



Household & Multi-Age Lenten Resource 2014

About this Resource

This Multi-Age Lenten Resource from the Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) encourages households, multi-age small groups and multi-age congregations to engage together around specific Bible readings throughout Lent. Usually based on the Lectionary readings for the Sunday that begins the week, these ideas can be engaged in at any time during the week.

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Acknowledgments


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Nb. This resource references a number of stories from Rewind: a resource for opening the Bible with children and families. Throughout Lent 2014, these stories can be used freely in communities of any size or description, bearing the attribution 'Beth Barnett: Rewind John's Gospel, SUVic, 2012'. However, if you wish to use these resources beyond Lent 2014, purchase of an original copy of the entire Rewind resource would be appropriate.



A Shrove Tuesday Liturgy for making pancakes in your household

Gather the ingredients, and print out the prayers and bible bits of the liturgy out. Distribute the tasks so that each person can contribute in the process of cooking, reading and praying. Add each ingredient to a bowl and mix as you go, reading the corresponding bible bit and prayer sentence.


 Our Loving God, We mark this Shrove Tuesday, celebrating with pancakes and remembering the ways your ancient stories and living words combine, calling us to give up greed and find fullness in faith and sweetness in serving. Give us a taste for your truth and a hunger for helping others.



1 Egg (beaten)



“God gives life to all things” (1 Tim 6:13)


 Creator God, we thank you for the life you have given us. Help us to honour life in all the earth.



$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Milk –



“Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation” (1 Peter 2:2)


 Lord Jesus, your good news of salvation is like milk that nourishes the new born child. The bible encourages us to eagerly desire it.



1 cup of Flour –



“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Deut 8:3)


 Lord God, thank you for your words that are better than bread. Help us to rely on what is good and substantial and lasting; to be generous sharers of food and truth; to offer our resources freely to those in need.



Pinch of Salt




“You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13)

 Lord Jesus, help us as your followers to be salt, preserving what is of value, healing what is wounded and bringing out the good flavours in the world.



Cook the pancake mix. As you sit down to eat, pray again.

 Our Loving God, We mark this Shrove Tuesday, celebrating with pancakes and remembering the ways your ancient stories and living words combine, calling us to give up greed and find fullness in faith and sweetness in serving. Give us a taste for your truth and a hunger for helping others.

Ash Wednesday Sacred Space

Begin your season of Lent as a household by creating a (portable) space that will remind you of the invitation to travel with Jesus and his followers across the ages through the intersecting stories and symbols of life and death and new life. Use a tray to define the space, so it can be placed in the middle of your common table as a focus, or moved easily to one side, or another space as necessary over the whole season of Lent. This can serve as a place for leaving short written prayers, or simply one word reminders (names, places, issues), and to light tea-lights for prayers.

Some options:

- Make a collection of small bits of junk: pipecleaners, wire, plasticene, sticks, bolts and nuts, springs, hinges, buttons, the broken innards of clocks/radios/mp3s, straws, cardboard scraps, plastic scraps, fabric... Form this into a scene of some kind from your imaginations that relates to your concerns and views of the world.
- Use pieces of charcoal to write or draw symbols and words of Lent on a piece of sandpaper. Tear the edges of the sand paper to ‘roughen’ the boundaries. Leave some crumbled charcoal and dust clumps on the sandpaper.

A confession prayer to pray as you construct your space

(Often there are one or two people in any given group who find words more helpful than tactile activity. You’ll know who those ones are. Don’t compel anyone to either read or to construct, but allow people to gravitate to the part of the task that will engage them well. The aim is not for everyone to have to do the same thing, but to do something together, in which each person has a part.)

We are made from solid stuff

We can list our molecules and decode our DNA

But we cannot make ourselves

God alone is our creator and life giver

We are easily broken

We burn out and we crumble to ash and to dust

And we cannot save ourselves

Christ alone is our deliverer and healer

We are able to know both good and evil

We can choose between our desires



But we cannot fully resist evil or get rid of it
The Lord alone is the holy one who defeats death with love.

