introduction

Welcome to the fourth of a series of five issues of Spill the Beans that will take us through Trinity to Pentecost T1. We are using our own lectionary plan of readings for this series which includes a six week series looking at four stories from the Apocrypha which we hope will be an enjoyable and enlightening journey.

The Spill the Beans Resource Team asked for feedback from congregations on both favourite Bible stories and those stories that we do not often hear in worship and many congregations wrote back to us. This information were most helpful. While we asked about favourite Bible stories, we were most interested in the stories people felt were not covered in the normal course of worship.

Using these ideas, and carefully considering what is already covered by the Revised Common Lectionary and Narrative Lectionary, we have created a plan that will take us on a different journey through the scripture, dipping into stories we do not often hear, or with which we spend little time.

We are excited about this new journey along lanes lesser travelled in the scriptures that it will be stimulating for us as worship and age group leaders, and will provide our congregations with an engaging and enlightening basis for our worship over the next year.

Revised Common Lectionary and Narrative Lectionary Resources

We have two Overspill packages that provide complete sets of past issues that give a huge library of resources for both the Revised Common Lectionary and Narrative Lectionary.

The Revised Common Lectionary Overspill Pack
Issues 1-12
1,536 pages
£50
Purchase through this link: https://pub.ly/b/108820

The Narrative Lectionary Overspill Pack
Issues 13-27 (plus summer extra) in higher quality render
2,082 pages
£60
Purchase through this link: https://pub.ly/b/207215

You are downloading a compressed archive of files which need to be unpacked so we recommend downloading these to a desktop or laptop computer rather than phone or tablet. Note that depending on future years there may not be resources for some Sundays depending on the timing of Easter and changes to the readings as a result.

Who Are We?

At the beginning of 2009 a conversation began amongst a couple, then a few, then a group about collaboratively creating resources that enabled us to tell the story of faith in a worship context and within age groups for younger people and teens. Spill the Beans was born as the result of that conversation and has grown and developed over the intervening years.

The ethos has remained the same, however. It is all about story. For we believe story is the lifeblood of faith. In story we can tell the truth and speak with honesty about things for which there are not yet words. Story contains mystery and is the poetry that forms faith. Stories grow as we grow and can reveal new truths at different times in our lives.

So we believe giving stories to people is one of the most important things we can do in sharing our faith. Children and adults hold stories in their being and keep coming back to them throughout life. Our culture is stored in story. The same is true for our faith.

Spill the Beans is a work of love. None of the contributors are paid for their contributions, these contributions are written and prepared with our own congregations in mind. Instead of working in isolation, we bring this work together, give it some spit and polish, and share it with others. This is how we can keep the cost so low.

In addition, we regularly pay it forward by using surplus monies to support other new ministries and projects.

Using Issue 31

In this issue of Spill the Beans you will find an extensive collection of things to use each week. Because each piece is written with specific congregations in mind there may be the need to be a little creative yourselves in adapting and evolving some of the ideas to suit your own place and culture and congregation. That is entirely purposeful.

Of course, if you are creative and would like to share what you have done, then have a look at our Facebook page http://www.facebook.com/spillbeansresources and the associated Facebook group that provides space for discussion and support. On our blog at http://spillbeans.org.uk you will find PowerPoint backgrounds for most weeks.

Each week we provide a selection of words, ideas and creative moments to take the theme and the passage a little further. We do not provide a ready made service or perfect prayers but ideas and pointers that hopefully scratch at your own creativity and provoke heaven’s imagination within you.

Here are some helpful tips to guide you in your use of the material in age groups:

1. It presumes some introduction to the story will have taken place in worship together or will play a part in the service when children join it later.
2. Depending on the make-up of your own groups of children you will need to remain flexible in how you use the material.
3. Each idea has been given a guide age range to help your planning, but this is only a guide so use your own judgement about what will work with your group.
4. Before the sit-down activities if you have a group of young children or lots of boys, you may want to add a run-around type game to expend some energy.
5. Use the gathering time exercise with the whole group to get into the story together across the ages.
6. We encourage you to retell the story together.
7. Follow that by choosing as many or as few activities your space and time allow. You could offer a number of activities each at different stations all at the same time for all ages to self-select with a teacher staffing each one, or have traditional classes.
8. During activities, ask children to retell the story to you and ask about their week, what was happy and what was sad and if this week’s story reminds them of other biblical and personal stories.
9. The intention is not to complete “the tasks” brilliantly, but rather to provide opportunities to begin conversations, build relationships, retell the story of the day, and talk about what it means for us today.
10. There are many websites that provide handout-type sheets that will have images, crosswords and word searches for the story of that week. They can be helpful in an emergency, but try to be more creative as leaders, the rewards are worth it.

