

You'll never guess what happened?

Meeting God – Amazing things happen when we meet God

Meet a child who gave their lunch.

Arrival

Paper chain people

What you need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- Colouring pens/pencils.

What you do:

1. Before the children arrive, cut the paper in half so you have two long rectangular strips of paper, and prepare some card templates of the 'paper doll' to draw around.
2. Demonstrate to the children how to fold the strips 'accordion style'.
3. Next, the children will need to draw around the template you have provided and cut out the shape.
4. Finally, encourage the children to decorate their paper chains.

Story John 6: 1-14

After this, Jesus went across Lake Galilee (or, Lake Tiberias). Many people followed him because they saw the miracles he did to heal the sick. Jesus went up on a hill and there sat down with his followers. It was almost the time for the Jewish Passover Feast.

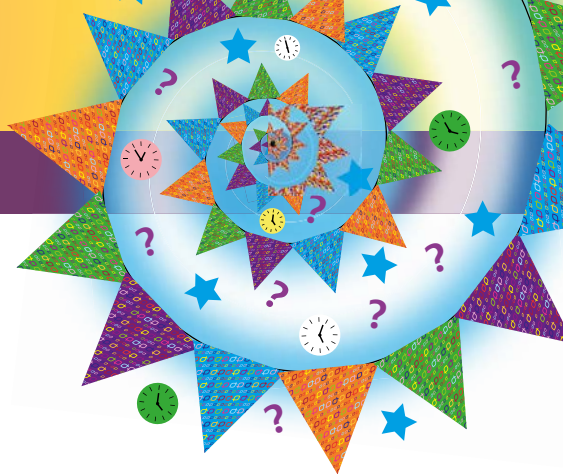
Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him. He said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread for all these people to eat?" (Jesus asked Philip this question to test him. Jesus already knew what he planned to do.)

Philip answered, "Someone would have to work almost a year to buy enough bread for each person here to have only a little piece."

Another follower there was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five loaves of barley bread and two little fish. But that is not enough for so many people."

Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down." This was a very grassy place. There were about 5,000 men who sat down there. Then Jesus took the loaves of bread. He thanked God for the bread and gave it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish. He gave them as much as they wanted.

They all had enough to eat. When they had finished, Jesus said to his followers, "Gather the pieces of fish and bread that were not eaten. Don't waste anything." So they gathered up the



pieces that were left. They filled 12 large baskets with the pieces that were left of the five barley loaves. The people saw this miracle that Jesus did. They said, "He must truly be the Prophet who is coming into the world."

Interview

Who are you?

My name's Joshua, son of Gad. I was supposed to be helping Dad on the farm but he said I could go off and play for a bit and mum packed me a picnic and told me to get from under her feet for a while, so here I am.

Where are we?

This is Galilee. You are on the hillside near Lake Tiberias, with pretty much everyone from around here – though nobody who's dressed quite like you! I mean, what are you wearing???? But sorry, that was rude, I guess. We're here because Jesus is here. I've heard all about him but wouldn't it be wonderful actually to meet him?

Story

Reflective story out of a picnic basket. Elements of the story coming out.

You will need:

- Picnic basket/hamper/rucksack
- Blanket
- Picnic food and drinks
- Five small loaves and two fishes.

NB. These may be paper fish you have prepared; alternatively you may use two tins of tuna fish.

As you are talking to the children, begin to take each item out of the picnic basket slowly. Allow time for them to view each item and respond to your questions. You may want to present items out of a deep bag, in the style of Mary Poppins. You may choose to do this part of the session outdoors. You do not need to use all the questions. Select what you think will work for your group.

The story:

Walk together to where you are going to tell the story. As you take a blanket out of the picnic basket and spread it on the floor for the children to sit on or round, start to tell the story using these words or similar:

At last, we've arrived. It's taken us a long time to get here. Gosh, there are so many people. Let's get a good spot away from the crowd.

Let's close our eyes and imagine...we have been on a long journey and climbed a big hill. Are you tired? You must push through lots of people to get to the front of the crowd. Imagine people brushing against you as you find a space to sit. Let's open our eyes.

Phew. I'm glad we decided to have a picnic today, but all that walking has made me thirsty. Hmm... What should I have to drink?

Begin to remove drinks from the basket – possibly even have small drinks cartons for the children to drink.



A long time ago a young boy sat on a hillside with his lunch listening to someone special speak. Do you know who that someone special was? That's right, it was Jesus. The boy had heard that Jesus performed great miracles and told great stories. He was wondering what might happen and whether he might actually get to meet Jesus and experience some of the amazing things that happen when Jesus is around.



