



# Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:  
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus  
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:  
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

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**Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?**

Esther

Written around 500 BC by an eyewitness in the Persian courts, this is the story of Esther, a young Jewish girl who is taken into the king's

We are all in positions of influence, the question is, how do we use it? For good or bad? Who do we influence and how? Who are we influenced by and how?

We invite you to share the whole story with your group using the videos provided and then use the suggested passages to explore the four different influencers in the story. King Xerxes, Esther, Haman and Mordecai. Two of them were good influencers, one was a bad influence and the other one? Was he purely in the middle or was he an influencer too?

This is the only book that doesn't mention God, inviting the readers to ask where do we see God's influence in the story?

This story could be a trigger for those children who might have people in their life who are strong in their influence and power, even abusive, some children might find this difficult to explore. The story also deals with themes of genocide and racism.

## Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

### Gathering prayer

#### Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

#### Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

#### As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

#### Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

#### Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

#### And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

#### As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

#### AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

**Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.**

**Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.**

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,**

**Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

**Amen**

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### In-person game

#### Carrot in a box

This is a bluffing game where players aim to keep hold of the winning box containing a carrot. One player must try to influence another and cause them to choose the incorrect empty box.

*You will need –*

- 2 boxes with lids (eg shoe box)
- carrot

Before the game the leader should secretly place a carrot inside one of the boxes, the second box remains empty. This is a bluffing game. The aim is to end up with the box containing the carrot.

Players stand facing each other and are each given one of the boxes. Player A begins by looking inside their box, Player B does not get to look inside their box and therefore does not know if it contains the carrot. Player A can now decide whether to keep their own box, or switch boxes with Player B, they s.wi

## A new way to explore the passage

Begin by showing the whole story using the videos suggested.

Here is a list of the four main characters in the story and the chosen passages for this section to explore. *All from the International Children's Bible*

We are going to think about each character and see how they used their influence.

**Haman** – Esther 3 v 1 – 13, put in a position of influence, used it for bad.

**Mordecai** – Esther 2 v 5 – 8, 4 v 12 – 14, put in a position of influence in Esther's life, used it for good.

**Esther** – Esther 5 v 1 – 8, put in a position of influence and used it to save a nation.

**King Xerxes** – Esther 1 v 1 – 4, had power and influence as a

Use the special box or bag and sing “what’s in the box/bag? What’s in the box/bag? Let’s see, let’s see, what’s in the box/bag” (to the tune of The Farmer’s in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word ‘box’. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week’s box could include:

- Costumes to dress up as characters from the story.
- Crowns, cloaks, tiaras, princess dresses, simple tunics and shirts and a triangle shaped hat for Haman.
- Include elements of small world play such as wooden or playmobile people, including princesses and kings.
- Four characters using wooden spoons or masks.
- A big smiley face and a sad face on the reverse, or a thumbs up and thumbs down sign, to encourage playing with the concept of good and bad influences and decisions.
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (A cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it’s always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)

## Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

### Coloured circle prayers

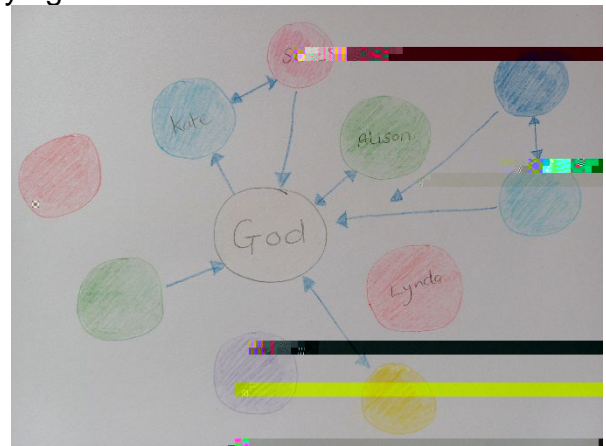
*What you need:*

- Paper
- Colouring pencils or pens

This is a way of praying intercessory prayers, praying to God on behalf of others.

Start by drawing a circle in the centre of the paper and write God in the circle. This is a way of inviting God into your prayer time. Start to draw other circles around the centre.

Encourage everyone to think about people in their lives they want to pray for perhaps people who are unwell or going through a difficult time, people they want to say thank you to God for who might be influencers in their lives, parents, teachers, friends etc. Continue to think about the world and add circles of prayer for other places and situations in the world that they want to pray for. It might be helpful to play some music as you do this to give everyone some space to think as they colour. When they have drawn the circles encourage everyone to link them to God and others with arrows.



