

## 18 Let's find out about Jesus

# Jesus talks to God



### Play time



#### Home corner

**You will need:** 'home' role-play equipment – baby dolls, cooking equipment, toy tools, etc.

Let the children play at family life. Be aware that family life is not stereotypical – children in your group will have experienced many and varied family structures and each, to them, is what is 'normal'!

#### Book corner

Stories about family relationships include:

*Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy, Walker Books

*Can't you Sleep, Little Bear?* by Martin Waddell, Walker Books

*Not Like That, Like This* by Tony Bradman and Joanna Burroughes, Picture Mammoth

#### Talking and listening

**You will need:** toy telephones, mobile phones, radio, cassette recorder, personal CD players.

Encourage free play with the toys. Develop this into a structured activity: encourage both children and adults to talk, sing, play instruments and record their efforts. Play the tape back so that they can enjoy listening to themselves.

#### Sandwiches

**You will need:** a selection of toppings, butter or margarine and bread of your choice. This could be white or brown, rolls or sliced bread. Alternatively, use pitta bread, ciabatta, baguettes or croissants and explain that these are all varieties of bread from different countries. Be aware of allergy, hygiene and safety issues.

Ask the children to choose some bread and toppings which they would like to sample. Supervise them discreetly, as they make their own sandwiches.

### Game time



#### Nursery favourites

For groups with lots of space to move around, play traditional games that need the children to be very quiet: 'What's the time Mr Wolf?', 'Grandmother's footsteps', or 'Bear and the honey pot' which is played sitting in a circle. ('Bear' is blindfolded and has a pot in front of him which contains treats. A leader chooses a child to quietly creep up and take one of the treats without Bear hearing them. If Bear hears a noise, he has to point in that direction, and if he successfully points at the child, the child has to go back to their seat and someone else has a try.)

#### What's that?

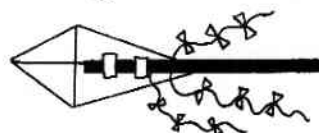
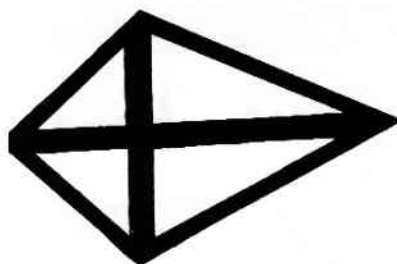
**You will need:** a cassette recorder and recordings of familiar sounds. These could be ones often heard in the house (tap, bath water emptying, kettle boiling, toaster popping up) or ones heard outside (traffic, Pelican crossing bleeps, police car siren).

Play the sounds back for the group to guess. This game could gently introduce the idea that prayer involves listening as well as talking.

### Making time



#### Prayer kites



Provide coloured paper kite shapes for individual children to decorate with pictures or drawings of things for which they would like to say 'Thank you', eg, families, friends, clothes, food. Add a tail made of florists' or gift-wrapping ribbon, then tape the main part of the kite to a small stick (the kind used to support houseplants). Take the kites outside to watch the tails blow in the breeze.

Explain that we cannot see the wind but know it is there because of the effect it has on things. We can know God is there because he listens when we talk to him.

Alternatively, work as a group to make a large kite and add paper bows with prayers written on them to the tail. Display it as a wall decoration.

#### Paper plate meals

Paste cut-out pictures of food onto paper plates. Write on the back of each plate 'Give us our food for today'.

### Story time



#### Jesus talks to God

This outline is about talking to God and gives a basic introduction to prayer. Children will hear about how Jesus talked to God and how he showed others to do the same.

Jesus was a very busy person. He liked helping people. If they were ill, Jesus could make them well again. If they were sad, Jesus would listen to them. If they wanted to ask questions, Jesus would answer them. Jesus also told lots of interesting stories so that people would understand about God, his father. Everywhere he went, crowds of people followed him. Everybody wanted to see Jesus.

But sometimes, Jesus got very tired and he needed to rest. Although he liked helping people, sometimes Jesus needed to be on his own. So then he would climb up a hill, or perhaps sail out in a little boat onto a lake, where the crowds would not follow him. Then Jesus would talk to God, his father, and he would have a rest. Jesus knew he could always talk to God about anything.

Jesus' friends knew that Jesus talked to God every day. 'Will you teach us to pray, please?' they asked him.

'Of course,' said Jesus. 'This is one way to do it. First of all, find somewhere quiet, then think about God. You don't need to talk out loud so that everybody can hear you. Just think about how special God is – like a king, like a very important person, or like a father who loves you very much. Then talk to him as if you were talking to your very, very best friend.'

'But what do we say to him?' the friends wanted to know.

'Ask God to help you always to do good things,' said Jesus, 'things that will make God and other people happy.'

'Then what?' asked the friends.

'Well,' answered Jesus, 'because God loves you, he cares about you. So ask him to give you food and everything else you need to keep you strong and healthy. And ask him to look after you so you are kept safe from danger.'

'Then what?' asked the friends.

