



*Session 1:*  
**You are never alone**



**Aims for this  
session**

- For each child to know that God is always with them.
- For each child to experience the presence of God around them.



## Memory Verse

'I am with you  
always.'

Matthew 28:20



## Catch Up (10 mins)

Refer to the teaching notes for guidance on how to run this time.



## Game 1 (10 mins)

### 5-7 years

**Resource:**

- Animal Snap cards

Use a pack of picture cards such as Animal Snap. Have the children place them face down in a grid format. Then have the children try and match the cards to create a pair by turning x2 up at random. Have no more than six children in each group.

### 8-10 years

**Resource:**

- Playing cards

Use a pack of playing cards. Have the children place them face down in a grid format. Then have the children try and match the cards to create a pair (just pair up the numbers) by turning x2 up at random. Have no more than six children in each group.





## Bible story

Based on 2 Kings 18-20

**5-7 years** (5 mins)

Tell the children that you are going to read them a story. Ask the children to get into pairs with a different person every time you say the words, 'God was with him' in the story:

**G** The Kings of Judah kept getting it wrong. They worshipped other gods, did bad things and encouraged the people to do the same. Then, a new king became the King of Judah. His name was Hezekiah. He was a good king; he did the right things. He took down the models of other gods that the people were worshipping and broke them up into tiny, tiny little pieces and then ground them into dust. Hezekiah listened to God and trusted Him. God was with him and blessed him so that everything he did went well. The Assyrian army came to fight King Hezekiah and his people. Before everyone knew what was happening, they had taken many castles in Judah. Instead of listening to God, King Hezekiah got scared. He forgot God was with him and, because he forgot, he messed up. He sent a message to Assyria's king. 'I'll pay you whatever you want, just leave our land.' The Assyrian king asked for ten tons of silver and one ton of gold. Hezekiah took the silver and gold from the temple and the palace to give to the Assyrian king. Doh! He gave away God's things.

This plan didn't work! Hezekiah realised that Assyria planned to fight anyway. He remembered God was with him and asked God for His help. He asked the people to help too and they worked hard to repair the city and made lots and lots of weapons. Hezekiah chose army leaders and told them to be brave, because God had the power to win the fight. The Assyrian king sent messengers to make fun of Hezekiah and his people, but the people kept quiet. Hezekiah simply worshipped God.

That night, God sent angels to kill 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. When everyone else woke up, they ran back to Assyria, and Hezekiah and his people were saved. God was with him. **G**





## 8-10 years (7 mins)

### Resources:

- Large sheet of paper and blu-tack or flip chart
- Marker pen

Put a piece of paper up on the wall or have a flip chart. Divide the piece of paper in two. At the top in one column write – ‘Got it right’, in the other column write ‘Messed up’. Ask the children to agree which side to tick for each paragraph as you read.

**G** *The kings of Judah kept getting it wrong. They worshipped other gods, did bad things and encouraged the people to do the same. Then a new king became the king of Judah. His name was Hezekiah. He was a good king; he did the right things. He took down the models of other gods that the people were worshipping and broke them up into tiny, tiny little pieces and then ground them into dust. Hezekiah listened to God and trusted Him. God was with him and blessed him so that everything he did went well.*

(Pause and let the children decide where to place a mark.)

*Hezekiah asked the people to clean out the temple and worship God again. Everyone came to worship God; musicians and singers, young and old. All together they celebrated and decided, from then on, they would obey God. Hezekiah gave the priests jobs to do to serve God. The people brought the priests wine, oil, honey and meat to help them do their jobs. King Hezekiah did what was good and right and he followed God with his whole heart, no matter what happened. So God was with Hezekiah making everything go well for him and his people.*

(Pause and let the children decide where to place a mark.)

*The Assyrian army came to fight King Hezekiah and his people. Before everyone knew what was happening, they had taken many castles in Judah. Instead of listening to God, King Hezekiah got scared. He forgot God was with him and, because he forgot, he messed up. He sent a message to Assyria’s king. ‘I’ll pay you whatever you want, just leave our land’. The Assyrian king asked for ten tons of silver and one ton of gold. Hezekiah took the silver and gold from the temple and the palace to give to the Assyrian king. He gave away God’s things.*

(Pause and let the children decide where to place a mark.)

*The plan didn’t work! Hezekiah realised that Assyria planned to fight anyway. He remembered God was with him and asked God for His help. He asked the people to help too and they worked hard to repair the city and made lots and lots of weapons. Hezekiah chose army leaders and told them to be brave, because God had the power to win the fight.*

(Pause and let the children decide where to place a mark.)

