



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 24th January 2021
3rd Sunday of Epiphany

Blessings Psalm 128

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...

Have you ever sneezed and someone responded, 'Bless you'? Have you ever wondered why people feel compelled to say 'Bless you' when someone sneezes? There are some interesting thoughts and theories as to why. In today's Bible reading, Psalm 128 mentions blessings but not when sneezing - the psalmist talks about God's blessings...

Watch the story...

A lovely short video for children explaining [what does it mean to bless...](#)

Explore the story...

Blessings are a good thing. Blessings are a gift from God, but they are not like gifts or a present that you receive at Christmas or on your birthday. Look up Deuteronomy 28: 1-13 and count the number of times the word blessing, blessed, or bless appears. (In the NIV these words appear 10 times).

The very first verse of this passage tells us what we must do to be blessed by God. Can you find the answer? (obeying God and carefully following all His commands). Can you find any examples of blessings in these verses? (children, crops, animals, food, protection from enemies, full barns, abundant prosperity, rain in the land and whatever you do!) What does verse 4 mean, that 'God will open the Heavens, the storehouse of His bounty?' (Heaven is full of blessings and God wants to give them to us).

As you can tell by now, blessings are all around us but we should not just take them for granted. God gives us blessings like the rain to keep things green and growing; the food we have to eat; people who care for us; a place to worship God; clothes to wear; friends; homes to keep us warm and dry; soft beds to sleep on; and the list goes on, and on, and on. Like in the words of an old hymn by Johnson Oatman Jr...

Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings see what God has done!
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your many blessings, see what God has done!

To finish today, think about all the blessings God has given you and write them down as a list. Take a few moments as a family thanking God in prayer.

End with a prayer...

Thank you God that You love and bless us in so many ways, We are so grateful. Amen.



Sunday 24th January 2021
3rd Sunday of Epiphany

Blessings

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

Craft activity: Ladybugs are beautiful insects but did you know that they are also very helpful? They help save plants from being eaten by other insects. Jesus also helped many people in the Bible - he was also sent to save the world! We should follow Jesus' and the ladybug's example. Colour the picture of a ladybird on the next page but leave the spots blank. Write names of people you can help on the spots. Leave the spots white and colour in the spot with the person's name on it when you have helped that person. Remember that God is not the only one who blesses people. You can bless people too by being helpful and kind.

5-11s...

Worship: This song went viral last year... **"The Blessing"**

Creative prayer: You will need a large bowl and paper... Give out a piece of paper and a pen, and ask everyone to write down something/someone they would like to thank God for. Fold up the paper and place them into a bowl. When everyone has done this, mix the papers up in the bowl and then everyone picks one out at random. Invite your family one at a time to share out loud to God what is written on the paper using a simple phrase such as, 'Thank you God for... Amen'. Short and sweet, but it's great for building up confidence that prayers don't have to be long and it can be as normal as talking to God together.

11-18s...

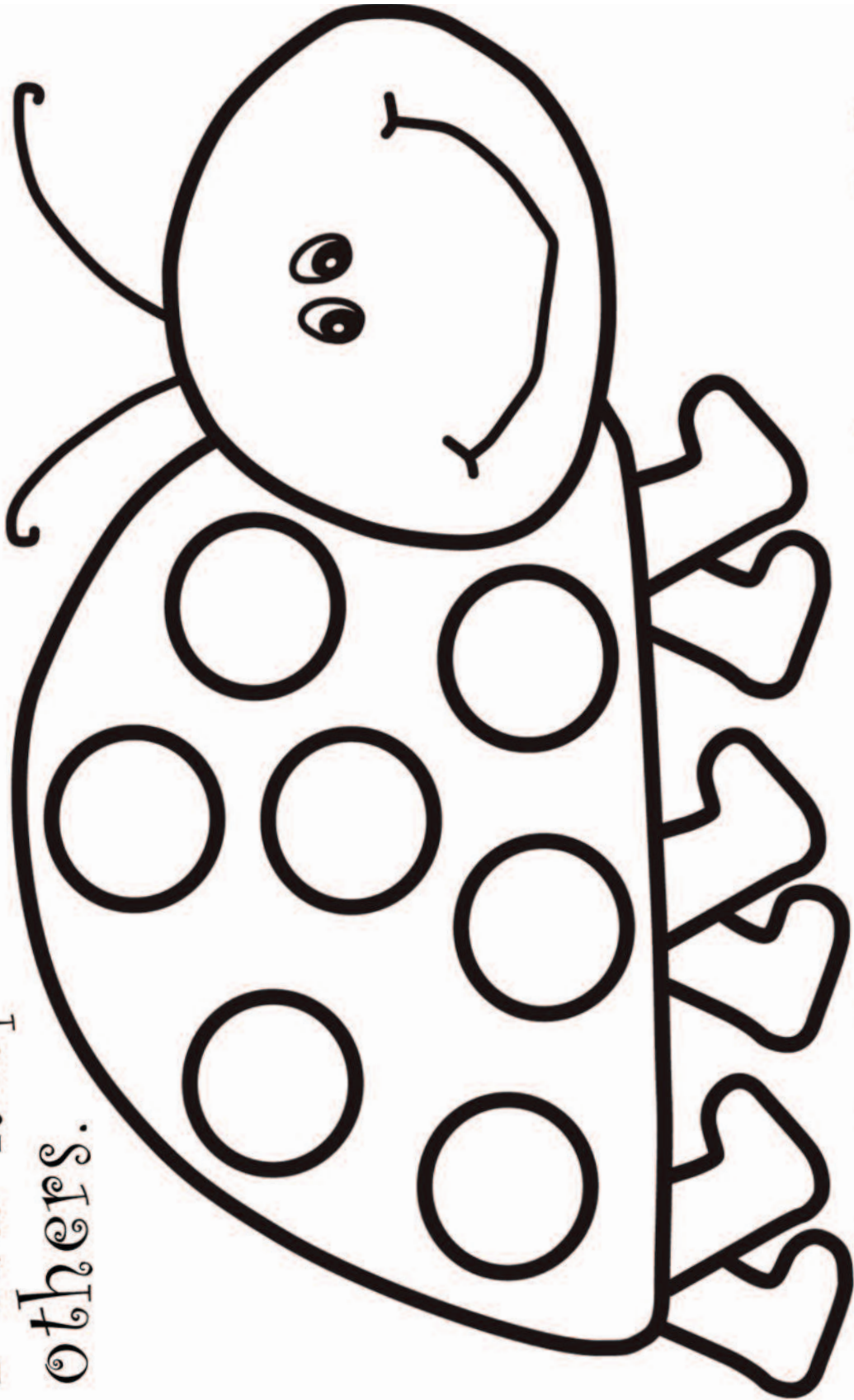
- 1) What does 'obedience' mean?
- 2) Read Psalm 128:1 - how does God reward those who are obedient to him?
- 3) When was the last time you were obedient to God?

Thank God that he blesses those who are obedient to him.

Make it a priority to spend time reading the Bible - start with John 14:23.

"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him" - Psalm 128:1

I can help
others.



“... but by love serve one another.” Gal. 5:13

Listening for God



“Speak, for your servant
is listening”

Samuel 3:10