

## **Welcome to Families on Faith Adventures @ Home!**

*This resource has been put together for you by the United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work team and the synod CYDOs and their equivalents.*

*We hope you will enjoy sharing a time of faith and fellowship together as a family through these stories, games, activities and prayers. They are designed as a 'pick and mix' of ways to experience God's message through the Bible, exploring what it means to you and express that in words and action. They are not linked to the lectionary but can be used in any order as we explore all the different parts of the Bible.*

*The Walking the Way challenges are one way of continuing our walk with Jesus throughout the week.*

*These ideas are designed to be intergenerational - maybe even to be shared with members of the family you can't see now except via the internet.*

*The resources are based on our non-uniformed children's groups, Friends on Faith Adventures and Pilots, but have been modified to make them suitable for all families at home.*

*These activities are planned to be used together as a family and under adult supervision. Please be aware of your family's ages and abilities as some activities may need more adult support than others. **Stay safe and have fun!***

### **This week's Bible story is:**

New Heaven New Earth  
Revelation 21 v 1-5



*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.

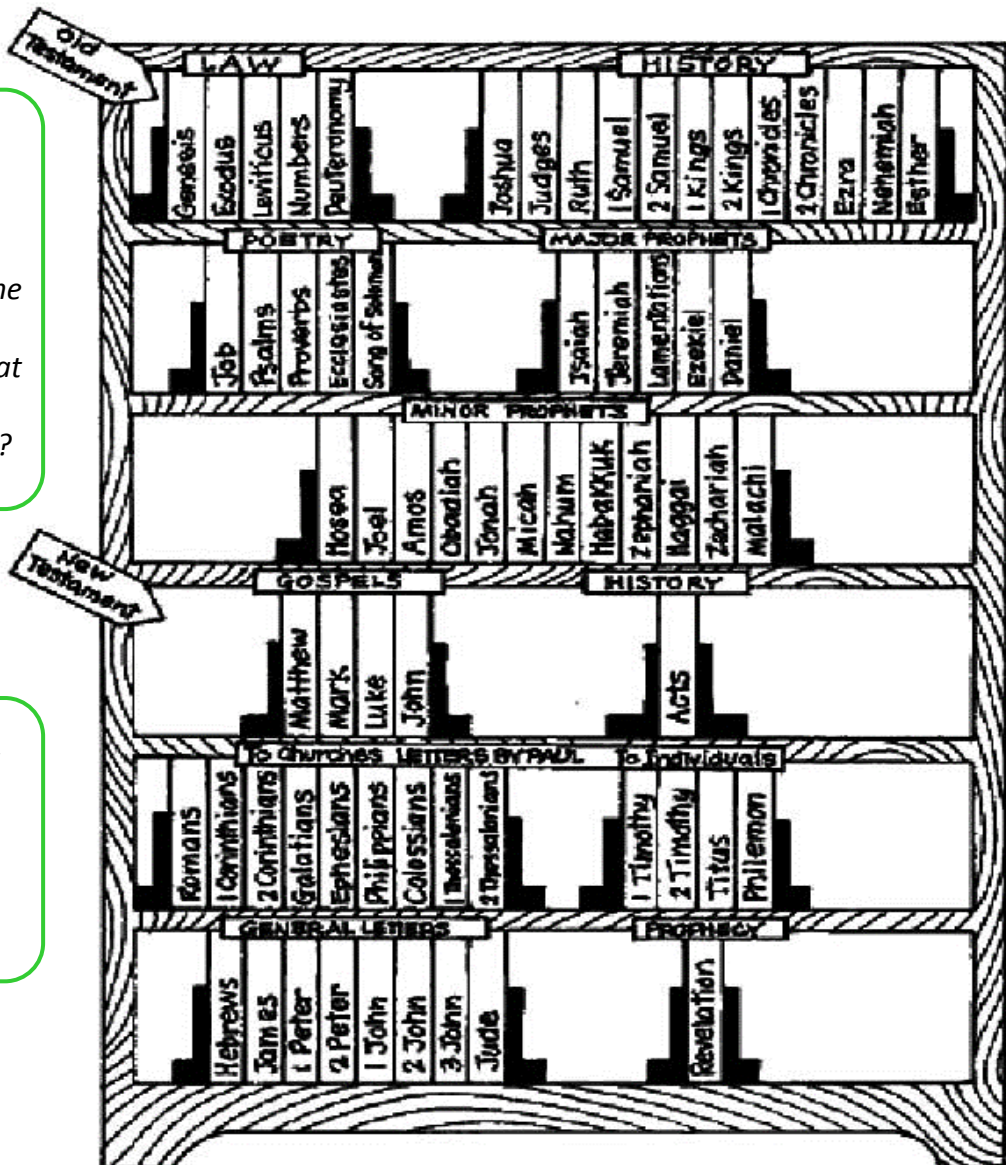
The Old Testament books were written before Jesus was born. They are the holy stories he would have grown up hearing and reading. There are 39 of these.

