Sunday Challenge for Children's Groups
Week 3 (7th March)

challenge

Lent 3.

- Talk about haircuts! How our hair keeps growing and can become very untidy unless we have it cut regularly!
- Take in a fig tree and some figs- trees have to be cut back as well- not just to look tidy but to grow good fruit.

Tell the story of the Fig Tree: Luke 13. 6-9

" Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found there was none. So he said to the gardener, "Now look here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! It's just a waste of space and a waste of good soil." But the gardener said, "Sir, leave it for just one more year. I will dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, then you can cut it down'

Wonder:

- Why the gardener wanted to give the fig tree another year?
- If the gardener had looked after the tree properly?
- What is manure?
- Why might three years be important?

Prayer:

Place the fig tree and the figs next to the prayer candle. Add the apple shapes with the fruits of the Spirit around the tree. (the children might place these next to the tree while some quiet music plays).

The figs remind us of the good fruits of our lives: love, joy, peace, friendship. Just like haircuts and pruning trees we sometimes have to ask whether we are living God's way- and bringing good fruit from our lives. The fig tree was given another chance-and when we say sorry to God, then in his love we are given a fresh start. Saying sorry to God helps us to grow closer to him and closer to others.

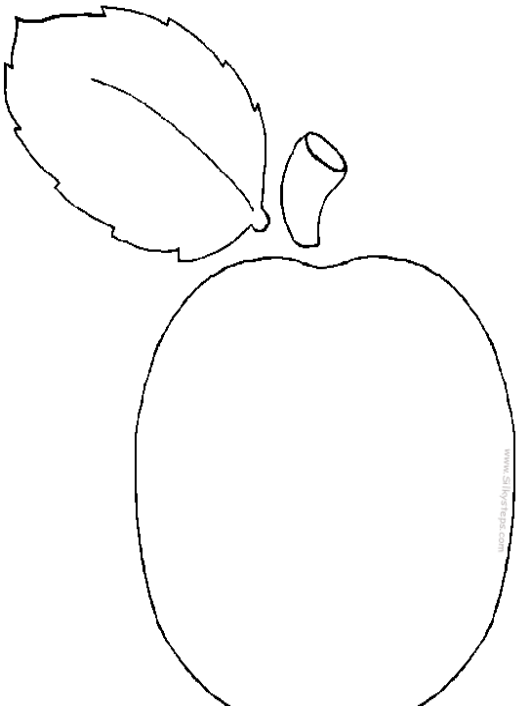
Jesus, we are sorry when we grow careless
and forget to bring your fruits of love and joy
to our families and friends.
Help us to stay close to you that we may grow together
as your family and your friends. **Amen.**

Activities:

You will need: yogurt pots (painted and with two holes pierced in the bottom.) Bag of potting compost; sunflower seeds, paper and felt tips.

Decorate the pot with felt tips, fill with compost and plant the sunflower seeds. Decorate the paper strip and stick round the pot.

Help me to grow good fruit in my life.



Cut out apple shapes. Write on each of them a gift of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. Let each child decorate an apple with a pattern, with a picture to illustrate the fruit, or a picture of the fruit tree.