

The Journey of a Lifetime holiday club



Leaders' guide

Focusing on encounters with Jesus, we'll share three fun and active sessions, using tried and tested spiritual practices that will be familiar to many. As you explore the Bible stories together, leaders, participating adults

and children will all discover how we can go on the Journey of a Lifetime with Jesus.

The three sessions within this resource pack are:

1. **Encountering Jesus together** – friends bring the paralysed man to Jesus (Luke 5:17-26)
2. **Choosing Jesus** – Jesus visits Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42)
3. **Changing lives** – Zacchaeus climbs a tree to see Jesus (Luke 19:1-10)

The sessions are flexible and can be adapted to suit your needs. The guide below outlines a two-hour club but can be altered as needed. Each day we provide Activity sheets and Thrive activities to take home, so families can further explore the practices and themes beyond the sessions.

The 12 spiritual practices we feature are based on 'A Methodist Way of Life'. www.methodist.org.uk/faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/

Each practice is a station on our discipleship journey where we can meet God and grow in our faith. The practices are accessible to everyone, whatever denomination. Each time we visit a station, we are encouraged to try a simple spiritual practice that leads us to encounter Jesus. We are encouraged to journey with others as we learn these healthy spiritual habits, reflecting on what we discover along the way.



An intergenerational resource

The Journey of a Lifetime holiday club is designed to bring all ages together to explore faith and learn from each other. All the activities intentionally encourage different ages to interact both during and after the club.

As you publicise the holiday club, make it clear that it is for all ages. Grandparents could invite their grandchildren. Families could come together. Think about how you will encourage children who attend without a parent or grandparent to get involved.

Preparing for the Journey of a Lifetime holiday club

- Recruit appropriate volunteers and check with your safeguarding officer what additional support and training is needed.
- If you'll have a mix of accompanied and unaccompanied children attending, make sure to organise registration forms for the unaccompanied children and plan leaders' ratios, a toilet policy and how to make best use of your space in liaison with your safeguarding officer.
- Think about any young people who could be young leaders and part of your team.
- Complete risk assessments for all activities.
- Think about your registration process and whether you will ask for donations from those attending.
- Consider what refreshments you'll be providing and if this will include lunch.
- Think about how you could advertise the holiday club in your community. There are customisable posters and postcard-size invites included in this resource pack (see pp.15-16).

Session outline (120 mins)

Gather (15 mins)

Welcome

Gather activity Each session opens with an activity to get everyone ready to explore, and a prayer.

Songs

Select one of the suggested songs to sing each day. Repetition will help everyone to learn it.

There are further suggestions if you want to sing more or create a playlist to play in the background.

Journey-themed songs

[Redacted on sample pages]

Songs for Session 1

[Redacted on sample pages]

Songs for Session 2

[Redacted on sample pages]

Songs for Session 3

[Redacted on sample pages]

Share the Word (15-20 mins)

Explore the Bible story

A way for leaders to share the Bible story.

Journey with Jesus

Explore together what the Bible story means for us.

Everyone collects their ticket for the day (see templates pp.24, 35, 64). You will need a stamp at each table for the guests to mark their ticket at each station.

Explore & respond (50 mins plus 10 mins for Journey of a Lifetime station)

There are four activities in **Explore & respond**, each relating to one of the stations and exploring a different spiritual discipline. The activities can be self-led and adapted to many contexts, including outdoors.

The **Journey of a Lifetime station** brings people together to make a collaborative craft that creates a banner or poster. This can be used as a fifth station or as a stand-alone activity, which helps to sum up and bring everyone together at the end.

You will need wall space or display boards to showcase this.

Go with God (15 mins)

An opportunity to reflect on what you have discovered and pray at the end of the session.

Snack break (10 mins)

The outline allows for a short snack break in the session.

Setting the space



Decorate the space to reflect the journey theme, making each table like a train station.

Consider costumes for team members, such as a train engineer or conductors. Offer train-themed play or display items (e.g. a wooden or model railway around the room).

Create a quiet zone with comfy seating, sensory toys and fidgets, mindful colouring and ear defenders.

Consider playing background music as people arrive. Choose a journey-based playlist and include some of the songs you will sing (see **Songs** on p.1 for suggestions).

Welcoming Under 5s

All three sessions are suitable for Under 5s with support. Ideas for additional play materials are included to allow Under 5s, and others, to play independently.

