



Tell it together

50 tell-together
Bible stories to share

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Introduction

Storytelling is a vital skill for everyone in ministry. Our entire lives revolve around the big story of God's love for us, how we respond to it and how we help others to respond to it.

The Bible is a collection of stories gathered from oral and written tradition. It reflects both the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the personalities of the people who penned the stories in it. Hence, it is both deeply sacred and deeply human. Indeed, the writer of Hebrews declares scripture to be alive and active; sharper and more penetrating than the most incisive of swords; able to divide soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and judge the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12, paraphrased). It is, as Paul says to Timothy, useful 'for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16).

Like all great stories, Bible stories inform, inspire, entertain, engage, encourage, warn, challenge, heal, comfort and guide. In the tradition of all great storytelling, each generation must come to an understanding of their faith that is both foundational and fresh.

The Bible reveals Jesus Christ, Emmanuel—God become human whose very names mean 'God is with us' and 'God saves'. Through Jesus, we know God's character and have the perfect example of what it means to be human.

Jesus' own use of stories both to reveal and to illustrate truth was so integral to his life and so prolific in his ministry that it is said he never taught without a story. The account of his life, death and resurrection, his words and his deeds, is there to bring us into relationship with God and bring about transformation in us.

Indeed, relationship and transformation are at the heart of all Bible storytelling. Bible stories connect us to God, ourselves and others and demonstrate the change that is possible when we allow the Holy Spirit—the divine Storyteller—to use them to shape our lives.

A well-told story can pull us in and hold us; it can enhance our experience and expression of worship, witness and learning—and that is why I have created this resource.

How to use this book

Ideally, the aim of oral storytelling is to tell stories, rather than to read (or recite) them. In reality, this can be difficult for those who have little time to prepare or lack the confidence to speak to a group unaided. This resource is a hybrid. It combines stories that have been written for you to read well aloud with all the tools that make a great oral participation story for your group to tell together. You could use it on a ‘grab and go’ basis with little preparation. However, you will get the most out of it (for yourself and for your group) if you use the ‘Prepare well, tell well’ guidance it contains.

What is a Tell Together?

Tell Together stories or tales involve everyone in some aspect of their telling. The participation is planned but only briefly practised, just before the telling—if it is practised at all. The Bible retellings in this resource have been written as participation stories and contain everything you need to tell them together.

Some of the stories have a simple action or gesture that everyone is prepped to do on cue, or a refrain that is echoed back or repeated throughout the story. Some have a line of a song to sing, a call for a response, a chant or a noise to make. Some involve role play. Some are written with rhythm, rhyme and repetition, others without. Tell Togethers can be told as narratives, eyewitness accounts or from

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different perspectives. They can be told in a variety of forms: chain tales, topple tales, silly songs or ballads. Some are reflective or liturgical in tone and others are energetic and fun.

Why Tell Togethers?

Participation stories are great for group gatherings, whether all-age or a single age group. They are, by nature, entirely engaging. They provide the irresistible invitation into discovery that is vital to effective storytelling. Everyone is involved in creating an experience that enhances their own worship, witness and learning. As such, Tell Togethers have the potential to be truly transformational. We become part of the stories we tell, and they become part of us.

Our goal, as Bible storytellers, is to allow the Holy Spirit to use us and the stories we tell to bring life and life-change.

Consider how Tell Togethers engage every aspect of our personality.

- Spiritually, they enhance our experience and expression of worship (our relationship and response to God), witness (our relationship and response to each other) and learning (our relationship and response to ourselves).
- Emotionally, they encourage empathy, develop confidence and demonstrate values.
- Creatively, they engage the imagination, inspire creativity and expression.
- Intellectually, they encourage knowledge, appreciation of language, literacy, history and cultural understanding.
- Physically, they give us ways to expend energy, express our emotions and use our voices; they help us to listen and provide a comforting structure.
- Socially, they teach communication and social skills, and help to connect us with one another.

What involves us engages us; what is repeated is remembered; what is remembered is repeated; and what inspires us transforms us.

Where do I start?

This resource is a good starting point. Fifty stories are written for you to read well aloud, providing everything that makes a great participation story for your group to tell together. Words and actions for everyone to say and do together appear in bold in the scripts. You will also find tips to help you prepare well and tell well, one step at a time.

The following two lists will, at a glance, get you thinking about where to start in the development of your storytelling skills. It will be helpful for you to return to them often as a reminder of your progress as you prepare your stories. Each point is explored more fully in the ‘Prepare well’ and ‘Tell well’ sections that follow.

