



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 17th January 2021  
2nd Sunday of Epiphany

## Are you listening? 1 Samuel 3:1-10

### 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...

Names are important. It is the one way you can easily get someone's attention and a great way of recognising someone. Think about your name. Do you know why you were given your name? Maybe you were named after a relative, a famous person or the even the midwife! Some names have important meanings. For example, we read that the Hebrew meaning of the name Jesus is 'Immanuel, God is with us' (Matthew 1:23).

### Watch the story...

Saddleback Kids are back with their retelling of [Samuel and Eli](#).

### Explore the story...

Names are really important to God. Can you think of any examples in the Bible when God called someone by name? Here are few: God calling to Moses from within the burning bush. Jesus calling to Zacchaeus down from the tree. God calling to Paul on the road to Damascus - and God also gave Paul his new name (he was called Saul).

Another well-known example is God calling a young boy called Samuel. In the story Samuel's mother, Hannah wanted a son more than anything in the world. She prayed to God to give her one. Hannah promised God that if He gave her a son, she would give him back to God to serve Him all the days of his life. God answered Hannah's prayer and she gave birth to a baby boy. When the boy was old enough, Hannah kept her promise to God and took the boy to the temple and presented him to Eli, the priest. Samuel lived and served in the temple under Eli.

One night Samuel heard someone call his name. He got up and ran to Eli but Eli told him to go back to bed because Eli had not called out to Samuel. Three times God called Samuel in the night. Finally, Eli realized that it was God and told Samuel to reply; 'Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.'

Some people think that God only calls grown-ups. But Samuel was just a young boy when God called him. God knows all of our names just as He knew the name of Samuel and God still calls boys and girls today saying, "Come, follow me." So, listen out for God's call. Recognise God is calling you and answer just as Samuel did, "Here I am!"

### End with a prayer...

Dear God, help us to recognise your voice so that when you call us by our name, we can answer like Samuel, "Here I am Lord." In Jesus' name we pray, amen.



Sunday 17th January 2021  
2nd Sunday of Epiphany

## Are you listening?

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

**Fun activity:** Can you guess the sound? Find objects that make interesting sounds. When you are ready, sit with your heads down on the table, eyes closed and take it in turns trying to guess what makes the sounds. Make animal noises too. How different were the sounds with your ear pressed to the table? Everyone can learn to hear God's voice - look up John 10:27.

**Craft activity:** Have fun making some listening ears using the templates on the next two pages...






5-11s...

**Worship:** Enjoy worshipping to "[How great is our God](#)"

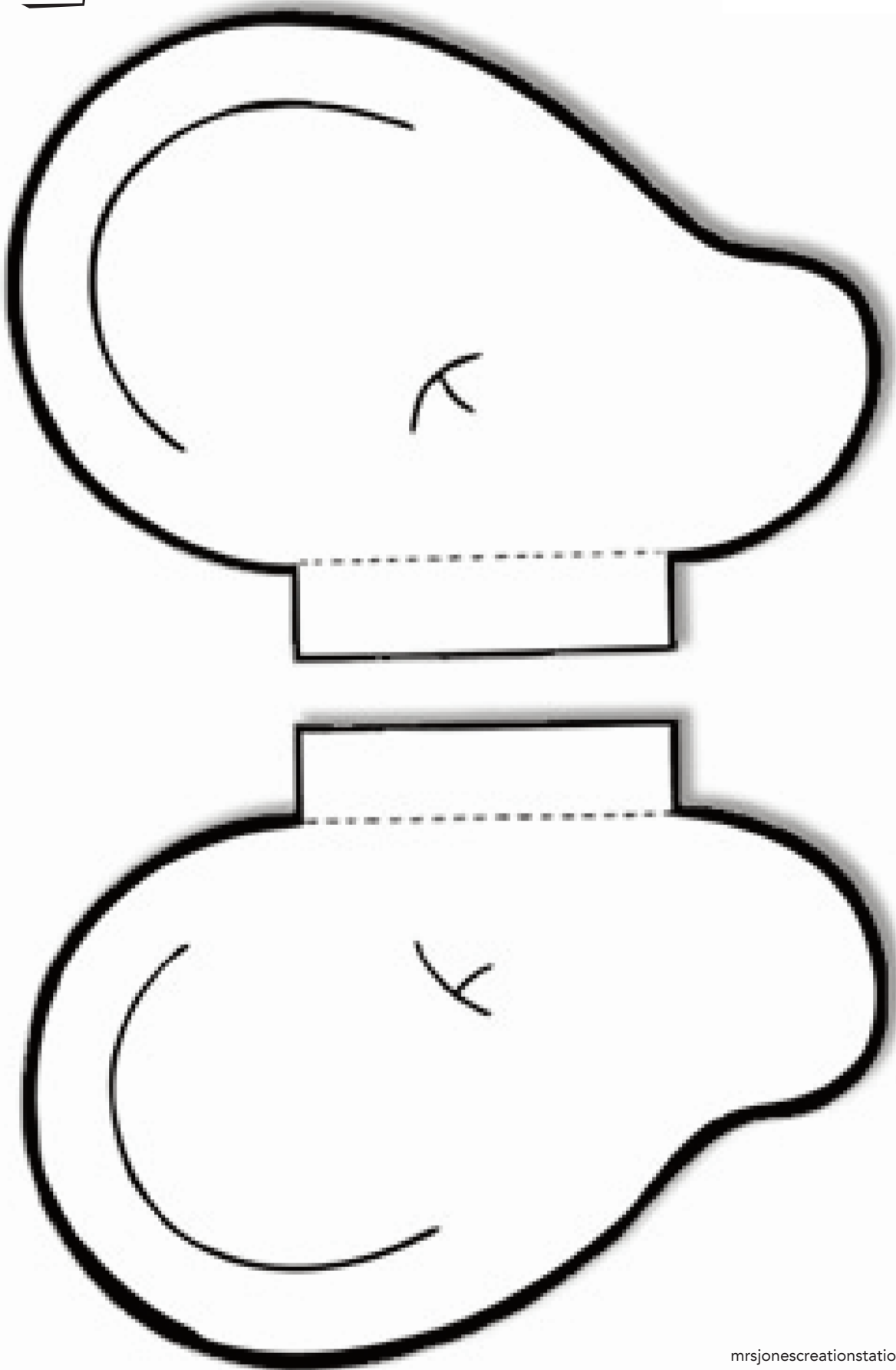
**Creative prayer:** You will need a large branch or a few branches arranged in a big vase. Cut out some leaf shapes and write or draw your prayers to God. It can be personal or something about creation that you would like to say thank you to God. Pierce holes in the leaves and hang them on the branches using wool or thread, or just stick the prayers to the branches of the tree. Be still as everyone reads out their prayers to God.

**Fun activity:** Can you guess the sound? Follow the instructions in 0-5yrs and adapt for older children e.g. play weird sounds on youtube on your phone.

11-18s...

-  1) What skills are needed to be a good listener?
- 2) Imagine you are Samuel. How would you have reacted to the voice?
- 3) How do Christians hear God's voice today?
-  Pause, be quiet and reflect on Psalm 46:10 - 'Be still and know that I am God'.
-  How many ways will God speak to you this week? You might be surprised!

*"Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening.""* - 1 Samuel 3:10



# Listening for God



“Speak, for your servant  
is listening”

**Samuel 3:10**