



Authorised Mess — PHILIPPIANS

Your details

Name: Susie Fox and Alison Hulse

Church: Liverpool South Methodist Circuit

Bible book	Philippians
Theme of session	Thanksgiving and perseverance
Notes	A range of activities which can be adjusted to suit different ages and abilities.

Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants	A vertical goal	Set the challenge to build a tower of bricks to a set height.	Wooden or plastic bricks—not Duplo or Lego as these stick together easily.	To think about the perseverance needed to reach the goal (Philippians 3).
Older participants	Endurance challenge	Set the challenge to move the loop around the buzz wire without making it buzz.	Buzz wire.	To think about the perseverance needed to reach the goal (Philippians 3).
Girls	Make a thank you plaque	Cut a large oval shape from card. Think of someone (X) you want to thank God for. Write 'Thank you God for X' on the card and then decorate. Fix some wool to the back to hang it.	Card (A4), materials to decorate, glue, scissors, wool, pens.	Throughout Philippians, Paul thanks God for the people of Philippi.



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Boys	Races	Organise a series of races and provide prizes for everyone at the end.	Equipment for races—for example, egg and spoon race, sack race, obstacle race, relay race and so on; score board (optional), prizes.	A physical reminder that we need to keep pressing on towards the goal and reaching for the prize (Philippians 3:12–16).
Word-based	Writing letters	Ask them to think of someone they haven't seen for some time and write them a note or letter. Post these in your post box. If possible provide stamps and promise to post these in a proper post box later.	A selection of paper, pens note cards and envelopes; post box (made from a large cardboard box painted red), stamps (optional).	To reinforce that Philippians is a letter from Paul to the people of Philippi, who he hasn't seen for a long time.
Food-based	Making cocktails	Encourage everyone to create their own 'pleasing cocktail' by mixing juices and adding water or lemonade. As they drink their creation, encourage them to think of things they could do which would be pleasing to God.	A selection of fruit juices, lemonade, still water, sparkling water, cups, stirrers.	In Philippians 4:18, Paul talks about the gifts that have been sent to him which are sweet smelling and pleasing to God.



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Explores global aspect of faith	Thank you translations	Get everyone to find as many different ways of saying 'thank you' as they can from the Internet or phrase books. Graffiti these phrases on to the paper.	Large sheet of paper or wallpaper, pens, paints, paint brushes, access to the Internet or a variety of phrase books.	Throughout Philippians, Paul thanks God for the people of Philippi.
Opens up great art	Word art	Show a selection of the Christian faith art. Read Philippians 4 together and ask everyone to choose their favourite verse. Get them to create their own word art using these words.	An assortment of Christian faith word-based artwork for Philippians 4 from the Internet—search using Religious art/Philippians; Bibles, paper, pens and pencils.	Philippians 4 is filled with verses telling of, and rejoicing in, the strength we find in Christ. This activity encourages the children to focus on this.
Quiet	Paper prayer chains	Ask everyone to write things they want God to help them 'keep going' with on the paper strips. Stick the strips together to form a long paper chain. Display the paper prayer chain as part of the celebration.	Strips of coloured paper approx 4 cm x 20 cm, pens, glue.	Even when Paul was in chains in prison he persevered and kept telling people about God (Philippians 1:12–14).



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Really messy	Shining stars	Ask everyone to think of ways they can shine like stars. Write these on the strips of paper. Decorate the stars with glitter, sequins, glittery paint and glow in the dark shapes. Stick the strips of paper on to the shining stars. Take a glow stick, snap it and then tape the stars on top. Use these later in the celebration.	Star shapes cut from card (10 cm high), glue, tape, strips of paper, glitter, sequins, glittery paint, glow in the dark shapes, glow sticks, pens.	In Philippians 2:12–18, Paul encourages the people of Philippi to show by their actions and attitudes that they can shine like stars.

Celebration suggestion

Before the session, write the words from Philippians 2:14–18 on a sheet of paper. Use a passage with an accessible translation—we found *The Message* was the best one for this. Roll up the paper and tie with a ribbon.

On an inflatable globe or a large map of the world, find Greece and explain that this is the Philippi of Paul's time. Paul had visited Philippi in the past and was now sending the Philippians a letter. Ask some children to be Paul writing his letter, some to be the messengers taking the letter and others to be the people of Philippi. 'Paul' should stand at one end of the worship space and the Philippians at the other. The messengers then need to take the letter from Paul to the Philippians.

Ask one of the Philippians or a leader to read out the words on the message. Say that just as Paul told the Philippians in his letter, so we need to shine like stars showing God's love. Look at the stars made in the activity. Ask everyone to shout out more ways in which we can shine like light. Write these on to a larger star adding the ideas from the activity too.



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Turn off most of the lights in the worship space, being aware that some children are afraid of the dark, and sing 'We are marching in the light of God' while those who have made stars in the activity march round waving their stars.

Still with the lights out provide a selection of torches, lights and glo sticks. Ask everyone to shine these on to the ceiling as they think about shining like stars. Sing 'Light of the world' together as you look at the lights. Encourage people to lie down on their backs, if able, as you do this, to look at the lights.

As everyone lies looking at the stars simply pray:

May we be like a shining light showing people how to live God's way.

May we be a breath of fresh air in the world.

May we shine like stars reflecting God's love.

May we be happy and cheerful not grumbling and arguing.

May each of us be a shining star for God.

Amen.

Meal suggestion

- ✿ Moussaka/vegetarian moussaka (a Greek dish).
- ✿ Star-shaped cookies.
- ✿ Cocktails (made in the activity).

Faith in Homes suggestion

Set up an obstacle course at home (indoors or outdoors) that is difficult but not impossible for your child/children to complete. Place a prize at one end of the course—choose something they really want. Encourage them to negotiate the obstacle course and claim the prize at the end. How does it feel to complete the course? How does it feel to get the prize?

Primary School RE idea

KS1 and KS2: Highlight the verses in Philippians 3 that talk of perseverance and keeping going, and talk about what it takes to keep going. Set a number of age-appropriate tasks to challenge the group to keep going—see the activities 'A vertical goal', 'Endurance challenge' and 'Races' above for ideas.