



Transformed
God Centered,
Spiritual Transformation
for Children

FORWARD

by Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley

God Centered, Spiritual Transformation

In 2007, after years of working with children as a chaplain, as a children's minister, and as a Holy Listener at my not-for-profit, First Steps Spirituality Center, I earned my Doctor of Ministry degree for having developed a U-shaped model of spiritual care to be used with children and teens in times of hurt, crisis and loss. I observed and codified this pattern that occurs during times of spiritual transformation. It is a simple U-shaped path.

Journeys that take us into spiritual transformation, when examined closely, follow the U-shaped path. The first half of the journey through the U-shape gives us permission to let go of our old selves and enter into the presence of God. This is what I called, *entering the heart of God*.

There are many techniques that people throughout the ages have used to move into the heart of God. Prayer, holy meditation, music, worship, movement, and story are all common. Sometimes it is a life crisis or illness or the loss of a job that moves us out of our comfort zone and closer to God.

Sometimes we experience God in profound ways and other times our experience with God is much more subtle. However, this is only one half of the experience with God. After spending time in God's presence, we need to process what we have experienced. Again, there are techniques that help us reflect and process. Silence, journaling, discussing, doing creative dance, writing poetry, and taking a walk can help us reflect, ponder, and accept that our experience was important and real.

I call this U-shaped journey, "God Centered Spiritual Transformation." Many of our Bible stories follow this pattern and the greatest of all of our stories, Jesus' life, death, and resurrection follows the U-shaped pattern.

Since receiving my DMin degree and originally using this model to help children and teens to heal from trauma, I began applying it in other arenas of ministry. I have most recently been working with a group of 85 Children's and Youth Pastors implementing this model deeply into the faith formation within their congregations, studying its effectiveness and now, more than ever, because of the results of our study, am convinced that structuring our lessons in this U shape, creates an environment of transformation for the children and teens, as well as adults.

This collection of Bible story lessons was masterfully written by Karen Larimore and is currently being used with the children at Christ Church United Methodist in Louisville, Kentucky. Each lesson follows the God Centered Spiritual Transformation model. We feel honored to share them with you and pray that they will bless you and the children in your lives.

In Christ,
Leanne Hadley



The U-shape gives us permission to enter into the heart of God.

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Five Underlying Principles of God Centered Spiritual Transformation

1) Children are spiritual people.

Jesus had high regard for children and time and time again in scripture, He lifted children up as spiritual leaders for the adults He was teaching. Children are capable of a relationship with God and those of us who work with children know that even the youngest of children can experience and do experience God. What they may not have is the language or theological mastery to tell us about their experiences using words and phrases adults are familiar with. *God Centered Spiritual Transformation* can and does happen in children.

2) The Bible is God's living Word.

For some reason, many adults shy away from teaching Bible stories to children for fear that the children will be bored or turned off. Some adults fear that the stories are too hard for children to understand. But the Bible is the living word of God and it is through the Bible stories that God speaks to us. It is not a Bible story that bores our children. It is that often we read the story and then follow it with so many activities, crafts and games that there is no time or space for children to hear and process what God is saying to them through the story. The second half of the U shape of *God Centered Spiritual Transformation* allows space for silence, reflection, and pondering so that the story can speak into their lives.

3) Children follow the lead of the adults.

This model invites everyone to participate together during each moment of the experience. While the adult guides the lesson and reads the story, children are much more likely to share authentically when authenticity is first modeled by the adult. For example, during prayer time, the adult should pray, not pretend to pray while watching the children. During story time, the adult should listen deeply to the story and participate honestly in the discussion and should journal at the same time as the children. When adults are willing to leave their comfort zone and enter the heart of God, children will follow.

4) Spiritual Transformation is measurable.

One of the most exciting discoveries of my work and study has been the discovery that spiritual transformation can be measured when we know what to look for. One of the measurements is that, when adults work with children, and if they are willing to listen to the story and really listen to what the children share, they become spiritually transformed as a result of experiencing God through a child's eyes.

5) Every lesson ends with a blessing!

We don't earn God's blessing and love because we know all the facts and can quote scripture. We are all, you and I, blessed! When we truly experience the love that God has for each of us, as we are, we spontaneously share God's love with others. We are blessed and we become blessings to others. A blessing is a time to look each child in the eyes and say, "You are a blessing!" It is that simple! This personal exchange between you and each child in your class, is affirmation that the work you did together, leaving your comfort zone, listening to and processing the living word of God, is important time together. You and the children are truly a blessing!

INTRODUCTION

by Karen Larimore

"Where two or more are gathered in my name, there am I with you." - Matthew 18:20

Each lesson plan provided in this book will follow the same basic structure. Below are the icons used to designate each special time of interest. Whether we are blessing a child on their birthday or playing with legos at the end of the lesson, each moment spent with the children using this curriculum is intentional and meant to help them enter into the heart of God. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with these icons before you begin perusing the curriculum.



Gathering

This includes activities designed to create positive feelings and security as children enter the room. Through Gathering Activities, children get to know one another better and feel free to express ideas. These activities create a focus a part of the lesson and spark curiosity. Some examples include experiments, investigating artifact boxes, feely bags, hiding clues around the room, manipulating and examining objects, and simple games.



Birthday Blessings

Each child is recognized and affirmed by the whole class on their birthday. Along with powerfully boosting self-worth, this tradition serves as a reminder that their birthday is a milestone in the exciting journey that God has planned for them.



Prayer Time

This is a specific, sacred time that is scheduled in the weekly lesson where the children, along with their adult leadres, talk and to listen to God. Prayer tools (pinwheels) are passed and children and adults express joys and concerns as they talk to God.



Bible Story

In addition to the Bible story exploration, the curriculum is designed to include relationship building, the inquiry process, real-world connections, self-reflection, and service to others.

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Journal Time

This is a time for children to think and process the scripture, to make decisions, set goals, make lists, dream, express themselves in creative ways, (drawing, cartoons, create story scenes, pictures of Bible characters using thinking or talking bubbles, etc.). Journals help build memories and are ways children can look back and reflect. It is important that leaders keep journals along with the children and freely share their journal entries.



Real World Connection

During this time, leaders begin a discussion that helps children connect what they have heard in the Bible to their own hearts. Leaders are encouraged to share from their own experiences first and then prompt the children in a brief discussion/self reflection before Journal Time.



Sharing and Listening

During this time, children (and leaders) are invited to share their journal entries. Sharing with others provides an opportunity to become comfortable sharing personal thoughts and reflections, and creates a safe space for shared learning to happen. During the sharing and listening time we ask the children to present their journals before the altar of the God. The altar can be a table at the front of the room lit with a candle or a chair with a tablecloth draped over it. The altar doesn't need to be fancy, it just needs to be a designated area where the children can present their journals to the Lord.



Blessings

Every child is blessed by leaders each Sunday. Looking into the eyes of each child, calling them by name and telling them, "YOU are a blessing," is a way to let children know how special and significant they are. It is important for them to know and feel that they are loved and supported by God and many people. Children learn to "bless others" as they discover "they are blessed to be a blessing."



Deep Dive Time

This is a time at the end of the lesson where children have the opportunity to *create knowledge* rather than receive knowledge. An area is provided with craft materials and educational building toys (legos, blocks, magna tiles). Children are empowered to dive deeper in their knowledge through creative expression. Deep Dive Time has been proven to increase retention and more complex thinking when recalling the story of the day.

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GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:1-31

BIBLE STORY

God Created the World

THEME OF THE DAY

How Can You Be Creative?

MEMORY VERSE

"Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day." Genesis 1:31

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Paper
- Picture of the Earth or a Globe
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "What Did God Create?" Large paper will be on tables with markers. Ask children to draw or write things God created on the paper.

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

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PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you might have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 1."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 1:31. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** I want to compliment you on your mural of things that God created. What are some of the things you drew? (Children respond.)
- What does creation mean? (Creation means making something out of nothing).

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Everyone close your eyes. What do you see? (Children respond - darkness, nothing, etc.)
- That was what it was like a long, long time ago. Before anyone was born. It was called, "The beginning."
- God spent six days creating the moon and the stars and everything on the earth, because in the beginning, there was no earth or sky or oceans, or animals. There was nothing. Just like when you closed your eyes.
- God decided it was time to create a world for people to live in. So God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." The light He called day and the dark He called night. That was the first day.
- The second day, God created a great space called the sky. He said it was good.
- The third day, God put all the water in one place and the dry land in another. He made plants to cover the ground. Roses, daisies and trees. He made grasses that began to grow.
- On the fourth day, God created the sun to light up the day and the moon and stars for night.
- On the fourth day, God created the sun to light up the day and the moon and stars for night.
- On the fifth day, God filled the seas with fish of every kind, with whales, dolphins, shrimp and all kinds of sea life. He filled the skies with birds of all kinds. Robins, eagles, blue jays.
- On the sixth day, God made animals. Furry animals, scaly animals, smooth and sleek animals. And he said that it was good.
- But there was something missing. Do you know what that was? (Children respond - people.) God made Adam and Eve and wanted them to be happy and have children to grow up on earth.
- And when He was finished, God saw that everything He had made was very good. On the seventh day, He rested.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** How do we know that God is creative? (He created the earth, sky, land, moon, etc.)
- What did we say it meant to be creative? (To make something out of nothing.)
- How can you be creative? (Come up with new ideas, solve problems, express yourself, etc.)

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REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Creation. Remember how I told you that the Bible is alive and that God speaks through it?
 - I am wondering what you are thinking about. What did you hear?
 - Did this story tell you anything about yourself? What is God saying to you through this story?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal. Reflect upon the story and these questions.
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SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the story.



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 3:1-23

BIBLE STORY

Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Fruit

THEME OF THE DAY

Does God Love Us Even When We Make Mistakes?

MEMORY VERSE

"The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it too." Genesis 3:6

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Poster With the Outline of a Tree on it
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

A poster with a tree drawn on it is prepared in the room. As the children enter the room, ask them draw and decorate leaves on the tree. Ask them to wonder what the tree might have to do with today's Bible story.

- The theme of the day and Bible text are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

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PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or that you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 3."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 3:6. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** You all drew leaves on a tree this morning. What does the symbol of a tree say to you? (Growing, roots to keep you in the ground, need water to grow, etc.)
- The symbol of the Tree is an important part of today's Bible story. Listen to find out why the symbol of the tree is such an important part of our story.
- When God put Adam and Eve in the beautiful Garden of Eden, God gave them everything they needed – food to eat, water to drink, sunlight to keep them warm, and soft grass to sleep on at night.
- God gave them love and visited them every day.
- Tasty fruit grew on many of the trees, and God told Adam and Eve they could eat any fruit they wanted, *except* one kind. They must *never* eat from the Tree of Knowledge in the middle of the Garden.
- God also gave Adam and Eve a special gift, something they couldn't see or feel. It was the gift of *free will*, which is the right to choose to do what God told them to do.
- God wanted Adam and Eve to show love by obeying Him, but their free will meant they had a choice.
- One day a snake came to Eve. He tempted her to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, the tree God told Adam and Eve NOT to eat.
- The snake said to Eve, "Don't listen to God. The fruit looks good. Go ahead and try it."
- At this point, Eve had a choice. The good choice would be doing what God told her. The bad choice would be doing what the snake said and eating from the Tree of Knowledge.
- What do you think Eve did? Well, she made a bad choice. Eve chose to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, which God had told her NOT to eat.
- And then Eve tempted Adam to eat the forbidden fruit as well. She told Adam it tasted good and snake had told her not to pay attention to what God said.
- So what do you think Adam did? He used his gift of free will and made a choice to eat the forbidden fruit as well. Even though he knew God told him not to.
- How do you think God felt when He found out that Adam and Eve had chosen not to do what he told them? (Disappointed that they made a bad choice.)
- But did God stop loving Adam and Eve after they didn't obey Him? No. God still loved Adam and Eve, although they made a bad choice.
- The story of Adam and Eve reminds us that sometimes we all make mistakes, but even though we do, God continues to love us and stays with us.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Recount a time when you disobeyed your parents. (Recount a story here where you made a bad choice when you were young.)
- Can you think of a bad choice you've made?
- Turn to someone and share a time when you made a bad choice. (If time allows, have 2-3 children share with the whole group.)
- Like Adam and Eve, we have choices to make in life. God loves us and supports us as we try to make right choices.
- What are some ways we can show God we love Him?

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REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** We have heard the story of Adam and Eve and when they made a mistake. The Bible is the living word of God.
 - Did this story tell you anything about yourself?
 - Did this story tell you anything about yourself? What is God saying to you through this story?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
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BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
 - God supports you as you try to make the right choices.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

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GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 6-7

BIBLE STORY

Noah Is Faithful

THEME OF THE DAY

How Do We Show Faithfulness To God?

MEMORY VERSE

"Noah did everything as God commanded him." Genesis 6:22

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Sticky Notes
- Large Paper
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm
- Picture of Tools Noah Would Have Used to Build the Ark



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Tool Predictions." A poster in your room shows pictures of tools that Noah would have used to build the ark. Ask the children to look closely at the tools and think of how Noah could have used them to build his ark. They are to write their predictions on sticky notes and stick them by the tools on the poster.

- The theme of the day and Bible text are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

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- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapters 6-7."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 6:22. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** For our Gathering Activity this morning you made predictions about how Noah could have used of the tools on the poster. Let's look at some of your predictions you wrote on the sticky notes. (Leader reads some of the predictions about how Noah could have built the ark with tools.)
- What do you think was needed inside the ark? How many trees do you think were needed to build the ark? How deep do you think the water was that the boat sat upon?
- Our Bible Story this morning is about an amazing man named Noah. Here are 2 questions I want you to think about as you hear this story of Noah: What made Noah such an amazing man? How did Noah react when people made fun of him for building the Ark?

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Time passed and many people filled the earth.
- Noah was one of those people. He was a farmer and a preacher.
- People lived a lot longer when Noah was alive. It's hard to believe this, but Noah was 500 years old as our story begins!
- Noah was a very good man. God was Noah's best friend. He listened to God and talked with him all the time. Noah tried to get other people to worship God.
- But everyone else had forgotten about God, and they were doing bad things all the time. This made God and Noah very sad.
- "Noah," God said. "Things have gone wrong. People have filled my world with hate instead of love. They are destroying themselves...and each other... and my world. I must stop them, and I need you to help me."
- "Noah," God continued. Do you know anything about building?
- Noah replied, "No, God. I'm a farmer, not an architect!"
- "Well I will show you," said God. "I want you to build a gigantic boat (ARK). A huge storm is coming. I will save you and your family, and I'll send all kinds of animals to you to keep safe in the Ark. This is going to be a big job because you will have to build the huge boat and pack enough food and water for everyone, as well as any other supplies you might need."
- God's plan was to wash away all the hate and sadness, and make the world clean again. God was going to keep Noah safe, but Noah would have to TRUST God and do exactly what God told him.
- So Noah built an Ark. And Noah's neighbors came out to watch. He was building a boat in the middle of the desert! And the desert was nowhere near any water. People laughed and made fun of Noah. They told him he was crazy! There wasn't even a cloud in the sky!
- But Noah didn't pay any attention to them. He didn't care what other people thought. He only cared what God thought. So Noah continued to do the right thing when other people were trying to get him to quit.
- And finally it started raining and raining. In our Deep Blue Bible in Genesis 7 verse 24, it says "The waters rose over the earth for 150 days!"
- It rained so much that it flooded the whole earth.
- But Noah trusted God and God took care of Noah and his family and the animals, just like he said he would.

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REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** How did Noah react when people made fun of him for doing the right thing? (Wanted to please God, He trusted God, etc.)
 - What can you learn from the story of Noah? (Trust God and do what he tells you.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** We have heard the story of Adam and Eve and when they made a mistake. The Bible is the living word of God. This story had a lot of symbols in it. (The Tree, the snake, the fruit).
 - Did this story tell you anything about yourself? What is God saying to you through this story?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
 - God supports you as you try to make the right choices.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 9

BIBLE STORY

God Makes a Covenant

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Is It Important To Keep a Promise?

MEMORY VERSE

"The rainbow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth's creatures." Genesis 9:16

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Several Prisms
- Large Paper
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Let's Create Rainbows!" Prisms are available. Let children hold their up to the light as they enter the room to try to create rainbows.

