



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>

Acts 27: 21-44 – Paul is shipwrecked

Theme: Knowing God’s plan helps us to make courageous choices.

Contents:

- [Introduction](#) 1
- [Together](#) 1
- [Experience](#) 3
- [Explore](#) 4
- [Express](#) 6
- [Handouts](#) 9

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

Acts

It is really helpful to understand what happens before and after the Bible passage being studied. The person in this link gives a detailed explanation of Paul’s journey, the shipwreck and then what followed. It helps to give context and meaning to the Bible passage and Paul’s intention to share the gospel.

Paul Shipwrecked on Malta

https://youtu.be/tSO2Tb7lszA?si=H2yq_w1rhaqFFVv2

It is important to consider the courageous acts which all characters, the soldiers, the sailors, in the story demonstrate, not just Paul.

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,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,

Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.

Amen

In-person Game - Islands

You will need newspaper and music

This is a familiar game so many of your group may already know it.

The idea is to move around the room when the music is playing, when the music stops you need to get onto a piece of newspaper (with no part of your body hanging out). Each round sees children eliminated to sit and watch from the side. After each round, as the music plays, remove some of the papers and tear some of the sheets; creating less and smaller islands each time. Children will get creative as the game goes on, often giving piggy backs to each other and fitting many children onto a tiny piece of paper. Keep it light and fun, leaders can pretend to be sharks, capturing any children who are not safely on an island when the music stops.

Alternative game – Outdoor game

You will need:

A range of items such as newspaper sheets, benches, crates, rugs/mats, hula hoops.

Mark out a playing area and have all participants stand at one end of the area. Players must get the whole team and all items across to the end point, without touching the floor. They must work together to get across by moving and standing on the items provided. If a player touches the floor, then they must return to the starting point. See if the whole group can make it across within a given time limit.



Ideas to adjust the difficulty:

- Provide fewer items to stand on
- Remove items during the game. (For example, you could state that at least one player must always remain in contact with an item, otherwise it is lost and removed from the game.)
- Blow a whistle and require all participants to complete an action. Eg freezing, standing on one leg, shake hands with another player
- Ban participants from talking – they must only use visual communication
- Require some players to wear blindfolds.

Experience

For this story we recommend using the International Children's Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+27%3A+21+--+44&version=ICB>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives:

Pauls Shipwreck Story Acts 27

https://youtu.be/QGoQ_oVSEAo?si=7GISwDmqaB21-Ywh

Five to elevens:

The Book of Acts for Kids #11: The Shipwreck

<https://youtu.be/nPJvtpoylrM?si=hEadZ9PeG4K35OFo>

Songs to support the story

Under fives:

Plan for me

https://youtu.be/K_3rqonxHnQ?si=Jp28HeAMptOXJBOL

Five to elevens:

Be strong and courageous – Doug Horley

<https://youtu.be/PcHGM6vEiGI?si=KjTv4RLL7Ai0zbGf>

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A way to explore the story

Guided dramatized retelling of the story

This is a way of retelling the story (after watching it or reading it first), you will lead them through the story, giving them opportunity to play all the parts.



Being involved in the drama will support the group in being able to do a hot seat activity to finish with.

You will need

- Materials and resources for fort building
- Signs or stickers to name each character, Paul, Centurion, Soldier, Julius, soldiers, Prisoners, Crew

What you do

Begin by recapping and setting the context of why Paul was travelling with other prisoners on the boat and watch/ read today's passage.

Explain that we are going to have a go at retelling the story together.

Provide materials that the group can use to build a boat big enough for all the group to get into. You may have fort building equipment or use sheets, chairs and cushions.

Once the boat is complete, all get on board, using this as an opportunity to allocate roles.

Once all are safely in the boat, use the following script to retell the story (older children may like to take on the narrator/director role). Hopefully the opportunities for action are obvious and time should be given for the children to act it out.

Paul, who has been a prisoner for 2 years, is now on board a ship taking him and other prisoners to Rome. There were over 250 people on board. This was a long journey over many dangerous seas.

There were times when the seas and the weather were calm.

There were many times when the winds blew hard and the seas were rough, throwing people around the ship. Many felt ill and unwell.

The ship was at risk of breaking apart in the strong winds and seas, so the crew threw ropes under and over the ship to hold it together.

They threw the anchor overboard to try to slow the ship down in the storms.

The storm continued for days, they threw the cargo overboard to try to lighten the ship.

Everyone on board were so frightened they were beginning to lose all hope, they thought they might die in the storms.

On the 14th day at sea, the crew thought they might be near land so they dropped 4 anchors with a plan to stay the night and wait for daylight.

The soldiers were so worried that the boat might break apart on the rocks that they let down the lifeboat ready to try to secretly escape.

Paul spoke to Julius and the soldiers, saying, "God has told me that if you stay with the ship you will be safe."

Just before morning Paul spoke to everyone on board saying, "you have been so worried that you have not eaten properly. God has told me that no one is going to die, but you do need to eat, to get your strength back." Paul took some bread and said a prayer of thanks, then he ate. They ate the bread together.

After they had eaten, they threw the spare grain overboard to lighten the ship.

When daylight came, they could see they were near a beach, so they cut the ropes holding the anchors and hoisted the sail to head towards the beach. They planned to run the ship into the land. To crash it.

When the ship hit rocks and ground, it began to fall apart.



The soldiers planned to kill all the prisoners to stop them from escaping; but Julius stopped them, saving the lives of Paul and the prisoners.

Julius ordered everyone who could swim to jump overboard and swim to land.

He told those who could not swim to cling to bits of the boat and make their way to land too.

Everyone made it safely to shore, just as God had promised Paul.

