

Easter 3**Lectionary Bible readings**

RCL Easter 3 Year A
 Acts 2.14a,36-41
 Psalm 116.1-4,12-19
 1 Peter 1.17-23
Luke 24.13-35

Moments of revelation

Luke 24.13-35

Two disciples walk back from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus. They are in despair about the death of Jesus. Jesus appears and walks beside them, but they do not recognise him. He teaches them from the Scriptures and they see who he is when he breaks bread with them.

This week's resources explore: how Jesus takes time to explain his own story.

 Look out for ways to connect faith with everyday life.

Bible notes

New Testament

Acts 2.14a,36-41

Peter concludes his open-air sermon with a strong statement about the identity of Jesus: 'God has made him both Lord and Messiah', and a hard-hitting accusation: 'this Jesus whom you crucified' (v.36). Events in Jerusalem before the Passover may have convinced members of this very crowd that Jesus was a rabble-rousing, blaspheming troublemaker who needed to be crucified to maintain peace with the Romans and a proper respect for their faith. Jesus' resurrection disproves this assessment: God raised Jesus from the dead, showing clearly that their whole understanding of God's will had been wrong. How could they get it so wrong? They ask the anguished question, 'What should we do?' (v.37). Peter's answer is surprising – he does not tell them to go away in sackcloth and ashes, but to be baptized and then they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is a promise for all who hear God's call. Peter gives them an urgent yet open invitation.

New Testament

1 Peter 1.17-23

The writer continues to encourage his readers by changing their understanding of their sufferings. He evokes two aspects of Jewish culture and shared memory – the exile, and the practice of ritual sacrifice. 'The time of your exile' was originally the time in Babylon after Judah had been conquered (587/6–538 BC). 'Exile' thus becomes shorthand for living in a hostile environment while holding true to the faith (e.g. in the stories of Daniel). So, the readers are being encouraged to understand their

sufferings as caused by being God's people in a hostile context, but also to have hope that, just like the original exile, theirs is temporary – they have an eternal home with God, and they are not living outside God's care. They are secure because they have been ransomed with the blood of Christ, who can be pictured as resembling the perfect sacrificial animal. The cleansing he brings is not temporary but resembles a new birth. How are they to live in the light of this? With reverent fear for God, who judges all impartially and with genuine mutual love.

Gospel Luke 24.13-35

In Luke's Gospel, the risen Jesus makes his first appearance during this 10 to 12 kilometre walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Two disappointed and heartsick disciples are making their way home when Jesus himself comes and walks beside them. Their eyes are kept (literally, 'held back') from recognising him. We are not told who or what prevents them from knowing – it could be God's direct action, or the trauma they have experienced in witnessing his death, or a combination of both. Jesus asks them what they have been talking about as they walked along, and there follows the almost comical scene of Cleopas and his companion recounting the story of 'Jesus of Nazareth' to – Jesus of Nazareth! When he first asks them, though, they stand still 'looking sad', as if the horror of recent events has sapped all their energy. The word for 'sad' here could also be translated 'angry'. Either way, they are overcome with deep emotion and say, 'We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.' 'Redeeming Israel' could mean freeing Israel from Roman rule, but it could also indicate more far-reaching hopes, such as the idea that the Messiah

would end all wars or bring about the end of time. Whatever they were hoping for, it all seems lost now. Then the unrecognised Jesus begins to reframe their experience by explaining to them, from the Scriptures, that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer; it was in God's plan and not a terrible accident. It is as if this unknown teacher takes their isolated beads of knowledge and re-strings them into a different sequence revealing a new pattern. Their hearts burn within them as they listen to him. It is this new knowledge, plus their own generous hospitality, that paves the way for the moment when they recognise him in the breaking of the bread.

The links between the lectionary readings

These readings encourage us to consider that we might have got things wrong and jumped to false conclusions. The crowd in Jerusalem had previously assumed that Jesus was a troublemaker; the readers of 1 Peter perhaps felt alone in meaningless suffering; the disciples on the road had assumed that Jesus was finished. All these thoughts were overturned by the reality of the resurrection.

WEB Notes on Psalm 116.1-4,12-19 and ideas for using it together.

See www.rootsontheweb.com

With very young children: resources on the reading to use with under 5s.

Children's Sheet and Colouring Sheet (Welsh versions available).

Drama: *Let me explain*

Bible study: a selection of this week's resources to print out.

