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Session plans



Pages 7–16

Creation
Genesis 1:1–2:4

We explore nature and think about God's creation and the importance of rest.



Pages 37–41

Feeding the 5,000
John 6:1–14

We find ways to enjoy eating together and finding out about a time when Jesus did something miraculous!



Pages 17–27

Moses and the Israelites
Exodus 14–24

We find out about Moses and the Israelites, and think about journeys.



Pages 42–45

Jesus appears to the disciples on the beach
John 21:1–14

We enjoy spending time together and finding out about how Jesus made time for his disciples at a special beach-side barbeque.



Pages 28–36

Naaman's slave girl
2 Kings 5:1–15

We find out about Naaman's slave girl and consider how we can help others.



Pages 46–48

Running the race
Hebrews 12:1–3

We have fun playing active games and exploring how we can keep 'running the race' as followers of Jesus.

Big Summer Holiday Bucket List

Enjoy summer and discover more about God's big story in this engaging holiday resource for children aged 5–11 and their families. Across six sessions, we will be ticking off some essential summer 'bucket list' activities. Through ice breakers, fun activities and a chance to build up self-esteem, children are encouraged to make treasured memories while learning about God.

You can run the *Big Summer Holiday Bucket List* as a holiday club, during your usual Sunday slots, or as a seasonal community event. The six sessions can be tailored to your particular group and setting: each will take a minimum of an hour, but you can vary activity lengths, swap the order around and pick and choose the themes. Parents, carers and friends can get involved too. The main activity for each session is an invitation to others so everyone can connect and explore God's big story together.



Plan your sessions

- We provide children's versions of the Bible passages, based on the NRSV. There are also links to engaging videos. See if you can source suitable audiovisual equipment, such as a phone and Bluetooth speaker for outdoor activities, or you can adapt the activities to suit what you have available.
- You could start and finish each session with a song, e.g. 'All Through History' by Nick and Becky Drake (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQS2HHayr38>) which covers God's big story. You can find the actions here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lxs2l2hzv4>. Each of the six sessions include a 'Join in and sing' listing.
- If you're running this as an event or holiday club, don't forget to check in with your safeguarding officer, complete risk assessments, and recruit appropriate volunteers. You will need to consider how you would like your registration process to go, whether you'd like to charge for this event and what, if any, refreshments you'll be providing. This is a flexible resource so encourage the children to have fun, make memories, and enjoy ticking off their Big Summer Holiday Bucket List as you explore God's big story together.
- Give yourself plenty of lead time in which to promote the type of 'Big Summer Bucket List' event you want to run. Download and print copies of the colourful poster to display, and hand out the invitation postcards with the key 'date, time and location' written on the reverse, well in advance of your planned event. Include a contact number so people can RSVP. This will help you plan for a specific number of attendees.





Tick it off your bucket list!

We hope you have enjoyed exploring the big story of God with your family and friends.



Creation
Genesis 1:1-2:4

Did you have fun exploring the natural world around you?



Feeding the 5,000
John 6:1-14

Was it fun making and sharing food together?



Moses and the Israelites
Exodus 14-24

Was it exciting exploring different journeys?



Jesus appears to the disciples on the beach
John 21:1-14

Has it been fun imagining yourself at the beach?



Naaman's slave girl
2 Kings 5:1-15

Did you discover different ways to help people?



Running the race
Hebrews 12:1-3

Have you enjoyed taking part in the different events?

Tick off your bucket list

Bible passage Creation **Genesis 1-2:4**

Concept/themes God/Creation/rest/sabbath



Gather

An active way to introduce the session's theme

Did you hear that?

You will need: blindfold, plenty of natural items (hidden until needed) or audio recordings of the items, sticker prizes (optional).

- ① Invite the children to sit in a circle, and ask for a volunteer to wear a blindfold. Select a child to pick a natural item that makes a noise, e.g. a stick to break, scrunching leaves, sheep bleating audio. The blindfolded person points to where they think the noise has come from and identifies the sound. Award a sticker for each correct answer. If they get it wrong, another person takes their place. Share together thoughts about the aspects of God's world they enjoy or are curious about.

Share the Word

Read and share the children's Bible story on page 9

You will need: Creation images (see pages 10-16), placed round the edges of the space.

- ① Discuss together times you've spent outside to help the children appreciate God's wonderful creation. Invite everyone to stand in the middle of the room, then to listen carefully as you read the passage, and work out which word they need to run to for each day of creation.
- ① Wonder about the story together: I wonder why God made the world? I wonder which bit of creation makes you think 'Wow, God made me'? I wonder which bit of creation you most want to protect? When you are outside, I wonder where you feel refreshed and rested?