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 – Revelation**

Written around 95 AD by John, who was one of Jesus' disciples. He is now an old man and is in prison on an island. Jesus appears to John in a vision and shows him a glimpse of God's plans for a new heaven and a new earth.

This is the only prophetic book in the New Testament.

### **The Story – Revelation 21 v 1 - 5 (International Children's Bible)**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared. Now there was no sea. And I saw the holy city coming down out of heaven from God. This holy city is the new Jerusalem. It was prepared like a bride dressed for her husband.

I heard a loud voice from the throne. The voice said, "Now God's home is with men. He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain. All the old ways are gone."

The One who was sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted."

*The Holy Bible, International Children's Bible® Copyright© 1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson™, a division of Thomas Nelson.*

## **Online versions of the story**

### **Watch and listen**

Re-Creation story by Crossroads Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eZxdYQCoUE>

### **Dance and sing** (Songs about God the creator)

Lovely Jubbly Doug Horley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1yu1L6LZCo>

Creator God Nick and Becky Drake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywkquREnrq0>

Hillsong 100 Billion reasons (reflective song)

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

### **Ideas to retell/explore the story**

We would like to encourage you as a family to explore and express what God is showing us about his new earth tomorrow.

### **Guided Meditation/Mindfulness**

*Find a quiet five minutes and relax; enjoy this simple meditation as we think about what the future might look like.*

*One person needs to read the piece calmly, enabling the rest of the family to take part.*

*Find a quiet space, indoors or outside. Have comfy pillows and sheets. Gentle Music playing in the background*

***Script for reader:** We are going to have a mindfulness meditation.*

*It's going to help us to think about creation and perhaps get a glimpse of God's plan for the future.*

*In the Bible God shows us glimpses of what the earth might be like one day. A perfect place where God lives with his people.*

*You might like to think about this more as we relax.*

*Find a space that's just right for you. Lie or sit down comfortably and close your eyes. You can use pillows or blankets to make yourself as comfortable as you can be.*

*Listen to my voice and relax. Sometimes we get a giggle during relaxation, this is ok but try not to disturb the people around you as we are all concentrating.*

*Take a few deep breaths as you begin to relax.*

*Breath in long and deep to the count of 5, hold it for 3 then release it slowly to the count of 6*

*Breath a few times till we are all relaxed.*

*Now I want you to picture the world that God has created*

*I wonder what you can see in your imagination.*

*Picture the trees, all different colours and sizes*

*Picture the wind blowing in the trees and the birds flying above*

*Picture a path winding through the trees of a wood*

*I wonder what animals you can see and hear?*

*Picture a stream slowly babbling across rocks*

*Hear the waters as they crash into the sea*

*Picture the waves coming in and out to the sandy beach*

*Match your breathing to the waves as you watch them – in and out, in and out*

*Picture the sky so high and wide it goes on forever*

*Take a moment to thank God for all his amazing creation*

*Remember that you are his creation too*

*You were created by God, from the very top of your head down to the tip of your toes*