Prayers

WEB Welsh translations.

Call to worship

Come, walk with him.
Come, talk with him.
Come, feast with him.
Come, worship Jesus, our risen Lord.

A gathering prayer

God, we gather as your people.
We come to walk a journey together,
to talk and to share along the way,
[to feast on bread and wine],
to meet and to know Jesus.
Help us to marvel at all that Jesus has done for us. **Amen.**

A prayer of approach

Risen Saviour, risen Lord,
we come to you today.
We come to share in your story.
We come to feast with you.
We approach your throne with the knowledge
that you died for us and rose again.
Hallelujah, risen Lord Jesus.
Hallelujah. Amen.

A prayer of confession

Risen Lord, we are sorry
that we fail to recognise you in our midst,
that we are too preoccupied with ourselves.
We are sorry
that we let you down,
that we feast and don't invite others to share with us.
We are sorry
that we welcome friends but not always the stranger,
or anyone who makes us feel uncomfortable.
Forgive us, Lord.
Help us to be generous people,
our church, our homes – and our hearts –
always places of welcome. **Amen.**

A prayer of adoration and thanksgiving

Father, we thank you that you come out and meet us
where we are.
We worship and adore you.
We thank you that you walk the road with us, that you treat us
as an equal even when we fail to recognise you.
We worship and adore you.
You always love us, always care for us, always want to eat
and drink with us – such is your love.
We worship and adore you.
Thank you, Lord, that you are not a stranger, but our friend.
We worship and adore you. Amen.

An active way into prayer

Share a loaf of bread (gluten-free, if required) with those
present, inviting people to savour their piece of bread, to eat
it slowly and to enjoy it. Invite everyone to imagine the meal
at the end of the journey to Emmaus. Then say together: **Risen
Lord Jesus, as we feast with you, help us to recognise you in all
people, places and situations. Amen.**

A prayer for all ages together

*Invite people to walk around the worship space in small groups,
and to mime eating during the refrain.*

Jesus, you walk on the road with us.
Let us enjoy the feast together.
We walk and talk and laugh.
Let us enjoy the feast together.
You share your story, we share ours.
Let us enjoy the feast together.
We're tired and weary and stop to rest.
Let us enjoy the feast together.
You break the bread and thank God.
Let us enjoy the feast together.
You open our eyes and we see you.
Let us enjoy the feast together. Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Living Lord,
we bring to you the needs of the world.

We pray for those who consider themselves to be strangers
and outcasts.

Help us always to welcome the stranger, whatever the cost,
not sitting comfortably and ignoring people we think
don't fit in,
not taking the easy way.

May our homes and churches be places of welcome,
hospitality and love,
that all may have the chance to recognise and see you
in the warmth of those around them.

We pray for countries where food is in short supply.

May we farm sustainably and eat sensibly,
so there is enough to feed the whole planet.

May we not look only after ourselves but seek to offer
the same opportunities to all.

Help us not to be selfish, but always to consider others.
Lord, we long for the day when all in society will be equal.
May we be a part of making that happen.

We pray for those who are lonely and have no one
to eat with them.

May we open our doors to our neighbours, so that love
and friendship can flourish, and all can enjoy the feast.

We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

A sending out prayer

Lord Jesus,
as you walked on the road to Emmaus,
walk with us on the roads we travel.
Help us to know your presence with us,
and to be your presence to others.
And, at the end of the day,
may we all enjoy your feast.
Amen.

A personal prayer

Risen Christ, friend, companion, healer:
as I walk the road in front of me
be by my side and never leave. **Amen.**

Gather

All-age introduction

A way to begin worship when all ages are present.

Who is it?

Prepare some pictures of a number of animals from the *Lion King* story. Also prepare some small cards with clues about each item (e.g. Zazu the officious bird: says a lot; gets into trouble; is blue; has feathers; is a red-billed hornbill). Information is readily available on the internet to do this. Ask volunteers to hold up the pictures. Ask if anyone knows what or who each image is. Try to identify them by name (e.g. Simba the lion, Zazu the bird). Help the guessing along by using the descriptions you have prepared – one clue at a time. Try some clues before you show the picture. Ask if people knew all the interesting facts about each image, commenting that you have discovered so much in preparing for today. It's amazing how much more we can find out, not just about Disney characters, but about all sorts of things and people when we dig a bit deeper, or when we listen to people telling their story. Let's see what or who we find out about today.