Information


All original content in this issue © 2019 Spill The Beans Resources Team.

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http://www.facebook.com/spillbeansresources
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Please remember you can use the bookmark system within Adobe Reader to quickly move around this document.

spill the beans resource team
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Key to Abbreviations
In the worship ideas section the following abbreviations may be used to indicate different sources of worship music:
ATAS All the Assembly Songs You’ll Ever Need
CG Common Ground
CH4 Church Hymnary, 4th Edition
CH3 Church Hymnary, 3rd Edition
JP Junior Praise
MP Complete Mission Praise
SGP Songs of God’s People
WGP Wild Goose Publications
# 2018-2019 Bible Readings

To assist you in your planning, we include here the complete plan of scripture readings for our own lectionary plan taking us through to the end of the 2018/19 liturgical year.

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Preparations

Create five zones set up around your venue and invite people to move around spending as much or as little time at each zone as they wish. Each zone is based on a different section of Acts chapters 13 to 21.

You will need to provide everyone with Bibles to use at the various locations. The Scottish Bible Society have a version of Luke and Acts (NIRV) called “Dear Theo”, the chapters and verses have been removed making it easier to read for all ages.

These can be purchased at only £1 a copy when you buy 10 or more. You could also give these as a gift to take away for each person or family who comes to the event.

See https://scottishbiblesociety.org/2019/01/dear-theo-letters-to-a-friend/.

If you have some good storytellers in your congregation you could enlist them at each zone to be Paul, explaining and telling the story of their experience as it relates to each zone. This would provide a grand opportunity for some dressing up.

Journey Zones

BBQ Zone

You will need: barbecue facilities, food, people prepared to cook and serve.

Have a BBQ running throughout the zone time, making this as simple or as elaborate as you wish. This could range from simple burgers and buns to a much wider selection of food. If the weather is good you can have the option of making and serving these outside, but you may have to cook outside and bring the food in for serving.

Paul and his friend travelled about so much they must have had many meals with friends in so many locations, including cooking over an open fire, eating together is a feature of the early church mentioned in Acts 2:46.

Reflective Zone

You will need: tents, space in which they can be pitched, guide sheets, paper, pens.

Have a selection of tents to “pitch” (again this can be an indoor or outdoor activity but will work well in both locations). The number of tents you “pitch” will depend on how many people you expect to come to the event (best to plan for a quarter of the people being at this activity at any one time).

Once the tent(s) have been put up invite people to go inside and to read Acts 18:1-4, explain (or have on an instruction sheet) that Paul’s job was making tents and he was able to do this while continuing to live for Jesus and share his story.

Invite each person to think about what their job is (what do they do each day, not necessarily a paid job, this also includes being at school or nursery—not what they will do in
the future). Then encourage them to write or draw a prayer to leave in the tent asking God to help them be the kind of person he wants them to be in the place he has put them (school, home, work, and so on).

At this time of year some people will be thinking about moving on to a new phase of life such as starting school, moving to secondary school, leaving school, starting work or further education. This zone will give them time to pray about those situations.

**Creative Zone**

*You will need: junk materials (such as cardboard boxes, tubes, bottles, paper), scissors, packing tape.*

Using lots of junk material, ideally recycled materials, build as big a boat as you can manage.

To help the building to be as authentic to the story as possible, do an internet search of the boats Paul and his friends might have sailed on. Use these images to help create your boat and chat about what it would have been like for Paul as he sailed around the Mediterranean.

The picture above is of the type of boat Paul may have used. This model is found in Rali Museum, Caesarea. The picture taken by Ferrell Jenkins.

**Active Zone**

*You will need: print out copies of the map of Paul’s journeys (see page 116), designate areas of your venue with place names relating to Paul’s journeys, affix place names around your venue with the bible verses and short prayers as below, sticky coloured dots.*

Print out enough of the downloadable maps for a small group of people (this could be a family or a group of friends) or individuals to travel around the venue and find the locations listed below. Each place name, along with the Bible verse and short prayer suggestion should be printed out on A4 or larger paper and stuck in eight different locations around the room. Each group or individual is also given a sheet of small round coloured stickers, when a place name is found the team or individual should stick one of their stickers on the map where that place is located, they can then read the short verse and pray the suggested prayer before they head off to find another place.

**Place:** Antioch  
**Reading:** Acts 13:1-3  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for our Church family.