- The word of the day and Bible text are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 9."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 9:16. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** I told you all that a rainbow was a very important part of our story today. We used a prism to make a rainbow around the room. Let's look at the prism.
- Tell me about the prism. (It is glass. You can see through it. It has straight sides.)
- So how does this prism create a rainbow? (Light passes through the prism and separates making the different colors or the rainbow.)
- A prism and a rainbow work exactly the same way. Raindrops in the sky separate the light, making a rainbow.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Today's story is about a special covenant that God made with Noah.
- What do you think Covenant means? (It is a special promise.) Let's look at some special covenants that people make. When people get married, what do they do to show they have made a promise to love and support each other? (A ring.) So a ring is a symbol of the promise.
- Are any of you in the boy or girl scouts? In the scouts you make a promise. Do you know what that is? (To do the right thing for God and country, to help others and to obey rules.)
- We all make promises. Maybe your friend told you a secret and made you promise not to tell anyone.
- Have you ever promised your parents you would clean your room or do your homework? (Leaders share an example from their own lives.)
- Today's Bible story is about a time that God made a promise to Noah. Last week, we learned about Noah and the ark. We left Noah in that big boat for 40 days and nights while it rained.
- Today we will find out what happened next.
- All that rain finally stopped. But Noah and the animals could not leave the ark. Do you know why? (There was too much water and they couldn't reach land. Everything was covered in water.)
- After a while, Noah opened a window and send out a raven. It flew back to the ark.
- Then Noah sent out a dove. But the dove couldn't find any place to go because everything was still covered with water. He waited a week and sent out the dove again. This time the dove came back with an olive leaf in its beak. What did the olive leaf tell Noah? (That there was some dry land and the dove brought back a leaf from a tree.)
- The next time he let the dove out it didn't return. So what did that mean? (The water had dried and the dove had a place to live.)
- From the way the Bible describes, Noah, his family and the animals were in the boat for a year! That's a long time! How would you feel about that? What would it be like to be in a boat with all those animals for over a year? (It would be smelly, dirty, boring, etc.)
- When the earth had dried up enough, God told Noah that everyone could get out of the boat. How do you think that felt when they stepped out onto land? (Happy, scared, uncertain, etc.)
- What do you think they saw? (There was no one on the earth but them. They would have to rebuild houses and plant gardens.)
- Then Noah built an altar to thank God for keeping them safe. And God made a covenant or promise to Noah that rain would never again flood the whole earth.
- As a sign of the covenant, God caused a beautiful rainbow to appear in the sky. The rainbow was a reminder that Noah and his family could trust God and not be afraid.
- When God makes a promise, He keeps it. So when you see a rainbow you can be reminded to trust God too.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Has anyone ever broken a promise to you? How did that make you feel?
 - Talk to your elbow partner about a time when someone broke a promise to you. (If time allows, have 2-3 children share with the whole group.)
 - Sometimes we make a wrong choice and break a promise. But one of the great things about God is that He never breaks His covenant (or promises) to us. God promised He would never again flood the whole earth and what did He send as a sign He would never break his covenant? (A rainbow.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** We have heard the story of God making a covenant with Noah. The Bible is the living word of God. That means that God speaks to us through the Bible. Imagine that you were on a huge ark with Noah and all the animals for a year. You just found out that the water is gone and you can get off the boat.
 - Draw or write what you are thinking. What would you see when you stepped off the land for the first time? How would you know you could trust God? Share your thoughts in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

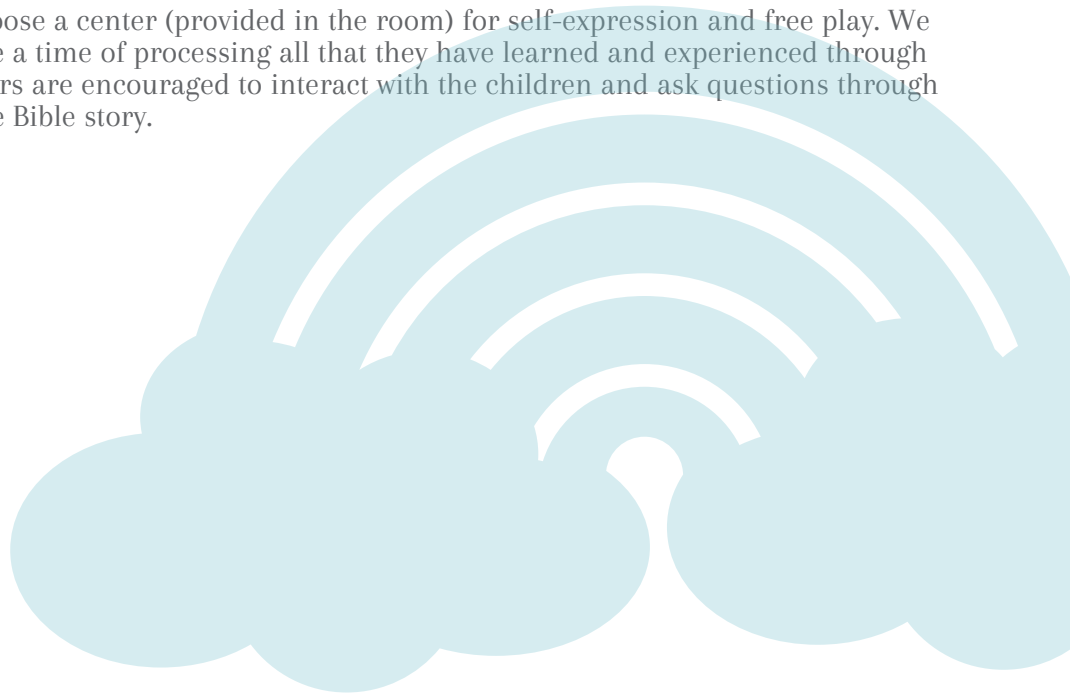
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
 - God supports you as you try to make the right choices.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 11

BIBLE STORY

The Tower of Babel

THEME OF THE DAY

How Can We Get to God?

MEMORY VERSE

"They said, 'Come, let's build for ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky, and let's make a name for ourselves...' Genesis 11:4

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Marshmallows
- Straws
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

In small groups, children use the marshmallows and straws to try and build towers.

- **Leader:** Towers are an important part of our lesson today. In the biblical days, towers were exclusive and showy. They were built for Kings and Gods and the purpose was to show-off how great they were. Compare towers with churches today, which are open to everyone. They are to glorify God and are places to come to focus on God, to help one another, be with Christian friends, help others, etc.
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Do not discuss it, just let it be there.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 11."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 11:4. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** When you hear this verse what are some of the things you are thinking? (The people wanted to build a tower so tall it went to the sky. They wanted to show how great they were, etc.)
- Why do you think they wanted to build a tower to the sky? (To get to heaven, to see God, to be the first people to build a tower to the sky and be famous, etc.)
- Let's find out from the Bible why these people wanted to build such a big tower.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** In Genesis, chapter 11, we find that everything in Noah's family was going great. His children had children, and their children had more children, until there were lots of people on the earth once more.
- Back then everyone spoke the same language.
- One day they were talking and they said, "Let's build a really tall tower that can reach up to heaven."
- "Everyone will look up at us. We'll say, 'Look at us up here!' And we will look down on them. And we can say to them, 'We are better than you because we built this tower to heaven. In fact, we are so much better than you, we are like God. We are famous!'"
- So they got to work. They made their own bricks and the tower grew higher and higher, until the tower soared above the city of Babylon.
- Close your eyes and imagine what this tower looks like. See stairs in the tower so they could climb to the top. It was like a giant staircase to heaven.
- Do you see people making bricks near the tower? How are the people dressed? Is the weather hot? Do you see sweat glistening on their skin? (Leaders can add more details here to help children visualize building the tower.)
- Open your eyes, turn to your neighbor and take turns sharing what you saw in your mind. (Leaders feel free to partner and share with a child. Ask some children to share with the entire class.)
- Do you think that this beautiful tower pleased God? Give me a thumbs up if you think it pleased God. Give me a thumbs down if you think that it didn't please God.
- Thumbs down was the way that God felt. God was not pleased with them. They had decided that they didn't need God anymore.
- Why do we need God in our lives? (To help us make the right choices, to love us, to help us love others, etc.)
- Well God loved the people too much to let them continue to act like they were better than everyone else. He also loved them too much to let them think that the tower was more important than God.
- So God had a brilliant idea! He decided to mix up their language so they wouldn't be able to understand each other.
- What do you think happened when they couldn't understand each other? (They weren't able to work together, they couldn't continue to build the tower, they were confused, etc.)
- In fact, their talking sounded like babbling to each other. And the Hebrew word for Babel means confusion.
- It wasn't easy to work after they spoke different languages. People were always quarreling and fighting and getting grumpier and grumpier, until building the tower had to stop.
- After that, people scattered all over the world (which is how we ended up with so many different languages to this day.)



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** I have a question for you after hearing this story. Do you need a staircase to get to heaven?
 - How can you get to God? (Reading the Bible, praying, loving others, going to church to learn about God.)
 - God wants us to live for HIM. We do that by going to church where we can learn and grow in God's love together, by caring for others, etc.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of the tower of Babel. The Bible is the living word of God. What is God saying to you through this story?
 - Draw or write what you are thinking. Share your thoughts in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
 - God supports you as you try to make the right choices.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed

GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 15

BIBLE STORY

God Calls Abram

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Do We Worship God?.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Playdough
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your protector. Your reward will be very great.'" Genesis 15:1



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Create a Sculpture." Create playdough sculptures of the kinds of gods you think people may have worshiped during the time of Abraham. (The sun, moon, stars, dogs, cats, etc.) Tell them they will be used in the story this morning.

- The theme of the day and Bible text are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (10 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 15."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 15:1. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** This morning we are going to meet a new Bible hero. He was a relative of Noah.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Abram was a direct descendant of Noah. That means that Noah's grandson had a grandson, and he had a grandson, and so on until Abram was born.
- Way back, from the time of Noah, and even through the time of Abram, the people did not understand there was only One God. They thought there were thousands of gods.
- Abram's father, Terah, was a rich and powerful man. He was the Chief Officer of King Nimrod of Babylon. King Nimrod worshiped idols, like the playdough figures you created. (Have the children show some of their creations and discuss how crazy it sounds that people would worship things like that.)
- In fact, King Nimrod was the one who told the people to build the tower of Babel that we learned about last week.
- King Nimrod's chief idol was the sun, and Abram's father, Terah, worshiped the sun too. Abram's father got rich selling idols made of wood, stone, silver and gold to people.
- Abram was a rich man too. He and his father sold things like incense, spices, and black eye makeup for women's eyes.
- When Abram was about your age, even though his father worshiped idols, Abram knew there was one God who created the sun, the moon and the whole world.
- So he left his father and went to live with Noah. Noah taught him all about the one, true God.
- When Abram grew up he finally convinced his father to give up worshiping idols and to leave his job working for King Nimrod.
- This had to be a scary time for Abram and his father. King Nimrod was out to get them for not following his orders to worship the sun and other idols.
- In our memory verse, it says, "The Lord's word came to Abram in a vision, 'Don't be afraid, Abram. I am your protector.'"
- God promised to give Abram a large family and a lot of land where they could be safe to worship Him. God told Abram to leave on a long journey with his family.
- Abram didn't know what would happen or where they would end up. But he did this because he believed and he trusted God would lead them to a safe place where they could worship Him.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Why do we worship God? (Because God created the world, He created us, God gave us the Bible, etc.)
- When I learn about Abram it makes me thankful Abram was brave enough to worship God, especially when King Nimrod was forcing everyone to worship the sun and other idols. It makes me want to be strong like Abram and follow God's teaching in the Bible.
- What did we learn from Abram's story?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how God called Abram. The Bible is the living word of God. What is God saying to you through this story?
 - Draw or write what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 17:1-8; 15-19

Genesis 18: 1-5

BIBLE STORY

New Names and New Promises

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Chime or triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

THEME OF THE DAY

How Does God Show Us That Names Are Important?

MEMORY VERSE

"And God said to him, 'My covenant is with you: you will be the ancestor of many nations. And because I have made you the ancestor of many nations, your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham.'" Genesis 17: 4-5



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "My Name." When children arrive there are sticky notes on tables with markers. Each child is to write or print his or her name in large letters on one of the sticky notes and decorate it with things that describe them. (For example, there may be a football, a pet, a computer, music notes, by their names.) Teachers please put your name and some symbols that describe you too. Ask children to put their sticky note names on the board.

- The theme of the day and Bible text are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

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- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

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THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 17 and Genesis, chapter 18."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 17:4-5. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Look at the wall of our names.
- Why do we have names? (Answers could be to show who we are, to differentiate us from other people, to name us after someone in our families, etc. This would be a good time for leaders to tell how they got their names.)
- Do you know why you have the name you do? (Children share.)
- If you do not know how you got your name, please ask your parents to tell you. Names are very important and I'm sure you want to know the story of how you got your name.
- In our Bible story this morning, I want you to think about this question; How does God show us that names are very important?

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Our Bible story last week was about a man name Abram. We learned that God called him to be a leader, and to help people worship one God. God promised to lead Abram and his people to a place where they would be safe to worship God.
- Today we continue that story. By this time Abram was 99 years old. His wife, Sarai, was 89 years old. They were very sad that they didn't have a child. They thought they were too old to have a child and had given up.
- In Genesis 17, we find that God comes to Abram and makes a promise (covenant) with him.
- God said, "Abram, how many stars are there in the sky?"
- Abram looks up at the sky and said, "There are so many stars in the sky I can't count all of them!"
- God laughed and said, "Well this is my promise to you. You are going to have so many children and grandchildren and great grandchildren, you won't be able to count them either!"
- Abraham started laughing at this wonderful idea, but then he stopped himself. "Wait a minute, God," he said. "I am 99 years old. It is way too late for me to have babies at my age." And he wiped away a tear as he said this.
- God said, "Abram, believe me, I will make your family very big, until one day your family will come to number even more than the stars in the sky."
- "And to show you how important this promise is, I am going to change your name from Abram, which means high father, to Abraham, which means "father of many nations."
- So Abraham trusted what God said, and he believed.
- And Abraham went to tell Sarai the good news of their having a baby.
- Abram's wife, Sarai, was a beautiful lady, even though she was 90 years old. Sarai's name meant "my princess."
- When Sarai heard about God's Promise for them to have a baby, she laughed too. But she didn't believe God could do what he promised.
- And God told Sarai, "To show you that my promise is really true, I am going to change your name to Sarah, which means "princess of many."
- Sure enough, nine months later, just as God promised, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. And guess what they named him?
- They named him Isaac. Do you have any idea what the name Isaac means? (Get some responses.)
- It means "son of laughter." Why do you think they would name him that? (Because Abraham and Sarah laughed at the thought that they would have a baby when they were so old.)
- God did as he promised and looked after Abraham's large family. And Abraham and Sarah were happy that their dream came true.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** How did God show us through this story that names are important? (He changed Abraham and Sarah's names to prove they would be a large family, even though they were older. Isaac's name reflected how happy Abraham and Sarah were when they found out they were having a baby boy.)
 - What does the story about Abram and Sarah tell you? (Believe and trust God always.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have heard the story how God made Abram a father when he was very old. The Bible is the living word of God. What is God saying to you through this story?
 - Draw or write what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
 - God supports you as you try to make the right choices.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 28-30 and 37

BIBLE STORY

Joseph and His Coat of Many Colors

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Do You Think Joseph Was Jacob's Favorite Son?

MEMORY VERSE

"Now Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons because he was born when Jacob was old. Jacob had made for him a long robe." Genesis 37:3

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Colorful Robes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

Have some colorful robes available for the children to try on as they enter the room. Ask the children what the robes could have to do with today's Bible story.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapters 28-30 and 37."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 37:3. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

• **Leader:** Joseph was one of the great heroes of the Bible. But to really know Joseph, you have to understand his family.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Let's begin with Joseph's father, whose name was Jacob.
- Jacob had gotten into some trouble at home and decided he needed to get away for a while. Maybe find a job in another town.
- He was old enough to get married, so he hoped he would find a wife as well.
- When Jacob got to a new town, he saw a woman tending sheep.
- Jacob thought, "Wow! That lady is beautiful! I want to meet her."
- Her name was Rachel. And it was love at first sight for both of them!
- Jacob got a job working on that farm and after a while decided that he would ask her father if he could marry Rachel.
- Jacob told her father that he would work for him seven years if he could marry Rachel.
- Jacob's father said, "It's a deal! You work for me for seven years and I'll let you marry Rachel."
- After seven years Jacob said to Rachel's father, "It's time for me to marry Rachel."
- So they planned a big wedding.
- But Rachel's father tricked Jacob, and he wound up marrying her older sister, Leah.
- Jacob was really upset when he found out he had married Leah because Rachel was the one he loved.
- So Rachel's tricky father said, "If you want to marry Rachel you will have to work for me another seven years."
- And Jacob did. So that meant he worked how many years to marry Rachel? (14)
- Jacob now had two wives. Leah and Rachel.
- You are probably wondering why Joseph's father, Jacob, had two wives.
- Back in Jacob's time, a family could only survive if they had a lot of children to help with the work. So it was the custom for a man to have several wives.
- Jacob had 12 children with his wives.
- And here is where Joseph comes into the story.
- Jacob and Rachel waited many years to have a baby. In fact, Jacob was 91 years old when Joseph was born!
- Joseph and Rachel were so excited to finally have a baby, they treated him better than his brothers.
- They treated Joseph like he was special, so he was spoiled.
- This really made his brothers mad because it showed Joseph was his father's favorite son.
- He would tell his father whenever his brothers did something wrong.
- And that really made his brothers mad!
- To make matters worse, when Joseph was 17, his father gave him a special present; a beautiful, expensive, long sleeved coat, woven in different colors and patterns.
- How would YOU feel if your brother tattled on you all the time, and if he got better clothes than you did?



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** What are some words that you would use to describe Joseph? (Tattler, informer, tells secrets, thinks he is better than his brothers, etc.)
 - What are some words that you would use to describe Rachel's father? (Tricky, doesn't tell the truth, difficult to deal with).
 - What are you wondering about the special coat Joseph's father gave him?
 - Do you think God loves people who are not perfect? Why do you think this?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Joseph and his coat. The Bible is the living word of God. What is God saying to you through this story? Did this story tell you anything about yourself?
 - Draw or write what you are thinking.
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (5 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

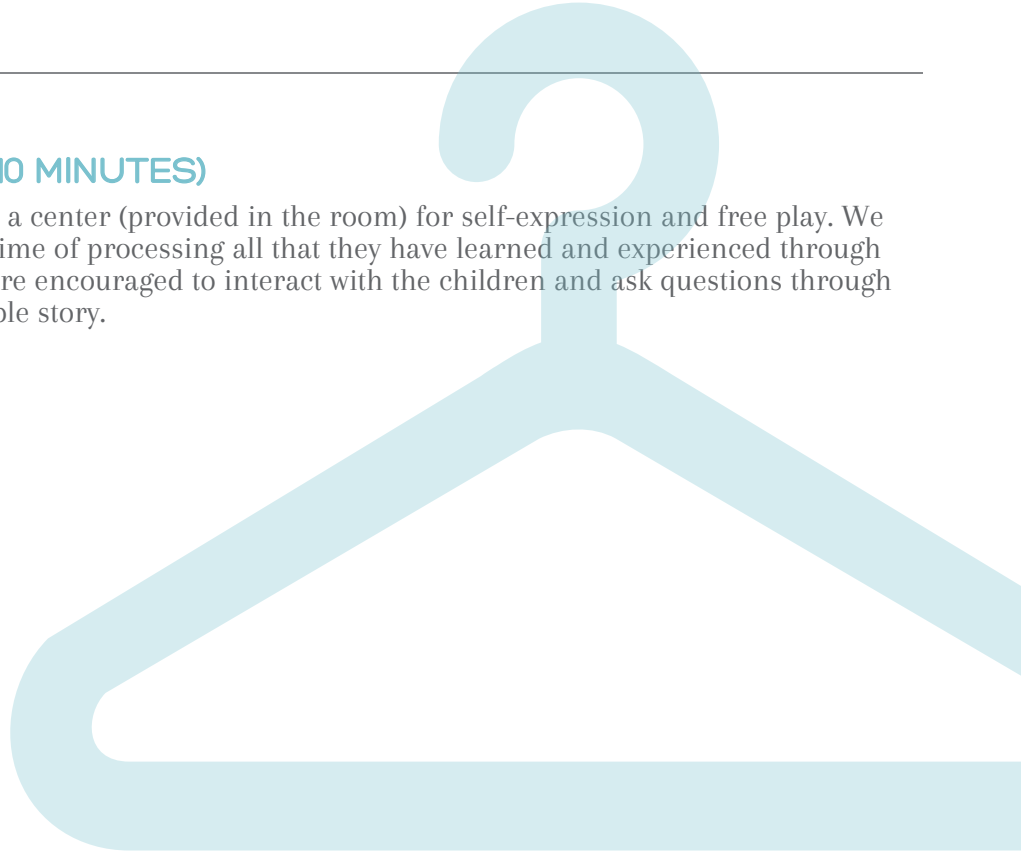
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
- God supports you as you try to make the right choices.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed





GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 37:1-45

BIBLE STORY

Joseph the Dreamer

THEME OF THE DAY

What Was God Telling Joseph Through His Dreams?

MEMORY VERSE

"Joseph had a dream and told it to his brothers, which made them hate him even more." Genesis 37:5

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Colorful Scarves
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is, "What Can You Create With These Colorful Scarves?" Have colorful scarves in the room for children to come in and play with.