Equipment and templates

We list the equipment needed in the session details, but please have pens, pencils, scissors, glue and paper to hand. Some activities will require hand-washing facilities and clean-up equipment. Templates to print out are included in this resource pack, to share at the appropriate time.

Ticket to ride

As they visit each station, the ticket has spaces to stamp, so each station will need an ink pad and stamps.



Collaborate cards

As the **Explore & respond** part of the session is self-led, each table will have a series of **Collaborate cards** (see pp.25-26, pp.36-37 and pp.65-66) with activity instructions and questions on them to encourage people to talk together. The text for these is included within each activity. Remember to have people available to support those who find reading the instructions difficult, or need other encouragement/support.

Activity sheets and Thrive sheets

Activity sheets and Thrive sheets (for each session) are included in this resource pack, to take home so families can further explore the practices and themes. Print these and give out at the start of each session.

Final gathering

Make the most of the opportunity to invite families and your community to a Journey of a Lifetime celebration at the end of the holiday club. This could be planned for a Sunday service, a midweek gathering or an extension of the final session. Demonstrate some of the 12 stations in action as you gather; for example, practise hospitality, provide an opportunity to challenge injustice and pray together. Display the three banners from the Journey of a Lifetime crafts and invite families to any future events and weekly groups.

You may want to use these resources to help plan a final service:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/mwol-service-outlines/>

Spiritual styles: Word, Emotion, Symbol, Action

Canadian scholar Joyce Bellous identified four pathways of spiritual expression in her books *Educating Faith* and *Conversations that Change Us*. David Csinos, a former student of Bellous, used these styles as a framework in his research into the spiritual lives of children. **WEB** Find more at [rootsforchurches.com/spiritual-styles-intro](https://www.rootsforchurches.com/spiritual-styles-intro)

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the Methodist Church for sharing A Methodist Way of Life content and visuals, and working in partnership with Roots to create this holiday club resource.

Session 1: Encountering Jesus together

The friends lower the paralysed man through the roof (Luke 5:17-26)

Gather

Travel graph

W S

An activity to think about today's holiday club focus

As people arrive, create a large bar chart on the floor to show the ways people like to travel. Use string or wool to create the axis and the bars or columns. At the bottom of each column, place something that indicates a method of travelling or write onto a large sheet of paper. Objects could include walking boots, a scooter, a bike helmet, a toy train, aeroplane or car. Ask everyone to mark with a token (wooden brick, piece of card, small world figure) their two favourite ways to travel.

Today, we are on a journey with a difference. It's a journey of a lifetime with Jesus. Some of us may have been on a journey with Jesus for a long time and some of us may be new. We are all welcome! For this holiday club we are going to journey together and discover who we meet along the way. One of the first people we meet is travelling in quite an unusual way!

A gathering song

Choose one of the song suggestions (see p.1) to begin your session.

A gathering prayer

Pray using the actions in brackets. Invite those with mobility issues to sit.

Thank you, God,
that we are here together, *(open arms wide)*
ready to go on a journey; *(stand as though starting a race)*
the journey of a lifetime! *(march on the spot)*
As we journey may we meet with you *(hold arms up)*
and meet others who love you too. *(hands on heart)*
Be with us as we continue our journey. *(link arms and march on the spot)*
Amen.

Share the Word

Luke 5:17-26

Explore the Bible story

Junk model story

W

You will need: lots of cardboard boxes or play bricks, doll or teddy, fabric mat, large sheet of card.

Using the resources, ask one leader to tell the story while one or more leaders build three walls of the house and place the cardboard roof on top. Pause at 'couldn't get to Jesus' to make sure the building is finished. Continue the story, removing the roof and lowering the man in.

One day Jesus was teaching. As he spoke, a group of experts in the Law and some Pharisees * sat listening. They had come from every village and town in Galilee, from Judea, and even from Jerusalem. There were so many people that the house they were in was overflowing.

At the same time, a group of friends arrived carrying a man who could not walk. Carefully they carried him as he lay on a mat, taking him to Jesus knowing that he could heal him. But when the group reached the house, the crowd blocked every entrance. There was no space. There was no way in. They just couldn't get to Jesus.

So, the friends devised a plan. They climbed up onto the roof, removed some of the roof tiles and gently lowered the man down, right into the middle of the room.