We are called to follow Jesus and walk in his steps
But only forgiven and forgivingly
Only falteringly and only together
The Spirit alone makes us one, gives what we need and
comforts our steps.

Matthew 4: 1-11 'You're not yourself'

'Snickers' have run a series of commercials (there are many versions adapted for different countries) with the tag line: 'You're not you when you're hungry'.

They show scenarios of people behaving in socially unacceptable ways to their context and being given a chocolate bar, with the advice from the friend that they need to eat the chocolate because 'you're not you when you're hungry'. The camera switches away and then back again, and the person is dramatically transformed to their 'normal' self. Often they have been depicted as the opposite gender in their 'abnormal/unacceptable' state – and I should add the warning that on the whole the series of ads is irrevocably sexist.

Below are links to 3 examples (the ones which don't involve gender parodies – you can search for those yourself). As a household watch the clips, and together consider the effects of being hungry. Is there room to challenge the idea that fasting intentionally might make you 'not yourself' but rather help you to become more authentically you, by confronting your humanness and the power of your desires?

As Jesus was fasting, he was tempted to become untrue to himself, to use his power for self-gain and self-gratification and self-aggrandisement, but the episode ultimately reaffirms Jesus' true self and call to serve. As a household help each other see the ways in which your season of Lent, whether you are fasting or not, reaffirms your call to serve others – as you were truly made to do.

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziTmA8z6X2s>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBk2MbFeUxg>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndphyShO9HA>

Romans 5:12-19 "Rightification"

Start with a large cardboard circle, no less than 30 cm in diameter. From old magazines, tear out pieces of pictures of 'nature' scenes (mountains, jungles, beaches, cliffs, deserts, oceans, trees, animals, birds, fish...etc) and people in healthy communities. Glue these to cover the entire circle (both sides if you like), to make a 'world'. Keep 13 pieces spare. On these extra pieces write in white crayon or gold marker as follows:

- 5 pieces - 'free gift'
- 3 pieces - 'grace'
- 5 pieces - 'rightification/justousness'

You will also need a thick black marker.

As you read the passage, each time the word 'sin' (in any of its forms) or 'trespass' (in any of its forms) occurs write 'sin' somewhere on the cardboard circle world.

Each time 'free gift', 'grace', 'righteousness' or 'justification' occurs, paste a corresponding extra piece of world over one of the 'sins' or 'trespasses'.

By the end of the reading the 'world' should have been restored with all 'sins' and 'trespasses' covered by the 'free gift', 'grace' and 'rightification/justousness' pieces.

NB: The use of rightification/justousness is worth some comment in your household, remembering that both 'justification' and 'righteousness', as they appear in the English texts, stem from the one word root in Greek.

- Consider the ways 'right' words and 'just' words are associated in English.
- How does this help us understand the way Paul tells the story of humanity and God in Romans 5?

Genesis 12:1-3 'Go and Bless'

- Make a board game in the style of Monopoly, 40 squares around the edge of the board. There are just under 72 words in the words God speaks to Abram (beginning from 'Go') in Genesis 12:1b-3 to spread around the 40 squares. Write one or two or three words on each square, beginning with 'Go!' on the first.
- Add strips of colour to the squares in the style of Monopoly properties, grouping some phrases together. Make matching cards that players can collect when they land on a square.
- Make the word BLESS a special square on which every player receives a Jelly baby.
- Play the game by giving each person in your household a character from Abram's family – Abram, Sarai, Nephew Lot, Slavegirl Hagar, cow, sheep, camel, donkey...use Lego people and plastic animals as tokens for the players, according to the characters.

Roll dice for each person to advance around the board. Keep going as many times as you can, rehearsing the words as you go, until all the 'property' cards have been collected, and you are all well and truly blessed!



An invitation to pray: Let this passage call you to prayer for all the families of the earth, whom God intends to be blessed by those who are already blessed.

John 3:1-17 'Round and Round' (from Rewind)



[Download the pdf of Round and Round \(from Rewind\)](http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/)

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

Exodus 17:1-7 "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Thoroughly rinse an empty plastic or glass bottle. In permanent marker write the final question of this text...

