



# 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>

## Luke 5: 1-11 – A surprising catch

Theme: God can help us do surprising things

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

This week's passage from Luke takes place at the shores of the Sea of Galilee, where people had gathered to hear Jesus' teachings. A group of fishermen experience a surprising encounter, which has a transformative impact on their lives.

The surprise in this passage doesn't solely emerge from the miraculous catch of fish. It's rooted in the fact that the fishermen chose to follow Jesus' instructions in the first place. Picture the scene: a tired and weary crew, shattered from working all night and ending up empty-handed, are met by a carpenter with no apparent knowledge or experience of fishing who wants to take control of their boat. It's surprising that they even let him into the boat, and even more astonishing that they chose to hand over control to someone who didn't share their expertise.

This willingness to trust in the unexpected challenges us to question our own tendencies to persist in our ways before turning to God. How often do we, like the fishermen, exhaust our efforts before considering whether God could offer a better solution? When we truly trust in the Lord, we can be surprised. God comes up with a solution, but this might not be what we expected.

And what happened to the miraculous catch, the valuable reward for their trust and obedience? The surprise continues, as they choose to leave it all behind and follow Jesus. This narrative challenges us to reevaluate our priorities, recognising that God might require us to leave behind what we perceive as valuable for the pursuit of something far greater.



# 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**

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## In-person game – All the fish in the sea

The group sits on chairs in a circle, facing outwards. Going round the circle, label the players in turn either haddock, cod or salmon. The leader then calls out, for example, "Haddock are swimming". All those who have been labelled haddock get up from their chairs and walk clockwise around the circle. If the leader calls the name of a second fish, those players get up and join the first ones. If the leader calls "It's getting choppy", the players walk faster. If the leader calls, "It's getting stormy", the players run. If the leader calls, "It's getting calmer" the players walk. If the leader calls, "The tide turns", the players turn and go in the opposite direction. If the leader calls "All the fish in the sea," everyone gets up and goes round the circle. When the leader calls, "Fishing boat coming!", everyone runs and tries to sit in a chair. Each time a chair is taken away and the person who fails to find a seat to sit in is out.



## Alternative game – frantic fishers

This is a variation on Hungry Hippos. In the Hungry Hippos game, players lie on skateboards or trolleys and are pushed into the middle and pulled back, which can be done in this game, or you can play just by lying on the floor in turn.

In the centre of the floor is a pile of small balls (e.g. ball pit balls) or beanbags, with a rope around them to mark the edge of the playing field. Players are in teams at the four corners of the room. One person at a time has a fishing net and either lies down at arm's length from the rope or lies on a skateboard which is pushed forward to the edge of the rope and pulled back again by team members. They catch as many balls/beanbags in their net as they can and bring them back to their team. Then another person takes the net and does the same. Once all the balls/beanbags have been collected, count up and see which team has managed to catch the most.

## Experience

For this story we recommend using the Easy to Read version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+5%3A+4-11+&version=ERV>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: story from Kidsspring Children's Ministry [https://youtu.be/y\\_IHk---CsE?si=Lxfk7Ezota5qGQoq](https://youtu.be/y_IHk---CsE?si=Lxfk7Ezota5qGQoq)

Over fives: Gone Fishing by Hope Kids

<https://youtu.be/nmKnRe7753g?si=4naiJi0duFoPeR6o> (From 0:42)

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: I will make you fishers of men by Kids Ministry Tools

<https://youtu.be/fLuH6Onhxc8?si=oeQTG3831hatRiZY>

Five to eevens: God is a Surprise

[https://youtu.be/a\\_vVoTvwLP4?si=nNzUqTz1BCZ4Ccpo](https://youtu.be/a_vVoTvwLP4?si=nNzUqTz1BCZ4Ccpo)

## Explore

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

### A new way to explore the story: *The Miraculous Catch*

*Everyone sits in a circle.*

*Each child is given a character or object to represent. As you tell the story, as each object or character is mentioned, the children stand up and preform the action.*

**Jesus** – the people/ person who are Jesus stand up and pretend to talk, using gestures.

**Fishing/ Fishers** – the people/ person who are fishing stand and pretend to fish.

**Fish** – the people/ person who are the fish stand up pretend to swim.



**Boat/s** – the people/ person who are the boat stand up, hold their hands out in front like the prow of a boat, and rock back and forth like a boat on the water.