- Leaders ask probing questions while they play. (What do these colors remind you of? Do you dream in colors?)
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 37."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 37:5. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** The story of Joseph continues today. Joseph was one of Jacob's youngest sons, so he was very special to him. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat, which made his 11 brothers angry and jealous.
- Today, Joseph gets into more trouble because he had some interesting dreams.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Have you ever had a dream? Do you remember what your dream was about? Turn to your elbow partner and tell each other about a dream you remember. (Give them a few minutes to share. Leaders partner with some of them and share a dream of yours with them.)
- We've all had dreams. Dreams are a big part of Joseph's whole story.
- In Joseph's time, people believed dreams showed them truths about themselves or their world.
- One day, Joseph had a dream and he told it to his brothers.
- He said, "Brothers, listen to this dream I had last night."
- "When we were binding stalks of grain in the field, my stalk got up and stood up straight, while your stalks gathered around it and bowed down to my stalk!"
- This made his brothers so angry. They said, "Who do you think you are? Do you think you are better than all of us? Are we the stalks in your dream? Do you actually think we would bow down to YOU?"
- Then Joseph had another dream and he described it to his brothers.
- He told them, "You won't believe this, but I've had another dream."
- In this dream the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!"
- Joseph told his father about his dreams. Joseph's father scolded him and said, "What kind of dreams are you dreaming? Are your mother and me and your brothers supposed to come and bow down before you?"
- A few days later, Joseph's father asked him to check on his brothers who were in the field, tending sheep. So Joseph went to find them.
- When his brothers saw Joseph coming, one of Joseph's brothers said, "Here comes Joseph. Let's get rid of him for good."
- But when Reuben, Joseph's oldest brother heard this he said, "Let's not kill him. Let's just throw him in a well out here in the field."
- Reuben loved Joseph. He said this because Reuben planned to secretly come back and rescue Joseph after the brothers returned home.
- When Joseph got to his brothers, they took off the beautiful coat and threw him in that empty well.
- Later, a caravan of people on camels came by on their way to Egypt to sell things like sweet smelling perfumes and medicines.
- One of the brothers said, "Hey, I have an idea! Why don't we sell Joseph to these people? Let's not kill him. After all, he is Family."
- The other brothers liked this idea, so they sold him to the people who were going to Egypt.
- Unfortunately, Reuben was away working when all this happened.
- He returned to the well and noticed that Joseph was gone!
- When his brother told Reuben that they sold Joseph, Reuben was heartbroken.
- The rest of the brothers took Joseph's beautiful coat, dipped it in animal blood and took it back to their father, Jacob.
- They wanted Jacob to think that a wild animal killed his son.
- Imagine how sad Jacob was when he saw the beautiful coat with blood on it.
- But Joseph was alive. He had been sold in Egypt to the King's assistant, who was a very powerful man.

Transformed



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** What do you think Joseph's dreams about the stalks of wheat, the sun, and the moon and stars bowing down to him meant? (He was going to be a ruler, God would protect him.)
 - What were some things Joseph did that angered his brothers? (Bragged, told on them, etc.)
 - What are some bad things Joseph's brothers did to him? (Threw him in an empty well, threatened to kill him, sold him to merchants going to Egypt.)
 - How could Joseph being sold to the man in charge of the Royal Guard, help Joseph become a ruler? (He is close to some very powerful people.)
 - If God took care of Joseph, even in the most difficult of times, do you think God will take care of you in the difficult times?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Joseph and his dreams. The Bible is the living word of God. What is God saying to you in this story?
 - Write or draw 3 things you remember about Joseph, the Dreamer in your Journal.
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 40

BIBLE STORY

Joseph in Prison

THEME OF THE DAY

How Does God Communicate With Us?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Different Cups and Spoons
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"We've both had dreams and there is no one to interpret them." Genesis 40:8



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Who Would Use These Cups and Spoons?" Display different cups and spoons in the room.

- Encourage the children to pick them up and play with them. (Where would these be used? Who would use them?)
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 40."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 40:8. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** In last week's Bible story, Joseph's brothers were so mad and jealous of him that they sold him as a slave to a powerful man named Potiphar.
- Potiphar was an assisatnt to the Pharoah (King) of Egypt. He had a very important job.
- Potiphar liked Jospeh and made him in charge of everything he owned.
- Joseph was doing great now! But his life was a roller coaster. It was up and down and then up again.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** In our lesson today from Genesis 40, Joseph's life starts down again.
- Potiphar, the powerful assistant to King Pharaoh, had a wife. And his wife told her husband something about Joseph that was wrong.
- Even though what she said wasn't true, Potiphar believed his wife and he became furious with Joseph!
- Potiphar was so mad that he put Joseph in jail. And that was not fair!
- Joseph went from being Potiphar's most trusted assistant to a prisoner in a lonely jail.
- While Joseph was in jail he met two interesting people. (Hold up a cup and wooden spoon). What kind of job would you have with a cup and spoon? (Let children respond.)
- Joseph met a cup-bearer and a baker in the jail. These were very important jobs in Joseph's day.
- In the summer, I bet you all go swimming. Is there a lifeguard at the pool? What do lifeguards do? (Protect you from drowning, keep you safe.)
- Cup-bearers and bakers were like lifeguards because they protected the King from being poisoned in his food and drink.
- There were people who constantly wanted to kill King Pharaoh to keep him from being powerful and some of the ways they did this was by poisoning his food.
- The cup-bearers and bakers' jobs were to guard against someone trying to poison the Pharaoh.
- Sometimes they were required to swallow the Pharaoh's drink or taste the food before it was served to make sure no one had poisoned it.
- Their jobs were very dangerous because they could be poisoned themselves by tasting the food before it was served to the Pharaoh.
- In some way, the cup-bearer and the baker had angered King Pharaoh and he had them put in jail, where Joseph was.
- Joseph's job, while he was in jail, was to take care of these prisoners.
- One day, Joseph noticed they were both unusually sad.
- "Why are you so sad?" Joseph asked them.
- They said in Genesis 40:8, "We've both had dreams but there's no one to interpret them."
- Joseph replied, "God gives us dreams and He can help us determine their meaning. Tell me your dreams."
- So they told Joseph their dreams and he told them what their dreams meant.
- After he told them the meaning of their dreams, Joseph had one request. He said, "When you stand before Pharaoh the next time, would you please tell him that I didn't do anything wrong? I don't deserve to be in jail."
- The cup bearer and baker promised they would, but soon forgot about Joseph and didn't speak up for him before King Pharaoh.
- So Joseph remained in the dark prison for two more years. But he trusted God and didn't give up, even when it looked like he had been forgotten.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Have you ever felt like you were forgotten? That no one cared about you?
 - What could you do if you ever felt this way? (Talk to God, talk to your parents, a teacher, etc.)
 - In today's story, some people broke a promise to Joseph. Has someone ever broken a promise to you? How did it make you feel?
 - Why is it important to keep a promise?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Joseph in prison. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What is God telling you through this story? What did you hear today that spoke to you?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

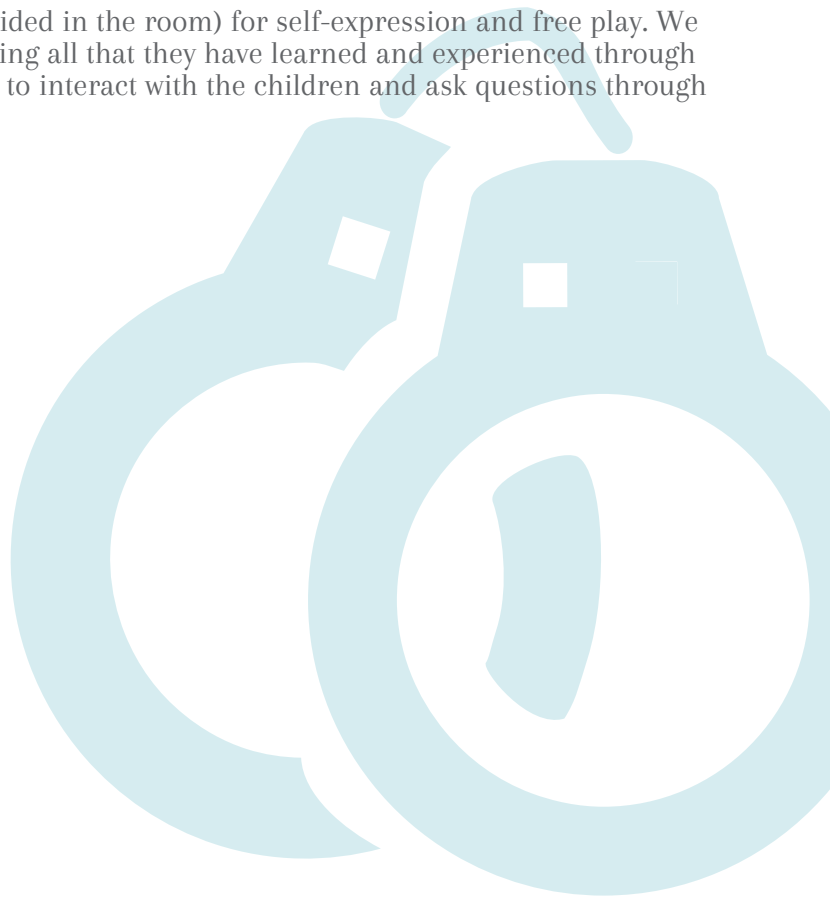
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 41

BIBLE STORY

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dream

THEME OF THE DAY

How Does God Take Care Of Us?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Toy Rings
- Playdough
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"Every country came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because in every country the famine had also become more severe." Genesis 41:57



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "The Power of the King's Ring." Display assortments of toy rings the children can try on and push into playdough.

- Explain that Pharaoh would use his ring and dip it in wax to seal official laws and letters.
- The imprint on the King's ring showed it was real.
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 41."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 41:57. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Last week we learned that dreams were very important in Joseph's time and in that part of the world.
- Joseph had dreams that told him he was going to be a ruler.
- But Joseph's jealous brothers had sold him as a slave and he wound up in a dark, damp jail.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** As we begin our story today, Joseph has been in jail for two years. Joseph is still in prison and he had done nothing wrong!
- The Pharaoh is starting to have some strange dreams. He can't figure out what they mean.
- He called for magicians and wise men in Egypt to tell him what his dreams meant, but they couldn't figure them out.
- Finally the Pharaoh's cup-bearer, the guard of the king's drinks said, "Oh, great Pharaoh, I just remembered a mistake I made!
- When I was in prison two years ago, I met a man named Joseph. I told him about a dream I had, and he told me God gave him the ability to interpret dreams.
- What he told me about my dream actually came true!
- I promised him I would speak to you in support of him, because he said he did not commit a crime and should not be in jail. But I forgot.
- Would you like me to bring him to you to interpret your dreams?"
- The Pharaoh said, "Yes. Get him out of jail and bring him to me. 'Let's see if he can make sense of these crazy dreams I keep having.'" So Joseph was brought to the Pharaoh.
- The Pharaoh said, "Joseph, I keep having a dream that no one can interpret.
- I heard that when you hear a dream, you can make sense out of it."
- Joseph replied to the king, "It's really not me, but God working through me. Tell me your dreams." So the Pharaoh told Joseph his dreams.
- Joseph told the king that the dreams meant for seven years Egypt would be rich. There would be more than enough food to eat and water to drink.
- But the seven years after that would be terrible. There would not be enough food to eat or water to drink. The people would be so hungry they would be starving.
- Joseph told Pharaoh to choose a smart, wise man to put in charge of the entire land of Egypt. And during the seven good years they should save grain and store extra food in large storehouses.
- Then when the seven bad years came, they could use the grain that they had stored up. That way the people would not starve.
- The Pharaoh said, "This sounds like a great plan. Joseph, I think you are very wise. I want you to be in charge of my kingdom of Egypt and my people will obey you.
- As a sign of how much I trust you, I am giving you my special ring. This ring I use to stamp the laws I make so people will know the laws came from me."
- And the Pharaoh took his ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger.
- Pharaoh said, "Now you are second in command under me, and people will obey you." What Joseph dreamed about the grain, the sun, the moon, and the stars bowing down to him had become true!
- So Joseph ruled Egypt, and during the first seven years much food and grain was stored.
- But then came the next terrible seven years and all of Egypt was starving.
- Every country came to Joseph to buy grain if they were to survive.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Joseph came from a deep, dark well and a dingy, damp jail to now rule all of Egypt!
 - God was with him through all those dark, lonely times. Joseph never gave up or stopped believing in God.
 - What can the story of Joseph tell you? (Let children respond.)
 - If God took care of Joseph through all these terrible times, will He take care of you when you are sad and lonely?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Joseph and Pharaoh. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What is God telling you through this story? What did you hear today that spoke to you?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



GENESIS

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 43-45

BIBLE STORY

Joseph Forgives His Family

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Should We Forgive Others?

MEMORY VERSE

"Joseph kissed all his brothers and wept, embracing them." Genesis 45:15

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Baskets/Bins
- Bean Bags
- Masking Tape
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Fill Joseph's Storehouse." Tape lines on the floor ten feet from baskets/bins. Children take turns standing behind the line and toss bean bags into baskets/bins to help Joseph fill his storehouses with food.

- Leader explains that Joseph needed to store lots of food in Egypt because a famine was coming.
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Genesis, chapter 43-45."

- Our special memory verse is Genesis 45:15. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Our memory verse tells us that Joseph forgave his brothers. What did they do that was really mean to Joseph?
- Do you think God wants us to hold on to mad and hurt feelings?
- God wants us to forgive people and to love and care about them.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** In today's Bible Story, Joseph now the second most powerful ruler in Egypt.
- The Pharaoh put him in charge of the whole country.
- There was a famine throughout the land, and it didn't rain.
- Without rain, crops couldn't grow. And if crops didn't grow people starved.
- The famine was so terrible that people were starving everywhere - except in Egypt - because Joseph was wise and had stored tons of grain in large storehouses.
- Joseph was in charge of selling grain to starving people during the famine.
- Joseph's father and his brothers and families were starving, so they went Egypt to buy grain.
- Who was the person who sold the grain? (Joseph)
- Joseph hadn't seen his brothers in 20 years, since the time they were so mean to him and sold him as a slave.
- His brothers came to Joseph and bowed down before him asking to buy grain.
- His brothers didn't recognize Joseph as an Egyptian King, but Joseph knew them as soon as he saw them!
- This was just like the dream Joseph had, where the stalks of grain, and the sun, moon and stars bowed down to him. His dream came true, just like God had told him so many years ago!
- Joseph said, "I am your brother, Joseph, the one you sold in Egypt."
- I wonder what his brothers thought then. What do you think? (Terrified. They were at Joseph's mercy now. He could get even with them. If he didn't let them have grain and they would starve.)
- But Joseph saw how scared they were and said, "Don't be upset and ashamed of yourselves for selling me here. It was God's plan that I become an Egyptian Ruler and save many lives."
- Joseph had tears of happiness in his eyes as he hugged each brother and said, "I forgive you. I will move you here to Egypt where you will be safe. I will care for you."
- How do you think his brothers felt now? (Relieved, happy, joyful, etc.)
- And that's how it feels to forgive, we don't feel mad anymore. God wants us to forgive just like Joseph did in this story.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** God gave Joseph the power not to be mad and forgive his brothers for the terrible way they treated him.
- Have you had a time you were treated unfairly?
- What did you do?
- Why is it important to forgive others like Joseph did?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Leaders are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Joseph forgiving his family. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What is God telling you through this story? What did you hear today that spoke to you?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. What is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



EXODUS

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 2:1-10

BIBLE STORY

God Protects Baby Moses

THEME OF THE DAY

Who Are Some People
That Protect You?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Baskets
- Baby Dolls
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"...She named him Moses, 'because' she said, 'I pulled him out of the water.'" Exodus 2:10



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "God Protects Baby Moses." Have baskets available for children to pretend play with the baby dolls. Children can also divide into two lines, face each other and make fluid movements with their hands as they make whooshing sounds. Choose one child to be baby Moses and walk through the "river." Allow each child the opportunity to be Moses floating down the river.

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Exodus, chapter 2."

- Our special memory verse is Exodus 2:10. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

• **Leader:** While we learn about Moses we will compare his life with the life of Jesus. There will be things that are different and the same about them. We will discover them together.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Our story begins in Egypt with a wicked Pharaoh ruling over Egypt. He was afraid of the Hebrew people because there were so many of them and he thought they might overpower him.
- The Hebrew people were not safe, especially the baby boys.
- Around this time, a woman had a baby boy. She wanted him to be safe and to live, so she hid him.
- When the baby was bigger, she put him in a basket and set the basket at the edge of the Nile river.
- The baby's older sister, Miriam, stayed nearby to watch the basket.
- Soon, Pharaoh's daughter, the princess of Egypt, went to the river to take a bath.
- She found the basket with the baby inside and felt sorry for the baby.
- In fact, the princess wanted to adopt him.
- The baby's sister, Miriam, asked the princess if she wanted to hire a woman to take care of the baby.
- The princess agreed, so Miriam brought her mother to care for him. This was wonderful because Moses was safe now and his own mother got paid by Pharaoh's daughter to take care of him!
- The princess named the baby, Moses, which means, "out of the water," because Moses was taken out of the water.
- Moses grew up in a beautiful palace, furnished with gold. He ate the finest foods off the finest plates.
- He was bathed in expensive oils like frankincense.
- He wore eye makeup like all rich Egyptians did, because they thought it protected their eyes from diseases and the bright sun.
- His clothes were made of the finest linen that was light and cool. He wore sparkling jewels made of beautiful gems.
- God saved Moses from the evils of Pharaoh by having him live in Pharaoh's own home!
- Moses was no ordinary child. He would grow up to save the Hebrew people from the Egyptians who had them captured as slaves.
- Jesus was no ordinary child either. He would grow up to become the Savior of the world.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** How were Moses and Jesus alike as babies?
- Moses and Jesus were protected when they were children.
- King Herod wanted to kill baby Hebrew boys because he was afraid one of them would overtake him as king.
- Moses was also a Hebrew baby whose life was in danger as the Egyptian Pharaoh was afraid of the Hebrew people.
- Who are some people that protect you? (Mothers, fathers, teachers, police officers, doctors, nurses, siblings, etc.)

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of baby Moses. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - God protected Moses. How does God protect you?
 - What is God saying to you through this story?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (5 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



EXODUS

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 2:11-23

BIBLE STORY

Moses Runs Away

THEME OF THE DAY

How Does God Work Through People To Help Us?

MEMORY VERSE

"They cried out, and their cry to be rescued from the hard work rose up to God." Exodus 2:23

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Race From Egypt." Have children line up against the wall on the opposite side of the room from the leaders. Tell the children that they are Moses and they must race as fast as they can to get out of Egypt. Give them each the opportunity to race out of Egypt. After each child has had a turn, leaders can have them race one another from Egypt.

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Exodus, chapter 2."

