

Focus: We belong to Jesus. We belong to the Church

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD: Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 1
Gospel: The Children's Bible Storybook
Foam heart

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Jesus healing the sick. This week we will talk about who Jesus is and who follows him.*

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.

O God, your Church is built on a solid foundation.

We are happy to be part of your Church family.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen

Song/Movement

Praise Him, Praise Him, All Ye Little Children, track: 29, from [Bible Songs for Kids Vol. 1](#)

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.

Praise Him, Praise Him
All ye little children
God is love, God is love

Praise Him, Praise Him
All ye little children
God is love, God is love

Replace Praise Him, Praise Him for
verses 2-4 and repeat Praise Him on
the final verse.

Love Him
Serve Him
Thank Him
Praise Him

Memory Verse

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

You are the Christ! The Son of the living God

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

Say: *The disciples were Jesus' closest friends. They listened to his preaching and saw how he healed people. Jesus was doing amazing things and people were spreading stories about what he had done. Jesus wanted to see if his friends had come to understand who he was and what he was doing here on earth. Peter spoke first "you are the Christ" he said and showed Jesus that he knew Jesus was more than a teacher, he was from God.*

Gospel Story

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

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 Children's Bible Storybook, pp. 273, *The Rock Man*

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *What question does Jesus ask his disciples?*
- *How does Peter answer Jesus?*
- *Why is Jesus pleased with Peter's answer?*
- *What does Jesus say to Peter about being a rock?*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's gospel, Peter shows how much he believes in Jesus. Jesus asks his friends what they believe about him. Peter replies, "You are the Christ." For this answer Jesus gives Peter the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," and calls Peter "Rock," the foundation stone upon which Jesus will build his Church. Peter's great faith in Jesus is a gift from God. Peter is given the job of passing on the faith to all of Jesus' followers. Jesus gives the keys to Peter and God's love is given to the entire community of believers (us).

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

In today's Gospel story Jesus asks his followers "Who do you say that I am?" Jesus was their teacher. How do we know Jesus was their teacher? Did he wear some kind of special hat or uniform. It is almost impossible to know what someone does just by looking at them. A teacher and a banker look just the same. Jesus didn't wear anything special to show who he was; so just looking at Jesus, he might have seemed to be like anyone else of his day. As you might imagine, there was a lot of confusion about who Jesus really was. Jesus often took his disciples aside to teach them important lessons about the Kingdom of God. This was one of those days. Jesus began his lesson that day by asking his disciples a question: ""Who do men say that I am?" Peter spoke up and said: ""You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."" Jesus said, "You are right, Peter. You didn't learn that from listening to other people. It was taught to you by my Father in heaven."

The lesson that the disciples learned that day is just as important today as it was then. Many people in our world today still do not know who Jesus is. You and I need to be ready with the answer, "He is the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We can tell others about Jesus and about how he loves everyone and he is God's Son and he cares

for us like a shepherd cares for his sheep. Let's play a little game and as we pass the heart around, think of something you can do to tell others about Jesus. When the music stops, if you are holding the heart, you can share what you want to do to show others about Jesus. – Sharing toys or books, listening to the teacher, treating others nicely, be kind to everyone. (Prompting questions: What could you share? Who should you listen to? What would you do if a child you don't know asks to play with you and your friends? What if there is someone who doesn't like the same things as you and you don't usually play with them and they forgot their snack?)

Play a song from the weeks CD. Let the children pass the heart around and share their thoughts. Continue as time allows. If anyone wants to share that didn't get a chance in the game, they can share at the end.

Dear Jesus, we know who you are. You are God's only Son, the Savior of the world. When people are searching for the answer to the question, ""Who is Jesus?"" help us to be ready with the answer. Amen.

Activity 2:

Jesus Says:

This game is played like Simons Says, but instead of saying "Simon Says", you say "Jesus says" Pick a few actions ahead of time when you won't say – Jesus Says.

The gospels tell us what we should do to be like Jesus. We should pray, listen to and learn from the stories of Jesus, love and serve God and each other. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone in the world were the best sheep, followers of Jesus they can be.

Let's practice what Jesus has taught us to do.

Sample Actions-. No one is out, everyone gets another chance:

Hug your neighbor

Close your hands in prayer

Pick up your toys

Bow your head

Jesus says, make the sign of the cross

Clap your hands!

Go to Church-(March in place)

Say peace be with you to your neighbor

Say Alleluia

Jump one time

Shake hands with your neighbor

Praise God-Raise your hands up high

Jesus says, Look around you to find Jesus (put your hands to your like looking thru binoculars)

Feel free to make up some more on your own.

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 loves us and gives us the power to believe in Jesus?*
Do you believe in Jesus, who trusted Peter to build his church and teach others who believe?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us be good followers of Jesus?

Sending Forth

Say: *Remember to show others that we believe in Jesus. Be helpful, be kind and share.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "*His Banner Over Me is Love.*" track 15 from Bible Songs for Kids Vol 1 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.