

Explore It FOR LEADERS

JULY
SESSION 01

JESUS INCLUDES BARTIMAEUS

- ❑ **Mark 10:46-52 Jesus heals a blind man**
- ◎ **Aim:** To learn how Jesus puts people first

Throughout our sessions this month, we are going to be thinking about belonging and the way Jesus included people living with a disability. There is so much we can learn from Jesus about ways to include people and help them to feel welcome. In today's story we meet Bartimaeus, a blind man who called out to Jesus from the crowd. Jesus took the time to be with Bartimaeus, reminding him that he was wonderfully made.

Each child will need:

- ➔ Bible verse wristband
- ➔ A range of resources for the children to be creative in art, or alternatively in writing, maths, IT, music ... – see Action It section

You will need:

- ➔ Slips of paper with characters' names on them, characters that your group will know, eg from books or films, plus spare slips
- ➔ A horn or bell (either the object or its sound from an app)
- ➔ A large sheet of paper and pen for a list

Start It

❑ **Say:** Throughout our sessions this month we are going to be thinking about the way Jesus included people living with a disability. Today we will meet a Bible character called Bartimaeus who was blind. Many people in the UK and Ireland live with sight loss, and we all play an important part in helping them to feel included.

Play a game of guess the character. Children take turns describing a character given them on a slip of paper – or they can choose their own. However, they are not allowed to describe the character's actual appearance – what the character looks like.

Encourage the children to rely on all their senses apart from sight. They can describe what the character likes to do, their personality, or even what they smell like, but they cannot mention their appearance. Use a horn or bell or computer 'Uh-oh!' to sound every time they describe something visual by mistake. Demonstrate the game for the children first.

Sing It

❑ **Say:** Our memory verse for this month reminds us that we are wonderfully made. God does not make mistakes, and he thinks we are pretty amazing!

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

The design on the wristband shows the BSL sign for 'God', which is the same as The Salvation Army's salute.

Say: Let's share a song together, based on the words of Psalm 139:14.

'Psalm 139:14' lyric and dance video by Kids on the Move (1:58)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7603oH33Ghs

Tell It

Ask: What does it mean to be included in something?

Say: In the Bible we read lots of stories where Jesus took the time to include people who would have otherwise been left alone and rejected. He made a special effort to make sure that everyone knew how much they were loved by God. In today's story Jesus takes the time to care for a man who is blind. His name was Bartimaeus.

Read:

'Then they came to the town of Jericho. As Jesus was leaving there with his followers and a large crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was sitting by the road. He heard that Jesus from Nazareth was walking by. The blind man cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, please help me!"'

'Many people scolded the blind man and told him to be quiet. But he shouted more and more, "Son of David, please help me!"'

'Jesus stopped and said, "Tell the man to come here."

'So they called the blind man. They said, "Cheer up! Get to your feet. Jesus is calling you." The blind man stood up quickly. He left his coat there and went to Jesus.

'Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

'The blind man answered, "Teacher, I want to see again."

'Jesus said, "Go. You are healed because you believed." At once the man was able to see again, and he followed Jesus on the road.'

— (Mark 10:46-52 ICB)

Ask:

→ Why do you think Bartimaeus was begging for money on the streets?

→ How did the people react to Bartimaeus shouting out and asking Jesus for help?

→ How did Bartimaeus react?

Say: In Bible times it was almost impossible for blind people to work and earn a living. People often believed that if someone had an illness or physical disability, then they must have done something wrong. This meant that people with disabilities were often rejected from society and had to ask others for money. Jesus had different ideas about the way people like Bartimaeus should be treated.

Ask:

→ What did Jesus do when he heard Bartimaeus calling to him?

→ How did Jesus showing an interest change how the crowd reacted?

Say: Jesus showed kindness to Bartimaeus, and it changed how the people saw him.

Ask:

→ What did Jesus ask Bartimaeus?

→ Do you think it was a strange question? If so, why?

Say: Even though Jesus knew that Bartimaeus was blind, he wanted to give him the opportunity to speak for himself. Sometimes people with a disability can feel like everyone else is speaking for them. Although others are often trying to be helpful, Jesus recognised that Bartimaeus was perfectly capable himself of saying what he needed from Jesus.

Ask:

- ➔ What did Bartimaeus ask for?
- ➔ How did Jesus respond?

Say: After his sight was restored, Bartimaeus continued to follow Jesus. Sharing the love of Jesus and including people the way he did makes a difference. We can make a difference too by listening to those who are usually ignored and making them feel part of what is going on.

Action It

Say: Psalm 139 reminds us that we are created by God and deeply loved. At times we may feel that there are things about us that are not wonderfully made, but God thinks differently. He created our personalities, our interests, our quirks, and he loves everything about us. Today we are going to celebrate the wonderful creation of you.