**Place:** Paphos  
**Reading:** Acts 13:6-7  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the things we learn about you from the Bible.

**Place:** Derbe  
**Reading:** Acts 16:1  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for our families.

**Place:** Lystra  
**Reading:** Acts 16:2  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for our friends.

**Place:** Athens  
**Reading:** Acts 17:16-17  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for our brains and all the things we can wonder about.

**Place:** Corinth  
**Reading:** Acts 18:1-3  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for our homes.

**Place:** Ephesus  
**Reading:** Acts 19:1-2  
**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the Holy Spirit who you sent to help us.

**Place:** Galatia  
**Reading:** Acts 18:23  
**Prayer:** Dear God, help us to follow you more closely.

**Word Zone**

*You will need: lots of postcards (if available, including some of your local area), pens, postage stamps, copies of Acts 20:1-3.*

Invite people to read the Bible passage and to wonder about what words of encouragement Paul said to the people he met in Macedonia.

After folks have done this ask them to think of someone they know who needs encouragement just now and to write a postcard to them with “words of encouragement” they need to hear which would let them know that God is with them. These postcards should be taken away and posted as soon as possible.
If your event is at the start of the summer you could suggest that people take a few postcards away with them for the weeks ahead and every week send similar “words of encouragement” on a postcard to a different person. They could read more of the Bible and find words of encouragement there that they could pass on.

**Gathered Time**

Bring everyone together into a space with the boat you have created in the centre or at the front. Comment on the boat and what it must have been like for Paul and his friends travelling all over the Mediterranean Sea, ask people to chat to each other about what they think made him do that.

If it is possible, have the image of the map projected onto a screen. Once you have had a few minutes to do that ask if anyone had a particular place that they read about when they were finding places on the map that they really liked, or surprised them, or they had never heard before or confused them. Spend some time discussing that together and then say that we are going to remind ourselves of the whole story.

**The Story**

*Invite someone to narrate this story and have a few others to show everyone the actions to go with it. Do the story once with the actions and then invite everyone else to join in. It is based on Acts 13-21.*

In the book of Acts, in the Bible, we read that

**Barnabas and Paul are set apart**

(put your hands as if holding a book)

Barnabas and Paul are set apart

(separate your hands wide)

and sent on their way.

(bring your hands together in a silent clap then slide your right hand forward leaving the other hand still)

They sail to Cyprus.

(make wave shapes with your hands)

In Turkey whole cities want to hear what Barnabas and Saul have to say.

(cup your hand behind your ear)

but some of them are jealous!

(point two fingers at your eyes and then out towards the people)

Barnabas and Paul know they are bringing God’s light to the whole world.

(make star shapes randomly in front of you, at different heights and places)

Paul and Barnabas fall out.

(fold your arms and look abruptly to the side)

Barnabas heads off with Mark.

(salute)

Paul teams up with Silas and heads for Syria.

(shake hands with the person next to you)

On the way Paul meets Timothy.

(high five the person on the other side of you)

Churches grow, and faith is strengthened.

(cover your mouth with both hands and make a silent scream)

He makes tents and talks to people about Jesus.

(pretend to hammer in a tent peg)

In Ephesus some people have never heard of the Holy Spirit.

(shrug)

Paul introduces them, and their faith is strengthened big time!

(do an even stronger pose to show off your arm muscles)

There is a riot and Paul’s words shake things up for some people but send other people to sleep.

(put both hand to side of your head and pretend to sleep)

What do God’s words do to us?

(put finger to your lips in a wondering pose)

Read together Acts 13:44-47, explain after it has been read that you are going to have 30 seconds of silence to think about those words and then you are going to read out some of the prayers from the tent (check before you do this if there are any prayers that people do not want to be read out) where we thought about how we could be more like Jesus in the places God has put us.

Ask everyone to continue to pray for each other after they have left this time together.

**Scottish Bible Society**

This intergenerational event has been prepared by Jen Robertson. Jen is the Children’s Resource Manager for the Scottish Bible Society. You can find out more about the work of the society at:

[https://scottishbiblesociety.org](https://scottishbiblesociety.org)

And for more resources have a look at:

[https://scottishbiblesociety.org/our-work-in-scotland/](https://scottishbiblesociety.org/our-work-in-scotland/)
Introduction

In this issue, Through the Season comes in three sections. We begin with a three week journey with Paul starting on Trinity Sunday, then explore some of the Apocrypha, and finish with a two week study of Samson.

