

# Six things you can do now to nurture faith at home

This season of lockdown has placed emphasis on the home and the spotlight on parents like never before. To support parents and carers as they nurture faith at home, here are six ways of noticing and acknowledging God in everyday family life and activity. We believe they are accessible and adaptable for all ages in families and households.

## Everyday faith – Noticing God at work

How do we help our children learn to notice that God is active and present in their lives, every day? We give you one way to help begin noticing.

### Start with story

Reading together is often part of daily routine with children, especially at bedtime. It's easy to include Bible stories as part of this, and we give you some tips.

### Play 'I wonder' and 'What if?'

This is a great game that broadens and strengthens curiosity and playfulness and is suitable for all ages.

### Slow down, speed up!

We're familiar with slowing down and stopping to help us catch breath with God, but how can the concept of *Fartlek* help children on the move?

### Eat together, talk together

Eating a meal together around a table provides a wonderful opportunity to be together and talk. We've put together some ways to use this time to explore faith.

### Sing

COVID may have stopped us singing together in church, but we can sing at home and in the car.

**See next page for more detail on each idea.**

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## Everyday Faith – Noticing God at work

An easy way of helping children know they are disciples of Jesus today is to say “Be kind and helpful” as they go into school or nursery. At the end of the day ask when and how they were (or experienced others) being kind and helpful. As they tell their story affirm that you see God at work in and through them: *It’s great that you helped the teacher by... You were kind when you ....* You can also gently challenge: *Was that thing you said really kind?* Notice other fruit of the Spirit and draw attention to them, increasing your awareness of God’s activity in and through each other.

You can find a fuller version of this activity in the Contemplative Toolkit section of [this page](#).

## Start with story

Sharing Bible stories as part of bedtime routine can help children settle, and form a long-term habit.

When reading with younger children, be aware of how storybook Bibles tell God’s story in their words and pictures. What is excluded and included? How important is this?

Other ways to enter Bible stories:

- Encourage your children to tell Bible stories with their toys.
- Making, telling or animating Bible stories with Lego, on Minecraft or other apps is a great way for older children to explore. Could this be included in online church?

## Play ‘I wonder’ and ‘What if?’

This game helps children (and adults) be curious, playful and reflective about God and the life of faith. You can play anytime, anywhere and about anything.

Whatever your activity, looking at a picture, reading a story, watching TV, out for a walk, playing, listening to music, simply complete the statement ‘I wonder...’ or ‘What if...?’

*I wonder where God is/you are in this? I wonder which part you like the best? I wonder what would help that character be less afraid? I wonder what you would do?*

*What if we take the other path? What if God isn’t in this story? What if God is? What if the ending were different? What if you were in this story?*

## Slow down, speed up

Going slow and stopping can be a helpful way of connecting with God, so take time to go on a slow walk. What do you notice, smell, see, hear, touch?

Going slow is harder for some, so how about going on a *Fartlek* outing? *Fartlek* is a Swedish word meaning ‘speed play’. Runners sometimes use it as a method of training. They literally play with speed, running fast, faster, slow, slower for longer and shorter distances. What do you notice when you move at different speeds? How do you experience God in this play?

## Eat together, talk together

Perhaps around a family meal:

- Share the highlights and lowlights of your day.
- Ask where you’ve each seen God at work.
- Say something you are thankful for today.
- Do the fruit of Spirit noticing exercise.

## Sing

We can’t sing in church right now but can sing in the shower, kitchen or the car!

Create a playlist of worship music including a favourite of each member of the family. Don’t forget to ask Granny or Uncle John – this is a good way to include them! Share a memory or story about them and pray for them when the song comes up.