



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 18th April 2021  
3rd Sunday of Easter

## When in doubt

### Luke 24: 36-48

#### 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...

Have you heard the expression, "I'd have to see it to believe it"? Can you think of a situation that the expression might be used? For example, your friend is learning how to skateboard and one day they tell you that they can do an amazing trick. You might say to them, "I'd have to see that to believe it!" And until you actually see them perform the trick on the skateboard, you won't believe they can actually do it.

#### Watch the story...

Do you know what happened just before today's reading? Watch the story [here](#)

#### Explore the story...

Do we always have to be able to see things in order to believe they exist? For example, we can't see the air all around us, but when the wind is blowing, we can feel the air, or we can see the things it moves. We can't see sound waves, but when we hear a loud noise, we know that sound is real. We can't see the love that our parents and friends have for us, but we feel their hugs and hear their loving words - we know that their love is real.

How do we know Jesus is real? Can we see Jesus - the real Jesus, not just pictures of him? Today's reading from the book of Luke tells the story of Jesus appearing to his disciples not long after his public trial and death on the cross. They were startled and frightened, but Jesus reassured the disciples saying; 'Look at my hands and my feet. It is me! Touch me and see' (v39). There are other stories in the gospels of Jesus appearing to his disciples. The book of John tells the story of a disciple named Thomas, who did not believe the other disciples when they told him they had seen Jesus. A few days later, Thomas and the other disciples were all together. Suddenly Jesus appeared amongst them, and he told Thomas to touch the nail wounds in his hands and feel the spear wound in his side. Jesus wanted Thomas to stop doubting. Finally Thomas believed. Jesus said, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway" (John 20:29).

We can't say that we have seen Jesus with our own eyes. Still, we believe in him. Today remember that you are blessed. We may have not seen or touched Jesus with the disciples, but 'hallelujah!' we believe and rejoice that Jesus is alive!

#### End in prayer...

Jesus, thank you for being alive and for being here with us. And thank you for helping us to believe that you will always be with us. Amen



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## When in doubt

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

**Outdoor activity:** A great and easy way to help children see and connect with God is through nature. All around us is evidence of a wonderful and creative God. Today, go on a family walk and search for things in creation that you can thank God for. Or on a clear night, go outside and lie on a blanket together and look at the stars. Or watch the sunset/sunrise as you snuggle and enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

5-11s...

**Worship:** Dance along to "[Open the eyes of my heart](#)"

**Activities:** So, this saying; 'seeing is believing'... many of the disciples needed to see Jesus before they believed he had risen from the grave. Often our eyes can play tricks on our brain. Have fun as a family looking at these [optical illusions](#) together and deciding which are your favourites and why.

Has someone ever told you something that you didn't believe was true? On the next page is a fun quiz with ten weird facts - all you have to do is say whether you believe them or not >>>

Finish saying that it is by faith that we believe in God, and there are so many things that help us to believe and know God is with us... believing is seeing!

11-18s...

- 1) When have you doubted something?
- 2) How would you feel if Jesus stood in front of you right now? What would you say?
- 3) How would you explain Jesus rising from the dead in five words?

 Pray that in times of doubt, God draws close to you.

 Ask someone if they think Jesus rose from the dead. Listen to them and share what you believe.

*"Be at peace. I am the living God. Don't be afraid. Why are you so frightened? Don't let doubt enter your hearts" - Luke 24: 37-38*

# Do you believe it? or do you doubt it?

- 1. Did you know...**  
Penguins can smell toothpaste from several miles away? **(false)**
- 2. Did you know...**  
In Tokyo, Japan a bicycle is faster than a car for trips of less than an hour? **(true)**
- 3. Did you know...**  
Every day, on average, 20 banks are robbed? **(true)**
- 4. Did you know...**  
50 years ago, M & Ms were candy-coated peas during a chocolate shortage?  
**(false)**
- 5. Did you know...**  
You are more likely to be stung by a bee in windy weather? **(false)**
- 6. Did you know...**  
When glass breaks, the cracks move faster than 3,000 miles per hour.  
**(true)**
- 7. Did you know...**  
A violin contains about 70 pieces of wood? **(true)**
- 8. Did you know...**  
The Irish like Thomas the Tank Engine so much that they have put faces on  
all their trains? **(false)**
- 9. Did you know...**  
A handy household tip: The elastic in your underwear will last twice as  
long if you freeze it after washing it? **(false)**
- 10. Did you know...**  
They have square watermelons in Japan because they stack better? **(true)**