With very young children

WEB Resources on the reading to use with under 5s.

Open the Word

To help the listener

The reader could use these words to provide context.

Try to imagine what it would have been like to be so close to the events of the first Easter, and to find the resurrection of Jesus so surprising. Note how much faith and trust and meaning these early preachers and disciples find in the fact that Jesus is risen.

Present the New Testament


This is a continuation of Peter's sermon to the crowd that began last week (see the *Present the New Testament*, p.36). Re-enact it in a simple way, with Peter on an improvised platform (e.g. a wooden box or milk crate – check in advance that it is stable and can bear the person's weight!) placed either at the front (with a few people gathered round as the crowd) or in the middle of the worship space (among the people). Peter speaks with great passion and as if speaking ad lib – ideally having learnt the speech so that no script is required.


Present the Gospel

Set up a table and chairs at one side of the front of the space, with some bread (ideally, flatbread) on a plate on the table. While the passage is read, three actors mime the slow walk to Emmaus, beginning as far as possible from the table, and walking round or through the building (as appropriate) – they mime talking too! At verse 28, they mime urging Jesus to stay, and then all sit down at the table. At verse 30, Jesus takes the bread, holds it up, breaks and shares it – then immediately and without any fuss, leaves. The remaining two run back to where they started, wave their arms about, and mime talking excitedly to whoever is nearby.

Explore & respond

Sermon ideas

WEB *PostScript*: Linking this week's reading to the news .

 In our culture, there are lots of ways to interact with people without actually seeing them. We can email them, send a text, share messages in a WhatsApp group, 'like' something posted on Facebook or Instagram, and so on. Not to devalue these products, but we are made for human interaction. The disciples understand who Jesus is after hearing him share stories about himself from the Scriptures, and watching him break bread in their home. Does this raise questions for us, not only about the depth of our own relationships, but also whether we spend (enough) time allowing Jesus to come alongside us?

● Driven as the two disciples were by very different emotions, we cannot fail to notice the contrast between the speed of the journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and that of the journey back to tell of the meeting with the risen Jesus. It can be hard to get ourselves moving when we are weighed down with worries and disappointments. The Church has never pretended such stresses are not real, but it has always looked for ways to help people meet with Jesus personally – e.g. through prayer. If we are struggling and finding our path difficult, are there ways we can encounter Jesus and allow him to meet us in – and transform – our situation?

● Jesus explains his death and resurrection to the two disciples by 'beginning with Moses and all the prophets'. Are we familiar with the Old Testament and how it points to the coming Messiah? John 3.14 is but one example of how Jesus saw his own ministry foreshadowed in the Jewish Scriptures (see Numbers 21.9). We can be daunted by the Old Testament, but Jesus saw himself and his work in its pages. As his followers, we have an obligation to explore it, whether through commentaries, church study groups or our own personal reading.

● Although the two disciples engage Jesus in conversation, it is not a 'head to head' conversation; it is a walking alongside. A talking and sharing in which all are, in a sense, equal – all listening, speaking, learning, discovering. It is also 'of (or in) the moment' – it is now. We can be good at looking back, seeing what God has done in our lives. We can also be good at looking forward, thinking about and praying for how our life might be with God. What about now? The breaking of bread – whether understood Eucharistically or domestically (or both – for both have a place in the story) – is a now moment. Do we spend enough time living in the now, talking about what God is doing in our lives right now? Or are we wary of talking about it?


All-age conversation

A way for leaders to help all ages explore the reading.

Split everyone present into two teams. Say that you are going to ask each team, in turn, to find out as much as they can about a particular person. For the first team, display a picture of an ordinary person known to you but not to others present. Invite the team to write on a large sheet of paper what they 'know' (or can deduce) about that person. Stop after a minute or two, saying that you will look at their score later. For the second team, ask someone you have approached in advance (someone not known, or not well known, to those present) to come and stand at the front. The team can ask questions of the person, and should write up what they 'know' (or can find out) about the person. Again, stop them after a minute or two. The teams' scores are simply the number of accurate statements written up. The difference between the two scores should be very clear. Discuss together what made the difference.

Now, ask: How do we know about Jesus? Do we look at him, trying to deduce something about him, rather as the first team looked at their picture? Or do we engage with him, as the second team did with their person? We see this difference in today's Gospel story too. As in that story, Jesus doesn't ask us to guess things about him; he takes time to walk with us, and he invites us to ask questions and to explore Scripture together to find answers.