- Our special memory verse is Exodus 2:23. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Today we will continue into the life of Moses.
- As we compare Moses with Jesus, see what Moses did in today's lesson that Jesus would have never done.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Even though Moses was adopted into an Egyptian royal family, he never forgot that he was an Israelite.
- It made him so sad that while he lived a life of luxury, all around he watched his people suffer as slaves to the Egyptians. They worked the Israelites very hard and they beat them if they didn't work fast enough.
- One day, Moses came across an Israelite slave being kicked to the ground by an Egyptian guard. The cruelty made Moses extremely mad and he didn't control his anger.
- Suddenly, he found himself rushing at the Egyptian attacker to save the slave. The slave got away, but Moses hit the guard until he killed him.
- Moses thought no one saw him kill the guard, so he took the guard and buried him in the sand.
- But word got back to Pharaoh that Moses had killed a guard and Pharaoh was very displeased with Moses. In fact, Pharaoh wanted to kill Moses!
- Moses ran for his life. He went to the neighboring country of Midian. The Pharaoh had no power there.
- Moses knew no one. He had no job and no place to live. Moses was all alone.
- Moses would have been homeless in Midian if he hadn't stopped to help seven sisters trying to water their sheep.
- In return for his kindness, their father, Jethro, who was a priest and a shepherd, invited Moses to stay with them. Jethro liked Moses so much that he gave him work as a shepherd.
- Moses lived happily with Jethro's family and fell in love with one of his daughters, Zipporah.
- They married and had a son that Moses named, Gershom, which means, "a stranger here."
- Why do you think Moses named his son a name that means "stranger?" (Moses was a stranger in Midian.)
- Years passed and back in Egypt, the Israelites were still slaves. They wanted to be free.
- The old Pharaoh, who wanted to kill Moses, finally died.
- But the new Pharaoh was even a meaner ruler and treated the Israelites cruelly.
- The Israelites hated being slaved and prayed to God to be free.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** So God heard the Israelites prayer. But they suffered a long time before they were eventually set free.
- It is hard for us to understand suffering. God allows it to happen to teach us many things. We know that when we suffer, we are still in God's hands.
- God works through people like Moses and situations to help those who suffer. Who helps you when you need it?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Moses running away. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - Have you ever been through a hard time and wanted to run away from it? How did God help you through this difficult time?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



EXODUS

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 3:1-21

BIBLE STORY

Moses Is Called By God

THEME OF THE DAY

What Do We Do When God Calls Us To Do Hard Things?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"God said to Moses, 'I Am Who I Am. So say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:14



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Moses and the Burning Bush." The leader then divides the group in half and tells each team to place their shoes against a wall on the far side of the room. Each team lines up, one person from each team runs to the wall, grabs his shoes and runs back. The next person follows as the two teams race to grab and put on their shoes before their opponents.

- An adult leader explains how when Moses appeared before the burning bush, God commanded him to take off his shoes because he was standing on holy ground.
- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Exodus, chapter 3."

- Our special memory verse is Exodus 3:14. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

• **Leader:** Today we will continue to learn about Moses. Last week we learned that Moses' temper got him into trouble. This week we will learn what God did to get Moses' attention.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** We left our story last week with Moses running away to Midian because he killed the Egyptian guard who was beating an Israelite.
- Moses found a home in Midian, married and had a child. He became a shepherd, which is quite a step down from being the Prince of Egypt.
- But life was peaceful and he was happy and safe in his new home.
- One day he was out with his flock of sheep and saw a strange sight. There, in front of him was a bush, but it was not an ordinary bush. The bush was on fire!
- What happens to something when it is on fire? It eventually burns up, right? It turns black and then to ashes.
- The really strange thing about this bush is that it never burned up! That got Moses' attention! Imagine what he could have been thinking as he watched the hot flame and the bush not burning up!
- Soon things got even stranger. Suddenly, Moses heard God speaking to him through the flames.
- God told Moses to take off his shoes because he was standing on Holy Ground.
- Let's read exactly what God said to Moses.
- Exodus 3:9-10, "Now the Israelites' cries of unfairness have reached me. I've seen just how much the Egyptians have treated them with hate. So get going. I am sending you, Moses, to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."
- God had a big job for Moses to do! Now if you were Moses and all these strange things were happening and God told you to go right away and save the Hebrew people. What would you say?
- Moses thought he was not good enough for this huge job. In fact, he was scared. He was afraid the Israelite people wouldn't listen to him. He was afraid he wasn't a good speaker. He made all sorts of excuses to God why he was not the right person for the job.
- But God promised that he would be with Moses and he should not be afraid, because no matter what, God would work through Moses to rescue the Israelites.
- Moses was afraid that he wouldn't know what to say when the Israelites asked who sent him to rescue them. God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." This is what you say to the Israelites, "I AM has sent me to you."
- You see, God is so big and powerful that he can't have an ordinary name like Bill or Sam. When God says his name is, "I AM," He is saying He has no beginning and no end. His name, "I AM," means He is the one, true God and we can trust in Him.
- This is the first time God tells the name, "I AM." But Jesus used this term over and over in his ministry to express His saving relationship toward the world. Jesus was and is God.
- Jesus used the phrase in seven descriptions of himself found in the book of John. He says:
I AM the bread of life. I AM the light of the world. I AM the door of the sheep. I AM the good shepherd. I AM the resurrection and the life. I AM the way, the truth and the life. I AM the true vine.
- God wanted to make clear to the Hebrew people through Moses that he was the creator of everything and in no way comparable to the gods they worshiped!
- God made it clear to the world through Jesus that He was the one true God.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Moses told God he wasn't good enough to talk the Pharaoh into letting the Israelites go.
 - Do we ever make excuses to God? Sometimes God asks us to do hard things, like forgiving someone who hurt our feelings. He asked Moses to do a hard thing by going back to Egypt. Moses was scared and didn't think he could convince the Pharaoh to free his people.
 - But the thing to remember is that God is always with us, even when He asks us to do something hard. He will help us through those difficult situations.
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Moses being called by God to free the Israelites. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - I want you to write or draw something that stood out to you from the story.
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

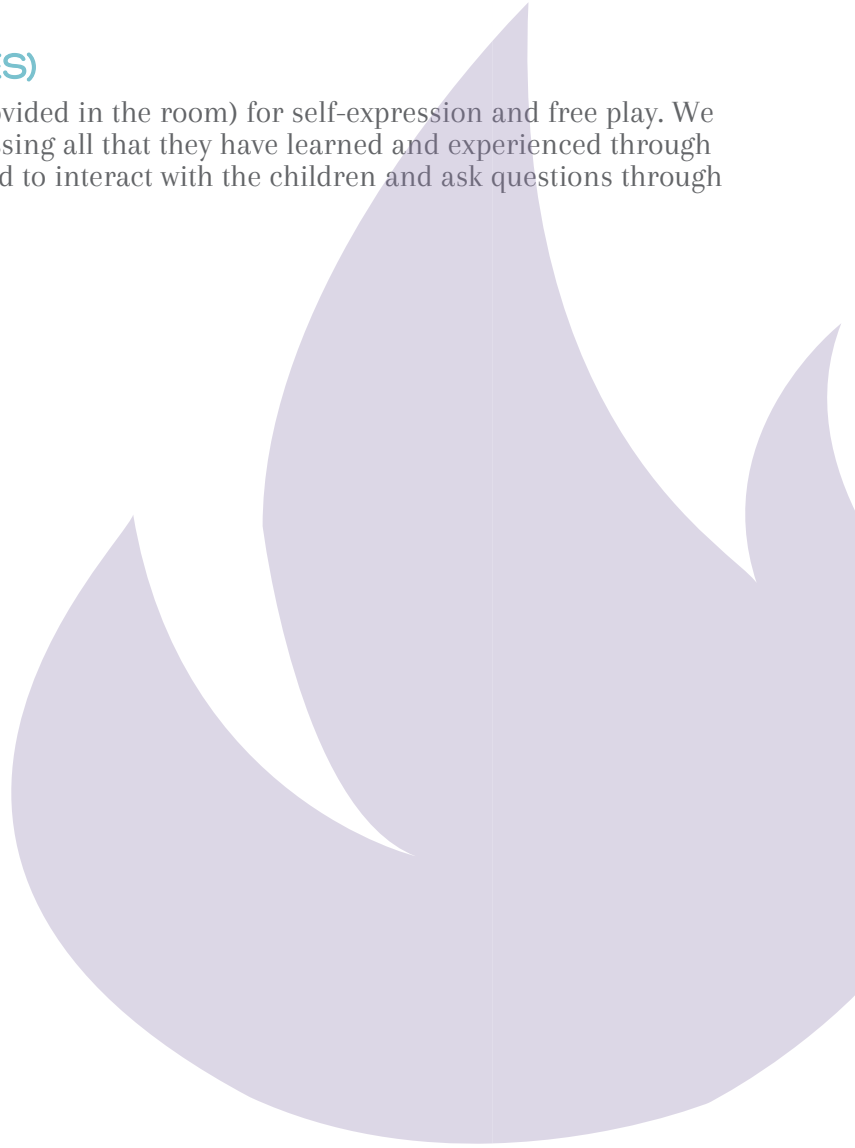
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



EXODUS

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 4

BIBLE STORY

Moses Needs Aaron to Shine

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Do We Need Other People?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Sticky Notes
- Poster
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord said to Aaron, 'Go into the desert to meet Moses.' So he went and Aaron met him at God's mountain and greeted him with a kiss." Exodus 4:27



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Compare and Contrast Moses and Jesus." Have children write or draw on sticky notes the ways that Jesus and Moses are alike as they enter the room. Put the notes on the board for all to see.

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Exodus, chapter 4."

- Our special memory verse is Exodus 4:27. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** I have a question for you. How are people like stars in the sky? (Let the children process this and then share their thoughts.)
- Here is a scientific fact: Did you know that most stars live in pairs? When we look up at the stars from here on earth, they look like single stars hanging in the sky, but if you look closely at stars through a powerful telescope, you'll see that most of the time it is two stars huddled together.
- Stars require each other's gravity to live. After hundreds of thousands of years, some stars pull apart. Do you know what happens then? They die quickly without each other.
- People are a lot like stars. We need each other to shine our brightest.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** In our story today from Exodus 4, God told Moses he must go back to Egypt and persuade the new Pharaoh to give Hebrew slaves their freedom.
- Moses did not want to go, mainly because he had trouble speaking, his words didn't come out like he wanted them to.
- Moses knew he needed help talking to Pharaoh and convincing him to free his people. He knew he could not do it all alone.
- So God told Moses to take his brother, Aaron, with him. Aaron was a good speaker and he could talk for Moses if he needed to.
- Moses felt supported to have Aaron with him.
- Aaron must have been happy to help Moses, because in our memory verse it says that Moses went to the desert and "Aaron met him at God's mountain and greeted him with a kiss."
- Moses was afraid his people would not listen to him.
- But God was with him just like he promised.
- Moses was welcomed back by his people, the Israelites, who were so happy to hear his plan to lead them to freedom.
- He knew Aaron would keep him from giving up when things got hard and speak for him when he needed to.
- Jesus had helpers too as he preached. He had his 12 disciples who gave up their jobs to support Jesus.
- Several women helped Jesus too.
- Jesus welcomed women and accepted their support in a time where women were not treated equally with men.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Just like stars we need to support each other in order to shine.
- Moses and Jesus used other people to help them do great things.
- We need people to believe in us, to share our ideas with, to teach us, and to love and care for us.
- Who supports you each day?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Moses needed Aaron to shine. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - I want you to write or draw the people who help you to shine. Who gives you support in your life each day?
 - I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



ESTHER

SCRIPTURE

Esther 1-2

BIBLE STORY

Esther Becomes Queen

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Should We Trust In God Even In Difficult Times?

MEMORY VERSE

"The king placed a royal crown on her head and made her queen." Esther 2:17

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Shoe Box
- Crown
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "What's Inside the Box?" Put a toy crown inside a shoe box. As the children enter the room they guess what is inside the box. They can pick up the box or shake it to make guesses. Have them write or draw their guess on a sticky note and place the sticky note on the box. Open the box before Birthday Blessings begins.

- Discuss what it is and what they think it has to do with the Bible story.
- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Esther, chapters 1-2."

- Our special memory verse is Esther 2:17. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Let's look a little harder at our memory verse. What does this verse tell us?
- What do you think the Queen looked like?
- Do you think she wanted to be queen?
- What kinds of questions do you have about Esther?
- Let's write your questions on the board and see if we find the answers in our story today. (Let children generate questions here. Examples: How old was Esther? How did she become queen? What does a queen do? What was the king like?)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Esther was a young girl who lived in Persia.
- When her mother and father died, Esther's cousin, Mordecai, raised her.
- He was like a father to her and treated her with love and kindness. Mordecai had an important job. He was a judge at the king's gate.
- Esther and Mordecai were some of the few Jewish people who lived in Persia.
- At this time, the king of Persia, King Xerxes, was searching for a new queen.
- Many unmarried, young women from different countries were brought to the king's court.
- Esther, who was now 12 years old, was one of the girls chosen. A guard arrived and took Esther to the palace.
- She didn't want to go. She didn't want to be queen.
- But Esther was brave. She had to stay in the king's court for several years.
- Her cousin, Mordecai, was allowed to visit Esther. He would bring some of her favorite foods and tell her stories about her family. Esther loved those visits.
- Mordecai made Esther promise not to tell anyone that she was a Jew.
- He was afraid she might be punished because she was not Persian.
- Finally, after four years, the king decided he would choose a queen.
- Out of all the women from many countries, the king picked Esther to be his queen!
- As our memory verse says, "The king placed the royal crown on Esther's head and made her queen."
- King Xerxes gave many parties to celebrate the new Queen, Esther. He told her she could have anything she wanted.
- But Esther asked for nothing. People loved Esther at the palace because she was kind and considerate to everyone.
- Mordecai continued working at the king's gate.
- One day, he overheard two people secretly planning to poison the king. Mordecai went straight to Esther and told her about the plot to kill her husband, the King.
- Esther spoke to king Xerxes and told him about the plot to poison him. She told him this information came from Mordecai.
- The two people were caught and severely punished.
- The king was so thankful that he wrote Mordecai's name in his special record book.
- Now let's see if you can answer the questions you had at the beginning of the story. (Let the children answer the questions on the board. Save to review next week.)



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

• **Leader:** How did Queen Esther show courage? (She didn't want to go to the king's court, but she bravely left her home. She didn't want to be queen, but when chosen, she showed kindness to everyone. She told her husband about the plot to poison him and saved his life.)

- What is something you are facing that you do not want to do?
 - How can you show courage in your life?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Esther became queen. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? Did this story tell you anything about yourself?
 - Can you show courage like queen Esther? I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



ESTHER

SCRIPTURE

Esther 3-9

BIBLE STORY

The Courage of Queen Esther

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Do the Jewish People Still Celebrate Purim?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Dice
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"They are to make (Purim) days of feasts and joyous events, days to send gifts to each other and money gifts to the poor." Esther 9:22



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Haman's Dice Game." Have sets of dice and sticky notes set out on tables for children as they enter the room. Tell children the word "purim" means "lots" or "rolling of dice" in Persian.

- Haman's dice game: You need – 2 dice and sticky notes
- Each child chooses a number from 2-12.
- When it's your turn, if you roll the number you chose, you get a tally mark on your sticky note and another turn.
- When the number is NOT rolled, your turn is over.
- The first person to get 10 tallies is the winner.
- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Esther, chapters 3-9."
- Our special memory verse is Esther 9:22. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Our memory verse mentions the word Purim as a Jewish celebration. How does this verse tell us they celebrated Purim? (feasts, joyous events, sending food and money to the poor).
- What do you think a Purim party would look like? (Give children time to discuss this. Feasts - eating special food. Joyous Events - parties where they dressed in costumes and wore decorated masks, giving food and money to the poor.)
- Having a Purim Party is how the Jewish people celebrate queen Esther and her bravery in saving the Jewish people.
- (Optional - invite children to have a Purim party the following week after this lesson.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Last week we learned how Esther was made queen of Persia against her wishes. She was happy in the home of her cousin, Mordecai, and wanted to stay there.
- But God had some big plans for her as queen. Esther showed her bravery in many ways.
- First, Esther warned the king that some people were plotting to kill him. These people were found and punished, so Esther saved the king's life.
- In today's story, Esther shows even more courage.
- The king had a powerful friend named Haman. Haman thought he was better than everyone else and made everyone bow down to him.
- But Mordecai, queen Esther's cousin, would not bow down to Haman. This made Haman very angry.
- "Mordecai is a Jew," Haman thought. "I will take care of him and all the Jews!" So Haman made a plan to kill all the Jews.
- He threw dice to set a date for this terrible plan and told the whole kingdom about it.
- Mordecai sent a message to Esther that said, "Please ask your husband to stop Haman."
- Esther thought, "I can't go to the king unless he calls for me. If I do, he might have me killed."
- Mordecai told Esther, "Even though you are married to the king, remember YOU are Jewish, too. Maybe God made you queen so you could help our Jewish people."
- "Then pray for me," Esther said. "I will go to the king. And if I die, I die."
- Esther put on her royal clothes and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace. The King noticed Esther standing there. He was not angry with her. He was glad to see her.
- The King held out his gold scepter and Esther touched the tip of it. "Ask for anything you want," he told her.
- "Please, your majesty," she said, "I want you and Haman to be my guests at dinner."
- The king was delighted. He and Haman went to dinner with Esther that evening.
- Haman felt very proud to be invited. The next evening they had dinner with Esther again.

Transformed

- “What is it you wish, my queen?” the king said. “I will give you half of my kingdom.”
 - “I fear for my life,” queen Esther said. “Please protect me.”
 - The king got so angry he stood up. “Who would dare harm you, my queen?” he asked.
 - Esther stood up and pointed her finger at Haman. “He would! Haman has planned to kill all the Jews and I am a Jew.”
 - Then the king learned about Haman’s evil plan to kill all the Jews.
 - Haman was arrested and sent away.
 - The king made Esther’s cousin, Mordecai, in charge of making laws to protect all the Jews. He gave his royal ring to Mordecai so he could seal all the laws with the king’s royal seal.
 - So these days of Purim were made law to remember and celebrate the courage and bravery of queen Esther and her cousin, Mordecai.
 - And the Jewish people still celebrate Purim today.
-



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Esther spoke up for people who needed help, even when it was scary.
 - Who are the people that need help in your world?
 - How can you speak up for people who need help at school, at home or in your neighborhood?
 - How can you help others?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Esther showed courage to help others. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
- What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? Did this story tell you anything about yourself?
- I am going to give you time to write or draw in your reflection journal.



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. What is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.

Transformed



DANIEL

SCRIPTURE

Daniel 1

BIBLE STORY

Daniel Is Taken Captive

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Is It Hard To Do The Right Thing
When The People Around
You Are Not?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Tray
- Healthy and Unhealthy Food Choices
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"So at the end of the 10 days, Daniel and his 3 friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the King." Daniel 1:15



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Guess The Missing Food." On a tray display healthy and unhealthy foods. Ask children to look carefully at the items on the tray. Then take the tray outside and remove an object. Come back and show the tray to the children. See if they can recall the missing object. Take turns letting children remove an object and letting the others guess the missing object.

