



8. Examine my heart

Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. *This is part of our new series ‘Songs from the heart’.* You may need to tailor this script to suit the needs, age range & levels of concerns of your school community, which of course includes adults as well as children. **We are thinking today about the impact of the choices that we make, through the effects that David’s biggest mistake, his friendship with Bathsheba (without dwelling on the details!), had on his relationship with God, and with others, but how God forgave even the big wrong that David did – and why. It uses the image of a maze to explore what we do about our mistakes, the things that we do wrong, and how we find our way back to the right path.**



How does this link to your school’s Christian vision & values?

Use this section to reference your school’s values and the things that are a part of your school’s unique vision. Today, we will use some words from Psalm 51, David’s psalm of repentance. This should fit nicely with your school’s practices relating to forgiveness and restoration, for which you will no doubt have your own vocabulary. We link very briefly into the start of Lent on slide 16 – remove this if it’s not relevant to your school setting.

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation.
- For your reflective areas this week, you will need a few small whiteboards, whiteboard pens and dusters.

Gathering:

Slides 1-3: Use these new gathering words for this term, or your usual greeting if you prefer. The greeting comes with BSL signing; you can view the demos using links under the slide.



Leader: As we gather together,

ALL: ...we bring our hearts.

Leader: As we gather together,

ALL: ...we share our thoughts.

Leader: As community together,

ALL: We serve one another.

Signs for greeting: click on links

Hearts: [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - heart](#) (or you could use your hands as shown in the image)

Thoughts: [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - thought](#)

Serve: [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - serve](#) (or you could just open your hands in front of you)

Engaging:

- **Slide 4:** I expect some of you have tried to do one of these. This is a maze, and you have to try to get from the outside to the middle, or from one side to the other, but it’s not always as easy as it sounds is it?
Why is that? [ask a child]. That’s right – we sometimes turn the wrong way and find ourselves in a dead end. In some ways, I think that our lives are a little bit like a maze – but we’ll think some more about the reasons why after we’ve heard our story for today....
- **Slide 5:** In our story, David is now King of Israel, and it’s fair to say that there are many, many stories about what a great king he was, but there’s also this story, about some very bad decisions that he made, the effect that his choices had on others and what he did about them.
- **Slide 6:** One evening, David was on the roof of his palace, watching the world go by. As he looked across the rooftops, he spotted a beautiful woman as she went down to a nearby pool to wash. He asked one of his servants: ‘Who is that beautiful woman? Go and find out who she is.’ So the servant found out and told the king ‘She is Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah.’ King David was thinking about Bathsheba so much that he just couldn’t see that what he was about to do was really, really wrong.
But he was the king, and by now, he was very used to people following his orders. And so, King David made his first bad choice – wanting something that didn’t belong to him.



