



Adoption Sunday

Sunday School Session

This material is adaptable for groups in all school years. Each section contains a number of options, so you can make sure your session suits your group. If you have any questions, please email us.

Other than in the scenarios in Resource 5, this session doesn't specifically mention children or young people who have been fostered or adopted. This is to make sure that fostered or adopted children and young people in groups don't feel singled out or embarrassed.

Part of the Body and Part of the Story

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." [Ephesians 4.16](#)

This session is about what it means to grow together and be part of the body of Christ. It aims to encourage young people to consider the role they play in supporting one another and sharing God's love.

Equipment needed:

- Bibles
- Resource 1: Body Drive print-outs cut out (Introduction Activity 1) - one per team
- Dice (Introduction Activity 1)
- Smarties/Skittles/Starburst or Lego (Introduction Activity 2) - enough for 2-7 per child
- Resource 2: Colours of me print out (Introduction Activity 2) - one or two - optional
- Resource 3: Marmite game emojis (Introduction Activity 3) - one per child - optional
- Resource 4: Body print out (Explore 1) - optional
- If not using Resource 4, lining paper to draw around one of the young people – optional
- Resource 5: Scenarios print out (Explore 3)
- One large piece of paper per child (Prayer 1)
- Felt pens (Prayer 1)

More Bible verses to use in this session:

Romans 12:4-5 GOD'S WORD Translation (GW)

Our bodies have many parts, but these parts don't all do the same thing. In the same way, even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

John 15:12-14 ESV

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

Section 1: Introduction

ACTIVITY 1:

Body Drive game (based on the Beetle Drive game)

Divide the group into teams, and give each team a set of cut-out body parts (Resource 1).

The aim of the game is to be the first team to create a whole body. Each body part is given a number:

- 1 = Torso
- 2 = Arms (need 2)
- 3 = Hands (need 2)
- 4 = Legs (need 2)
- 5 = Feet (need 2)
- 6 = Head

The teams take turns to roll a die and add the corresponding body part to their body. They must, however, roll a 1 first for the torso before they can add any other part. If you have enough dice and Sunday school leaders, you could play with teams in two or more separate circles. If you have a smaller group, each child or young person could have their own set of cut-out body parts and play in turn with one die.

Players may only add the correct number of body parts to their body. For instance, when the body has two legs, any further number 4s rolled would result in the die being passed on.

As soon as a team has completed their body they should shout **'ONE BODY'** to signal the end of the game.

Tip: You could set a time limit (e.g. 5 minutes). The winning team is the team that completes the body first, or whichever is at the most advanced stage when the time is up.

Introducing the theme:

Each of the body parts in the game represents someone in our church or Sunday school. Each part is different, but we need them all to create the body.

Explain to the group that in this session we're going to think about the part of the Bible that says we are all different parts of one body, all joined together, and we need each other to love one another, and grow together. God has created us all to be different and we can support one another in different ways. We're going to think about what it means to support each other as the body of Christ.

ACTIVITY 2:

Colours of me

This activity will help the group to get to know each other better.

Ask everyone to sit in a circle or around a table. Pass around items of different colours - perhaps something edible like Smarties, Skittles or Starburst, or Lego, for a non-food option. (If it is food tell them not to eat it yet!) Ask them to take a minimum of two and a maximum of seven items in whatever colours they want.

Depending on the size of the group, you could break out into smaller groups, or keep as one large group.

Go around the group and encourage the young people to share something corresponding to the colour. For example:

- Green: Favourite thing to do in their own time (e.g. reading)
- Red: Food they really dislike
- Yellow: What they look for in a good friend
- Blue: Favourite chocolate bar or sweet
- Orange: Favourite film
- Purple: Favourite food

If you have more colours, you can create more categories. It might be helpful to have a list of the colours and their meanings on a piece of paper where the group can see it. If you are using the colours and suggestions as above, you can print *Resource 2: Colours of me*.

Introduction to the theme:

This activity shows that we are all different – not one person gave exactly the same answers as someone else! If our lives were books, they would all be very different stories. So it's easy to understand that we get on better with some people than others. However, in the Bible Jesus tells us to love each other as He has loved us. He even went as far as to say we are one body – we are all joined together and we need each other.

Jesus said we need to love each other and build and grow together. God has created us all to be different and we can help to support one another, to care for and love each other in different ways. We're going to think about what it means to support each other as the body of Christ.