We're going to watch a clip that shows amazing children wonderfully created by God. They are sharing the words of Psalm 139.

Video

'Psalm 139' by Willow Creek Community Church (2:29)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTbeILWpERs

As a group, list all the different parts that make up who God created us to be: personality, strengths, weaknesses, interests, appearance, habits ...

Be creative

Give the children the opportunity to create a piece of artwork or a collage that represents who they are and that they are wonderfully made. Some children may need some additional support and guidance, but the aim is for the children to express themselves.

The aim of this task is to celebrate their individuality, so if there are children that do not enjoy art, then they could create something else instead. They could write a poem, create a maths equation that sums up their personality, create a tune or even create a PowerPoint presentation. You know your children, so adapt this activity to suit the way that they are wonderfully made.

Pray It

Say: We are going to spend time thanking God for the way that he made us. Sometimes we focus on the things we don't like about ourselves, but God thinks we are wonderfully made – and he can't be wrong, because he is God!

Ask the group to stand in a circle and bring their creations from the Action It activity. Once each member of the group has shared their creation, then ask the children to take it in turns to finish this sentence:

'I am wonderfully made because ...'

Example: 'I am wonderfully made because I can always tell when someone needs a hug.'

When each child has had their turn, pray with the group and thank God for each of them.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 01

JESUS INCLUDES BARTIMAEUS

- ❑ **Mark 10:46-52** Jesus heals a blind man
- ◎ Aim: To learn how Jesus puts people first

FOR ME



Explore

Watch the clip based on our memory verse and listen to the rest of the psalm (with the help of some Lego minifigures).

Lego Psalm 139 by CODECUK

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eQ7D-A00Bw

TOGETHER



Create

Many visually impaired people use audiobooks to hear new and exciting stories. Ask the people at home to help you create an audiobook of your favourite Bible story, perhaps using a phone to record your voice.



Song for the week

'Psalm 139:14' lyric and dance video

by Kids on the Move

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7603oH33Ghs



Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'

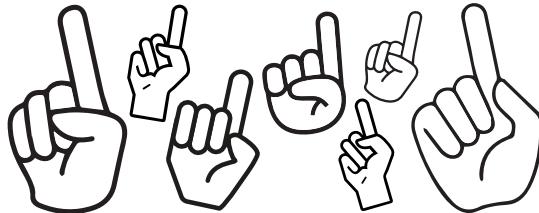
— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

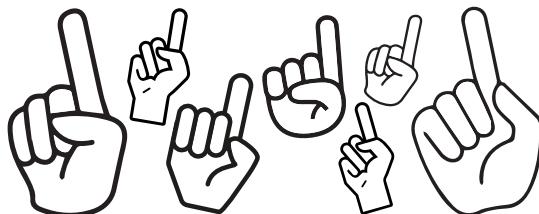
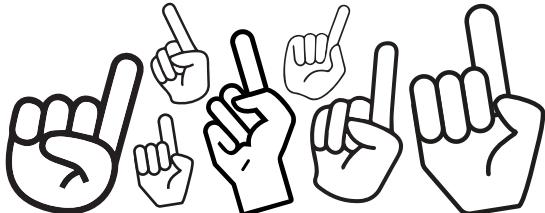
<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

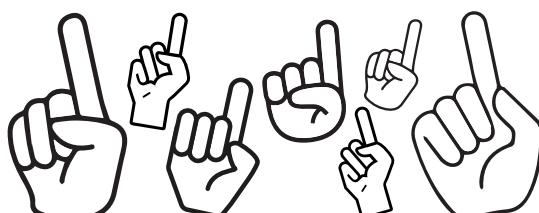
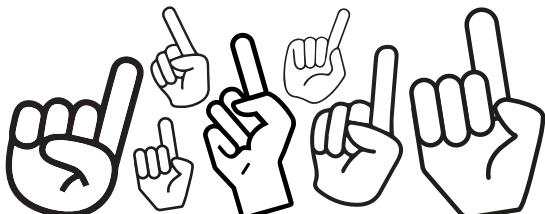
KIDS ALIVE!



