

Top Tips on Family Worship at Home

Whilst our usual pattern of Sunday service and Junior Church is put on hold, we hope to resource households to continue to worship and pray together and be a place of Christ's light in our world during these uncertain days.

Here are some top tips to get started:

- 1) Find a time in the day that works for you.
- 2) Don't expect it to be silent - it will be messy! Go with the flow.
- 3) Encourage everyone to contribute, both adults and children.
- 4) Be flexible on timing and ready to adapt or shorten the session if your children get restless - there's no point in making this a battle!
- 5) Use the events of the past few days to explore where you've each met God or seen him at work.
- 6) Involve your children and young people with what the church is doing during this CV-19 crises – suggestions can be found in the **Action** section.

A Junior Church session for Sunday 29th March

Big Idea: If Only....

Starter activity: Prepare your parcel.

Inside: from the centre should be Lazarus wrapped in a white cloth, a stone, Mary, Martha, Thomas and Jesus (use play figures or small images).

Whilst reading the story (below), pass the parcel round and pause at each * in the text, and invite the person holding the parcel to unwrap a layer to reveal what is inside. Place the pieces in the centre of the circle to make a visual focus.



Bible Story: John 11.1-45

Lazarus lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. One day, Lazarus became ill. Although Jesus * was their good friend, and he received a message to say that Lazarus was very ill, he delayed visiting, and

stayed where he was. The last time he had been to Judea, people had tried to stone him!

After two days, Jesus said, 'Lazarus has fallen asleep. I'm going to wake him.' His disciples were confused. 'Why go to such a dangerous place just to wake him up? He'll wake up without you.' So Jesus spelt it out. 'Lazarus is dead. I didn't go when he was ill, because through him, many will see God's glory.' Hearing this, Thomas * said to the others, 'Let's follow him. If he's going to be stoned, we should die with him.'

Lazarus' sister Martha * came out to meet Jesus. She said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus said, 'Your brother will rise again.' 'I know,' answered Martha, 'at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live and never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' said Martha, 'I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God.'

Then Martha's sister Mary * ran out to meet Jesus. She knelt at his feet crying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus wept with Mary. He asked, 'Where is his tomb?' A crowd of mourners followed Jesus to the cave where Lazarus' body had been laid. Lazarus had been dead for four days, but Jesus asked for the stone * to be rolled away.

Jesus prayed aloud, so the crowd would hear him and know that God had sent him. Then he shouted into the cave, 'Lazarus, come out!' Incredibly, Lazarus walked out of the tomb, wrapped in burial cloths. *

Jesus said, 'Unwrap him and let him go.' And many people who saw this believed in Jesus.

Discussion:



I wonder...?

- How were Martha and Mary feeling because Jesus hadn't come to be with them?
- Have you ever felt let down by a friend?
- What might help us to know that Jesus is with us even when we feel sad?



Creative Prayer Activity:

Where is Jesus?

A visual reminder that Jesus is always with us

You will need: On a piece of paper draw a flower shape, with petals

- Discuss together some of the things that happen to make us feel sad or frightened, e.g. being ill, not seeing our friends and loved ones
- Write or draw these things on separate petals of the flower. Also colour and decorate the flower. (dependant on what crafts you have)
- Talk about Jesus coming to see his friends in this story. They felt sad and frightened but he showed that he is always there. Add the word 'Jesus' to the circle at the centre of their flower.



Prayer:

Father God

Father God, show us how to heal the world you made.

Son of God, teach us to walk with those who suffer.

Holy Spirit, fill our mouths with the right words.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, help us to show your love to all people.

Amen.



For the week:

Do we ever think 'If only Jesus were here'?

Think of ways in which you can help bring Jesus closer to people you know who need to feel his love.

Write down the names of the people you have thought of and leave them somewhere you can all see in your house. Each time you see the list, ask God to show you how to bring Jesus to them.

If you haven't done already, create a Rainbow to put in your window, a sign of Hope and Joy for all who see it.

If you like, light a candle in the evening at 7pm and place it in the window