Active worship

Ideas to engage different ages, learning and spiritual preferences. Spiritual styles (as defined by David Csinos) key: **W**ord, **E**motion, **S**ymbol, **A**ction. Find out more  in *Worship and learning support*.

A simple worship activity for all ages

In advance, ask two or three people to prepare a one-minute account of how they came to be or call themselves Christian. Ask individuals in turn to share this testimony with those present. When each person finishes their story, light a candle at the front. When all the

testimonies have been given, say that we all have a story to tell, and invite everyone who wishes to, to come and light a candle to add to the few already lit (you could play quiet background music). Finally, pray together: **Jesus, thank you that you walk alongside us and help us to know you. Thank you that we recognise you in one another. May your light shine in us and through us today and always. Amen. W E S**

Question box

Display a large sheet of paper on which is drawn a simple road. Invite people to write down questions they have about the Bible on sticky notes and to stick them on the road. The leader(s) can respond to these straight away, or take them away to inform future sermon topics, Bible studies, or invitations to visiting speakers. **W E**

Prayer bracelets

Make available different coloured beads, and lengths (about 20cm) of elastic string. Invite people to think about important events, people or places in their journey to faith, and to select a bead to represent each one. Then ask people to thread the beads onto the string, arranging them in the order in which they 'happened'. Add two extra beads on the end, before tying the string to make a bracelet. Encourage people to use the bracelet to thank God for each part of their journey of faith. When they reach the penultimate bead, they should ask God to show them their next step. And with the last bead, encourage them to name before God someone they know, that they too might meet Jesus on their journey. **W E S**

Coffee time

If you usually have tea and coffee before or after the service, for a change have it during the service – perhaps before the prayers or final hymn. Ask people to sit with someone they don't know well, and share stories about themselves (e.g. where they grew up, how they first came to your church, when they first called themselves a Christian). Encourage people to take time with these stories and to really listen to one another. **W E**

Picture pointers



Questions for reflection

- ▶ When have you gathered round a fire (or similar) to tell/listen to stories?
- ▶ If you were to tell your own story, where would you begin?
- ▶ Where is Jesus in your story?

Hymns & songs

Songs in italics are suitable for all ages.

All heaven declares

Be thou my guardian and my guide

Be still, my soul: the Lord is at your side

Broken for me, broken for you

Come, risen Lord, and deign to be our guest

Falling, moving, closer

Fear not, rejoice and be glad

From heaven to here and from here to heaven

God has spoken – by his prophets

Heaven shall not wait

Listening God, you hear us when we cannot speak

Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder

O thou who this mysterious bread

On the journey to Emmaus

Sometimes a light surprises

Stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ (Taizé)


There is a longing in our hearts

When our Lord walked the earth

You make my heart feel glad

Send out

Live your faith

Encourage everyone to put their faith into action. Use the suggestion below or distribute the **Live your faith** sheet .

Look for the chance to spend time with someone you don't know so well, and pray for an opportunity to share a story of what Jesus has done for you. **E A**

Easter 3

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Acts 2.14a,36-41

Psalm 116.1-4,12-19

1 Peter 1.17-23

Luke 24.13-35

Moments of revelation

Luke 24.13-35

Two disciples walk back from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus. They are in despair about the death of Jesus. Jesus appears and walks beside them, but they do not recognise him. He teaches them from the Scriptures and they see who he is when he breaks bread with them.

This week's resources explore: how Jesus takes time to explain his own story.

 Look out for ways to connect faith with everyday life.

Bible notes

- The gift of story is significant in the way the Scriptures have been written and shared. They began as a faithful retelling of stories from generation to generation: around a fire, walking along the road, and then written down for us to hold onto today.
- Jesus begins to reframe the experience of the two disciples on the road by explaining God's story, told through the Scriptures. It is as if this unknown teacher takes their isolated beads of knowledge and re-strings them into a different sequence, revealing a new pattern: God's story.
- We see within Scripture the imperative and the power of sharing God's story. As Jesus walked along the road, the disciples did not realise who he was until Jesus recited his own words, and their eyes were opened. There is power in God's Word and the faithful proclamation of it, as in the Acts passage, where 3,000 came to believe, as God's Word and his story were faithfully shared.
- All these readings explore situations where people have jumped to false conclusions. The crowd in Jerusalem had previously assumed that Jesus was a troublemaker; the readers of 1 Peter perhaps felt alone in meaningless suffering; the disciples on the road assumed that their time with Jesus was over. All these thoughts were overturned by the reality of the resurrection. This is the greatest story we can tell, and one which will change lives: who might we share this story with?