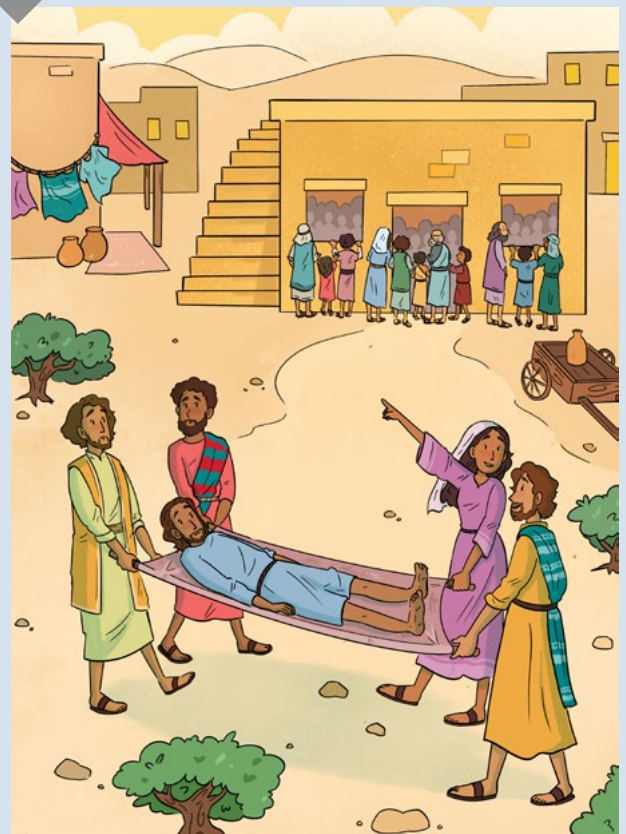
Jesus looked up with a smile. He saw how much faith the friends had. He saw how much faith the man had. Jesus looked at the man and said, 'My friend, your sins are forgiven *.'

This annoyed the Pharisees and teachers of the law. 'Only God can forgive sins,' they said. 'Jesus must think he is God.'

Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking. 'Which is easier?' he asked: 'To say "Your sins are forgiven", or to say "Stand up and walk". I am God's Son and can forgive sins here on earth *.'

Then Jesus turned to the man and said, 'Stand up, take your mat, and go home.' The man stood up, picked up his mat and went home, thanking God.

The crowd gasped. Everyone was amazed. They praised God for everything that they saw.



See p.4 for **Stop and share** discussion points indicated by asterisks in the story, and pp.20-23 for story presentations.

Stop and share

Pause at these points to explain concepts and vocabulary

- * Pharisees were Jewish religious leaders who followed the law Moses gave them very strictly.
- * Sin is when people are not living as God intends. The Jews believed God would forgive them when they offered animals or other goods at the Temple.
- * Jews believe that there is only one God and God doesn't have any children. They could not believe Jesus was saying that he was God's Son.

Story for Under 5s

Everyone wanted to hear Jesus teaching. They came from far away and nearby. The people who wanted to hear Jesus filled up the house. There was no room, everyone was squeezed inside and listening. There was a man who could not walk. His friends knew Jesus could heal him. Because he couldn't walk, they carried him to Jesus on a mat. When they got to the house it was too full. They could not carry their friend inside. So they went up on the roof of the house. They made a hole in the roof and lowered their friend on the mat down to Jesus. Jesus saw the man. 'I forgive you for all the wrong things you've done,' he said. The people inside were puzzled. Jesus said, 'I can forgive him and heal him because I am God's Son.' Jesus told the man, 'Get up and walk!' and the man stood up, picked up his mat and walked. He was very happy and thanked God. See p.22 for story text and illustration presentation.

What made you smile in the story? (smiley face)
 What surprised you in the story? (exclamation mark)

Do you have any questions about the story? (question mark)

The man in today's story has an unusual journey before he meets Jesus. He is carried on a stretcher, taken up on a roof and then lowered down into the room. And then he meets with Jesus and is healed. Today we are going to explore how we too can meet with Jesus – but maybe not by being lowered through a roof!

We have four stations where we can discover more about the Journey of a Lifetime with Jesus.

1. Challenge Station



2. Care Station



3. Tell Station



4. Pray Station



As you name the stations, point to these and explain any activities as needed.

And, finally, there is the Journey of a Lifetime Station where we meet others.



