

Focus: Being part of God's family

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD: Bible Songs for Kids – Vol 2
Gospel: The Beginner's Bible
Baby doll

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Jesus gathering his disciples and helping them teach people about God. This week we will hear a story about when Jesus was a baby and his parents brought him to the temple to be blessed.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

Let us pray.

Creator God, the earth is filled with your blessings. Help us to be thankful for the wonders of your creation. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Song/Movement

Get On Board Little Children, track: 4, from [Bible Songs for Kids - Vol 2](#)

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

*The gospel train is comin'
The wheels go 'round and 'round
Everyone is happy
This train is heaven bound*

*Get on board little children
Get on board little children
Get on board little children
There's room for many a-more*

*I hear that train a-comin'
Comin' down the track
I'll be getting on it
And I won't be lookin' back*

*Get on board little children
Get on board little children
Get on board little children*

There's room for many a-more

*You won't need a penny
To ride this glorious train
Just give your heart to Jesus
And ride away with Him*

*Get on board little children
Get on board little children
Get on board little children
There's room for many a-more*

*Get on board little children
Get on board little children
Get on board little children
There's room for many a-more
There's room for many a-more...*

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

Jesus is the light of the world.

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *At Christmas we heard the story of Jesus' birth and how the wise men followed the star to Bethlehem. That was Jesus' star, Jesus' light. When Jesus grew up, everyone knew him. They saw his love and his light shining. When we are baptized, we receive the light of Christ so that we can show Jesus' love to everyone.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: The Beginner's Bible, pp. pp. 284-287, *Blessings for the Baby*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *Why do Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the temple?*
- *Who do Mary and Joseph meet at the temple?*
- *What do Simeon and Anna tell Mary and Joseph?*

Reflection on Reading:

Today's feast of the Presentation invites us to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. We remember Jesus' coming as God's coming into the world offering the light of salvation.

Today's gospel shows that Jesus is part of a family that is faithful to God's law. In keeping with the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the temple to present him to the Lord. Today parents bring their children to the church to be baptized. When we are baptized, we become members of God's family.

Simeon and Anna, two faithful people of Israel, recognize Jesus as the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Both Anna and Simeon spent their lives in prayer and service to God. They listened to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Today's gospel celebrates that Jesus' coming brings God's love into the world.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

Baptism makes us members of God's family.

Ask: *Do you remember your baptism? Have you ever seen pictures of your baptism or heard stories about the time you were baptized? Who here has ever seen a baptism? Do you remember what happened? (They use water, there are special prayers and there is a candle)*

We receive the Holy Spirit at our baptism like Jesus did and we become members of God's family.

We were baptized with water to symbolize that we are a part of the community of Jesus. Our parents gave us the name we would use to show we are believers in Jesus and we belong to him.

Names are very important. We know who others are by their name. Jesus knows each of us and knows our name. He calls us every day, to be close to him and to follow him.

Conduct a mock baptism:

Let each child make a cross on doll's forehead and say: *I claim you... --fill in with their own name--... for Christ in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

Then the priest or deacon says these special words: I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Have the children repeat after you: *"In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"* as they use a cupped hand to pretend to pick up water out of a font and pour it gently over the doll's forehead.

The lighted candle we receive when we are baptized represents the light of Jesus. We are baptized like Jesus and we can be a light for other people. Can you remember ways Jesus was the light for people? We can be light for the world to by caring and serving for others. Discuss ways they can be the light of the world.

Activity 2:

Act It Out

Select children to be Joseph and Mary and Simeon and Anna. Use the doll for the baby Jesus.

Read the Gospel story and have the children act out the motions.

or

Ask them to recreate the scene and use their own words to retell the story.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who calls us by name and knows and loves each one of us?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who teaches us how to be the children of God?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us know and trust God?

Sending Forth

Say: *This week remember that we are baptized into the family of God and that we are called to be the light of the world. Be kind and caring to those who need extra love and caring.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play *"All Things Bright and Beautiful"* track 16 from Bible Songs for Kids - Vol 2 while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.