I'm hungry. What's your favourite food to eat at a picnic? What do you think is inside my basket? Let's see...

Begin to take out food items. You may want to include a couple of foods you would not usually take on a picnic eg, baked beans, a cabbage.



But look – nobody else has thought to bring a picnic. *Let's close our eyes and imagine...* Can you see the people around you starting to look a bit tired, a bit hot, a bit hungry? Can you hear them muttering? They want to hear Jesus but they're also ready to eat and they are wondering what to do about the fact they have no food. Can you see the boy, sitting over there? He looks a bit embarrassed. What's that he's got in his hand? A cloth bag with something in – do you think he's the one person who's actually got something to eat with him? *Let's open our eyes.*



I wonder what you would have done if you'd been there? All those hungry people – you can't feed them all, can you? I wonder what was in the young boy's picnic anyway? Do you know what he had for his packed lunch?

Finish by taking out five small loaves of bread and two fishes.

Look, this is what the boy in the story had, though I suspect his fish were fresh fish, not tinned! It's a very ordinary packed lunch. Not enough to feed five people, let alone 5,000. And it can be difficult to share with others, especially when it's something we really like. I bet he started by wondering how he could nibble away at his lunch without anyone noticing.



Mime surreptitiously nibbling at a loaf of bread.



But now an amazing thing is happening. There's a feeling growing in the boy's heart, the feeling that he wants to help, he wants to share, he wants to do what he can. He grabbed the cloak of one of the disciples and showed him his packed lunch, and the disciple took him to Jesus. Amazing – just imagine meeting Jesus face to face, actually talking to him!

Hold the bread and fishes up so that everyone can see them.



Close your eyes and imagine... Can you see the hungry crowd around you, muttering and nudging one another? Maybe some of them are even laughing at the boy for offering his small picnic lunch. I wonder what the boy looks like. Is he scared and nervous, proud, embarrassed? Can you see him handing his packed lunch to Jesus? And can you see Jesus lifting the food up and blessing it? *Let's open our eyes.*



The boy gave his food to Jesus who blessed it, and a miracle happened. When the disciples shared the food out amongst the crowd, all the people were fed until they were completely full! There was even enough left over to fill twelve more baskets! Amazing things happen when we meet with Jesus – I wonder what amazing things Jesus has in store for you?

Interview continued

What's happened?

Everyone's been talking about this Jesus fellow for months, how he does amazing things and teaches about God and love and peace and everything. Well, the news spread that he was in town and, like, everyone wanted to see him. I followed the crowd 'cos I wanted to see him too. He just sounded so amazing and so kind too. He was teaching us but then he realised that everyone was getting a bit hungry. Thank goodness mum had packed me a picnic. Anyway, I wasn't too sure what to do with it but I gave it to Jesus and what do you know? A. Ma. Zing! He thanked me and he blessed it and started sharing it around. Five bread rolls and two little fish and he not only fed everyone who was there, thousands and thousands of them, but he even got his disciples to gather up the leftovers and there were twelve whole basketsful left. That's some miracle!

What can we take back with us?

You can take my lunchbox if you like. It's only small but then I'm only small too and meeting Jesus was simply amazing for me. Maybe my lunchbox can help you remember that Jesus wants to meet with you, no matter how small you are.

Bible verse

Matthew 19: 14 "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like these children."

Video

Jesus Feeds 5000 – Sketch – PursueGODkids: <https://youtu.be/EGVHZRtbkrk>

Wondering together

This story shows us amazing things can happen when we meet Jesus.

- I wonder if you can think of a time when you have felt too small or powerless to do something.
- I wonder how it felt to be in the crowd and witness this miracle.
- I wonder what the child told his friends about he witnessed. What would you have told them?



Craft/creative response

Make your own playdough and then use it to model your own basket of loaves and fishes. Alternatively you could use ready-made playdough or salt dough.

Edible playdough

You will need:

- Two cups plain flour
- Two tbsp vegetable oil/baby oil/coconut oil
- Half cup salt
- Two tbsp cream of tartar
- One-one and a half cups boiling water (added a bit at a time until the consistency feels right)
- A few drops of glycerine (optional, but makes it more stretchy and adds shine)



- Optional – gel food colouring, flavourings (eg ginger), textured substances like lavender flowers, glitter, rolled oats etc).