Journey with Jesus

WESA

Move from the Bible story to thinking about what it means for us

You will need: emoji, exclamation mark and question mark symbols (see pp.17-19).

Hold the symbol images up one at a time as you ask the questions below, allowing time for people to respond. Remind everyone that you may not have all the answers, but you can explore the questions together.

Today we are on the journey of a lifetime with Jesus. Do you like going on a journey?

Along the way, we will meet other people who are also on a journey with Jesus. And we will visit different stops.

Who was on a journey to meet Jesus in the story?

Ticket to ride

Give out the ticket for the day, see p.24, and invite participants to decorate it.



Here is your ticket for the journey. At each station, you can have the ticket stamped to show you have been to that station on the journey. You can go to all the stations or just some – it's up to you.

Explore & respond

Play materials for Under 5s

All today's stations are suitable for Under 5s with support from an adult. Providing these additional play materials allows the Under 5s, and others, to play independently.

- Tuff Tray™ or large tub with bricks and small world people.
- Bubbles and bubble wands.
- Story area with a selection of young children's Bibles and Bible story books.

1. Challenge Station – We challenge injustice



Prayer weaving

W E S A

Think about how we can bring issues of injustice to Jesus

[Redacted on sample pages]

Collaborate card | Prayer weaving

Discuss

The friends brought the man to Jesus. He couldn't get there easily alone.
What things aren't fair for people that we need to bring to Jesus?

Look at the news and at charities highlighting injustice such as Christian Aid and All We Can.

Activity guidance

- Take a strip of fabric and write on it what you want to tell Jesus about.
Weave your fabric into the frame as you commit to pray and act for justice.



2. Care Station – We care for ourselves and those around us



Obstacle course

E

A challenge to think about caring for others

You will need: obstacle course with things to go over, under, around and through.

Create an obstacle course with a table for the Collaborate card at the end.

Collaborate card | Obstacle course

Activity guidance

- Take it in turns to go around the obstacle course. Make sure you support and care for each other as you go over, under and around.

Discuss

*Who helped you on the obstacle course?
Who are the people who care for you every day?
How can we care for and look after others?*



3. Tell Station – We tell of the love of God



Creating a soundscape

W E S

Create a soundscape to share today's story

You will need: selection of percussion instruments or homemade instruments, copies of today's story.

Collaborate card | Creating a soundscape

Activity guidance

- We can tell others about God in lots of different ways – with words, images, by the things we do and with music.
- Try out all the instruments. Can you use the different sounds to retell today's story?
You may want to read as others create the sounds.
Could you record your soundscape and share it with others at home?

Discuss

*What do you think the man's friends told others about Jesus?
What can we tell others?*



4. Pray Station – We pray daily



Make a finger labyrinth

ES

A craft to create a way to pray daily

You will need: pieces of card or paper plates, glue, string, child-safe scissors, (optional) labyrinth template (see p.27).

Collaborate card | Make a finger labyrinth

Activity guidance

- [Redacted on sample pages]



Discuss

How could you use your prayer labyrinth with others at home?

What could you do to remember to pray each day?

Go with God

Journey of a Lifetime march

An activity for all to think about the journey we have been on
March to different areas of the room in response to the questions.

[Redacted on sample pages]

A sending out prayer

Stand in a circle. Ask everyone, in turn, to put one foot into the circle and say their name when indicated.

Thank you, Jesus, that we are on the journey of a lifetime with you.

Thank you that [say your names] are on the journey of a lifetime together with you.

Amen.

Journey of a Lifetime Station – Collaborative craft



Journey steps

ES

Create a banner together, to show we are all on the journey with Jesus

You will need: pieces of fabric, felt tips, fabric pens, buttons, craft items, needles (be aware of health and safety), embroidery thread, PVA, wool and a long strip of fabric.

Collaborate card | Journey steps

Activity guidance

- [Redacted on sample pages]



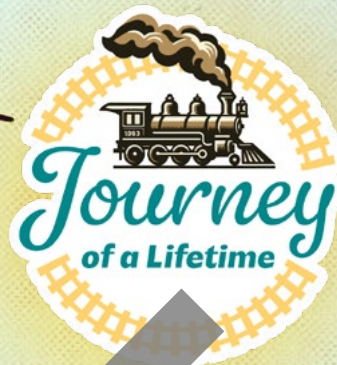
Discuss

Whose names on the journey footprints do you recognise?