- The question to discuss is, "Why does God want us to put healthy food into our bodies?"
- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Daniel, chapter 1."
- Our special memory verse is Daniel 1:15. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Our story today is about a young man named Daniel. He stood up for what God wanted him to do, even though it was hard to do.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Long ago there was a king named Nebuchadnezzar. That name is fun to say. Echo that name with me. (Leader says Nebuchadnezzar and children echo.)
- Nebuchadnezzar was not a happy king. Why do you think he was not happy? (Children respond.)
- He was not happy because always wanted *more* and *more*. He was never satisfied with what he had. He had his own kingdom of Babylon, but that wasn't enough.
- He decided he wanted Jerusalem too! So he sent out his powerful army to capture Jerusalem.
- After he captured Jerusalem he took some young men to train them to be servants in his palace.
- Daniel and three of his friends were taken captive by king Nebuchadnezzar. They had to leave their home and families and go far away to Babylon.
- The king wanted Daniel and his friends to become servants in his palace.
- King Nebuchadnezzar ordered all his captured young men to eat unhealthy food. This was a problem for Daniel and his friends.
- God had told the Jewish people in Jerusalem, like Daniel, to eat only vegetables, grain and water. God did not want them to eat the unhealthy food the king ordered.
- What do you think Daniel and his friends did? (Children respond.)
- Daniel wanted to do the right thing and follow God.
- So Daniel talked to the guard in charge and said. "Please just give us vegetables, grains and water."
- The guard in charge said, "The king has ordered what you should eat. He will be mad at me if he sees your faces thinner and paler than the other young men. He will punish me for not following his rules."
- Daniel said, "I have an idea! Why not test all of the servants just for ten days? Give my three friends and me vegetables, grains and water, and let the rest of the servants eat the food the King ordered.
- Then you can see which group looks the healthiest.
- The guard decided to go along with Daniel's plan and he compared them in ten days. What do you think happened? (Children respond.)
- At the end of ten days Daniel and his friends looked healthier and stronger than all the young men who ate the king's food.

Transformed

- So the guard continued to give Daniel and his friends the healthy food and they grew stronger and wiser.
 - After three years it was time for king Nebuchadnezzar to review all the servants in training. The king tested all the servants and he said, “Daniel and his friends are by far the healthiest and the smartest of all the servants. I want them to be in the palace with me.”
-



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Daniel and his friends wanted to please God in everything they did – even the food they ate.
 - Daniel did the right thing, even if it was hard to do.
 - What are some ways YOU can do the right thing, even when everyone around you is doing something else?
 - For example, you can be kind to someone when everyone else is being mean to him or her. You can share with your brother or sister, when you really don’t want to. You can pick up your toys when you would rather do something else.
 - What are some other times it’s hard to do the right thing? (Children respond.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Daniel showed courage to honor God. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - Write or draw how you can do the right thing, even when it’s hard.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.





DANIEL

SCRIPTURE

Daniel 3

BIBLE STORY

Daniel's Friends Do the Right Thing

THEME OF THE DAY

How Can Our Actions Show
That We Love God?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Paper
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The God we serve is able to bring us out of the fire alive." Daniel 3:17



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Create Your Own Emojis." Have markers and paper available for the children to create their own emoji characters that will be used in the story. Examples to create - mean king, three men, strength, statue, music, fire, angel, and love. Children bring their favorite emoji to circle and hold it up at the appropriate time in the story. (Emojis are noted in the story.)

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Daniel, chapter 3."

- Our special memory verse is Daniel 3:17. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Our story today takes place in the city of Babylon, with a mean king and three men who had important jobs in the king's palace.
- All these people had really unusual names. The king's name was Nebuchadnezzar.
- The three men who worked for the king were called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- Listen to find out how these three men showed great courage by standing up for what they believed.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, thought he was the most important person in the world. (Hold up the king emoji.)
- He was rich, lived in a grand palace with lots of servants, and kept conquering more lands and more people. It seemed like he had it all! But he was never satisfied. He always wanted more.
- One day, king Nebuchadnezzar decided he would build a huge statue of himself made out of gold to prove he was so important.
- He made the statue so big it was 90 feet high! (Hold up the statue emoji.)
- 90 feet would be as tall as 15 grown men standing one on top of the other. Can you imagine how tall that gold image of the king would be?
- Then the king made a rule. He said that when he played music, all people must bow down and worship the gold statue of him. (Hold up the music emoji.)
- Anyone who didn't fall down and worship the statue of king Nebuchadnezzar would be thrown into a fiery furnace. (Hold up the fire emoji.)
- This created a real problem for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Why in the world would they worship a gold statue, when they worshipped God?
- They knew that God loved them and cared for them. A gold statue couldn't do that. A gold statue couldn't do anything! (Hold up the love emoji.)
- Suddenly, the music started playing and people stopped what they were doing and bowed down to worship the statue. (Hold up the statue emoji.)
- But Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego didn't bow to the statue.
- Some people saw the three men were NOT worshipping the statue and ran to tell king Nebuchadnezzar.
- When the king heard this got very angry and demanded that they be brought to him. (Hold up the king emoji.) "Explain yourselves to me! Is it true you would not bow down to the gold image of me?"
- "Yes," the three men said, "we did not bow down to the statue of you."
- "Just in case you didn't understand, I am giving you another chance. When the music plays you are to bow down to the gold statue of me," said the king.
- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego looked at each other and said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we did NOT make a mistake. We will NOT bow down to your statue because we worship the one true God. (Hold up the love emoji.)
- "If you throw us in the furnace, we believe the God we worship will save us."
- This made king Nebuchadnezzar even madder. He shouted to his soldiers, "Make the furnace hotter and throw them in it. NOW!" (Hold up the fire emoji.)
- The soldiers threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the fiery furnace.
- The King looked in the fire, and to his surprise, he saw four men walking around! They weren't being burned at all!

- It appeared that there was an angel with the three men keeping them safe. (Hold up the angel emoji.)
 - The king shouted into the fire, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, come out! Your God has surely saved you!” (Hold up the love emoji.)
 - That’s when king Nebuchadnezzar knew there was one true God, and his statue was only a fake.
 - From that day on the king would not allow people to speak badly of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and he gave them even better jobs than they had. (Hold up the king emoji.)
 - The actions of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego showed how much they loved and trusted in God. (Hold up the king emoji.)
-



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Have you ever heard the saying, “Actions speak louder than words?”
 - How can our actions show we love God? (Sharing with friends and family, helping at home/school/church, showing kindness to family and friends.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** : You have now heard the story, “Daniel’s Friends Do the Right Thing.”
 - Remember how I told you that the Bible is alive and that God speaks through it?
 - I am wondering what you are thinking about. What did you hear. What did this story say to you?
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. What is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

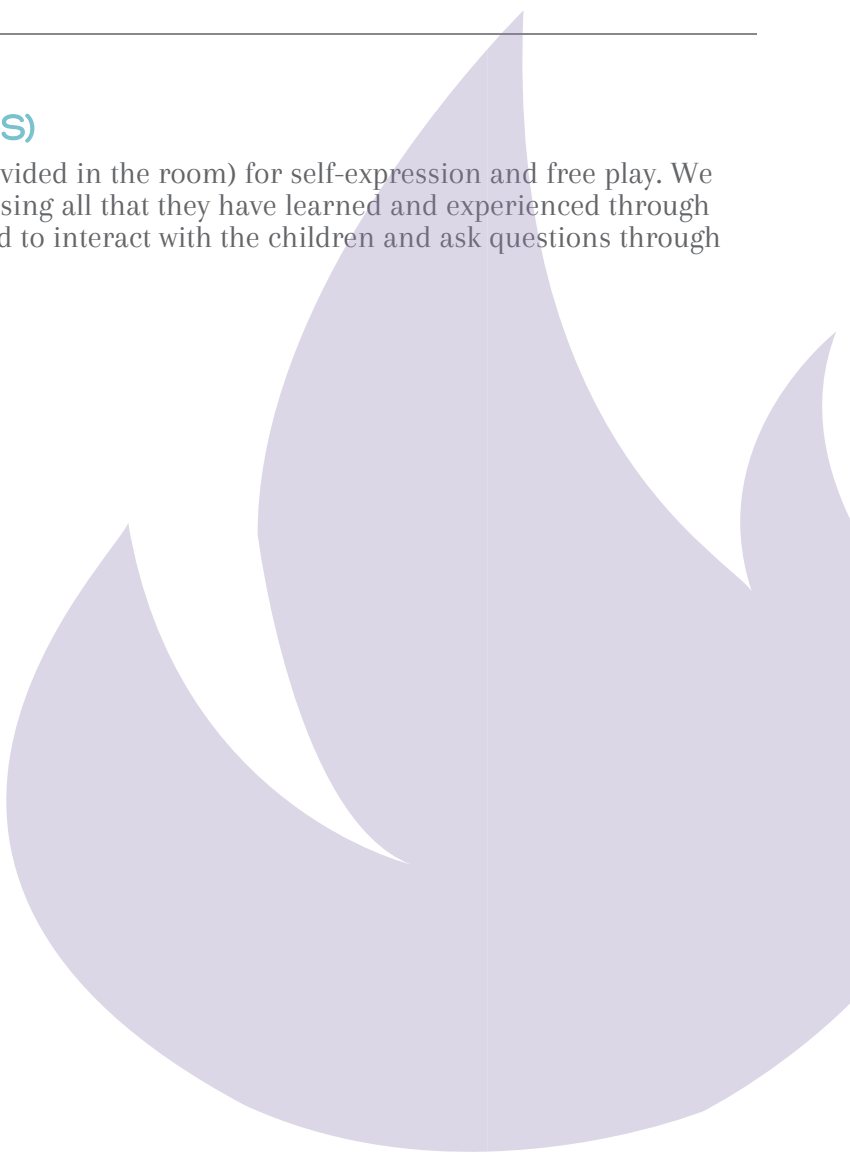
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

• **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



DANIEL

SCRIPTURE

Daniel 6

BIBLE STORY

God Protects Daniel

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Should We Pray To God?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Dice
- Deck of Why We Pray Cards
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The King said to Daniel, 'Your God, the one you serve so consistently, will rescue you.'" Daniel 6:17



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Why We Pray." Before the game begins, make a set of cards with reasons to pray written on them (List is provided below.) Put the cards in a pile on the center of the table. Children roll one dice.

- If a child rolls 1, he or she picks one card and describes what it means to them. For example if a child draws a card that says "I can pray to God when I am happy," they can give an example such as "I am happy today because I just found out my mom is going to have a baby." Then they get to keep the card.
- This happens if they roll a 1, 2 or 3.
- If they roll a 2, they draw and explain two cards and get to keep them.
- If they roll a 3, they draw and explain three cards and get to keep them.
- If they roll a 4, 5 or 6 they must put one card back in the center of the table. If they don't have any cards, when they roll a 4, 5 or 6 they simply miss a turn. The person who ends with the most cards wins the game.
- Reasons "Why We Pray" that can be written on the cards:
 - To tell God when you are worried
 - To tell God when you are happy
 - For people who are sick
 - To tell God you love him
 - To ask God to help you be a good friend
 - To pray for people who help us
 - To pray for our family
 - To pray for our friends
 - To pray for sick people to get well
 - To ask God to help our country's leaders
 - To be strong when you are scared
 - To keep us safe when we travel
 - To forgive you when you hurt someone's feelings
 - For your school
 - To help you to be kind to others
 - Ask God to help you do more things for other people
 - Tell God something you are thankful for
 - To tell God things you see in the world that are beautiful.
 - To thank God for our food

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- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
 - For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.
-



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Daniel, chapter 6."
- Our special memory verse is Daniel 6:17. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Last week we met Daniel and his friends. They trusted God even when they were thrown in a fiery furnace.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** In today's story, the Jewish people were in BIG trouble. They had been captured by the Babylonians and taken far away from their homes. If that wasn't bad enough, they were made to be slaves for Darius, the king of Babylon.
- Daniel was taken captive too, but he had gotten a very important job working for king Darius. The king really liked Daniel and realized how helpful and wise he was, so he made Daniel his most important servant.
- Well, that was great for Daniel, but soon the other servants got jealous of him.
- They tried to find a way to get Daniel in trouble. Those jealous servants wanted him to be fired.
- But they just couldn't find anything Daniel did that was bad or wrong. The servants watched Daniel all day, every day and they noticed that he would go into his room and close the door three times a day.
- They spied on him to see what Daniel did in his room with the door closed. Here is what they found:
- Every day, three times a day, no matter what, Daniel went into his room to pray to God.
- That was it. He was just doing what God wanted him to do.
- One of the servants said, "Hey, I have a plan to get Daniel in BIG trouble. Let's get the king to make a law that people can only pray to king Darius."
- "Daniel will never quit praying to God, so he will get punished! That will fix Daniel for good! Then we will be rid of him."
- The rest of the servants thought that was terrific idea, so they hurried off to tell the king.
- The king didn't know that he was being tricked by his servants. And like most kings, Darius thought he was the best king ever, so why not make a law that everyone should pray only to him?
- Darius was sure he was the best king that ever lived, so he said, "I now am making a law so powerful that it can never be broken!"
- This law says that all people must pray to me – King Darius! And if they don't pray to me, I will throw them

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in a lion's den and the lions can have them for breakfast! What a great idea!"

- Daniel heard of this new law and what do you think he did?
- He would not pray to King Darius. He kept right on praying to God.
- Those jealous servants spied on Daniel again and saw he was still praying to God. They couldn't wait to get to the King and tell on Daniel.
- "King Darius," said the jealous servants, "Did you know you have a worker who is ignoring your law?"
- "Nonsense!" the king said. "Who would do such a foolish thing?"
- "Oh, great king," the jealous servants said, "we have seen your favorite servant, Daniel, praying to his God three times a day."
- When the king heard this it made him very sad, because he liked Daniel so much. Darius did not want Daniel to die.
- The king tried to change his law, but he was reminded that he made the law so firm that it could not be changed.
- King Darius ordered Daniel to be brought to him. "Daniel," he said, "You are my friend, but I can not change the law. Surely the God you worship will rescue you. Servants, lower Daniel into the lions' den."
- The king went to his palace with tears in his eyes he was so upset. He couldn't eat or sleep. As soon as the sun came up the king ran to the lions' den. He shouted, "Daniel, did your God save you from the lions?"
- And he waited...
- Then he heard Daniel say, "My God protected me. The lions did not touch me because I did nothing wrong."
- The king was thrilled. He ordered that Daniel be lifted out of the pit. There wasn't a scratch on him.
- The king sent out a decree to everyone in his kingdom. It said: Daniel's God is the one true God. He will rule till the end of time. Everyone must respect the God who rescued Daniel from the lions.
- And Daniel continued to be the king's friend and most powerful leader.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Daniel knew how important it was to pray to God. He prayed to God even when the king made a law against it. God saved Daniel from the lion's den.
- Why should you pray to God?
- Prayer is talking with God. We can talk to God anytime, any place.
- God wants us to talk with Him. It's a way to stay close to Him.



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now heard the story, "God Protects Daniel." I am wondering what did you think about during the story? What did the story say to you?
- In your Journal draw or write your favorite part of the lesson.



SHARING AND LISTENING (8 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

• **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

• **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.





THE PROPHETS

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9: 6 - 7; Isaiah 42: 1-3

BIBLE STORY

God's Promise of Jesus' Birth

THEME OF THE DAY

How Can You Talk To God?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Bottles
- Clothespins
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord will give you a sign. The young woman is going to have a baby soon, and she will name him Immanuel." Isaiah 7: 14



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is titled "Message in a Bottle." Each child receives a bottle and 5 clothespins. The clothespins each have a message that God told Isaiah on them. Children stand over their bottle with clothespins in hand. They read each message aloud and then attempt to drop the message into the bottle.

• Messages for clothespins:

- Mary is going to have a baby.
- God would put his spirit in Jesus.
- Immanuel means "God is with us."
- Jesus would bring Peace.
- Jesus is the King ruled by God.

• The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.

• For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

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BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found here in the book of Isaiah."
- Our special memory verse is Isaiah 7:14. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** This memory verse is a promise God made to the people of Israel.
- Who do you think the young woman could be in this verse? (Mary)
- Who was the child promised to be born to Mary and Joseph? (Jesus)
- This verse says that Mary would name him Immanuel. That must be a special name. What do you think the name Immanuel means? Turn to your neighbor and share what you think the name, Immanuel means. (Give a couple of minutes to share thoughts. Leaders participate with this discussion as well.)
- The name Immanuel means "God is with us." God put his spirit in Jesus. Calling Jesus Immanuel meant that God wanted the people to remember that he would always be with them.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Our story takes place 700 years before Jesus was born, in the town of Jerusalem, the country of Israel.
- The man telling this Bible story is named Isaiah.
- Isaiah was a prophet. What do you think a prophet is? (Children respond.)
- A prophet is a messenger for God. A prophet is a special person chosen to speak for God, and guide the people of Israel.
- Since this Bible story happened long ago, there were no phones or computers. How do you think God talked with Messengers like Isaiah? Turn to your neighbor and share how you think God talked to his messengers. (Allow 2-3 minutes for children to share with each other. Leaders move around and participate with children in the discussion.)
- What did you discuss with your neighbor? (Ask several people to share.)
- Many years ago, God lovingly spoke to his prophets through visions and dreams.
- Sometimes when I have a dream, I wake up and can't remember it very well. Has this ever happened to you?
- Isaiah had a dream, and he did *not* forget it. Isaiah remembered every detail of his dream very clearly.
- To make sure his messages would never be forgotten, Isaiah wrote his dreams down.
- They are recorded in the Bible, so even today we can read about them.
- God promised Isaiah that he was sending someone who would be like a king and he would rule the people.
- God told Isaiah that Jesus was coming as a baby. That baby would be born to Mary and Joseph and he would grow into a man who would redeem His people. He would bring peace to Israel.
- God also gave Jesus another name, Immanuel.
- What did the name Immanuel mean? (God is with us.)
- Why did God name him Immanuel? (So the people would remember that God would always be with them. Just like God is always with us today.)

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REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Before Jesus was born, God spoke to prophets through dreams.
 - How does God speak to us today? (Bible, Prayer, other people)
 - What messages would you like to give to God?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how God promised Jesus' birth. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? Think about what messages you would like to send God today and take some time to write or draw them in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



THE PROPHETS

SCRIPTURE

Micah 5:2

BIBLE STORY

Micah Predicts the Birth of Jesus

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Did God Send Jesus?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Paper or Poster
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"But you, Bethlehem, though you are small, out of you will come for me one who will be the ruler of Israel."
Micah 5:2



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Question to Ponder." As children enter the room there will be a large sheet of paper taped to the table with the question written in large letters: Why did God send Jesus? Children can respond with markers drawing or writing their thoughts about this question.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Micah chapter 5."

