



Welcome to the second official United Reformed Church (URC) Children's and Youth Work (CYW) Holiday Club – Time Travellers. Tying in with our theme for the year, Jubilee, we are travelling through time together to meet some of the children of the Bible and see what they can teach us about following God, listening to God, meeting with God, belonging to God and worshipping God – what can we bring back with us to the present day and our ongoing journey of faith?

This material is not designed to be prescriptive, although you may use it that way if you wish. Nor is it designed to be exclusive; feel free to swap and change the ideas included here for ones you think more suitable for your groups. It is written as a five-day plan but you may decide to do a one-day extravaganza, a club once a week through the holidays, or maybe just select a couple of the sessions to do on two or three days in the week.

At the back of this resource you will find several appendices. You may be thinking of adapting this material in a variety of ways and the appendices will give you suggestions and ideas of how to do so for various different settings.

As always, we would really love some feedback. Do let us know what you found helpful and if there is anything else you wish we had included. Should we do another such resource next year, what would be most helpful to you? And do let us know how you use it – some pictures for our Facebook page would be greatly appreciated. Contact lorraine.webb@urc.org.uk or children.youth@urc.org.uk.

Credits:

Main writing team: The Revd Chris Dowd, Lorraine Downer, Nicola Grieves, Judy Harris, Sharon Lloyd, Hannah Middleton, Jess Poole, Megan Tillbrook, Lorraine Webb, Jo West, Ruth White

Appendices: Leo Roberts, Judy Harris, Ann Davies and the Revd Carole Marsden (Shrewsbury URC Vintage Messy Church), Sam Richards

Songs: Leo Roberts (music and lyrics) and Roo Stewart (score)

Proofreading: Heather Wilkinson and Laurence Wareing

Graphics: Laura Jones

Scriptures quoted from the International Children's Bible®, copyright ©1986, 1988, 1999, 2015 by Tommy Nelson. Used by permission.



In this resource



Appendices

While the main resource is written with the five to eleven age range in mind, you may have some young people who are just outside that demographic or come as junior helpers. The first appendix gives ideas for extending the material to take them a little deeper. You may have some children of pre-school age within your holiday club so we have included an appendix on how to adapt the theme for little ones. Perhaps you are running a vintage holiday club and want the theme to tie in, so there is an appendix of ideas for the elderly and for those with dementia. Why not develop the holiday club as an intergenerational adventure, inviting adults and young people as well as children to participate together? There is an appendix with some ideas for running an intergenerational event, which may help in adapting these materials.

Overarching themes and activities

In the first section of this resource, there are some overarching themes and activities. Here are some ideas for decorating your hall or Zoom background and for ongoing/cumulative activities for your groups of children and adults. There are also the two songs which have been purpose-written for this material by Leo Roberts.

Reflections for volunteers

It is important for the volunteers running the holiday club to ground it in faith and sound theology and to know where the theme is taking them. For this reason, we have included some initial reflections for the team to include in a daily pre-session briefing, with discussion points to stimulate their own thinking and learning. Obviously you will also want a prayer time together, maybe focusing on your thinking and the session ahead.

Arrival activities

You will need something to keep your children busy from the moment they arrive until the holiday club session actually begins. These activities will take place in the team areas and are to encourage children to feel welcome, engaged and to start them thinking about the theme. They will be able to continue building and decorating their time machine as well as doing a challenge and creative activity, engaging all learning styles.

Story

We have chosen to deliver the stories in a variety of styles and encourage you to be experimental with different ways of presenting Bible stories. For those of you not confident with storytelling or drama, or for those of you running your holiday club over Zoom, there are videos of the stories being told by our team on our YouTube playlist www.bit.ly/Timetravellers_playlist.

There are also suggestions for YouTube videos you may wish to use to retell the story later in the session. These are chosen because they tell the story in a way suitable for this age range and are true to the Bible accounts.

Bible verse

There is also a focus on one Bible verse each day, which could be used as a memory verse.

Craft

These crafts are not prescriptive – you may substitute them with crafts of your own.

We recommend checking Pinterest for ideas or referring to past issues of Families on Faith Adventures at Home to stimulate your creative juices: www.bit.ly/fofaadventuresathome.

Do try to use recycled or eco-friendly materials wherever possible. Craft time is a good time to talk – maybe use the reflective (wondering) questions to prompt a conversation while you are engaging in the craft together, or ponder on what you have found out so far. We have included a variety of crafts and science experiments – you will probably want to choose one or maybe two, depending on your group.

Games

Two games are described here for each session, which have a link to the theme. You will undoubtedly want to include more games – probably some of the children's favourites.