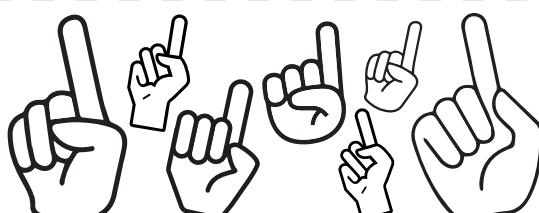
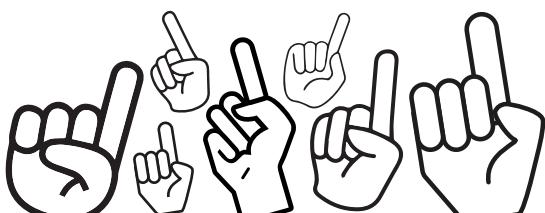
'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



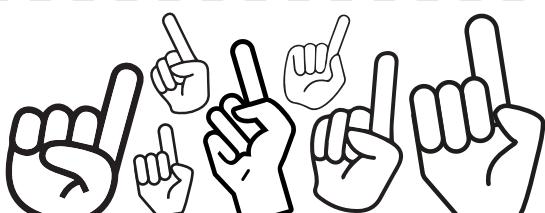
'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



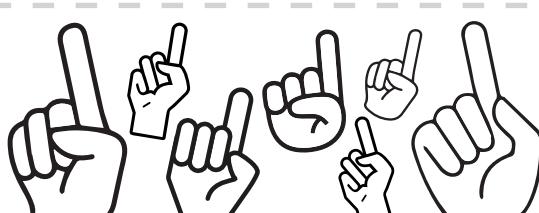
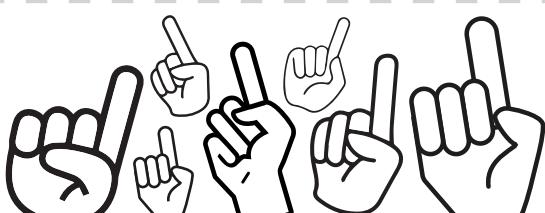
'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



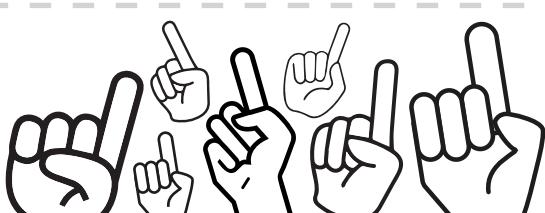
'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
(Psalm 139:14)



**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

**'I praise you because you made me
in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'**

(Psalm 139:14)

Explore It FOR LEADERS

JULY
SESSION 02

JESUS MEETS A DESPERATE WOMAN

■ Luke 8:43-48 Jesus heals a sick woman

◎ Aim: To consider how desperate we are to get near Jesus

The woman in today's story was so desperate for healing that she struggled through the bustling crowds, just to touch the cloak of Jesus. After years of living with a long-term illness she was finally healed. Not everyone experiences the same kind of healing as this woman, and today we are exploring ways to help, support and include people with long-term illnesses and disabilities.

You will need:

- A scarf or handkerchief (or two if you have a large group)
- A large sheet of paper and a pen for notes
- To research ways your group can respond to a need in your local area – see Action It section

Start It

Play a game of pickpockets, the aim of the game being to take the scarf/handkerchief. Ask one child to tuck the scarf in their pocket (or waistband or sleeve if they do not have a pocket) so that it is hanging down. This child is the scarf holder. During the game, they must keep moving as the other children try to take their scarf.

Then choose one protector. The protector moves with the scarf holder, guarding them and trying to protect them from the other children who want to 'steal' their scarf. If a child successfully takes the scarf, then they become the scarf holder. The child whose scarf was taken now joins the protection team. As the game goes on, different children will become the scarf holder, and the number of protectors will increase.

This is a non-contact game! Anyone who touches the scarf holder instead of the scarf automatically joins the protection team.

If you have a larger group, then you may want to have two scarf holders to start off with.

■ **Say:** In our story today, a desperate woman tried to touch the hem of Jesus' cloak, but the bustling crowd wouldn't let her reach him. When she finally managed to touch Jesus, amazing things happened.

Sing It

■ **Say:** Let's share our memory verse together.

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.'

What you have done is wonderful.

I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 ICB)

■ **Say:** Our memory verse for this month is taken from Psalm 139. Our song for today is based on Psalm 139 and reminds us that God knows everything about us and loves us very much.

'You know everything' (Psalm 139) official lyric video featuring Shane and Shane by Kingdom Kids (3:28)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPdGBqup-bw

Tell It

☞ **Say:** Today we continue looking at the way that Jesus cared for people with disabilities. Many of you will probably know someone living with a disability or a long-term illness that makes it difficult for them to live their lives in the way they would like.

☞ **Say:** We can learn a lot from Jesus and the way he made sure people could spend time with him. In today's story we meet a desperate woman who had been struggling with illness for a long time.

Read:

'A woman was there who had been bleeding for 12 years. She had spent all her money on doctors, but no doctor was able to heal her. The woman came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his coat. At that moment, her bleeding stopped. Then Jesus said, "Who touched me?"'

'All the people said they had not touched Jesus. Peter said, "Master, the people are all around you and are pushing against you."

