

*taking childhood spirituality seriously*

# Godly Play<sup>UK</sup>

**Associates of Godly Play UK**

## The Magazine : No. 6 Spring 2020

Guest Editor: Alex Mackenzie

### At the threshold

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### Welcome

I wonder if you are ready. If you had asked me that over the past few months, the answer would have been 'no'. In September 2019, Rebecca Nye asked if I would guest edit this edition of The Magazine. It didn't occur to me until after I had agreed that I might not be ready.

But it did make me wonder what helps me to get ready. For me, it's the storytelling and response materials. I know that wherever I am in Godly Play, I am surrounded by beautiful things that tell me stories ... I am allowed to play with them

and wonder about them.

And so, this Magazine is dedicated to all those beautiful Godly Play materials.

When we invite people into Godly Play, they often look at all the things we have, and ask 'Where do I start?', 'What do I buy?', 'What can I make?' That is the story, wondering and work in this newsletter: where the materials come from, how to start building up what we need; and how we continue - what might be on the response shelves and which books you could add.

I wonder what you bought, or made, first. And I wonder what the last thing you bought was? And if you had to start again, what would be your 'must have'?

Now my 'no' has become a 'yes'. Here is a Magazine dedicated to a consideration of Godly Play materials. I wonder if you are ready.

*Alex Mackenzie is the Lead Trainer for Godly Play Scotland.*

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## Like a mustard seed

### Godly Play, Trust and Transformation

*By Caroline Decanniere*

*Caroline is a trainer for Godly Play Flanders and works in schools and churches in the Antwerp area.*



Godly Play storytellers and friends from all over Europe, and far beyond, will meet in Belgium for the 6th European Godly Play Conference from Friday 18 September to Monday, 21 September 2020.

Godly Play in Europe is steadily growing and is playing a significant role in a great number of churches and countries. But ...

- do you ever wonder about the sowers ...
- about the seed ...
- about how it germinates ...
- about how we encourage it to grow?

Find out on our three-day conference. Come along and get to know the beautiful Godly Play community tree. The programme will consist of four lectures, more than 20 different workshops, daily Godly Play sessions in different languages and worship. All this alongside chances to buy or create your own Godly Play materials, visit to a local Montessori School, enjoy a guided tour of the medieval town of Mechelen (with local children as guides), plenty of leisure time and opportunities to meet and make friends.

On Friday, the opening lecture will be given by Gemma Simmonds. Gemma is a sister of the Congregation of Jesus and professor in pastoral theology and Christian spirituality at the Margaret Beaufort Institute in Cambridge. She will speak on 'Rooted in love: theological grounds of nurturing spirituality'. Friday workshops will focus on the basic ingredients of Godly Play such as silence, play, nonverbal communication, and Montessori education.

On Saturday, we are delighted to announce that Rebecca Nye (pioneer of Godly Play in Europe) will be our main speaker. Rebecca will talk about 'Godly Play and vulnerability'. On Saturday afternoon, workshops will be about Godly Play in different target groups, such as older people, very young children, children in children's hospitals, multi-religious groups, and intergenerational groups.

On Sunday the main lecture will be given by Nikolas Sintobin. Nikolas is from the Society of Jesus, and specialises in Jesuit spirituality and pedagogy. His lecture will be on 'Inner senses, doors to interiority'. Sunday workshops will introduce Godly Play-related storytelling methods, such as *Gott im Spiel*, Deep Talk, Stories of God at home, Bibliodrama. We will finish the day with evening prayer, held in the beautiful, medieval Cathedral of Mechelen.

On the last conference day, Andrew Sheldon, Godly Play Advocate for International Development, will speak about: 'Godly Play, a way for today'.

You can find all the practical information you need on [www.godlyplayconference2020.be](http://www.godlyplayconference2020.be).

The Belgian team of Godly Play trainers and storytellers is looking forward to meeting with you!

## Come and Play by the Sea

### Godly Play Scotland Conference 2020

*By Michelle Brown*

Godly Play Scotland is hosting its third conference from 13-14 November at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church in Edinburgh with guest speaker, Dr Rebecca Nye. Portobello is known as 'Edinburgh's Seaside' and our guest speaker spent her early childhood years looking out on this very beach.

Rebecca will share a bit about her own experience of childhood spirituality in those early years as she explores with us the importance of an adult culture that believes in childhood spirituality.

The conference begins with this opening talk at 7pm on Friday night. On Saturday we will continue from 10am with a Godly Play story, a plenary session with Rebecca, lunch, two workshop sessions, and worship time which will finish by 4pm. Throughout the conference there will be market stalls, tea and coffee and time to chat with fellow Godly Players. Workshops will include topics like: Wondering, Godly Play with Makaton Signing, Stories of God at Home, Godly Play Large, Outdoor Godly Play and more. Plans are also in the works to include an enrichment day option for Friday during the day before the opening talk.

The full conference costs £50 with an option of just the Saturday for £40 or just the Friday evening for £25.

Whether you are new to Godly Play or you are a seasoned Godly Player, this conference invites you to come and play ...

Full details and booking for the conference are available at [www.godlyplayscotland.co.uk](http://www.godlyplayscotland.co.uk).

# ‘Take all the time you need ...’

## How to get started

*By Sue North-Coombes*

*Sue is an experienced Godly Play Trainer based in Ottershaw, Surrey where she developed a Godly Play room that has often been used for three-day training courses. Perhaps you have been there!*



When you first start Godly Play there is a major challenge. How are you ever going to be able to collect all those beautiful story materials? Few of us, in fact, will ever achieve a fully-equipped, permanent Godly Play space, but that is not a cause for despondency. Jerome Berryman himself wrote:

‘To start, focus on the relationships and actions that are essential to Godly Play, rather than on the materials needed in a fully-equipped Godly Play space.... Without any materials at all, two teachers can make a Godly Play space that greets the children, shares a feast and blesses them goodbye each week. With materials for one story and a few cans of crayons or pens, the teachers can present a full Godly Play session.’ (*The Complete Guide to Godly Play, Volume 2* Introduction ‘Getting Started’)

In the beginning ... Jerome and his wife, Thea, filled temporary shelving with homemade lesson materials and, as more time and money became available, they gradually upgraded these. Finally they collected together the beautiful and lasting materials they wanted to give to the children. It is a good model to follow when money is in short supply. Peter Privett advises us to begin by buying a really good selection of response materials and after that to start building up the story materials.

### **It’s a journey**

Godly Play is quite unlike any other approach to working with children. You start, thinking that you are involved in something that is all about children, and then unexpectedly find yourself on a journey of your own. Those who have been doing Godly Play for some years have come to realise that the gradual building up of the stories and resources is part of the journey, and a real joy. So, take all the time you need. Let it be part of the journey that you and your group make together.

### **Get people involved**

What might help to build up your resources? You might try to find different ways to raise money. I heard of someone who organised a concert in her village to raise money for their Godly Play room. Her friend was a concert pianist – which possibly helped! I would suggest trying to get as many people involved as possible, and particularly the group with whom you are doing Godly Play. You might make a big board with pictures of the



stories you want to buy and put prices against the different items, then invite people to sponsor something. You could include response materials and floor cushions. Offer a range of things, from a felt pen or a rubber, that a child could buy with pocket money, to the big stories that come as a whole for wealthier supporters. People could join together to buy a story or pay so much a month until you finally have enough to buy it!

Offer a list of items for people to look out for in charity shops or at home, the things that cannot be ordered with the stories. Baskets were the things I needed, but it might be a scent bottle, or a crystal dish and jug for the baptism story that you need. Maybe you would like a singing bowl to end the response time, or a lovely box for the matches. And look out for talented people who like sewing and making things: someone may be delighted to make the coloured cloths for the focal table.



### **Celebrate**

As you build up the resources, you could take a photo of the items with the people who sponsored them (including those pens and rubbers) and make a book to tell the story of your Godly Play space. It is worth telling – those beautiful materials will last for ever and the account of their acquisition will help future generations to understand how they came to be, and to treasure them anew.