'Is the Lord among us or not?'

...on the side of the bottle.

During the week keep the bottle on your table at meal times to serve your water from. Use it as a reminder to ask yourselves the question each day, and share your answers with examples of your sense of God's presence, or perhaps absence.

Exodus 17:1-7 "Sticks and Stones"

Gather 14 sticks and 15 stones. The sticks should be at least 1 cm in diameter and the stones 3-4cm across to enable you to write on them.

As a household, work slowly through the text stopping to write each of the words that begin with 'w' on a stick and the words that begin with S on stones (note that there are a few repetitions).

Divide the sticks and stones between you (mix them up at random). Have one person read the whole text, while others join in calling out on the 'W' and 'S' words of the particular sticks and stones they have. Somewhere outside use the sticks and stones to spell out the phrase 'Is God with us or not?' (You'll need some extra sticks).

John 4:5-42 'Well, Well, Well' (from Rewind)



[Download the pdf of Well, Well, Well\(from Rewind\)](http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/)

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

Ephesians 5: 8-14 'Light in Darkness'

This activity spreads over a few days – possibly the whole week - and enacts the narrative of the vibrant creation being overtaken by darkness, and then light coming again.

- Paint a piece of white card with bright colours. This can be a creation garden scene, or just random splashes of colour. Leave to dry completely.
- Cover the entire card by colouring thickly over with black and/or grey crayon.
- Use a wooden skewer to scratch through the black crayon to reveal the colour underneath.
- Mark a border all around and decorate this with symbols, patterns and pictures that the passage suggests to you. Do some brainstorming together over the text and discuss your ideas.
- Scratch in some of the key phrases from Ephesians 5:8-14. You can add more each day. There are seven verses which could provide one verse for each day...but most households will find it more beneficial to concentrate on a few verses.
- Substitute pictures or glyphs for key words as appropriate to your imaginations, ages and literacy levels.

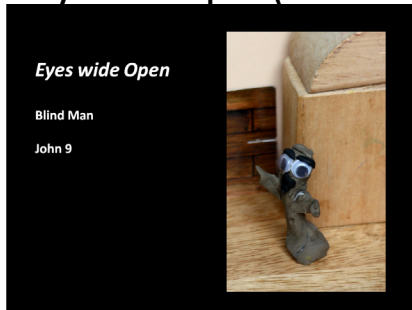
1 Samuel 16:1-13 "Silhouettes"

On an outside wall or fence where you live, take it in turns to stand against the wall - preferably in height order from tallest to shortest - and trace around each other's silhouette in chalk.

Read the passage and agree on a pithy paraphrase for each verse to be written inside the silhouettes. For example, vs. 2: 'Sam: Death danger from Crazy King. God: BBQ bluff'



John 9:1-41 'Eyes Wide Open' (from Rewind)



[Download the pdf of Eyes wide open \(from Rewind\)](#)

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

John 11:1-45 'Mazzie, Lazzie and Martie' (from Rewind)



[Download the pdf of Mazzie, Lazzie and Martie \(from Rewind\)](#)

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

Psalm 130 'Out of the Depths'

Make a large batch of slime in a bucket (perhaps using the recipe here - <http://chemistry.about.com/cs/howtos/ht/slime.htm>)

Copy out the verses of Psalm 130 on to individual pieces of sturdy plastic using permanent marker.

Drop the verses into the slime and mix around, submerging them completely.

Take turns reaching into the 'slimy depths' of the bucket and pulling out one verse at a time and reading it. When all the verses have been salvaged, refer to a full copy of the text and place them in order, reading them again.

Romans 8:6-11 "Breath of life"

In Genesis 2, the human is made from earth and the breath of God. Life is earthy and godly (or in Paul's terms, flesh and spirit). To just think we are physical matter is a 'dead end' – life is breathing in the spirit; the spirit in us, and we in the spirit.

