



Diocese of Bristol

## Families growing faith at home

**Church@Home** is a fantastic all-age resource that has been created to encourage and help families enjoy a time of worship, explore the Bible, pray together and grow in their faith in the comfort of their own homes.

**Church@Home** provides a fun, engaging and easy-to-follow session every Sunday using a Bible reading selected from the Church of England Lectionary. Each session lasts approximately twenty minutes and provides age-related material for toddlers to teenagers to accommodate everyone in the family. Thought-provoking questions, fun activities and crafts bring the Bible story to life as well as creative prayer ideas to help families focus, learn and grow in their faith together. Additional teaching and craft suggestions are also provided for families with very young children.

**Church@Home** can also be used as a fun way to help families connect with other families on Sunday mornings too during this time of distancing. Invite everyone to begin **Church@Home** at the same time and perhaps set up a WhatsApp group where families can share what they have done, or discuss the topic further together.

If your family or families in your church are using **Church@Home** please let us know. We would like to keep in contact, find out how you are doing as well as hear how **Church@Home** is helping families grow in their faith, so that we can share and inspire others during this time of distancing.

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Thank you 



Sunday 22 November 2020  
Sunday before Advent

## Sheep and goats

### Matthew 25: 31-46

#### Time to focus...

Find a place where the family can all sit comfortably - around the table, on the lounge floor etc. As you gather, if possible, light a candle to mark the beginning of your worship time. Quietly stare at the candle, watching the flames flicker and glow.

#### Set the scene...

How easy is it to tell the difference between a sheep and a goat? Have a look at the pictures on page 4. It may not be as easy as you think. The easiest way to tell a goat from a sheep is that goat tails usually stick up in the air but a sheep's tail hangs down. If sheep have horns, they are usually curved (goat's horns are less curved). Sheep usually have fluffy wool that must be sheared, whereas goats have flatter hair.

#### Watch the story...

Watch LifeKids retelling of the parable of the [sheep and the goats](#) on YouTube.

#### Explore the story...

When someone does something nice for you, it is nice to say, "thank you". Another way you can show your gratitude is doing something nice for them in return. For example, if someone invites you to their birthday party and you have a really good time, you can return their kindness by inviting them to your party.

It is always polite to show that you are thankful, and no one does more for us than God does! Think about it... God provides for us in so many ways - can you think of any? God also comforts us when we're sad and can heal us when we are poorly. The Bible tells us that God is always with us in times of trouble.

In today's Bible story, Jesus is talking about a special day when the Son of Man (Son of Man was a title Jesus used for himself) is sitting on his throne and separating people like a shepherd separates sheep from the goats. Jesus tells the sheep that they have been good: 'I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

But Jesus was not impressed with the goats - look at his response in v41-45. Jesus even tells them that they will be punished! (v46). Jesus is telling us that God really does notice when we do kind things for other people. If we are followers of Jesus, we are taught to show love for others as Jesus shows love for us. That is how Jesus can tell His sheep from the goats. Remember to thank God for the many ways he has blessed you, and as an act of praise, thank Him by sharing His blessings with others you meet this week.

#### End with a prayer...

Lord, help us to show love for others as you show love for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.



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## Sheep and goats

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

**Worship:** Enjoy learning this song called "[Big and strong](#)"

**Craft activities:** Make get well cards or draw a nice picture for someone you know who is poorly - a friend, relative, someone from church or one of your neighbours.

Make a sheep snack using a large marshmallow for the sheep's body, four small pretzel sticks for the legs, and cut a slit in one end of the marshmallow to insert a traditionally shaped pretzel into for the head.

5-11s...

**Worship:** Praise and thank God singing along to "[Thankful](#)"

**Activity:** Make get well cards for someone you know who is poorly - a friend, relative, someone at church or a neighbour.

**Creative prayer:** Some people find it difficult praying out loud. For this creative prayer, you will need three envelopes labelled 'Thank you', 'Sorry' and 'Please'. Everyone in the family writes their prayers on slips of paper and placed them in the appropriate envelope. Don't forget to check the envelopes from time to time to let everyone share in the joy of the thank you prayers and to find out how the please prayers have been answered.

11-18s...



- 1) Can you think of a time when you were in need and someone helped you?
- 2) Look up verse 40 and 45 - what does Jesus mean by this?
- 3) How do Jesus' words challenge how you act?



Pray that your actions flow out of your relationship with Jesus.



Think about your actions towards others; are you willing to help the least and the lost?.

*"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." - Matthew 25:40*

# Sheep or Goat?

