



World Day of Prayer

(Scottish Committee)

Informed Prayer; Prayerful Action

“I Will Give You Rest: Come”

Matthew 11:28-30

Prepared by WDP Scotland

March 6, 2026

Children’s Leaders Notes for 5 -12yrs

RESOURCE ACTIVITIES

This provides a 2hour programme for children aged approximately 5-12. You can use it in its entirety or mix and match as fits your needs. All activities are individually timed. The whole programme could be used as an intergenerational event. There are 4 colouring pages available for download in the resources/downloads section on our website. www.wdpScotland.org.uk/resources

LEADER’S GUIDE

Things You’ll Need:

- Paper, colouring materials, recycled cloth
- Food colouring or diluted paint
- Box for theatre
- Cardboard for puppets/socks/brown bags
- Beans or rice in jars
- Brown lunch bags
- Plastic tubs/drums
- YouTube for Nigerian music/dance
- Candle (LED)
- Simple ingredients for rice and plantain snacks
- Printed flag templates (optional)

WELCOME & STORY CIRCLE (15 MINS)

“Come to Me and I Will Give You Rest”

- Light a candle to symbolise hope.
- Share a short, simple version of Jato’s story (a mother worried about her child’s safety in school) or Blessing’s story (poverty and mental health) adapted to be age-appropriate.
- Invite children to each place a stone on a tray when they hear about a burden and say, “Let’s help carry this.”

Reflection “What helps you feel better when you are tired or sad?”

1. COLOURFUL NIGERIA CRAFT STATION (30 MINS)

Activity Options (choose one or rotate stations):

- Adire-style tie-dye napkins: Use elastic bands and watered-down fabric paint or food colouring to create folded dye effects on white cloth (or kitchen towel for ease).
- Design your own Nigerian flag: Green and white stripes using felt, paint, or collage.
- Pattern printing: Use potatoes, sponges, or cardboard to print African-inspired shapes on brown paper or old T-shirts.

Leader Question, “What can colours and patterns tell us about people and places.”

2. MUSIC & MOVEMENT: NIGERIAN BEATS (15 MINS)

- Play Afrobeat or drumming clips (Kids’ Afrobeat dance).
- Use plastic tubs, boxes, or drums and create simple rhythms.
- Learn a simple Nigerian dance move together (e.g. Koroso claps or leg shuffle).
- Leader prompt - “Let’s dance our prayers of joy!” https://youtu.be/Gte2gmL_8og?si=8QJCBz_mpPsxDhfz
<https://youtu.be/ATTyDXJhXo4?si=54CLJ0ZfYnyXuLLX>

3. TASTE OF NIGERIA (15–20 MINS)

Mini snack session – Invite children to try:

- Rice with a little tomato & spice (Jollof-style)
- Fried plantain pieces (can be baked)
- Chin chin (tiny sweet dough cubes – optional to make) Allergy-safe versions and small sample sizes are fine!

Discussion while tasting: “What food makes you feel at home?”

4. GRATITUDE BACKPACK ACTIVITY (10-15 MINS)

You Will Need:

- A backpack decorated with a heart of kindness
- Colouring pens, crayons
- Paper for making or drawing notes on

Ask the children to write or draw:

- Something they’re grateful for
- Something that feels heavy (a worry or a feeling)
- Something they can do to help someone else feel lighter Pop the notes inside the backpack as “Heart Luggage”.

5. GROUP GAME – “CARRY THE BURDEN, SHARE THE LOAD”

(10 MINS)

Use a beanbag or small ball. Pass it round. When a child receives it, they say:

“I carry (a burden – like tiredness, worry, hunger)...

...but with friends, I feel (supported, happy, lighter).”

6. WE ALL CARRY THINGS – PUPPET PLAY

Puppet Script: “We All Carry Things”

Characters

- Narrator (optional adult voice or older child)
- Blessing (young girl puppet)
- Teacher (gentle, caring voice)
- Jato (mother puppet)
- Son (young boy puppet)

Scene 1: Blessing's Burden Narrator:

This is Blessing. She's a bright girl who loves singing and drawing. But something's been bothering her...
(Blessing puppet walks on with a huge paper "backpack" on her back.)

Blessing (sighing): Ugh. My backpack feels so heavy... even though it's not full of books.

Teacher (enters gently): Blessing, you look tired today. Want to talk?

Blessing: Sometimes... it feels like everything is too much. We don't have much food. Everyone's worried. I don't know how to help.

Teacher (kindly): That's a heavy load for one small person. You don't have to carry it all by yourself.

Narrator: The teacher sat with Blessing. They talked. She listened. And the backpack didn't feel quite so heavy anymore.

Blessing (smiling): Thank you. I feel... lighter now.

Scene 2: Jato's Worry

Narrator: Far away, in a busy village, lived a mum named Jato. She had a daughter, Amina she loved very much.
(Jato and daughter puppets appear holding hands.)

Amina (cheerfully): Bye, Mum! I'm off to school!

Jato (worried): Be safe, my child. I'll be thinking of you all day.

Narrator: Jato wanted her daughter to learn and grow. But sometimes, school wasn't safe. She felt afraid.

Jato (to the audience): I want her to have a good life. But what if... something happens?

Amina (turns and hugs her): It's okay, Mum. I'll be brave. And I know you'll always be here.

Narrator: Even though Jato was scared, she was strong. Like many mums, she carried her worries quietly... and filled her daughter's world with love.

Closing Scene: Together

Narrator (joining the two scenes): Blessing and Jato both carried heavy things. But with kindness, sharing, and love – their burdens got lighter.

All Puppets Together: "When we care, when we share, we help carry each other's load."

(End with all puppets bowing.)

Step-by-Step Instructions Choose a Puppet

Type:

Ask each child to pick whether they want to make:

- A sock puppet (fits over hand)
- A stick puppet (flat cut-out character on a stick)
- A paper bag puppet (flap becomes the mouth)

Introduce the Characters:

Briefly explain:

- Blessing – a girl who carries worries
- Teacher – kind and calm
- Jato – a mother who's worried for her daughter
- Amina – happy, hopeful and brave

Encourage children to pick a puppet to make, or team up in pairs to create both characters in a scene.

Puppet Creation:

- Draw the face and clothes
- Stick on eyes, wool hair, paper fabric
- Decorate with colours and patterns from Nigeria (show images for inspiration)
- Add a paper "backpack" for Blessing or a cloth bag for Jato

*Optional Extra – Puppet Theatre Box:
Use a large cardboard box to cut out a "theatre stage" window and let children decorate the backdrop with trees, houses or schools (representing Nigeria).*

Reflection Questions

- "What do you think Blessing needs to feel better?"
- "Why do you think Jato was worried?"
- "How can we help someone feel safe or less alone?"
- "Have you ever helped carry someone's load?"

Performance

Encourage each group or pair to perform a mini version using their handmade puppets – even just a few lines each. Younger children may want to narrate or repeat after the leader; older ones can add their own dialogue.

7. CLOSING REFLECTION & CALABASH BOWL (5 MINS)

Place a bowl (preferably wooden) in the centre with words like:

"Peace", "Hope", "Rest", "Together", "Strength"

Children take turns picking a word and say: **"I will carry (word) this week."**

Turn out the candle and say: **"We are part of the world's family. We can help bring rest and peace."**

Copyright © 2024 World Day of Prayer International Committee, Inc.

World Day of Prayer (Scottish Committee)

Charity Number SC020446

Website <http://www.wdpScotland.org.uk>