**Peter** – the people/ person who are Peter stand up and pretend to listen by putting a hand to their ear.

**Net** – the people/ person who are the net stand up and mime throwing a net out.

**Sea/Water** – the people/ person who are the sea stand up and make the sound of the sea while moving their hands in a wave action.

**Change** – everyone stands up and change places.

One day as **Jesus** was standing by the **Sea** of Galilee, talking to a crowd of people, He saw two **boats** on the seashore.

**Jesus** saw some people who had been **fishing** and were now cleaning their **nets**.

### **Change**

He got into the **boat**, which belonged to **Peter** and taught the crowd of people from the **water**. The other **boat** followed beside them.

When **Jesus** was done talking, he told **Peter** to put his **nets** into the **water** to try to catch some **fish**.

### **Change**

**Peter** had been **fishing** all night and had not caught any **fish** but he listened to **Jesus** anyway and put the **net** into the **water**. When **Peter** did this the **net** became so full of **fish** that the **net** began to break.

### **Change**

**Peter** called to his friends to help bring in the **nets** and the **fish**. **Peter** was amazed by all the **fish** they had caught and was embarrassed because he knew that he was not a good man. He told **Jesus** to leave because he thought that he didn't deserve to be with **Jesus**.

### **Change**

But **Jesus** told **Peter** and the other men that they would become **fishers** of people. When **Peter** and the other men heard this, they moored their **boats** and left everything they had, even their amazing catch of **fish**, and followed **Jesus**.

### **Change**



## 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.



### **The Most Magnificent Thing' by Ashley Spires**

<https://youtu.be/UM8oN4yzJqw?si=bjThrWXeWjY8DmX->

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

- What do you think was the most surprising thing in this story? Why did you choose this? Does everyone agree?
- I wonder whether the disciples all agreed to do what Jesus said and what thoughts might have gone through their heads?
- Why do you think they left the fish on the shore, after all that?

### **Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities**

- I wonder what happened to all the fish the disciples caught? I wonder why they just left them?
- Have you experienced anything surprising this week? Was God in the surprise?
- I wonder what you'd have been thinking if you were one of the crowd?
- I wonder if you've ever had good advice from someone you didn't expect to give it to you?

### **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:

- Fishing game – either create your own or use an existing game – the people in the story were fishermen, explore what it would be like to have that type of job and what they'd like to do when they grow up
- Water play – explore the water
- Letters to spell out names – we can all be Jesus' friend
- Paper dolls to draw on – who are they?
- Mirrors – look at the details on their faces
- Dolls with clothing
- Role play clothes
- Surprise toys like pop ups – what does it feel like to be surprised?



## Express

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

### Fishing net prayers

#### **You will need:**

A board and some wool or ribbon.  
Alternatively, you can use some netting if you have some and some paper clips.  
Paper cut into fish shapes.



#### **What you do:**

Create a crisscross pattern using ribbon or wool on a board, or display some net on a board or wall.  
Ask the children to write or draw thank you prayers, help me prayers, or prayers about surprises, onto their fish shapes.  
Weave the fish into the nets as your prayer or peg your prayers to the net display.




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### Spoken prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for surprising us with amazing things.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

Help us to be brave, like the fishermen who listened to Jesus.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

We know that you are always with us, even when things can be difficult.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

We are sorry for when we sometimes forget to ask for your help.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

Like the fisherman who left their catch, help us let go of things that stop us following you.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

Remind us to talk to you and trust you with everything.

**Help us trust you more and more.**

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-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf> .

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.

### Fish caught in a net

What you will need:

Two paper plates or pieces of cardboard each  
 Netting (the nets holding oranges would work well)  
 Glue  
 Paper  
 Felt tips or similar  
 Scissors

What you do:

Decorate one of the plates with blue pens to depict the sea. On separate paper, draw and decorate some fish. Cut them out and place them on the plate. Glue some netting over the top. Cut out the middle of the second plate to leave a ring, this is to be stuck over the plate.