Prayers

 Welsh translations.

A gathering prayer

Jesus of Nazareth,
we all come with our own stories to tell,
we've all made different journeys here,
but we all come to hear your story
and to understand how our stories and
journeys fit with yours.
Walk and talk with us, Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

A prayer of thanks

God our Creator,
we're blown away by the story of Jesus,
going all the way back
to the beginning of time,
leading all the way to the cross
and carrying on until today.
Thank you for caring enough about us
to make us part of this story. **Amen.**

A prayer for forgiveness

Holy Spirit, our guide,
we're sorry when we misunderstand
because we haven't listened properly;
we're sorry for being impatient
when you haven't finished speaking.
Show us the way to hear and to wait.
Amen.

A prayer for others

Response line: **Open their eyes.**

Almighty God,
we pray for people
who don't know you when they see you:
Open their eyes.
We pray for people
who have read the Bible,
but haven't understood...
We pray for people
who haven't heard your story yet...
Amen.

A sending out prayer

Lord Jesus,
fill us with excitement for your story,
so that when we go out,
we want to tell our friends all about you.
Amen.

Gather

Choose a quiet or active way to begin your session.

Who am I?

Ask for a volunteer among the children to be blindfolded. Ask them to recognise somebody in the room by asking that person (ideally a leader) to share a story from their life. How easy was it to recognise the person sharing their story? In the story today, there are people who meet Jesus, see and hear him, but still don't recognise who he is.

Word story

Ask the children to sit in a circle and explain that you are going to tell a story together, but each person is only allowed to say three words before the storytelling is taken over by the next person. Choose someone to start and move around the circle until everyone has had a turn.

Open the Word

Present the reading Open the Bible at Luke 24.13-35

Jesus shows who he is by explaining the stories in the Bible and sharing food with his friends.

Choose from these two ways of telling the story.

Our story Bring in a few autobiographies for the children to see, explaining that people love to share their personal stories, and some people write them down. What kind of things might a person put in a book about their life? Write down the key words that the children suggest. The Bible passage we have today helps show us that Jesus takes time to tell his own story. Read it together, and write down the key words that explain this story about Jesus.

Share it out loud Set the scene for today's passage with a bit of information, for instance, this story appears just after Jesus' death and resurrection, but before everyone knew that he was alive again. Read the story first, and then ask for volunteers who are confident readers to play the three parts and act it out (see script on [WEB](#)).

Who was the mysterious man on the road to Emmaus? That's what Cleopas wanted to know. Cleopas and his friend had been walking away from Jerusalem, talking about Jesus' death, when the man suddenly appeared with them. 'What are you talking about?' the man asked. Everyone in Jerusalem was talking about Jesus. Where had this stranger been?



Cleopas said, 'We're talking about our friend, the prophet Jesus. We thought he was the Messiah, the one sent by God to save Israel, but he was killed three days ago, and now we don't know what to think.' There was something familiar about the stranger, but Cleopas couldn't put his finger on it.

Cleopas' friend said, 'This morning some women went to Jesus' tomb and told us the body was gone. They said they saw angels, who told them he was alive. The body's definitely gone. The disciples checked. But what does it mean? Where's the body?'

Then the stranger began to speak about the Old Testament prophets. He explained how the Messiah's life and death had been predicted a long time ago. 'You are slow and foolish not to see it,' the stranger said. 'The Messiah had to suffer before entering his glory.'

They all arrived in Emmaus as evening approached. 'Come in and eat with us,' Cleopas said. The stranger accepted, and when he broke the bread, Cleopas suddenly knew who he was. It was Jesus! Back from the dead!

Jesus disappeared and Cleopas and his friend couldn't contain themselves. They rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the 11 disciples what had happened. When they got there, the disciples were talking about Jesus. 'He appeared to Simon. He has risen!' Cleopas told his story and how he had recognised Jesus when he broke bread.

Talk together

- Why do you think the two friends may not have recognised Jesus?
- Are there any times in your life where you have learnt something about Jesus' story?
- How might we take time to share Jesus' story with our friends?