ACTIVITY 3:

The marmite game

Clear as much space as possible in the room. Call one side the room the 'love it' side and the other the 'hate it' side. As you read the list below, everyone needs to go to one of the sides. If you don't have very much space in the room, you could print off the emojis (*Resource 3: Marmite game emojis*) on both sides of the paper and give one to each young person, telling them to show the side that expresses how they feel. Alternatively, they can draw their own 'love it' and 'hate it' emojis.

You can use the lists below, a combination, or create your own.

Children:

- McDonalds
- Adventure Time (the TV programme!)
- School
- Dogs
- Swimming
- Someone else's birthday party
- Board games
- Playing in the snow
- Reading
- Making cakes or cookies
- Dancing
- Fireworks
- Singing

Young people:

- Hot curries
- Rom Coms
- Football
- Ed Sheeran (or Zayn depending on the age group!)
- Peanut butter
- Hollyoaks
- Prawn cocktail crisps
- School
- Marmite
- Harry Potter
- Theme park rides
- Camping

Introduction to the theme:

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Jesus said we need to love each other and build and grow together. God has created us all to be different and we can help to support one another, to care for and love each other in different ways. We're going to think about what it means to support each other as the body of Christ.

Section 2: Exploring the Bible

Explore 1:

Read these Bible verses together:

Ephesians 4.16 NIV

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Romans 12:4-5 GOD'S WORD Translation

Our bodies have many parts, but these parts don't all do the same thing. In the same way, even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other.

What if a body was just made of legs and arms? Think about these questions together:

- What would it look like?
- Would it look like a person?
- Could the body walk to the shops, buy some sweets and eat them? If not, why not?
- What could they do? What would the body you made in the Body Drive game (Introduction Activity 1) be able to do?

This is exactly what the Bible means when it talks about us being a body:

1 Corinthians 12:15-27 NIV

Now if the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

What the Bible was trying to say wasn't about human bodies, however, it was **about understanding that even though we are all different, we are all important to God and we all have a role to play in helping each other to experience God's love**—just like the body has different parts that all work together to make a complete body.

Read these two verses:

1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

John 15:12-14 ESV

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

Ask the group what the Bible says we should do for one another. Because we're all different, we are all good at different things and do things differently. So we all support and love each other in different ways.

Ask the group: What are you good at?

You could draw up a basic list like this:

- Listening
- Helping
- Organising
- Running
- Jumping
- Playing
- School work
- Encouraging

Then explore how you might use these things to show love to other people when they need it.

E.g.

- Listening: Listening to someone talk about their problems
- Helping: Helping other people
- Organising: Helping someone to organise something like their homework
- Running: Looking out for people who have got left behind, or helping to fetch things
- Jumping: You must have lots of energy! Maybe you could support someone else by doing things for them!
- Playing: Helping people around you to have fun and play games together
- School work: Helping other people who aren't very good at school work
- Encouraging: Find people who don't get encouraged very much and look for ways to encourage them

Or you could draw up a list that is more detailed like this:

- Thinking of encouraging things about someone and telling them
- Talking to new people
- Making something for another person (like a card or cake when they're ill)
- Helping with homework
- Sending a nice text message
- Keeping in touch

- Helping to choose clothes/get ready for a party
- If someone is shy or doesn't have very many friends, someone who is very outgoing can include them in what they do and introduce them to people
- Sitting next to someone in class that no one else wants to
- Being friends with someone, even if other people make fun of them
- Listening to someone if they need to talk
- Giving hugs when someone is down
- Inviting someone round for dinner
- Praying for them

These are all ways that God can use us!

For younger groups, you can say: We can use these things to help do what God wants us to do. God has planned good things (in advance) for us to do (or to help with). Each of us needs to do what God has for us. While we are little, we are growing and learning about Jesus. That is very important! That is a big job! While we are little we can also care for each other and help each other. Just like in a body, the different parts work together to do things and help the other parts. We are all different. Each of us has our special things we are good at.

Put the body outline in the middle of the group (*Resource 4: Body*), or get a big piece of paper – e.g. lining paper and draw around one of the young people and **ask them to write or draw in the body the things that they think they are good at, with their names next to it.** For example:

- If they're good at school and homework, they could write or draw that in the brain area
- If they're good at saying nice things to people, they could write it in the mouth
- If they're good at giving hugs, they could write it in the arms etc.