### Spoken prayer

#### God in my everything

God be in my whole life,  
 God guide me and be my influence.  
 God be in my thoughts and my imagination,  
 God be in my yes and in my no.

God be in my today and tomorrow,  
God be in my decisions and opportunities.  
God be in my words and actions,  
God be in my everything.

Amen

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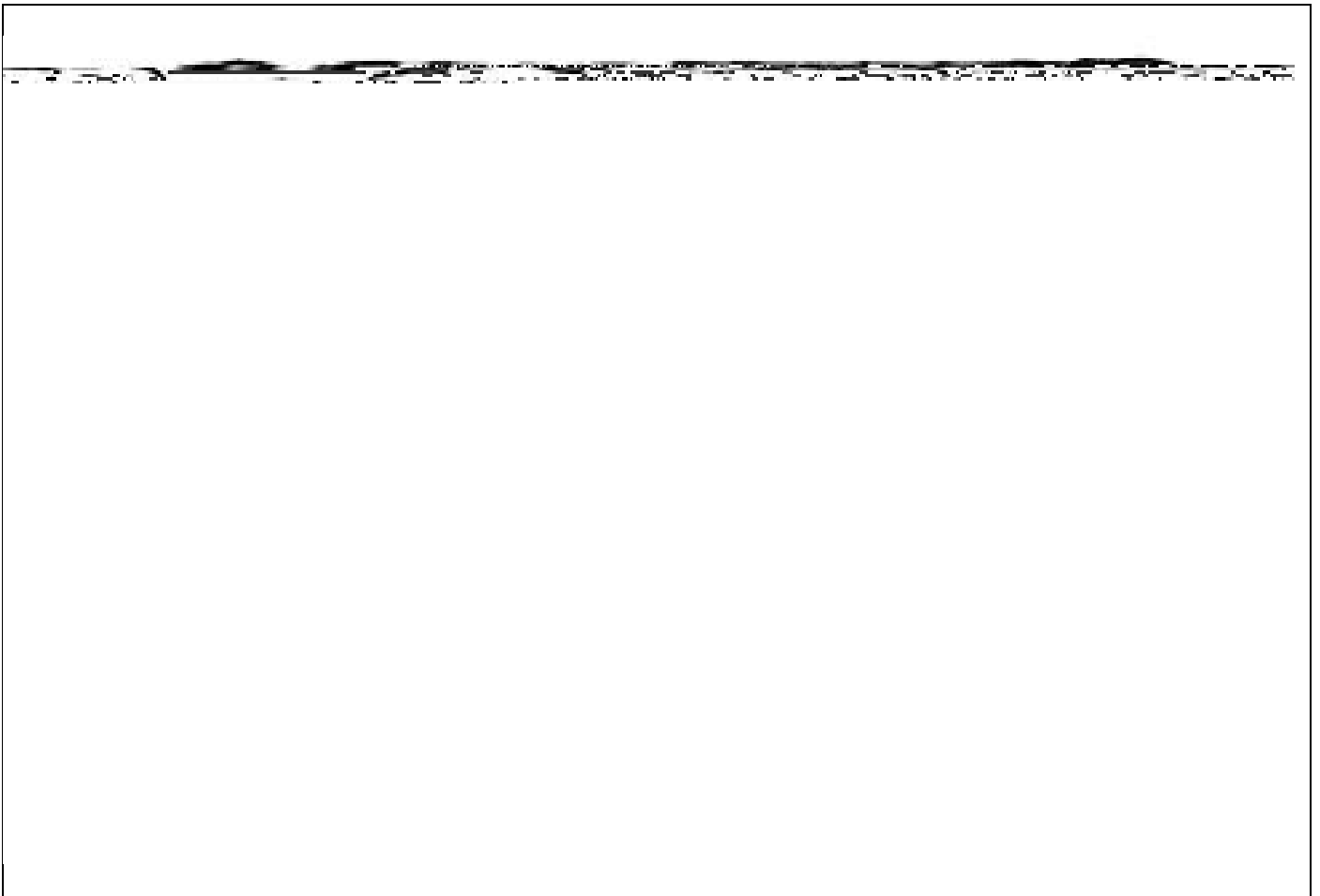


Illustration by [lambsongs.co.nz](http://lambsongs.co.nz) via [freebibleimages.com](http://freebibleimages.com) Jill Kemp and Richard Gunther

