

Worship at Home—27 September 2020—Harvest



It is with great sadness that we have to intimate the death of:

Jean Perry

Whose funeral will take place in Currie Kirk Graveyard on Monday 5 October at 2 pm.

Please pray for the family

Harvest Call to Worship from Psalm 65

Praise awaits you, our God

You who answer prayer,
to you all people will come.
who stilled the roaring of the seas,
and the turmoil of the nations.

The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders;
where morning dawns, where evening fades,
you call forth songs of joy.

You care for the land and water it;
You greatly enrich it you provide grain, for so you have ordained it

You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges,
softening it with showers and blessing its growth.

You crown the year with your bounty,
the hills are clothed with gladness.

The meadows clothe themselves with flocks
and the valleys deck themselves with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.



Opening Prayer

Creator God,

You have made us stewards of Your earth. You have charged us to tend it and to grow food in season; help us to respect and to use your gifts to Your glory and to cherish all life that comes from You, so that we may share in the labour of all creation to bring relief to those in need and to sustain ourselves in our own well-being.

We thank You for all those who work the land and sea to provide food to feed us; for farmers who grow crops and produce livestock with love and care and those fishing the deep oceans.

We thank You God for the rich variety of food that comes from all across the world. We thank You for the enjoyment and pleasure we find in sharing food and fellowship. We pray for those who grow, prepare and distribute the food we eat. And we give thanks that you not only give food for our bodies but you provide food for our souls in the Word of scripture and the soulful food of Sacrament.

Bless us and bless our worship and hear us now as we share the prayer for every day that Jesus has given.

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.
AMEN

The Scripture Readings are taken from: Exodus 16: 11-16, 31 and Exodus 17: 1-7

EXODUS 16: 11-16, 31—Manna from Heaven

The Lord said to Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'"



That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded: 'Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'"

The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey.

EXODUS 17: 1-7—Water From the Rock

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarrelled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.”



Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the Lord to the test?”

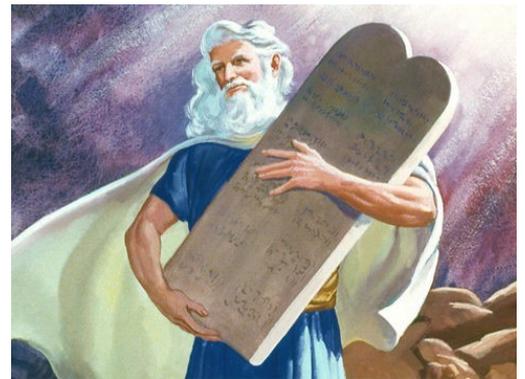
But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?”

Then Moses cried out to the Lord, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.”

The Lord answered Moses, “Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarrelled and because they tested the Lord saying, “Is the Lord among us or not?”

Sermon

The past two weeks, we have heard about the experiences of Moses and the Israelite people in the wilderness. Moses aided God in emancipating people from slavery in Egypt. But once those people got out and into the wilderness it was headache after headache. Poor Moses! At first they were fighting with one another because they couldn't agree on how to be a community together and so Moses went up the mountain to pray. When Moses came down he gave them the Ten Commandments—God's simple rules for getting on in life—to worship the one true God and lots of other sensible laws to help them live.



There was a Sunday School teacher discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining ‘to honour thy father and mother’, she asked the wee ones, “is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?” and without missing a beat, one little boy answered, “Thou shalt not kill”.

Moses delivered the Commandments but the Israelites still grumbled. They told him they longed for home. Yes, back in Egypt they were slaves, but—at least life was familiar then.

This pandemic has proven how stressful it is to live with uncertainty. The Israelites blamed Moses (and God) for taking them away from their homes.

In Lockdown, many of us might have felt a bit trapped within our homes. Professor Michael Banner spoke on Radio 4 this week. He suggested good and bad things about people now working at home. He also noted that in 2020, there are over 15 million people worldwide currently displaced from homes. Some have been uprooted by floods, forest fires and natural disasters. Others are fleeing conflict, persecution and violence. He suggested that, as we adapt to more life at home, “let us not think of home as a place of confinement or a place in need of a new sofa. Let us use our life at home to cultivate an active concern for the plight of those driven from their homes.”

The Israelites were far from home and they were hungry and thirsty and unsure of the way ahead. It is understandable that the Israelites got grumpy under Moses. The bible says they were wandering in a wilderness for forty years. We can imagine them asking Moses, “Are we there yet?” (It has been suggested that if Mrs Moses had been allowed to ask for directions, the journey would have taken half as long.)

