

MARCH 2020

SCHOOL MINISTRY

Mailing



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

School Ministry



Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7

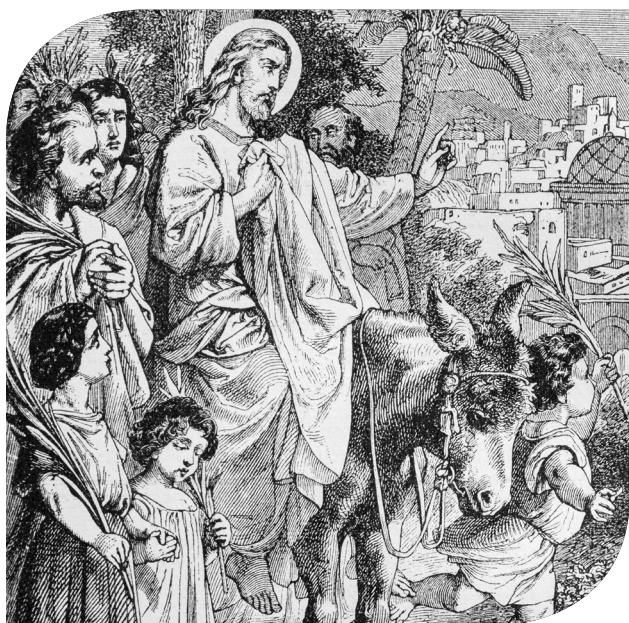


JOYFULLY LUTHERAN 1 THESS. 5:16-24

FOCUS: Jesus. Others. You.

The Praise of Children (Palm Sunday)

(MATT. 21:1-11; MARK 11:1-10)



Before You Teach

There are a lot of songs and anthems for children's choirs about a donkey. Donkeys are humble, but useful animals. In the clamor of Palm Sunday, amidst the vigorous waving of palms and the loud shouting of "Hosanna," let's not miss the service of the donkey. Humble, but useful is what we, Jesus' present-day disciples, want to be. Individually and as a community, we want to be those whom Jesus uses to present Himself to the world. Our deeds are as important as our words.

Greeting

Greet each child upon entering the classroom, establishing a positive outlook for the day. **Good morning, child of God! I am so very happy you are here to help celebrate a very special day: Palm Sunday!**

Gathering

Light your battery-operated altar candle and signal children to gather in your worship area.

Say: Today we are celebrating the day Jesus went into the city of Jerusalem. We call this day "Palm Sunday," and it is a special day we celebrate every year.

Teach and sing: "Hosanna! Hosanna!" (LOSP, p. 94).



Tell the Story


YOU WILL NEED: Palm branches, real or precut from green construction paper; crepe paper or ribbon streamers.

Do: Distribute palm branches and streamers, keeping a branch for yourself. Signal children to wave the branches and streamers where indicated by the 🌿 as the narrative is told.

Jesus and His disciples were walking to the city of Jerusalem. On the way, Jesus sent two of the disciples into a small town and said, "Go into this village.

Immediately, you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her. Untie both and bring them back to me. If anyone says anything to you about taking them, say, 'The Lord needs them.' And, both will be sent with you at once."

The two disciples did as Jesus told them. They brought the donkey and the colt to Jesus, putting their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit. A crowd gathered to see Jesus, spreading their cloaks on the road before Him. People cut branches from the palm trees  and spread them on the road or held them in their hands. Crowds of people, boys and girls, moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, walked in front of Jesus and behind Him,  waving palm branches and shouting, "**Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!**" (Repeat with children.) When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was excited and curious. Many people wondered aloud, "Who is this?" Excitedly, the crowds shouted, "This is Jesus, from the city of Nazareth in Galilee!"

 "**Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!**" (Repeat with children.)

Pray: *Guide children to repeat each line after you.*

Hosanna to our King of Kings!
Our praise to You we loudly sing.

Hosanna to our Lord of Lords!
Whose never-ending love outpours.

Hosanna to our Savior King!
Thank You for all the love You bring. Amen.

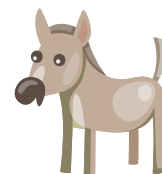


Remember the Story

BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

Pre-K & K: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (MATT. 21:9B).

Grades 1 & 2: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (MATT. 21:9B).