To facilitate the suggestions for each of the sections it would be helpful if a free standing artist’s easel could be purchased or acquired. Although if you have projection facilities each of the suggestions could be projected instead. Each section requires preparation for which we would advise reading through the whole of this section to enable planning ahead.

Part 1: Paul’s Journeys

16 Jun  Trinity

Ephesians 3:1-13
Title: Mission to the Gentiles
Visual: On a large sheet of card or on your projection screen show a three circle Venn diagram. The three interlocking circles create a similar shape to a simple Celtic Trinity symbol. Colour in the ‘trinity’ and label one of the circles ‘Diversity’ and label the centre of the ‘trinity’ with the name of your congregation.

23 Jun  Pentecost 2

Romans 8:1-4,31-34; 16:3-5a
1 Corinthians 2:1-10
Title: Paul Proclaims Christ
Visual: Add the label ‘Mission’ to one of the other circles in your trinity symbol.

30 Jun  Pentecost 3

Romans 6:1-4
2 Corinthians 13:1-5
Title: Baptised Into Christ
Visual: Add the label ‘Teamwork’ to the third circle.

Part 2: Apocryphal Tales

Note that the texts for the stories from the Apocrypha are included in each Sunday’s notes. If you do not have a Bible that includes the Apocrypha these books are also available on the website www.biblegateway.com. We use the New Revised Standard Version (Anglicised) as our standard text.

For this section you will need to create a large book either by covering a big book or using a spare lectern Bible as your base or making your own. Create a new cover with the title ‘The Apocryphal Tales’ and the author ‘Various’ or by using A1 sheets of card and paper. Each week in this section a new ‘chapter’ will be looked at and an appropriate image opened up in the ‘book’. This could be a great creative project for someone in your congregation or even a team. A Google images search will produce an interesting array of images! But you will have to be sensitive as to those you use and careful over copyright. Or you may wish to simply create a title page.

Each week the ‘book’ could be opened at an appropriate part of the service. For example if you have a Bible carried in at the beginning of the service the book could be carried in too and place on the easel and opened at the appropriate page. Or it could be opened just prior to the readings being read.

7 Jul  Pentecost 4
Apocrypha: Susanna vv 1-64
Judith 9:1-8
Title: Susanna
Visual: Your created title page with an image of Susanna.

14 Jul  Pentecost 5
Apocrypha: Bel and the Dragon vv 1-22
Scripture: Numbers 21:8-9
Title: The Mystery of Bel
Visual: Your created title page with an image of the statue of Bel.

21 Jul  Pentecost 6
Apocrypha: Bel and the Dragon vv 23-42
Scripture: Psalm 54:1-7
Title: The Stuffed Dragon
Visual: Your created title page with an image of the dragon.
through the season

28 Jul  Pentecost 7
Apocrypha: Tobit 1:3; 2:1-14, 3:1-6,11-17
Scripture: Job 3:1-11
Title: Laments and Hopes
Visual: Your created title page with an image of Tobit.

4 Aug  Pentecost 8
Apocrypha: Tobit 5:10-6:6; 7:1-2,9b-13; 8:1-21
Scripture: Genesis 24:40-44
Title: Tobias Travels
Visual: Your created title page with an image of Raguel.

11 Aug  Pentecost 9
Scripture: Luke 15:11-32
Title: Tobias Returns
Visual: Your created title page with an image of the angel Raphael.

Part 3: Samson
In the final two weeks of this issue we take a look at the story of one of the Judges, Samson.
We suggest you continue to use the idea of the ‘book’ with images of Samson contained within.

18 Aug  Pentecost 10
Scripture: Judges 14:5-20; 15:1-8
1 Corinthians 12:4-7
Title: Samson the Riddler
Visual: Your created title page with an image of Samson in battle.

25 Aug  Pentecost 11
Scripture: Judges 16:4-31
Jeremiah 20:7-10
Title: Samson and Delilah
Visual: Your created title page with an image of Samson and Delilah
Expanding Mission

The church in Antioch was clearly already a diverse group of people, reflecting the multicultural society and communication network of the Roman Empire. This enabled the early church to spread so rapidly. It also raised, for the first Jewish followers of Jesus, the big question of whether or not Gentiles should be accepted as Christians without having to convert to Judaism first.

Simon, with his (hopefully descriptive and not pejorative) nickname ‘Niger’, must have been dark-skinned; Barnabas, Saul and Lucius came from modern-day Cyprus, Turkey and Libya respectively; and Manaen had been a member of King Herod’s court, where he would have been aware of Jewish hostility to the new Christian sect.