When they left Egypt in a hurry they did not bring much with them. They were living as nomads so they could not grow their own food. And so, after a lot of grumbling at Moses, God gave them Quail to eat at night and Manna to eat in the morning. Manna was a kind of residue from trees that they found on the ground and it tasted sweet. Every day God would rain down Manna in the mornings and Quail to eat at night.

Today we celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving. We give thanks for the food on our tables and the farmers who work to grow it and all the other hard working people involved in producing, processing and getting it to our tables—key workers in these pandemic times.

We give thanks for our variety of food we have to enjoy and we also give food donations for others to show our thanks to God, and, sadly to recognise our need to care for our neighbours near and far who do not have enough food. We want to share what we have. We know it is terrible that some people are hungry in Scotland. It was great that the footballer Marcus Rashford championed continued school meals during this Covid Crisis.

In the wilderness, God provided for the people and no-one was without food. We might wonder why they grumbled—but then, we see the problem! The bible tells us that the Israelites ate Manna in the mornings and Quail in the evenings for forty years!!!

I have a friend whose Beagle is always greedy. Snoopy is four years old and from the day she got him she only fed him Purina Dry Dog Chow in the morning and the same dry dog food at night. Every day without fail he looked forward to his full bowl of dry chow in the morning and half bowl of dry food in the evening.

Until she went on a holiday and left Snoopy with a neighbour. When she got home, she noticed he turned his nose up at his food when she fed him. But he got very excited when she opened her fridge. Her friend had given the dog tasty treats like bacon, steak bones and other enticing leftovers.

Maybe you love pizza or maybe you love roasted chicken. But can you imagine having pizza every single morning and roasted chicken every single night for years? Even if you have a favourite food, it wouldn't be fun to eat the same thing every day. The Israelites ate the same things for breakfast and dinner every single day. Even though they had food to eat, they grumbled at Moses. In Chapter 17 of Exodus, they are grumbling because they are thirsty. By some miraculous means, when Moses strikes the rock with his staff, God provides water for them to drink.

What is clear from all these stories is that the Israelites had a hard time following God. They found it tough to be obedient to God and they got frustrated when they didn't see the way ahead or when they didn't feel they were the ones in control. Maybe that is how some of us might feel right now as we face another lockdown and the strains of this Pandemic take a renewed hold on the economy and on all the normal aspects of our lives.

Although the Israelites fought, grumbled and gave Moses a hard time—years later when they made it to the Promised Land, they looked back and saw how God had paved the way ahead for them at every step; how God had saved them from slavery and brought them out into freedom; and how God had provided laws and leaders. They remembered now with gratitude the food and refreshment God gave to them. They told the stories over and over again to their children and grandchildren and great grandchildren that God had guided them in the worst of times, even with a pillar of cloud by day and a fiery light at night. Most of all they remembered and gave thanks for the way God had formed them into a community and that even when they grumbled or were unfaithful, God was faithful.

Jewish people re-enact those experiences during their religious holidays in order to remember God's faithfulness and goodness to them—God's saving work calling them out as a people, and a community of faith. They wanted to remember the Passover and that whole formative experience in the wilderness when they learned to rely on and trust in God.

Today we share in the meal that Jesus shared with his disciples at the Passover celebration in Jerusalem. Jesus wants us to remember his life and sacrifice and to remember God's love for us then and now.

As we come to share in our Lord's Supper we will hear Jesus saying, "Do this to remember me."

Once more with simple fruits of the harvest like bread and wine, we are reminded who calls us out and saves us. Once again we are invited to be nourished by God's gifts of grace in these simple things; a little piece of bread and a small taste of juice or wine enable us to remember his faithfulness—His gifts are means by which we receive gifts of Divine mercy, grace and love. And also, by remembering Him as we share in God's gifts we show our gratitude to God as we lift our hearts in our prayers of thanksgiving.

It is a blessing to share this sacrament of communion at Harvest—we give thanks for the bounty of the fields that ease our own hunger and thirst . . . the grain for bread and fruits for wine . . . for just as God provided for the people of Israel and just as God saved them, so God is continually providing for us and doing his saving work in and through us.

Perhaps now, in our own homes, more than ever, is important to remember that Communion is communal. If we are not physically together, we are joined into a family by Jesus. We belong to a community of grace and we receive his gifts together.

This Pandemic has meant that many of us feel that we are in a wilderness. Some of us feel like grumbling, "How long will this Pandemic last." "When will we ever get back to normality and to hugging and feeling safe." When the road ahead seems unclear, or our footing seems unsure, when the burdens feel heavy or the struggle seems too much.

