



Diocese of Bristol

Families growing faith at home

Church@Home is a simple, practical and 'easy-to-use' resource designed to help and encourage church families enjoy a time of worship together, explore the Bible, pray 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 5 July 2020
5th Sunday after Pentecost

Come to me Matthew 11: 28-30

Time to focus...

As you gather as a family, find a place on the floor, around a table or even in the garden. If possible, light a candle to mark the beginning of the worship time. Quietly stare at the flame as you pause and prepare for a time of worship as a family...

Set the scene...

Do you exercise regularly? Have you been doing the Joe Wicks workouts during lockdown? There are lots of fun ways to exercise and keep fit. How many can you name?

Watch the story...

Children from 'PursueGOD Kids' explain what a [yoke](#) is in Matthew 11v29

Explore the story...

Weightlifting is a popular way to exercise that makes the body's muscles big and strong. Often people lift weights in pairs - whilst one person is lifting the weights the other stands near the lifter's head. This person is called the spotter. Sometimes, the spotter doesn't do anything at all. Just knowing that the spotter is there is enough to give the lifter the confidence needed to lift the weights. At other times, the spotter calls out words of encouragement to the lifter. "Come on, you can do it! You can do it! Push! Push!" These words of encouragement are just what the lifter needs to give him the strength to lift the weights. Most important, when the weight gets too heavy the spotter reaches in and helps the lifter lift the weights.

Weightlifting is a great image of the way our Heavenly Father helps us to bear the challenges we face in our daily lives. There are days that things seem to be pretty easy. There are other days when we may struggle as we face a few obstacles along the way. Just knowing that God is with us gives us the confidence we need to overcome those obstacles. Then there are some days that are more difficult and we may need more encouragement. We find that encouragement in God's Word. It is good to know that when things are more than we can bear, God is there!

Jesus's words of encouragement in Matthew 11:28-30 are just what we need to face the hard times that may come our way., "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." On those really hard days, Jesus steps in and lifts our burden. With him, our burdens are so much lighter!

End with a prayer...

Father, sometimes life is hard. We are thankful that you are always there to help us, to give us strength, to encourage us, and to lighten our load. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



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5th Sunday after Pentecost

Come to me

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

Teaching game: Have fun lifting different items around the house that are different weights. Turn the activity into a quiz selecting various items and guess which one is the heaviest.

0-5s...

Prayer idea: Prayer aeroplanes Give each child an A4 sheet of paper and ask them to write or draw a prayer. You may want to give younger children guides e.g. Thank you God for.... Lord I am sorry for.... Please Lord please help.... When we pray, our prayers go straight to God's ears and he hears each one of them. Write the word GOD on a large sheet of card or paper and place it on the floor. Try and land the paper aeroplane to land on the card. Emphasize that our planes might miss the mark but our prayers won't – they always reach God.

Worship: Sing along to "[My lighthouse](#)" by Rend Collective.

5-11s...

Activity: Snakes and Ladders - play a game as a fun way of introducing that life has many ups and downs. Click [here](#) for an online version. Sometimes when we are the midst of difficulties we might ask where is God. Believing in God doesn't guarantee that we will avoid hardship - but God is with us to help us keep moving forward.

Craft idea: Click on this link for a beautifully illustrated colouring-in sheet of [Matthew 11v28](#) for you and your children to doodle over.

 1) Have you ever been weary or burdened?
What did it feel like?

2) A yoke trains young oxen to plough by linking them to the mature oxen. Why do you think Jesus used this metaphor?

3) How are the words of Jesus reassuring to his followers?

 Spend time in prayer focusing on Jesus' words in verse 29.

 If you know someone who is stressed help ease their burdens this week.

11-18s...

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

- Matthew 11:28