Involving your community, and particularly the children, provides a sense of achievement and ownership. And more importantly, it offers people a delight when the story they raised money for arrives from Bowthorpe and they unpack it with you.

I missed that experience. We were given a lot of money to renovate a broken-down outside classroom behind the

church and turn it into a beautiful and permanent Godly Play room. We were thrilled, and the room has been very special. Over the last 11 years many people have trained there and the children from the church have used it virtually every Sunday. But they did not have a hand in collecting the stories and looking back, that I think, was a shame.

If you are just beginning, or you know someone else who is, do not be despondent if you have little to start with, and no money. Take time, involve others and enjoy the journey ... together.

## Feature Articles

### Lovingly handcrafted

#### The story of Godly Play materials at St Michael's Workshop

By Lena Maher

*Saint Michael's Workshop was established in 1984 as part of the Bowthorpe Community Trust. Its purpose is to help people with learning difficulties and physical disadvantages to develop their full potential, working with wood and*



*developing social skills through the creative and therapeutic*

*activities which form the basis of each week. Among the trainees are people with Down's syndrome, autistic traits and learning difficulties, those who are registered blind, use a wheelchair or are prone to seizures. They attend for between one and four days each week, giving a unique mix of people every day. Most trainees are involved in the finishing of wood items by hand sanding, wax polishing and oiling. Some have a particular gift for painting. Others have skills in drawing out shapes and cutting them on a fretsaw. Some have been trained in the safe use of other woodworking machinery such as the band-saw, pillar drill and electric sander. It is satisfying for each person to see their work being valued by customers, and to take a pride in keeping standards high.*

*There are opportunities for trainees to follow through their own ideas in designing items, and in commissioning gifts or making greeting cards featuring plywood shapes. Every Godly Play item is hand crafted and finished.*

*Social contacts are rich and varied: interaction between staff, trainees and volunteer helpers forms a natural part of the daily routine. At lunchtime there may be card-games, snooker and visits to the shops or a walk. There are regular trips to the Post Office to dispatch goods, developing an awareness of places and distances. These contacts increase the confidence of trainees and bring an added dimension into the life of the community. Each week is different, but Lena tells us here about one week, late in 2019.*

#### **Monday**

I enter the Workshop, open the office and warm up the computer. Coffee is made ... the heating is on. Our order programme, *Shopify*, loads and a new order pops up!

The words stand out in bold on the screen: **Unfulfilled (7)**

#### **W3564 – Cathy Bridges**

P7R – Good Shepherd, Ordinary Shepherd, Wolf and 5 Sheep – Ready Made

P8R – Good Samaritan, Traveller, Priest, Levite, 2 Robbers Plaque, Jericho, Jerusalem – Ready Made

P9R – Great Pearl - Merchant, Seller & Accessories – Ready Made

P10R – Sower, 3 Types of Ground, 7 Birds, 3 Grain Bags – Ready Made

P11R – Leaven - Woman, Table & Accessories – Ready Made

P12R – Mustard Seed - Person, 12 Birds, 10 Nests – Ready Made

A3A – Creation Plaques Set of 7 – Ready Made

The order is placed in the second system, printed off and put into the orders folder.

Tom, our professional carpenter, takes a look at all the new orders, which includes this one from Cathy. He jots it down in his book and starts hunting for the plywood. In the back room he surveys the shelves, picking the right pieces for parables.

Our plywood is locally sourced, we try to support local business as much as possible, as community is important to us here at Bowthorpe.

We are often asked why we don't use a cheaper wood or MDF and the answer is quite simple, it can be very dangerous. The dust produced from sanding MDF is a respiratory irritant and known to cause asthma and other respiratory problems. We would not allow these materials to be handled by our trainees, employees or by children. All our products are child safe, which impacts on prices, but we believe this to be worthwhile for both our customers and our trainees.



The ply is cut to size and handed over to Simon, one of our trainees and the initiator of all our parable sets. He sticks three boards together, draws out the chosen shapes and then sets to work cutting them out. Simon likes to work in sets of three. Once all the pieces are accounted for, he flat sands them to get the wood nice and smooth, avoid splinters and allow the pictures to be glued on without any trouble. When done, they are taken to the finishing room and placed in the *'To be sanded'* drawer.

We always start the week with a prayer. Occasionally Mandy will tell us a story relevant to the time of year or related to life of one of our members.

## Tuesday

Catherine opens up the Finishing Room, surveys what work needs to be done and sets a priority on each item. Trainees are then given a choice of activities, some may sand, some wax, some oil, cut out pictures and some may paint (be that the purple boarder on our Easter Plaques or small crowns for Advent).

The parables are handed out over the day to different trainees to sand, for although Simon has flat sanded the surface, the edges still need to be rounded off, dulling the edges to keep them child safe. To add some variety to the day, the pictures are not always stuck on at this point. We encourage all of our trainees to try new things and be as flexible as possible, so having sanded pieces in the morning we might suggest that they try to paint or oil in the afternoon to avoid the monotony of the same activity all day. The Creation Plaques take time. Produced in stages by our very dedicated trainee Eugene, the plaques are painted at different times over weeks, the smaller pieces added on another day, and touch ups done before they are varnished. Eugene makes these in sets of five, so the process is a long one. However, as the tasks are all different and require considerable concentration, he is the best man for the job.



Paul is sanding. He was born blind and really enjoys feeling the smooth edges of a finished piece!



## Wednesday



Eugene gluing the cacti in place.

Mandy opens up the Finishing Room on a Wednesday. Like Catherine, she gets up to speed with the orders and prioritises the workload. Each trainee is offered the chance to oil, wax, sand, paint, stick pictures or varnish (there are many more activities, but to detail them all would be longer than this article!) Seeing that we have a parable order, she sets David, Joe and Glenn to the task of sticking pictures on a few of the sets. Each one works at a different speed and in a different way. David actually taught Glenn how to line up his pictures and Glenn often

encourages Joe to get his glue on faster. They are great friends and lift the atmosphere in the Finishing Room.

In the afternoon everyone is given the choice of varnishing their parables or turning their hand to a different task. Glenn chooses to varnish and gets busy with the edges and picture side of the parables first. Once dry he turns them over to varnish the backs. I finish my office work and join in sticking pictures on some of the parable sets whilst engaging the trainees in lively conversation (this usually includes the latest movies, what everyone did last weekend and what the next one holds).

## Thursday

We always have a busy Thursday here at Bowthorpe. This is the day Trina comes: she likes to get as much done as she possibly can and definitely keeps us all on our toes! The final parable pictures are stuck on during the morning, allowing them enough time to dry over lunch so they can all be varnished in the afternoon. The wax and varnish we use is child safe just in case small children pick them up and put them in their mouth. Once the varnish has dried, we use a light grey sandpaper to smooth it out, helping the pieces glide over felt nicely and giving them a lovely feel. Finally they are placed into the packing drawer ready for dispatch to Cathy Bridges the following week.



Trina and her Mum sticking pictures on the Mustard Seed Parable.

## Monday again

Sally runs the packing room in the mornings. She checks the drawers for all the packing that needs to be done over the next two days and sets aside pieces for certain trainees. Sally has been here since the very beginning and knows who packs what best! All the plastic used to protect our products is recycled and can be put in to domestic recycling. We have tried different protective materials over the years and found this way to be the



best: paper tends to slip in the boxes and can become damp if water gets in, which has been known to happen on long trips (our items are sent to Godly Players as far away as Australia and Hong Kong). The offcuts of plastic are then used as stuffing in the boxes, further protecting items together with other pieces of left-over material. In the afternoon I pack all the completed orders, and these include Cathy's parables and creation plaques. The items are cushioned inside a donated box and more stuffing is added to protect them on their travels. The label is popped on and the box placed into a trolley.

