**FIRST STEPS TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Session 1 of 4

# Joshua

### MEETING AIM

To think about how God didn’t tell Joshua not to be scared but to be brave becauseGod was with him.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Joshua 1

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

Moses led the Israelites to the promised land then when he died, God chose Joshua to take over. Joshua, who began life as a slave, became a powerful leader who was used by God to lead an army to victory.

God tells Joshua to “be strong and courageous” three times in Joshua 1. However, he’s not telling Joshua to be brave and get over his fear, he’s telling him to have courage because God is with him. This session explores how it’s OK to feel scared and how we can have courage even while we feel scared, because God is with us.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Welcome each child by name and encourage them to share stories from their week. Celebrate any birthdays, or special events. Ask the children: “What helps you to feel brave?” Thank God that he’s with you and ask him to help you learn more about him today.

### PLAY – 10 mins

**You will need:** a box; a blindfold; various items with different textures such as soft fabric, rough sandpaper and water

Invite a child to be blindfolded and place one of the items in the box. Invite the blindfolded child to put their hand inside the box and guess what the item is. Let the children take it in turns while you put lots of different things to feel inside.

Chat about how it might feel a scary to be blindfolded and not know what you’re about to feel.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

Explain to the group that as you listen to today’s story, you’re going to play follow the leader. Joshuawas able to be a brave and strong leader because he knew God was with him. Invite the children to listen carefully and watch you for actions to copy. You might want to teach them the actions before you read the story or do them to copy as you go along.

God’s people had been wandering in the desert for a really long time – 40 years, in fact. *March on the spot.* God had looked after them. He had been teaching them how to trust and listen to him. *Cup your hand to your ear.*

Moses had been leading the people. He had led them to the special land that God had promised them. *March on the spot.* Sadly, then Moses died. *Make a sad face.* God gave them a new leader called Joshua. Joshua was going to lead them into the special land.

God spoke to Joshua: “I want you to lead my people into the land I have promised them. You need to get ready to cross the Jordan River. Just like I promised Moses I will be with you everywhere you go. No one will be able to hurt you. I will be with you. Be strong and courageous. Listen to what I say and do what I ask you to do. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid because I will be with you wherever you go.” *Invite the children to come up with an action for ‘brave and courageous’. Copy the actions that different children think of.*

So, Joshua told the people: “Go and get everyone ready. In three days’ time we’re going to cross the river and take the land God is giving us.” *Mime packing bags.*

The people answered Joshua and said: “We’ll do whatever you ask us and go wherever you send us. We did what Moses asked us to do, and we will do the same for you. We pray that God will be with you like he was with Moses. We will protect you. Be strong and courageous!” *Do one or two of the actions the children thought of earlier.*

Joshua was probably nervous. Moses had been a really great leader; the promised land which God said they would live in already had people in it. It wasn’t going to be easy for them!

In this part of the Bible God says to Joshua to be “strong and courageous” three times. He doesn’t just say: “Be strong and brave, don’t be afraid” and that’s it. He says: “Be strong and brave, don’t be afraid, because I am with you.”

God was with Joshua. *Do another ‘strong and courageous’ action.*

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, ensuring everyone has the chance to contribute:

* What was your favourite part of the story?
* How do you think Joshua felt when God told him he was going to lead all those people?
* What does it look like be brave?
* What times do you need to be brave in your life?
* How can God help you to be brave?

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** badges or stickers with the Bible verse Joshua 1:9 printed on; collage materials; glue; pens or pencils

God told Joshua to be ‘strong and courageous’ because he was with him everywhere he went. God says we can be brave because he is with us. Invite each child to decorate a badge or sticker which they can wear to remind them that God is with them wherever they go.

As you chat, talk about the different times the children might need to be brave. What does God being with you feel like? Share a story from your own life that illustrates this, so that children get an idea of how this can practically work out.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Invite the children to share a time or place where they don’t feel brave and ask that God would help them to feel strong and courageous and know that he is with them. Pray this prayer together:

“Thank you, God, that you are always with us wherever we go. *Invite the children to name all the different places they go.* Thank you, God, you are with me. Amen.”

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