

The whole world changed

Mark 1.4-11 Baptism of the Lord

This passage is the first appearance of Jesus as an adult and comes at the beginning of his ministry. His baptism is a new beginning and a transformation. John the baptizer says that he is not worthy to untie Jesus' shoes. He recognises that Jesus will be able to do much greater things by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This week we explore the opportunity for a new beginning that comes with Jesus.

Prepare your young people's session

Read Bible notes on **WEB**.

Young people face many transitions and new beginnings and need to be reminded of God's delight in them at every stage. How has your faith helped you when going through a transition?

Resolutions made at the new year may have failed by now, so this week is an opportunity to discuss how faith can make a difference to how we live. Particularly that, when we fail, God can offer us a fresh start to try again.

Find more ideas opposite. Go to www.rootsontheweb.com for links, templates, images, tracks.

- Debate whether Jesus knew that he was going to do something radically different.

People who are changing the world

10 mins **WEA**

Discuss how we can be activists for change

You will need: photos of current activists, e.g. Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, David Attenborough, Jack Monroe (see links on **WEB**).

- Invite the group to identify the people in the photos and ask who they would add. Discuss if Jesus would have been an activist and, if so, in what way.
- Plan some ways in which the group can be involved in initiatives for positive change in the local community, e.g. litter-picking, contributing to a food bank, reducing plastic waste.

Newspaper prayer 10 mins **ESA**

Pray for situations or people in the news that need transformation

You will need: newspaper cuttings.

- Offer the young people a selection of news reports of situations where dramatic change or a new beginning is needed. Invite them to choose one and explain their choice.
- Play the track 'My Revival', Lauren Daigle on *How Can It Be*, during this activity.
- Keep a time of prayer for the situations and how we may possibly be part of the solution.

WEB Check-in: Connecting faith with everyday, real-life issues.

GATHER

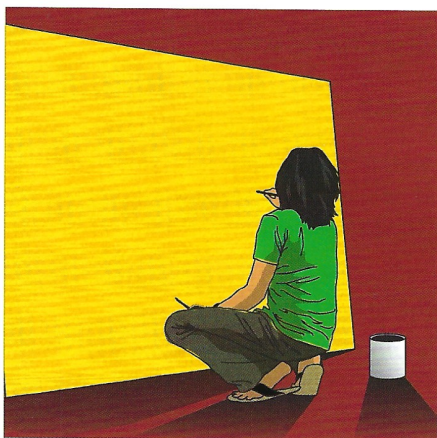
What's new? 5 mins **W**

You will need: a calendar or diary for 2021.

- Invite the young people to share what they are watching this month. Discuss their delight or otherwise with the new season's offerings on TV or streaming sites.
- Ask: Beyond, film, TV and music, is January a more enjoyable month than November? Is there more to look forward to? Do we, or the world, need regular new beginnings?

First Impressions **WEB**

You could also use the image and following questions to help introduce the theme.



- What would you draw/write here?
- How does the idea of a 'blank canvas' make you feel?
- When have you experienced a fresh start?

SHARE THE WORD

RCL Baptism of the Lord Year B:
Genesis 1.1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19.1-7;
Mark 1.4-11

Highlight the surprises 10 mins **WE**

You will need: copies of the Bible passage and a highlighter for each young person.

- Give each young person the Bible passage and a highlighter. Read the passage, then ask the young people to read it to themselves and highlight anything surprising or unusual.
- Discuss how John's ministry and Jesus' arrival were new beginnings and weren't what people were expecting. Ask the young people to think of a time when they had a new experience, and whether it was what they expected, or not.

EXPLORE AND RESPOND

Transformation challenge 10 mins **E**

Illustrate how we can be changed by God

You will need: empty containers and boxes, parcel tape, scissors, pens.

- Challenge the young people, in pairs, to use the recyclable materials to make something new and give it a new purpose.
- Discuss how old things can be transformed into something new.

GO WITH GOD

Consider together what you have explored, what that means for each of you and how it might influence your daily lives.

- Invite the group to pray, in pairs or threes, about their response to the session.
- Play the track 'Second Chance', Rend Collective on *Campfire*, during this activity.
- Decide, as a group, on one action everyone can take in the coming week to help transform a small part of the world.

Go with God 24/7

Notice someone campaigning for change at school, at home or in the community and support them through prayer and by getting involved. **EA**