



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 1 November 2020  
4th Sunday before Advent

## Children of God

### 1 John 3:1-3

#### 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...

Do you know the children's book "Guess how much I love you" by Sam McBratney? This bedtime favourite tells the story of two hares expressing their love for each other. One line in the book; "I love you to the moon and back" has become a well-known phrase used to express the vastness of someone's affection for another person.

#### Watch the story...

If you have a copy of the book in the house, why not go and find it and read it together. Or watch this retelling of the [story](#) on YouTube.

#### Explore the story...

Have you ever wondered about God's love? There are so many Bible verses that remind us of how much God loves us - if you have a Bible look up; Jeremiah 31:3, Psalm 86:15, John 3:16, Romans 8:37. Unfortunately, some people sadly think that maybe God does not love them. Perhaps they think that they've done something wrong and that God does not want anything to do with them because of it. I hope you do not think that because God does indeed love all of us and he wants us to know it!

The beginning of today's Bible reading says: "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" God has plenty of love to go around and here is a simple illustration...

Fill a glass with some water. If you have a marble, or something similar, place it in the glass. The marble represents you and the water in the glass represents God's love. You are surrounded by God's love but there is still room for more marbles isn't there? As more marbles are added, these can represent family, friends and your church family. You could go on adding and all of them are surrounded by God's love.

And remember, God is much much bigger than this small glass with water! God's love is big enough for everyone! The Bible says: I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love (Ephesians 3:18).

How do you measure a love like that? We can't measure it and we don't need to because we are God's children and he has God has plenty of love to go around!

#### End with a prayer...

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your love - a love so great that you gave your one and only Son so that we could have eternal life. Amen.



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Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

**Fun activity:** This is a simple craft making a Cross Bookmark that can be adapted depending on the ages of the children. Give each child a piece of paper about 6 -8 inches long and 2 inches wide, as well as markers, stickers and glitter glue, draw a cross in the middle of the bookmark. Finish by writing 1 John 3:1.

0-5s...


**Worship:** Listen along and learn "[I am a child of God](#)"

**Fun activity:** These simple games can be done individually or in teams and involve measuring things - referring to how impossible it is to measure God's love (you will need a ruler/ tape measure).

You will need everyone's shoes. Take turns running to the other side of the room, getting a ruler from the table, measuring your shoe, quickly writing down the size on a piece of team paper and running back to the start. Repeat until all the shoes have been measured and written down. Or how about selecting 5 random things/objects to measure e.g. a table, a light switch, a Bible, a window or door.

The first person/team to complete the challenge is the winner. Have fun involving everyone as you check the answers before declaring the winner(s).


5-11s...

 1) What makes a good parent, what sort of things do they do?

2) How does God the Father show his love to all his children?

3) How can you show others you are a child of God?

 Pray for all parents, grandparents, carers and guardians.

 Do something kind for someone who cares for you.

11-18s...

*"Look with wonder at the depth of the Father's marvelous love that he has lavished on us! He has called us and made us his very own beloved children!" - 1 John:3*