What you do:

1. Mix together the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil. If you want to add dry powdered flavouring such as a little ginger or cinnamon, add it at this point.
2. If you're adding food colouring, add it to the boiling water before you add this to the dry ingredients. Add the water a bit at a time and keep stirring until it all sticks together to form a sticky dough. At this point you may choose to add a few drops of glycerine to make it shiny and more pliable.
3. Once the dough has cooled a little, take it out and knead it until all the stickiness has gone. This may take several minutes of quite vigorous kneading. If it remains sticky, you may wish to add more flour. While kneading your dough, you could add textures such as lavender flowers etc. Remember, this playdough is non-toxic but anything you add to it may not necessarily be edible so consider whether it is suitable for the children in your group before making it available to add!

Mentoes experiment

(illustrating an amazing thing – something small causing a big reaction)



This must be done outside in an area that is ok to get covered in coke.

It should also be done very carefully – probably by an adult.

You will need:

- Cardboard (enough to make a tube the size of a packet of Mentoes)
- Tape
- A packet of Mentoes
- A new bottle of Diet Coke.

What you do:

1. First, create a tube of cardboard by wrapping it around a packet of Mentoes and sealing the join with tape. Cut a circle of card and secure it to the end of the tube to make a closed end. Now take the packet of Mentoes out again, remove their wrapping, and place them back in the tube.
2. Go outside and find a safe place to stand your bottle of Diet Coke. It needs to be a level surface and you need to make sure that the area around it is clear. Do not shake the bottle before doing this experiment or you will not be able to get the desired effect. Stand well back unless you are the person doing the experiment.
3. Open the Coke and put a piece of cardboard over the open top. Turn the tube of Mentoes upside down over the cardboard, lined up with the top of the bottle. Now pull the cardboard out of the way and allow the Mentoes to fall out of the tube, straight into the open top of the Coke bottle. Step back VERY QUICKLY! The Mentoes will react with the Coke and create a high fountain of bubbles that will shoot out of the top of the bottle like a geyser!



Small group prayer

Making the lunch: basket, loaves, and fish

You will need:

- Card
- Paper plates
- Pipe cleaners
- Glue
- Scissors
- Colouring pens.

What you do:

There are two styles of basket you could make.



1. The first needs two paper plates. You can colour them and add a pattern if you want too. Stick the plates together round the edges and don't forget to cut out a handle.
2. The second style needs one paper plate. Colour and make two pairs of holes along the rim, one pair opposite the other. Put your pipe cleaners in to make handles.
3. Now make your two fish and five bread rolls any shape you like – remember, they need to fit inside your basket.
4. Think about those people who are often ignored, not included, and left out of things. It might be people you know, people you see when out and about, or see and hear about in our country and in other countries. Write the places or people on the loaves, eg a new person at school who has come from another area/country, a homeless person, someone who supports a different football team to you. Then write on the fish how you might help, for example you might donate to a food bank, make a new person at school feel welcome, do not judge by what a person wears, has or where they live, or what hobbies they have.
5. Place your loaves and fish in your basket and keep them as a reminder, look at them during your prayer times.



Games

Come to me

One child is chosen to be Jesus and stand at the far end of the hall; the other children are all at other end of the hall. Two or three young leaders, leaders or a couple of older children are chosen to be the disciples and stand in the middle. Jesus calls, "Let the children come to me, I call...", followed by the name of a child, and that child has to try to dodge the disciples and run to Jesus. Jesus can call another child straight after calling the first. The aim is for all the children to get to Jesus. If tagged by a disciple, they go back to the start. (If particular children struggle to get through, leaders can run interference)

Meeting and Greeting

Everyone walks around the room to the music saying hello to everyone as they pass. When the music stops, a leader shouts out "High five" or "Fist bump" or "Elbows" or "Bum bump" and everyone has to find a partner and do the action together in a pair. Last ones to do it are out. You could get the partners to find out one thing about each other before moving on.

Recipe

Our suggested recipes and food activities that are themed to our days. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cope with allergies are in brackets.

Fish sandwich

You will need:

- Bread – sandwich thin (squares of gluten free bread)
- Tuna mayo or a filling of your choice
- Edible icing eyes
- One slice cheddar cheese (vegan cheese, if needed).

What you do:

1. Make a square sandwich, using the filling of your choice. Cut off the two opposite corners to make triangles, then cut one of those triangles in half to form two smaller triangles.
2. Arrange the triangles on the plate as in the illustration – the larger triangle forming the tail and the two smaller triangles forming the fins. Add an edible icing eye to complete your fish shape.
3. Cut some circles from the slice of cheddar cheese to make bubbles and a small piece of cheese to form a smiley mouth for your fish.



Whole group prayer

All sit in a circle.

A large plate with pieces of bread well spread out is displayed. A leader hands each person a piece of bread and, when they receive it, they can say one thing that displays/ shows God's love to them. They can eat all together or as they receive bread. Finish with a final: "We thank you God for all your love and the love we share today. Amen."

