

KIDS RESOURCES

4-7



BUILDINGS

ECO  **CHURCH**
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



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BUILDINGS FOR CREATION



GAME

Tower Building

Materials:

- A large variety of cardboard boxes (shoeboxes, cereals, tissues, teabags boxes, postal packages etc...)

Instructions:

- Put the children into groups of 3 or 4.
- Use the cardboard boxes to build the tallest tower they can without any adult help within a time limit of 5 mins or until all the boxes run out!
- Celebrate the tallest tower.



GAME

Simon Says

Play a game of Simon Says with a variety of actions including:

Simon says – wear a big smile; hi-five people around you; pick up a piece of litter, wave at the clouds...

Simon does not say – throw stones, hit other people, wear a grumpy face, sit and do nothing...



BIBLE

Introduction

Today we are going to be learning about building our lives on wise words and how that makes our lives strong. But not just our lives, it also makes the world strong. We are going to see how following Jesus is good for us and for the whole Earth and then try to encourage all people who love Jesus to care for God's creation.

Bible reading: The wise man and the foolish man (paraphrase of Matthew 7: 24–27)

One day, Jesus saw lots of people coming to listen to him so he went up a hillside and started to talk to them. They all sat near to him and heard him talk about what living God's way was like. They heard him talk about caring for others before themselves and how to deal with people when they hurt you or upset you. He talked about how to talk to God and how to trust God. He then finished off his time with them, by telling them this story:

There were once 2 men – one was wise and one was foolish. The wise man worked hard to build his house on solid, rocky ground: he worked hard to dig deep foundations. When the storms came with pouring rain and strong winds, his house stood firm and did not move. He is like the person who listens to the words I say and does what I say, even when it is hard work. When life gets hard, his faith in me is not shaken and he can carry on living for and with me.

The foolish man took the easy route and built his house on soft, sandy ground: it was easy to dig in the soft sand. When the storms came with pouring rain and strong winds, his house did not stand firm – in fact it crashed to the ground. He is like the person who does not listen to the words I say and does not do what I say – he takes the easy ways in life and doesn't work with any challenges. When life gets hard, his faith in me is shaken and he cannot carry on living for and with me.

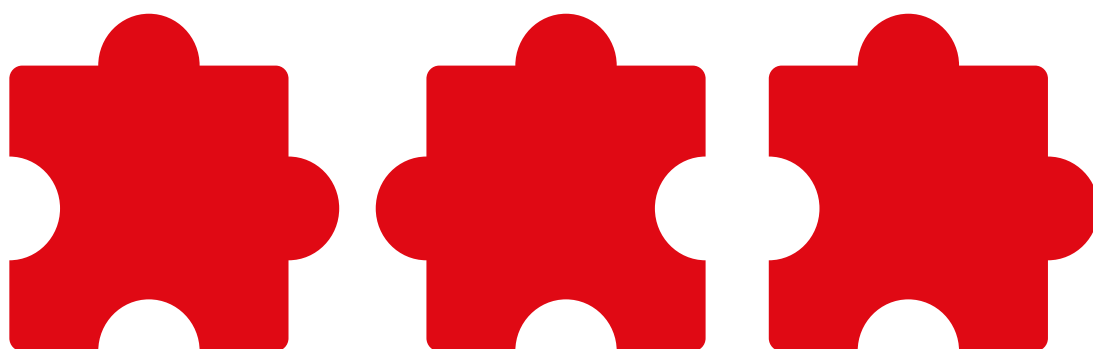
He finished his story and all of the people who had been listening to him were amazed, because he had told them many wonderful new things about God and about life. They were left to wonder if they were going to follow Jesus's wise words and be like the wise man or whether they were going to ignore them and be like the foolish man.