ACTIVITIES

Create: You will need: Precut palm leaves, paint sponges, green tempera paint. Children sponge paint palm leaves. Display with the words, "Hosanna to the King of Kings!"

Do: Praise Parade. Have children listen carefully, following your directions as they march. Play a song of praise.

Say: Let's march to the music taking big steps; bigger steps; teeny, tiny steps; tiptoes; opposite direction; arms out to the side; to your seats.

Sing: "Hosanna! Hosanna!" (LOSP, p. 94). Wave palm branches while singing.

Sending

YOU WILL NEED: A palm leaf to pass. See "Gathering."

Gather children in your sending circle. Review highlights of your day. Pray, inviting children to offer a prayer as the palm leaf is passed and received by each child in turn. Then say, **Hosanna to our King of Kings! Amen!** Repeat with the children. Dismiss, saying to each, **Jesus came for you!**



Live the Story

Each day is another opportunity to sing and pray "Hosanna" to our Savior King. Each day we have opportunities to celebrate and share the extravagant love of our gracious God, in the person of Jesus. As we go about our daily activities, let us begin and end each day with prayers of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating lives lived in His grace.

Early Childhood Devotions

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Dr. Judith Christian Designer: Lisa Moeller

NOTE: You will need the songbook: *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House (CPH), St. Louis, Mo.

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Rattles & Prattles

A RESOURCE FOR CAREGIVERS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS



“Rejoice always ...” (1 THESS. 5:16–24)

Bible Story: Palm Sunday (LUKE 19:28–40; MATT. 21:1–16; MARK 11:1–10).

Focus: A week before Jesus’ arrest, beatings, crucifixion, death and resurrection, many welcomed Him as the promised Messiah: “the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God” (LUKE 19:37).

What it teaches us: As we think ahead to Jesus’ passion and resurrection, we take time to join the people who welcomed Jesus, the promised Savior, in the parade the first Palm Sunday.

Prepare to teach

- **Read** the story in the Gospel accounts and, if possible, a study Bible.
- **Think:** As Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem, the people waved palms and shouted “Hosanna” (MATT. 21:9). He was fulfilling an Old Testament prophecy from Zech. 9:9 — God’s kept His promise to send the Messiah. “Hosanna” is Hebrew for “Save us, we pray” (SEE PS. 118:25). That is exactly what Jesus, the promised Messiah, did. He suffered, died and came alive again to take away the sins of the world.
- **Pray:** We thank You, Jesus, for Your love. We’re thankful You came from heaven above. We’re thankful that You came to be ... the Savior God promised for all to see. Amen.



“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
... Hosanna in the highest!” (MARK 11:9–10)

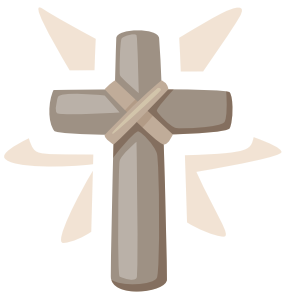
WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE STORY PRESENTATION

You will also need:

- › *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House
- › *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, copyright © 2001 Concordia Publishing House, pp. 126–27
- › **Picture of Jesus** (find one doing an Internet search)
- › **Pictures of Palm Sunday:** 1) disciples finding donkey; 2) Palm Sunday parade

Gather for Worship

Invite the children to the worship area. Sing (tune: “Are You Sleeping?”) **Come and sit down** (repeat) **on the floor** (repeat). **We will learn of Jesus** (repeat) **sing and pray** (repeat).



Invocation: Use the same melody and sing: **We begin now** (repeat) **in God's name** (repeat) — **Father, Son and Spirit** (repeat). **Amen** (repeat).

Opening Song

Show picture of Jesus. **Jesus loves each of us. We learn about Jesus'**

love in the Bible (show Bible). Sing “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know” (*LOSP*, p. 42).

Bible Story

Read the story from *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, pp. 126–127, or use the rhyme below; show picture #1.

One special day, Jesus knew exactly what He would do.

He asked two helpers to go into town bring Him a donkey, shaggy and brown.

When Jesus saw the donkey, He sat on its back walked slowly into town, just like that.

Show the second picture.

People saw Him coming, cut branches from a tree, waved them all around and sang happily.