Who else is with you on your journey with Jesus?

Display the banner prominently on a wall, leaving space for the collaborative crafts for the coming sessions.

All aboard!



Enjoy holiday time together with crafts, Bible stories and fun activities!

Venue:

Date(s):

Time:

For:

To register or find out more:

Collaborate card | Prayer weaving

Discuss

The friends brought the man to Jesus. He couldn't get there easily alone.

What things aren't fair for people that we need to bring to Jesus?

Look at the news and at charities highlighting injustice such as Christian Aid and All We Can.

Activity guidance

- Take a strip of fabric and write on it what you want to tell Jesus about. Weave your fabric into the frame as you commit to pray and act for justice.



Collaborate card | Obstacle course

Activity guidance

- Take it in turns to go around the obstacle course. Make sure you support and care for each other as you go over, under and around.

Discuss

Who helped you on the obstacle course?

Who are the people who care for you every day?

How can we care for and look after others?



Collaborate card | Creating a soundscape

Activity guidance

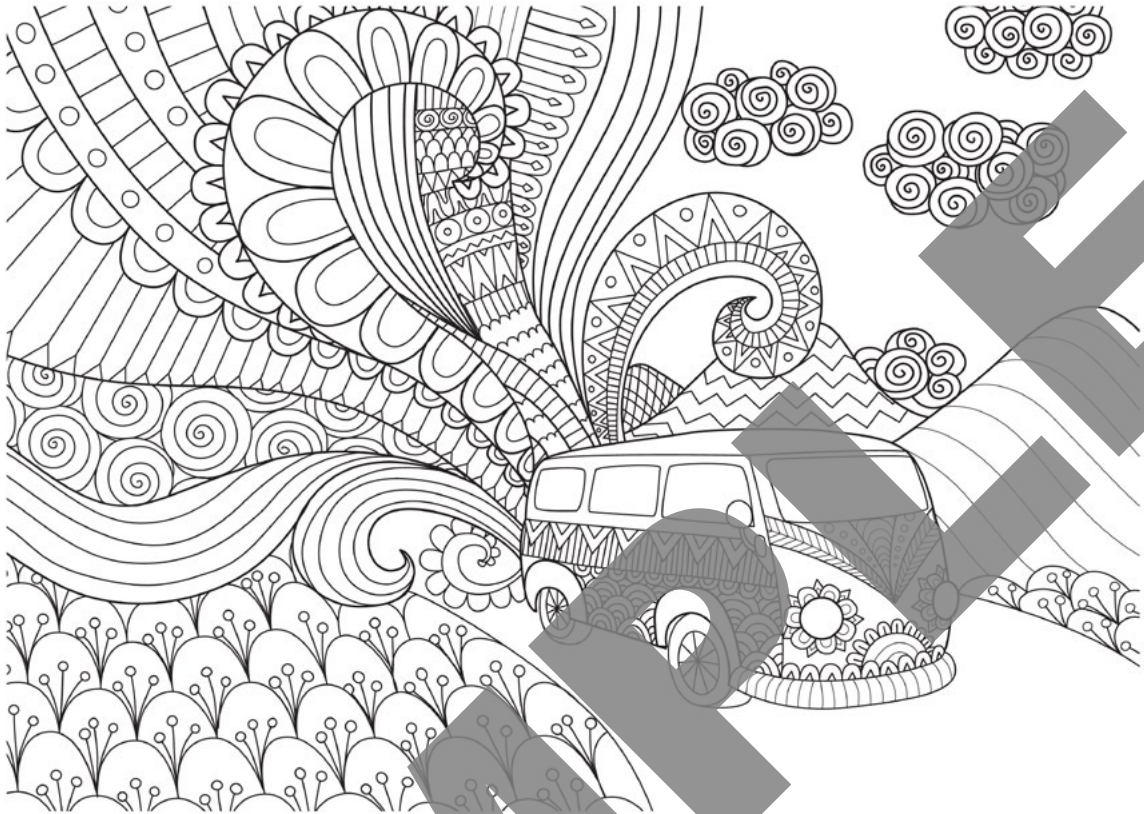
- We can tell others about God in lots of different ways – with words, images, by the things we do and with music.
- Try out all the instruments. Can you use the different sounds to retell today's story? You may want to read as others create the sounds.
Could you record your soundscape and share it with others at home?

