



MRS PILATE'S SERVING GIRL

Ideas for all-age service activities



Why not use *Mrs Pilate's Serving Girl* as part of an all-age service around Easter? Below are suggestions for how you could include the story and run some related activities.

You can use each activity separately, or they can all work together – you can use the items found in the scavenger hunt to set up prayer stations. Obviously you can adapt the prayer station ideas to suit your own context or tradition.

1. TELL THE STORY

If you have the facilities, you could show the [short animated video](#) telling the story of *Mrs Pilate's Serving Girl*, or if that isn't possible, you could invite the children to the front and read them the short booklet, which you can order [here](#).



You could give each child a copy of the booklet to read along with, or if you think that would be too distracting, give them their own copy at the end of the service. Please be sure to order these in plenty of time!

If you're feeling creative, you could enlist a group of volunteers to act out the story themselves or even use puppets!

2. SCAVENGER HUNT

As part of the story, Mrs Pilate sends her serving girl to find various items – some straw, a mat, lamps and wine.

Hide these items around the room before the service.

- Rather than a lamp, you may wish to hide an (unlit) candle or artificial tea light
- Similarly, rather than hiding a full bottle of wine, you could hide a plastic bottle of juice or coloured water
- If you prefer, you could print out pictures of the items, and stick them around the room.

Send the children in your church to find the items.

Explain that the items are all within the room you are in, so the children don't disappear into other parts of the building! If the children in your group are a little timid, or having trouble finding the items, invite their grown-ups to help.

If there are many children in your group, hide multiples of each item so that there are more chances for the children to find something.

Give each child who brings back an item a small prize, such as a sweet or a sticker.

3. PRAYER STATIONS

In this section, each item from the scavenger hunt becomes the focus of a prayer station, which should be set out in different parts of the room.

STRAW – This prayer station invites people to reflect on the life of Jesus and how He humbled Himself for us. This could include a nativity scene using the straw from the scavenger hunt, and images of other scenes from the life of Jesus.



You could also include palm crosses if this is part of your tradition – clearly these are not made of straw, but it draws on the idea of simple materials, such as straw and palm leaves, being a part of Jesus' humble life.

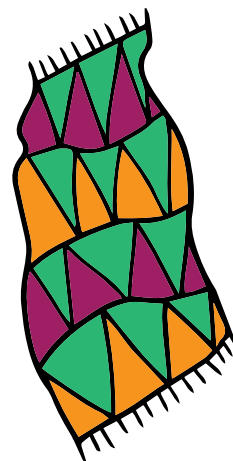
Provide colouring pages and pens or pencils for children (or adults!) to colour scenes from Jesus' life.

You may wish to display Philippians 2:7-8 as part of this prayer station: "He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!"

THE MAT – In the story, the mat was used to create darkness. At this prayer station, invite people to pray for those living in darkness.

This could include people we know who are facing challenges, and those we don't know who are living through war, famine, poverty and persecution.

You could include materials from Open Doors, such as the prayer diary, to help people to pray for persecuted Christians.



Invite people to write prayers on post-it notes and stick them on the mat. If you have the space, you could set up a small tent or a 'den' made from dark sheets so that people can sit in the dark to pray, and put the mat at the entrance. This may particularly appeal to the children in your group.

LAMPS – Invite people to pray for those who are bringing light. This could include church leaders, those who volunteer in your church in different teams, your church mission partners, teachers, doctors, social workers, or anyone you know who is helping others.



Allow people to light a candle (or turn on an artificial tea light if safety is a concern) to represent that person.

You may wish to display these words from Matthew 5:16 as part of this prayer station: "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Pray for our brothers and sisters in the persecuted church who try to bring light into dark places.

WINE – A reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus. Use this prayer station to invite people to say sorry to God for the things they have done wrong.



If this is appropriate in your tradition, you could make this a prayer station where people can take communion and the children can receive a blessing.

Another way to use this prayer station could be to set out a large cup or bowl of red liquid (it doesn't need to be wine – beetroot juice is very effective!) Invite people to use a pencil and paper to write down something they want to say sorry for. They can then place the paper in the 'wine' so that the 'sin' is covered by the 'blood' of Jesus.

You may wish to display 1 John 1:7b as part of this prayer station: "The blood of Jesus ... purifies us from all sin."

4. TAKE AWAY

At the end of the service – or this part of the service – you could give every child a copy of the book to take away with them.

We also have free, downloadable activity sheets for children to use, with word searches, puzzles and even a quiz.

And if the children are going out to their own sessions, there is also a free *Mrs Pilate's Serving Girl Teaching Session*.

You can order books and find all the downloadable resources at opendoorsuk.org/mrspilate