For very young children

Play and think about Jesus' story.

Play materials: storybooks.

Storytelling

Pass round a story bag and invite the children to dip their hands in and choose an object/picture (in italics) to help you tell the story.

Some friends were travelling along the road to Emmaus (*footprint*), talking about the sad story of their friend Jesus' death. Then they met a man; he couldn't understand why they were so sad, so they explained that the women had gone to the tomb, but Jesus' body had gone. (*stone*) The stranger began talking to them about all the stories in the Old Testament (*Bible*) and explaining how Jesus was meant to die, but that he would rise again. (*sunrise image*) They reached Emmaus that evening and the two friends invited the stranger in to share some food. The strange man took the bread (*bread*) and suddenly they realised they had been talking to Jesus and he had been telling his own story. (*storybook about Jesus*)

Play

Cover up large pictures of simple objects, e.g. a tree, a house, with smaller pieces of paper. See if the children can guess the object as you slowly reveal it.

Create

Make storybooks for the children using A4 paper (instructions on [WEB](#)), and invite everyone to draw things inside their book which are important to them.

Praise

Go for a walk together outside or around your indoor space and help each other to tell the story again through words and actions.

Pray

Open a Bible and then pray together:

God, you give us these words to learn about your Son.

Help us to read and share and know them.

Amen.

Find more prayers opposite and additional activities on the next page.

[WEB](#) Very young children page with more activities, prayers and songs.

Explore & respond

Select ideas to help children connect the Bible reading and their lives. [WEB](#) Templates and links to online resources. Spiritual styles (as defined by David Csinos) key: **W**ord, **E**motion, **S**ymbol, **A**ction. Find out more [WEB](#) in *Worship and learning support*.

Do

Charades

10 mins **W E**

Share a story in a different way

You will need: a list of daily activities such as brushing teeth, eating breakfast, walking to school.

- Play the game of charades. Ask for one volunteer and give them an everyday action to act out.
- Remind each child when it is their turn that they are only allowed to use their bodies to make actions, with no noise or speech allowed.
- Emphasise to the children that they need to exaggerate their actions in order to share the story well.
- Swap round, to ensure each child who wishes to has a turn.
- Ask: is it possible to share a story without using words?

Make

Creating a scene

15 mins **E**

Take time to recreate the scene of your story

You will need: scissors, sticky tape, glue, pens, and a selection of recyclable materials, e.g. toilet rolls, boxes, newspapers, yoghurt pots, bottles.

- Ask the children to work in small groups to create the three different scenes from today's passage: the road to Emmaus, the room where they shared bread, and the disciples' room in Jerusalem – using the recyclable materials provided. Encourage the children to take time to think of all the details they might include.
- Once they have finished, retell the story using their crafted scenes.

Walking along the road

15 mins **E**

Imagine journeying with Jesus

You will need: copies of the 'Emmaus road' template (on [WEB](#)), printed on card, pens, scissors, lolly sticks, glue.

- Give each child a template. Ask them first to colour the road scene and then cut it out.
- Then, while they are colouring in the three figures, prepare the road scenes by cutting a long slit along the centre of each (as marked on the template).
- Ask the children to cut out the three figures as one piece.
- Invite them to put the lolly stick through the slit in the road scene and then glue the three figures to the top of the stick.
- Encourage the children to recall the story as they move their figures along the road, using the lolly stick.

Pray

Prayer acrostics

10 mins **W E S**

Remember that God is interested in every part of our story

You will need: paper, pens.

- Give each child a piece of paper and a pen. Ask them to write their name in large letters down the left-hand side of the paper.
- Then, using each letter of their name, encourage everyone to write something they want to thank God for, or would like his help with. Invite them to include some things that are part of the story of their life.
- Then ask the children to swap their papers with someone else in the group, and spend some time quietly praying for the person whose sheet they have. Encourage everyone to take the sheets they are holding home and pray for that person through the week.

Stories of strife

10 mins **W E A**

Spend time reflecting on how some Christians struggle to share their story

- Watch the video (link on [WEB](#)) to see how Christians in other countries are sometimes unsafe if they share their story.
- Talk about how we can pray and tell other people about our faith in God safely. Some Christians across the world might be in danger for praying or going to church.
- Spend some time praying for people all over the world who do not have the freedom to share their story, or the story of Jesus, with others.