'But Jesus said, "Someone did touch me! I felt power go out from me." When the woman saw that she could not hide, she came forward, shaking. She bowed down before Jesus. While all the people listened, she told why she had touched him. Then, she said, she was healed immediately. Jesus said to her, "Dear woman, you are healed because you believed. Go in peace."

— (Luke 8:43-48 ICB)

☞ **Say:** The woman in the story had seen many different doctors over a long period of time.

☞ **Say:** Many people with disabilities regularly have to visit the doctors or go to the hospital.

Ask:

- ➔ What do you think it feels like to miss out on things because you are ill or visiting the doctor?
- ➔ Is there anyone you know who is in this position?
- ➔ How could you let them know you are thinking of them?

☞ **Say:** The woman's illness meant that she was excluded from lots of religious activities and could not worship with her friends and family.

Ask:

- ➔ How do you think she felt when she couldn't join in with everyone else?
- ➔ What kind of activities at church might be difficult for people with a long-term illness or disability to join in with?
- ☞ **Say:** Despite her illness the woman desperately wanted to be with Jesus. She touched his cloak. Jesus sensed that she was there and healed her.

Ask: Not everyone experiences the same healing as the woman in today's story. Why do you think that is?

☞ **Say:** Although we may not experience the same kind of healing as the woman in the story, we can feel the peace of Jesus just like she did. All sorts of people felt that peace when they were around Jesus.

Ask: What can we learn from the way Jesus treated people and how it made them feel?

☞ **Say:** Although we can feel Jesus with us any time of the day, something special happens when we worship together.

☞ **Say:** People with disabilities can sometimes find it difficult to join in worship with everyone else. If they are dyslexic they may struggle to read the words on the screen, or those with sensitivity to sound might find the music too noisy. Some may not even be able to get up the steps to enter the building. Those who are in a hospital or living in a residential home might not be able to gather with everyone else for worship.

☞ **Say:** Children like you are brilliant problem solvers, so get creative and think about the following question.

Ask: In what ways could we help people with disabilities to spend time with Jesus?

Keep a note of all their ideas. Some of the children may come up with suggestions that are not possible to implement, but keep encouraging them to be creative. The aim of the question is for the children to put themselves in someone else's shoes and look for ways to help. If none of the children suggest asking people with disabilities what they themselves think, then try and draw this into the conversation. Refer back to last week's story, where Jesus asked Bartimaeus what he wanted him to do.

Action It

There are lots of different ways that the children could support those in the church and the local community who live with long-term illness or disability.

For the Action It activity today, it would be great if the children could respond to a need in your church or local area.

Some ideas are listed below as a starting point:

- Invite a member of the church who lives with a disability or long-term illness for the children to interview (this could be done online)
- Contact a local residential home and see if there are any ways that the children could help, eg create a joke book to read to the residents, send cards to say hello, create a video of a song they would enjoy
- Send a card or letter to children who are living with an illness www.postpals.co.uk
- Invite the corps officer to come to listen to the children's ideas about making church more inclusive
- Share ideas to make your Explore It sessions more inclusive for everyone

Pray It

Say: For our prayer time we are going to take some time to think about how we can be like Jesus and support people with disabilities and long-term illness.

Encourage the group to find a place to sit comfortably or lie down. As they listen to the song, ask them to try to hear the words and answer the main question posed by the lyrics. You may want to share the words of the chorus before listening to the song.

The song is nearly six minutes long, so can be stopped when you feel that the group is becoming restless. A YouTube link is provided for the song below, but you may be better using a music platform where the sound quality is better.

Listen: 'Do they see Jesus in me?' by Joy Williams (5:57)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tpf243UN4yM

- Do they see Jesus in me?
- Do they recognise your face?
- Do I communicate your love and your grace?
- Do I reflect who you are in the way I choose to be?
- Do they see Jesus in me?

Songwriters: Amy Roth / Peter A Carlson

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 02

JESUS MEETS A DESPERATE WOMAN

■ Luke 8:43-48 Jesus heals a sick woman

◎ Aim: To consider how desperate we are to get near Jesus

FOR ME



Invent

Watch the clip that describes an amazing invention to support children with long-term illness.

Robot helps children with long-term illness beat loneliness by ITV News

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPV0otETAFs

Create your own invention to help people with a disability or long-term illness.

TOGETHER



Share

Sometimes we can find it difficult to believe that we are 'wonderfully made'. Watch the clip with someone at home to discover how God made you exactly how you are meant to be and that you are incredibly special to him, just the way you are!

Fro-Yo anyone? Individuality and self-confidence (Psalm 139:14) by Crossroads Kids (Stop the clip at 7 mins 11 seconds to avoid the adverts!)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNFTVFhugaE

Discuss with the people at home how you are all different and yet all special to God.