## Tuesday again

Our regular postal days are Tuesday and Thursday, unless something is very urgent for a customer. We make the trip to the post office with some trainees, allowing them to be involved in the entire process. Sally is in charge of the post run and has a great rapport with the local post office. Kieran and Bill accompany her on a Tuesday. They carry Cathy's order safely to the shop. And that's it! Cathy's order is now in the post and on its way. Bill will take back all the receipts to Bob, our manager, and the shipping information will be updated for each customer.

Thank you for joining us on our journey! We hope you have found it informative and at least a little bit interesting! You can visit our website, [shop.stmichaelsworkshop.com/](http://shop.stmichaelsworkshop.com/), Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/StMichaelsWorkshop/](https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsWorkshop/), or email me, [lena.maher@bowthorpetrust.com](mailto:lena.maher@bowthorpetrust.com), for more information.



Kieran, Bill and Sally waiting their turn at the Post Office.

## Consider the quality

### Starting out with response materials

*By Rachel Bainton*

*Rachel is a Godly Play Trainer in the North East of England and lives in North Shields. She developed a Godly Play space in St Mary's, Monkseaton, after she first trained as a storyteller in 2005.*

When I first began to assemble materials for our Godly Play space – well, really way before we even had the space – our priority and focus was resourcing the story materials. However, I remembered that on my 3-day training, back in 2005, Peter Privett had suggested that half the available budget should be allocated to response materials, and that stuck in my head.

*The Complete Guide to Godly Play* volumes offer guidance on response materials, and that is certainly where we started: paper in two sizes, painting trays, paint and brushes,

drawing boards, crayons, pencils and markers, boards for modelling clay, clay rolled into small balls in airtight containers, basket of wood scraps, basket of various kinds of cloth, glue sticks and a small bottle of liquid glue. This is a really good place to start, but over the years Mary Cooper and I have revised and expanded this collection.

### **Revised and expanded**

The following list of materials is not exhaustive, nor should it be followed slavishly; rather treat it as a list of ideas that might act as a springboard for thinking about your own response materials. Remember too, that it can be beneficial to start with relatively few options and add more gradually; too much choice can be as much of a barrier as too little. As with all Godly Play material, consider the quality of whatever you provide. It is far better to have a small variety of good quality materials, rather than a wide range of colouring pencils that won't sharpen (a pet hate of mine), faded felt pens, and glue sticks that don't work.

### **Mark-making**

As well as paper of various sizes, in a variety of colours, we also supply card, and mount board – cut into small shapes. If you ask at a picture-framing shop, they often have offcuts of mount board that they will let you have for a nominal price. For collage, we also have squares of wallpaper (ask for old sample books, and cut the pages to a standard size), tissue paper etc., and a



selection of scissors – for both right and left handers. In our supplies we have water-colour pencils, pastels, charcoal, sketching pencils (and erasers), fine-liners, rulers and pencil sharpeners. A useful addition to this section is a buddha board. These encourage the concept of 'process' not 'product' and can be a useful gateway into mark-making for adults who 'can't draw'.

### **Modelling**

We now use 'proper' clay. That is, clay that is intended to be fired in a kiln. After each use, this clay is 'knocked back' into a cube shape, all the air pockets are carefully expelled, a thumb hole is filled with water and all the cubes are stored in an airtight container. The clay absorbs the water and is ready and pliable for the next use. We use small rectangular plywood boards (A5 size) to work on. Some children are put off by the cold, slippery nature of the material, but many really engage with it. Fewer adults do!

### **Fabric/Haberdashery**

As well as an attractive tray of fabrics, including felt and ribbons, we have a sewing box with fabric scissors, pinking shears, needles, pins and thread. For children, we've found that cross stitch Aida, cut to approximately book-mark size, is very popular. It's helpful

to source single-stranded embroidery thread, and to wrap the different colours onto clothes pegs. It's also useful to get at least some needles with large eyes. Threading needles is a skill that many children may not yet have been taught – maybe a magnifying glass would be a useful resource too!

A few small balls of wool, alongside a French knitting dolly is another option – do ensure that the storyteller/door person is able to demonstrate how these can be used. Wool can also be used with a small weaving loom.



Another useful addition to the supplies is a jar of buttons – this is often attractive to children; it can also be a point of familiarity that enables an adult to transition into response.

Having been introduced to dry felting through Godly Play (think felted doves, maybe even a felted whale for Jonah), we now include felting resources in the response materials. A basket contains a couple of felting sponges, a selection of needles and a variety of merino wool for felting. The addition of some pre-felt in the fabric tray allows the creation of felted pictures as well.

### **Natural materials**



These can be used in collage, or in contemplative response. We include shells, stones, dry foods (beans, pasta, etc.), sea-glass, feathers, pinecones, scraps of wood. A response from one adult included black-eyed peas as sheep in a mixed media picture ... I've never looked at black-eyed peas in quite the same way again.

### **Construction materials**

Kapla blocks are small machined planks of wood, all the same size. They can be used to build and to balance. Outlets such as IKEA and ALDI do a similar product at a much lower price. Buy plenty, as we find that once one child is working with these, others want to join in. We also mix these with natural tree blocks, and wooden figures. Another resource that we might bring to a retreat are Ankerstein (image).



### **Contemplative**



For those who definitely don't want to create anything, it can be helpful to have resources to aid contemplation and reflection. We do have some books in the response materials, but we try not to make them too prominent. The written word shouldn't be the first thing that is seen when entering the room. We have a finger labyrinth – ours is made from wood, but you can also make your own using fabric.



I've found that 'executive toys' can provide useful tools for contemplation, and they can often be picked up at charity shops or church fairs. We have a magnetic sculpture (those spheres that stick onto a base), and a sand art picture. We also have magnetic words – I think we have the Poetry set, but there are various different options available. If you have some budget, and would like to browse, [www.myriadonline.co.uk](http://www.myriadonline.co.uk) have delightful geometric magnetic puzzles that can promote open-ended response; they also stock many other attractive materials suitable for response time.

### **Action**



It's worth exploring materials that will support those people who need to be active, even at least slightly, following a period of sitting during the story. It can be hard to accommodate this within the constraints of a Godly Play space, and while upholding the needs of the whole community. Consider floaty silk cloths, or perhaps quiet toys that can be moved or spun. We have a gyroscopic spinning top toy, and children can sometimes be seen using this for a few minutes before being able to settle into a different activity.

### **Layout**

It's good to have a logic to the way the response materials are set out. We tend to lay things out in the following order: Mark-making (including pencils, pens, paint etc.), paper/card/post-its (arranged according to colour), connecting materials (glue, Sellotape, paper clips, treasury tags), collage materials, natural materials, fabric/haberdashery, construction, contemplative.

Try to make the layout attractive as well as logical. Space is essential – around each item/type of response. If you can't fit all your response materials into the space available, consider reducing the amount on offer.

### **Meeting all needs**

On one course we ran, we had a participant who suffered from cerebral palsy. He had an assistant with him, but she was also doing the course; when it came to the response time, he really wanted to work independently, to allow his assistant some space and time to respond for herself. This is when we realised how much of our response materials rely on fine motor skills.

I wonder what else is needed in the response materials.





# Creating stories for the Salvation Army tradition

*By Andrea Harrison*

*Andrea Harrison is a trainer and the Godly Play specialist for the UK territory of the Salvation Army. She helps train and equip leaders to run Godly Play sessions in their corps and community.*

In 2013, when the Salvation Army asked Rebecca Nye to write some liturgical action stories in the style of Godly Play for The Salvation Army, I gave little thought to the physical resource materials. The integrity and accuracy of the written content dominated my thinking. It was not until Rebecca brought the first story drafts, with some home-made artefacts, to show a group of us, that it really dawned on me how important the story materials were going to be, not just to furnish the stories that had been written, but actually to shape them.



Initially there were three stories: 'The Flag and Ceremonies in the Life of a Salvationist'; 'The Mercy Seat and Salvation Presentation' and 'Social Action: Here to Help'. As with all liturgical action stories, the materials needed to reflect what the children would actually see in church and so, for example, tracking down the makers of The Salvation Army flag to ensure that we used authentic materials and colours was an early task.