BIBLE CONTINUED

Bible Discussion

- What does a wise person do with God's words? (follow them)
- What does a foolish person do with God's words? (ignore them)
- Who made the Earth? (God made the Earth)
- Who does the Earth belong to now? (It all belongs to God – Psalm 24:1)
- Who understands how all the Earth works and the best way to look after it? (God does because He made it: God's instructions are wise because he understands how the whole world works.)
- What happens when we don't follow God's instructions for caring for the world properly? (when we don't follow them, the world becomes wobbly and falls down. God says we are wise to follow his instructions if we want our world to stand strong.)
- God allows us to understand some of his wisdom as scientists study the world and people who know him study his word. One wise thing we have learnt is that to care for God's world, we have to use less electricity. How can we use less energy in our church building? (Turn off indoor lights; don't use outdoor lights all night; turn off electrical equipment when not being used)





ACTIVITY

EXTRA RESOURCE:
Statements from Jesus
to be printed out and
put into strips – below.

Activity – Statement Sort

Jesus told this story after he had been telling the people around him what his kingdom was like.

Materials:

- A set of the statement bricks printed out for each group. (See extra resources)

Instructions:

- Split the group so there are a small number of children with an adult.
- Discuss each of the statements and sort them into 2 piles: one pile that Jesus said his kingdom was like and one pile that Jesus didn't say. (The statements with a star next to them did not come from Jesus)
 - Happy are the people who are kind: the whole earth belongs to them.
 - You are like a light for the world to show them what God is like.
 - Love people who hurt you.
 - Don't want to have too much money on Earth because it will not last.
 - Do not worry about what you are going to wear.
 - Think about your own behaviour before you judge someone else.
 - You cannot love God and money.
 - * Take everything that you want because God has blessed you.
 - * You are more important to God than anyone else.
 - * You will be happy if you ignore all the problems that other people have.
 - * Always make sure that you have enough food and money for yourself.
- Which of these statements help us to care for God's world? (All of the ones which Jesus said – these are wise words.)
- Jesus said that we are a light to the world to show people what God is like – do we use our lights wisely in the church to show that we take care of God's world?



ACTIVITY CONTINUED

Action – Creation Care

Either

Make a model church with wisdom instruction bricks.

Materials:

The cardboard boxes used in the game

The statement bricks from the discussion

Some blank bricks (could be made out of scrap paper)

Glue, Sticky Tape

Instructions:

- Work together as a whole group to create a model of a church building using the cardboard boxes. Don't forget the door, the steeple or tower and the windows.
- Glue Jesus's instructions onto the side of the building so they look like bricks.
- Write instructions for use of electricity and lights onto the extra bricks with your thoughts of how these show the church caring for the world.
- Invite parents and church members to look at the model of the church to see how Jesus asked us to care for his world with everything we have. They might like to add some extra idea bricks.

Or

Make mini-posters to encourage people to turn off the lights in the church building

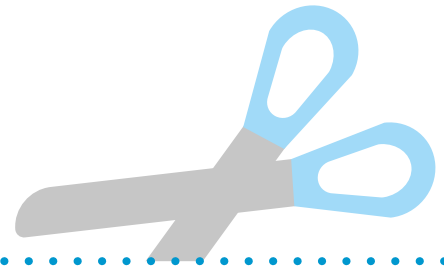
Materials:

A6 or A5 paper

Pens and Pencils

Instructions:

- Discuss the key message to write on the mini-posters e.g. turn off the lights please; save electricity – save creation; switch off; last one out – turn off the lights; thank you for turning off the lights (if the children struggle with writing, the message could be printed onto the poster or written by the leader)
- Draw a picture to encourage people to turn off the lights.
- If it doesn't disturb the service, put the mini-posters next to light switches in the church (otherwise do this after the children have left).



Happy are the people who are kind: the whole earth belongs to them.

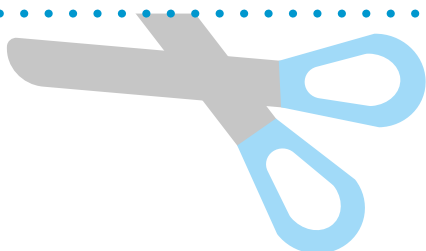
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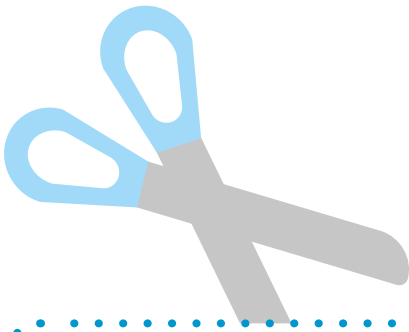
Love people who hurt you.

