

WEEKLY@

January - April
2020

Lectionary based Sunday group resource aimed at
5-11 year olds with additional activity ideas for those in
creche and youth groups.



THE BLACKBURN
DIOCESE BOARD
OF EDUCATION



WELCOME

Weekly@ is a weekly lectionary based resource with activity suggestions for all age ranges from creche to youth groups. Using colour codes to help you identify activities suitable for your children, Weekly@ aims to offer a simple, flexible bible-based resource sheet, plus a handy 'take home' sheet which helps parents carry on the conversation at home. We recommend that you start by 'Setting the Scene' and how you arrange the rest of the session is up to you!



GUEST WRITER

Clare Serfontein

This term Weekly@ has been written by the brilliant Clare Serfontein. Clare has over twenty years' experience working with children and families. She started out as a paediatric nurse but soon moved into church based children's ministry and schools work. In 2012 Clare moved from the UK to South Africa to work for a charity aiming to encourage and empower children and families in disadvantaged communities. Here she met her husband Charles and has since settled in the country on a more permanent basis. Clare also has an MA in Children and Youth Ministry.

COLOUR CODES

Weekly@ is categorised by colour codes which represent the different ages that we feel an activity is suitable for, however they are just our suggestions, so please feel free to use them with other age groups if you feel it's appropriate. You may find that some weeks have more All Age activities than others. Some activity headings might be split colours, meaning they are suitable for the two age groups they represent.

Under 5s

Suitable for those aged 5 and under, typically those in creche.

All Age

Suitable for all groups, from creche to youth group.

5-11s

Suitable for those aged 5-11.

Over 12s

Suitable for Sunday youth groups.

Overview

Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple for the purification and redemption sacrifice (purification of the mother, redemption for the firstborn child). This was required under Jewish law a month after birth and could only be done at the Temple in Jerusalem. Here Mary and Joseph meet two elderly people, Simeon and Anna. These two strangers were some of the first to recognize who Jesus was, that this small baby was the Messiah. God used them to encourage Mary and Joseph that all they had been told about their baby was true. Simeon and Anna play no great role in Bible history but are significant enough to be named as some of God's faithful people because they were sensitive to God's voice and available when God called upon them.

Aim

To understand that whatever our age we all have something to contribute and if we listen to God he will guide us.

Song Suggestion

Touch a finger - Doug Horley
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raEj9MC-5yw>

All Age Talk

Gather some pictures together that you can display of different games/toys through the years.

Examples:

1930s Shirley Temple doll

1940s Cigarette cards, Spinning Top and Jacks

1950s Dinky toys e.g. Ford Anglia, Little People by Fisher Price and Muffin the Mule puppet

1960s Easy Bake oven, Spirograph and Scalextric

1970s Mastermind game, Atari 2600, Weebles

1980s Care Bears, Cabbage Patch Kids and Micro Machines

1990s Furby, Tamagotchi and Bop it

2000s Beyblades and Cranium board game

2010s Micro mini scooter and In the Night Garden characters

Ask the congregation to look at the different pictures and see if they recognise the what all the different games and toys are. Encourage people to chat together in small groups to try and name them all. Explain that their group will benefit from having people of all ages if they want to work out what all the things are.

After they've had some time, ask if any of the groups can tell you what all the toys and games are.

Explain that to be successful in this game you needed help from people of all generations.

Sometimes we can tend to just spend time with people like us, people our own age, but God wants us to go out of our comfort zones to make an effort to talk to those we don't normally talk to. We all have things we can learn from each other.

In the bible reading today Simeon and Anna were older people and had amazing things to share with Mary and Joseph. They both believed that God would send the Savior and had waited for him to keep his promise. When Simeon and Anna saw and believed that Jesus was God's promised Son, they chose to praise and thank God for allowing them to see his promise come true. Let's be like Simeon and Anna and live with an attitude of praising God and thanking him for all that he has done and will do for us.

Prayer

Thank you God that we are surrounded by people of all different ages who can show us new things. Help us to make an effort to spend time with each other. Amen

Set the Scene

Ask leaders of the children's group plus a few key people in church e.g. the minister to give you 2 photos of themselves; one as a baby and a recent one. Get the children to guess who is who by matching the baby photo with the right adult photo. Ask the children if they ever think about getting old?

Discussion

You will need to find these four pictures. 1. Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus by the Temple, 2. Simeon, 3. Anna, 4. Group picture of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, Anna and Simeon.

