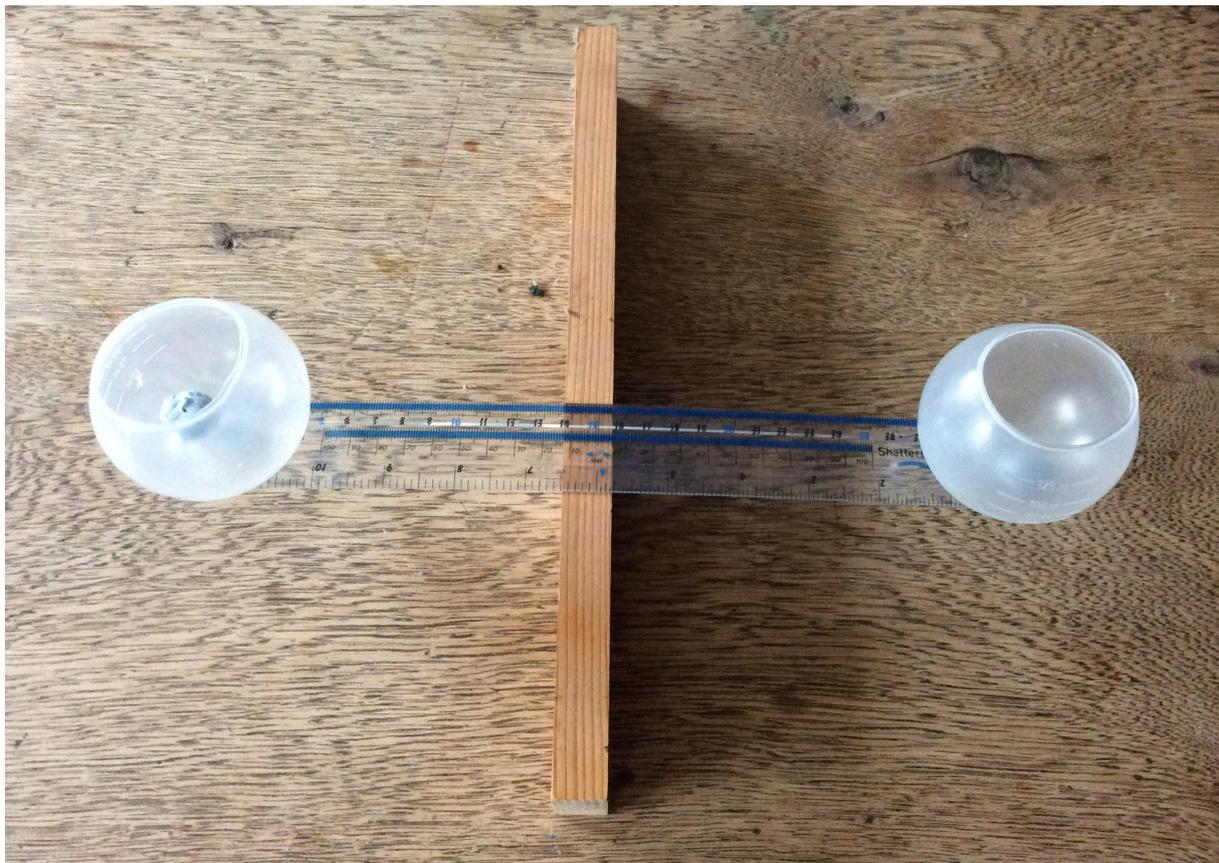


All-age resources

Produced by ROOTS for Churches



Preparation

The all-age activities through the service are linked to the idea of the scales of justice. You will need an old fashioned set of balance scales. Alternatively, make a simple set by fixing cut-down paper cups or other small containers to each end of a rigid plastic ruler. Balance this on a narrow strip of wood. You could make a larger version using other materials, so that it's easier for everyone to see them.

The scales need to be placed in a prominent position and could be brought in by children at the beginning of the service. To the left and right of the scales you will need a board to attach cards during the prayer of repentance.

An all-age introduction

This could be used after the Introductory words in the service.

You will need: small objects, e.g. dominoes or coins and some pasta or lentils.

- Invite some volunteers to conduct an experiment by placing different objects in each of the cups on the scales. You may need to steady the 'scales' if they are home made.
- As they are trying out the different items, ask: What happens and what does it mean?
- Then ask the volunteers to share the pasta or lentils so that the scales balance. Is this easy to do? When might you need to do this?

Justice or fairness is sometimes described as a set of scales which balance. When something is really unfair, one side of the scales comes down with a crash!

