

## ALL AGE WORSHIP

### *FORM AND FLOURISH – TO RE-FORM*

#### **Jeremiah 18:1-11 - The Potter and the Clay - Service suggestions:**

Give everyone some Play-Doh (easy to make your own and colour with food colouring) to play with while you read this passage.

Invite everyone to make a pot of some shape with their Play-Doh.

Then ask them to swop pots with someone else. Now change the pot you have been given in some way. Then give it back.

What do you think of your re-made pot?

How did it feel to see someone else remake it?

Why might God suggest that we are like clay and he is like a potter?

Now join your Play-Doh together with a few other people and make one large pot between you. In this story God was talking to Jeremiah about the whole nation, a large group of people, not individuals. Read the passage again whilst people do this.

Places we come together to learn, like schools, colleges, universities and even churches (!) help to form us together as a group or community.

How have places of learning helped to form you?

How have they helped you to grow and flourish?

How have they helped you to make a new start, or go in a different direction?

We are going to pray now for the places of learning in our community. We will pray for everyone there, learners and teachers, and that these will be places to form everyone into a loving community, and to enable everyone to flourish.

Everyone in your group break a chunk off from the group large pot, and use this to make something for a garden – a flower, leaf, plant, tree – anything you like. As we pray please bring your creation to be part of a garden of learning – a picture of our prayers for our schools and colleges.

Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:**

**Form us into your image we pray.**

We pray for our schools, colleges and universities – that they would be safe and supportive places, able to help all their learners to grow and flourish.

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Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:  
Form us into your image we pray.**

We pray for our schools, colleges and universities - that they would be offer second chances and new starts to many, and open up a world of possibilities to all.

Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:  
Form us into your image we pray.**

We pray for all who shape our schools, colleges and universities, policy makers, curriculum writers, leaders, governors and heads - that they would create places that foster loving, caring relationships and form good communities.

Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:  
Form us into your image we pray.**

We pray for all who work in schools, colleges and universities - that they would find support and encouragement for their work, remain inspired and creative, and always focus on helping their pupils and students.

Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:  
Form us into your image we pray.**

We pray for all who go to school, college or university, all pupils and students - that as they learn you are at work forming their minds, hearts and lives, revealing yourself and your call to them to follow you.

Lord God,

**You are the Potter, we are the clay:  
Form us into your image we pray.  
Amen.**

By the end of the prayers you should have a garden of Play-Doh creations - you could bless this and offer it to God:

Lord God,

**You are the Potter we are the clay.  
We offer you our clay creations as our prayer for everyone involved in education -  
May they find their right form and flourish,  
May they find their right direction in life and  
Their place in the community.  
Amen.**

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» Invite everyone to come and look at it after the service / during communion - they might like to photograph it on their phones and use it as a reminder to keep praying for everyone in education over the coming week.

## **Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18 - activity for older children's and young people's groups**

Read through the Psalm extracts a couple of times.

Can you connect going to school with this Psalm?

When do you sit down and stand up?

Does a good teacher know what you are thinking?

Does a good teacher know what you are going to say before you say it?

Do school days seem planned out in advance?

David (who wrote this psalm or song) had lots of experience of sheep and shepherds before he was a king - it was where he did his learning about how to defend and fight (which he used against Goliath), how to sooth those who were upset/frightened with music (which he used to help King Saul), and how God cares for all his people like a shepherd cares for the whole flock (which he used when he was king and had responsibility for the whole nation).

David's most famous psalm is probably Psalm 23 which describes God as a shepherd from the point of view of a sheep!

Look at this psalm - can you write your own psalm describing God as a great teacher?

When you go into the service, read your psalm(s) as part of the worship to mark Education Sunday.

Can it be put on the notice board (so people can take a photo on their phones and use this to pray in the week) or on the church website / in the church newsletter so it is shared with the whole church?

## **Luke 14:25-33. The cost of discipleship - alternative service suggestion or kids club / assembly idea**

Give two (or more) teams a large pile of bricks (or spaghetti and marshmallows, or newspapers and sellotape ) and challenge them to build the tallest tower they can. First, though, they have to tell everyone how tall a tower they think they can build in 3 minutes. Measure this with a retractable tape measure and show everyone the target. Ask someone to come and stand with their arm out at the target height.

Whilst they are building, have the reading read out.

Then measure their towers against the target they set themselves. The team that has come nearest to (or surpassed) their target wins!

Did they have enough materials to build their dream tower?

Did they have enough people in the team?

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Did they have enough time?

Did they improvise (or cheat) in any way - lower the target height, or find extra resources?

Jesus says that choosing to be his follower is like starting to build a tower. We need to realise it is going to be costly.

How might cost us our things or our money?

How might it cost us our relationships with friends and family?

How might it cost us our time and energy?

Should we start following if we don't know the full cost in advance?