Sit the children in a circle. Pass the pictures round the circle as you share about each one.

Picture 1. It's a month since Jesus was born and the Jewish law requires Mary and Joseph to go to the Temple in Jerusalem to make a sacrifice to consecrate their first-born male to God. (v 22-24)

Picture 2. Simeon's Story. Read out Luke 2 v 25-32

Picture 3. Anna's Story. Read out Luke 2 v 36-38

Picture 4. Mary and Joseph respond. Read out Luke 2 v 33-35

Ask: How do you think Mary and Joseph would have felt hearing what Anna and Simeon had to say? Do you think they were glad to have met them at the Temple that day?

Have pictures of elderly people to look at together. It's important that these pictures are not all stereotypical or patronising of old people, so could include pictures of the Queen, David Attenborough, etc.

Ask: What changes when you get older? Body slows down, look different, friends and spouse may die.

Ask: How do you think that makes older people feel? Lonely, frustrated, lack of purpose.

Ask: What doesn't change when you get older? Same person, still love, laugh. Still valuable to their friends and families; younger people can learn so much from older people and vice versa.

Anna and Simeon were elderly but that didn't stop them still serving God and sharing their God given wisdom with Mary and Joseph. Surely young Mary and Joseph and little baby Jesus were glad of their support. God wants us to come together as his family young and old alike. To care for each other no matter our differences in age or how we look.

Response

Helping Hands Get the children to draw around both of their hands on a piece of card. Explain that we all have hands to help others. What things have you learnt to do that you could share with or teach others? Write or draw these on the card on the first hand. Who do you know who is elderly? What could you do to help them know that they're special to you and God? Write/draw these things on the second hand. Pray together asking God to help you with these things.

Activity

Peppermint Creams Make peppermint creams together which the children can package in cellophane or paper bags and give out to older members of the congregation at the end of the service.

See recipe on attached link:

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/features/how-to-make-peppermint-creams/>

Game

Guess Who Source some Guess Who board games which the children can play against each other individually or as teams OR print out a Guess Who sheet for each child from the following link: <https://za.pinterest.com/pin/80079699607115795/> and let the children play against each other, crossing off the people on their sheet as they go.

Take Home

Recipe Card Make and decorate recipe cards for peppermint creams which the children can take home with them. Perhaps they could make some more peppermint creams at home this week to give to an elderly person who lives near them?

Share that your age or appearance doesn't matter, we all have something to contribute. We may be very young or very old but we still have lots of things we can do and can teach and help others with.

2nd February 2020

WHATEVER AGE

Luke 2 v 22-40

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

Share a special moment you have spent with someone who is much older or much younger than you.

How can we make sure that the older people in our community know they are important and not forgotten?

FAMILY PRAYER

Make a hand tower with everyone's hands. Look at the difference in your hands; size, softness, number of wrinkles. As we age our hands change. Think of an elderly person's hands. How do they feel and look?

Think of an elderly person you know that you could use your hands to help this week. Pray: Father God help us this week to reach out to so they know they are loved by us and you. Amen

2nd February 2020

WHATEVER AGE

Luke 2 v 22-40

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

Share a special moment you have spent with someone who is much older or much younger than you.

How can we make sure that the older people in our community know they are important and not forgotten?

FAMILY PRAYER

Make a hand tower with everyone's hands. Look at the difference in your hands; size, softness, number of wrinkles. As we age our hands change. Think of an elderly person's hands. How do they feel and look?

Think of an elderly person you know that you could use your hands to help this week. Pray: Father God help us this week to reach out to so they know they are loved by us and you. Amen

Overview

The Sermon on the Mount is by far Jesus' longest explanation of what it looks like to live as his follower and to serve as a member of God's Kingdom. The exact location where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount is unknown; the Gospels don't make it clear, but we are told that Jesus is sat on a mountainside, teaching the crowds. He talks about salt and light comparing them to followers of God. Salt and light; each is essential but only has its necessary effect on its environment if it is both distinctive from it and yet fully involved in it. Christians therefore need to function in society and through their visible goodness and actions, bring glory to God.

Aim

To understand that God shows his love for others through us, we shine for him by bringing his light/love into people's darkness.

Song Suggestion

Shine from the Inside Out - Nick Jackson

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

All Age Talk

Explain to the congregation that you have a dilemma for them to think about: "You have got lost on a hike and now it's cold and dark, but you've found a little hut in the woods. You have a single match and are in a pitch black room with a candle, an oil lamp and a gas stove. Which do you light first?" Ask them to discuss with people around them and then get a few answers from the congregation.

