

RESCUE

PALM SUNDAY † MAUNDY THURSDAY † GOOD FRIDAY † EASTER SUNDAY

Good Friday

Matthew 27:32–54, Colossians 1:11–23

Good Friday is a very reflective day, one that is more solemn than others leading up to Easter. It is helpful for Good Friday to have a separate space and activity for children right from the start of the service. This is also a slightly shorter service than normal. Below you will find an outline with some suggestions for a kid's church lesson.

Children's Good Friday Outline: RESCUE

Connecting In: Play a game of 'stuck in the mud' with a slight modification—there is only one rescuer who can crawl through and free those playing from being 'stuck in the mud'.

One child or leader is 'in'. They must run around and try and tag others playing the game. When someone is tagged, they must stand still with their legs apart so the rescuer can crawl through their legs. The rescuer cannot be tagged. The game ends when everyone has been tagged. Play again if there is time.

Link: Today we have been playing a game of 'stuck in the mud'

- How did it feel to be stuck and not be able to move in the game?
- Was there anything different that you noticed about the game today? (Some children will have played a similar game before and usually all the children that are not 'stuck in the mud' can rescue the others who are stuck.)
- We have been playing a fun game about being rescued and today we are going to explore the idea of being 'rescued' and what Jesus might have to do with that in our lives.

The Main Thing: 'Who rescues who?': I love animated movies, I am sure that you seen plenty of these yourselves. Let's brainstorm together a list of the movies, the characters that might have been rescued and what they have been rescued from. (Below is a list to help you but I am sure that you have seen your share of animated movies.)

- *Toy Story* – Woody rescues Buzz from being launched into space on the rocket.
- *Toy Story 2* – Woody and Dog rescue Wheezy from the yard sale and Buzz, Slinky, Rex, Mr Potato Head and Pork Chop rescue Woody and the gang from the collector.
- *Toy Story 3* – Woody rescues all the toys from the Daycare Centre.
- *Shrek* – Shrek rescues Princess Fiona from the dragon.
- *Tangled* – Flynn rescues Rapunzel from the tower and Gothel.
- *The Incredibles* – The Incredibles rescue the world from Syndrome.
- *Finding Nemo* – The fish in the tank rescue Nemo from Darla.
- *Horton Hears a Who* – Whoville is rescued from the Kangaroo and Vlad.
- *The Lorax* – Ted rescues Sneedville from Mr O'Hare and pollution.
- *Monsters & Aliens* – The monsters rescue the world from the Aliens.

We watch so many movies that have a 'rescue' theme somewhere in them. It is not only in movies that we see this but also in books and in real life too. There are always going to be things that are not good for us and people who don't care about us and want to hurt us or be nasty to us, and so there are always going to be things that we need to be rescued from. We looked at some things that characters in animated movies might need to be rescued from but I wonder what we might need to be rescued from.

- Ask the children for some suggestions.
- You might need to give some examples to get them started. e.g. bullies, being greedy or selfish, perhaps a storm or something happening in nature, dangerous situations, being tempted to do something naughty, getting angry at someone, wanting to lie to a parent, thinking about stealing something, etc.

I wonder if you can think of any stories/situations in the Bible where someone was rescued.

- Ask the children for some suggestions
- You might need to give some examples below to get them started. e.g. God rescued Daniel from the lions (Daniel 6:22), Reuben and Judah helped save Joseph from dying in the well (Genesis 37:19–28), God saved Jonah from drowning (Jonah 1:17), Jesus saved a woman from being stoned to death (John 8:1–11).

Rescue—saving someone from something that might harm them or that is not good for them—is a major theme not only in stories, movies and the Bible but also in our lives in relation to Jesus. Today is Good Friday and we know that Jesus did something to rescue us. Lets explore in our small groups how Jesus can rescue us.

Tying In: Jesus rescues us. The Bible tells us in lots of places about how Jesus took our place, how He rescued us from the consequences of our choices, how He stepped in to take the punishment that we should have received. Let's look at some Bible passages and discover how Jesus stepped in to rescue us.

Read the following verses in small groups and then respond to the questions below.

- Colossians 1:13–13 (NLT)
- Romans 5:6–8 (CEV)
- Isaiah 53: 3–6 (CEV)
- John 3:16–17 (CEV)

- What stands out to you in these verses?
- What do you like? What don't you like?
- Why do you think that Jesus chose to rescue us? (i.e. you, me, humanity, the world)
- How do you feel that Jesus stepped in to take the punishment for our wrong choices?
- What do you want to say to Jesus in response to this? (Give the kids the opportunity to share how they would like to respond, this might be saying thank you, praying, writing or drawing something etc. You will need to be sensitive to the children that you might have in your group on this day as some of them may not have made a decision to have Jesus as their friend, you might have visitors or other children that would like to make a re-commitment.)
- Pray together to finish this time.