The five men named were already in leadership positions in the church, their gifts as prophets and/or teachers having been recognised. Now they were to be set apart for the specific task of mission in Cyprus and the surrounding area.

It would be interesting to know more about the selection process involved: how precisely did the Holy Spirit convey the message about their calling to this work? It happened in the context of worship, and fasting was involved, but beyond that no details are given. Was the whole group involved in a gradual process of discernment, or did one of those recognised as a prophet speak on the Spirit’s behalf? However they had been selected, their commissioning involved more fasting and prayer, and the laying-on of hands, not for a lifetime’s vocation, but just for this mission.

Their missionary technique in each new town was to start in the Jewish synagogue, where there was a mixed community of those who were Jews by birth and ‘god-fearers’ / interested sympathisers or converts from other traditions. They made use of structures which were already in place, notably the custom of asking male visitors to share their thoughts on the Scripture passages which had been read.

Two competing strands become apparent here:

1. a recognition that everyone has a part to play in telling the ongoing story of salvation, discerning God’s word for the present day hidden in the ancient texts and unpacking what it might mean;
2. a reliance on, and respect for outstanding leaders, verging on a cult of personality. The corporate choosing and setting apart of a group of five men for this missionary journey contrasts with Paul’s own assertion, in Ephesians 3, that his understanding of the ‘mystery of Christ’ had come by direct revelation from God.

And when the group were asked to give their “word of exhortation” in the synagogue, it was Paul, the bold, charismatic preacher who stood up to speak. One can only speculate as to the nature of gesture with which he began his dramatic peroration.

There are some clues in Acts 13 about the nature of the process by which Paul’s view that the gospel should be open to Gentiles on exactly the same basis as it was to Jews, came to prevail. Paul’s preaching, designed to show how the story of Jesus was the fulfilment of the Hebrew scriptures, was well received by his audience in the synagogue, all Jews by birth or by choice. Nevertheless “the Jews” are set against them as being “filled with jealousy”, and determined to contradict Paul’s teaching. This was necessary in order to justify Paul’s contention that “the Jews” had had their chance of salvation and rejected it, with the same opportunity now offered to those of other nations.

It is unfortunate that the mission to the Gentiles is presented here as a ‘second-best’, which would not have happened if God’s chosen people had been more responsive. There is no such implication in the reference quoted from Isaiah 42 and 49, that Israel has been chosen to be “a light for the Gentiles [to] bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

mission to the gentiles

bible notes

Ephesians 3:1-13
I’m a member of the church in Antioch, Antioch in Syria. It’s a lively place. One of our leaders is Barnabas, he was born in Cyprus and another is Simeon, I think he was born in Africa. Manaen, another of our leaders is a member of Herod’s court, and there’s Saul too who comes from Tarsus, and he sometimes gets called Paul. As you can see, we’re a pretty diverse lot.

Our church is a missionary church, which means we sometimes send people out to other towns and villages to tell people about Jesus. We usually pray about who we should send, and one day after prayer (we’d been fasting too) the Holy Spirit seemed to say to us that Paul and Barnabas should lead a mission to Cyprus and Galatia. So the church leaders prayed for Paul and Barnabas and then sent us off. Later our mission became known as Paul’s first missionary journey.

We travelled on foot, and then by boat to Cyprus. As Barnabas was born in Cyprus, he knew his way around. John Mark, who had come with us, was a great help to both Barnabas and Paul. We told people in the synagogues about Jesus; Paul was a good speaker, he could hold his audience. Many people came up to us in the synagogues and in the streets and some of them became Christians.

After leaving Cyprus we travelled to the mainland and to Perga in Pamphylia. At this point John Mark left us. He travelled back to the church in Jerusalem and was able to tell them about our mission.

Eventually we came to another place called Antioch, it’s funny isn’t it that two places can have the same name. This Antioch was in Pisidia. We stayed a long time there. Many people wanted to hear what Paul and Barnabas had to say. Paul spoke for a long time in the synagogue and was asked to do so again on the next Sabbath day.

Lots of people came to hear Paul. It seemed as if the whole city was there. Some of the Jewish leaders and members of the synagogue were angry and tried to contradict what Paul was saying. I think they were jealous of Paul’s ability to draw a crowd. Both Paul and Barnabas told the Jews that they had been sent to preach in the synagogues, but if the Jewish people rejected what they said they were going to talk to the gentiles about Jesus. Paul and Barnabas had decided that God’s message about Jesus is for everyone.
worship ideas

Through the Season

Please visit pages 9-10 where you will find ideas that can be used to help create a linking theme through each series in this season.