The answer is the match; it needs to be lit before anything else. Share how sometimes we can be so busy thinking about what we need to do that we forget the first and most important thing, which is to make sure our little light is shining.

Illustration – You will need a candle and a jar it fits into. Stand the candle on the lid of the jar. Light the candle, so the flame is bright and strong. Ask rhetorically: What do you think will happen when I put the jar over the candle? Demonstrate by putting the jar over the candle and fastening it to the lid. When the flame has no air/no oxygen it goes out. (A small jar will work quicker than a larger one).

In our bible passage today Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." We can show others the way to Jesus by letting our light shine but if we want to keep our little flame shining, we need to stay close to our source of light and life. Being near to God will help us keep our light shining strongly. Then we can help to shine that light in the dark places around us.

Prayer

Light of the world, thank you for bringing your light into our lives. Help us to shine your light into the dark places so that others may know of your love. Amen

Set the Scene

Have 6 packets of different flavoured salty crisps in numbered bowls. Pass the bowls around and ask the children to taste the crisps and decide what flavours they are. Be mindful of any allergies. Which flavour crisp did you think tasted the saltiest? Read out Matthew 5 v 13. What do you think salt was used for in Jesus day? How do you think followers of God are like salt?

Discussion

Light Illustration. You will need a candle and the option to darken the room. Ask the children to share the darkest place they have ever been; how did they feel when they were in that dark place?

Sit the group in a circle. Explain to the children that you're going to turn off the lights and you will all be in the dark together for a few minutes and then you're going to light a candle. Ask the children to sit quietly whilst they watch and think about the difference between being in the dark and lighting the candle. How do they feel? Slowly go through the sequence. Ask the children to share their thoughts and feelings afterwards. If it's not possible to darken the room, you could ask the children to sit quietly with their hands covering their eyes, then after a minute or two, invite them to remove their hands.

Read out Matthew 5 v 14-16

What do you think Jesus means by letting your light shine before others? You will need to find lots of pictures of everyday situations e.g. a child sharing their snack, a child pinching another child's toy, parents and children having fun together, good and bad community situations such as someone stealing a bike, someone helping an elderly person across the road, etc.

Explain to the children that some things that happen in our world bring darkness and sadness. Other things bring light, hope and love. Can the children go through the pictures and sort them into things that bring darkness and things that bring light?

Look at the pictures together and discuss what they've decided. Ask the children to think about something they could do this week to show someone God's love. What could their act of love be? Let the children share their ideas with each other if they want to.

Take Home

Glow Stick Give each child a glow stick to wear and take home as a reminder that they can shine God's light and love into the lives of people around them.

Response

Spread the Light Light a big candle on a tray and place a taper with it. Dim the lights. Each child takes it in turn to light a tea-light from the big candle with the taper and place it on the tray asking God to help them love others. Watch as the tray fills with light. Notice how the lit candles make the room brighter. In the same way when we show God's love, we shine for him and make the world brighter. We point people to God.

Activity

Pin Prick Pictures Show the children how to place pin pricks in paper so that when held up to the light the picture created shines through. See link:

<https://picklebums.com/pin-prick-drawing/>

We think when we do small things for others it's sometimes not enough for people to see but just as the tiny pin pricks altogether make an amazing picture, all the small ways we show love to others can reveal how much God loves them.

Game

Blindfold Obstacle Challenge Make an obstacle course and get the children into pairs, one with a blindfold and one without. The blindfolded child must get through the obstacle route with the help of their non-blindfolded partner. The child who can see is only allowed to give the blindfolded person verbal instructions; not guide them by the hand. When they have finished ask the children to swap roles. Link the game to the theme by explaining that when we have God's light/love (like the non-blindfolded person) we need to use it to help others.

9th February 2020

SHINE

Matthew 5 v 13-20

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

What do you like most about light?

Share together a time you have been through or know of, when someone brought light into a dark place.

FAMILY PRAYER

Ask everyone to find a light source e.g. torch, candle. Talk about the items and how each is different, but all give light. Although each of us is different, we all carry God's love; we just may share it in different ways. Share ways you will shine your light this week, then pray together:

Father God help us shine your light and love into the lives of people we meet this week. Amen

9th February 2020

SHINE

Matthew 5 v 13-20

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

What do you like most about light?

Share together a time you have been through or know of, when someone brought light into a dark place.