Ensuring that the materials we use have been ethically sourced has been particularly challenging as no sooner have I located a good supplier than they stop trading. The dolls we use in the Flag stories were originally found at The Early Learning Centre and helpfully were available in different ethnicities. Their availability, however, has fluctuated over the years and so I found myself subscribing to Ethical Consumer to check the provenance of other dolls and baskets and felt and jugs. The list goes on!

Children must be able to play with the stories and so ensuring the safety of materials has been another paramount consideration. The cost of materials is also a consideration and so the charity shops of Saffron Walden, in particular, have become very familiar to me. I can highly recommend them!





The story about The Mercy Seat draws strongly on The Good Shepherd and World Communion and so we were able to use the same people of the world figures, sheepfold, Good Shepherd and sheep figures, supplied by St Michael's Workshop in Bowthorpe. Immediately there is a visual connection between the two stories which can enrich the understanding.

There are always some materials that are hard to source. St Michael's Workshop has adapted materials

from other stories, making smaller lecterns and miniature People of God to represent children. I have cajoled various individuals into making things. My dad asked with some trepidation, 'You want HOW many mercy seats?' And I am indebted to Neville Andrews, Martin Wheeler and Richard Prescott for their workmanship in stabilising little flags and creating miniature drums.

By 2016 Rebecca had written another story, this time about Catherine Booth, one of the founders of The Salvation Army. Initially envisaged as a saints story, we tried to identify three objects to encapsulate her work, but in trying to show the roots of her life and the breadth of her work we found this impossible, so we opted instead for a Book 6-style linear presentation. Nevertheless, a major piece of work was the continuous reduction of the objects. Peter Privett was asked to create the artwork so that the figure of Catherine matches those of the other saints.

In this story a small bottle filled with gold seed beads is poured onto the felt and gradually shaped into a cross. At the end of the story-telling, the beads must be retrieved and so I learnt about jewellery shovels! The children love playing with these beads and the shovel but I confess that after any session using them there will always be a few stray beads twinkling in the light on the carpet.

At the time of writing we are about to 'launch' another story, about William Booth. He lived a lot longer than his wife Catherine and so there is much more story to tell. We have been able to do this not only with extra pieces in the basket but also by creating a series of diagonal lines within the linear layout. At the end of the story it is striking to see the directions his life took.

The stories are all assembled and supplied to users from The Salvation Army headquarters in London. They are sent all over the world, where of course they must be adapted to reflect local practice. All the stories have been trialled and revised repeatedly.

I now know quite a lot about felt colours; cutting out paper chains of children (Catherine and William had eight); threading white ribbons onto miniature flags to show the practice at Salvation Army funerals and using Mod Podge to stick pictures to board. Sometimes people ask me if doing this is my work. The enquirer is usually sceptical, but in assembling and creating the materials, the stories have become so much more a part of me, and it has been a privilege to shape them in this way.

# We make Godly Play Materials in Germany

## By Johannes Klemm Translated by Sheila Whittenberg

*Johannes is the Manager of the Godly Play Workshop in Panitzsch, Germany where materials are made for Godly Play Deutsch.*



Sebastian Ziegert and Maik Koch (pictured) are proud of their woodworking skills and the fruits of their labour. They work in a team of up to twenty people, all of whom have special needs, that produces amazingly unique materials for Godly Play and its German adaptation, *Gott im Spiel*.

To ensure that the Godly Play materials are produced in an environmentally responsible manner, high quality natural resources such as wood, wool, paper and clay are carefully chosen for their ecological benefits. The wool used in Godly Play materials, for example, is sourced from a business in nearby Wurzen.

### We belong to the Diaconia Leipzig

The Diaconia Leipzig, a part of the Lutheran Church in Saxony, employs more than 400 people with special needs in three different workshops, called the Linden Workshops. We serve many businesses in Leipzig and the surrounding area who have depended on the efforts and skills of our employees for many years. We deliver items to larger companies such as DHL, BMW and the Meibes Group as well as to smaller businesses.

Our workshop in Panitzsch employ 170 people with disabilities. In addition to metalworking, carpentry, packaging, and farming, there is a group who specialise in Godly Play materials. This group has up to twenty employees at a time and has existed for fifteen years.



In the beginning, the group produced material for only a few stories. Today, they make the materials for 150 Godly Play stories, that are made up of 1,000 different pieces (in 2018 they began producing items for the new *Gott im Spiel* stories as well).

We sell our products through our online shop,

[www.lindenwerkstaetten.de](http://www.lindenwerkstaetten.de). Modern

ordering software and a specially-equipped warehouse allow us to ship 30-40 packages a week. We like to say, 'From Panitzsch to the World!', because although the majority of our customers are from German-speaking countries, we are seeing an increase in orders from all over Europe. Most of our customers are churches, kindergartens, schools and other Christian organizations that educate children about the Christian faith in a playful manner. We also cater for private individuals.



Our work sequence is determined by the strengths of our employees and their specific disabilities. Tasks range from cutting paper to sawing and sanding wood or painting.

After the materials are finished, they are stored in the warehouse until they are ready to be packaged for delivery. Because of the many different kinds of material, and the range of disabilities among our employees, the estimated delivery time varies between 2 and 10 weeks for each order.

It is our goal both to produce quality materials and to support the individual development of each special needs employee. During work hours, our employees can take advantage of speech, physical, and ergotherapy as well as other services that strengthen and develop their competencies in the working world.

A highlight among our employees is having a Godly Play story told to them at the workshop. Through this, they realise that their work is cherished by others, and they are filled with pride to be a part of Godly Play.

## Taking your wondering further...

### Reviews: Books to take your wondering further...



#### *Bookworm: A Memoir of Childhood Reading*

Lucy Mangan, (2018), Square Peg: an imprint of Vintage, ISBN 9780224098854

#### *A Review by Gill Ambrose*

I grew up in a household without a TV, so we read ... a lot. At least, I thought I read a lot, but Lucy Mangan makes me look like an amateur. As an adult I have always had a love of children's literature, and I loved reading to my children (a lot ... but again, Lucy Mangan has ensured that I am not too big for my boots), so previous surveys have been well-loved purchases. *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* is a weighty tome on my shelves. *Written for Children* by John Rowe Townshend is a masterly survey beginning with 'Aesop's Fables' (which,

interestingly, my 4-year-old grandson loves in their Michael Morpurgo retelling), published in 1965, with an appendix that looks at the Ahlbergs and Raymond Briggs. *Boys and Girls for Ever* by Alison Lurie was also published by Vintage, in 2004, when Harry Potter was still new, and looks more at big themes, in bigger print! *Writers, Critics and Children* is a collection of essays that tells us more what some writers think about other writers!

I tell you all this because it offers a feel of the scene into which Lucy Mangan is stepping with her new, and perhaps overdue, contribution to the field. And it is a great contribution. Mangan is a journalist, so she has a way of demanding your instant attention. She is also fearless, and irreverent, and yet at the same time tender – perhaps like a really good story. At the end of 308 pages, you will know what you should have read, what you might encourage a child to read, and what you should buy your smaller relatives for Christmas. (And if you still don't, then the final few pages helpfully offer a list!)



The book takes the form of a kind of childhood autobiography, setting the books she read into the context of a real childhood, and real childhood experiences. Born into a Lancashire Catholic family who had left 'the North' for London, Mangan wonders if her refuge in books was partly attributable to an ongoing sense that she was always, somehow, an 'outsider'. The family was not religious, so it is interesting to see what she made of Narnia, which, like many of her earlier story encounters, was commended by her father when he gave her *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Although a fellow-reader ('the daughter of two vicars') had declared 'This is about Jesus, isn't it' when she was nine or ten, Lucy Mangan suggests that she herself was fourteen and 'ploughing through the very last pages of the final volume ... – after the biblio-equivalent of being hit over the head with a claw hammer – that I began to feel the semblance of a shadow of an inkling that something funny was going on.' There follows a brief account of the life of C.S. Lewis and his Christian conversion, and a declaration that 'I was simply furious at the deception!' But, she says, 'eventually my rage subsided. It was still a very good story after all. As were all the others.' And then she tells us why. 'The tale of Lucy Pevensie discovering the secret world beyond the wardrobe door is a story about courage, loyalty, generosity, sacrifice and nobility versus greed, conceit, arrogance and betrayal.' Well – there you have it.