*The Assyrian king sent messengers from his army to Hezekiah and his people. They stood and shouted at Jerusalem, making fun of Hezekiah, his people and God. They said God would not save them. They said Hezekiah was wrong, but the people in the walls of Jerusalem kept quiet. When Hezekiah found out what the messengers had said, he was so sad he tore his beautiful clothes and put on an old sack. Then he went to worship God. That night, God sent angels to kill 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. When everyone else woke up they ran back to Assyria, and Hezekiah and his people were saved. God was with them.*

(Pause and let the children decide where to place a mark.)





## Talk

(10 mins)

Have you ever had a time when you felt lost and alone? (Let the children tell stories and tell one of your own from your childhood to get them started.) *It's a horrible feeling to be alone, because we can feel afraid. There can be other times when we feel alone too: when we don't have a special friend or when our brothers and/or sisters are playing with their friends and we can't join in.*

*Did you know you can never be alone? The Bible says that God never sleeps or takes a nap.<sup>1</sup> So, even at night, God is with you: He watches over you, you are never alone. In our story, Hezekiah did some good things, but he also made some bad decisions. God was with him through the ups and the downs. God is with us all the time: He's everywhere. Jesus said, before He went to join God, that He would be with us always and that He would never leave us.<sup>2</sup>*

*You get to choose whether or not you have anything to do with God. Just like Hezekiah, you can choose to do things with God or do things your own way. God is next to you now, but He will never force Himself into your life. (Mime someone pushing in as you speak.) He will be like the friend who waits alongside you till you turn round and say, 'Come and play.' When you do that, He will join in. When Hezekiah let God join in with his plans, what happened? (God helped, the people won, he was healed.) What happened when Hezekiah ignored God? (The Assyrians didn't stop.)*



## DISCUSS

(5-10 mins)

*Do you want to ask God to help in your life? If yes, why? And if no, why?*

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 121:3-4 The Message (MSG)

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 28:20



## Response

(5-10 mins)

### Resources:

- Large chairs
- Throws
- Paper and pens

Set aside some large chairs or armchairs (camping chairs can work too). Cover each with a cosy throw. Have paper and pens available.

Tell the children that: *We are going to spend some time asking God to let us know in our hearts and our heads that we are not alone. To do that we are going to be still and quiet.*

You may want to introduce this time by saying, *I'm going to ask God to help us. There are many ways that God might let you know He is close. You may feel it on your skin, you may feel love or feel really happy or you may just know, deep down, that He is here or, He may do something else.*

*God, thank You that You are here: come and fill this room with more of You. Help us to be still, help us to know You are here. After a minute, I'll let you know what is next, but for now, I just want you and God to have special time.*

After the minute of quiet, when you feel it is right, lead gently into saying, *Isn't this great? Keep your eyes closed with God and you can decide what to do next:*

- choose to stay still, right where you are, and keep having time with God*
- choose to use the paper and pens we have given you to draw what it looks like for God to be near you*
- or you can go and sit in one of those big chairs and imagine you are sitting on God's lap*



## Reflect and share

(5 mins)

### Resources:

- Optional: Pens and paper

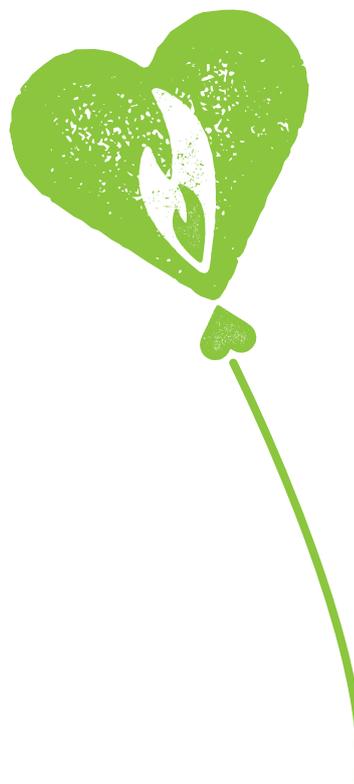
Give the children another chunk of time to do this. Walk around with your heart tuned into the Spirit, watching the children engage. When you feel it is right, feel free to move on. If you are unsure, a good rule of thumb is that, when you see the engagement of the children drop to 50%, it may be time to think about gathering together again. However, sometimes, disengaged children just need an alternative thing to do. You may want to continue to give space to the children who are still engaging by saying quietly: *If you are done, then come on over here and sit on the floor and write or draw. If you are still spending time with God, you stay just where you are.*

When you feel it is time to move on, gather the children back together in their small groups or in their one large group, and ask the children, *What did God do?* and then, *How did that make you feel?* Trust that God will have moved in the room: this is often a stepping out moment for us as leaders. Since the purpose of sharing is to be community, it is helpful to be careful about praising children's experiences, as we don't want them to feel that there is a 'right' answer with encounters.