FAMILY PRAYER

Ask everyone to find a light source e.g. torch, candle. Talk about the items and how each is different, but all give light. Although each of us is different, we all carry God's love; we just may share it in different ways. Share ways you will shine your light this week, then pray together:

Father God help us shine your light and love into the lives of people we meet this week. Amen

Overview

In this part of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus addresses the whole area of worry and how worrying does not add time to our lives but can actually distract us and make us feel trapped. When Jesus spoke these words, people had a lot to worry about. Peoples livelihoods depended on fishing and agriculture, but one summer's drought could wipe out crops for the winter and fishermen might fish all night long and catch nothing to sell or bring home to their family. Our world is equally as unstable and unpredictable but for different reasons. In a society where children are struggling with anxiety at an ever younger age, it is important to recognise that it is not wrong to be anxious but that God can help us in our times of worry and anxiety. God gives us peace and freedom.

Aim

To understand that God knows that we all worry but he wants us to realise that he is always there with us and we can lean on him when we are anxious.

Song Suggestion

My Lighthouse - Rend Collective

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

All Age Talk

You will need a large handbag or big rucksack full of things, some normal, some more strange e.g. pyjamas, and something heavy like an encyclopedia or a house brick. Make sure the bag is heavy to carry and leave it at the back of the church.

Start by explaining that you've left the bag which you need for the talk this morning at the back of church. Ask if a child can help you by going to get it.

As the child brings it up thank them and apologise for it being so heavy. Share that you don't know what you have in there and the problem with your bag is, you keep putting stuff in, but you never take anything out. Go through some of the things in the bag, seeing what's in there. Pull out a few of the normal items first, then move on to the more unusual and heavy items.

Share how you think you are carrying around things in your bag that don't need to be in there; they're just making it heavy and weighing you down.

Sometimes our lives can be a bit like this; we can end up holding on to things that we need to let go of. This is especially true with things we worry about. We keep our worries close, like the items I've been hoarding in my bag, so we can keep having a look at them and go over them all again and again, but this worry weighs us down just like the heavy bag.

Jesus understood that worry was a part of everybody's life but he also knew that worry could weigh us down and make life heavy and hard, rather than light and free. The good news is, he wants us to leave our worries with him.

Ask the congregation to reflect individually. What is worrying you at the moment? Are you willing to let go of these things and give them to God?

Prayer

Father God, help us to remember that we can always bring our worries to you. Take these worries we have shared and give us your peace. Amen

Set the Scene

Make a set of cards with pictures of faces showing different emotions, worry being one. You will need two cards showing each emotion. Play a game of pairs together. As you play ask what feeling the children think each face is showing. With an older group, you could play a game of feelings charades. Give a child one of the emotion cards to act out and the group has to guess.

Discussion

Bring in some food and drink, some clothes, a wild flower and toy bird (or picture of a bird).

Ask the children: What things do people worry about? What makes them anxious? When the children have discussed what people worry about, share with them that Jesus spoke to the crowd about worrying and he gave two examples of what people were worrying about then. Show them the food, drink and clothes. Ask: Do we worry about these things today?

Show the children the bird and share the example Jesus gave about the birds by reading v 26. Then show the wild flowers and read v 28-30 to see what Jesus said about worrying about what we wear. End by reading v 34 'Do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough worry of its own' Ask: What do you think Jesus meant by that?

Explain that it's okay to worry; everyone worries but we also need to let our worries go so they don't take over our lives. God is there and he wants us to leave our worries with him. It might be helpful at this point to say that if we are really struggling with worry and anxiety it is important to talk to an adult that we trust about our worries. Discuss with the children what feeling they would say is the opposite of worry. Consider the feeling of peace. God longs to replace the worry in our lives with his peace. Share the verse below with the children. You could simply have it written up for them to see or you could cut it into separate words or phrases and let the children work together to put the verse together in order.

Philippians 4 v 6-7 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Response

Clay Give everyone a piece of air-drying clay. Ask the children to sit quietly and squeeze the clay while sharing with God the things that worry them. When they've had some time, ask them to shape the clay into something that represents 'God with them in their worry'. In the future when they're worried, they can hold their object and remember that God is with them.

Activity

SFJTD Box Make a 'Something for Jesus to do' box. You will need small boxes and items to decorate them with. Let the children decorate the boxes and write SFJTD on the top. Explain the purpose of the box to the children: if there is something the children are worried about, they can write it down on a piece of paper and put it inside their SFJTD box, asking Jesus to work in that situation. Explain we can trust Jesus with our worries but in doing so we need to try and let go of them and leave them with him.