Prepare well

- Develop your self
- Choose a story to tell
- Explore the original story
- Explore the retelling
- Know your calling as a storyteller
- Read and rehearse the text aloud
- Know your tools
- Know your group and setting
- Know your desired outcome
- Know how you will begin
- Know how you will end

Tell well

- Be prayerful
- Be positive
- Be comfortable
- Be careful
- Be calm
- Be confident
- Be approachable

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- Be organised
- Be clear
- Be heard
- Be aware
- Be respectful
- Be responsive
- Be yourself
- Be measured
- Be flexible

Prepare well

To tell a story well takes advanced preparation—not only of the story but of your self as a storyteller. The process needs time for reflection, practice and the development of storytelling skills. The following section will get you started.

Develop your self

While it is tempting to skip straight to the ‘practical bits’ of this resource, it is vital not to do so. To be as effective as you can be, you will need to develop your self as well as your skills. True confidence will exude from your own relationship with God and your own story of transformation. This is such a core value in the life of a Bible storyteller that it deserves an entire resource of its own. For now, however, I urge you at least to begin to prepare your self.

- **Honour the Storyteller:** Discover more of God the Holy Spirit who breathed life into the library of stories that you are seeking to retell. How are you relying on the Holy Spirit to enrich you, empower you, gift you and embolden you?
- **Honour the original story:** Discover what the original story means to you personally. Reflect on scripture and let the story transform you and become part of you, your growth and experience. What is the Holy Spirit trying to communicate to you and through you in this story?

- **Honour the experience:** Discover the difference between delivering an entertaining event and creating a transformational experience. Pray and prepare. Expect God to speak and move and transform. How will you create an environment that the Holy Spirit can easily inhabit?
- **Honour your calling:** Discover your calling as a Bible storyteller. How will you let the story you are seeking to retell enhance your own and other people's experience and expression of worship, witness and learning?

Choose a story to tell

The stories in this collection do not cover every story in the Bible. However, they do offer a wide variety to get you started. Please feel free to adapt or write your own versions if you prefer. You may want to tell a story that will stand alone, be used to enhance a theme or Bible passage, or be combined with other activities as the basis for a club meeting or a creative worship gathering or festival. Remember to choose something that is appropriate for the group you will be working with. This may mean not telling some of these stories where there are young children present or where particular sensitivities might be triggered. It may also mean challenging the notion that adults will not enjoy stories that children like.

Ask yourself these questions when choosing a story to tell:

- Do I like this story myself?
- Will I enjoy telling this story?
- Do I care about this story and feel connected to it?
- Will the group like this story and enjoy being part of it?
- What will they need to know or have experienced to relate to this story?
- Will the story work well in the location where I am planning to tell it?
- Will the story fit the tone of the gathering?
- Will this story enhance the theme or Bible passage we are exploring?
- Will this story enhance the experience and expression of worship, witness and learning?

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If you like the story yourself and care about what happens in it, you are more likely to spend time preparing it and will most certainly enjoy telling it. This will help your group to connect with you as the storyteller as well as with the story you tell.

If you can imagine how your group will respond to the participation aspects of the story, you will quickly identify where you may need to adapt it. The same is true if you think about where you will be telling the story.

If you spend some time reflecting on how the story fits into the wider context of your ministry, you will naturally enhance the spiritual exploration and journey of your group.

Explore the original story

Seek to understand something of the original story in its biblical context; note points of transformation in the characters you encounter. Ask the following questions.

- What is this story about? Can you summarise the bare bones?
- What is the story *really* about? Do you understand its meaning?
- What type of story is it (for example, poetry, parable or factual)?
- Who are the characters in the story and how are they involved in the events?
- How do the characters change in the story? For example, how do they struggle, discover, and grow?
- What is the setting of the story? Where does it take place?
- What happens in the story? Can you describe the structure and plot?
- What is the context of the story? What happens before and after the events it describes?
- What did the story mean when it was written, to those who were involved in it or first heard it?
- What is timeless about this story? What truth does it reveal or illustrate today?
- What is the Holy Spirit communicating to you through the story? How will you let it transform you and shape your faith?

Explore the retelling

Seek to understand the story you have chosen from this collection. Again, ask some questions.