Rather over thirty years ago, when I was a new diocesan children's work adviser, a chap called Maurice Lynch was doing the rounds of RE Inset meetings and conferences talking about 'Stories for Religious Education'. He was an engaging Irishman, who simply opened a huge box of children's books and began to pull out stories and read from them, each time explaining why this was a good story for RE. I loved it, because it suddenly dawned on me that my childhood reading had essentially been what had formed my Christian faith (or at least it was a very significant contribution). Lynch never did write a book (as far as I know), which is a pity, because it would have been good. He offered a duplicated list of titles, with notes, which remains one of my dog-eared treasured possessions. Several years on, I half adopted his technique but developed it a bit. When asked by groups to 'give us a talk about children', I, too turned up with a box of picture books. I opened the box and laid out the books. Then I asked everyone present to choose a book they liked the look of, read it, and decide what they would say to a child to whom they might give it as a present. I did hardly any talking, and I hope that perhaps they went away and found some books!

More recently there has been quite a lot written about 'Christianity and film', teasing out the threads of some well-loved movies from a religious viewpoint. And that's great; but there are many more books than films, and the average picture book, at least, can be read in minutes and revisited endlessly. We overlook their value at our peril.

Lucy Mangan's masterly book offers an extremely comprehensive overview of children's books that are available to us now, with fascinating insights into what they offer. I thoroughly recommend it. Her capacity for reflection is inspiring, developed undoubtedly from the fact that she has spent so much time in the other worlds of the story. As Godly Players, we know only too well the potency of story and power of wondering. This book will help the reader to appreciate the possibilities both more deeply and more broadly, and on many pages it will also cause you to laugh out loud, for as well as being clever, it is great fun! Its only draw-back is the lack of an index, which would have helped me a lot in writing this!

# Wonderworld

## Children's books and children's spirituality

*By Katie McGlew*

*Katie McGlew is a Godly Play Advocate, based in Scotland. Alongside Godly Playing at church, in school and with an all age group, Katie loves books. Inspired by the bookstall at the first Godly Play Scotland Conference (in 2016) and aware that other delegates weren't sure what books they might have as response materials, Katie brought together this collection of children's books as a suggestion.*

'Children's literature regularly touches the transcendent. Some favourite books do this and we don't always notice how they connect the everyday to faith. Blessings as you read them again and again and again!' (Christen Laney Erskine)

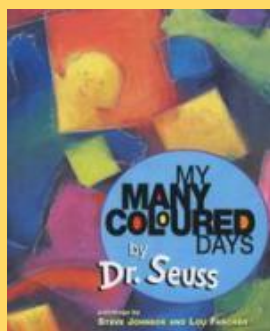


### ***The Big Big Sea* by Martin Waddell, illustrated by Jennifer Eachus**

In this gentle, meditative story, a little girl and her mother take a night-time visit to the sea in the silvery moonlight. The luminous pictures show the bond between parent and child, and how a simple experience can become a rich memory. The little girl knows that, 'I'll always remember just Mum and me and the night that we walked by the big big sea'. A beautiful, entrancing book.

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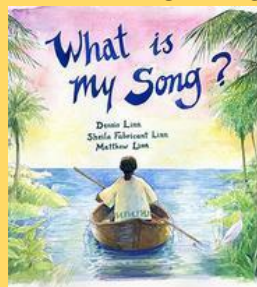
### ***My Many Coloured Days* by Dr Seuss, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher**



In characteristically zany and flamboyant rhyming text, this thoughtful book describes emotions in relation to colours. The vivid illustrations, not by Dr Seuss but commissioned after his death, celebrate and acknowledge human feelings without judgement. The moods range from, 'Grey Day...Everything is grey. I watch. But nothing moves today', shown by a static, watchful owl, to a lively, chaotic tangle of flamingo legs: 'But when my days are Happy Pink it's great to jump and not just think'.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL261239W/My\\_Many\\_Coloured\\_Days](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL261239W/My_Many_Coloured_Days)

### ***What is My Song?* by Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn and Matthew Linn**

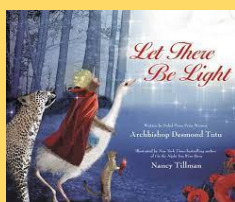


Based upon a traditional African fable, this moving story tells of the special life purpose or God-given 'song' with which everyone is born. Deo's mother 'listened in her heart until she heard the special song of me', which she sings with his father, 'inviting me to come to them'. The song is sung during pregnancy, by the people of the village to welcome the baby Deo, and to mark the boy's achievements and failures, his coming of age, marriage, and is finally sung in farewell at his death. The large, generous watercolour illustrations are expressive

even to younger children. Finally, the reader is invited to 'Take deep breaths, and listen deep inside your heart. Can you hear your song?'.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL14960294W/What\\_is\\_My\\_Song](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL14960294W/What_is_My_Song)

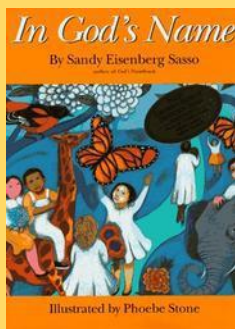
***Let There Be Light* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, illustrated by Nancy Tillman**



Published in 2014, this is a poetic retelling of the creation story, with an emphasis on God's love and delight for the world: 'on the seventh day, God laughed, and rested, and enjoyed his glorious creation'. The unusual illustrations are dreamlike and fanciful, and awash with digitally-enhanced sparkles.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL19707481W/Let\\_there\\_be\\_light](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL19707481W/Let_there_be_light)

***In God's Name* by Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, illustrated by Phoebe Stone**



A fable set in the newly created world, in which 'no one knew the name for God. So each person searched for God's name'. Names for God include 'Maker of Peace' to the tired soldier, 'Redeemer' to the freed slave, and 'Friend' to the lonely child. Finally, the people recognise God in their own communal reflections, and their diverse voices come together to call God 'One'. The bright pictures are full of appealing detail and interest.

[https://openlibrary.org/books/OL1093846M/In\\_God's\\_name](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL1093846M/In_God's_name)

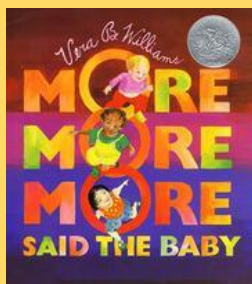
***The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd**



This charming American children's classic was first published in 1942. In it, a little bunny is determined to run away, and his mother assures him that she will be there for him. "If you become a crocus in a hidden garden," said his mother, "I will become a gardener. And I will find you". Simple black and white line drawings are alternated with wordless double-paged spreads in full colour, which give the reader pause. The story evokes God's relentless, ever-pursuing love in Psalm 139, 'O Lord, thou hast searched me out and known me'.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL151861W/The\\_Runaway\\_Bunny](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL151861W/The_Runaway_Bunny)

***More More More Said the Baby* by Vera B. Williams**

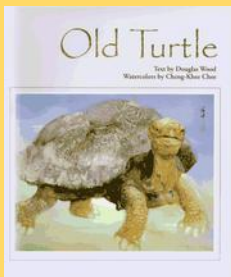


With bright, splashy paintings, this quirky book gives strong expression to the love and adoration showered on three toddlers by their grown-ups. We meet Little Guy and his daddy, Little Pumpkin and a glamorous blonde grandma, and sleepy Little Bird with her mama, and they fill the pages with their exuberant running, swinging, kissing, and rocking. The characters are ethnically diverse, but all share the same tenderness. The warmth of their love cannot fail to extend to the readers.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL3243592W/More\\_more\\_more\\_said\\_the\\_baby](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL3243592W/More_more_more_said_the_baby)