*The Bible tells us that this world will one day be gone*

*That God will make a new heaven and a new earth*

*It will be a perfect place – picture it now.*

*God will make everything new again*

*There will be no more tears, no more death, no more pain*

*It will be a place where God will live with his people,*

*I wonder what it will look like?*

*God says to you I am your God and you are my people; God loves you, from the very top of your head down to the tip of your toes*

*Finally lie perfectly still, repeat the deep breathing from the start for 3 breaths.*

*When you are ready open your eyes and begin to sit up slowly.*

### **Discussion:**

*How did you find the experience?*

*What did you picture in your imagination? Perhaps you could paint or draw it?*



## Dinner table Chat Activities

### Then, Now and Soon

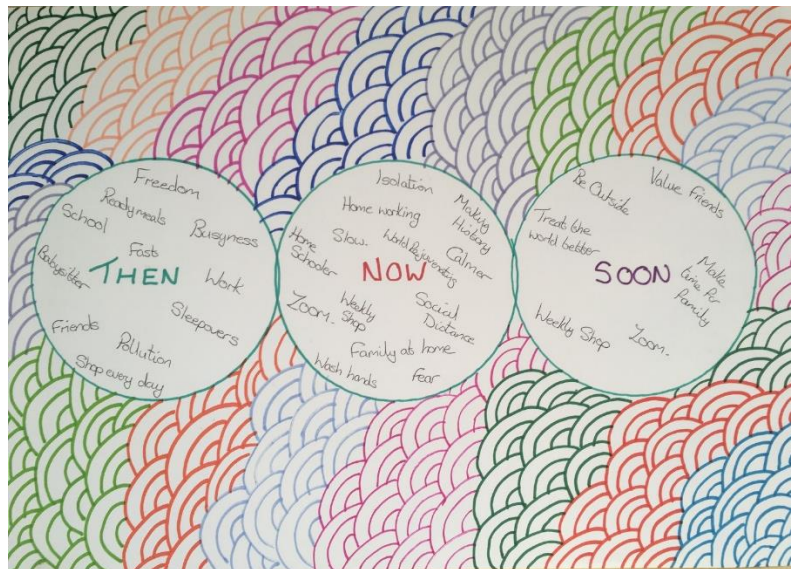
As things continue to change and shift in the restrictions and lockdown, it provides a good opportunity for families to reflect on the changes they have experienced as a family and as individuals and what it might look like after lockdown. Finding a way to capture these thoughts is an important part of the journey, especially for children. One idea is to create 3 circles, one for Then (life before lockdown), one for Now (Life in lockdown) and Soon (Life after lockdown).

Encourage a conversation and capture the thoughts on paper. Be sure to celebrate the good that has come out of each part as well as the negative.

Put it up somewhere so it can be added to over the coming weeks.

Questions to support the conversation might include:

- Can you remember what it was like in our family, with friends, in school etc before lockdown?
- What are those things like now? Is it a good or difficult change?
- What do you think it might look like in a few months/weeks?
- What do you hope it will look like?



## Dream Wall

Create a space somewhere in the house that become a dream wall. This is the place to put words or pictures of what the family's dreams are for the future: for themselves, for the family, for their friends, for the community and the wider world. It is good to dream big dreams. During family prayer times you could include times of stillness as an opportunity for God to show us glimpses of the future. An adaptation is to create a simple dream journal for each member of the family. Decorate a simple stapled book and keep it by your bed. It seems many people are having unusual dreams in lockdown and perhaps some are hearing God in their dreams.

## 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:

New Heaven New Earth

Revelations 21 v 1-5



A child's mirror



Bubbles



Something with  
rainbow colours



Something  
shiny



Aluminium foil

## Pray Together

### Prayer Labyrinths

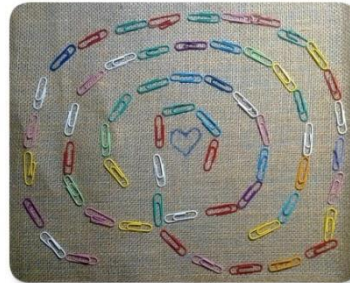
**You will need:** Coloured felt or paper  
Spiral template  
Card

**Alternative Ideas:** Sand Tray  
Paper clips  
Stones  
footprints



Cut out a spiral from the felt or paper.  
Spread the spiral out to make a gap  
between the lines.  
Stick down to the card.