- What is/are the universal theme(s)? What is familiar to the experience of those in your group, which will provide a point of connection between them and the story?
- What themes may be personal to individuals in the group? Are there any themes that may be sensitive for some people?
- What is the tone of the story (for example, powerful, entertaining or inspiring)?
- From whose point of view is the story told?
- What emotions emerge from the story? What do you need to feel in the story so that you can express it well and help the people in your group to experience it?
- What motivations are present? Identify the motives behind the characters' actions so that the group can understand them.
- Does the story work as a whole? Adapt as necessary for your own style and setting; expand or leave things out.
- What does it leave you reflecting on or questioning? What does it inspire within you? Allow room in your retelling for this to happen for your group.
- How does the story engage you emotionally from beginning to end?
- How is the story sharable? Imagine what the people in the group will talk about or share with others when they leave your presence.
- How does the story enhance the experience and expression of worship, witness or learning?

Know your calling as a storyteller

If Bible stories play any role in your ministry at all, big or small, you are a storyteller. Think of yourself as a storyteller whenever you tell a Bible story and it will make a significant impact on your delivery.

The stories in this resource may be read aloud well, but they are intended to be 'Tell Togethers' and will require preparation as such.

Read and rehearse the text aloud

You will be telling your story aloud, so it is vital to practise it aloud.

Read aloud, read aloud, read aloud, repeat

- Aim to be so familiar with the story that you are able to gain and maintain as much eye contact as possible and rely on the text as little as possible.
- Know the beginning lines of each paragraph, repetitive phrases and points of participation particularly well or off by heart.
- Play with the phrasing: just because something is written in rhyme, it does not mean it has to be overpowered by the rhyme.
- Note where you may be stumbling on words or phrases and smooth them out with practice.
- Aim to familiarise rather than memorise.

Rehearse as you intend to tell

- Pay attention to the places in the story where you will make eye contact, and how you will use your voice, facial expressions and body language. (See ‘Know your tools’ below.) This will not only help you tell well, but will also give you confidence and be a natural channel for the productive use of nervous energy.
- Although there are elements of performance in storytelling, remember that storytelling is not a performance.
- Participation stories are collaborative by nature and anything but passive.
- Aim to visualise and improvise rather than dramatise.

Refine your skills with feedback

- Rehearse in front of a mirror, into a dictaphone and/or in front of a friend. This will help you to identify any distracting or disturbing mannerisms that you might have, such as fiddling with your glasses or nose, swaying back and forth, bouncing, pacing or screeching.
- Get constructive feedback from others and refine your skills.

Know your tools

Good storytelling (like all communication) involves more than what you say. It involves you—the whole of you. Indeed, the best visual aid you will ever use in storytelling is your body language—your eye contact, facial expressions and gestures. Understand and use the tools you need to tell well.

Use your voice

- **Animation:** Avoid the drone of monotone. Be expressive and dynamic. Raise and lower your pitch within a comfortable listening range. Ensure that the characters in your story, as well as your narrative style, are dynamic and animated.
- **Articulation:** Speak clearly and fluently, and articulate your words and phrases. Exaggerate them. Ensure that your characters also speak clearly and fluently, particularly if they are given their own voice or an accent.
- **Pauses:** Plan pauses carefully. Make effective use of silence as well as speech.
- **Pace:** Speak slowly enough for listeners to catch what you are saying. Change your pace to match the mood of the character who is speaking or to reflect what is happening in the story. However, always speak slowly enough for listeners to hear what you are saying and to grasp it.
- **Pitch:** Avoid high, whiny or screechy speech. Lower the pitch of your voice to the middle of your speaking range for the comfort of your listeners (and your voice). Vary your pitch to suit the dynamics of the story but avoid whining or screeching at uncomfortable levels.
- **Rhythm, rhyme and repetition:** These ‘three Rs’ are often used in participation stories. They can help you and your listeners to remember the story; they build tension and animation and encourage participation naturally. Over-exaggerate your delivery of these elements to increase the fun-factor or humour in the story or if you want the story to have a lilting musical feel. Seek to deliver them with a more natural flow and speech pattern if the story is sombre in tone.

- **Sounds:** Practise important sounds and sound effects.
- **Tone:** Convey a sense of place, mood, emotion or personality in the way that you speak.
- **Voices:** Plan and practise character voices and accents. Make sure that they are appropriate and inoffensive. Be mindful that the voices you use create an impression.
- **Volume:** Use a volume that is appropriate to your setting. Make it your aim to be heard by everyone without shouting. This will depend largely on the size of your group. As a rule, speak more quietly and intimately to smaller groups and more loudly for larger groups or across larger spaces. You will, of course, need to change the volume as dictated by the characters and situations in your story. Use a stage whisper (which is still loud enough for everyone to hear but gives the appearance of a whisper) or stage shout (which is loud but not deafening to the group) in your telling.