Song for the week

'You know everything' (Psalm 139) official lyric video featuring Shane and Shane by Kingdom Kids

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPdGBqup-bw



Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Explore It FOR LEADERS

JULY
SESSION 03

JESUS IS MADE ACCESSIBLE

▀ **Mark 2:1-12 Jesus heals a paralysed man**

◎ **Aim:** To become a better friend

Today we meet an amazing group of friends who were determined to make sure their friend with a physical disability met Jesus. When they couldn't get past the crowds they found a creative way to get close to Jesus. In what ways can we solve problems and make church more accessible for those with physical disabilities?

Each child will need:

→ A box and a range of craft and junk material plus glue, scissors, tape ... – see Action It section

You will need:

→ World map or globe

Start It

▀ **Say:** Later in the session we will be praying for children with disabilities from across the world. To get you thinking about which countries you could choose, have a go at this world map quiz together.

The world map quiz game by Beano.com

www.beano.com/posts/the-world-map-quiz-game

Sing It

Ask: How are you getting on learning this month's memory verse? Let's share it together.

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

▀ **Say:** Today we are going to sing a song that reminds us that we are wonderfully made.

'Wonderful' Psalm 139:14 by Seeds Family Worship (2:51)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-pi_MV7ASQ

Tell It

▀ **Say:** In our story today a group of friends go out of their way to make sure someone special met Jesus. They did everything they could to bring their friend to Jesus.

Video

'Jesus heals the paralytic' by Max7.org uploaded by RodTheNey(2:42)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LqHYkGU4Zg

Say: This amazing story shows us how important it is to make Jesus accessible to everyone, regardless of their physical disability. The man in the story is paralysed, he cannot move or walk.

Read:

'A few days later, Jesus came back to Capernaum. The news spread that he was home. So many people gathered to hear him preach that the house was full. There was no place to stand, not even outside the door. Jesus was teaching them. Some people came, bringing a paralysed man to Jesus. Four of them were carrying the paralysed man. But they could not get to Jesus because of the crowd. So they went to the roof above Jesus and made a hole in the roof. Then they lowered the mat with the paralysed man on it.'

— (Mark 2:1-4 ICB)

Ask:

- How do you think the friends felt when they couldn't get the paralysed man close to Jesus?
- In what ways do people with disabilities experience this kind of thing today?
- What kinds of situations at church do you think it might be difficult for people with physical disabilities to access?

Say: Often it can be very frustrating for carers when they cannot get the support they need for the people they love. Just like the friends in today's story, they keep trying to find ways for people with disabilities to be near to Jesus.

Read:

'Jesus saw that these men had great faith. So he said to the paralysed man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."

'Some of the teachers of the law were sitting there. They saw what Jesus did, and they said to themselves, "Why does this man say things like that? He is saying things that are against God. Only God can forgive sins."

'At once Jesus knew what these teachers of the law were thinking. So he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to tell this paralysed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to tell him, 'Stand up. Take your mat and walk'? But I will prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

— (Mark 2:8-10a ICB)

Say: In this story Jesus is not saying the man is paralysed because of the mistakes he has made or because he has a sinful life. We all make mistakes and let God down, and it is these sins that Jesus is forgiving. He wants the man to be healed inside and out.

Ask: Why do you think the teachers of the law were annoyed that Jesus was saying that he could forgive sins?

Read:

'So Jesus said to the paralysed man, "I tell you, stand up. Take your mat and go home." Immediately the paralysed man stood up. He took his mat and walked out while everyone was watching him.

'The people were amazed and praised God. They said, "We have never seen anything like this!"'

— (Mark 2:10b-12 ICB)

Say: The people were amazed when they saw Jesus heal the paralysed man, but none of it would have been possible without the amazing love shown by the man's friends.

Action It

Craft activity

The children will need junk craft materials, so that they can get creative. Depending on the size of your group the children can work together or divide into smaller teams. Each team will need a box and craft material.

The aim is for the children to recreate the story of the paralysed man using the box and the materials. They will need to create the different characters in the story and find an accessible way for the paralysed man to be lowered down to meet Jesus. Use this activity to prompt a discussion about how we can work together to problem solve and make church more accessible for people with disabilities.

Pray It

Say: Children across the world face challenges due to their physical and learning disabilities.

Place a world map in front of the children. Watch the prayer clip *A prayer for children with disabilities* together. We suggest that you turn the sound off the clip and read the words to the group – select cc to reveal the subtitles / closed captions on the video. The clip can be stopped at 2:44.