Gathering Activity

Place a large world map and invite people as they gather to put a pin in a place to which they have travelled.

- Why did you make that journey?
- Who accompanied you?
- What made the journey difficult or a success?

Call to Worship

In this one space we gather as the three collide and become one.

A place where searching, questioning and doubting become belonging.

A place where journey, company and stories become relationship.

A place where God, Son and Spirit explode into love.

On this Trinity Sunday may we collide and become one in worship.

All-Age Prayer

God, we thank you for the world which you created, for the places that we can go, the people that we meet, the stories we share.

There are many people in so many different places, yet we are all your children bound together in love.

May we go together on a journey of discovery, questioning, searching, seeking together, and making your love known.

Amen.

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

Parent God, you gather us together in this safe place, all from different places, from different backgrounds and cultures, yet all one as your people.

Son of God, we gather in this place with different ideas, different questions, but all with doubts, yet you recognise these doubts and bring us together as one in love.

Spirit of God, encircle us, bringing us together; enfold us, drawing us closer to you; empower and energise us to be mobilised as your people to share the love you give to us with all the world.

May we keep hearing the Word you spoke, O God, keep sharing the love you gave, O Christ, keep living in the creativity and community in which you inspire us, O Spirit.

In the name of God, Son and Holy Spirit, the blessed Three in One.

So be it.

Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

God of resources, take these gifts we bring before you. Bless them and bless us to go on a journey, sharing your love in the places we go and in the world around us.

Amen.
Prayers for Others and Ourselves

The truth is, O God, that your ways seem to be beyond us; your words seem too difficult for us to take in, your journeys often too hard for us to make, yet we are not beyond your love.

God of patience, may you hold us in your everlasting arms, love us in your tender embrace, empower us and send us energised by the Spirit, to make the journey into our communities.

Creator God, we thank you for the wonder and beauty of your creation. As we travel, help us to love and respect all that you have made; to protect and nurture all that is fragile and vulnerable on this planet.

Creative God, we thank you for the diversity of the people in our community and our world. May we renew our spirit of longing for peace and reconciliation wherever there is conflict, injustice and oppression.

We thank you for the love and fellowship of friends and families. Help us to be generous with our time, with our love and with ourselves to care for all who are lonely and in need of our support.

Loving God we thank you for all who work to improve care and treatment of those who are physically ill or mentally distressed. We pray that your loving and healing presence will surround all who are suffering today and that your Holy Spirit will comfort and uphold them. So be it. Amen.

Reflection

We are multifaceted people of a multifaceted God, each with unique purpose and calling brought together to serve.

None of us is dispensable, all have something to bring without which the body is diminished. God, the Three in One, reveals to us how we might offer the gifts we have, how we might weave our skills and our calling together as one so that none stands out, so that none become more important than the other, but so that all find their place in the rhythm and flow of the music that God calls us to make together.

Take Home Ideas

When you look at the people involved in the church at Antioch you have quite a diversity of folk, yet today in our culture we seem to narrow our field of contacts through social media that connects us mainly with like-minded people. This week reflect on your ‘contacts’, or the stories you read in newspapers online and challenge yourself to diversify, broaden your contact list, explore stories that you would not normally read and recognise your connection with God in these unfamiliar places.

Praise/Hymns

Eternal Father strong to save CH4 260 / MP 122
God our creator Known Unknowns, WGP, 26
I may live in a great big city ATAS 111
In the morning early ATAS 132
Inspired by love and anger CH4 253
Jesus calls us here to meet him CH4 510
Jesus calls us o’er the tumult CH4 509 / MP 359
Let us build a house CH4 198
Moved by the Gospel CH4 247
Sent by the Lord am I CH4 250
The church is wherever God’s people CH4 522
The world is full of smelly feet ATAS 233
When morning gilds the skies MP 756
age group ideas gathering

**Travelling Bags**

*all age*

You will need: a selection of different bags (suitcase, rucksack, small backpack, school bag, shopping bag, handbag, for example).

Discuss with the children when you would use the different kinds of bags and what you would put in them. Use this as an introduction to the idea of travelling and Paul’s missionary journeys.

**Boat Biscuits**

*age 6-12*

You will need: paper plates, pencils, wet wipes, bowls, spoons, knives, forks, digestive biscuits, icing sugar, blue food colouring, apples, cheese slices, lollipop sticks.

**Check for any food allergies.**

Give each child a paper plate and ask them to write their name around the edge using a pencil. Ask children to wash their hands with wet wipes or provide a bowl of warm soapy water and towels. Depending on time and numbers of children you may wish to have making of icing as part of the activity or have icing prepared beforehand. Icing should be of fairly thick but spreadable consistency with a little blue food colouring added to make it look like water. Divide the icing into bowls so that each child has easy access to a bowl.