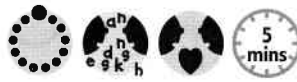
'Say sorry for the things you have done or said which were unkind, and upset other people,' Jesus told them. 'God wants you and your friends to say sorry to each other when you've argued or hurt each other. God wants to forgive you, and always be your friend.'

Jesus' friends were pleased he had told them how to pray. Now they could talk to God too.

And lightning in the sky.  
I don't like crowded shops,  
Or big lorries rumbling by.

So I want to ask you, God,  
'Please look after me.'

## Song time



### Talk to God

*Explain that however we are feeling, whatever time it is and wherever we are, we can talk to God. God cares about us and he is always willing to listen to what we want to tell him. The tune is 'She'll be coming round the mountain'.*

When you're happy, really happy,  
talk to God, (repeat)

When you're feeling really happy,  
why not tell God all about it?

When you're happy, really happy,  
talk to God.

When you're frightened,  
very frightened...

When you're sad...

When you're sorry...

When you're worried...

In the daytime or the night-time...

## Extra time

•Enjoy reading *The Lord's Prayer for Children* by Lois Rock, Lion or *My Little Prayer Box* by F Thatcher, SU.

•Look at material produced by Christian Aid, Tear Fund, or other relief agencies. Think about people who do not have enough to eat.

## Adults too

The Lord's Prayer is the one prayer that everyone used to learn at school or church. Older adults remember the traditional words, younger ones with some church background may know the more modern version. However, you cannot assume that everybody will have learned the prayer at school, particularly if yours is a multi-cultural, multi-faith area. Jesus used this prayer as a pattern: acknowledging the greatness and holiness of God; asking for his help in doing the right things; asking for protection from danger and to provide everything we need. Then, there's the element of saying sorry. The Lord's Prayer is a recognition that Christians are part of a worldwide family – we are praying to God together as 'our father', not just as 'my father'. Some people find difficulty praying to God as their father, especially if their relationship with their human father has been strained or non-existent. Others may find the idea of having such a personal relationship with God difficult. Encourage, but always be sensitive to individual needs.

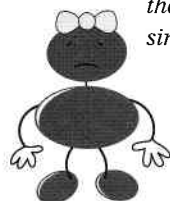
## Rhyme time



### Talking to God

*This rhyme expresses joys and fears in a childlike way. We can chat to God about anything!*

I want to say, 'Hello, God,'  
And tell you about today.  
I found lots of shells,  
And saw some crabs  
Scampering away.  
I splashed in the sea,  
And I jumped the waves,  
Built castles out of sand,  
And tried to count the grains,  
Trickling through my hand.  
I found slimy slugs on the path.  
They gave my mum a fright.  
But I don't like bad dreams  
I sometimes have at night.  
Thunderstorms scare me too,



## Pray time



### The Lord's Prayer

*Play some quiet instrumental music. Dim the room lights, and light a candle or nightlight. For safety, place it in a votive holder or jam jar where the children can easily see it but not touch it. Suggest that everyone listens quietly to the music, looks at the candle, and thinks about what a special person God is. Remind them that God loves and cares for each of them very much. Then suggest that they imagine God is sitting right next to them in the room and smiling at them. What would they like to tell him? Finish by reading the words of the Lord's Prayer, in a modern version or singing the Calypso version, from JU, p94.*

## Top tip

Kathy says, 'Use glove puppets as a signal when you need quiet. Our friendly rabbit appears at prayer times, or during a devotional reading (for adults). Often a child holds him. We also have a monkey who hates noise. If the story is a quiet one and the children are boisterous, he puts his hands over his ears or hides behind the storyteller. This usually gets the message across without using words.'

### ACTIVITY PAGE:

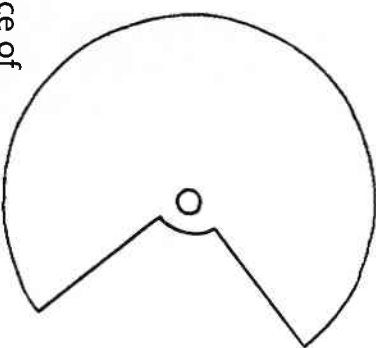
The photocopiable activity page for this outline is on page 67

Photocopy this page directly onto thin card, if possible.

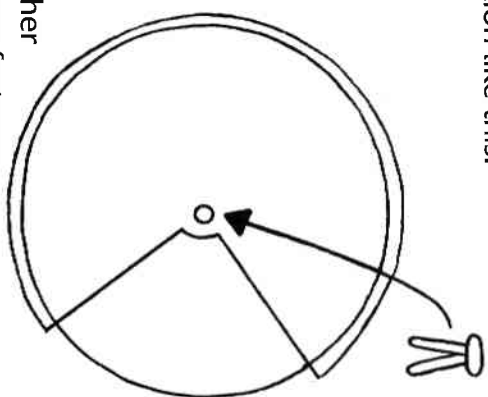
My name

# I can talk to God.

Colour the pictures on the circle. Cut out the circle.



Cut a piece of card the same size and shape as the circle. Cut out a section like this.



Join together with a paper fastener, like this.



Use this shape to make your own picture wheel about anything you wish.