You could try making a labyrinth out of  
paper clips or cut out footprints and  
make one on the floor or in the garden.



**Alternative idea:**  
Trace a pattern in sand with your  
finger



Spend time in quiet, thinking about God's Kingdom and what that means to you. Think about God's Kingdom on earth and in heaven. Follow the line with your finger or you could use a peg doll or wooden figure. Pause and take time to talk to God about what you are thinking. Continue to journey as you follow the pattern and take time to just be still and listen to God.



## Pray Together



### 'Your Kingdom Come'

Cut out a blue circle to represent the earth and use your handprints to make the land.

Jesus taught us to pray 'your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven'.

How could we bring a bit of what heaven will be like into our lives now?

Think about things like loving others and treating them with kindness; forgiving others; settling quarrels; being a peacemaker; thinking, speaking, and acting in ways that put others first. Glimpses of Gods Kingdom.

Through acts of loving kindness,  
**your Kingdom come,**  
Through care for those in need,  
**your Kingdom come,**  
Through friendship shown to lonely people,  
**your Kingdom come,**

Through never giving up on those who feel lost,  
**your Kingdom come,**  
Through patience, thought and prayer  
**your Kingdom come,**  
**Amen.**

### Praying in colour

God is king of the whole world and wants life on earth to be as amazing as life in heaven is. The Bible says that heaven is a place where there is no more death or crying or fear or sadness

Sit quietly with some paper and coloured pens or crayons. Start praying by drawing a shape on your piece of paper. In the shape write your name for God. Ask God to be part of your prayer time. Start to colour and draw around your God shape. You can write words or just doodle. Add other shapes and colours as you pray. You can pray with words in your head or write words on the paper. Enjoy your quiet time with God and see where the patterns and colours lead you.

If you would like to start with a template you can download a selection here.

<https://prayingincolor.com/handouts>





*I wonder what you  
would change about  
earth if you were in  
charge?*

*I wonder what else  
John saw in his  
vision?*

*I wonder what  
you think heaven  
is really like?*



*I wonder what  
God might be  
saying to us?*



TO DO TOGETHER...

**Kaleidoscope**

**You will need:**

Kitchen paper tube,  
Sequins  
Plastic from a fruit container or similar  
Card  
Aluminium foil  
Tape.

**What you do:**

Take the plastic from a container for fruit and, using your cardboard tube as a guide, trace two circles, one slightly smaller than the other. One needs to fit snugly inside the tube and the other needs to sit just on the end of the tube.

Take a sheet of white card, this could be from a cereal packet. This is going to fold into a triangle shape to fit inside your tube.

It should be about 1 ½ cm shorter than the cardboard tube and, when folded into three, it should fit snugly inside the tube.

Before you fold your card and fit it into the tube, glue some aluminium foil to fit over one side of the card. Now fold the card into three with the foil on the inside and push it into your tube.

Position the smaller plastic circle to sit on top of this, touching the sides of the tube. You can secure it with some tape to keep it in place.

Gently add your sequins and then secure the second plastic circle to the end of your tube with tape so that the sequins are trapped between the two circles of plastic.

Cut another circle from white card to fit the other end of your tube and cut the middle out as an eye piece. Secure that to the opposite end of the tube, and now you can decorate your tube with paper and stickers.

Now look through it and see what glimpse of God you can see.





**TO DO TOGETHER...** Sensory ways to explore



**Kaleidoscope - Alternative option**

**You will need:**

Pringle tube  
Piece of aluminium foil  
glitter and sequins

**What you do:**

Measure the foil to fit inside the tube of pringles and secure it inside the tube with Sellotape. Stretch some clingfilm to make a lens and colour it in with Sharpies. Sellotape it in place. Decorate the outside of the tube any way you like.