More prayers are on p.38.

Sing

[WEB](#) Abbreviations and music links* in *Hymns, songs & music*.

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Under 5s | Who put the colours in the rainbow?
Jesus is the one, Freedom kids* |
| Under 12s | Heaven in my heart, Hillsong kids on <i>Super strong God</i> *
My Jesus, my Saviour, Lord, there is none like you |
| 12+ | You are love, Rend collective experiment on <i>Organic family hymnal</i> *
For who you are, Marty Sampson, Hillsong worship on <i>Mighty to save</i> * |

See www.rootsontheweb.com

Children's Sheet and **Colouring Sheet** (Welsh versions available).

Send out

Live your faith

Encourage the children to put their faith into action. Use the idea below or give out the **Children's Sheet** [WEB](#).

Keep a diary this week, with just a few words each day about your own story. Share it with God, and know that it is important to him. **W E**

ROOTS YOUNG PEOPLE

Go to www.rootsontheweb.com for all templates, links and images. Find Bible notes and more prayers on p.38. Use the BIBLE section below first, then choose activities from the other sections. Extra ideas can be found in *Explore & respond* opposite.

BIBLE Luke 24.13-35

Warm up 5 mins W E

Prepare sticky notes with the names of different famous people written on. Give one to each young person – making sure they don't see what is written – and ask them to stick it to their forehead. Taking turns, using simple yes or no questions, each individual tries to guess whose name is on their sticky note. Trying to find out some of the story of the people by asking questions can be very important.

Sharing his story 10 mins E S

Ask the young people to find a space where they can sit comfortably. Invite everyone to close their eyes and try to imagine they are walking along the road listening to Jesus telling his story. Encourage people to focus on imagining the atmosphere: the smells, the sounds, how they would feel. What would they ask? As the young people are in that quiet place and imagining that journey, read **Luke 24.13-35** slowly to them.

Questions to discuss

- Why do you think the people on the road may not have recognised Jesus?
- How do you think God reveals himself to people today?
- What experiences have helped you to learn more about Jesus' story?


CONNECT

Storyteller 10 mins W E

Everyone has a story to tell, so let your group tell their story. Give each young person exactly one minute to tell you a story from their lives; remind the group to be respectful of each other. You could try to include rules such as no repetition or hesitation during the one minute.

'Insta' story 15 mins W E

Split the young people into small groups and ask the groups to create a 30-second Instagram story about today's session and what they have learnt during it. Give everyone the chance to plan, rehearse and, if possible, record their story, or take photographs to illustrate their story on their mobile phones.

[WEB](#) PostScript: Linking this week's reading to the news .

Listen

[WEB](#) See *Young People* page or *Hymns, songs & music* for links to these tracks.
Red letters, Crowder on *Red letters/wildfire*
Nailed to the cross (live), Rend collective on *Standing on the edge (live)*
Psalm without words (live), Soul survivor & Momentum on *The flood*

EXPLORE

Too close 10 mins W E


Sometimes we might find it difficult to see what is in front of us. Download and play the quiz (link on [WEB](#)). You can play this straight from a laptop, or print off the relevant images if you don't have internet access during your session. Ask: have we ever been so close to something that we may have missed the meaning?

Comic strip story 15 mins W E S

Create a simple eight-square grid on sheets of A4 paper (enough for one sheet per person), to make a comic strip. Ask the young people to try and retell today's passage in a comic book style. You may wish to share these stories together.



Picture pointers [WEB](#)

Questions for reflection 

- ▶ When have you gathered round a fire (or similar) to tell/listen to stories?
- ▶ If you were to tell your own story, where would you begin?
- ▶ Where is Jesus in your story?

PRAY

Prayer webs 10 mins E S

Invite the group to stand in a circle and then to throw a ball of string round the circle (remembering to keep hold of the string), so that everyone is connected to someone else in the circle. Once everyone is connected, remind the young people that we are all part of each other's story. Invite everyone to spend time praying for those they are connected to, either aloud or silently.

Silence 5 mins W E

In among all the busyness of sharing our stories, ask the young people to take just five minutes to sit and be still, and to thank God. Encourage everyone to invite God to be involved in their story, and ask that they don't become too busy for him.

Live your faith

Sum up each day this week with one word. At the end of the week, take time to reflect on the good and bad moments and share your story with God. **W E S**