Discuss

What do you think the man's friends told others about Jesus?

What can we tell others?





I am on a journey with God



I am on a journey with God



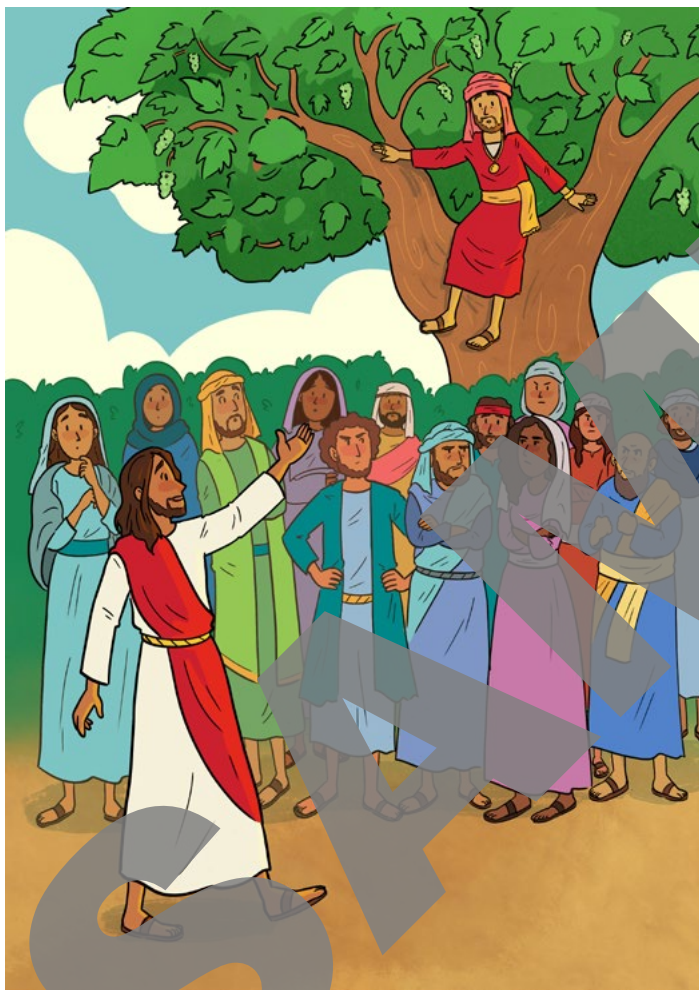
Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus is desperate to see Jesus when he visits Jericho but is prevented by the crowd, because he's too short and too unpopular. But Jesus spots him in a tree and asks to stay at his house. Zacchaeus is changed when he meets Jesus; he becomes kinder and more generous.



Read this week's passage:



Living Scripture

'Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."' Luke 19:9-10

Zacchaeus' job as a tax collector, and the way he cheats and steals money from others, means he is disliked by most people. So, Jesus' visit to Zacchaeus is hugely unpopular.

However, spending time with Jesus radically changes everything for Zacchaeus. His greed is changed into generosity, and he sets out to right all the wrongs he has done to others – and more. As a result, it's not only Zacchaeus' life that is changed by meeting Jesus – the poor and the lives of those he has cheated money from are also changed as the money is returned.

This encounter reveals how spending time with Jesus can change lives. Are there parts of your life that you need to change, as Zacchaeus did? Or can you see ways in which the things you do could bring change to other people's lives?

Pray

Thank you, God, for seeing every one of us. Thank you that we are all special enough to be called your friends. Help us to welcome everyone as we welcome you, and to find new friends in unexpected places. Be with us as we continue our journey with you Amen.



Discuss

Watch this animation of Zacchaeus together. Share your favourite part of the story. Talk about the different ways Zacchaeus is changed by meeting Jesus.



Enjoy

Share your hospitality with others. Invite another family round for tea or a play date. Think about how you could show they are welcome. Could you make cakes, choose a game to play together or send a special invite? Consider inviting someone you wouldn't usually include.



Play a few games of Hide and seek. Chat about how it feels when you are found. How do you think it felt for Zacchaeus hiding in the tree? Do you think he wanted people to notice him? How did it feel when Jesus 'found' him?



Go on a walk to a high place, or climb a tree (safely!). What can you see? Imagine what it would be like for Zacchaeus looking out across the crowds and seeing Jesus. As you look out at the things God has created, say, 'I praise you God for...' inserting the things you have seen.