Don't want to have too much money on Earth because it will not last.

Do not worry about what you are going to wear.

Think about your own behaviour before you judge someone else.





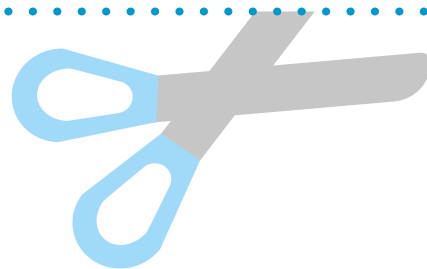
Take everything that you want because
God has blessed you.

You are more important to God
than anyone else

You will be happy if you ignore
all the problems that other people have.

Always make sure that you have enough
food and money for yourself.

You cannot love God and money.





PRAY



All stand around the cardboard box church.

Leader reads the prayers and the children respond, "Let us be wise God!" after each prayer.

Creator God, please let people who know and love you care for the earth which belongs to you.

Creator God, please help your church to be like the wise man and build their lives on what Jesus says.

Creator God, please let our own church shine like a light to show God's love for our world, in our [village/town/city].

Creator God, please give us ideas for what we could do in our own group. [Spend time listening to God to see if He gives you any ideas – share any thoughts]



WORSHIP

Sung Worship

"The wiseman built his house upon the rock": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkNOcr5iHP4>

"City on a Hill" by Nick and Becky Drake: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITEa-dEftdnM>



ACTIVITY

Activity – Habitat Hunt

Have a quick run-around search to see if our church building has any lights on the outside of the building. If it does, what is the purpose of the lights? (safety; showing off the building when it's dark)

What other parts of the building can you spot? (walls, roof etc). What is the purpose of those?

As people we normally live in buildings made with brick, stone or wood. We are going to look at the "buildings" of wildlife today and see how they show off their homes and keep them safe.

Materials:

- ID guides (for suggestions, see extra resources)
- Clipboards and paper to record
- Magnifying glasses
- Camera

Instructions:

- Talk about the different habitats you have within your church land: woodland; gravestones; paths; hedges; flower beds etc...
- Split into smaller groups with 1 adult per group and each explore a different habitat.
- Use the ID guides and magnifying glasses to name plants and creatures, and try to spot homes of creatures (e.g. holes, nests etc...)
- Take a photo of the habitat you have been exploring.
- Record your findings by drawing or writing.
- Did any of the "buildings" or homes you saw have any lights on? Did they have extra decoration? Were they near to the lights of our building or were they far away?

Action – Wildlife Homes

Creating a wildlife home can be as big as you want – but you will need to pre-plan this carefully: location, materials, extra help required etc... (for suggestions and instructions, see extra resources)

We are going to hear and follow Jesus' instructions to care for his world and we are going to make a home for wildlife within the church grounds. We are going to put these homes where they won't be disturbed by light or people and where the wildlife can flourish – remember that's the first thing God asked us to do.



PRAY

Stand around the new wildlife homes you have created and pray a blessing on them – children to say “**I agree**” after each blessing.

