

# Using Exodus Scripts: two case studies

Holy Trinity, Wavertree and St Andrew, Kirkby in the Diocese of Liverpool used Exodus Scripts to good effect in their Giving in Grace programmes. This paper describes how they went about using the scripts with their young people.



### Holy Trinity, Wavertree

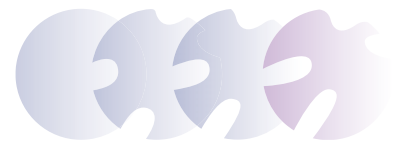
Holy Trinity church is situated in Wavertree, about 3 miles from Liverpool city centre. According to the local history society, Wavertree is home to the 'smallest house in England' at 95 High Street. Situated next to the Cock and Bottle pub, it measures just 6 ft wide, and 14 ft from front to back and was inhabited until 1925. Wavertree was also home, for his first 6 years, to one George Harrison of Beatles' fame.

When Holy Trinity ran its Giving in Grace programme, the church leaders wanted to help children engage as well as the adults, and so they chose the *Preach Exodus* materials to form the basis of the preaching series for both adults in church and children in their Climbers and Explorer groups (aged 3–11 years). The Exodus Scripts within *Preach Exodus* are not Godly Play scripts in the fullest sense but do draw on part of the rich Godly Play approach to helping children engage with the bible stories.<sup>i</sup>

All the Exodus Scripts in the *Preach Exodus* resource were used with one exception – the desert freedom box (week two). This was because the planning of the worship was carefully done to link with the adults and so the story of the people of Israel who were set free to leave Egypt was explored in one of the regular monthly all-age worship services. The leaders of the children's' ministry commented that it was good for them and the children to see and experience the links between the worship in church and where the children met in the church hall over the road. This was reinforced when, at the end of each week's activity, the contents of the boxes were displayed as a tableau on the window ledges in the church.

Once the session started, the children were keen to see what came out of the boxes and they responded very well to the 'wondering questions' which are part of the Godly Play approach. The adults involved commented on the sense of sacred space that was created during the presentations of the bible story. The adults present also joined in and responded well. One leader particularly appreciated the session involving the gold box, which retells the story of the golden calf. The jewellery made from yellow play dough was recreated into a golden calf and then later squashed by Moses. The leader felt that this simple activity greatly enhanced the impact of the story.

The children's ministry leaders felt free to adapt the Exodus scripts and included some of the additional resources in the *Cry Freedom!* all-age resources. The leaders also made use of the Action Scenes resources, which proved very useful for stimulating discussions among the children and also as take-home sheets. These resources can be found under Designing the Programme in the Preaching section at their respective tabs.

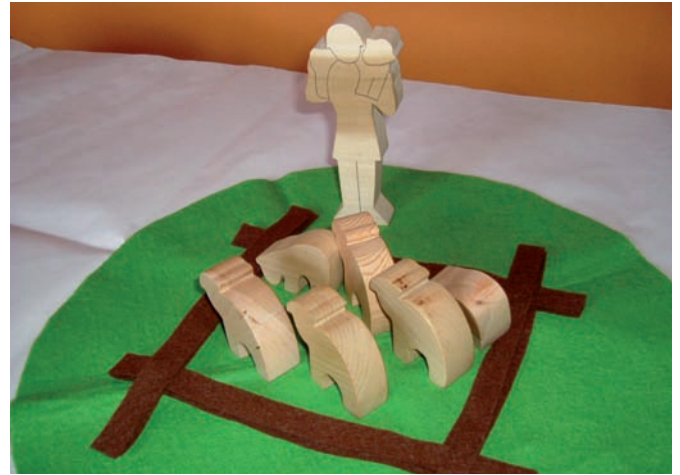


The final word should go to one of the children's ministry leaders at Holy Trinity: *'I must admit that it was hard work preparing the boxes and the programme, but it was well worth it.'*

### St Andrew, Kirkby

St Andrew, Tower Hill is part of the Kirkby team ministry, a group of four churches serving a council estate and private housing of around 40,000 people, 5 miles from Liverpool city centre. After some deliberation, St Andrew's decided to use the Exodus preaching series in its Giving in Grace programme because the leaders felt that the idea of a journey would resonate with people in the church and because of the children's resources. It would also be good to integrate the teaching material for both adults and children.

The church has a small children's group called the 'Cool School', which meets every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month, when the children stay in church for all-age worship. The children's ministry leaders stayed close to the scripts as they were written, each team producing its own box to illustrate the story. The leaders said that they felt very comfortable leading the sessions. What's more, the children were really struck by the excitement and wonder generated by what was going to come out of the box. Whether the children were 3 or 13, they were engaged, quiet and fascinated. Once the story had been told, the use of 'I wonder' questions, drawn from Godly Play, proved really helpful in enabling the children to enter into the story and find its meaning and relevance for their young lives.



Once the sessions had finished, the children came back into church for communion and then, during the notices, shared with the adults what they had been doing, with the help of their 'special' box. Thus the adults were able to have a different slant on the story that they had been studying. It is just a rumour that many adults said that they wished they had been out with the Cool School as it sounded much more interesting than staying in church!

After the Giving in Grace programme was over, the Cool School leaders continued to use the same kind of approach to some of the Gospel stories. The response from the children was so positive that they felt that the creative Godly Play approach could be explored and developed further.

#### Notes

*i See [www.godlyplay.org.uk](http://www.godlyplay.org.uk) for more on this innovative and exciting approach*