Use your eyes

Whether telling or listening, nothing is more engaging than eye contact. Maintain as much comfortable eye contact as possible, given the size of the group. Each person should feel as though you are telling the story just for them. Look up and look out!

Use facial expressions

Change your expressions depending on the emotional content of the story. Let people see what is happening in the story on your face. This will help your listeners to know how to respond, too.

Use your body

Gestures should be meaningful and simple, natural and relaxed. Practise them ahead of time and you will do them naturally when you tell. Make sure your whole body is telling the same story. Match your body language and gestures to the tone and message of the story and avoid giving mixed signals. Remember, everyone in the group will need to see what you do. On the whole, you will use large, exaggerated gestures for large groups and smaller, less exaggerated gestures for smaller groups.

Knowing what gestures you will use in your story will also help to prevent distracting mannerisms and give your body something to do with its nervous energy.

Know your group and setting

Discover all that you can about the group you are telling to. Who are they—ages, stages, abilities? What are they expecting from your time together? Why are they gathered: is it a regular meeting or a special event? How can you enhance their spiritual journey?

Single-age groups respond differently from mixed-age groups. For example, a story that may seem too young for a teenage or older age group may be perfectly enjoyed and often relished in an all-age setting or a large group where there is safety in numbers.

Family groups that sit together will respond differently from family groups that are scattered. Indeed, family members who listen together can relate to and influence each other, explaining things that may not be understood.

Aim to tell stories that families would be happy discussing, exploring or explaining together.

Make sure you know and understand the place where you are gathering, including the physical surroundings and what issues may arise from them.

Know your desired outcome

Know why you have chosen the story and what you are hoping it will achieve.

Know how you will begin

Think about how you will introduce your story, and prepare a simple set-up for it. Resist the temptation to tell what you are going to tell before you tell it. If you prepare how you intend to introduce your story beforehand, you will avoid being tongue-tied if nerves kick in.

Know how you will end

You will want to let the story speak for itself where possible. Skip the need to express your own opinion or tell people what to think. Prepare reflective, wondering questions beforehand to help your listeners discover meaning for themselves. Let the story speak and the Holy Spirit apply. Remember, ‘stories enhance sermons; sermons do not enhance stories’.

Tell well

You have prepared well in advance and have taken the time to reflect, practise and develop your storytelling skills. Now it is time to tell your story and tell it well—putting all that preparation to work for you. This section explains what you will need to think about shortly before you tell and/or during the telling itself.

Be prayerful

Ask God to honour your preparation, use the story and use you to transform others.

Be positive

Expect a good outcome. The attitude you bring with you into your storytelling will have a huge impact on the delivery and impact of your story. Choose to be optimistic, respectful, calm and flexible. Remember, the group are on your side. They want you to do well. The more positive you are, the more positive they will be.

Be comfortable

Wear something that is appropriate for your story and setting, comfortable and easy to move in.

Be careful

Take good care of your voice. Drink lots of water before you start and keep a bottle of water within reach while telling. It is also a good idea to go to the toilet before you start.

Be calm

Accept your nerves but get rid of the jitters. It is only natural to be a bit anxious. Harness these feelings; control your nervous energy and convert it into the warm enthusiasm you will need to tell your story.

Breathe deeply to get oxygen to your brain and help to relax your body. Clench and release your hands. Stretch your limbs and walk around. Slow your speech.

Arrive early and give yourself plenty of time to settle down, relax into the environment and adapt to the space. The more adjusted you are, the more comfortable you will feel.

Strike a superhero pose. Practise an exaggerated power stance for a few minutes in private before entering the space to tell the story. Stand straight and tall, plant your feet, and keep your chest out, head up, hands on hips and a wide smile. This may look and feel ridiculous, but will help you get rid of jitters and create a sense of confidence and assurance to take with you into your telling.

Imagine yourself delivering the story in a calm and confident manner.

Be confident

If you have prepared well, you have laid a good foundation to tell well.

Hold yourself in a comfortable and confident manner before you begin. Remember that your body language will either support or distract from your story.

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Make as much eye contact as possible. This will help your group feel valued, connected and attentive. Any time you look down or away, you will place a barrier between you and those you are telling to.

Rely on your written text as little as possible.

