

# Godly Play



## Useful Websites –

[www.godlyplay.uk](http://www.godlyplay.uk)

[www.godlyplayfoundation.org](http://www.godlyplayfoundation.org)

[www.leeds.anglican.org/children-youth/training-support](http://www.leeds.anglican.org/children-youth/training-support)

***What is it?***

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  

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Diocese of Leeds

**Godly Play** ...is a creative and imaginative way of exploring the Christian story. It can be used in a variety of settings – church, schools, hospitals, care homes – to help people attend to God. It invites listeners into stories, helping them to discover things they would never previously have noticed.

A session comprises of four elements:

### **1. The arrival and welcome**

Each person is welcomed individually by the 'doorperson' and invited to join a circle with the 'Storyteller' when they are ready to do so. This is a way of building community. The "Storyteller" then welcomes everybody together.

### **2. The Word and Response**

The storyteller brings a box or tray to the circle from its place in the room and tells the story.

There are three styles of story;

*Parables, Sacred Stories and Liturgical.*

All are scripted and have been developed over many years.

After the story there is a time of "wondering". Questions begin with "I wonder..." and help to explore the story together.



Following the wondering, there is a time for an individual response. Each person is asked in turn, they would like to do. This may be drawing, painting, work with clay, writing, playing with the story or with another story previously seen. There is no pressure or imposed direction on this.

### **3. The Feast**

The storyteller reconvenes the circle and each person is given a paper napkin, a biscuit and finally a drink. Then prayers are said, beginning with the storyteller; thanking God for the story, the time together and each one of us. Individual prayers are then offered, going around the circle.

When prayers are completed the feast begins.

### **4. The Dismissal**

After the feast each person leaves in turn. The storyteller says goodbye to each as they leave the circle and the doorkeeper says farewell as they leave the room.

### **Top Tips**

#### **\* Do not be afraid of silence**

Do not rush the story.

If there is silence in the wondering do not rush to fill it or ask another question. There will not be silence within heads!

#### **\* Keep the story as your focal point**

The story is what is important. Often when you engage eye contact it gives the person permission to talk and makes them 'important'.

#### **\* You need to respect questions or responses**

Responding with an 'mmm' acknowledges their thoughts but is non committal. You should try not to give direct answers, this can close down 'thinking and wondering'. You could also answer question with a question; for example 'mmm, I wonder what would happen if...?'

#### **\* Do not panic if things go 'off track' or become 'silly'**

It is often only after things wander that you get to 'deep' places.

#### **\* Finally...Trust the material!**