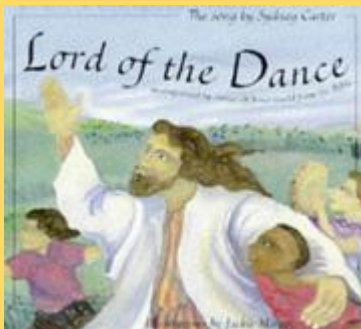
### **Old Turtle by Douglas Wood, illustrated by Cheng-Khee Chee**



A memorable parable of conflict and confusion on earth, which is calmed by the wise voice of Old Turtle, a prophetic figure. She says, 'God is all that we dream of, and all that we seek...all that we come from and all that we can find. God IS'. With a complex text and subtle paintings, perhaps this picture book is especially for adults, even more so than for children.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL892390W/Old\\_Turtle](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL892390W/Old_Turtle)

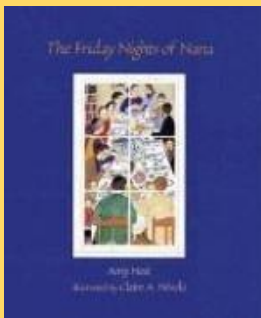
### **Lord of the Dance, accompanied by stories of Jesus retold from the Bible, by Sidney Carter and illustrated by Jackie Morris**



The Shaker song, Lord of the Dance, unfolds with vivid, detailed watercolours on the centre of each page. Accompanying Bible stories are told inside columns. So, for example, the words, 'I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame' are matched with Luke 6.6-11 where Jesus heals in the synagogue on the day of rest. A piano arrangement of the song and instructions for simple dance steps are included. This book reads beautifully at different levels, starting for young children with the song words and engaging illustrations.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL763907W/Lord\\_of\\_the\\_dance](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL763907W/Lord_of_the_dance)

### **The Friday Nights of Nana by Amy Hest, illustrated by Claire Nivola**



A book rich with the traditions and rituals of a Jewish family, and the reassuring love between a child and grandmother. Jennie and her Nana prepare for the Sabbath by cleaning the house, polishing candlesticks, and baking chicken, apple pie and challah bread. The family arrives in a swirl of snow and finally it's the best time: 'Nana is lighting candles and our dresses are touching and she is whispering Sabbath prayers and no-one makes a peep'. The colourful pictures are full of absorbing detail.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL15048594W/The\\_Friday\\_nights\\_of\\_Nana](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL15048594W/The_Friday_nights_of_Nana)

### **Elisabeth by Claire A. Nivola**



A true wartime story in which a woman, Ruth, is reunited with the beloved doll she left behind as a child when fleeing Germany on the eve of Hitler's rise to power. The subject is Ruth's affection for the doll, an attachment and loss to which young children can relate. Although the Nazi context is poignantly apparent to the adult reader, to a child it appears alongside the equally baffling but benign curiosities of bourgeois life in 1930s Munich: a frog kept in a jar with a ladder to predict the weather, and a pet African turtle big enough to ride on. Claire Nivola's memorable folk-art style illustrations are to be treasured.

<https://openlibrary.org/works/OL3276946W/Elisabeth>



### ***The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco**

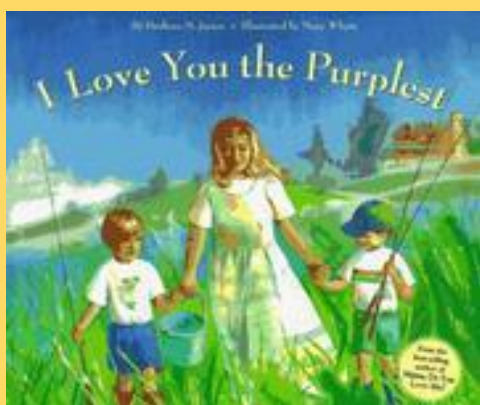


This is a true story of the author's quilt, made a century ago by Russian-Jewish immigrants to the USA from a basket of old clothes: 'Anna's babushka, Uncle Vladimir's shirt, Aunt Havalah's nightdress, and an apron of Aunt Natasha's'. The quilt is passed from mother to daughter, and plays a role in rituals (Sabbath tablecloth, wedding canopy) and everyday life (picnic rug, baby receiving blanket, and cosy lap rug in old age). The moving black and white pencil drawings show vivid human expressions,

and only the quilt appears in colour. A lovely, memorable representation of family traditions and succeeding generations.

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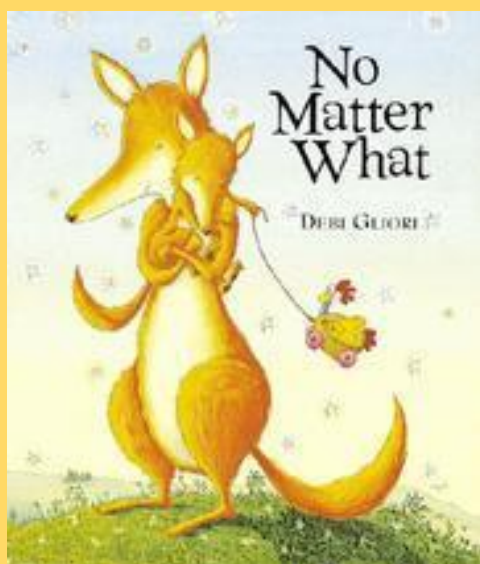
### ***I Love You the Purplest* by Barbara M. Joosse, illustrated by Mary Whyte**



A wise and thoughtful response to sibling rivalry, in which a mother diplomatically celebrates her sons' different qualities on a fishing trip; 'Why, Julian, you took the deepest strokes. And Max, your strokes were fastest'. She also has a clever answer to the question, 'Who do you love best?'. She loves one 'the bluest', the other 'the reddest', creating a deep 'purplest' affection for the boys she loves best. This book probably won't end competitiveness between your children, but it provides a loving and reassuring perspective.

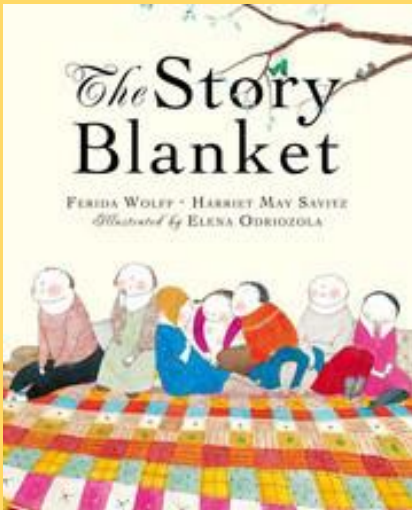
[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL547294W/I\\_love\\_you\\_the\\_purplest](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL547294W/I_love_you_the_purplest)

### ***No Matter What* by Debi Gliori**



Two foxes, parent and child, explore unconditional love in witty rhyming text and pictures. Things start badly with Small's 'grim and dark' tantrum, and Large responds that 'Grumpy or not, I'll always love you not matter what'. Small tests this, 'What if I was a crocodile?', 'Does love wear out...does it break or bend?', and is reassured. Small finally asks whether love goes on even when we are dead, to which Large has a good and memorable answer. Debi Gliori creates a familiar and comforting sense of the everyday – bad moods, mending toys, bedtime tooth-brushing – in which to set these profound questions.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL15055377W/No\\_matter\\_what](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL15055377W/No_matter_what)



***The Story Blanket* by Ferida Wolff and Harriet May Savitz, illustrated by Elena Odriozola**

Babba Zarrah tells stories to the children from her village, deep in the snow-covered mountains. They sit on her knitted story blanket, which she slowly unravels for the wool to make presents for her neighbours. When the villagers realise her generosity, the story blanket is gone, so they all donate wool from their homes for a replacement, and the cycle of sharing and giving resumes. This sweet parable of community cooperation is illustrated with fun, quirky pictures.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL2639389W/The\\_Story\\_Blanket](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL2639389W/The_Story_Blanket)