Game

Blow Game Divide the children into equal teams. Give each child a straw and provide the team with a table tennis ball. The aim is to blow the ball across the room to another member of their team who then blows it back in relay. The first team to finish is the winner. Reflect on how we need to take deep breaths to blow the ball across the room. When we are worried or anxious, we can sometimes feel better if we take slow deep breaths. Practice together and remind the children that they can ask Jesus to bring calm whilst doing so.

Take Home

Bubbles Give each child a small pot of bubbles. Ask them to save them until they get home so they can use them for the family prayer time on the take home sheet.

16th February 2020

WORRIED?

Matthew 6 v 25-34

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

What are some of the things that you worry about?

How does being worried make you feel?

FAMILY PRAYER

Reflect on some of the worries that you have just shared with each other. Using the bubbles that your child brought home from their group, take it in turns to each say a worry and then blow a bubble to represent it. Watch as the bubbles float away and pray together:

Thank you God that you have heard our worries. Help us to leave them with you and give us your peace. Amen

16th February 2020

WORRIED?

Matthew 6 v 25-34

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

What are some of the things that you worry about?

How does being worried make you feel?

FAMILY PRAYER

Reflect on some of the worries that you have just shared with each other. Using the bubbles that your child brought home from their group, take it in turns to each say a worry and then blow a bubble to represent it. Watch as the bubbles float away and pray together:

Thank you God that you have heard our worries. Help us to leave them with you and give us your peace. Amen

Overview

The transfiguration was a glimpse of the glory of the Son of God demonstrating that Jesus would return one day in his Father's glory. It was an encouragement to the disciples who were discouraged after the recent reminder from Jesus of his coming suffering and death. During this transfiguration God affirms Jesus as his son, as he did at Jesus' baptism. God goes on to state the importance therefore of listening to him. "This is my son with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" The presence of God's voice in a cloud resembled the way God spoke to the Israelites in the wilderness in the Old Testament. Just as the Israelites responded in fear Peter, James, and John bowed in fearful worship as they heard the voice of God telling them to listen to His Son. It is in listening to Jesus that the disciples will begin to grow and understand.

Aim

To understand that God wants us to take time to listen to him.

Song Suggestion

Follow You - Hillsong Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wfhv1iN4Fo>

All Age Talk

Ask the congregation to stand up and play a game of Simon Says with you. Explain how the game works. If you say an action with 'Simon says' e.g. 'Simon says clap your hands' then everyone should clap their hands. (You could use your name instead if you prefer). However, if you don't say 'Simon says' and just say 'Clap your hands' no one should do that action but carry on with the action from before. If they slip up then they are out and have to sit down.

When the game is over, think together about what things distracted people in the game so they went wrong. It can be hard to stay focused and keep listening.

It is important to make sure that we pay attention and listen to others and the same is true for God. We follow a God who wants a relationship with us. A relationship doesn't work if it is only one way with one person doing all the talking and no listening.

When Jesus was on the earth, there were a lot of different ideas about who he was. Many people thought that he was just a good teacher. Some people thought that he was Elijah or one of the prophets. There were some who thought he was John the Baptist. Even Jesus' own disciples didn't really understand who he was. In the bible reading today God confirms to the disciples (and to us) that Jesus is his son and instructs them to listen to him. He wanted them to take time listen to him and learn from him, and God wants his followers today to listen and learn from him too.

Prayer

Thank you God that you always listen to us. Help us to make time to listen to you too. Amen

Set the Scene

Collect 10 objects that make everyday sounds e.g. sellotape, stapler, keys, etc. Make sounds with the objects but don't let the children see them. Encourage the children to listen and guess what is making the sound. Then reveal the objects and see if they were correct. Discuss how it can sometimes be difficult to hear things even when they are listening hard.

Discussion

You will need: Six small toy people e.g. Playmobil or Lego, a big rock or something similar which ideally has a flat area on top, a torch, a piece of white material or cotton wool to resemble a cloud. Tell the story acting it out with the props.