Explore the theme

Enjoy making connections between the Bible passage and everyday life

Join in and sing

ALL THROUGH HISTORY, Nick and Becky Drake: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQS2HHayr38>

Follow the actions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lxs2l2hzv4>

PHARAOH, PHARAOH, Billy Jonas Band on *Toot the Horn!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqwVcbENn2o>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl-uzRi350g&t=70s>

World structure challenge

You will need: paper cups or spaghetti and marshmallows, images of famous structures for inspiration.

- 1 Invite children and their families to take part in a 'World structure challenge'. Can they build an Egyptian pyramid or the Leaning Tower of Pisa? Perhaps the Eiffel Tower or Buckingham Palace? Working in family teams, allow 10 minutes to create famous structures from around the world. Display the creations at the end.
- 2 Remind everyone that wherever we travel, no matter what we're going through, whether we get lost or not – God is with us on our journey.

Make a prayer passport

You will need: A5 coloured paper or card, A5 white paper, hole punch, string or stapler, pens and decorative materials.

- 1 Invite everyone to take some pieces of white paper and fold them in half, widthways, then select a piece of coloured paper/card and fold it over the white paper. Help everyone to secure the 'passport' in the middle with a hole punch and string, or a stapler.
- 2 Children can spend time decorating and personalising their passport cover. If time, they could write questions on different pages, e.g. What are you thankful for today? What did you worry about today? What did you notice on a recent walk? What do you want to say to God? What is God showing you?
- 3 Encourage the children to take the prayer passports home and use them regularly; by writing or drawing their prayers, they will see their own faith journey in action.

Respond

An opportunity to pause, reflect and pray about the theme



You will need: four tables/areas, each with an image or physical item representing: a walking boot, a car, a boat and a plane; stickers or printed versions of the items.

- 1 Explain that life is full of journeys, some small and some long; some are easy, while others see us facing challenges. We may forget or stop listening to God, but God is always with us as we journey.
- 2 Present the children with the four modes of transport that take us on different journeys: walking boots = your town/locality; car = your country; boat = travelling the seas; plane = other countries.
- 3 Invite the children to stand near a mode of transport that they're drawn to and think about what type of journeys people might take. Why are they travelling? What difficulties might they face? Where could they find God in these places? Hand out stickers/printouts that represent their chosen mode of transport and ask children to place it where they'll see it every day, as a reminder to pray for these places.
- 4 Pray together, asking God to bless and guide people as they journey through life.

An illustration of a caravan of people and camels walking across a desert landscape. The scene is set within a large, irregular yellow shape that resembles a sun or a bright sky. The ground is a lighter yellow, and the sky is a darker yellow. A large, bright orange sun is visible in the upper right. The caravan consists of several people and camels, with a trail of footprints leading behind them. The text "Wandered the wilderness" is written in a bold, black, serif font across the middle of the illustration.

Wandered the wilderness

2 Kings 5:1-15

Naaman's slave girl who leads him to Elisha

Naaman was an army commander in a country called Aram. His army had captured an Israeli girl during the war and she became a slave in Naaman's family. Naaman was ill with leprosy – a skin disease with no cure. Bravely, the girl spoke up and said to her mistress, 'There is a prophet of God who lives in Samaria. He will be able to cure Naaman.'

The king of Aram gave a letter to Naaman to take to the king of Israel. Naaman travelled there with gold and silver and fine clothes and handed over the letter. It said, 'Here is Naaman, my servant, cure his leprosy.' The King of Israel was beside himself. 'How can I cure leprosy? The King of Aram just wants to start a war!'

But the prophet Elisha sent a message saying, 'Send the man to me.' So Naaman travelled in his grand chariot and reached Elisha's house. Elisha sent a message outside: 'Go and wash in the river Jordan seven times and you will be healed.' Naaman said, 'Is that it? We've got nicer rivers at home!' Naaman's servants said to him, 'But if the prophet had asked you to do something difficult, you would have done it. So why not do this small thing?' So Naaman went down into the river Jordan and washed seven times. When he came out of the water, he was healed. He offered Elisha treasure as payment, but Elisha would take nothing. Naaman said, 'Now I know that the Lord is the true God who I shall worship.'





Sad



Bored



Surprised



Confused



Scared



Happy