



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

March 2015

Issue 96



An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting about the Bible

Make sure you have a little time of worship for yourself and other volunteers before the session – even a couple of minutes are good. This outline is based on a 45 minutes children's meeting. Resources for this session: collection of cut out Bible quotes and images (for young children) - see Additional Resources 96.B & 96.C for these.

Gather

Greet and settle everyone as suggested in the Gather guidance and then continue with the Gathering exercise on page one of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*.

5 minutes

Engage

Introduce the Bible – a hidden treasure. *Resources: three different Bibles, including a children's bible and one that is older and possibly bigger, each wrapped in cloth.*

Carefully and respectfully unwrap one of the Bibles – maybe the children's one - placing it carefully in front of you. Ask children to say what they think might be found in the Bible – exploring what they know already. Stories about people, things they did, decisions they made, parables or puzzles, poems. Listen, ask questions that encourage children to think or say more.

Go on to ask and talk about the questions in the 'Introduce the Bible – a hidden treasure' part of Engage.

Cut up and spread out the quotes and images from *Additional Resources 96.B and 96.C* and ask the children to choose one. Ask them if they can think of one short sentence that says something about their quote or image. After a moment of silence, ask those who want to, to share their sentence. Welcome their sharing with a nod and a smile. No need for verbal responses.

If you are working with older children, hold the Bible, explain: there is so much in the Bible, so many stories about people's lives you wanted them to choose something for themselves. Invite them to choose another quote or image and sit quietly reading/look at it. Encourage them to note how they feel, and what, if any, images, thoughts or memories arise.

15 minutes

Respond

Resources: In a space away from where you all sit, have baskets of some or all of the following: paper, coloured pencils, crayons, paints, brushes, water, paper towels or cloths (if needed for spills), scissors, glue, play dough & paper plates, natural items: e.g. rocks, leaves/flowers, pine cones, shells. Set a part variety of Bibles; small characters (doll house dolls, animals); and nic nacs for gazing at.

After some silence, point out the creative resources. Tell the children that for the next 25 minutes they may use the resources to help them quietly draw, write or colour about their quote or picture. How does it link with their life and any feelings or thoughts they may have. Clarify there are items to create with, and items simply for reflecting. Invite them to choose some resources, and to quietly find a comfortable space to use them.

When it is nearly time to come back together, quietly go to each child and let them know it is time to return the materials where they came from and to put creations in a (designated) place; not the centre of their circle. This to avoid presenting creations in a "show & tell".

20 minutes

Reflect

Ask children to read their quote/show their image and a brief comment. It's okay to remain silent.

Closing good byes. Say: "We lit one large candle to remind us that God is present with us and within us. As this Meeting for Worship draws to a close, we extinguish the candles for those present." You may choose to say each child's name as you extinguish each candle. Then, "for absent friends" and extinguish. Lastly, extinguish the large candle, reminding "God is with us always, even when we can't see his light" (or words that you are comfortable with).

After a moment of silence, announce it is time to feast: ask children's help to pass around the small bowls/plates, cups of water/juice, napkins and a piece of fruit to each child. When done, encourage children to tidy up with you. **5 minutes**