Video

A prayer for children with disabilities by Reconciled World (3:22)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cmcqiSTEx4

Encourage the children to choose a place on the world map and say a short prayer for children with disabilities in that country. Bring the time of sharing to a close with a final prayer.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 03

JESUS IS MADE ACCESSIBLE

- Mark 2:1-12 Jesus heals a paralysed man
- Aim: To become a better friend

FOR ME



Create

Read Mark 2:1-12 and create your own version of the story. You could use Lego to create a stop-motion animation, build a model of the house with a missing roof, or draw your own comic strip. Get creative and bring the story to life.

TOGETHER



Pray

Using a map of the world or globe, choose a different country each day. Ask the people at home to pray with you as you remember children with disabilities across the world.



Song for the week

'Wonderful' Psalm 139:14 by Seeds Family Worship

www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-pi_MV7ASQ



Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 ICB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Explore It FOR LEADERS

JULY
SESSION 04

JESUS RESTORES THE SENSES

- ✎ **Mark 7:31-37 Jesus heals a deaf man**
◎ **Aim:** To use all of our senses in worship

In today's session we will be discovering more about what life is like for deaf people. We will hear the story of Jesus' miraculous healing of a man who was deaf and could not speak. The children will also get the opportunity to start learning a new language and to think about how we can make sure everyone has access to the teachings of Jesus.

Each child will need:

- ➔ A British Sign Language (BSL) fingerspelling poster
 - ▶ www.dotsignlanguage.co.uk/fingerspelling-poster-free-download
 - ▶ www.ndcs.org.uk/documents-and-resources/fingerspelling-poster
 - ▶ www.british-sign.co.uk/shop/product/fingerspelling-charts-a5-a4-a2-poster

You will need:

- ➔ Psalm 139:14 BSL PowerPoint presentation

Start It

- 🗣 **Say:** In today's story we meet a man who cannot hear or speak. In Bible times it must have been difficult for him to find a way to communicate. Deaf people today use their own sign language to speak to each other, but it can be difficult to communicate with the hearing world when they cannot use the same language.
- 🗣 **Say:** For our starter today we are going to start learning how to sign the alphabet and spell out our names.

Use the clip to practise signing the alphabet and then give each child a BSL fingerspelling poster to practise spelling out their name.

Video

Learn BSL alphabet! by BSL Club (2:04)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTy5Eu5LLM0

Sing It

- 🗣 **Say:** Let's share our memory verse together.

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

- 🗣 **Say:** Today we share another song based around Psalm 139. It reminds us that we are known by God.

Tell It

Say: In our Bible story Jesus miraculously healed a man who was deaf and unable to speak.
This story is found in the book of Mark in the New Testament.

Read:

'Then Jesus left the area around Tyre. He went through Sidon to Lake Galilee, to the area of the Ten Towns. While he was there, some people brought a man to him. This man was deaf and could not talk. The people begged Jesus to put his hand on the man to heal him.'

— (Mark 7:31-32 ICB)

Ask:

- What did the people want Jesus to do?
- How were they looking out for their friend?

Read:

'Jesus led the man away from the crowd, to be alone with him. Jesus put his fingers in the man's ears. Then Jesus spit and touched the man's tongue. Jesus looked up to heaven and took a deep breath. He said to the man, "Ephphatha!" (This means, "Be opened.") When Jesus did this, the man was able to hear. He was also able to use his tongue, and he spoke clearly.'

— (Mark 7:33-35 ICB)

Ask:

- What unusual methods did Jesus use to heal the man?
- Although it might seem strange to us, how did Jesus' actions help the man to understand what was happening?

'Jesus commanded the people not to tell anyone about what happened. But the more he commanded them, the more they told about it. They were really amazed. They said, "Jesus does everything well. He makes the deaf hear! And those who can't talk – Jesus makes them able to speak."

— (Mark 7:36-37 ICB)

Say: Today's story is another example of the miraculous way that Jesus healed people. Sometimes it can be challenging to understand why these kinds of healings don't regularly happen today, but we can still follow Jesus' example to make sure people with disabilities can access the teachings of Jesus.

Re-tell

Give the children the opportunity to retell today's Scripture story using a range of senses. They need to create a retelling that can be accessed and understood by deaf people so cannot rely on sound to communicate their story.

Action It

Say: We're going to watch a clip together that shares some of the experiences of deaf people. In the clip a different kind of sign language is being used from the one we discovered in the starter. We had a go at learning British Sign Language, and in the clip they are using American Sign Language. Hopefully this clip will help you to discover a little bit more about what it is like to live as a deaf person.

You will need to stop the clip at 5:24 to avoid the adverts and, depending on your group, you may need to read the words.

Video

Deaf people answer commonly googled questions about being deaf by Buzz Feed Video (5:45)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IgmB9c29UKU

Ask:

- ➔ What was the most fascinating thing that you discovered from the clip?
- ➔ How did it change your understanding of what deaf people experience?