Ask the children to place a digestive biscuit on their plate and to spread it with blue icing, making the sea. Cut apples in half and then each half into three slices. Ask the children to place a slice of apple onto the icing, making the boat. Give each child a lollipop stick which they should stick into the apple to make a mast and then cut cheese slices into triangles of suitable size and attach to lollipop sticks by making two little cuts in the cheese to form a sail.

Discuss boat trips with the children. Have they ever been on a boat, what size, where were they going and so on? Talk about setting off on a journey and how they felt. Talk about how they think Paul might have felt. Talk about how we can take the message of God’s love into the world.

**Little Boat**

*age 3-5*

You will need: plastic tubs (such as yoghurt pots or margarine tubs), scraps of fabric, scissors, lollipop sticks, sticky tape, sticky shapes, PVA glue, glue spreaders.

Give each child a plastic tub and ask them to decorate the outside with sticky shapes. Help the children to attach a lollipop stick to the inside of the tub using sticky tape. Ask the children to cut out a small flag-shaped piece of fabric which they can then attach to the lollipop stick with sticky tape or PVA glue. You might want to have these shapes prepared ready for the children to stick on.

If trying out your boats in a bowl of water, you may need to put something dense in the bottom of the tubs such as plasticine or playdough so they do not overturn.

Talk about boats of various sizes the children have seen or been on. Talk about the different feelings we have when we are setting off on a journey. Talk about Paul setting off on a journey with an important job to do of sharing the story of Jesus.

**Big Boat**

*all age*

You will need: large boxes, strong tape, string, scissors, card tubes, old sheets.

Ask the children to work together to make a big boat from junk materials provided. Use or make card tubes for masts and add old sheets for sails. The children should be able to sit inside the boat. If you have a larger number of children, you may have to divide into groups and make more than one boat!

Discuss boat trips with the children. Have they ever been on a boat, what size, where were they going and so on? Talk about setting off on a journey and how they felt. Talk about how they think Paul might have felt. Talk about how we can take the message of God’s love into the world.
Going On A Journey  

**age 3-5**

**You will need:** a map of your area or a large floor map of the world.

Talk about going on a journey whether it is to nursery/school, shops, church and so on. Ask the children what they would take with them, who they would go with. Ask them what they would wear on their feet, depending on the weather or where they were planning to go.

Think about and show children on the maps some journeys they take regularly or that you take regularly.

When Paul and Barnabas went on their journey they mostly walked and did not take very much with them. They talked to lots of strangers and some people were nice to them while others were not. We should be careful who we talk to, especially children should not talk to strangers. But that does not stop us from being nice and kind like Jesus wants us to be. Sometimes we need to do that with other people.

Spreading Good News  

**age 6-12**

**You will need:** the facilities to show this clip of a young Austin who has a mission to 'Show Love' by helping homeless people, see [https://youtu.be/iHnWMqKSoEO](https://youtu.be/iHnWMqKSoEO).

Allow the children to watch this clip or tell the story of young Austin (aged 4) to them about why he started doing what he did but emphasise the point that he used his pocket money and the money his parents would have used to buy him toys.

In the passage today we hear of the struggle Paul faces: that he is suffering for the sake of his message and although it appears young Austin is not suffering, he has given up a lot to do what he wanted. His response: it is the right thing to do and everybody needs to be loved! If something meant so much to us could we sacrifice something or put up with suffering because of it?

What’s That Scribble?  

**age 9-12**

**You will need:** paper and pencil for each child and a story that you need them to write down (maybe a story of your journey to church today).

A simple piece of work known in the old days as dictation. You read the story and the children are to write it down as they hear it, no repeating if they did not hear it properly.

Storytelling is a huge part of the bible and in the Ephesians reading you can just imagine the scribes scribbling the words down in a frenzy. Did the children get every detail down, was it problematic for them? It is easy to mishear, misinterpret and even add things in to a story.

Mission Partners  

**age 6-12**

**You will need:** information about early or current missionaries or mission partners working around the world (from David Livingstone to Eric Liddell, Mary Slessor or Jane Haining, to modern day mission partners you can find out about from websites like the Church of Scotland World Mission page – see link on next page’s game).