Jesus says to us, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

At times like this we need this sacramental meal to remind us that God is with us. Jesus invites us to his table and says, "Do this in remembrance of my love for you. Do this to remember that my body was broken for you and I laid down my life to love you." And as we receive this meal, let us be thankful.

Let us pray:

Loving God, today we give thanks that we live in peace, without threat of violence or persecution.

We give thanks for the food we can enjoy on our tables.

We give thanks that you love us and that although we are sad to be apart, even in a virtual way, we can be together at your table.

As we receive your good gifts to our lives

As we remember that we are formed, reformed and redeemed by your love

Let us be quiet for a moment within ourselves to thank you

And let us also widen our horizons to pray for those who have been caught in the grip of the corona virus, forest fires, violence, storms and hurricanes.

Let us help wherever and however we can.

Let us remember who we are and whose we are.

Amen

Invitation to Communion

He was always the guest.

In the homes of his friends, he was always the guest.

At the meal tables of the wealthy

where he pled the case of the poor, he was always the guest.

Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people,

welcoming the stranger, he was always the guest.

But here, at this table, he is the host.

Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him,

those who want to follow him must first be fed by him,

those who would wash his feet must first let him make them clean.

For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished;

this is the time when Christ can make us new.

So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith,

for a better life, for a fairer World.

Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guests at his.

The Story

What we do here, we do in imitation of what Christ first did,

To his followers in every age, Jesus gave an example and command rooted in

the experience he shared with his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem.

On the night on which he was betrayed, and as they were sitting at a meal, Jesus took a piece of bread and broke it. He gave it to the disciples saying,

"This is my body. It is broken for you, Do this to remember me".

Later, after they had eaten, he took a cup of wine and said,

"this cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me."

So now we do as Jesus did:

We take this bread and this wine,
the produce of the earth and fruit of human labour,
In these, Jesus has promised to be present;
through these, Christ can make us whole.
As Jesus drew near to God to thank him for his gifts, let us so do. . .
Let us pray

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Loving God, is indeed right, to praise you and give you thanks
for you made us, and before us,
you made the world we inhabit, and before the world,
you made the eternal home in which, through Christ, we have a place.
All that is spectacular, all that is plain have their origin in you;
all that is lovely, all who are loving point to you as their fulfilment.

And grateful as we are for the world we know
and the universe beyond our ken, we particularly praise you,
whom eternity cannot contain, for coming to earth and entering time in Jesus.

For his life which informs our living,
for his compassion which changes our hearts,
for his clear speaking which contradicts our harmless generalities,
for his innocent suffering, his fearless dying,
his rising to life breathing forgiveness, we praise you and thank you.

Our gratitude rises for the promise of the Holy Spirit, who even yet,
even now, confronts us with your claims and attracts us to your goodness.
And offers us gifts of grace and peace beyond our understanding.

Therefore we gladly join our voices
to the song of the Church on earth and in heaven:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD,
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT.
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY.
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

And now, lest we believe that our praise alone fulfils your purpose, we fall silent
and remember him who came because words weren't enough.

(Silence)

Setting our wisdom, our will, our words aside, emptying our hearts,
and bringing nothing in our hands, we yearn for the healing,
the holding, the accepting, the forgiving which Christ alone can offer.

Merciful God, send now in kindness,

your Holy Spirit to settle on this bread and wine
and fill them with the fullness of Jesus.
And let that same Spirit rest on us, converting us,
from the patterns of this passing world,
until we conform to the shape of him whose food we now share. Amen

COMMUNION

(breaking bread)

Among friends, gathered round a table,
Jesus took bread, and broke it, and said,
"This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

(Holding up a cup of wine)

Later he took a cup of wine and said,
*"This cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death.
Drink this all of you, to remember me."*

Jesus, firstborn of Mary.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, Saviour of the world.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, monarch of heaven.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

He whom the universe could not contain,
is present to us in this bread,

He who redeemed us and called us by name
now meets us in this cup.

So take this bread and drink this wine.
In them God comes to us so that we may come to God. (sharing of bread and wine)

The Peace

Christ who has nourished us, is our peace,
old and young, he has broken down the barriers
to bind us to him and to each other.
Having tasted his goodness
The peace of the Lord be with you.

Let us pray.

In gratitude, in deep gratitude
for this moment, this meal,
we give ourselves to you.
Lord, having tasted the living bread, may we live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.

Amen.