**Hosanna! Hosanna!
Jesus! Jesus!
We love You!**

Repeat and invite the children to “parade” around the room, saying **Hosanna! Hosanna! — Jesus! Jesus! — We love You too!**

What the Story Teaches: The people were happy to see Jesus, the Savior, coming. They even had a parade. They waved palm branches and sang, “Hosanna.” We're happy Jesus came to be our Savior.

Time to Pray

Dear Jesus, we know You are our Savior King. Happy songs to You we sing. Amen. Wave and sing, “Hosanna! Hosanna!” (*LOSP*, p. 94).

Closing/Benediction

Sing (same melody): **Time to go now** (repeat) **Time to play** (or whatever activity you do next) (repeat). **God is always with you** (repeat). **Loves you too** (repeat).



CURRICULAR MATERIALS //

IDEA STARTERS for integrating the Bible story and theme into STREAMS (curriculum)

S Science and Nutrition

- > **God gives us eyes to see;** the people saw Jesus riding on the donkey. Take a walk; what do we see in our room/outside?
- > **Parade to eat:** 2 halves of graham cracker to make a road; add a strip of Easy Cheese by Kraft; set people (e.g., teddy grahams) in the cheese.

T Technology

- > **Apps:** Check out appropriate screen time apps for young children.
- > **Web:** Utilize *parentschoice.org*; include website in parent newsletter.

R Reading and Language Arts

- > **Fingerplay:** **Peek-a-boo. Peek-a-boo** (repeat); **I see you; Peek-a-boo** (repeat); **Jesus loves you.**



- > **Board Book:** *The Eye Book* by Dr. Seuss (Random House Books for Young Readers, 1999). Take pictures and make classroom books to look at (e.g., Favorite Toys, Favorite Foods, Our Families).

E Engineering

- > **Use toy figures** (people, trees, etc.) and make a parade for Jesus. Afterward, manipulate figures to act out the parade.

A Arts (art, music and physical education)

- > **Paint** with palm fronds and sing Hosanna and Hallelujah songs.
- > **Piggyback song:** (tune: “Are You Sleeping?”) **God gave me eyes** (repeat) **that can see** (repeat) **the blue sky, up so high** (repeat). **God gave me eyes** (repeat). Create additional verses using various body parts.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS in your newsletter

We know children love screen time, but parents need to help them use what’s best. To help you choose, check out *parentschoice.org*.

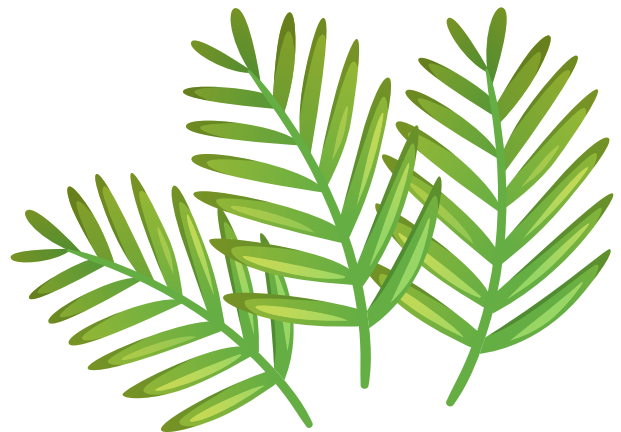
- > **Wave scarves,** streamers, or pretend palm branches and have a parade for Jesus while singing praise songs (e.g., *LOSP*, pp. 68, 94).

M Mathematics

- > **Counting:** Draw happy faces on fingernails. Raise fingers, sing (tune: “Ten Little Indians”) **One little, two little, three little children, Four ... Ten children sang to Jesus.**

S Social Studies

- > **Eyes:** people saw Jesus and praised Him. Look in mirror and “notice” eyes. God gives us eyes to see each other.



A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY



Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



THE AGE-OLD QUESTION: What's Your Curriculum?

As an early childhood educator, do you often feel like a “jack-of-all-trades”? Do you feel like a mother/father, health-care provider, educator and police officer all at the same moment? Or, do you perhaps feel like a high-level engineer with all of the environment and curriculum design that you find yourself doing each day? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you are likely a good early childhood educator and leader! It’s true that early childhood educators make more minute-by-minute decisions than a brain surgeon. The field of early childhood education is fascinating and complex, yet at times simple and beautiful. When you add in the ministry component, it’s absolutely delightful!