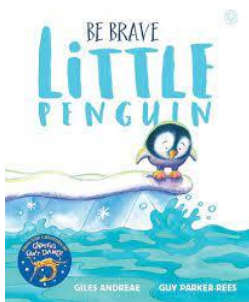
Once the drama retelling is over, older groups might like to explore the story further with a hot seat activity.

Characters from the story are invited to sit on a central chair and the group are able to ask them questions. If you feel it is needed, leaders could take on the role at this point.

Who would the group like to hot seat and what would they like to ask them?

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



Be Brave Little Penguin by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees

<https://youtu.be/4eK9i0tr2LM?si=uHMJcKMgSlohV9nx>

Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- Why was it God's plan to let this happen to the people of the ship?
- Some of the people in the story had to make some courageous choices. Did you spot any of them in the story? What were those decisions and who was making them?
- What helped them to make the courageous choices that they took?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder if you've ever been in a situation where something difficult is coming? Where do you find your courage to face it?
- I wonder how brave and courageous you are feeling at the moment?
- I wonder who you relate to in the story and why?

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "what's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap 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:

Lay out a tough tray or large plastic tray to create the story as you bring things out of the box.



- Stones – arrange the stones into an island
- Shells – place the shells onto the pebbles
- Sand – place some sand around it to create a beach
- Water – pour some water around to create the sea
- A boat – place a boat on the water and talk about how the ship was in a storm and they run aground to save themselves
- Play figures – have some play figures helping the ship to safety
- A large heart – bring out the heart to remind the children that God is with us always.

Express

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

Stormy weather prayer

This prayer uses a play parachute or alternatively a large bed sheet. If you have a large group, you could split into smaller groups with a blanket each.

Focus on a different prayer focus as the parachute is moved in different ways.

Move the parachute so that it ripples slightly, pray that we remember to speak to God when things start to feel unsettled and we are unsure what to do.

Move the parachute vigorously to create waves and pray that God gives us courage when things seem stormy.

Move the parachute so that a big bubble of air is created and pray that we help each other when things seem hard.

Move the parachute so that everyone gets inside and pray that God protects us and keeps us safe.

Move the parachute so that it is totally still and taut and pray our thanks that God is with us in the still and the storm, God never leaves us.

Raise the parachute and then all but the leader lets go and that person gathers the parachute into a ball.... all shout Amen at the same time.

Spoken prayer – The children are to respond with the words in bold.

When the storm is all around us,

Be strong and courageous

When we feel scared,

Be strong and courageous

When we need to be brave

Be strong and courageous

When we feel alone

Be strong and courageous

When need help

Be strong and courageous.

God be with us in the storm



Be strong and courageous

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. [See here for more suggestions.](#)

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Ship in a bottle

You will need:

- A jam jar or plastic bottle with the top cut off
- Corks
- Cocktail sticks
- Triangle of paper
- String or thick thread
- Some pebbles or shells
- Water



What you do:

Cut the corks in half lengthwise and tie 3 cork halves together with string or thread to create a boat.

Stick the cocktail stick into one of the corks, and thread the triangle of paper onto the cocktail stick to create a sail.

Place the shells and pebble in the bottom of the bottle and pour in some water so the bottle is half full.

Carefully place the ship into the water and move the bottle to create a storm.

Stem

Tornado in a Bottle

You will need:

- Clear bottle or other tall, shatterproof container with a lid
- Water
- Dish soap
- Glitter or food colouring (optional, but may make it easier to see the tornado)



What you do:

Fill your container about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with clean water.

Add a squirt of dish soap, as well as your glitter or food colouring, if desired.

Seal the container tightly.



Move the bottle rapidly in a circular motion. After a few seconds, you should see the water begin swirling. Stop, and watch your tornado!
Using a bigger bottle may also result in larger tornados, which will be easier to observe.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Perhaps there is something or certain situations in which you find it hard to be brave and courageous. It might be holding a spider or having a go at cycling without your stabilisers. Have ago at it this week..... you could try asking God to make you brave. Don't worry if you don't succeed this time, it's just important you were willing to have a go and don't forget you can try as many times as you need.
 - Make up a story like Paul's in which the characters need to be brave and courageous. Share that story with someone else.
-

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story from **Paul's shipwreck** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Loving your enemies**.

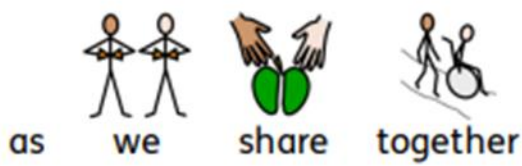




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



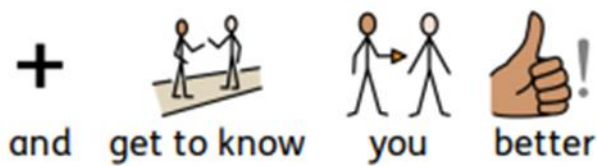
as we share together



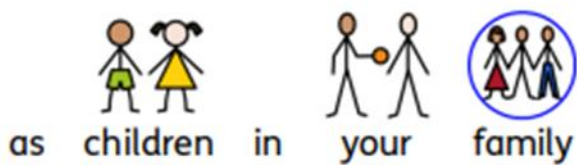
pray together



play together



and get to know you better



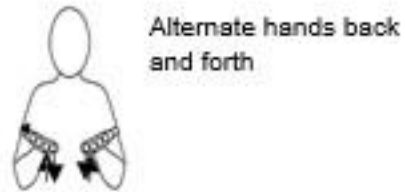
as children in your family



Amen



Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, repeat with left hand



Alternate hands back and forth

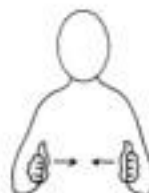




Illustration by Richard Gunther - www.lambsongs.co.nz