News from the Kirk

The office is now open on Tuesday mornings from 9.30—12.30 (Tuesdays only) which will allow you to collect wool and bring along your knitting, milk bottle tops or stamps. Also any items you may have for Fresh Start.

The electronic doors will be open and boxes will be placed on a table in front of the swing doors to accommodate any deliveries. Hand Gels will be available. You must wear masks when entering and exiting the Hall. Entry beyond the swing doors is not allowed.

You can make a donation to Currie Kirk Funds in light of reduced income from our Sunday morning services and no income from our Halls. If you wish to donate, please contact our Treasurer, Eddie Pigott on 0131 466 1459, email pigottsef@icloud.com or alternatively Nina in the office.

Lastly, if you are in a position to donate money to the Currie Benevolent Fund which is an independent fund to help people and families in distressing circumstances—please send a cheque to the Currie Benevolent Fund, c/o Kirk Office. Any moneys are given out at the discretion of the minister. Please contact The Manse (0131 449 4719) or email: Esmart@churchofscotland.org.uk. All donations you might give for people at this time of wage loss and uncertainty are greatly appreciated.

Please get in touch with the Kirk Office (451 5141) if you need anything. We have friends willing to listen, shop, walk a dog, fix a garden.

Website: <https://www.curriekirk.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/>

You can also find the sermon on YouTube—search Currie Kirk.



Donations of food and money for the Trinity Centre Food Bank can be handed into the office on Tuesdays—9.30—12.30 for the next two weeks.

The list of items that can be donated are:

Tinned soup, cold meat/corned beef, tuna.
Tinned meals: *eg* stew, mince, and meatballs *etc.*
Tinned fruit, rice, beans, UHT milk, coffee, jam, cereal,
biscuits.

Toothpaste/shampoo/soap and nappies.

Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Blythswood Appeal this year going to Eastern Europe

Shoe Box Appeal 2020

This is the time of year when we ask everyone if they can to support the Shoebox Appeal run by Blythswood Care, a Christian charity whose aims are to transform lives through education, community action and the promotion of the Gospel.

This year's appeal will go to the poorest people in Eastern Europe, families who face huge difficulties every day through poverty, illness, disability or other disadvantages having fled from violence. Receiving a shoebox brings such joy to these children and adults, lighting up their faces with huge smiles.

You can make such a difference to lives that are otherwise almost hopeless.

Shoebox Appeal Forms showing the sorts of items to include in a shoebox and how to wrap it for Customs inspection are sent out with the printed service paper or you can contact Nina at the Kirk Office on Tuesdays 9.30 to 12.30 for a form. Nina will be the main point of contact and she will be in touch with members of the Mission, Outreach & Fellowship Team who are co-ordinating the Shoebox appeal for Currie Kirk.

If you can't find an empty shoebox to fill, this year you can use a drawstring cloth shoe bag instead (not a plastic bag). Nina will have a few spare empty shoe boxes in the office. Blythswood would appreciate a donation of £3 for each shoebox to help cover transport costs.

If you find you cannot fill and wrap a whole box or bag, please hand in donation items or money to Nina and the MO&F Team will make up suitable shoeboxes then wrap them ready for uplift by Blythswood.

The Shoeboxes are all due to be uplifted at the end of October/start of November and will be stored in isolation at the Gibson Craig till then with at least 48 hours of quarantine.

Thank you in advance for your help with this.

Viola MacPhail 0131 449 4664

Checklist

Please tick items included and firmly secure this list on your shoebox lid.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS (ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW):
Include the following items highlighted in the top box.

<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and Toothpaste	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Toy for boys and girls such as cars, dolls, balls. Please only include new shop-bought toys.
<input type="checkbox"/> Hat, scarf, gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweets (No chocolate or any other food) 'Best before' date no earlier than 31 March next year. No loose sweets, lollies or undated bags of sweets.
<input type="checkbox"/> Soap	
<input type="checkbox"/> Underwear	

Tear along the perforation to detach this panel and secure to the outside of your shoebox

Do not include used or damaged items; war related items such as toy guns or knives or military figures; hand-made or knitted stuffed toys; chocolate or any food other than sweets. Chocolate Eclairs and Chocolate Limes are not allowed; books that are mainly words should also not be included.

