out of patience with the congregation in Corinth.

### **Paul's views on communion in Corinth**

Give everyone a copy of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 with a blank space for verses 23-26.

Explain the group is looking at the wider context of a familiar text about the institution of the Lord's Supper. Invite everyone to combine this reading with the missing excerpt they were given earlier. Ask them to share their response to seeing this passage in its original place.

We are now joining Paul in Ephesus.

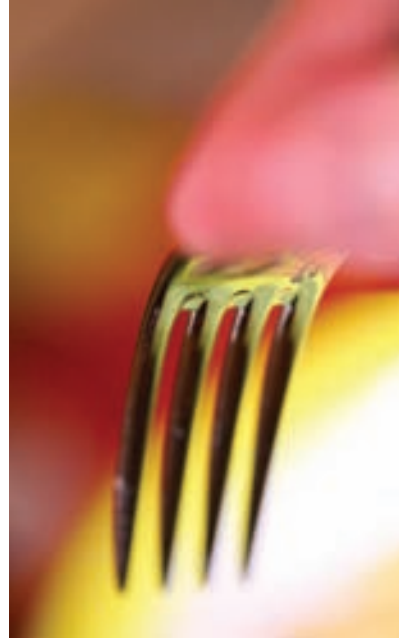
Watch the DVD or video clip of Paul, or hear someone read his words. Paul is dictating the section of 1 Corinthians on behaviour at communion, and shows his frustration with what he's heard.

'Tertius! Can you come now? I'm ready to dictate more of that letter to the church in Corinth. Come on, man, I'm waiting! The next thing I want to do is explain my objections to the way they conduct their whole-church assemblies. Y'know, they are such a disgrace! They claim these gatherings demonstrate their love and togetherness in Christ and their unity in the Spirit of God, but anyone passing by would simply see or hear the world's ugly ways reproduced.

From what I hear, a passerby would hear loud merriment from Gaius' guest dining room, watched silently by hungry, ignored slaves and traders gathered round the door and in the courtyard. Where is the Gospel in that? Can't they see what they're doing? Do they never stop to think what their fellowship looks like to people on the edges, or people on the outside? How can they ever hope to attract new believers in Jesus if they never do a reality check on themselves? How can they ever expect to succeed in mission, or help the people of Corinth? Are you ready, Tertius? I'll try to put this firmly, but caringly. Let's see...!'

Together, with the whole group, take five minutes to discuss Paul's reaction to the church in Corinth:

- What does he think they are signalling by the way they conduct communion?
- What does he suggest they should do as a result?



### **Following Paul back to our own church**

While we may not suffer today from drunkenness and starvation at communion, we do need to do a reality check about what we think we are signalling, and the signals others receive from us. We may also need to change things as a result.

Ask for people's response to two, quick questions:

- What parts of our church life need regular reality checks?
- Where should we stand, and whose perspectives do we need, so we can do reality checks on the signals our church gives?

Ask people to return to their smaller groups for 10 minutes, give each group a large piece of paper for their answers, and pose the question:

- What reality checks should we plan for our church, and how can we make them happen?

With the one, big group, ask each smaller group to share their responses. Display their answer sheets for people to read later. Pose a final question:

- What are we going to do now?

End the session with prayer.



section four:  
**desserts**

'How sweet are your words  
to my taste, sweeter than  
honey to my mouth!'

Psalm 119:103



## Introduction

These activities are more focussed on fun and creativity than on sharing a Bible story. They may include conversation, cooking, quilt-making, art work, writing poems, drama, storytelling or outdoor activities – anything that engages people with the Bible.

Some ideas could be developed as single sessions while others might be used for regular groups, whole days or church weekends. Because these are longer than the other material we've just included a taste of the Desserts.

## OPTION ONE: Kennings and Cookies

Kennings are Anglo-Saxon word pairs and cookies are tasty things to eat. Combining these two attractive items into one Bible exploration activity can be fun and fulfilling. The idea is to use kennings to reflect on well known Bible stories and to accompany these reflections with Fairtrade cookies.

This activity is for groups of any size, with a range of ages and abilities. It can take anything from 20 minutes to two hours, depending on whether the cookies need cooking first, and how many kennings you do.