Be approachable

Chat with people beforehand. This will help to put everyone at ease, including you. It will also help everyone to feel good about what is coming next. Say hello and smile when it is time for the story.

Be as close as possible to the group. Be aware of what your body is saying, not only during the telling of your story but before and afterwards. Keep an open stance, with arms relaxed at your sides.

Be organised

If possible, get to your venue early and ensure that the space is set up before you start.

Test the acoustics and lighting. Rehearse your story with the microphone, and understand the seating arrangements. Distractions will diminish the experience. Be aware of them (for example, a noisy road outside) and remove them where possible (for example, flowers placed directly in front of you).

Ensure that you can see the words and that they are not a distraction to the group.

Hold the book (or other material) up at chin level. This will help with eye contact and your ability to speak clearly and be heard. Use a stand or a podium if you can, but stand to the side of it. This will free up your hands and body for gesture and movement and ensure that everyone can see you. Avoid holding the book down, dropping your chin or hiding behind the book or podium.

Be clear

Have everyone's attention before you start. Wait quietly or do something to grab attention. Start smoothly and be natural.

Look at everyone; take in the whole group. Can you see everyone and can everyone see you?

Be clear about how you want people to participate in the story. Practise participation elements briefly before you start.

Be clear about your boundaries as well. How close can they get to you? Set a silence signal to help maintain control if necessary.

Be heard

If there is a microphone, use it, especially if you are telling to larger groups in settings where people are spread out over a big space. There will be those who simply cannot hear you without it. With or without the microphone, aim to be heard by everyone. This does not entail shouting or screeching, but requires good use of volume, pitch and clarity of speech. Project your voice.

Be aware

Read the group. Who perks up and looks willing to participate? Who hangs back or looks uncomfortable? Who seems eager and energetic? Who may find it physically difficult to do actions or hear? If your group is scattered, try to draw it together.

Be respectful

Respect the group. Help them to relax; encourage participation at their level of comfort or not at all. Speak respectfully with them, and resist demeaning or chiding them. Are they comfortable? Is there enough fresh air and wiggle room? Warmly eyeball those who are disruptive.

Be responsive

Respond to the group. Adapt to the needs and energy in the room; add more or less participation; change direction or find alternative physical gestures if need be. Encourage the group to respond to you with their eyes and gestures. Storytelling is a give-and-take experience. Help listeners to learn how to be a good audience. Look for verbal and non-verbal communication.

Be yourself

Tell the story your way, as you have practised it. Be authentic.

Be measured

Speak slowly. Your nerves and familiarity with the story will tend to speed you up. Exercise good pacing. Speak slowly enough that the story may be easily absorbed and can be reflected upon, but not so slowly that you bog it down. Vary your tone.

Use the moment you have created and the empathy generated to gently guide personal application. Give people a way to respond, something to do or remember or say or take away. Look for transformational applications and life-changing moments.

Be flexible

Telling well does not mean telling perfectly. Don't worry about mistakes. Try not to draw attention to them. What is lost in eloquence may be made up for with enthusiasm. If information is needed, slide it in. If not, leave it out. Keep a steady flow.

Remember, no matter how well you have prepared, there are a lot of things you will not be able to predict. If attention is lost during the story, gently help people get back on track. Acknowledge what may be happening in the room with a glance or a nod, but don't focus on it.

Prepare well to tell well, and it will also help you to be flexible, come what may.

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The basket baby

Moses is born

For your reflection: Exodus 1:22—2:10

The descendants of the Israelites who migrated to Egypt become many and strong. A pharaoh rises to power who fears that they may take over, so he turns them into slaves. The people cry out to God to free them, and God sends Moses to do just that.

Moses is born while Pharaoh's population control policy is in force, to kill newborn Israelite boys. This retelling captures some of the drama as well as the divine irony: Moses is rescued by Pharaoh's own daughter and is raised as an Egyptian prince with the help of his own birth mother.

Tell-it tips

This story is written in rhyme and includes a lyric from a well-known nursery song. Its tone, however, is not light-hearted. Aim to capture the sinister and ironic context of the story and, of course, the sense of joyful completion.

The lyric is spoken rather than sung. You will want to try it together before you begin.

Try it together

Practise saying these lines together.

Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).

Don't say a thing (*finger to mouth in a whisper*).

Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).

Don't you cry (*finger to mouth in a whisper*).

Tell it together

Once upon a wicked time there lived a wicked king
who was wicked to God's people and made them slaves to him.
He hated that God's people were living in his land—
feared how many there might one day be—so he devised a
wicked plan.

