**GROWING TOGETHER:** FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Session 2 of 4

# Meeting together

### MEETING AIM

To explore what the Bible says about Church and to decide how they can be a meaningful part of their church community.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

Many of our children have grown up in church without really thinking about what the Church is and what’s important in a church. As adults, we can also become familiar with our own ways of being church. But when we look at Acts and the early Church, we are challenged about how radically different the Church was. Use this session to help the children come to their own conclusions about how they can be Church and perhaps think again for yourself about ways you can be Church in our desperate world.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Welcome the children as they arrive and share out any refreshments you have provided. Chat together about what has happened since you last met; share in the triumphs and difficulties of the children’s lives and share something appropriate from your own life. Ask the children what they enjoy doing with their friends. What’s important in their friendship group?

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** a tape measure

Divide the children into two or more teams. Using only the items they have brought to the session, they must make the longest chain possible. They can use shoelaces, hair bobbles, coats, hats, jumpers, sunglasses, socks etc. The only rule is that they must keep on the clothes covering their shoulders to their knees! Apart from the two ends, every item must somehow be connected to the items either side. Give them a time limit, then measure each chain to decide who are the winners.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles; paper and pens; wheat biscuits breakfast cereal (such as Weetabix); buttercream icing (shop-bought or homemade); ice cream cones; icing in small tubes; small biscuits; sweets; cover-up and clean-up equipment

Divide the children into two groups and give out Bibles. Ask one group to read Acts 2:42-47 and the other to read Acts 4:32-37. Challenge each group to create a list of elements that are important in a church. (Make sure you have a leader with each group to guide the discussion if needed.)

Ask each group to share their lists and create one joint list incorporating suggestions from both groups.

Once the list is made, ask each group to create a structure using the wheat biscuits as bricks. Each individual biscuit brick must show one element of Church from their list either by writing it on with icing or using the other resources to create it. The biscuit bricks can then be stuck together with the buttercream to create a structure. They can also decorate the wall with whatever edible decorations you have provided, gluing everything together with the buttercream.

When everyone has finished, give time for the groups to show their structures and invite them to explain each brick’s meaning. Make sure all the elements below are included: teaching, sharing, prayer, breaking bread, miracles and signs, having everything in common, selling possessions to give money to those who need it, meeting in temple courts, meeting in homes, eating together, praising God together, more people following Jesus.

If the children would like to, they can then eat part of their construction! Alternatively, you can wait until the end of the session to have a snack. Be aware of food hygiene and allergy issues, and provide alternatives for those who need them.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

* Did anything surprise you about the list of things that are important in a church?
* Out of the things you found, what do you have in your church?
* What do you think you need to have more of?
* Why do you think you built a structure out of these things?
* Is there anything in this list you can do or be a part of?

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** list from ‘Bible story’; paper; pens

Have another look at the list from the verses in Acts. Give out paper and pens and encourage each child to create a mind map with ‘Church’ in the middle and the elements as the spokes. From each individual spoke, the children should add more spokes with anything they can do to make sure these things happen in your church. For example, can they pray? Can they invite someone for a meal? Can they raise money for a charity?

Ask the children if there is there anything they can do as a family. Or perhaps there’s something you can do together as a group? If so, make plans on how you can do it and follow that up at a later date.

Make sure the children take their mind maps home as a reminder and to talk about it with their parents or carers.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** mind maps from ‘Creative time’; paper; pens

Divide into twos and threes and encourage the children to share their mind maps with one another.

Choose one or two action points from each other’s mind maps and pray for each other. Pray for courage, wisdom, boldness, ideas – whatever they need to make their action points become a reality.

**HELEN HODGSON**

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