In Jesus name

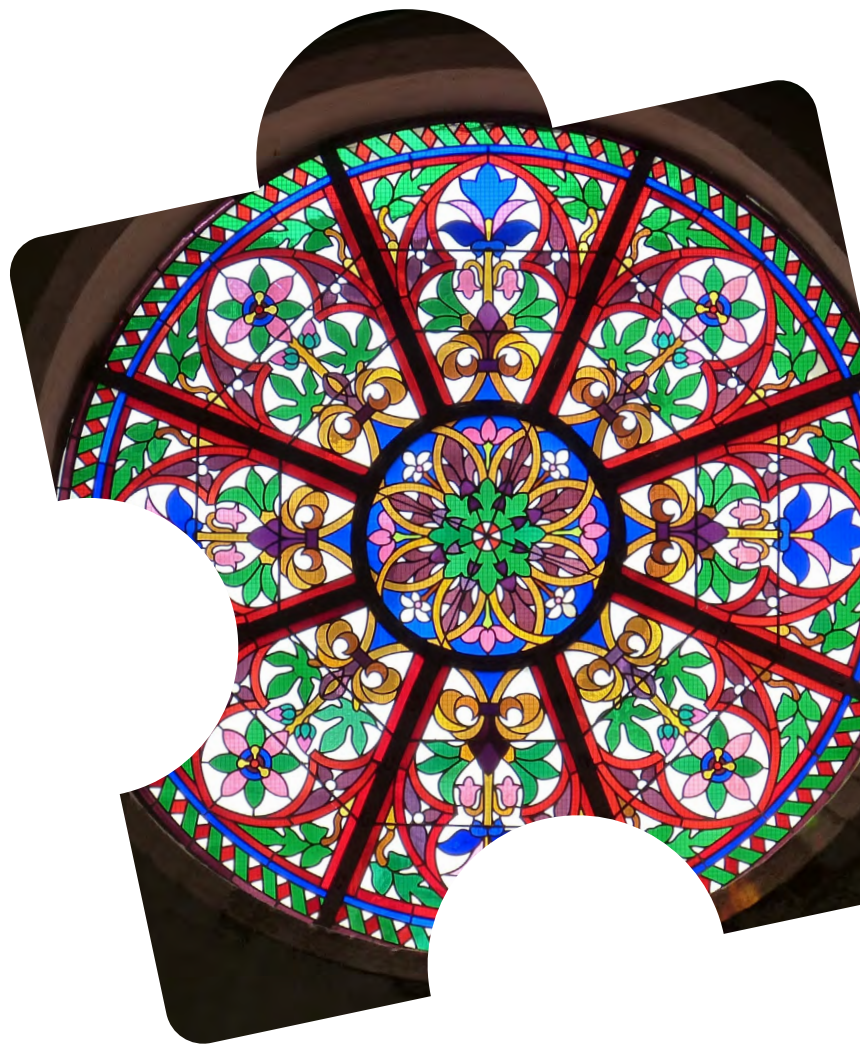
We bless this new building with safety – that no-one will damage it.

We bless this new home with protection from the weather.

We bless this new home with wonderful creatures coming to live in it.

We bless the creatures who will live in this new building – that they will be safe, protected and live well.

Amen





EXTRA RESOURCES

Habitat resources from Caring for God's Acre: <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/resources/education-pack/wildlife-safari/>

ID guides can be purchased from the Field Studies Council: https://www.field-studies-council.org/product-category/publications/?fwp_publication_type=fold-out-guide

Bee hotel

- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-bee-hotel/> (mild difficulty – you will need a drill and thick wooden disks)
- Bug hotel
- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-multi-room-bug-hotel/> (easier – you will need plant pots and string)
- RSPB: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/> (mild difficulty – you will need wood plus material to fill gaps)

Individual mini bug hotel

- Perrywood: <https://www.perrywood.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Perry-wood-Garden-Explorers-Create-a-Mini-Bug-Hotel.pdf> (easier – you will need plastic bottles plus materials to fill gaps)
- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-mini-bug-hotel/> (easier – you will need tin cans plus material to fill gaps)

Small pond

- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-mini-pond/> (easier – you will need old washing up bowls plus extra materials)
- Gardeners World: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/diy/how-to-make-a-mini-pond/> (mild difficulty – you will need a large container and a variety of plants)

Hedgehog home

- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-hedgehog-home/> (easier – you will need plastic boxes)
- Wildlife Trust: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-hedgehog-home> (trickier – you will need wood, nails and hammers, plus space to locate)

Toad home

- PECT: <https://www.pect.org.uk/resource/24-toad-home/> (easier – you will need plant pots)

Bird Box

- RSPB: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-birdbox/> (trickier – you will need wood, nails and hammers)