Small group prayer activity

This is an opportunity for the small groups to pray together and to encourage a bit of creativity in prayer. Prayer during this time can be far more personal and encourage children and adults alike to build their personal relationship with God. Remember to allow time to listen and be still.

Recipes

Here are suggested recipes and food activities that are themed to our days and are quick and easy for children to make themselves during the session if you choose. If you are using them, it would be helpful to consider also serving fruit and a healthy drink. Alternative suggestions to cater for those with allergies are in brackets in the ingredients list.

Interview

As you travel back in time, in each session you will meet a child from a Bible story and ask them four questions. As the same four questions are asked each time, either the leader or a nominated child could carry out the interview or you could use puppets. Again, these dramas are available on our YouTube playlist.

Song

You will want to include songs in your closing worship time and probably through the session. One of our songs is about the time travelling theme in general, the other is a cumulative song with different verses to go with each of our Bible characters. You could sing just one 'verse and chorus' part of the cumulative song for each session or you could build up by adding a verse on each time. Your church probably has additional songs which your children will enjoy – think about the lyrics and make sure they are appropriate for this age group and theologically sound.

Closing prayer

The closing prayers are designed to be a little more active and for everyone to get involved in. Remember that prayer is for adults as well as children – this is not a time for the adults to go off and start tidying up! You might even want to encourage parents and carers to arrive slightly before the end of the holiday club session and join in the closing prayer with their children.

Bible version

For the purpose of this resource we have used the International Children's Bible. Please make sure that you credit them using the wording on the first page of this resource if you copy the text, and please ensure that you do not change the text in any way. Obviously you may choose to use the Bible preferred by your church family but please ensure that it uses language which is accessible for your group while remaining a true translation.

A typical holiday club might run like this:

Suggestions for a daily timetable, 2.5 hours:

- **Arrivals – Here and Now (10-15 minutes)**
 - Welcome to the small group – getting to know each other (suggestions circle activities)
 - Arrival activities – daily activity as detailed in that day's session instructions
 - Continue decorating the time machine or do activity sheets for the session.
- **Travelling back – Upfront Session 1 (45 minutes)**
 - Active warm up (music and exercise routine)
 - Song/s
 - Check the Bible reading for the day – could have a Bible with a bookmark in it with the details of the reading. Feed that into the time machine. Music (maybe Dr Who music) and children walk in a spiral or spin round or move into another room to experience travelling back in time. Meet the child from the past. First part of interview.
 - Story – performed or video
 - What are you giving us to take back with us?
 - Spiral back to the present. Put the item into the time capsule and take out the memory verse
 - Memory verse – what does Jesus have to say about the theme of the day?
- **Here and Now – Small groups (1 hour)**
 - Refreshments – recipe of the day
 - Crafts
 - Reflection
 - Prayer activity
 - Games.
- **Travelling forwards – Upfront session 2 (25 minutes)**
 - Song
 - What have we learned? Review of story and memory verse. Can we add anything to the time capsule from today to teach the people of the future about the theme? What do we think being a follower of Jesus should look like in the future? Chat in groups with feedback – draw a picture or write a message to feed into your team's time machine
 - Closing song and group prayer activity
 - Goodbye wind-down, and gather up ready for collection from small group.



Overarching themes and activities for the whole week



Time Travellers – travelling through time to bring messages from the past to help us grow in faith, now and in the future

Each day we will travel back in time to meet a character from the Bible who will share their experiences with us. We have offered a creative way to tell the story, as well as a link to a video if preferred. The emphasis is to introduce different elements of discipleship for the day and enable the children to truly explore the message and bring their own thoughts and ideas to it.

The personnel of the Control GMT

The Time Travellers' Lab: Holiday club leader is the professor of the lab who has invented a time travelling machine. The professor is known as "Professor". You might choose to have a sidekick in the form of a lab technician known as "Seconds". This could be another leader or a puppet. Remember, puppets can be very helpful in giving children information that you really want them to listen to as well as being used as described in the activities for the day.

The children are the time travellers, travelling with the professor back and forth in time.

Team identity/Time Labs

Designate one area of the hall for each team of inventors and get the teams to come up with their own team name.

Decorate your venue

The scene is set in a genius inventor's time lab. You may want to decorate it with keyboards, screen, machines built out of cardboard boxes and other scrap. The professor (and sidekick) may wear lab coats, have crazy hair, glasses, a compass or a pocket watch etc round their neck, and carry a clipboard. If possible, use spiral decorations around the room to indicate the passage of time. If you have PowerPoint, you may wish to prepare a slide which has a spiralling effect on it for when the group travel forward and backwards in time. The focus should be a giant time machine (use your imagination!) which includes a large time capsule and a feed where the memory verse will be taken from each day.