Psalm 139-14 BSL

SAY: Today we are going to get some help from a member of The Salvation Army who will teach us how to sign our memory verse. Katie Sephton is part of Castleford Salvation Army, and during the week she supports deaf young people in school. Katie is deaf herself, and is very excited about sharing the memory verse with you today.

The aim of this activity is for the children to learn how to use BSL to share their memory verse. You may need to watch the clip a few times to learn the signs, but then encourage the children to have a go on their own.

Pray It

SAY: Every person on this earth has something to contribute. We may sound different, look different, or move differently, but we all respond to things around us in our own unique way. Our memory verse reminds us of this. To bring our session to a close, we are going to sign our memory verse together, and then I will pray with you all.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 04

JESUS RESTORES THE SENSES

- Mark 7:31-37 Jesus heals a deaf man
- Aim: To use all of our senses in worship

FOR ME



Learn

Did you enjoy starting to learn another language today?

If you did, then here's an opportunity to learn even more British Sign Language.

50 simple signs in British Sign Language for Kids by Kids by Commanding Hands

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtAi0R83qzU



Song for the week

'You know me' (Psalm 139) by Elim Coventry Kids uploaded by Limitless Kids Coventry

www.youtube.com/watch?v=el2HkzJFZ40

TOGETHER



Discover

Have a chat with the people at home.

- How would your lives be different if you could only communicate with sign language?
- What about your everyday life in the wider community, how would that change?

Watch the clip together.

Celebrations as British Sign Language looks set to get legal status by ITV News

www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7gekJF5-6o

- What have you learned about the challenges faced by deaf people across the UK?
- Is there anything in the clip that helps us to learn new ways to make church more accessible for deaf people?



Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Explore It FOR LEADERS

JULY
SESSION 05

BELONGING IS IMPORTANT TO JESUS

✉ **Mark 1:40-45 Jesus heals a sick man**

◎ **Aim:** To make sure others belong

In today's session we meet a man who was separated from his loved ones due to a skin disease. The rules of the time meant that he was isolated from the community and could not be with his family and friends. Jesus saw his need and helped him to belong to the community again. Today we will be thinking about ways that we can make church more accessible for people with learning and physical disabilities.

Each child will need:

- ➔ Resources to create a presentation – this will depend on your group
- ➔ Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

- ➔ To display some sentence prompts – see Start It section

Start It

Play a game of 'Find someone who ...' The aim is to encourage the group to discover more about each other and what they have in common. Using the following sentence prompts, ask the children to 'find someone who ...' within the rest of the group.

The children are not allowed to shout out to the whole group; they must talk to each other and then stand with the person they have found. You may like to make up some of your own sentence prompts based on your knowledge of the group, as some of the suggestions below may not be appropriate. If they cannot find someone who exactly meets the sentence prompt, then they can look for and discuss similarities.

Find someone ...

- ➔ whose favourite Disney film is *Encanto*
- ➔ who would rather read than watch TV
- ➔ who uses an asthma inhaler
- ➔ whose favourite sport is rugby
- ➔ who has used a wheelchair or pushed a wheelchair for someone else
- ➔ who likes to put crisps in their sandwiches
- ➔ who finds concentrating difficult
- ➔ who loves to paint

❸ **Say:** Throughout these sessions our memory verse has reminded us that we are all wonderfully made. We don't need to be embarrassed about the things that we think make us different. We are all part of God's amazing family.

Sing It

❸ **Say:** Before we sing together, let's share our memory verse for this month.

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'
— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

☞ **Say:** In each *Explore It* session this month we have shared a different song based on the words of Psalm 139.

Ask: Which one was your favourite?

Remind the children of the songs they have shared this month. Carry out a vote to see which is their favourite and sing it together. All the links are provided below.

'Psalm 139:14' lyric and dance video by Kids on the Move (1:58)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7603oH33Ghs

'You know everything' (Psalm 139) official lyric video featuring Shane and Shane by Kingdom Kids (3:28)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPdGBqup-bw

'Wonderful' Psalm 139:14 by Seeds Family Worship (2:51)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-pi_MV7ASQ

'You know me' (Psalm 139) by Elim Coventry Kids uploaded by Limitless Kids Coventry (4:13)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=el2HkzJFZ40

Tell It

Ask:

- ➔ Have you ever been left out of a situation?
- ➔ What did it feel like?

☞ **Say:** The main character in our story today knew just what it felt like to be left out. He had a skin condition that meant that he could not mix with other people or attend worship. He was totally excluded from his community and relied on friends to look after him. Let's find out more about his story in the book of Mark.

Read:

'A man who had a harmful skin disease came to Jesus. The man fell to his knees and begged Jesus, "I know that you can heal me if you will."

'Jesus felt sorry for the man. So he touched him and said, "I want to heal you. Be healed!" At once the disease left the man, and he was healed.'