- Slide 7:** He told the servant ‘Bring her to me because I want her to be **my** wife.’
But she was someone else’s wife, and so King David decided to do something about that too – his second bad choice. Bathsheba’s husband was in King David’s army, and the army were about to go into battle. He told Joab, who was in charge of the army, ‘Put Uriah on the front line of the battle, where the fighting is fiercest.’ He knew that this would mean that Uriah would probably be killed. What a terrible thing to do!
And that’s exactly what happened – Uriah was killed in battle, and King David married Bathsheba.
- Slide 8:** But that’s not where the story ends – you’ll be pleased to know that King David had a very wise adviser called Nathan who knew that what David had done was really, really wrong, and had made God very sad. Nathan was also not afraid to go to the king and tell him so. When David saw what he had done, and realised how his actions had hurt others, and worse still, made God sad, he wrote these words in Psalm 51:
- Slide 9: ‘Wash away all my guilt and make me clean again. Create in me a pure heart, God. Make my spirit right again.’ (Psalm 51: 2&10)**
David knew that what he had done wrong was really serious – and that he needed to say sorry, to repent (which means ‘turn around’) in order to restore his friendship with God. And the story tells us that God did forgive David, which made their friendship right again.
- Slide 10:** So, what has this story to do with us, and our maze?
We said at the start that our lives can be a little bit like the maze. Like David, we can bad choices that hurt other people. This is a little bit like going the wrong way in the maze and getting stuck in a dead end [trace your finger to the first red dot].
Here are some **more big red dots**. The red dots will help us to find the right path through the maze – and help us to think! Each time we reach a red dot, we’re going to think about how the story of David’s big mistake might help us in **our** lives. So, let’s follow the path from the start to the next red dot....
- Slide 11:** (Trace your finger)
We all have choices – just like the pathways in the maze, we can go the right way or the wrong way. Sometimes in our lives, we make bad choices – just like King David did – and we have to live with the results of our bad choices.
- Slide 12: We all make mistakes** – there is a difference between a mistake and a bad decision. Mistakes are accidental, they’re not deliberate or on purpose, but they can still have an effect on other people and we need to learn to be aware when our mistakes hurt others. But David’s actions were not a mistake – he made the wrong **choice** when he wanted Bathsheba to be his wife.
- Slide 13: We need to say sorry**
David told God that he had made the wrong choice and said he was sorry. There are many more stories about King David’s life after he made his bad choice that show how much God still loved him, and had forgiven him. When we hurt others, whether it’s a mistake or a deliberate choice, it’s important for us to say – and be – sorry. Saying sorry gives others the opportunity to forgive us.
- Slide 14: God is loving**
David believed that God loved him deeply despite his bad decisions, and knew that by saying sorry, his relationship with God could be mended. He wrote in the first verse of Psalm 51 **‘God, be merciful to me because you are loving.’**
David believed that because God’s character is full of love, it would mean that God would show him mercy – and forgive him.
- Slide 15: We can learn from the past**
David’s bad decision taught him how to mend his broken relationship with God, and to trust God to help him in the future. We can also learn from our bad decisions, because the next time we are faced with a choice in how we behave, we can remind ourselves what happened... and hopefully choose differently....
- Slide 16:** For many Christians across the world, this week marks the start of Lent, a time when many will be thinking about their lives and the things they are sorry for, or want to do better, as they try to be like Jesus. Like David, who talked about the state of his heart, it will be a time when they will examine their



hearts and their actions, and get right with God. *[share any school-based follow-up you might have here.]*

Slide 17: Responding (and words for worship):

In the stillness now, you might want to look at the maze and the dots, and think about how this might make a difference in our school community or our families.....and what difference this might make in our world if more people were to live in this way....



Slide 18: Prayer

Dear God

Thank you for this story about King David and how it helps us to see the difference between making a mistake, and making a bad choice. Help us to learn from the choices we make, just like King David did, and to realise that we need to say sorry so that broken relationships can be mended.

Slide 19: Amen

Sending: Slide 20

Leader: As we leave this place and time and go into the day ahead,

All:may we serve one another in our **thoughts** and **words** and **actions**.



Signs for response: click on links

Thoughts: [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - thought \(signbsl.com\)](http://British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - thought (signbsl.com))

Words (use 3rd definition): [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - word \(signbsl.com\)](http://British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - word (signbsl.com))

Actions: [British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - action \(signbsl.com\)](http://British Sign Language BSL Video Dictionary - action (signbsl.com))

To sing / listen to:

[The Kindness Song](#) or [Let's be kind](#) (NBD) or [Be kind](#) (POP UK)



Ideas for classroom reflection: Sorry whiteboards

Provide a small whiteboard in your reflective area & some drywipe pens. Write some things you're sorry for/about & rub it out, symbolising forgiveness.





After his bad choices, David wrote: 'Wash away all my guilt and make me clean again.'



Are there choices you regret, or things you are sorry about?



Use a whiteboard marker to write or draw these things if you would like to, then use the duster to rub them out as a symbol that you are wanting to put things right.



If you need to say 'sorry' to anyone, don't forget to do this too!