Show the children images of missionaries of the past, who they were, where they went and anything special about them that they are remembered for. Livingstone started churches in Africa and became an explorer, Liddell refused to run on a Sunday, Slessor helped to save twins, Haining (pictured) was the only Scot to die at Auschwitz. Then go on to talk about our current mission partners (not missionaries) and that they are learning how other churches operate, help them and also learn from them and they pass that information on to us. Mission now works both ways.

You may want to ask World Mission Council for any information they have or contact our mission partners and see if they will record a short message and send it to you via your phone. There are many retired missionaries living in Scotland and they have so much information they can share about travelling by ship for months and no contact with family, but they all felt God calling them to tell people who had not heard about Jesus the Good News and how it would benefit their lives.

Storytelling  

**age 9-12**

**You will need:** an envelope for each child with a number of items in it (a picture of shoes, a coin of any value, a throat lozenge, a picture of a bottle of water, a button, a picture of a bible, a picture of a country outside Britain), paper and pencil.

Each child will open the envelope with identical items inside it and write their own story using the items as the main points in their story.

We are told to spread the good news and to do that we need to tell stories of who we are and what we believe in. How many of the children in their short story speak of Jesus, doing good things for other people or journeying/travelling?
games

Go Here, Go There! age 3-5

In the passage the apostles are travelling from here to there and everywhere. Ask the children to follow your commands around the room. For example: go to the table and walk around it three times, run to the window, hop to the door, and so on. You could then get them to sit as if rowing a boat, take big steps as if climbing a hill, use your imagination!

Paul and Barnabus mostly walked everywhere over different types of ground and walked for miles here, there and everywhere. Today most people use cars, buses, trains and aeroplanes, how fortunate are we! Though we should be walking more, to help the environment, of course.

Leader Of The Pack! age 6-12

You will need: a very large pair of Wellington boots.

Divide your group into two or three groups depending on numbers. The best way to do that is just to number them 1,2,3,1,2,3,1,2,3 etc. When they are in the groups the children are to decide who is going to be the leader. The leader then has to decide who goes in which order. A simple game of putting on the boots and running to the wall and back: a difficult journey in big boots.

Did the groups find it easy to pick a leader? Was it who you thought it be? What criteria did they use to pick the leader? Did the leader pick the running order because he knew the people or because they thought that order would benefit the team? Discuss these points.

Around The World age 6-12

You will need: A4 sized outlines of a number of countries where the Church of Scotland (or your denomination) have mission partners. On separate pieces of paper put the names of the countries and on other paper the names of the mission partners [see https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/world_mission/mission_partners].

A relay race with the children running up and down one at a time to collect the images. They need to collect the outlines and the names of the countries and the mission partners and match them up.

Once the game is finished you could then hold a short quiz to see how much information the children have retained about mission partners today.
discussion starters for teens

Preparation
You will need a world map. A large poster size one would be ideal but you could print one or project one.

Opening Activity
Favourite Trips
Encourage the group to think about trips that they have had during their lives.

• What has been your favourite trip?

Be very careful not to make this a ‘who has been on the most fancy holiday’ competition. Encourage the group to think about what made their trip special. It could be a picnic in a park, a day out somewhere nearby or a longer trip further afield.

• What made that trip special for you?
• Who else was with you on that trip?
• What will you always remember from that trip?

The Word
Over the next three weeks of following Paul’s missionary trips, we have a selection of verses from Acts which give some of the story of what was going on, but we have also added a passage from some of Paul’s writing to give a flavour of what he was also thinking.

Read all or some of Acts 13:1-5,13-16(a),42-47; 14:1-2,21-28 or use the story retelling paraphrase. Refer to Ephesians 3:1-13 if you wish.

Activity/Discussion
Plan A Trip
Paul and his friends travelled from place to place, staying longer in some places than others.

Pick a destination anywhere in the world that the group will visit.

• What things will you visit there?
• What will the weather be like?

You might want to look at things like Trip Advisor to help.

Once you have decided, tell the group that they can’t fly! They will have to travel by land and sea. So, plan your route!

• Where will you sail from?
• Which countries will you pass through and which cities might you visit on your journey?
• How long do you think your journey will take?
• How many different languages do you think you might encounter along the way?
• How do you think Paul and his friends would have felt making their journey?
• Would having their missionary purpose to tell people about Jesus make the journey easier?

Think about mission partners in churches today working around the world (you could use the ‘Missionaries to Mission Partners’ section in the all age material or look at the Church of Scotland’s https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/world_mission/mission_partners).

• What would it be like to go and live and work as a missionary or as a modern mission partner?

Living It Out
Think about people who have been forced to travel away from their homes and now live in a new place. What could you do to make life better for them?