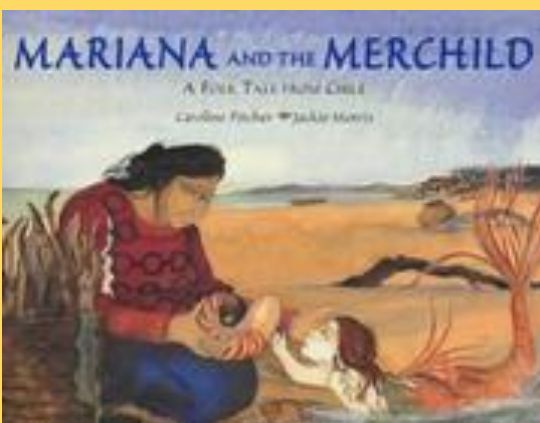
***Over in the Meadow* illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats**



An old song, described by Dorothy Butler in *Babies Need Books* as 'probably the most lulling number rhyme ... a wonderfully warm, drowsy contentment'. Ezra Jack Keats has created richly glowing collage pictures and marbled paper for this version. Every baby deserves to enjoy the 'old mother turtle and her little turtle one' and the life-affirming birds who 'sang and were glad in the hole in the tree'.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL831050W/Over\\_in\\_the\\_Meadow](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL831050W/Over_in_the_Meadow)

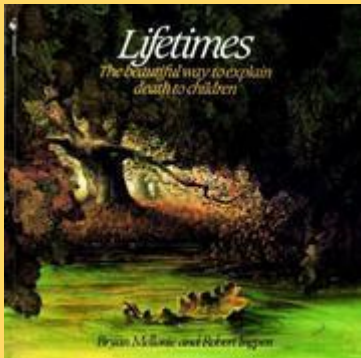
***Mariana and the Merchild* by Caroline Pitcher, illustrated by Jackie Morris**



An unusual folk-tale from Chile, in which a childless old woman cares for a merchild until she must be returned to the sea. The Klimt-like pictures of the baby being breastfed and mothered are especially beautiful. A wistful story of unconditional love, loss and consolation.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL85266W/Mariana\\_and\\_the\\_merchild](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL85266W/Mariana_and_the_merchild)

***Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children* by Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen**

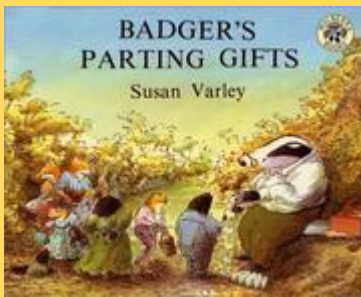


This unsentimental book describes earthly lifecycles and lifetimes with a calm but unwavering firmness: 'There is a beginning and an ending for everything that is alive. In between is living'. The focus begins with the natural world, and then extends to people, explaining that lifetimes share the same pattern. The soft drawings show new life (eggs in a nest), pain (a child's splinter being removed), death (the broken body of a butterfly), and many flourishing natural creatures thriving in their own lifetimes. In spite of its slightly misleading subtitle, feelings of grief and loss are not addressed. This is a

valuable book for children at any stage.

<https://openlibrary.org/works/OL5124983W/Lifetimes>

***Badger's Parting Gifts* by Susan Varley**

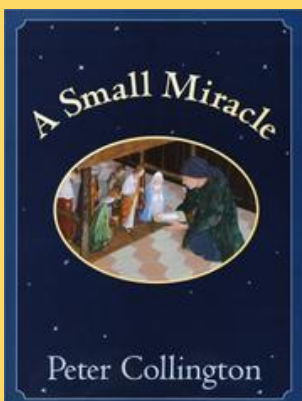


Old, wise, dependable Badger knows that he must soon die, and tries to prepare his woodland friends. Death is represented by a long tunnel through which Badger finds himself running and tumbling, leaving behind his infirm body. The animals are desperately unhappy, and a winter of desolate hibernation sets in. As spring arrives, they visit each other and talk about Badger, remembering the skills they learned from him, until in the warm days they can thank him

for his gifts and tell stories that make them all smile. The language is gentle and poetic, and the soft ink and watercolour pictures have a comforting echo of Ernest H. Shepard's illustrations for *Wind in the Willows*.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL5600556W/Badger's Parting Gifts](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL5600556W/Badger's_Parting_Gifts)

***A Small Miracle* by Peter Collingwood**



This wonderful, wordless story is told in 96 pictures, similar in style to the panels used by Raymond Briggs. An impoverished busker woman receives unexpected help at a time of great desperation, in a story which blends pathos with humour, realism with fantasy, and simplicity with intriguing detail. When first sharing this book with children, expect urgent and heart-felt exhortations to 'turn the page!' and immediate requests for a re-reading. Highly and enthusiastically recommended, this unforgettable classic deserves to be much better known.

[https://openlibrary.org/works/OL85700W/A\\_Small\\_Miracle](https://openlibrary.org/works/OL85700W/A_Small_Miracle)

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# The Feast

## A chance to meet ... An interview with Katherine Lyddon



*Katherine is one of GPUK's newer trainers. She is based in Somerset and has recently started a new job 'disrupting the established ways' for the Diocese of Bath and Wells, as a Children and Families Rural Pioneer Catalyst.*

### **Why and when did you become a Godly Play trainer?**

I became a trainer in November 2018, 8 years after I'd attended my own 3-day accredited course. In the intervening years, as Children's Adviser for the Diocese of Exeter, I had given the experience of Godly Play away to lots of different children in different settings (school classes, church weekends away, our church outreach club, Sunday schools) as well hundreds of adults through taster days around Devon. From these, over the years, I part funded at least 15 people to attend a 3 day training themselves in various places around England and set up seven sets of core story materials around Devon so that everyone was within 30 minutes of borrowing stories.

Becoming a trainer has allowed me to run two 3-day courses in Devon, bringing the option much closer for a lot of people living in the south west, which is really exciting.

When I first saw Rebecca Nye do a taster day in Cornwall in 2009 I did not grasp Godly Play at all; in fact I hated what I saw. That makes me chuckle now because not only do I love it, but it seeps into everyday life and how I am with people, even outside of Godly Play sessions. It really is not a 'Bible story technique'. The essence of Godly Play is way deeper than that and has enabled me to connect with God in an innate way that I didn't realise was possible.

### **Can you tell us about something that's recently happened as part of your work as a trainer?**

I finished in Devon and started a new job in Somerset in September 2019. 18 months previously I had trained 11 people from the Deanery I was now working for and although it had been a powerful and wonderful experience for all of them (they said so on their evaluations!) I discovered only one of them is actually using Godly Play. Last Saturday, I arranged a refreshment morning. Unfortunately only two of those 11 people could come, so I opened it out via the Godly Play UK website and Facebook and we ended up with 12 people coming from Torquay, Paignton, Bideford and Ilminster, as well as locally. It was such an exciting morning. Three newbies to Godly Play were blown away. The rest were so grateful to be on the receiving end of a story as well as opportunity to share with each other on how they are using it in their own context. There was such a buzz in the room and that's why I love being a trainer.

### **What's been your favourite Godly Play moment?**

When I used Godly Play as part of our outreach club to the children on my estate, the situation was completely different from what they were used to, and along with a lot of excitement, there were constant disruptions. My most favourite part was hearing their wondering even within that situation and also seeing how their desire to engage with the



story and the wondering increased week after week, as they began to realise that their own ideas were valuable and that I wasn't waiting for 'the right answer'.

### **What area of special interest do you bring to Godly Play UK?**

I absolutely love rural ... tractors and cows in particular! I want the people living in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset to have the same opportunities to access Godly Play training as people in towns. Godly Play works in every setting, but I think it is a real gift to rural churches that have few children and wide age differences. It means the children and young people can stay as one group and through Godly Play be disciplined each according to their own need.

### **As this is our 'resource issue', I wonder if you have a favourite resource or object that you like working with? Is there one that is especially precious for you?**

I won't go anywhere without my desert bag. It is such an absorbing and powerful start to many of the sacred stories which I love telling, but I've also seen so many children and adults engaged in breath-taking play in their own response time.

