



Family
Ministries

Having faith in the family



JUMP In!

Leaping into Faith with Little Ones

A NEW THING!

A special session for use in the National
Month of Prayer for Parent-and-Toddler
Groups based on Isaiah 43:18-21.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

- Percussion instruments
- Instrument songs

A New Thing!



INTRODUCTION

'1277 Make Them Count' is a national movement for church-based toddler groups. On average a UK child has just 1,277 days between birth and starting nursery education, and the aim of the movement is to make these days count for the children, for their families and for the toddler groups that they attend. The precious moments of development from birth onwards can be challenging for parents/caregivers, full of questions or loneliness. Through working with the children we can offer support, hope and connection. For the child, they get to learn the value of social spaces and trusted adults, to hear the word of God and to grow.

The National Month of Prayer (NMOP) is an ecumenical initiative of 1277 Make Them Count and happens throughout June each year. It encourages churches, individuals and toddler communities to pray three ways – in groups, for groups and across groups in the UK. The theme for 2025 is based on the words of Isaiah found in Chapter 43 vv 18-21.

You might like to join the 1277 National Month of Prayer Facebook group, where ideas, prayer requests and stories can be shared alongside The Salvation Army's parent-and-toddler groups' UKI Facebook group (SA P and T groups UKI).



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BIBLE STORY

Isaiah 43:18-21 Easy-to-Read Version

Isaiah 43:18-21 Easy English Bible

To help understand these verses, use an object lesson that includes something old and something new. If you have invited someone to come and show their old toys (suggested in the Activities section), you could use this alongside a new toy; but if not, you could use an old pair of well-worn shoes or socks and a new pair of shoes or socks.

Show the old item first and talk about how this may not be as good as it used to be. Ask everyone what they think should be done with the old item now. Hopefully they will suggest things like: you can keep using it, donate or recycle it, throw it away, or get a new item.

Talk about how sometimes we need to get rid of things that are old, worn out or broken, and to replace them with something new – for example you can't wear old shoes if they have a hole in or they don't fit any more! I wonder how it feels when something is new? Good, exciting or perhaps scary?

The prophet Isaiah gave a message from God to the people of Israel telling them that they shouldn't just remember the things that happened a long time ago, but instead they should look for the new thing God is doing, because he is always doing new things.

God did this to reassure his people that he would never forget them, and that whatever happened in their lives, he would always be with them, helping them in new ways. God wants us to know this too – that whatever happens, he never runs out of new, good things to do for us because he loves us very much.



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SONG SUGGESTIONS

1. Theme song (Tune: 'Frère Jacques')

Sing the first part of the line and get the children and families to sing it back to you:

Forget the old things, forget the old things,
Don't look back! Don't look back!
God is always with us, God is always with us,
Every day, every day.

Look for new things, look for new things,
God is here! God is here!
He will always help us, he will always help us.
Praise his name! Praise his name!

2. 'Brand new day', Yancy & Little Praise Party

<https://youtu.be/qKy54w1wg5E>

3. 'Thank you, Lord, for this new day',

<https://youtu.be/njsdfxK9FcQ>

4. 'I am never alone', Dance Fit Tots 3

salvationist.org.uk/resources/worship/dance-fit-tots

5. 'I'm so blessed', Allstars Kids Club

<https://youtu.be/n9NWmC8CnRQ>

6. 'All things bright and beautiful'

<https://youtu.be/uBsQDK1Vp34>



PRAYER

Invite everyone to shout, 'God is good!' and put their thumbs up after every line.

Thank you, God, that you are always thinking of new things to do for us. – **'God is good!'**

Thank you, God, for every new day and the opportunities it brings us to praise you. – **'God is good!'**

Thank you, God, for being with us in the past and for promising to be with us in the future. – **'God is good!'**

Please help us to enjoy every new thing that you give us. – **'God is good!'**

Amen.



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CRAFT/ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Invite an older person to come and share about the toys they played with as a child and how these are different from the new toys available now.
- Using old yoghurt pots, decorate them with stickers, fill with some seed compost and sow wildflower or cress seeds to show that something new can be created from something old.
- Ask the families to write their family name(s) on two stones and to decorate them. Tell them that they can take one stone home, but the other one is to give to members of the Sunday church congregation to take home as a reminder to pray for their family.
- Make percussion instruments using old plastic bottles filled with rice, dried beans or pasta.
- Create a seahorse picture using a template to paint or add collage materials. *Talk about how a seahorse can look forward and back at the same time!*
- Other craft ideas can be found at <https://uk.pinterest.com/FamilyMinistriesUK/IT/a-new-thing-national-month-of-prayer/>



SENSORY PLAY

- Have a selection of different foods to eat and encourage the children to try something new they haven't tasted before. *Be aware of food allergies.*
- Have a selection of items that can be sorted into old and new piles, eg socks, shoes, toys, books, model cars, people figures of different ages etc.
- In a sand pit or Tuff Tray, create a desert scene using sand and encourage the children to try and make a road through it using spoons, spades or toy diggers.
- Drop different items into a water tray to discover the ripples made.

A New Thing!



NATIONAL MONTH OF PRAYER - GROUP IDEAS

1. Prayer Stones

Ask the families in the parent-and-toddler group to write their family name(s) on two stones and to decorate them if they would like to. Tell them that they can take one stone home, but the other one is to give to members of the Sunday church congregation to take home as a reminder to pray for them.

During the Sunday service, invite church members to collect a stone and commit to praying for the family named on it.

2. Water Droplet Prayers

In a Tuff Tray, create a desert scene using sand and stones. You could use the decorated stones made in the parent-and-toddler group or write family names on them yourself. Cut out some water droplet shapes from card or paper. Ask members of the congregation to write prayers on them for the families who attend the group, and for the leaders and helpers. Challenge them to ask God to do something new in the lives of everyone who is part of the group. Invite people to place their water drop into the desert scene, and to take a stone as a reminder to pray for the family and for the parent-and-toddler group.

3. A Simple Action Prayer, written by Captain Rachel Dunham, Cheltenham

Whenever you say 'new', people could make the Makaton/BSL sign for 'new'
<https://www.british-sign.co.uk/british-sign-language/how-to-sign/new/>

God – you are always doing something new!
As we welcome children into our parent-and-toddler groups, help us to be filled with joy as we see children and babies discover new things to explore and learn.

As we sit with new parents will you give us patience to listen and compassion to journey along the ups and downs of parenting.

As we open the door to those who are new, may they find safety and somewhere to call home.

As we consider the new things you may be doing in our groups and churches, open our eyes and hearts.

As we show and share good news – which will be new to many – may people see Jesus do a new thing in their lives.

Amen!

4. Prayer Stations

Create some simple prayer stations using the resource created by Emma Anderton from the London Network of Parent-and-Toddler Groups, found at the link below
1277.org.uk/national-month-of-prayer/



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