- Our special memory verse is Micah 5:2. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

• **Leader:** Our memory verse was written by Micah. He was a Prophet. Prophets were special messengers for God. Sometimes God spoke to prophets through dreams like he did with Joseph. God spoke to Micah and told him to tell the Jewish people something wonderful was going to happen. What was that?

THE STORY

- **Leader:** The Romans had a huge empire. They had conquered the Jewish people and the land they lived on.
- Everything about the Roman rule was hateful to the Jews.
- The Jewish people were charged high taxes. The Roman government took more than half the money the Jewish people made.
- The Roman soldiers would bully and physically beat the Jews.
- The Romans worshiped all kinds of gods that they made into statues. They also thought their leaders were gods, so they worshiped them.
- The Emperor of Rome was the most powerful man on earth at that time and he used that power to hurt Jews.
- So do you see why the Jewish people wanted a new leader to treat them fairly?
- The Romans treated the Jewish people cruelly in every way.
- The Jewish people must have been so happy to hear the Bible Verse from Micah that said a new ruler was coming.
- But Micah goes on to tell the people something else. He tells them that this new ruler is going to come from a tiny little town called Bethlehem. Who do you know that was born in Bethlehem? (Jesus)
- Why do you think God chose to send the savior of the world to be born into a tiny, poor town? (Children respond.)
- God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. He uses ordinary places to do extraordinary things.
- It doesn't matter how powerful you are or how rich you are. God can use any of us to do amazing things for Him.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** God chose a tiny little town for a baby to be born.
- This person would grow up to become a King.
- If God can use a baby from a tiny town to bring peace and love to the whole world, God can use you.
- Think about ways God could use you.

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REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Micah predicted the birth of Jesus. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? What are some ways you feel God calling you to be used by Him?
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



THE PROPHETS

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:6; Hosea 11:1; Malachi 3:1

BIBLE STORY

A Child Is Born

THEME OF THE DAY

What Is The Best Gift You Ever Got?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Empty, Wrapped Present
- Large Paper or Poster
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and the government shall be upon his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

An empty present will be in the room. On large paper or poster in the room, children are to respond to this question: What is the best present you ever received? They can draw a picture or write their response on the paper/poster.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in three different books of the Bible, Isaiah, Hosea, and Malachi."

- Our special memory verse is Isaiah 9:6. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** I have a favorite holiday. Do you know what it is? My favorite holiday is Christmas!
- I love Christmas because there are delicious cookies, shiny decorations and gifts!
- What do you like about Christmas? Turn to your elbow partner and share what you love about Christmas.
- How many of you said presents were your favorite part? (Show the empty wrapped present in your room.)
- Do you get excited when you see presents under the tree with your name on them? Do you feel like Christmas morning will never come? Do you feel like you are just waiting and waiting?
- That's what the Jewish people felt like because they were waiting for a leader to save them. They waited for much longer than a year.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Let's reread the memory verse from today.
- It comes from the Old Testament in the Bible. That means it was written long before Jesus was born.
- It was written by the prophet Isaiah. A prophet was a person who heard God speak then told people what God was saying.
- Sometimes the prophets warned people, sometimes they explained things, and sometimes they told good things that were going to happen.
- Who is the child Isaiah is talking about in this verse? (Jesus)
- When it says, "the government will be upon his shoulders," that means that Jesus will treat people fairly.
- Look at the names Jesus is called: a counselor you can talk to, a powerful God, He will be like a Father to us, and Jesus will bring peace to the world.
- Can you imagine how happy the Jewish people were when they heard these words from the prophet Isaiah? They were a people who had been slaves for many years.
- This verse was written over 500 years before Jesus was born.
- Isaiah was so excited to tell people about God's promise of Jesus' birth because they knew it meant they would be saved.
- But the Jewish people had to wait a lot longer than we wait for Christmas to come.
- They had to wait so long they probably thought Isaiah wasn't telling the truth.
- But God always keeps his promises.
- Repeat this with me: God always keeps his promises. (Children repeat.)
- And finally God's promise to send the world a savior came true! Just as Isaiah and the other prophets said in the Bible!
- The angel told Mary she was going to have a baby. She and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem and Jesus was born in a manger.
- And that is when the best present ever came into the world.
- A King was born in that manger in Bethlehem. But not just for the Jewish people of Israel. Jesus was born for everyone!
- Jesus was called the "Light of the World." Maybe that's why we have all the beautiful lights on trees and houses at Christmas time. To remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World.
- God gave us the best gift ever! Jesus!



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** God gave us the best gift ever – Jesus.
 - Your relationship with Jesus is also an amazing gift. Think about your relationship with Jesus being a gift as we pass out the reflection journals. How is Jesus a gift to us? (Shows us how to live, comforts us, protects us, loves us, etc.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how God gave us the best present when a child was born. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? Think about your relationship with Jesus and how He is a gift that the world waited for.
 - How is Jesus a gift to you? Draw or write in your journals what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



MATTHEW

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 3:13-17

BIBLE STORY

Jesus is Baptized

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Was Jesus Baptized?

MEMORY VERSE

"Jesus answered, 'Allow me to be baptized now. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.'" Matthew 3:15

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Tape
- Small Pieces of Paper
- Large Paper or Poster
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm
- Picture of a Dove



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Dove Fact Hunt." On the board, have a picture of a dove. Tell the children that doves are a very important part of our lesson today and that God uses doves as a symbol in the Bible. Before class begins, write out these 10 dove facts on pieces of paper and hide them around the room. As children find the facts, have them tape them onto the board/poster board.

Dove Facts:

- The white color of doves represents purity.
- Doves eat seeds, fruits and plants.
- Male and female doves BOTH feed their babies.
- Doves live to be 20 years old.
- A male and a female dove stay together for life and treat each other kindly.
- A dove is peaceful and gentle. When a dove is attacked, it won't fight back. It will only cry out for help.
- Doves have been great messengers for thousands of years. In WWII, they were used to deliver messages.
- Doves can fly fast – 55 miles an hour!
- Female doves lay 2 eggs at a time and they hatch in 2 weeks.
- Doves are now endangered due to people hunting them and taking their habitats.

• The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.

• For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

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BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found Matthew, chapter 3."
- Our special memory verse is Matthew 3:15. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** In today's story, Jesus asks his cousin, John the Baptist, to baptize him.
- Baptism is a symbol.
- I'm going to give you some examples of symbols that we use every day.
- I'll give you some clues and see if you can guess what the symbol is.
- When people get married they give each other this as a symbol of their love for each other. (If they need another clue you can point to a ring on your finger or your wedding ring.) A ring! A ring is a symbol that you love someone and want to be married to that person.
- Here is another example of a symbol, a heart. What does a heart symbolize? (Love.)
- Why do you think the heart is the symbol of love? (Let children respond.) Here are some reasons -the heart is in the center of your body, without a heart you cannot live, the heart represents your emotions and your soul.
- Can you think of any symbols? (Red light - stop, green light - go, etc.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Our story today begins with Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist.
- John was a preacher and many people came to hear his sermons about Jesus.
- They wanted to be baptized as a symbol that they would follow Jesus.
- The symbol of Baptism uses water. You can be sprinkled, as we do with babies, or you can be completely dipped in water. Why do we use water in baptism? (Get a few responses.)
- Can we live without water? (Children respond.)
- We must have water to live. We can go weeks without eating solid food, but only live a few days without water. In fact, over half our body IS water.
- We use water in baptism as a symbol that Jesus is as important to have in our lives as water. We need Jesus in our lives to live.
- One day, while John the Baptist was baptizing people in the Jordan River, Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized. John tried to tell Jesus he wasn't worthy enough to baptize him.
- John said, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?"
- Jesus replied to John, "Let me be baptized now. I want to be an example to others and show them that baptism is important." So John agreed to baptize Jesus.
- When Jesus was baptized, and came out of the water, something amazing happened!
- The sky opened up and the Holy Spirit came like a beautiful white dove, and landed on Jesus' shoulder.
- Then a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I dearly love. I find happiness in him."
- Baptism is important because Jesus made sure it was the first thing he did before he started his ministry.
- Jesus was baptized as an *example* for us. We are baptized as a symbol that we love Jesus.

Transformed



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Have any of you been baptized or seen anyone get baptized? What was that experience like? (Leader can describe their own experience if the children need help.)
 - God used baptism to show that He was pleased with Jesus. Baptism is a symbol that we use to show that we are following Jesus.
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of how Jesus was baptized. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - Why does God want us to be baptized? Think about your relationship with Jesus and how baptism is a symbol of that relationship.
 - Write or draw what you are thinking in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



MATTHEW

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:1-11

BIBLE STORY

Jesus - Prayer and Discernment

THEME OF THE DAY

Discernment

Using the Bible to make decisions in all areas of your life.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Two Oranges
- Clear Pitcher of Water
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"Jesus answered, 'It is written: man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "With Prayer and Discernment, You Won't Sink!"

You will need a clear pitcher of water and two oranges. The children will make predictions about whether the oranges will sink or float in the pitcher of water.

With Prayer and Discernment, You Won't Sink!:

- **Leader:** Let's make a prediction. Do you think that a peeled orange will sink or float?
- Have the children peel an orange and put it in the pitcher. (It should sink.)
- **Leader:** Now do you think an orange with the peel left on it will sink or float?
- Have another child put the orange with peeling on it into the pitcher. (It should float.)
- **Leader:** How can we connect this experiment with the importance of praying? Just as the outer peel keeps the orange floating when it is in water, Jesus is our protection and keeps us from sinking when we pray and follow God's Word in the Bible.
- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found Matthew, chapter 4."
- Our special memory verse is Matthew 3:15. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Today's lesson takes place just before Jesus started preaching to large groups of people. Jesus used prayer and discernment. He used these things to help make good choices and follow God's plan for Him before he preached.
- What does prayer mean? (Communicating and talking to God.)
- What do you think discernment means? (Refer to the Theme of the Day. Discernment- using the Bible to help you make decisions.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** After Jesus was baptized by his cousin, John, in the Jordan river, Jesus went straight into the desert.
- What is the desert like? (Hot, different vegetation, not much water, etc.)
- So let's wonder... Why do you think he went to the desert of all places? (He needed to get away by himself and be someplace quiet. He needed to be able to pray to God alone. So he could listen to what God had to say to him.)
- Do we ever need to be alone and pray to God? (Yes. The Bible tells us that we need to be still and quiet and know that God is with us.)
- Jesus didn't want other sounds, sights or even food to distract him from praying and listening to God.
- When you don't eat food for a period of time so you can focus on your relationship with God, that is called fasting.
- Fasting and praying together is a way to focus more deeply on God, Jesus saw it as a way to get closer to God, to be more aware of God's love, wisdom and hope.
- Jesus used this quiet, alone time as a way to find out what God wanted him to do with his life.
- Let's read our memory verse together again. (Read aloud together.)
- What does it mean that man does not live on bread alone? (We need more than food to live the life God wants us to live. Food is important, but what other things do we need to live? Love, care, hope, faith, direction, etc.)
- What does the part in our memory verse that says, "But on every word that comes from the mouth of God" mean? (The word that comes from the mouth of God is the Bible. The Bible is our guide to living the example that Jesus set for us.)
- This is why our word for the day, *discernment*, ties this whole lesson together.
- Discernment means using the Bible and quiet time praying with God to make good decisions.
- Let's think back to some Bible stories we had earlier. Do you remember the story about Adam and Eve? Tell me some things you remember about it. (Let the children remember. Give clues and ask questions as needed.)

Transformed

- Did Adam and Eve use discernment when they were in the Garden of Eden? Did they pray and talk with God before making a decision to eat the fruit? No, they did not.
 - How about the story of Noah and the Ark? What do you remember about that story? (Let children respond again. Use clues or questions to prompt them.)
 - Did Noah use discernment when he built the ark, even when people made fun of him for building a huge boat? (He prayed to God and listened to God. He followed the directions God gave him about how to build the ark.)
-



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Why is it important to use discernment to have a quiet time to pray, read the Bible and talk to God before making decisions? (It can help you make good decisions, do the right thing, treat people with love and kindness.)
 - Leaders use your own life and give an example of how you have quiet time alone with God.
 - Where and when could you have a quiet time alone with God? (Children think and respond where they could use prayer and discernment. In their bedroom at night, first thing in the morning, in a special chair in their house, etc.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- How you are going to use prayer and discernment?
- When can you spend time talking with Jesus? Where will you do it?
- Draw or write in your journals about this now.



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

• **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

• **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



MATTHEW

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5

BIBLE STORY

The Sermon on the Mount

THEME OF THE DAY

What Is A Blessing?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Sticky Notes
- Large Poster/Boards or Paper
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven." Matthew 5:12



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Why Are Mountains Are Important?" Ask children to draw mountains on a large poster/board. Give each of the children sticky notes and have them write words that describe a mountain. (Mountains can be tall, rocky, beautiful, steep, ski, climb, winter sports, etc.) Have them put the sticky notes on the large poster/board where you have drawn mountains.

- The word of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found Matthew, chapter 5."

- Our special memory verse is Matthew 5:12. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** In the Bible, when it mentions a mountain, that is a clue that something very big is about to happen. Let's review the words you all wrote to describe mountains. (Review the words from your Gathering Activity. Children can add more describing words if they think of some.)
- All those words you wrote show us that mountains are very special places. God uses mountains as a symbol for big things in the Bible. Many times Jesus spoke on a mountain, like He did in today's Bible story.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Our lesson today happened on a mountain. We don't know the exact mountain, but we know it was close to the Sea of Galilee in Israel.
- Today's Bible story is called *The Sermon on the Mount*, and it is one of the most famous sermons Jesus gave.
- It is famous because Jesus tells us how to find true joy, no matter what happens to you.
- Wherever Jesus went, lots of people followed him. They loved being near him. Old people, young people, sick people, hungry people, sad people.
- People who were tired and worried and felt like no one understood them.
- When Jesus saw all these people, his heart was filled with love for them. He decided to teach them by preaching a sermon.
- So he went to the top of a grassy mountain by a fishing village and told the people to sit down.
- They gathered around him so they could hear what he had to say.
- I'll bet they could see blue water glittering in the background, with little fishing boats coming in from a night's catch.
- Jesus made 10 points in the first part of this famous sermon.
- These 10 points are called *The Beatitudes*. All except one point start with the word *blessed*.
- What does the word *blessed* mean? (To be blessed means more than to be happy. It means finding deep, spiritual joy in God.) Life doesn't always go like we want it. Sometimes we get sick or someone gets hurt and this doesn't make us happy.
- The kind of *blessed* Jesus was talking about means to be full of joy inside, even if things are not perfect.
- Here are some of the things Jesus said:
 - You are blessed when you are not attached to "things," because trusting God brings you true happiness. (Explore "things" such as toys, games, watches, clothes, etc.)
 - You are blessed when you are hurt or sad, because God promises comfort when we need it.
 - You are blessed with what you have, because God provides everything you need.
 - You are blessed to learn about God, because God's word will show us how to be like Jesus.
 - You are blessed to take care of others, because God takes care of us.
 - You are blessed when you think and make good decisions, (discernment) when you use the Bible to make decisions in all areas of your life.
 - You are blessed when you help others to get along peacefully with one another, because then you know the peace that comes from being a part of God's family.
 - You are blessed when others treat you badly, because you know that God will be with you in difficult situations.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

Leader opens up discussion.

- **Leader:** Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount that happiness is a choice because he has already blessed us! We can be happy in sad and difficult times, because Jesus is with us in those very moments and he wants to be close to us through them.
 - Blessing or happiness is not a feeling brought on by the things that happen to us. Happiness is an attitude that we have because God is in our hearts and brings us joy as we live life with Him.
 - How can you be a blessing to others? (Comforting, caring, loving, helping, encouraging, forgiving, etc.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of the Sermon on the Mount. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What did you hear in this story that is speaking to you today? Think about the ways that you can bless others this week as you think about how God has blessed you.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (5 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:57-80

BIBLE STORY

The Birth of John the Baptist

THEME OF THE DAY

God Created Us For A Special Purpose

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Poster/Board
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"You, child, will be a prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way." Luke 1:76



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "What Do Signs Tell Us?" On large paper, have the children draw as many road signs on the board as they can remember. (Stop, Under Construction, U-Turn, School Zone, Speed Limits, etc.)

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 1."

- Our special memory verse is Luke 1:76. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not think they would ever have a child.
- The Angel Gabriel came to the Priest, Zechariah, and told him he and Elizabeth would have a child, and they should name him John. The angel was the sign of something coming.
- This news of this baby was like a wonderful gift to them as they had wished for a son. This baby boy would be Jesus' cousin.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** You drew a lot of road signs this morning. We see them all the time as we are on the road.
- When you are traveling on vacation in the summer, driving to school, or driving to see a friend, do you see road signs like this? What do they tell you to do? (Slow down, watch for construction workers, etc.)
- Signs tell us people are preparing the road, so it will be better to drive on. So there won't be big bumps in the road, so we can get where we need to go easier.
 - In today's Lesson we find that John is born to Zechariah, the Priest, and his wife, Elizabeth, just like the Angel Gabriel said.
 - God told Zechariah that John would grow up to be a prophet.
 - What do you think a prophet is? (Refer back to previous lessons on prophets if you have covered them.) A prophet is a man or woman in the Bible, chosen by God, to tell His message to people.
 - The Bible tells us that God sent John to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus.
 - When John the Baptist grew up he was actually going to be the special messenger who would announce the coming of Jesus.
 - He was the messenger that God promised. And he had a very important job. He was to prepare the way for Jesus to come.
 - But he wasn't preparing roads in the desert for Jesus to walk on. He was telling people to prepare their hearts to accept Him, to listen to Jesus and to follow his teachings.
 - John grew up to be strong in strength and in character. We know that because he grew up in the desert.
 - He wore animal skins for clothes and he ate whatever he could find in the desert, which included honey and grasshoppers. He had a big bushy beard and long scraggly hair.
 - John was an unusual person, but he had a very special purpose. Great crowds of people listened to John preach as he prepared them for the coming of Jesus, just like road signs prepare us for what's ahead.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** John the Baptist had a special purpose.
- His purpose was to prepare people for the coming of Jesus.
- God created you for a special reason.
- Have you ever thought about what God wants you to do in your life?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of the birth of John the Baptist. His purpose was to prepare people for the coming of Jesus. The Bible is the living Word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What do you think your purpose might be?
 - Write or draw what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:39-40

BIBLE STORY

Jesus as a Child

THEME OF THE DAY

How Was Jesus Like Me As A Child?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- 20 3x3" Paper Cards
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on Him." Luke 2:40



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Memory Match." See list below of pictures to draw or paste on cards. On one side of the cards is a picture of something that Jesus would have known or used. Prepare the cards in advance. There are ten different picture cards - two of each picture.