### Swimming paper fish

You will need – paper, scissors, shallow tray, water, washing up liquid.

- Fill your tray with a layer of water
- Cut a small fish shape out of the paper. The fish should have a v-shaped notch in the tail
- Gently place the fish on the surface of the water at one end of the tray
- Place a single drop of washing up liquid in the centre of the tail. Watch what happens to the fish
- Rinse the tray and fill with fresh water before repeating with a new paper fish.





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## 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:

- Being a fisher of people means telling people about Jesus so that they can get to know God too. Can you take the challenge of talking to one person about your faith – maybe tell them a story about Jesus or share something that you get from knowing God. If you're nervous, ask God to help you
  - Find out more about someone who did amazing things with God's help: Florence Nightingale, Harold Moody, Corrie ten Boom, Brother Andrew, Thomas Bowman Stephenson.
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We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Luke 5: 4-11** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk](mailto:lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk)

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Noah**



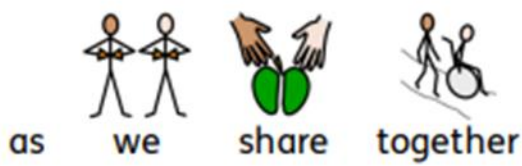




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



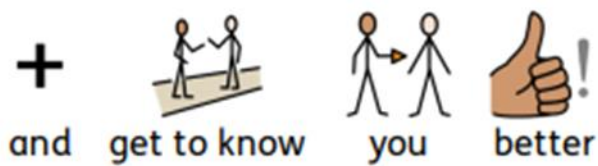
as we share together



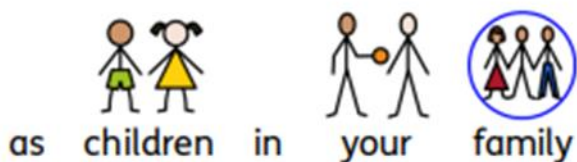
pray together



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



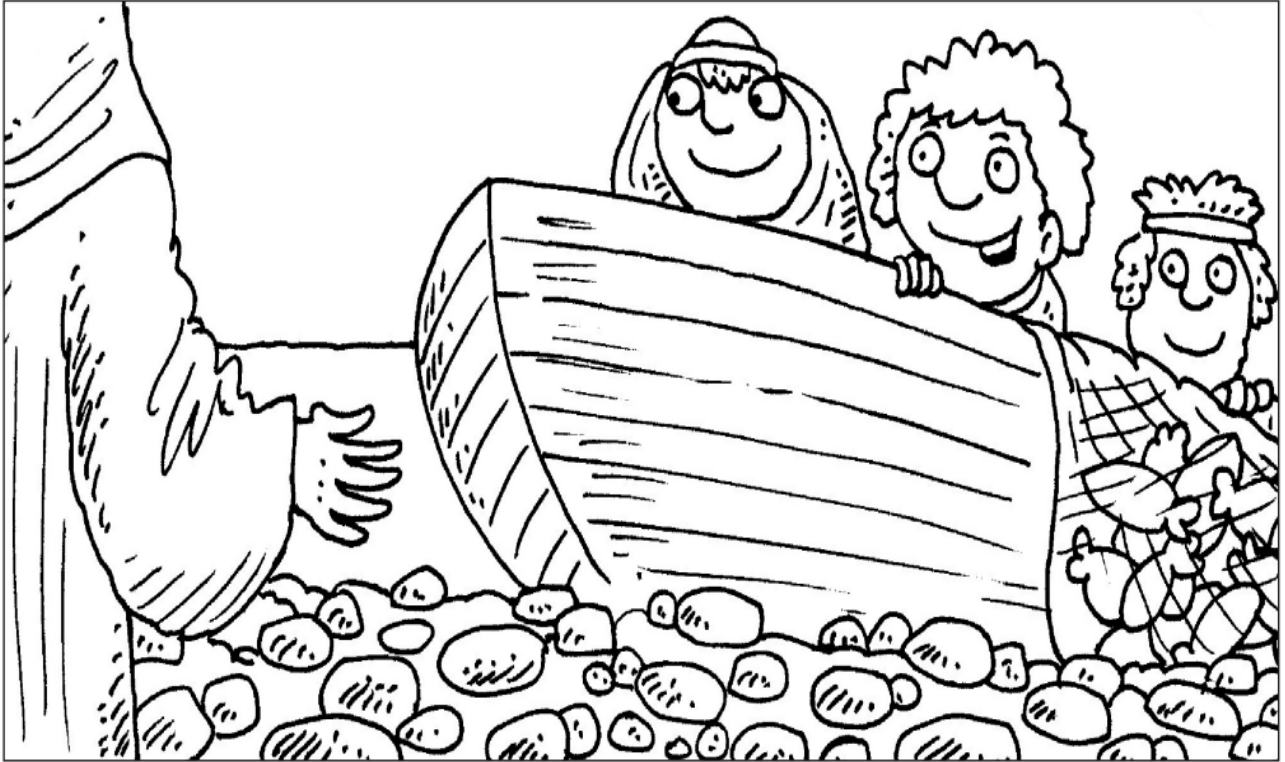


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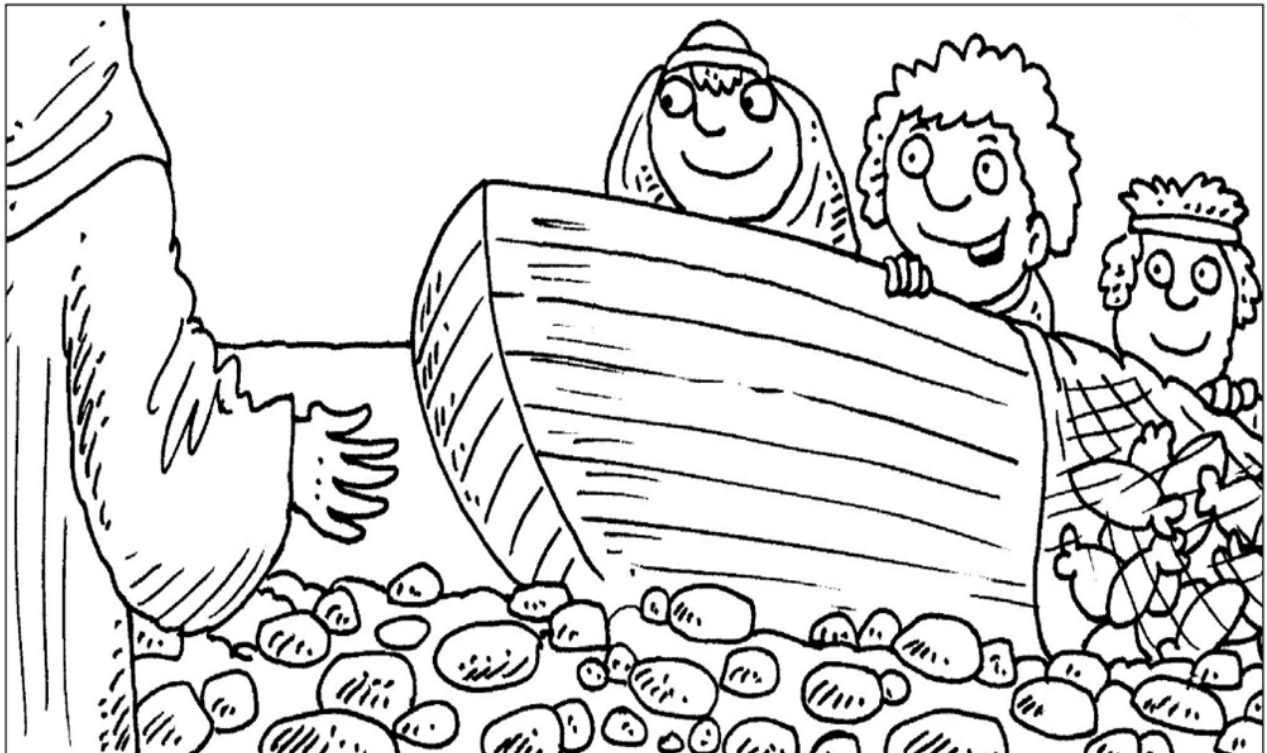




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