When there are positive stories of them meeting with God, affirm those stories by any number of ways. You could feed back about a time in scripture that reflects that experience, for example, *Solomon's priest felt almost the exact same thing - isn't it interesting how God speaks the same?* Or, thank the individual for sharing or affirm how their sharing encourages you. For example, *I'm so encouraged when I hear how God meets with other people.*

If the children feel that they have not had an experience with God, reassure them.

*We don't all feel, see, hear or know God is in the room in the same way. It can be different for each of us. Even if you think nothing happened, we can trust God is here and with us. It's also something that can take practice and we will try lots of different ways over time, so you can find what's right for you.*





## Game 2 (5-10 mins)

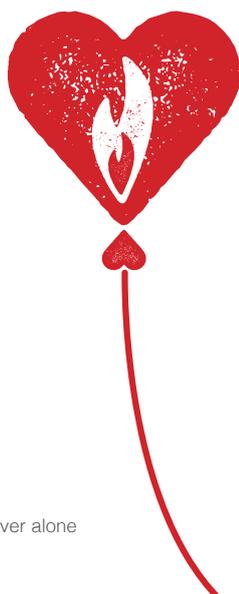
### Resources:

- Large boxes x2
- Blindfolds x2

## All ages

Divide your group into two teams. Have all the children take off their shoes and place them in a large box for their team. Give one person in each team a blindfold and place the box of shoes at a distance from each team. Have one team member lead the blindfolded person to their team's box.

The blindfolded person must feel the shoes with their hands to select two matching shoes from the box (the assisting team member must not speak). They then return with the shoes to their team and the owner of the shoes puts them on. When they get back, the next person can take the blindfold and go.



## Action (5 mins)

### Resources:

- Map of your area
- Hand-shaped post-its
- Pens
- Cocktail sticks
- blu tack

Lead the children into connecting their hearts to the outside world by heading into a time of prayer.

Explain: *There are lots of lonely people in the world who don't know that God is with them all the time. Can you think of anyone at school who sometimes feels alone? How could we help people who feel alone? (Speak to them, visit them, play with them.) There will be people here in (your town) who are lonely this morning. We can pray for them today.*

Explain we will be using hand-shaped post its to write our prayers on. God will take that prayer and use it to help people know He is with them. *We are going to look at a map of (your town). As you look at the map, ask God in your head to show you a road you should pray for. Look and see which road seems to stand out on the map: 'God show us a road to pray for.' Take a moment and wait till you see a road that pops out to you.*

*Now collect a sticky hand and a pen. Write your prayer on the hand; if you need help with writing just ask. Then stick the hand to a cocktail stick (another sticky hand on reverse will hold it in place) and place a piece of blu tack on the bottom of the cocktail stick. Then stick it on the road you picked on the map.*

Finish this time of prayer by praying: *Thank you God that You are always with us. Help everyone in our town to know You are near and that You want to be their friend.*



## Resources For this session

### Game 1:

- Animal Snap cards (5-7yrs), Playing cards (8-10yrs)

### Bible story (8-10):

- Large sheet of paper and blu tack or flip chart
- Marker pen

### Response:

- Large chairs
- Throws
- Paper and pens

### Reflect and share:

- Optional: Pens and paper

### Game 2:

- Large boxes x2
- Blindfolds x2

### Action:

- Map of your area (you don't have to buy one; print one off the internet)
- Hand-shaped post-it notes: [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Handy-Notes-by-Suck-UK/dp/B0054QE6LY/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1402323436&sr=8-1&keywords=handy+notes](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Handy-Notes-by-Suck-UK/dp/B0054QE6LY/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1402323436&sr=8-1&keywords=handy+notes) is one possible source
- Pens
- Cocktail sticks
- blu tack



## Parental communication

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our theme this week was: 'You are never alone'. Through the story of Hezekiah's life in 2 Kings 18-19, we aimed to help the children explore the idea that God is always with them. Hezekiah made good choices and bad choices, choosing sometimes to trust God and other times to ignore Him but, through it all, God's presence was with him.

In ministry, we asked God to help us to feel Him around us, and we drew what we thought it looked like to have God all around us.

If you want to explore this idea more, at some point this week play hide and seek with your child. When you have a snack at the end of the game, share with your child a time when you've felt alone and God has come and helped you in some way.

Next week, we will be looking at the creation story in Genesis 1 to learn about God and to understand how He feels about us.

Love