Celebrate the way Paul pulls these ideas together in this passage by all

- Clapping your hands together each time the word 'flesh' or 'body' occurs.
- Exhaling through your lips each time the word 'spirit' occurs.

Matthew 21:1-11 'Branches of (short-lived) enthusiasm'

Cut a leafy branch from a garden. The leaves should be plentiful and a reasonable size. Write the key words (nouns and verbs), one word per leaf in random order, leaving the leaves attached to the branch.

On the first day of the week, pass the branch around from person to person, inviting each person to find three or four words among the leaves (don't pull them off the branch) and read them out.

Talk about whether this gives any clues to what might be happening in the story? If you knew some of the story ahead of time would it help you put the words together? Note that Jesus' actions were seemingly a little random, though if you knew what was going to happen next it helps to understand these slightly strange instructions and the events that unfold.

Finally, read the text, listening for the words that each person had chosen from the branch.

Keep the branch in a prominent position for the rest of the week and further engagement.

On a following day of the week, allow each person to pick several leaves from the tree and, reading the text from the bible together, place the leaves in order as you go.

As the week goes on, read again, picking from the remaining leaves.

Towards the end of the week, your branch is likely to begin to look not so fresh, drying up and withering. As this happens, consider how the enthusiasm of the people in this story also withers away as the week progresses.



John 13:1-17, 31b-35 'Wriggly Toes' (from Rewind)



Download the pdf of Wriggly Toes (from Rewind)
<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

John 13:21-32 'Do it quickly'

Leonardo Da Vinci's famous painting of 'The Last Supper' depicting Jesus' disciples' reactions to the declaration that one would betray him, took around four years to complete. It has been copied and adapted many times with many variations, either for humor (several 'Simpsons' versions) or to help us critique our assumptions about Jesus and his disciples through different cultural lenses. Take some time together to look at some different versions online. Or, if you like, print out a selection and create a mini-gallery for Holy Week.

John 13:21-32 'Quick Draw'

While Da Vinci's work took years to paint, this activity is called 'Quick Draw'. Jesus tells Judas to 'Do quickly' what he has decided to do (betray Jesus).

Give each person a few pieces of paper and a marker or crayon. Explain that you will read the passage from the Bible and every now and again stop and call out 'Quick Draw', repeating the word you have just read. Each person must try to quickly draw that word, calling out 'Quick Draw' when they are finished. Awarding a silver chocolate coin (if you haven't given up chocolate for Lent) is an appropriate reward for being first!

When the passage is finished, compare your artistic efforts, and the interpretations of the text they reveal. If you have made a 'Last Supper Gallery' of Da Vinci replicas, add your own 'Quick Draw' Last Supper art.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 "Open gates"

Pick up the theme of open gates in this psalm with a bit of photo-poetry in your neighbourhood. Read the passage together and note the call to a community to be open to God.

Take a camera with you on a walk and photograph various gates you observe. As you photograph your streetscape stop and pray that there will be openness to God in your community.

When you have an interesting collection of photographs, use the images to assemble a slideshow of Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29. Later in the week, revisit your slide show and pray the psalm together as you do.

John 18:1-19:42 'Busted' (from Rewind)



Download the pdf of Busted (from Rewind)

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/childrenfamilies/multi-age-lenten-resource-2014/>

John 20:1-10 "Relaying the Resurrection News"

This is not a text to read sitting comfortably! Firstly it is full of physical running around, secondly it is full of uncomfortable ideas and questions - Where is Jesus? What has happened? What is possible?

Choose two people in your household who are happy not to do any running to be readers. They should stand, bible in hand open at John 20, 5-10 metres apart (best done outside, but not essential). Each other member of the household should stand with either of the readers.

One of the readers starts by reading the first phrase to someone with them. This person runs to the other reader and their companions, and repeats the phrase. In response the reader at this end reads the next phrase in the text to someone else, who runs back to the first reader and repeats the phrase. Keep going like this, phrase by phrase (or two phrases and runners at a time depending on the size of your household).

Confusion and exhaustion are authentic to the text. If you can't get through it all in one reading, that's fine. Pick it up again another day...