• Cards are put face down four rows of five card each. Children take turns trying to find a match. Four children playing at one time works best. When a child has a turn, he or she turns over two cards. If they match, the child gets to keep the cards. If the cards do NOT match, the child puts the cards back in their original spots.

• Here are some examples of pictures you could use. Ask the children to name the picture on the card, and tell how it could be a part of Jesus' life.

Bread - Jesus could have helped His mother bake bread

Grapes - This was a food Jesus could have eaten

Sandals - These were the kind of shoes Jesus would have worn as He walked on hot, dusty roads.

Fish - Many of Jesus' friends were fishermen. Fish is a food Jesus would have eaten.

Palm Branches - People would wave them welcoming Jesus.

Bible - Mary taught Jesus to read from the Bible.

Sheep - Many of Jesus' friends were shepherds.

Donkey - Donkeys were used to carry heavy things and people.

Flower - Jesus used flowers to tell stories called parables.

Tool - Joseph taught Joseph how to use tools to cut stone to make houses and furniture.

• The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.

Transformed

- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.
-



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
 - Children share.
-



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 2."
- Our special memory verse is Luke 2:40. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Who is your favorite teacher at school? Turn to someone and share your favorite teacher and why you like him or her. (Give a couple of minutes to let them process this.)
- What made this teacher so special to you? (Let several children share.)
- I wonder who taught Jesus when He was your age?
- I wonder what it was like to be a child so many years ago in a country very different from ours today.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Jesus' life was in danger soon after he was born.
- Shortly after the Wise Men visited Jesus, an amazing thing happened!
- An angel visited Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, get up and take Jesus and His mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there till I tell you to come back, because King Herod is searching for the child to kill him."
- Joseph hurried his family to a place in Egypt where King Herod had no control.
- Egypt was very different from Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.
- Egyptian food, language, religion and customs, and even animals were not the same.
- Jesus learned as a very young child in Egypt to be thoughtful and kind to all people, even those who spoke a different language, ate different food, or looked different.
- The land of Egypt was a difficult place to live in because it almost never rained. (It rained less than an inch (show with your finger) a year!)
- Without the Nile river, which runs through it, Egypt would be just a big desert.
- Luckily the Nile river floods every summer, which helps crops and plants to grow.
- After King Herod died, that angel appeared again to Joseph and said, "Get up, and take the child and His mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."
- So Mary and Joseph made the journey to Nazareth, where Jesus spent the rest of his childhood.
- The main teachers Jesus had as a child were His parents.



Transformed

- Mary taught Jesus to read from the Bible.
 - As Jesus became a good reader, He learned how God created the earth and the sky.
 - His parents taught him Science by observing and learning from animals, trees, the sun and the stars.
 - Joseph, Jesus' father, was a carpenter. But when Jesus lived, furniture and buildings were built from stone not wood. So Joseph taught Jesus how to use sharp tools and hammers to cut stone to make furniture and buildings.
 - Joseph taught Jesus how to work and make a living from cutting stone.
 - Mary and Joseph taught Jesus about the Jewish religion.
 - Every year, they went to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. When Jesus was old enough, they took Him with them.
 - The Rabbis, who were religious teachers, were amazed at the questions Jesus asked, and how well he could stand up and read from the Bible.
 - Jesus' family didn't have much money, but His parents loved Him and took care of Him.
 - Jesus learned from Mary and Joseph that money doesn't make you happy. Love makes you happy. And Jesus was loved.
 - Jesus' parents taught Him many things. They helped prepare Him for His special calling to preach, teach and heal people when He became an adult.
-



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** : How was Jesus' life as a child different from your life? (Children respond.)
 - How was Jesus' life the same as your life?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Jesus as a child. The Bible is the living Word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
- In your Journals draw a line down the middle of the page.
- On the top of one side write JESUS. On the top of the other side write ME. Compare your life as a child with Jesus' life as a child.
- You can compare school, teachers, church, the job Jesus had, the job you might like to have, etc.



SHARING AND LISTENING (5 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

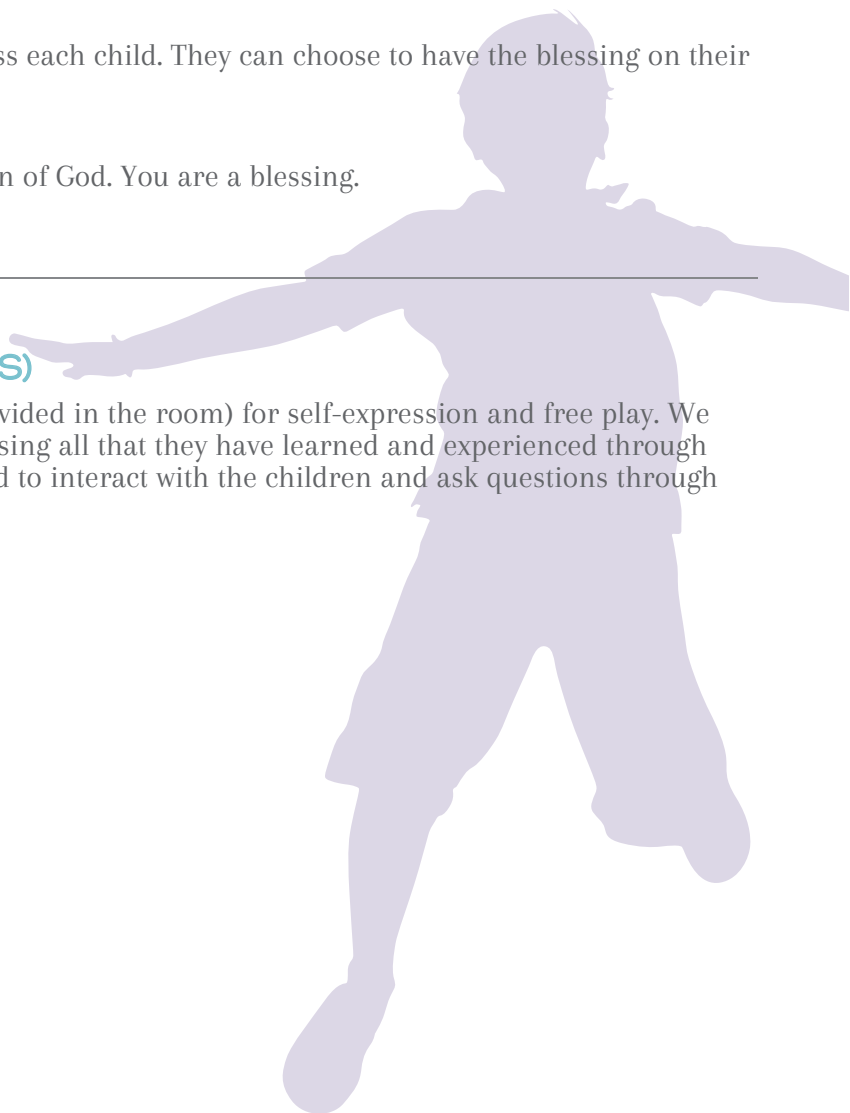
The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



Transformed



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:41-52

BIBLE STORY

Jesus Gets Lost

THEME OF THE DAY

What Was Jesus Like As A Child?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Poster/Board
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"Jesus grew in wisdom and years and in favor with God and with people." Luke 2:52



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

Draw the outline of a child on the board. Ask the children what they think Jesus was like as a child. Have them write their predictions on sticky notes and put the note on the picture you drew. (Smart, loving, obeyed parents, caring, hard working, carpenter, student, etc.)

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 2."

- Our special memory verse is Luke 2:52. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Why might it have been important for Jesus (and for us) to grow “in favor with God and with people?” (Jesus respected his parents and God. He wanted to learn about God. He loved to learn and go to church, etc.)
- Have you ever been lost? (Add a personal experience about being lost.) Think about a time you were lost, maybe in a store or on a trip. Turn to your neighbor and share that time with them.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** How many of you were scared when you got lost? Today, we read that Jesus was lost when he was just 12 years old.
- Every year Jesus and his family made the long trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. It was 80 miles away and it took them three days to get there because they walked. The festival lasted for seven days and it was a time of religious instruction and celebrations.
- Since Jesus was 12 years old he would begin some intense study of the Old Testament.
- After the festival was over, everyone started to return home. Mary and Joseph thought Jesus was with some family or friends, but then they discovered he wasn't.
- They spent the whole day looking everywhere for Jesus, but they couldn't find him.
- Mary and Joseph went back to Jerusalem to look for Jesus. After three days they finally found him.
- Where did they find him?
- In the temple! He was sitting among the teachers, who were listening to Him and asking questions. These teachers were amazed at how much wisdom and understanding Jesus gave in his answers.
- Jesus was away from his parents, but he wasn't scared at all. He was happy being in the temple talking with teachers because He was talking about God.
- When Mary found Jesus in the temple, she said, “Jesus! Your father and I have been so worried about you. We didn't know where you were!”
- Jesus answered them, “You shouldn't have been worried. Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?”
- What did he mean by, “my Father's house?” (He said this because He understood that He was God's son. It shows He knew His purpose in life was to share God's love and wisdom with others.)
- Then Jesus left with Mary and Joseph and went back to Nazareth.
- In verse 52, the memory verse, it says, “Jesus grew in wisdom and years, and in favor with God and with people.”
- What do you think this means after hearing this story? (Jesus grew up to be loved and respected by many people. He knew He had a special purpose in life.
- He was very wise and smart. He loved God and wanted others to know about God's love.
- So how was Jesus' experience of getting lost different from yours? (He wasn't scared because He knew He was in God's house and living out His mission.)



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Jesus wanted people to know about God's love.
 - What do you know about God's love?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Jesus getting lost as a child. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What is God telling you through this story? Think about the ways that you can show God's love to your family, friends, teachers, coaches and classmates.
 - Write or draw what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 3:1-18

BIBLE STORY

John Preaches and Baptizes in Preparation for Jesus

THEME OF THE DAY

What Can You Do to Prepare Your Heart for Jesus?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm
- Baby Doll
- Pitcher of Water
- Shell or Small Cup

MEMORY VERSE

"John replied to them all, 'I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming.'" Luke 3:16



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Baptize the Baby." As children enter the room, let them experience baptizing with the doll. Talking points: Baptism is a symbol that God is washing away negative ways and cleaning your heart to let Jesus in your life.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 3."

- Our special memory verse is Luke 3:16. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** We learned that John the Baptist was a special gift to his parents, Zechariah and Elizabeth, who were very old when he was born. We learned that John the Baptist had a very important job of preparing the way for Jesus.
- In today's lesson, we are going to explore how John prepared the way for Jesus and what this means to us today.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** During the holidays, do you have friends and family come to visit you in your home?
- Does your Mom or Dad ask you to clean your room and to help them get your house looking nice? Maybe they ask you to throw out trash or make your bed and put away toys.
- When we have people visit, we want our homes to look their best, so people can be comfortable.
- Now think about your heart. What if someone was going to come and live in your heart? You would want your heart as clean as possible.
- That means cleaning out all the bad thoughts and actions out of your heart. That way you will make room for Jesus, His teachings and His love to live in your heart.
- That was what John was asking people to do in Luke 3. John the Baptist is grown up now and he is preaching and baptizing people around the Jordan River.
- Great crowds of people were following him to hear what he had to say.
- Here was John's message. He was asking them to prepare or clean out their hearts to make room for Jesus.
- There is a special word for cleaning out our hearts. It is called repent. (Ask children to repeat word repent.)
- When people repent, it means you are sorry for any bad things you might have done in your life, and with God's help, you won't do them anymore.
- For example, you might have been unkind to your brother or sister. You are sorry and ask God to help you not do that anymore.
- John the Baptist taught people that a sign of cleaning out your heart was baptism.
- What is baptism? Baptism means being lowered under water and brought back up again, or being sprinkled as a baby, as a symbol to show that old, negative ways are washed away and you are born again to a new, clean life with Jesus in your heart.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** John the Baptist wanted people to clean out their hearts and make room for Jesus so that Jesus' love could live inside their hearts.
- How can you make room for Jesus to live in your hearts?

Transformed



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of John the Baptist. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways.
 - What is God telling you through this story?
 - Write or draw what you are thinking.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-

BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.



- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 8: 4-15

BIBLE STORY

The Seeds and the Soils

QUESTION OF THE DAY

Why Did Jesus Use Parables to Tell Stories?

MEMORY VERSE

"The seed that fell on the good soil are those who hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart." Luke 8:15

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Plastic Bin Filled with Rice, Rocks, Weeds, Toy Bird and Artificial Flowers
- Sunflower Seeds and Spoons
- Bird (Inexpensive Decorations)
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The activity is "Sensory Garden." Fill the plastic bin with uncooked rice and rocks. Hide the seeds in the rice and rocks. The uncooked rice will represent the soil. The small rocks represent the rocky soil. Weeds can be made from paper or real weeds you placed in the bin. Add the flowers and bird to the garden. Children can use plastic spoons to find the seeds in the soil. Encourage children to touch and feel the items in sensory garden while you focus the conversation around the Parable of the Seeds and Soils.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 8."

- Our special memory verse is Luke 8:4-15. Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Do you like to listen to a really good story? Who do you know that is a good storyteller?
- What does this person do that makes him or her a good storyteller? (Looks at people, puts enthusiasm in his or her voice, uses examples that you understand.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** (Bring the Sensory Garden with you to tell this story.)
- Jesus was the best storyteller ever!
- One thing that made Jesus such a great storyteller is that He would use parables when He told stories.
- Parables are simple examples that teach an important lesson.
- Jesus used everyday objects like seeds, and birds and rocks and even weeds, to help His friends and others discover how God works.
- He also used normal everyday experiences and people to make His stories real and easy for all people to understand.
- This morning we are going to review a parable that Jesus told, called “The Seeds and the Soils.”
- Jesus used seeds, rocks, birds and weeds, like you got to experience in your Sensory Garden this morning, to tell this story.
- Here is the story Jesus told.
- Jesus was talking to a large crowd and he said, “A farmer went out to scatter some seeds. (Pick up some seeds from the Sensory Garden.) As He was scattering them, some fell on the path where people walked. (Scatter the seeds in the box.)
- They were crushed as people walked on the path.
- And then birds in the sky came down and ate the crushed seeds. Other seeds fell on rocks. (Pick up some rocks.)
- As they grew, the seeds dried up because they had no soil to keep them moist.
- Some seeds fell in the thorny weeds. (Pick up some seeds and put them in the weeds.) They choked the seeds and they died.
- And other seeds landed on good soil. When those seeds grew, they produced many beautiful flowers.
- After Jesus told this story, some of his friends said, “Jesus, we don’t understand. What does this story mean?”
- Jesus said, “The parable of the Seeds and the Soils” means this: The seeds in the story stand for God’s Word. The seeds on the path are those people who hear God’s Word, but crush it out because they don’t believe it. The seeds on the rocks are people who hear God’s Word, believe it, but since they don’t have roots, it doesn’t last long. As for the seeds that landed in the thorny weeds, they represent the people who are choked by their own thorny worries of the world.
- What are some things you think people might worry about? (Money, big houses, expensive clothes, wanting more things, etc.)
- The seeds that fell on the good soil stand for the people who hear God’s Word and they share it with others. They are like beautiful flowers that keep blossoming.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** So what's the point of this story Jesus told? (Children respond.)
 - God wants to plant His seeds of truth in us. He wants us to blossom and grow in God's love like the beautiful flowers, sharing God's Word with others.
 - Ask if there is anyone who would like to use the Sensory Garden and tell this Parable of the Seeds and the Soils.
-



REFLECTION TIME (3 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have learned the story of "The Seeds and the Soils." What are some thorny worries that you have? What can you do about them? Write about it or draw a picture of it in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 10: 38-42, 1 John 4:7

BIBLE STORY

Friends of Jesus

THEME OF THE DAY

How Can You be a Good Friend?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Drawing Paper
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"Let us love one another because love is of God." 1 John 4:7



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

Have paper and markers available on the table. Ask children to think of some of their friends and draw pictures of them doing favorite activities together. After each child has drawn, ask them about their friends and what makes that friend or friends special.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
- **Child:** Tells age.
- **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
- **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
- Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"

Transformed



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke 10 and 1 John chapter 4."

- Our special memory verse is 1 John 4:7. Leader reads the verse and has the children repeat it.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** The more we learn what Jesus' life was like, the easier it is for us to understand what He teaches us in the Bible.
- Last week we learned what Jesus' life was like as a child. Who were Jesus' main teachers? (His mother and father.)
- How was Jesus like you as a child? (Children respond.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** Jesus was a real person who lived in a real place a long time ago.
- He ate some of the same foods you do, wore sandals like you do, and had lots of friends like you do.
- Today we are going to meet four of Jesus' special friends – Mary, Martha, Lazarus and John.
- Mary, Martha and their brother, Lazarus, were good friends of Jesus.
- One day Jesus stopped by their home to visit them. Jesus loved talking with them and having dinner at their home, and Mary, Martha and Lazarus were excited to see Jesus.
- Instead of mindfully sitting down to welcome and talk with Jesus, Mary started preparing a big meal.
- She spent a lot of time rushing around gathering water and cooking food.
- Then she realized how important it was to listen and talk with Jesus. She wasn't listening to and talking with Jesus.
- Mary and Martha knew that friends take time to be with each other and to listen to each other.
- Another good friend of Jesus was Lazarus.
- Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha.
- One time Lazarus got really sick. Mary and Martha called for Jesus to come.
- But Jesus could not get there quick enough. Lazarus died, however Jesus prayed for Lazarus and asked God to restore his life. And Lazarus' life was restored. Good friends pray for each other.
- John was another special friend of Jesus. John was a fisherman and he became one of Jesus' first followers.
- On the night of the Last Supper, John sat next to Jesus.
- John was the first person to realize that Jesus had risen from the dead.
- The way John chose to honor Jesus, was to tell everyone he could about God's love.
- He did this through preaching and writing. John wrote five books in the New Testament.
- Our memory verse today is one John wrote.
- These are just a few of the friends Jesus had.
- Jesus did the same thing you do with your friends.
- He spent time with them.
- He talked to them.
- He listened to them.
- He prayed for them.
- He stood by them in good times and bad.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Jesus was a good friend. How can you be a good friend like Jesus?
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of John the Baptist. The Bible is the living word of God. It speaks to us all in different ways. Think about the word we learned today, repent.
 - What is God telling you through this story? Is there something inside your heart you need to repent of to make room for Jesus' love?
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



LUKE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 19:1-10

BIBLE STORY

Jesus Forgives Sinners

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Is It Important To Forgive People
When They Do Things To Hurt You?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Dice
- Coins (play money or real)
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The human one came to seek and save the lost." Luke 19:10



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The game is "Dollar Dice." You will need play money or real money and dice. Children are to roll the die and collect their winnings. Players take coins based on the roll of the dice. The goal of the game is to collect the correct number of coins to create a dollar. The numbers on the dice correlate to the coin values as follows:

- 1 – Penny
- 2 – Nickel
- 3 – Dime
- 4 – Quarter
- 5 – Any Coin
- 6 – Lose Turn

- Players take turns rolling and adding coins. The winner is the first person to reach exactly one dollar.
- For younger children: roll the dice to correlate with the dice and coin values. Then they can match their coins by their faces, their values, and they can count their coins.
- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in Luke, chapter 19."
- Our special memory verse is Luke 19:10. (Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.)