You might need to encourage the young people to think of things to say to each other. You might also want to prepare in advance some things that the young people are good at, so that if one of them thinks they're not very good at anything, you can tell them one or two things.

Tip: If you have very young children, you could print and cut out images, like school books, that they can stick onto the body.

Explore 2:

Read these Bible verses together:

Ephesians 4.16 NIV

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Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Split the group into teams of 5 (the groups can do this all at the same time) to do the following:

- One child to be the head and torso (preferably seated on a chair, with legs crossed and arms folded)
- Four children to be each of the four limbs

To warm up, get the child to do the following (you might have to demonstrate):

- Say "hello!"
- Give a round of applause
- Jump up and down
- Bend forward and touch feet with hands

Give each group one of the scenarios below, give them 5 minutes to prepare their response and then show everyone. The others will guess what their scenario was:

1. You have a tummy ache. How do you react?
Example answer: Body bent in pain and hands clutching the tummy.
2. You've bit your tongue. How do you react?
3. You've won a race. How do you react?

Also, get them to think about what sounds or other movements they might make or, for example, when your foot taps repeatedly because your tongue hurts so much after you bit it!

Think about if only the tummy, knee or tongue hurts, why are other parts of the body responding? When you win a race, isn't it your feet or legs that are the winners? Why do all these body parts feel happy as well?

Think about the Bible verse and **what it means to be a body of people**. Ask the children what they noticed from the activities above? You could draw out that **when one part of the body is happy, all the other parts are involved as well**. Similarly, when one part is in pain, other parts of the body are affected. Our body is made up of many parts and they are all connected to one another.

Why do you think Jesus says we are His body? Draw out the response that **one body with many parts connected to one another, so when you notice someone being down or sad, we can help them and support them**.

The other Bible verses talk about how we should treat each other:

1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

John 15:12-14 ESV

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

What does it mean? We need to encourage each other and love each other. Like the body, we are all different and have different role to play, but we need to love each other. Ask the group: **What are you good at? Draw up a list and then talk about how they might show love for others in the ways they're good at.**

Explore 3:

How to be the body of Christ:

Divide the young people into groups and give out some scenarios (Resource 5).

Get them to **read through the scenarios and think about how they would respond**. Get them to look up the Bible verses attached to the story to think about how Jesus might want us to respond.

Remind the young people that **we all are different and all have different life stories**. We all have a part to play to help each other's stories be the best they can be. Being part of a body together means that we all need each other.

Have you ever had a really bad day or a really bad week? If you can, show the video of Sam's bad day: <https://youtu.be/fBJe6xwN0hA>. What makes a difference is other people who come alongside us and help make difficult times better. Remind them of the answers they had for some of the scenarios. Sometimes we need to pray for each other, and sometimes there are more practical things we can do - but there is always something. Because we are all different, the way we're able to show love to each other is different as well.

Finish the discussion by **asking the young people to think about people in their lives**. You could give them all a sheet of paper and ask them to write the names of their friends, and also the people at school who they don't know well and don't get on with very well. Have a time of quiet prayer, asking God to show how to support one another. **Alternatively, you could use the body activity at the end of Explore 1.**

Section 4: Closing prayer

Prayer 1:

Give everyone a piece of paper and pens. Ask everyone to stand on the paper and draw around their feet.

Around the outline of their feet, ask them to write their names and either things they're good at (from the Explore section) or things they need help with this week. For younger children, you might want them just to write their names.