Decorate each Time Lab

Provide scrap materials or a large drawing area for each team to build their own time machine during the course of the holiday club. They may want to develop it further each day. Do not be prescriptive – their time machine is their invention!

Ongoing activities

Hotseat

(Optional) Arrange a time for someone from the church congregation to come and visit the holiday club and talk about their own faith journey from the past to today and into the future, answering questions from the children.

A challenge for the end of the session

Who can you track down (in real life, on TV or in a movie, in the news, in the Bible) who is an example of what we've talked about today? Bring a picture and tell us a bit about them. Add them to our time machine.

Continuing craft

Genius inventor's clipboard. These can be made by gluing a peg at the top of a square of firm card. Each day, the time travellers can add to their clipboard completed activity sheets, a copy of the Bible story, things they have found out at home etc. They could even draw a blueprint for their time machine.



Songs

One song is a theme song entitled "We're going on a journey", which would be perfect for the start of your session and possibly also for when the group travels back in time.

The second song, "Hello, hello", is cumulative. It has a general verse and chorus and then specific verses for each day. You may choose just to sing the relevant verse for the day's theme or you may choose to build this song up.

Find the sheet music overleaf.

Sing along with Leo videos available on www.bit.ly/Timetravellers_playlist or from children.youth@urc.org.uk on request.



Essential things to think about



Covid-safe

At the time of writing, the restrictions for Covid-19 have been lifted and you no longer need to use track and trace, but please ensure that you have checked the current situation before running your event in case the situation has changed in any way. It is wise to make everyone aware that if they are showing any signs or symptoms of Covid-19, then they must stay at home. Should anyone test positive or suspect they may have developed Covid-19 during the course of the event, they should inform the leaders so that, where necessary, they can inform those who have been in contact and suggest that they may wish to self-isolate etc. If regional or national restrictions have been reinstated due to a surge or recurrence of the pandemic, please see the Supersleuths holiday club material or check the website for further information about risk assessments and recommended precautions for ensuring your holiday club is as Covid-safe as possible.

Online Holiday Club

You may have decided to do your holiday club over Zoom or a similar online platform. Much of the material here can also be done online, with children provided with a pack of resources to use during each session, although some of the games may need to be adapted. It might be fun to dress up and/or to decorate your background. Please make sure that your volunteers have all read www.bit.ly/safeguardingappendixc.

You can do small group activities online by using breakout rooms, but remember that you must have two adults who are DBS checked in each breakout room. You might also like to watch this helpful video from Ruth White to help you think about the pros and cons of online engagement with children <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzIzkG8-H4o>.

Outdoors

You may have decided to run your holiday club outdoors. While some of this material is suitable for doing outdoors, you will need to enhance it with extra activities more appropriate for taking advantage of the outdoor space. Alternatively, you may have access to a marquee or large gazebo which you could use, or go outside for part of the session if you have the facilities for that. If you are using outside space, you will need to ensure that the area is clean and free from litter and animal faeces before and after your session and you will also need to consider how you will ensure that children do not wander off from the area. You will need to think about safeguarding – how to ensure that no adults who are not on the team engage inappropriately with the children in your care. You will also need to think about issues such as access to toilets.

Registration

It is important to keep an accurate register of the children and adults who attend on each day of your holiday club. This information will need to be kept according to your church's data protection and safeguarding policies.

Parents/carers must also fill in a registration/consent form and children should not be accepted into the holiday club without it.

The registration/consent form must include name and date of the event; child's details; details of two emergency contacts; details of any additional needs; any health needs, medication or allergies; acknowledgement of liability; consent for photographs; consent for first aid and emergency treatment; details of who will be collecting the child at the end of the session. Do not include any information which you do not actually need (eg gender).

Ensure that your registration/consent form states where parents/carers can access your data policy and safeguarding policy. These forms must be kept securely and used sensitively. Sample registration forms are available here: www.bit.ly/generalregistrationform.

Safeguarding

Make sure you are familiar with your church's safeguarding policy and that volunteers have received training. Everyone over the age of 18 who is taking part in your holiday club must have an enhanced DBS check for the church. Occasional visitors who do not have a DBS certificate must not be left alone with children, and the leadership of the club are responsible for ensuring that a leader is with them at all times. See the URC Good Practice 5 www.urc.org.uk/good-practice-policy-and-procedures.

You may find that volunteers have children at the holiday club to whom they are related or have a close bond. They should be encouraged to remember not to treat those children any differently – hugs and kisses, sitting on laps, being alone with a child, these things are fine for at home but not advisable in a church club situation.