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** Our story today is about a tax collector from Jericho.
- He was a very short man with a funny name.
- His name was Zacchaeus and he had no friends. Why do you think he had no friends?

THE STORY

- **Leader:** People didn't like Zacchaeus because he stole their money.
- Zacchaeus collected taxes, which was money that went to pay the king.
- But Zacchaeus took more than he was supposed to, and kept the extra for himself, which made him very rich.
- People knew he was stealing their money and that is why no one liked him.
- One day, a huge crowd poured into Jericho to see an amazing holy man named Jesus of Nazareth.
- People followed Jesus everywhere because he preached such inspiring sermons and performed miracles of healing.
- Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus too, but he was so short he couldn't see a thing.
- Finally, he had an idea. "I'll climb up in that sycamore tree!" Zacchaeus said. So he did. He climbed up a tree to see Jesus and get a better view.
- But Jesus spotted Zacchaeus out of that large crowd and suddenly Jesus was at the tree looking straight in his eyes and called his name.
- "How did Jesus know my name?" Zacchaeus thought.
- The kind way Jesus looked at him made Zacchaeus so sorry for the way he swindled money from people. Right then he knew he wanted to change!
- Jesus told Zacchaeus that he wanted to stay at his house that night.
- The crowd of people was angry! They couldn't understand why Jesus would pay attention to such a sinful person.
- They told Jesus that Zacchaeus had cheated and stole from his own people! They said that Zacchaeus wasn't good enough for Jesus to stay at his house.
- Jesus told the people that no one is perfect. Everyone is a blessing. We all make mistakes and we need the forgiveness that God gives us every time.
- Zacchaeus was so happy that Jesus forgave him! Jewish law said that a thief should pay back twice what he had taken, but Zacchaeus paid all the people he cheated *four times* as much as he took! This is how he showed he was sorry for his sinful behavior.
- With God's help Zacchaeus had changed! His life of crime and sin became a life of following Jesus.

Transformed



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Jesus tells us in the Bible over and over again that it is important to forgive people when they do things to hurt you.
 - Tell about a time you forgave someone. Did you feel better after?
 - How does it feel to be angry?
 - Forgiving others helps us get rid of that angry feeling.
 - Conclusion: When we believe in Jesus we can become a new, better person like Zacchaeus did.
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** What have you learned about forgiving others through the story of Zacchaeus? What is God saying to you through this story? I am going to give you time to write or draw in your journal.
 - What are you thinking?
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



JOHN

SCRIPTURE

John 2:1-11

BIBLE STORY

The First Miracle of Jesus

THEME OF THE DAY

Why Did Jesus Perform Miracles?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Large Poster/Board
- Sticky Notes
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus did... and his disciples beleived in Him." John 2:1-11



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Thanking God A-Z." On the board or a large sheet of paper/poster board list all the letters of the alphabet A-Z. Have children write something to the side of each letter they should thank God for. Discuss the importance of thanking God for the good things in our lives.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in John, chapter 2."
- Our special memory verse is John 2:1-11 "This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus did... and his disciples believed in Him." (Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.)

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** A miracle is something that cannot be explained in by how we know our world works. Jesus could perform miracles like the one in our lesson today through God's power. Miracles proved that Jesus was God's son.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** The setting of our Bible story today takes place at a wedding. Has anyone ever been to a wedding? (Children respond.)
- Weddings are very special occasions. What kinds of things did you see when you were at a wedding? (Beautiful dress, flowers, colors, dancing, candles, etc.)
- What kinds of things do you hear at a wedding? (Music, preachers, instruments, etc.)
- What kinds of things do you taste at a wedding? (Cake, food, and most weddings have lots of special drinks, especially during the toasts of the bride and groom.)
- A wedding is such a special event that people spend lots of time to make sure everything goes perfectly.
- Jesus and his family were invited to a wedding in Cana.
- Suddenly, they realized that they were out of wine! The people who were in charge of the wedding were embarrassed at this mistake! They had lots of people to feed and give drinks to. In the Jewish culture, wedding celebrations would last for days! So they needed lots of wine.
- When Jesus found out about this, he asked the servants to fill up large jugs with water and bring them to the master of the wedding.
- When the master tasted the water, he was amazed because it was actually very fine wine! The people at the wedding were amazed because it seemed they had saved the best wine for last.
- Not everyone knew where the wine had come from, but the servants and the disciples knew that Jesus had turned the water into wine.
- This was the first miracle that Jesus performed. It helped his disciples to trust in Him.
- This miracle showed that Jesus was no ordinary person. Jesus was the Son of God.

Transformed



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Jesus did things on earth that proved he was the Son of God. They helped people to see the power of God.
 - Have you ever heard of any other miracles that Jesus did? Or remember any from the Bible? (Healed sick, made the blind see, helped the crippled to walk, etc.)
 - How do we know that Jesus really did miracles? (Because many people saw Him perform miracles and the disciples kept records by writing these historical events down.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** This is one of the reasons why your journal writing is so important. You are writing down what you see, hear and think just like the disciples did.
 - What did you see, hear and think during this story about the first miracle of Jesus? What is God saying to you through it?
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



JOHN

SCRIPTURE

John 6: 5-13, John 9: 1-12

BIBLE STORY

The Miracles of Jesus

THEME OF THE DAY

How Are Miracles Different Than Magic?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Two Small Coins and One Large Coin
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"I am the bread of life." John 6:48



GATHERING TIME (8 MINUTES)

The activity is "Easy Coin Trick." (#20 from Julian's Magician School on YouTube.) As children enter, show them this super easy magic trick. It is on YouTube: "Easy Coin Trick - Julian's Magician School #20." All you need are 2 small coins (like pennies) and one larger coin (like a quarter).

Show the coin trick to children as they enter.

• **Leader:** There were magicians in Jesus' day like there are today.

After showing the trick be sure to show them how it was done, and let them do the magic trick. If two leaders are showing the coin trick, more children will have the opportunity to learn the trick more efficiently.

- The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.
- For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

Transformed



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

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THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in John, chapter 6."
- Our special memory verse is John 6:48 (Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.)

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** When Jesus lived, people were very interested in magic. Magicians were entertainers and they made money by showing tricks and selling their charms and potions.
- What are you thinking about the coin trick we did this morning? (Children respond. It was not real. It was a trick.)

THE STORY

- **Leader:** When Jesus was here on earth He performed miracles, which were very different from magic tricks. The Bible calls miracles signs, or mighty works that show the power of God. We can't explain miracles and how miracles work.
- Miracles happen through the power of God, and God is not limited by how our world works.
- Jesus' miracles were very different from magicians' tricks.
- Jesus did not ask for money when He performed a miracle.
- Jesus did not use spells, potions or objects when He healed or helped others.
- Jesus was able to feed the hungry, heal the sick, the blind and the crippled and raise people from the dead, because He was filled with the power of God.
- Jesus needed proof to show people that He really was the Son of God. Miracles were the proof that He was God's Son.
- There are 37 miracles recorded in the Bible that Jesus performed. Let's look at one of them this morning.
- People heard that Jesus was changing peoples' lives through His miracles. He was as popular as a celebrity and people wanted to hear and see Him.
- One day, on a hillside by the Sea of Galilee, a huge crowd of over 5,000 people had gathered to hear Jesus speak. There was a problem though.
- The people started to get hungry and there were no restaurants in Jesus' day.
- One of Jesus' disciples, Andrew, came up to Jesus and said, "How can we feed all these people?"
- Jesus said, "Look in the crowd and see if people have brought any food."
- Andrew found one little boy with a basket of 5 small loaves of bread and two fishes.
- Andrew said to Jesus, "This little boy's lunch is all I can find. There is *no way it can feed that crowd!"
- Jesus saw this as a great opportunity to show God's power and prove He was the Son of God.
- With God's power, He used the young boy's loaves and fish to feed all 5,000 people.
- Jesus said to the people, "I am the Bread of Life." That meant just as we need food to eat, we need Jesus in our lives.
- He used that miracle to let the people know that God provides for us.

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REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** Jesus used an ordinary little boy's lunch to feed 5,000 people.
 - He used this miracle to show us that he can use anyone to do special things.
 - How can God use YOU to provide for others? (Children discuss ways they can help others.)
-



REFLECTION TIME (8 MINUTES)

Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** Now you have heard the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000.
 - How can God use you to help others? Write about it or draw a picture of it in your journal.
-



SHARING AND LISTENING (3 MINUTES)

A dedicated time for children to share what they have expressed in their journals and then place them before the altar of God.

- **Leader:** Thank you for sharing today. What you each shared is holy and important. That is why you laid them on the altar.
-



BLESSING (2 MINUTES)

The leader uses a blessing balm to bless each child. They can choose to have the blessing on their head or their hand.

- **Leader:** (Name of child), you are a special creation of God. You are a blessing.
-



DEEP DIVE TIME (10 MINUTES)

The children will choose a center (provided in the room) for self-expression and free play. We trust this time will be a time of processing all that they have learned and experienced through the morning. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the children and ask questions through play that relate to the Bible story.



JOHN

SCRIPTURE

John 9

BIBLE STORY

A Blind Man is Healed

THEME OF THE DAY

Believe

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Markers
- Paper
- Bandanas or Blindfolds
- Chime or Triangle
- Bible
- Birthday Stickers
- Pinwheel
- Electric Candle
- Individual Journals
- Blessing Balm

MEMORY VERSE

"The man said, 'Lord I beleive.' And he worshiped Jesus." John 9:38



GATHERING TIME (10 MINUTES)

The game is "Blind Drawing." There will be blindfolds, paper and markers on the table. Children partner up and will take turns drawing and giving instructions. One child sits down and is blindfolded, the partner reads the directions to him. When finished with the directions, the child removes the blindfold and analyzes his work. They then switch roles.

Directions:

- Draw a sun at the top right corner
- Draw some grass at the bottom of the page
- Draw 5 flowers in the garden
- Draw a house in the middle of the page
- Take your blindfold off and see what you drew
- Switch with your partner

• **Leader:** How did it feel to not be able to see while you had to draw? How would someone blind be able to work? How could they live unless someone took care of them? Does Jesus want us to help those people who need help?

• The theme of the day and memory verse are written on the board and shown to children as they arrive. Don't discuss it, just let it be seen.

• For older children, you might have some Bibles out and invite them to start finding the Bible text for the day so that they become familiar with the Bible.

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BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS (2 MINUTES)

The teacher will ask if anyone has a birthday coming up this week. When it is a child's birthday, the leader will invite the child to stand or come up to the front of the class and ask:

- **Leader:** How old will you be on your birthday?
 - **Child:** Tells age.
 - **Leader:** Okay everyone, (name of child), is going to be (age). It is his/her birthday! What is she/he?
 - **Children:** A blessing! (clap)
 - Leader places a birthday blessing sticker on the child and says, "Happy Birthday! You are a blessing!"
-



PRAYER TIME (13 MINUTES)

Overhead lights should be turned off and lamps lit. A chime is rung three times to represent the Trinity. This signals a sacred time is beginning.

THE SHARING OF OUR JOYS

- **Leader:** This pinwheel is a symbol of happy things and the things we are thankful for. I will pass it to each of you and as I do, please share something that has made you happy or that you are thankful for.
- The pinwheel is passed to each person (child and teacher) and they share a joy or thanksgiving they have.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in a silent joyful and thanksgiving prayer.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

SHARING OF OUR CONCERNS

- **Leader:** This candle is a reminder that not all of life is filled with joy. Sometimes we face sadness and struggles. These are not things to be embarrassed of. These are things we can share openly in this sacred space with Jesus. I am going to pass this candle around and invite you to share any struggles or sadness you might be facing. This might be something that affects you directly or you may have heard on the news.
- Pass the candle. Kids can speak or pass silently.
- **Leader:** Now let us sit quietly and spend a moment in the healing light of God's love.
- Sit silently for 10 seconds.

PRAYER

- Leader offers a short prayer.

REFLECTION

- Leader turns off the sacred candle and says, "Thank you for spending time in prayer today. I am wondering if any of you felt the presence of God today. Did you? What did it feel like? Did God say anything to you?"
- Children share.



BIBLE STORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader's bible is marked and ready to open to the story.

TELLING THE STORY

- **Leader:** This is the word of God, a gift to use. It is through the Bible that God speaks to us. I pray that you will not only learn the Bible story today, but also that God will speak to you through the story. (The leader passes the bible and each child holds it.)
- Leader opens the bible to the story for the day and says, "Our story for today is found in John, chapter 9."
- Our special memory verse is John 9:38. (Leader reads the verses and has the children repeat it.)

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- **Leader:** We have already experienced some of the challenges that might come with being blind when we did our drawings.
- Today's Bible story is about a man who was born blind.

THE STORY

- **Leader:** One day Jesus was walking with his disciples when they saw a man who had been blind since birth. Jesus' disciples asked the man, "Who sinned for you to be blind? Was it you, or your parents?"
- The Rabbis, who were teachers to the Jewish people, thought that someone had to have done something bad in order for a person to be blind.
- Jesus did not believe the ideas the Rabbis were teaching.
- "It isn't because this man sinned," said Jesus. "It isn't because his parents sinned. This happened so that God's work could be shown in his life."
- Jesus knelt down, spit on the ground, and stirred up some mud. He took the mud and put it on the blind man's eyes. Jesus told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam.
- The man went and washed the mud from his eyes, and when he came back he told everyone that a miracle had happened! He could see!
- Now you would think everyone would be happy about this wonderful thing that happened to this man. He had been blind all his life and now he could see!
- But some people were not happy. The Pharisees were really not happy. Pharisees were very strict Jewish people who made sure people kept the religious laws.
- They were mad at Jesus because he healed a blind man on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a special day each week that was set aside to rest and remember the Lord. Keeping the Sabbath was part of the law that God gave to Moses.
- The Pharisees thought it was a sin to do anything on the Sabbath – even if it was helping someone in need. The Pharisees and Rabbis were more concerned with keeping their religious laws than they were helping people.
- The man whose sight had been restored was taken to the Pharisees. "How were you healed?" The Pharisees asked him. "Jesus put mud on my eyes," the man replied. "Then I washed. And now I can see!"
- The Pharisees argued with one another. Some thought Jesus sinned to heal a man on the Sabbath, and could not be the Son of God, and others thought that God gave him the power to heal this man so he had to be from God.
- The Pharisees brought the healed man back in and tried to get him to say Jesus was a sinner. But the healed man refused to agree with them. He would only say, "I do know one thing. I was blind, but now I see!"
- The Pharisees were furious with the healed man because he would not say bad things about Jesus, so they threw him out of the synagogue.
- Jesus found him and asked him, "Do you believe in Me?", and he said, "Lord I believe." And he worshiped Jesus.



REAL WORLD CONNECTION (2 MINUTES)

- **Leader:** We all have problems in our lives. We sometimes get hurt or sick, or someone we love gets hurt or sick. But if God can heal a blind man, he can help us with anything we might be facing.
 - This story from John 9 is another example of God showing his power through Jesus.
 - What would you say if Jesus asked you if you believed in him? Why would you say this?
-



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Leader passes out individual journals for each child to use during reflection. The children are given crayons and markers to draw or write something they have reflected on from the story. Teachers are encouraged to write in a journal and share their entries as well.

- **Leader:** You have now learned the story of Jesus healing the blind man. Remember how I told you that the Bible is alive and that God speaks through it? I am wondering what you are thinking about since hearing the story.
 - What is God saying to you through this story? Did this story tell you anything about yourself? Write or draw what you see, think or feel.
-



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Christ Church United Methodist



I would like to thank Christ Church United Methodist for allowing Karen and me the space to experiment and play until we discovered a ritual for the Faith Formation Hour that follows my model of “God-Centered Spiritual Transformation” and creates a sacred space where the adults and children pray, hear the Bible story, respond and grow closer to God, leader and children together!

I want to thank Karen Larimore who took a model and made it come alive. You take the most complex stories, make them simple to learn without dumbing down the context or being condescending. You are a genius!

I want to thank all of our teachers who used this material faithfully week after week. The reason we are so proud of this material is that it has been developed with the input of children, teachers and parents and has become a powerful tool to lead people of all ages into a more spiritual place.

I want to thank our pastor, George Strunk, our Executive Director, Shannon McConnell, and the entire staff of Christ Church for their support, encouragement and excitement as we developed and lived into this work. The Children’s Ministry staff in particular are more excited about this than we are. We are so blessed to work in a space where there is no jealousy or competition. It is a rare gift!

Lastly, I would like to thank the children of Christ Church United Methodist who continue to teach us what it means to be a child of God and person of faith! You inspire us, you make us laugh and you make our church alive with the love, compassion and joy of Christ! Each of you is a blessing!

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Transformed

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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The Rev. Dr. Leanne Ciampa Hadley is an ordained Elder in the United Methodist Church and has specialized in children's spirituality for her entire career.

She is a graduate of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio where she received her BA, and United Theological Seminary where she received both her MDiv and DMin degrees.

Leanne currently serves on staff at Christ Church UM, Louisville, KY and oversees the ministries of children and teens and works as a trainer and mentor for congregations across the nation through her ministry, A Time for Children.

Before coming to Christ Church she served as the President and Founder of the First Steps Spirituality Center, dedicated to providing spiritual care to hurting children at no cost to the children or their families. She also served as the Children's Minister at FUMC, Colorado Springs, CO for 25 years.

In addition to working in the church and center, Leanne travels nationally and internationally leading retreats, workshops and training events centered around the spirituality of children and teens.

Leanne is the author of several books including *Touching Heaven: Real Stories of Children, Life and Eternity* and *Blessed to be a Blessing: Sacred Circle Time for Preschoolers*.

To learn more about Leanne and please feel free to contact her at leannecaresaboutkids@gmail.com or visit her website, www.leanne-hadley.com.



Karen Larimore is a life-long educator.

She holds a BS Degree in Elementary Education, a Master of Arts Degree in Administration and Supervision, and a Rank 1 Degree in Education Leadership, from Western Kentucky University.

In addition to teaching in grades 1-5, Karen has been a Coach for Teacher Leaders, A Reading Consultant, and Instructor at University of Louisville's College of Education, an Elementary Principal and most recently, a Project Director for several Grants of Innovation.

Joining the Children's Ministry Staff at Christ Church United Methodist Church in 2017, her vision was to combine Leanne's Model of "God-Centered Spiritual Transformation" with current educational research.

Karen designed these lessons to include the inquiry process, relationship building, real-world connections, self-reflection and service to others, providing opportunities for children to develop a relationship with Christ.

Karen resides in Louisville, Kentucky where she loves being a wife, mother and "Yaya" to three grandsons.