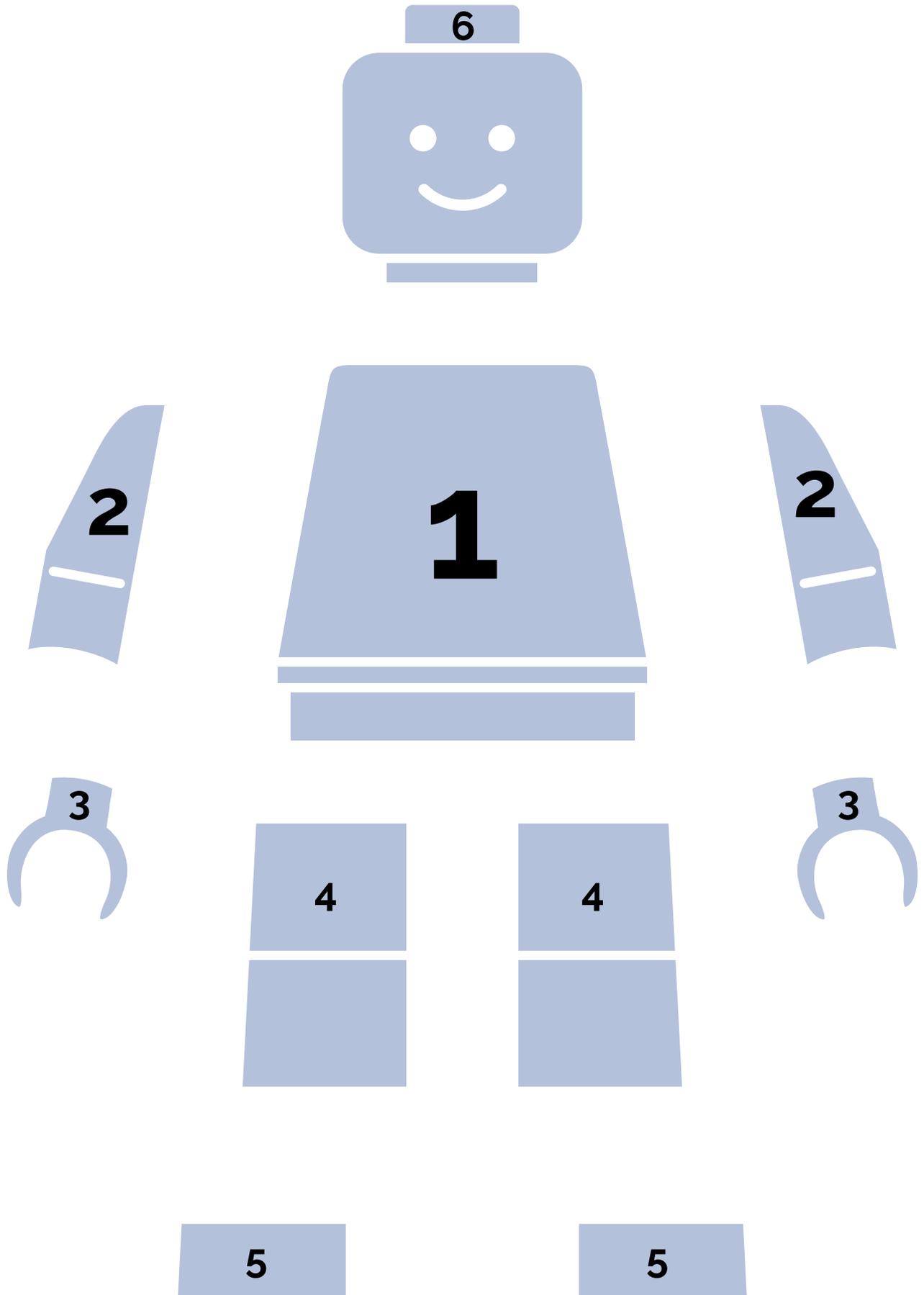
Put on some music, and encourage everyone to put their feet in someone else's feet outlines, and pray for that person to be shown love and to show others love this week. After a couple of minutes, they could change and pray for another person.

Prayer 2:

Get everyone to stand in a circle and turn to their left, and put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.

Encourage them to pray for each other. They can do it out loud all at the same time or in their heads. You could play some music in the background.

After a few minutes, change directions and pray for the person on the right.



GREEN:

Favourite thing to do in your own time (e.g. reading)

RED:

Food you really dislike

YELLOW:

What you look for in a good friend

BLUE:

Favourite chocolate bar or sweet

ORANGE:

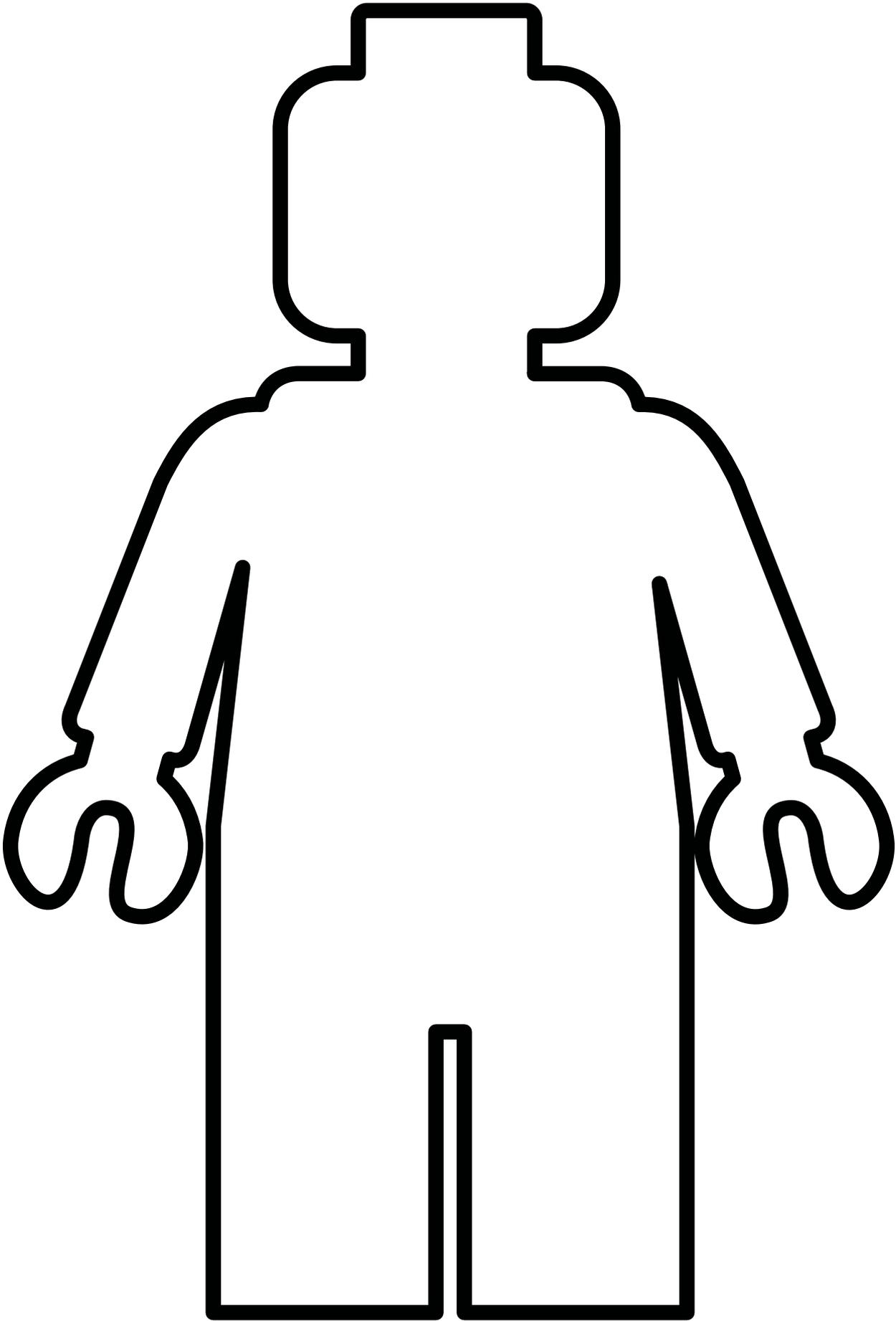
Favourite film

PURPLE:

Favourite food







SCENARIO 1:

Charlie is in your class at school. She always forgets to wear her own clothes on non-uniform day, she isn't very good at sport, she has an irritating high-pitched laugh and when she gets nervous she twitches. Other people in the class make fun of her behind her back and imitate her trying to throw a ball or her nervous twitch. Charlie and her family have recently started going to your church and you're worried that other people are going to associate you with her and make fun of you, and you're also worried that people at church are going to think you are friends and make fun of you there as well. What should you do? Read Luke 6:37 and Luke 10:30-37 for some help.

SCENARIO 2:

You finally managed to get the new computer game you've been wanting for a while and started to play it last night. All day at school you've been excited to try out a secret code you've read about that will get you to the next level. As you rush through the door after school, your mum tells you that someone your age has come to live with foster carers you know at church. They'd like you to go round to their house to meet them, so that they know someone from church. You really wanted to play your computer game! What do you think you should do? Read Mark 12:31 and 1 John 3:18-19 for some help.

SCENARIO 3:

Michaela has just joined your youth group at church. You don't know much about her, apart from that she has only just moved into the area to live with her grandparents. She seems really shy and doesn't like to talk much. She doesn't seem very happy either. Most people don't talk to Michaela because they don't know what to say to her. You have plenty of friends already, and can't be bothered to take the time to try to get to know Michaela. What should you do? Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 and Galatians 6:2-3 for some help.