The cookies could be cooked by one group and the kennings prepared by another, with the two groups coming together to share both items.

Alternatively, everyone can make cookies first and then write kennings together while these bake.

Another option is to buy some cookies and bring them to the kennings session.

## Using the Bible

You can use written Bible texts, stories from an illustrated Bible or children's Bible for this activity. Alternatively, you can invite people to tell one another their remembered version of a Bible story, as was originally done for this activity. The website has more information on how to do a remembered Bible story.

## You will need

A large flip chart (or big sheets of paper) and pens, ingredients for cookies, and the means to prepare and cook them.

## Kennings

Kennings are pairs of words in which the second word is part of a verb ending in 'er' and the first word is a noun or adjective: e.g. cookie eater, kennings writer.

Base your kennings session on a familiar Bible story like the feeding of the 5,000, the lost sheep, the Good Samaritan or the Easter story. It may help to go through the story first with the whole group.

Invite the group to think of single words that relate to this story. These can be any words at this stage – grass, people, fish, bread, eating, snoozing, hungry – but interesting words help the process, especially verbs. Write these on the flip chart or paper. Break into smaller groups if the group is too big for this.

Review the words and begin pairing them up. Invite the group to suggest which words could go together. Anything is acceptable at this stage because you may not use them all in the final kennings.



You might find the internet helpful for inspiring this activity. Try doing a search for 'kennings' or 'cookie recipes' and see what pops up.

As you put the words into pairs you will find patterns that are rhythmic or fun and seem to work well in a series. Run through the pairs several times. You might arrange them so they tell a story in sequence or highlight a particular character.

Here are some kennings based on remembered versions of well known parables.

### **The Lost Sheep**

Grass Eater  
Jumper Crafter  
Money Maker  
Fold Leaver  
Bleat Producer  
Shepherd Lover  
Flock Guarder  
Wool Keeper  
Feed Provider  
Animal Searcher  
Sheep Finder

### **Good Samaritan**

Journey Maker  
Lonely-road Trotter  
Cowardly Attacker  
Body Breaker  
Money Taker  
Death Defier  
Victim Ignorer  
Other-side Walker  
Donkey Leader  
Wound Binder  
Money Giver  
Need Provider



## Cookies

Try to include as many Fairtrade ingredients as possible in your cookies. You can use these recipes, experiment with other ingredients, swap ideas with a friend, look in a Fairtrade cookbook or find a website for other ideas.

### Dark chocolate and mango cookies

100g of Fairtrade dark chocolate  
50g of Fairtrade dried mango  
125g of Fairtrade muscovado/dark brown sugar  
125g of butter  
1 large free range egg  
250g of plain flour  
1 tspn of baking powder

### Double chocolate and nut cookies

50g of Fairtrade milk chocolate  
50g of Fairtrade dark chocolate  
75g of Fairtrade nuts: walnuts, brazils, pecan or hazelnuts  
125g of Fairtrade demerera/light brown sugar  
125g of butter  
1 large free range egg  
220g of plain flour  
3 tbspn of Fairtrade cocoa powder  
1 tspn of baking powder





### **Method for both recipes**

Warm the oven up to Gas 4/180°. Grease some baking trays. Chop up the chocolate and fruit or nuts into small pieces.

Cream together the butter and sugar in a large bowl using a wooden spoon. Beat the egg and add to the creamed mixture, a small amount at a time.

Sift the dry ingredients into the mixture and mix together. Add the chocolate pieces and dried fruit or nuts and mix well.

Put a spoonful of mixture for each cookie on the greased baking tray – the size of spoon depends on how big you want the final cookies to be. Allow about six cookies per tray – they spread out during cooking. Cook until golden brown. They should still be a bit soft in the middle. Put on a wire rack to cool for a short time – they are best eaten warm.

## **OPTION TWO: Making a Bible quilt**

If your group wants to celebrate the Bible, and create a visual record of stories from it, then you might make a Bible quilt. There are plenty of books and places to go to find out about quilt making. Someone within your group may have done this before. It is something which people of all ages and abilities can do and will take several sessions.