A question often asked not only by parents but also by fellow educators is “what curriculum do you use?” This can potentially be a loaded question because there are many different possible responses. Based on the age of the children you work with, your background and your philosophy, there are many different types of curriculum frameworks and resources that could be utilized.

This issue of *Time Out for Directors* will briefly share an overview of components that could be used in developing a response to questions about curriculum use. As a leader in early childhood education, it is important for you to be well-versed on the topic and be able to articulately explain the philosophy and practice of your classroom and program. No matter what curriculum materials you use, or the philosophy you have, all should be in line with your Lutheran, Christian faith — that’s what makes your school a Lutheran school — a JOY:fully Lutheran school.



A Curriculum of Faith

It is important for Lutheran schools to have alignment in theology and biblical teachings. Materials available through Concordia Publishing House (CPH), LCMS School Ministry and other ministry arms of the LCMS provide some of the richest resources to help teach the faith. Yes, there are many other materials and resources available, and they can be wonderful supplements to what is currently available through CPH. Using faith-based materials that are in alignment with your church and school mission is important. When some educators do not have specialized training in LCMS teachings or faith-based environments, the use of LCMS/CPH materials becomes even more important.

Learning Goals

Parents, and some educators, often ask what specific milestones or concepts children should exhibit,

or learn, at specific ages. While there is certainly a spectrum of what children can do, there are common milestones that are appropriate. Each of the 50 states has published common learning goals for early childhood education. These goals provide alignment in a progression of learning and development that starts at infancy and continues into elementary school. It is important that educators and leaders are familiar with these learning goals and use them to guide instruction, planning and learning environments.

Social & Emotional Learning

Today, perhaps now more than ever before, there is great emphasis on the need for children to learn appropriate social and emotional skills. These skills help children, not only in their current development but also into adulthood. Grit, positive character, responsibility and self-control are characteristics that even adults need. There are many different social-emotional curricular resources available today — complete programs, but also resources that can supplement already-in-place classroom practices.

Cognitive Learning

God's marvelous work is certainly evident when one thinks of the human brain, its development and how it processes information! Only God could create something so powerful and beautiful as the human brain. In coordination with Early Learning Goals, early childhood educators can begin planning for opportunities in which children play in a way that invites learning in a variety of cognitive areas, such as math, literacy, science and physical movement. The beauty of early childhood education is that many of these cognitive areas are woven together through the daily routine and classroom environment. It is important to know which skills and milestones are developmentally appropriate at the various ages and to strive to provide opportunities for children to engage in play that includes them.

Play-Based Learning

In any early childhood classroom, play, along with Jesus, should be at the heart of all that is done. This should be a type of play that invites learning! As children engage in a holistic learning environment where

they focus on JOY-filled and play-filled activities, they learn skills in physical development, social intelligence, academic learning and, because you are at a Lutheran school, spiritual development. While few early childhood educators would argue against play-based learning, many have a difficult time fully agreeing on what an experience should exactly look like. Take some time and research ideas on how child-initiated free play, guided play and instructional play all have important roles in a child's learning environment. Note that play should not end at preschool graduation! While additional academic content areas are introduced and taught in greater detail, play should still be part of what children do in kindergarten and first grade!

A Variety of Philosophies

If you did an Internet search of early childhood curriculum, philosophies or frameworks, you would find a plethora of options to read through: Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Creative Curriculum, Waldorf and many more. While these all have strong contributions to the development and learning of children, they do not contain a faith-based component. With Christ at the center of your Lutheran school, remember to maintain that focus regardless of your specific philosophy. Spend time with your faculty and staff and create a philosophy statement that cascades from your church/school mission and vision — they should be in alignment.

As you consider the important pieces mentioned above, reflect on how they each contribute to who you are as an overall ministry and educational program. With the ever-increasing competition, both from public and other faith-based programs, you need to be articulate in your practices, philosophies and how you best serve children and utilize research-based practices that contribute to high-quality learning.

Know that Christ is with you in all you do. As you remember your faith-filled purpose and fix your eyes on sharing the Gospel message, you will quickly find it easier to include faith-filled stories, examples and real-world applications in all you do. Jesus isn't just for Jesus Time — He is for all-of-the-time! Be intentional in how you JOY:fully share the Good News daily in complement with your cognitive, play-filled learning!