

Focus: Being a Good Neighbor

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD-Bible Songs for Kids Vol 1
- Bible: The Beginner's Bible
- Ping Pong Ball
- World Map
- CD-Bible Songs for Kids-Vol. 2

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about the time when Jesus sent his followers to tell others that the Kingdom of God is here. The disciples were asked to trust God to care for them. This week Jesus tells us a story about how we are to love God and our neighbor.*

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.

Dear God, help us to love you with all our heart and to love and care for one another.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Song/Movement

Happy All the Time, track: 3, 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. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

Movement cues in brackets [].

I'm inright [point in], outright [point out],
upright [point up], downright [point down]
Happy all the time [clap with each word]
I'm inright [point in], outright [point out],
upright [point up], downright [point down]
Happy all the time [clap with each word]

Since Jesus Christ came in
And cleansed my heart from sin...
I'm inright [point in], outright [point out],
upright [point up], downright [point down]
Happy all the time [clap with each word]

(Repeat all three times, getting faster and faster each time, then sing the 2nd verse a fourth time to close)

Memory Verse

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

Love God with all my heart, and love my neighbor too.

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

Say: *God's Kingdom is all about love, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit live in relationship with each other, a relationship of love. This is how God wants us to live. When we think of our neighbor we might think of the person who lives next door or down the street. Jesus tells us that everyone is our neighbor. When we see someone in need we are to show God's love to them.*

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. 395-399, *A Good Neighbor*

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *Who do you think of when you hear the word ‘neighbor’?*
- *Who is the neighbor in the Good Neighbor story?*
- *What does the man ask Jesus about God’s law of loving your neighbor?*
- *What does Jesus teach his followers about how they should treat others?*

Reflection on Reading:

In today’s Gospel Jesus teaches that the most important commandment is to love God and love your neighbor. To help us understand how to follow this great commandment Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan Neighbor. Samaria was a country that was next to Israel. The people of Israel did not get along very well with the people from Samaria. This story teaches us how to be a good neighbor and how to care for others. God wants us to help all people. The story of the Good Samaritan shows that it is not always easy to stop and help someone. When we take the time to care for others we show our love for God and neighbor.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

Hot Potato Praise

Use a song from the CD for the opening and closing songs)

Ping Pong Ball (for the potato)

Have the children sit in a circle, passing the “hot potato” as quickly as possible while the music plays. When the music stops, the player holding the “hot potato” must tell one thing we can do to show God’s love to others and take care of our neighbor. When they are done, everyone else shouts: Love God! –alternately with- Love your neighbor!

No one is “out” or has to leave the circle. Play continues as time permits.

Activity 2:

Love the World

Have volunteers close their eyes and point to a spot on the map.

Say a prayer for the people in that country. "Dear Father, show your love to the people of Germany." "Dear God, help us care for all the creatures of the sea."

Repeat as time allows, keep it moving along, very bouncy, very quick.

If possible play and sing. He's got the whole world in his hands. Bible Songs for Kids, Vol 2, Track 1

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 fills our hearts with love to share with others?
Do you believe in Jesus, who shows us how to love our neighbor?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the power to love others?*

Sending Forth

Say: Remember that anyone who needs help is our neighbor. You can hold the door for someone who is carrying packages. You could make a card for someone who is sad. Keep your eyes on the lookout for others that need your help and when you help them, remember you are spreading God's love.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "To God by the Glory" track 31 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.