I also won't go anywhere without the Holy Family. They are so tactile and I love holding them. Sometimes I pass one of the figures round in prayer before the feast and it is beautiful to see different people hold or feel the pieces as prayers of blessing are said.

### **My new job**

The Diocese of Bath and Wells are appointing nine pioneers for a five-year project to disrupt the established ways of doing things. My particular post is focussed around children and families and is based within 35 rural churches. Two of these churches engage with Christian families on a Sunday morning. The same churches also engage with families during the week through toddler groups, Toddler Church, Bereavement Café, Messy Church, Bread Church and Fire Church. Three churches have Open the Book teams going into local schools. My job is to support those already going out; catalyse the pew sitters that aren't and to personally go into settings and lives where churches have not yet stepped in, in order to see what God is up to and how we (the church) can join in. It's a daunting and incredibly exciting role and Godly Play already seems to be offering a gift that other ways of being don't. I'm looking forward to experimenting with doing Godly Play outside!

## **Bite-sized news**

### *Godly Play in hospital chaplaincy*

This is more a request for information really. Is anyone using Godly Play in hospital chaplaincy? Would you be interested in sharing learning with others? Alison Summerskill would love to hear from you. Please contact [alison@godlyplay.uk](mailto:alison@godlyplay.uk).

### *Trustee Comings and Goings*

The longest-serving trustee of Godly Play UK, the Rev'd Liz Cannon, has retired. Liz served the Trust from its inception, and Godly Play in the UK for a long time before that. She was the person who initiated the relationship between Godly Play, then very new, and St Michael's Workshop at Bowthorpe. That will be perhaps her greatest gift to Godly

Play. We shall really miss Liz's gentle, wise words at our meetings and we wish her well as she moves to a new house and new things. Thank you, Liz, for all your ideas, support and advocacy over so many years.

The Trust has two new trustees too. The Rev'd Rob Rogers has taught both Design and Technology and RE! He now works with pupils with SEMH issues as well as being a counsellor, taking church services and being on an adoption panel. In his spare time, he is a very enthusiastic grandparent, and a wonderful solver of problems!

The Rev'd Adrian Chatfield is a parish priest and theological educator with 46 years' experience in the Caribbean, the UK and in Southern Africa. As a spiritual director and mentor, he is particularly interested in human co-creativity with God, and the place of play as an expression of the beauty of God and as a key narrative tool containing rich redemptive possibilities.

## *Godly Play in Ethiopia*

The first Godly Play training in Ethiopia took place in January 2020, led by Joan and Stan Truby from GP South Africa. Funded mainly by the Godly Play International Development Fund, the event was supported by the West London Family Church, one of whose ministers, GP Advocate Bridget Steenkamp, raised almost £1000 which contributed to the cost of accommodation and travel, as well as providing support for materials. The Assembly of God Church in Zeeway provided the building for the training and two Godly Play classrooms were created there. There were 28 Ethiopian participants and also people from Romania, Mexico and Canada, who currently live and work in Zeeway, as well as a British trainee. The training was made possible by the huge amount of groundwork and preparation undertaken by Bridget. A further, ecumenical training, is planned for Ethiopia in the not too distant future.



Hunde Wondafrash changes the light.



## **Collaboration with Latvia**

Godly Play trainers, like all Godly Players, thrive on collaboration. Standing in front of an image of the restored Depkin Manor House in Ramava (where the training was held) are Rachel MacIntyre (from Munich) and Judy Yeomans (from Sussex), who recently trained 16 Latvian storytellers. They are with Lolita Millersone, who hopes to become a trainer for Latvia later this year, to work alongside Anita Kazak.

Sending out  
**www.godlyplay.uk**

*Do you know someone who would be interested in one of these? Are there ways in which you could make them known? We would love to hear your suggestions. Enquiries to [sheila.rogers@talktalk.net](mailto:sheila.rogers@talktalk.net)*

Cliff College, Derbyshire: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 17 – 19 April 2020  
*Residential – book directly with the College*

Tyneside, Monkseaton: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 22 – 24 April

Ottershaw, Surrey: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 28 – 30 April 2020

Edinburgh: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 11 – 13 May 2020

Rugby: 3-Day Accredited Training course 20 – 22 May 2020

Oxford: 3-Day Accredited Training course 23-25 May 2020

Llantarnam Abbey, Wales: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 6 – 8 July 2020 *Residential*

Harrow, North London: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 18 – 20 June 2020

Ampleforth, Yorkshire: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 23 – 25 June 2020 *Residential*

Cliff College, Derbyshire: 3-Day Accredited Training course 3 – 5 November 2020  
*Residential – book directly with the College*

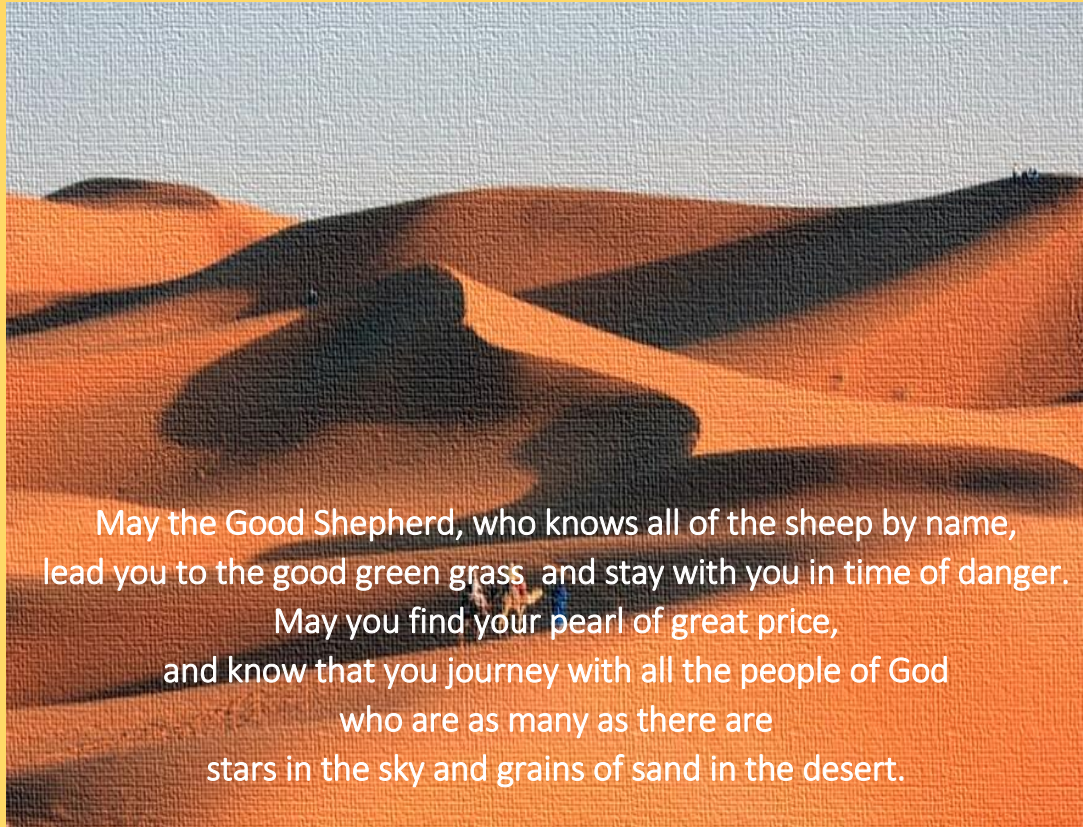
Cambridge: 3-Day Accredited Training Course 16 – 17 October and 7 November 2020





## **Associates of Godly Play UK: Caring about what really matters...**

Thank you for supporting Godly Play UK. We hope this issue has stimulated your concern for childhood spirituality. Do get in touch with suggestions for future issues.



*A Christian movement centred on childhood spirituality –  
providing training to transform thinking and practice for the whole of life*

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