<p>Toiletries (NO TALCUM POWDER)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo <input type="checkbox"/> Soap/Shower gel <input type="checkbox"/> Face cloth/ Moist wipes <input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant <input type="checkbox"/> Moisturising Cream <input type="checkbox"/> Comb/Brush <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary Products <input type="checkbox"/> Shaving foam/Razors <input type="checkbox"/> Socks/Tights	<input type="checkbox"/> Household Candles <input type="checkbox"/> Screwdrivers/Pliers <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen Utensils <p>Stationery</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Pens/Pencils/Sharpener <input type="checkbox"/> Notepads/Colouring books <input type="checkbox"/> Rulers/Rubbers <p>Clothes and other Items (T-shirts/Pyjamas/Jumpers/ Shirts) etc</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please tick the box next to who the box is for
 Please specify the age of the girl or boy you have filled this box for:

<div style="text-align: center; color: red; font-size: 2em;">♀</div> <input type="checkbox"/> Girl.....yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Teenage.....yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Woman <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly woman	<div style="text-align: center; color: green; font-size: 2em;">♂</div> <input type="checkbox"/> Boy.....yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Teenage.....yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Man
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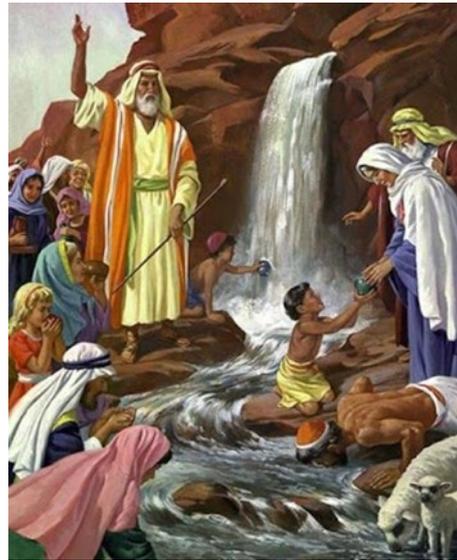


Human and Divine

These resources are designed to help you explore the Bible as a family together at home while we can't go to church. Be as creative as you want to be and enjoy spending time with each other and with God.

Prepare yourself...

Loving God, you give us life and fulfil all our needs.
You are boundless and unlimited.
Your love for us goes beyond our understanding.
Thank you, God, for all that you give us and the ways in which you care for us.
Help us to learn to rely on you more and turn to you constantly.
Amen.



Praise together...



Every Step by Nick & Becky Drake:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZBhKp5_HwE
A reminder that God is with us all the time.

Question...



What is your favourite drink?
Which of these would you rather have:

- * Lemonade or Coke?
- * Milkshake or smoothie?
- * Hot chocolate or Fruit juice?
- * Sparkling or still?
- * Juice or water?

Read the Bible...

Today's verses are found in Exodus 17:1-7. You can read them in a Bible or find them here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+17%3A1-7&version=GNT>
You could try reading the verses in different versions to see if it adds to your understanding of the passage.





Talk together...

Why were the Israelites quarrelling with Moses? How do you think they felt when there was no water?

Imagine you were one of the Israelites following Moses through the desert – how would you be feeling? What would you think after seeing what happened?

How would you feel if you were Moses? What was Moses' response to their complaints?

The Israelites were thirsty! They were in the middle of a desert, they couldn't simply turn on a tap or go to a shop to buy a drink, there was no water in sight. They were grumpy and they took it out on Moses. Moses knew they had to turn to God.

What miracle did God do last week when the Israelites were hungry? Do you know any other miracles God did for the Israelites?

How quickly they seem to have forgotten the miracles that God has done for them – rescuing them from Egypt, parting the Red Sea, sending food from heaven! Maybe that is why God told Moses to use the same staff which he had performed miracles with before, it was a reminder that God had been with them through it all and would continue to be with them and provide for them.

Can you think of a time when you've had to rely on God for what you need?

Can you think of any stories including Jesus that involve water?

Can you think of a time when you were worried or scared about something even though God was with you? What did you do?

Play together...

Each person should go to the kitchen and choose three random foods or drinks. Once you've chosen, put all the items in the centre of your group. Now your challenge is to plan a meal from what you have! Will it be one that will taste good? Will it have more than one course? Would you like to try it?

Explore together...

This week go for a walk near some water. Take time to stop and notice what other people, creatures or plants are enjoying the water. What can we be thankful for with regards to water?

Do something...

Could you find out someone's favourite drink and make it or buy it for them this week? How can we be generous to others flowing from God's generosity towards us?

Pray together...

Give each person a piece of play dough. Shape it into a heart to remind us that God's love for us is limitless. Pray: God, thank you for loving us no matter what. Thank you for caring for us in ways we aren't always aware of. Help us to be thankful for all you give us. Show us how we can show your love to others.

Amen.