The group can be of any size, but you need to have enough things like irons and sewing machines for the number of people present. There should also be enough facilitators to help things along – for example a group of seven to nine people might have three facilitators.

There is not enough space here to give the full process. This is detailed in full on the website. What follows is an outline of how to get a project underway. The aim is to celebrate your shared understanding of the Bible and to enjoy the shared experience of creating something together.

### **What you will need**

- fabric (can be recycled) 100% cotton is best
- bondaweb iron-on material to bond fabric together – available in sewing/craft shops
- iron and ironing board
- scissors, sewing thread and a sewing machine
- quilting, backing or wadding fabric for the quilt middle layer – from sewing/craft shops – 100% cotton is best
- paper and pens for initial designs
- Bible stories and imagination



Ask around to find the quilters in your congregation and see if you can encourage them to come along and share their skills.



**Don't worry if things take a bit longer than you thought they would. The important thing is to make sure everyone is involved. It's better to start with a straightforward project that you know you can complete reasonably quickly.**

### **Approach to the Bible**

You can get the inspiration for your quilt from the Bible itself or from a children's Bible. Alternatively, you may invite the group to identify a number of Bible stories by telling one another what they remember of some well known passages. The website has more information about how to remember the Bible together.

Each remembered story could form the basis for an individual panel in your quilt. The amount of time you spend on remembering the Bible is the group's choice. You may do this in the quilting sessions, or at other times, such as in worship.

When you invite people to remember stories from the Bible you get some insight into the Bible we each have inside us. Here is the story of the feeding of the 5,000 as told by William, aged 6:

*This man called Jesus and his disciples went to a land and there were lot of people. They had been walking a thousand miles. Some had come in boats. This little boy stood up out of the crowd with his basket. In his basket he had three fishes and some small bread rolls and they had to chop them up so there was enough for them all to go round. Then they all went home.*

### **Getting started**

To start with, people will need help to make connections between the stories of the Bible and the practical activity of making a quilt. This is an opportunity to learn together and offers a space for dialogue and creativity.

Assemble the group in a comfortable setting and tell them about the idea of making a Bible quilt. Explain that the quilt will be a patchwork of fabric pictures illustrating different Bible stories. Invite people to talk about which Bible stories they want to include. Encourage them to remember their Bible story and to tell it to someone else as they remember it. You may read William's example, given here, to help them get started.

The stories gathered could be from any part of the Bible. Alternatively, you might decide at the start to make a quilt with a particular theme such as parables. Keep a note of all the stories suggested, perhaps on a flip chart, so everyone can see them. Here is the list one church came up with:

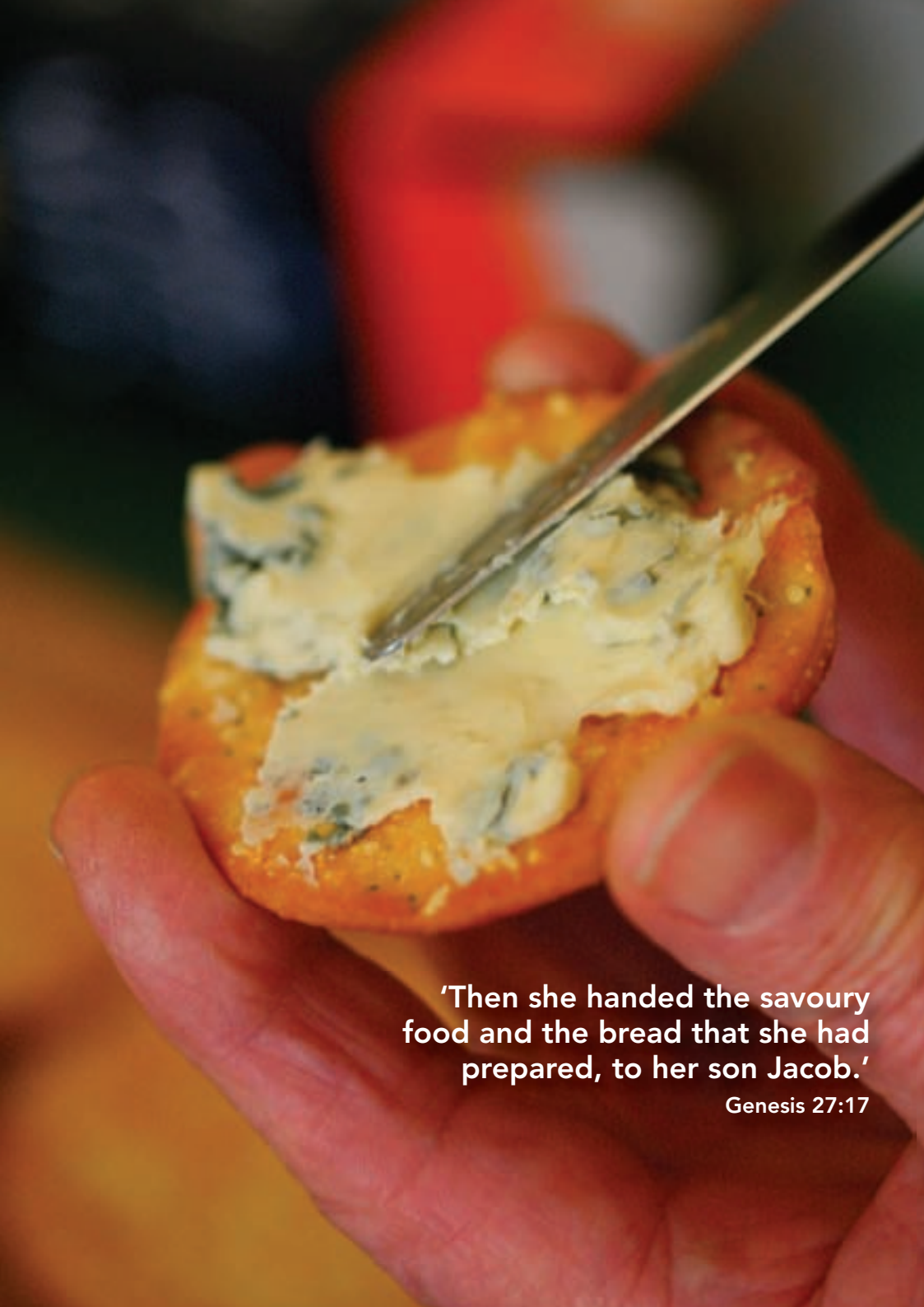
Christmas story  
Jesus's baptism  
Noah's Ark  
David and Goliath  
The Last Supper  
Adam and Eve  
The Good Samaritan  
The Easter Story  
Jonah and the big fish  
Daniel in the lion's den  
Joseph's multicoloured coat  
The lost sheep  
Moses in the bulrushes  
The wedding at Cana  
Mary saw an angel  
Zacchaeus  
Feeding 5000 people  
Walking on water  
Moses when older  
The tax collector





Now invite everyone to choose which Bible story they are going to work on. It is important that they make their own choice because this helps them to get more out of the process. Some people might like to work in pairs: that's fine. Encourage them to talk about their story. As they remember it they will think of details which can be part of quilt panel they will produce.

By the end of the first session the participants should have understood the basic notion of making a Bible quilt and decided which story they wanted to make into a fabric picture.



**'Then she handed the savoury  
food and the bread that she had  
prepared, to her son Jacob.'**

**Genesis 27:17**

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **Hearing back from you...**

We hope that our ideas have helped you to have a useful discussion and that your church is considering engaging with the next three years of *Vision4Life*.

A lot of *Vision4Life* materials, including downloadable versions of the words and images in this booklet, will be on the website [www.vision4life.org.uk](http://www.vision4life.org.uk) as well as worship ideas. Please use the website if you can and let us know if having printed materials as well is really important to you.

Comments, stories and suggestions on our website: **[www.vision4life.org.uk](http://www.vision4life.org.uk)**

or send an email to: **[admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)**

or write to us at:  
Vision4Life  
c/o The Windermere Centre  
Lake Road, Windermere,  
Cumbria LA23 2BY

Many thanks from the *Vision4Life* steering group





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