



Faith Adventures for Children Together

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

3 John 1: 5-12

Theme: The Church community as an influence in the world

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

3 John is a pastoral letter, sent to encourage a church community. Most people believe that the same person wrote the previous two letters, and also wrote John's gospel. It is written from someone who is a church leader, directly to Gaius rather than the whole church, celebrating his reputation for offering hospitality. The letter continues to discuss two individuals who have had very different types of influence on church communities: one good, the other bad.

This week's session will explore how churches can be an influence on the communities in which they are based. There will be an opportunity to consider the influence that churches can have, reflect on the influence your individual church has and explore the importance of churches looking outwards.

Whilst considering church influence, it will be important to allow space to consider positive and negative influences. However, it will be vital that the space offers a chance for the children and young people to raise issues that they are already aware of, rather than providing lots of negative examples which may be new to them. Some members of the group may also need extra time to discuss the issues and ask additional questions. Ensuring there is a balance within the discussion,



Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,





the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Building blocks and people (to create a building with people)
- A mirror (to discuss what is special about us and that God made us special to help others)
- A kitchen set (come and have a nice cup of tea? It's nice to see you! Welcome! Talk about sharing and being kind)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)

Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

Church Model Prayers

Create a church shape that your group can add their own prayers to. Younger children may need help writing their ideas or prefer to draw pictures to represent their prayers. You could make your prayer model in a number of different ways:

- Junk modelling – use clean boxes and other junk modelling materials to create a building shape similar to your church. Sit in a circle around the model and take turns to add prayers for your church and community onto the model.
- Church outline – Draw a simple church outline on a large piece of paper in the middle of your group. Take turns to add words or picture prayers to the outline.
- 3D model – Using a printed out net (such as; [Five Church Trail_3D Church Model.pdf](#)), create a 3D model in pairs or as a whole group. Add prayers for your church, to the model.

Spoken prayer

Stand in a circle, looking inwards

Thank you, God, for our friends in our church family,
for our friends at school and our families at home.
Thank you for loving us.

Still standing in a circle but looking outwards

Help us to let others know how much you love them.
Help us look out into our community
and see how we can make a difference.
Thank you for loving everyone.

Amen



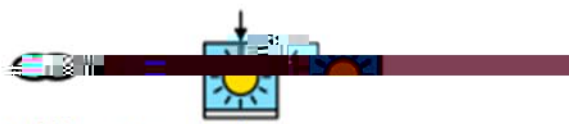
Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. <https://urc.org.uk/wp->

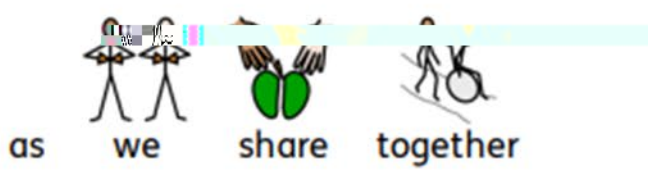




Jesus our friend



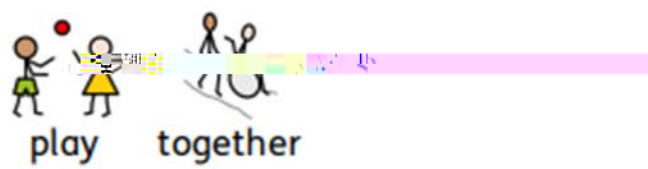
be with us today



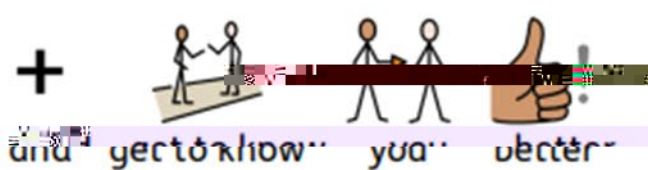
as we share together



pray together



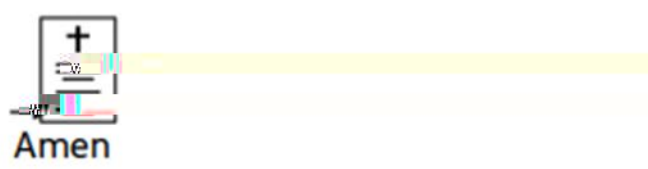
play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



Amen