'Throw all their baby boys in the river Nile!'
said the wicked king with a wicked smile.

Now a slave woman named Jochabed had a sweet little son.
She sang a sweet song all night long.
'Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).
Don't say a thing (*finger to mouth in a whisper*).
We must keep you a secret from the nasty king.'

But the baby got bigger as babies always do.
Now what was his sweet mother to do?
'Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).
Don't say a thing (*finger to mouth in a whisper*).
We must give your sweet mother time to think.'

She made a basket and tucked him safe inside.
Then she hid the basket by the riverside.
'Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).
Don't you cry (*finger to mouth in a whisper*).
Your big sister Miriam keeps an eye close by.'

Now a pretty princess with a pretty smile
often took a bath in the river Nile.
She saw the basket bobbing by the riverside.
She saw the bitty baby tucked up safe inside.
'Hush little baby (*mime rocking the baby*).
Don't you cry (*finger to mouth in a whisper*)?
She sighed, 'I will love you. I will not let you die!'

Miriam saw how the princess loved her little brother.
'You will need some help,' she said. 'I will go and get my mother.'
Now a slave woman named Jochabed held her sweet little son
and sang a sweet song all night long.
'Hush little Moses (*mime rocking the baby*). God knows everything.
You are now a prince in the palace of a king!'

29

Hushabye lake Jesus calms the storm

For your reflection: Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25

One evening, Jesus and his disciples are travelling by boat. Jesus is exhausted. He falls asleep so soundly that not even a sudden and fierce storm wakes him. The disciples, many of whom are experienced fishermen, are terrified. They wake Jesus. He stretches out his hand and commands the storm to stop. This remarkable story displays both Jesus' humanity and his divinity.

Tell-it tips

This story has a meditative lullaby feel, except during the tension of the storm. It works very well as a blessing. The participation element of this story takes place before the story is told and should leave everyone feeling relaxed and ready to listen. Essentially, you will be mimicking the movements and sound of rolling waves.

Try it together

Invite your group to stand; posture should be relaxed and soft. Repeat each of the following gestures or actions as feels right. Ask the group to do what you are doing.

- Roll your head to the right.
- Roll your head to the left.

- Put your arms out to your side with your palms open and roll your wrists forward in gentle waves; then add gentle arm rolls.
- Keep your arms out to your side and sweep them forward and back in a gentle wave motion; lean your body into this motion.
- Reverse the above actions.
- Ask everyone to sit down.

Tell it together

Jesus was weary. It had been a long day. He said to his helpers,
'Let's sail away, away, away; let's get in a boat and sail away.'

So they found a boat bobbing by the shushabye shore and sailed out a little way, then sailed out some more.

The waves gently lapped on the lullaby lake. The wind whispered low and Jesus soon fell asleep in the hushabye boat, hushabye, hushabye, hushabye boat.

Then suddenly the lake kicked up such a fuss! Thunder boomed, lightning flashed and winds rushabye rushed. Rain lashed; waves grew strong; the boat tossed about. Jesus' helpers began to shout! 'Wake up, Jesus! We are going to drown! How can you sleep so sound?'

Jesus stood up and stretched out his hand.

'Hushabye, hushabye,' he said to the waves.

'Hushabye, hushabye,' he said to the wind.

'Hushabye, hushabye,' he said to his friends. 'Don't be afraid. I am near. You can be brave.'

The waves gently lapped on the lullaby lake. Jesus' helpers whispered low. How did Jesus shush the storm? Then they all sailed away in the hushabye boat; they all sailed away, away to the shushabye shore.



Here there are no listeners, only participants!

Stories are so important. Everything we are and everything we do revolves around the big story of God's love for us and how we respond to it. Storytelling is a vital skill for everyone in ministry of any kind. In *Tell It Together* well-known author and storyteller Renita Boyle combines stories that have been written to read well aloud with tools for groups to share them effectively. The stories can be used on their own, to enhance a theme or Bible passage, or alongside other activities as the basis for clubs or creative worship gatherings and festivals. They don't just retell the story, they draw us in. There are no listeners here; we are all participants!

Renita Boyle has been described as a 'remarkable storyteller who can keep young audiences spellbound and older listeners thinking'. She has been Scottish Book Trust Reader in Residence (2014–15), and is an experienced children's worker and accredited Godly Play practitioner with a BA (Hons) in Theology. Her published works include *Parable Fun for Little Ones*, *My Storytime Bible* and *The Gingerbread Nativity*, all published by BRF.

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