Alternative all-age prayer of repentance

You will need: prepared cards with either words only, or words and very simple line drawings (see template).

- You could invite different people to read different parts of the Leader's words.
- After each short prayer the cards are taken by children to be stuck or pinned on boards to the left or right of the scales. If the scales are large, use A4 card or paper and put them on the scales. The words on the cards could be read out before they are placed.

Leader Lord we are sorry when we don't act fairly. Help us to be fair and to make sure the scales are not lop-sided.

Jesus ate with all kinds of people. We are sorry when we treat some people better because they seem more important.

Card 1 is taken to the front left.

We are sorry when we ignore poor people and strangers. Help us to remember to help people who are being given a very hard time.

Card 2 is taken to the front right.

You call us, the church to act fairly. We don't always use what we have, as a church, for the good of everyone.

Card 3 is taken to the front left.

We are sorry and we ask for your help to give a welcome and support to all.

Card 4 is taken to the front right.

Jesus asks us to love one another. Sometimes we only take notice of people from our own church or people like us.

Card 5 is taken to the front left.

We are sorry and ask your help to accept different people with different ideas.

Card 6 is taken to the front right.

You call us to love our neighbours yet we often think too much of ourselves.

Card 7 is taken to the front left.

We are sorry and ask for your help to befriend our neighbours and think more about their welfare.

Card 8 is taken to the front right.

All We are sorry when we get things out of balance. Help us to show your love and to work together to balance the scales of justice. Amen.

Every picture tells a story

This activity could come after the reading from Deuteronomy or as part of the sermon.

- Draw everyone's attention to the photograph of the city of Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia (on the front cover of the order of service booklet, and also available with the Word version of the service) or the simple line drawing of a city of high rise towers and shanty houses (available to download).
- Project or print out four questions and allow people time to think about each one in turn.
 1. What can we see in the picture?
 2. What does it tell us about people's lives in Jakarta?
 3. 'Pursue Justice and Justice alone.' Do you think what is happening in the picture is fair?
 4. What needs to change in the picture and what needs to change in the world?
- You may wish to invite people to discuss the questions with their neighbours.

A way of presenting the Gospel reading

You will need: a rolled up piece of paper with the quotation from Isaiah printed or written on it; two readers, a Narrator and Jesus.

Jesus sits near the front and stands up as the narrator reads that he is handed the scroll.

He unrolls the scroll and reads the portion from Isaiah. After saying 'this day is this scripture fulfilled...', he hands the scroll to the narrator and goes to sit down. The impact will be such that 'the eyes of all in the (church)' will indeed be on him! After a suitable pause, the narrator concludes the reading.

A 'dotty' way to balance the scales!

This activity could come after one of the readings or as part of the sermon.

You will need: a set of dominoes spread out face down on a tray, and a bag of sweets. You may wish to pre-arrange the volunteers mentioned below. Tell them their task will be very simple and will not involve speaking.

- Ask for five or six volunteers and invite them to stand in a semicircle facing the congregation.
- Without explaining or answering questions, invite everyone to choose a domino and look at it.
- Then give them a chance to change their domino for another one, or keep the first one.
- Now, explaining as you do it, produce a bag of sweets and give each person a number of sweets. The number each person receives is 12 (the highest possible number of spots) minus the number of spots on their domino, so a person with 3 spots on their domino receives 9 (12-3); a person with 12 spots gets none!
- Allow people to express their reaction – it is often interesting. The volunteers with most sweets may even offer to share!
- Conclude by observing that dominoes is a game that you quite rightly play to win. But sometimes in life, those winning may need to lose a little in order to win.

Alternative prayers of intercession

You will need: to project or show a picture of balance scales, or draw attention to the scales at the front (see *Preparation* above). Give out sheets of paper, either plain or using the template and pencils.

- Invite people to write on their sheet a list of people we need to pray for in order to ‘balance the scales’. This can be in response to the photo of Jakarta or in other places in the world. Include people with power to see justice done as well as those losing out. Younger children could work with older ones or draw the people rather than writing a list.
- The lists can be brought to the front and placed beside the scales. The scales could be weighted down on one side and the lists placed on the other to help rebalance them.
- Conclude with a summary prayer such as:

We pray for all those people, in Indonesia and elsewhere,
where the scales are not balanced fairly.

May all receive a fair share and be able to celebrate
because they have enough.

We pray for just rules to allow this to happen.

Amen.

These resources have been written by Daisy Barnes, on behalf of ROOTS for Churches Ltd.

ROOTS for Churches publishes weekly worship and learning resources at www.rootsontheweb.com.