

## What Makes Godly Play So Different?

- Godly play assumes that people are individuals with different needs. There are a variety of ways of learning and play is important in all our learning.
- Godly Play creates a safe and open space, allowing participants the opportunity to explore and develop an understanding of God.
- Godly Play has been developed over many years (since the 1970s). The well-tested story scripts are based on the bible and say only what needs to be said.
- The emphasis is on simplicity, getting to the essence of the story rather than 'exciting' elaboration. The silence and gestures are as important and powerful as the words.
- Although it was originally developed as a resource for children, Godly Play is now being used with a wide range of age groups, in a diversity of settings.



## Some Reading

Godly Play: an imaginative approach to religious education, Jerome W Berryman, Augsburg Books, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1995, ISBN 978-0806627854

Teaching Godly Play: how to mentor the spiritual development of children, Jerome W Berryman, Morehouse Education Resources, 2009, ISBN 978-1-60674-048-4

The complete Guide to Godly play Volumes 1- 8, Jerome W Berryman, Living the Good News, 2002-2012

Children's Spirituality, Rebecca Nye, Church House Publishing, 2009, ISBN 978-0715140277

## Find Out More

To find out more about Godly Play in Scotland you can contact:

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## Or On The Internet

[www.godlyplay.com](http://www.godlyplay.com)  
The official website of the Godly Play Foundation in the USA.

[www.godlyplay.org.uk](http://www.godlyplay.org.uk)  
The Godly Play UK web site. This site gives information about available training and includes links to online suppliers of Godly Play materials.

[www.godlyplayscotland.co.uk](http://www.godlyplayscotland.co.uk)  
The Godly Play Scotland web site. This gives information on Discovery, Making Materials and Going Deeper Days around Scotland.



# Godly Play

## What Is Godly Play?

- An engaging and creative method for exploring our Christian faith and heritage.
- A sacred space in which children can experience and engage with Bible stories creatively.
- Encountering and exploring the sacred stories of God's people, of knowing Jesus through his life and his parables and understanding the way in which we approach God through liturgical action.
- A multi-sensory approach that combines story and play, while encouraging a calm and quiet way of working and reflecting on the story.

## What Happens In Godly Play?

**Welcome** - The Door Person welcomes you at the door and helps you hang up your coat, asks how you are and if you are ready to go into Godly Play.

**Building the Circle** - The Storyteller is already sitting on the floor in the Godly Play space, waiting to welcome you. You join the Circle on the floor. Once everyone has joined, the Storyteller helps you to Get Ready to enter into the story.



**Story** - It is told using special objects, maybe some wooden figures and sand or some felt and painted objects. Objects for telling other stories are all around you. The Storyteller wonders which story they will tell today and once they've found it, they bring it back to the circle.

**Wondering** – After the story, we wonder about the story through wonder questions the storyteller asks. Some people in the circle may wonder out loud and some may wonder silently. Both are welcomed as the circle reflects on the story we just heard and how we connect to it.

**Response** – Each person in the circle has time to respond to the story through a variety of different mediums and materials. Some people may choose to work with the story they have just heard or any of the other stories, others may choose to use some of the art materials or may choose to read or to have some quiet time. The Storyteller stays in the circle and the Door Person helps with the practicalities for the response area.



**Feast** – After the response time, everyone is invited to come back to the circle to share in the feast. This is a small amount of food and drink shared around the circle with help from some participants in the circle. We wait until everyone has been served before we enjoy the feast.

**Saying Goodbye** - After the feast it is time to leave and the Storyteller and Door Person both say their goodbyes to you as you leave.

## What Do You Need For Godly Play?

- A Storyteller and a Door Person.
- Objects to allow the stories to be told. These can be purchased from Godly Play materials suppliers or you can make your own. They should be beautiful, robust and made from natural materials where possible.
- The Godly Play books – these are 'The Complete Guide to Godly Play'.



## What Next?

- Godly Play Network Meetings are informal gatherings, sometimes in the evening, sometimes on a Saturday morning, which give you the chance to see a Godly Play story, to do some wondering and to have a chat to other people who are doing Godly Play.
- If you would like to make your own objects, Godly Play Scotland runs Making Materials days and we're happy to come to your church. We provide the raw materials – you put them together.
- Godly Play UK offers three-day, accredited, core Godly Play Storyteller and Door Person course to help you on your journey. These provide more in-depth theory and practice. They are an excellent way to learn the storytelling techniques, see many of the core stories, find out about materials and setting up a Godly Play space and to learn more about the theology and spirituality of childhood.