



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.

daniel.jones@bristoldiocese.org

Thank you 



Sunday 13 December 2020
3rd Sunday of Advent

Anointed? Isaiah 61:1-3

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...

There are many famous verses in the book of the great prophet Isaiah and today's scripture is one of those verses. This reading is normally heard at a traditional Carol service each year, and a significant prophecy of Isaiah's and his special mission for God.

Watch the story...

Learn more about God's prophets watching this lovely video by [Crossroads kids](#).

Explore the story...

Do you know what a prophet is? The Bible is full of stories of God's chosen people - the Israelites - and their relationship with God. Throughout the Old Testament, the Israelites had a tendency of being obedient to God, then something would happen that led them astray, followed by a return to obedience and God blessing His people (again). The Bible tells the amazing story of God's plan to send a Messiah to save His people on earth. God chose special messengers called prophets to spread the news. Some prophets were sent to warn people that they had strayed from God's path. Other prophets gave people messages of hope and announcing the triumphant arrival of a saviour. Check out what the prophet Zechariah proclaimed:

"Rejoice and shout Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you;
righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey". (Zechariah 9:9)

Isaiah was another prophet called by God to announce such things to Israel. When Isaiah was first called, he was astonished and actually felt guilty that God had chosen him (Isaiah 6). But what did God do? He took Isaiah's sin away and cleansed him. Isaiah realised that God had made him with the unique characteristics to serve God and proclaim His news. Isaiah was eager to volunteer as a messenger to do God's will in whatever way he could. This meant numerous trials and overcoming difficult situations, but with God's anointing, Isaiah knew God was always there to help him through.

The word 'anointing' also means blessing, and like Isaiah, God anoints and blesses all of His followers because we all have a role to play in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. So, how are you going to spread God's message of hope and joy this Christmas?

End with a prayer...

Heavenly Father, we thank you that we are all part of your amazing plan. You call all of us equip all of us, and anoint all of us to do your wonderful work. Amen.



Sunday 13 December 2020
3rd Sunday of Advent

Anointed?

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

Worship: Listen along and boogie to "[Jump around!](#)"

0-5s...


Fun activity: In the Gospel of John there is a wonderful story of a lady called Mary and she anoints Jesus's feet with beautiful smelling perfume (watch the story [here](#)). As a reminder of today's story that God anoints and blesses every one of His followers, gather some beautiful smelling things from around your home and enjoy their wonderful aromas as a family.

Worship: Listen along and learn the moves to "[I am yours](#)"



5-11s...

Fun activity: In the Gospel of John there is a wonderful story of a lady called Mary and she anoints Jesus's feet with beautiful smelling perfume (you can watch the story [here](#)). As a reminder of today's story that God anoints and blesses every one of His followers, gather some beautiful smelling things from around your home and enjoy their wonderful aromas as a family. Finish the activity by saying the closing prayer again: Heavenly Father, we thank you that we are all part of your amazing plan. You call all of us equip all of us, and anoint all of us to do your wonderful work. Amen.

Creative prayer: Have a go at the 'envelope prayer' on the next page. All you need is some plain paper and pens (and some water) - it's great fun!

-  1) What do you think the word 'anointed' means?
2) What are the things God anointed Isaiah to do?
3) Read Luke 3:14-21. How did Jesus live out his anointing?

11-18s...

-  Thank God for the good news and ask God to anoint you afresh.
 Think about how you can be good news to the world around you.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor" - Isaiah 61:1

Envelope Prayers

For this prayer activity every child will need a piece of paper about 10cm square and felt-tip pens. You will also need a large bowl or a container with about 2cm of water covering the whole bottom. Then Invite the children to make an envelope by folding the four corners of their piece of paper to the centre, just like the diagram. This will create four envelope flaps. Open the four flaps and every member of the family writes a prayer in the middle of their envelope so that when they close it up again, their prayer is hidden inside the envelope.

When everyone has finished writing their prayers, carefully fold the envelope flaps to hide their prayers. Once this is done, invite everyone to place their envelopes with the flaps facing up onto the surface of the water in the bowl / container (you may wish to play a nice, reflective piece of music or a worship song during this). Then sit back and watch while the envelope flaps gently open to reveal their prayer. This is a great way of offering their prayers to God. It looks like magic as the water interacts with the paper to open the flaps.