*'After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **(Walk four figures up the side of the rock)** There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. **(Shine the torch on Jesus)** Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. **(Bring in two other figures who stand with Jesus)** Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them **(wrap them all in the white material/ place cotton wool above)**, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. **(Take cloud away and lay the three disciple figures facedown, and remove Moses and Elijah)** But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus. **(Jesus touches them and they stand up)** As they were coming down the mountain **(walk figures down the mountain)**, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'*

From that moment on Peter, James, and John had no doubt about who Jesus was. He was the Son of God; they had heard it for themselves. Peter said, "We were eyewitnesses of his majesty... we ourselves heard the voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the mountain." (2 Peter 1:16,18)
Why did God tell the disciples to listen to Jesus?

Take Home

Prayer Journal Provide a small notebook for each child and allow them to spend some time decorating the cover. Explain that they can use the notebook as a prayer journal to write or draw their prayers to God in. They may also like to write or draw anything they feel God has said to them.

Response

Meditation Lead a simple Christian Meditation (see attached resource) to give the children opportunity to listen to God. Invite the children to lay down comfortably in their own space as they listen to the words spoken. Afterwards have paper and crayons/pencils available so the children can draw or write how the process made them feel and if anything stood out for them. What did they hear God saying to them?

Activity

Cup and String Telephone Get the children into pairs giving them two paper cups, a piece of long string and two paperclips. Help the children make a small hole in the base of each cup. Then fasten the cups together with string, tying the loose end of string in the base of each cup around a paperclip. Stretch the string tight and try to pass a message down the 'telephone' with one person listening and one speaking. Discuss how well the telephone worked. What does having a 'conversation' mean? Which do you find easiest, talking or listening?

Game

Apple Pie and Custard Sit together and choose a child to be the listener. They should turn their back to the group and cover their eyes. Silently pick another child. This person then has to say 'Apple Pie and Custard' in a funny voice and the listener must guess who is speaking without looking around the room. The listener has two chances to get it right, then let the listener return to the group and choose a new listener to play the game.

Road Meditation

You can use the word Jesus or Father or God – whichever you feel is most appropriate.

At the start invite the children to lie quietly and explain what you are going to do.

Read through the meditation slowly, leaving pauses to enable the children to imagine, think, feel, and reflect.

You are walking along a road, people are passing you as you walk and move forward on your journey.

In the distance you become aware of someone walking towards you who looks familiar.

You strain to see and as they get nearer you begin to feel happy as you recognise that face; that smile.

Soon you are wrapped in a loving hug, and his name springs from inside you as you breathe out deeply. "Jesus" you say as he holds you close. You think about how it feels to be in his arms.

He beckons you to come and sit by the road with him.

"Child" he says "it is so great to see you, come tell me what is happening in your life?"

He faces you quiet and attentive, ready to listen to everything you want to say to him.

You begin to talk to him, to tell him what is happening in your life, the things on your mind, on your heart, the joys, the fears....

Leave a long pause for the children to speak to God.

After a while, you stop talking and you are aware that Jesus is still sitting and listening.

Jesus says to you "Thank you Child for sharing that with me. I love to hear what is on your heart. Now listen, I have things I want to share with you"

You draw close and listen as Jesus begins to speak to you...

Leave a long pause for God to speak to the children.

After a while Jesus stops speaking and you sit quietly for a moment reflecting on all he has said.

Then Jesus says "Child, it is time for us to journey on. I have so loved this opportunity to stop and be together. Remember I am always with you, always close, always ready to hear from you and speak to you"

You both stand and he holds you close for a moment.

You then turn and continue along the road, thinking as you walk on the time you just spent with Jesus.

Remain quiet for a few moments and then end with an appropriate prayer.

23rd February 2020

LISTEN

Matthew 17 v 1-9

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

How does it feel when someone really listens to you?

What could you do this week to help you listen to God?

FAMILY PRAYER

One person is blindfolded and led away. The 'blind' person has to get back to the rest of you without crashing into anything. You can give instructions to help but cannot lead them. We often want to do things our way rather than asking God for help, but this can often lead to us making mistakes and going the wrong way. Pray:

Father God, thank you that you're always ready and waiting to talk with us. Help us to make time to listen to you. Amen

23rd February 2020

LISTEN

Matthew 17 v 1-9

Ask your child what they did during church today.

Tell them what you learnt during church today.

How does it feel when someone really listens to you?

What could you do this week to help you listen to God?

FAMILY PRAYER

One person is blindfolded and led away. The 'blind' person has to get back to the rest of you without crashing into anything. You can give instructions to help but cannot lead them. We often want to do things our way rather than asking God for help, but this can often lead to us making mistakes and going the wrong way. Pray:

Father God, thank you that you're always ready and waiting to talk with us. Help us to make time to listen to you. Amen