Photographs

One or two people should be identified as designated photographers for the event and should wear a badge identifying them as such. They should use a camera rather than a smartphone where possible to take photographs and should only photograph those children whose parents have given permission. Photographs should not be used on any social media other than the church's or Church House official social media. See the URC Good Practice 5 www.urc.org.uk/good-practice-policy-and-procedures. You are, however, encouraged to share any photographs with Church House Children's and Youth Work (with appropriate permissions) for use on the website, CYW Facebook page and in URC publications.

Mobile phones

It is good practice that no mobile phones are brought into the holiday club area unless absolutely necessary.

Risk assessments

It is essential that you do a risk assessment for the venue you are using for your holiday club and also to do risk assessments for the activities you will engage in. You must also do this for the precautions you will use to reduce the spread of Covid-19, if appropriate. Your church may have its own policy and template for risk assessments but you may wish to use or adapt the ones available here: www.bit.ly/cywsupersleuths. Depending on the current situation with Covid-19, you may also wish your volunteers to complete a personal risk assessment. Risk assessments are useless if just put in a file. Ensure that all your volunteers have read the risk assessment or, better still, discuss it during your pre-session briefings. Please be aware that all risk assessments should be approved by your church leadership team.

Safety

Check the premises you use are safe, hygienic and suitable for children – think about stacked chairs, flooring, toilets, etc.

Children should not be allowed unaccompanied into kitchen areas.

Think about how to make your toilets a safe place without compromising privacy and dignity, so that you know when children have gone to the toilet and how long they have been gone. As far as this is possible, designate separate toilets for adults.

Have a routine for checking throughout the session that children have not gone missing from the group. Have a routine for the end of the session – perhaps tell the children that they are superglued to the floor until their parent or carer comes to collect them – and then get the parent and child to come to a leader to be signed out.

Although it is not compulsory to have someone on the team who is a trained first-aider, it is a very good idea. Make sure everyone on the team knows where the first aid box is and nominate someone to ensure that the box is fully stocked. Have a first aid recording sheet or book and keep clear and full records of any injury, however minor, who treated it, and what was done. Ensure that the record is dated and signed and take note of anything that needs to be done to minimise risk of that happening again. See here: <https://bit.ly/accidentincidentform>.

Behaviour

Remember that the children are at a club and it should be fun for everyone. Do not impose rules that are not necessary or enforce participation if the child feels uncomfortable. One member of the team should be the key person to speak to for any issues that arise, and this should be the only team member who liaises directly with parents or carers about behaviour. Remember that the best way of encouraging appropriate behaviour is to model it and to build positive relationships. You may want to watch the video on strategies to support behaviour that challenges, which was prepared for leaders of the Pilots organisation https://youtu.be/9XxpvUGVT_o. It is good to have a behaviour policy which all team members read and which is available for parents. An example can be found at www.urc.org.uk/holiday-club. You may also want a simple code of conduct which all participants sign, an example of which can be found at <https://bit.ly/behaviourpolicy>. It is helpful to have a short and punchy list of around five golden rules, framed positively ('we will' rather than 'we won't') and with visual cues as well as words. This can be put up in each room and referred to whenever necessary.

Additional needs and inclusivity

All we do in our churches and fellowship should be as inclusive as we can possibly make it. Nobody should be excluded due to their background, ethnicity, physical or learning needs, gender, or for any other reason. Consider what adjustments may need to be made to enable all children to take part. You may find it helpful to watch the video on strategies to support additional needs which was prepared for leaders of Pilots <https://youtu.be/usZWfOfEhm8>. Contact children.youth@urc.org.uk for some practical tips on supporting transgender or non-binary children and young people.

Timetable

Ensure that everyone is familiar with the timetable for the sessions. It is a good idea to establish a routine for your sessions and stick with it as far as possible. It is also helpful to have a large-scale visual timetable for the session up where everyone can see it, maybe with smaller

versions in any other rooms you use. If you would like help with putting together a visual timetable using Widgeit to create symbols, please do speak to your Synod CYW specialist or CYDO.

Debrief and review

Although you will be tired after an energetic session and want to clear up and go home as quickly as possible, it is good practice and helpful to have a daily debrief of how everything went, and to consider whether anything needs adapting for the next day; and capturing positives and negatives for an overall evaluation of the holiday club. You might also like to include the children and their families in your evaluation.

Feedback

The writers of this resource would greatly appreciate any feedback on how your holiday club went, which parts of this document were useful to you, whether there was anything additional that you needed. Please email **children.youth@urc.org.uk**. Remember, we would also love you to share with us any photographs for which you have the appropriate permissions.