A grown up will need to do this bit. Using a hammer and a nail, punch a hole into the sealed end of the can to make an eye hole. Glue sequins and glitter to the inside of the pringle tube lid and place it on the end of the tube. Twist the lid as you point it into the sky. Take it outside and see what glimpses of God you can see.

**NOTE:** Please help your child and ensure that they know not to look directly into the sun.



**Dream Catcher**

**You will need:** Paper plates or old Sellotape inner.  
Scissors, Wool, Beads and feathers.  
A hole puncher

**What you do:**

Punch 8 holes in the edge of the paper plate. Weave the wool across the plate, adding in a few beads if you wish. Tie on three lengths of wool and thread 2 or 3 beads and tie on a feather. Push the quill of the feather back through the beads to make it hang straight.

Alternatively use a Sellotape inner and weave the wool across it, winding in round the inner to secure it.

Dream dreams of what can be and what is to come.







**TO DO TOGETHER...**

*Sensory ways to explore*

**Mandala**

*Mandala is a Sanskrit word loosely meaning circle. They have been created by people from different religions for centuries. They are intricate, repeating geometric shapes that make up a circle. Basically, mandalas symbolize our universe, and the idea that everything in our universe is connected. They are meditative and beautiful.*



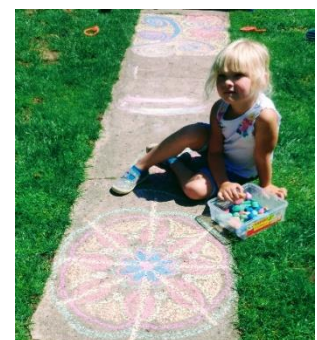
**You will need:** Paper, soft pencil, coloured pens or pencils

**What you do:**

*Cut out a square or a circle and fold it into 8 (or 4 if you want to make a simpler Mandala) Draw a design using a soft dark pencil on one of the paper pieces, making sure that some of your lines touch the edges of the segment. Using the existing crease, fold the drawn segment over onto the piece next to it and rub with the back of a spoon or the handles of your scissors, quite hard. This will transfer the pencil marks onto the blank segment. It will be quite faint so go over it with your soft dark pencil and repeat this process until all your paper has been traced on. Colour the design in with felt pens or coloured pencils.*



*Alternatively create a Mandala on your path of pavement, using chalk.*



# Walking the Way

Living the life of Jesus today

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

**At Home:**

God said in Revelation  
“Look, I’m making all things new!”

As a family, perhaps you could make something new by mending it or recycling it or re-purposing it. Maybe you could repaint a piece of old furniture or brighten some old clothes with tie-dye or patches.

**Outside:**

As you go for a walk around your neighbourhood, be on the look-out for glimpses of God. This will be different for everyone, so watch out for where you see, hear, feel God.

**For Others:**

Sometimes people can feel down and think that there is not a lot to hope for. Can you say or do something that helps someone see where there is hope and something to look forward to. Perhaps you could give them a voucher – “when lockdown is over, we will have tea together”... “When the cinema opens again, we will go to a movie together”... “When we can visit each other again, I am going to hug you so tight”.



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

**families  
on faith adventures**

at home

### **Adventurers Go!**

*You've shared together, now share with us!*

*Why not send photos of your crafts, your treasure boxes, your Walking the Way challenges - or dress up to make a tableau of the Big Story and take a photo to send in.*

Email your photos to: [lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk](mailto:lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk)  
with parental permission for them to be used in publicity and online URC social media.

Alternatively, share them on our Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth/>

Remember you can find more resources on our website:  
<https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth>

*And if you've enjoyed these activities, why not see whether your local church runs Pilots or Friends on Faith Adventures (FOFA) when things get back to normal again.*

*Created for you by Nicola Grieves (Eastern Synod), Judy Harris (National Synod of Wales), Hannah Middleton (Northern Synod), Philip Ray (Wessex Synod, North), Lorraine Webb (Programme Officer for CYW), and Ruth White (Wessex Synod, South) on behalf of the CYDO+ and Children's and Youth Work team and Pilots.*



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church