

# Explore It

## INTRODUCTION

August Online Discipleship Material for Children

### Children of God Serve

At this time of year, many of our children and children's leaders would have been looking forward to the summer children's camps. It is so disappointing that these have not been able to go ahead this year. The original programme for the summer camps had already been written pre-Covid, based on the 2020 theme of SERVE, so rather than put this on the shelf we have adapted the programme for use in online children's cell groups. We hope that in some small way these sessions will enable those children who were looking forward to the summer camps to still get together and have fun, albeit learning and growing in a different way from usual.

The 'Children of God Serve' programme explores two themes: how we grow as children of God and how we serve those around us. There are five sessions which take children on a journey through these themes, looking at themselves, their communities and the wider world. Children will see the difference they can make through God's power and love by reflecting on the lives of different children in the Bible. By looking at biblical examples of how God called people, their response and the effect of this on their lives and situations, children will learn more about God, their own calling and how God will move in their own lives and situations.

The five sessions adapted for online use have, by necessity, been simplified from the original programme. The learning objectives are narrower to ensure one main learning point is made. However, please do refer to the 'Children of God Serve' full programme for additional ideas, activities and resources, including comprehensive leader's notes on each session. The sessions can also be adapted for use in

the home as a family, or, if you are able to have a 'socially distanced' outdoor meet-ups with your group, many of the activities could also be adapted for this setting too.

The five sessions are:

#### 1. Growing as a Child of God

Luke 2:41-52: Jesus in the Temple

#### 2. God Has A Job for Little Ol' Me!

1 Samuel 16: The anointing of David

#### 3. I Can Make A Difference

2 Kings 5:1-19: The little servant girl

#### 4. I Can Teach Others About Jesus

2 Timothy 1:5-14: Timothy

#### 5. I've Got What It Takes to Serve!

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15: Jesus invites the children

Each session is designed to last approximately 30 to 40 minutes, thereby making it usable with a free Zoom account. (This material could also be used with other video calling platforms.) The Salvation Army has produced guides on how to use Zoom, along with safeguarding guidance and a parent permission letter for running a session online. These can be accessed via our website:

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/resources/coronavirus-response-resources/youth-and-childrens-zoom-guides>

All online meetings should be password-protected, so you will need to contact your group in advance with the meeting times and ID and passwords (see the Zoom guide for how to do this). If you, or the families you are working

with, have not used Zoom before, it would be a good idea to have a practice get-together so you can work out the technology and familiarise the children/parents with the format.

It is possible that parents may want to join in with your sessions. You will need to make a decision on this for your setting, but we would encourage parents to be involved in their children's faith journey as much as possible and join in with your group up to a point which doesn't stop children from being the focus.

The sessions have been written in a script style, designed so you can pick up and deliver them relatively easily. It will be necessary to read through each session and prepare some content required to enhance the learning experience and enable children to come to each session prepared. Don't feel that you have to deliver all the content; you can pick and choose and emphasise what is relevant to your group.

Each session follows a similar format based around the following headings:

### *Start It*

A game or activity and an introduction to the theme building on children's lived experience. (10 mins)

### *Sing It*

A song suggestion to enhance your time of worship.

### *Tell It*

Each week different ideas for telling the story will be used to share biblical truths. (10 mins)

### *Action It*

An idea to help children reflect on the story and theme for this week. (5 mins)

### *Pray It*

A time of response and prayer for the group together. (5 mins)

### *Explore It*

These 'send home' ideas come in two parts and are designed to reflect the range of ways children can come to encounter God:

***Explore It (FOR ME)*** - provides ideas and activities that children can explore on their own

***Explore It (TOGETHER)*** - provides ideas and activities that children can explore with their families.



The Salvation Army, Youth & Children's Ministries, 101 Newington Causeway, London. SE1 6BN

Phone: 020 7367 4548

Email: [youthchildren@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:youthchildren@salvationarmy.org.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/youthchildrenSA](https://www.facebook.com/youthchildrenSA)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/youthchildrenSA](https://www.twitter.com/youthchildrenSA)

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