'Jesus told the man to go at once. But Jesus warned him strongly, "Don't tell anyone about what I did for you. But go and show yourself to the priest. And offer a gift to God because you have been healed. Offer the gift that Moses commanded. This will show the people that you are healed." The man left there, but he told everyone he saw that Jesus had healed him. So the news about Jesus spread. That is the reason Jesus could not enter a town if people saw him. He stayed in places where nobody lived. But people came from all the towns to wherever he was.'

— (Mark 1:40-45 /CB)

Ask: What was the man able to do once Jesus had healed him?

☞ **Say:** For the first time in years, the man was able to be part of the community and mix with his friends and family. Jesus asked the man to keep his healing to himself and go straight to the priest. This seems like a strange thing for Jesus to say, as everyone could see that the man had been healed.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus told the man to go straight to the priest?

Say: Way back in the Old Testament, the book of Leviticus contains much of the Jewish Law. In this book we find out that it was the priest who decided whether someone with a skin disease could come back into the community. Jesus wanted to follow the Jewish Law and sent the man straight to the priest so that he could belong again.

Ask: How do you think the man felt when he finally got a great big hug from one of his friends?

Say: Our story today is another example of Jesus healing someone of their illness. Physical healing may not always happen, but there are many ways that we can 'be Jesus' to those who live with physical and learning disabilities.

Ask:

- What does our story today teach us about the way we should treat people with disabilities?
- How did Jesus help people to feel like they belonged?

Say: Mark Arnold is someone who is passionate about additional needs ministry, and this is what he has to say about belonging:

'Belonging is achieved when a person, regardless of ability or additional needs, has a sense of being completely in the right place; of feeling totally welcomed, accepted, loved, comfortable and at home.'

— Mark Arnold

Ask: Think of all the stories we have discovered in our Explore It sessions this month. How can we help people to feel welcomed, accepted, loved, and comfortable at home, school, or church?

Action It

Say: The Salvation Army does lots of wonderful things to support children and adults who have learning or physical disabilities. I wonder if your church knows about them? Your challenge today is to discover more about The Salvation Army's efforts to include people and to share it with your own church.

The completion of this task will depend on the level of awareness in your church and the needs of your group. The aim is for the children to create a short presentation that shares the different kinds of support available in the UK and Ireland Territory and the kinds of projects that are running across the country. They can also use everything they have learned in the sessions so far and may share some of their suggestions of ways to make their own church more inclusive.

Links for resources to help with this task are shown below.

- The Enabled newsletter describes what support is available for people with disabilities and their carers:
www.salvationist.org.uk/faith/our-territory/territorial-directory/enabled
- The Music Man Project – The Salvation Army (3:03)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSp--z-pdk8&t=73s

You may need additional time to complete the presentation, but it would be great if the children had an opportunity to share it with the rest of their church.

Pray It

Say: Every year The Salvation Army runs a music school for people with a range of disabilities. In our prayer time today we are going to listen to a special song that reminds us that everyone is wonderfully made by God. There may be children at your church or school with disabilities. May this song remind you that they are God's amazing creation. You may have disabilities yourself, and this song encourages you to use all your gifts and talents for God.

Video

'The 2019 Enabled Song' by SA Stu (3:31)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKCw9uOuAL4

When the children have listened to the song, discuss which words and phrases stood out for them. Discuss what they have discovered about people with disabilities in the sessions this month. Spend time in prayer together asking God to help the Church be more inclusive and to guide us as individuals to play our part to help people belong.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 05

BELONGING IS IMPORTANT TO JESUS

- ❑ **Mark 1:40-45 Jesus heals a sick man**
- ◎ **Aim:** To make sure others belong

FOR ME



Pray

Who do you know who has a learning or physical disability?

It might be someone at church, school or a club that you attend.

Spend time praying for them and asking God to guide you to be a better friend to them.

TOGETHER



Share

During this month's Explore It sessions you have learned about the importance of including people with learning and physical disabilities. You have so much important information to share with your church and family.

Use the clip from this week's prayer time to start a discussion with the people at home about all the ways we can help people to feel like they belong.

'The 2019 Enabled Song' by SA Stu

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKCw9uOuAL4



Song for the week

Choose your favourite song from this month's Explore It sessions.

'Psalm 139:14' lyric and dance video by Kids on the Move

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7603oH33Ghs

'You know everything' (Psalm 139) official lyric video featuring Shane and Shane by Kingdom Kids

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPdGBqup-bw

'Wonderful' Psalm 139:14 by Seeds Family Worship

www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-pi_MV7ASQ

'You know me' (Psalm 139) by Elim Coventry Kids uploaded by Limitless Kids Coventry

www.youtube.com/watch?v=el2HkzJFZ40



Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 /CB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

