



OCTOBER 2020

SCHOOL MINISTRY

Mailing



Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7



SENT TO SERVE **MATTHEW 20:28**

FOCUS: Freed to Serve. Galatians 5:13

Moses: Freed to Lead

(Exodus 13:1–15:21)

Before You Teach

God's call takes us to unexpected places. Like the children of Israel, we may not always know where God's Spirit leads, but we rejoice as God's plan is realized. Moses led the Israelites to trust God's promises in spite of their fears and to joyously praise Him for their rescue from the Egyptians. Trust and praise may well be a two-pronged emphasis in our own faith life and in our teaching.

Welcome/Greeting

Greet each child upon entry! The first five seconds of a child's arrival are critical for establishing the child's positive outlook for the day.

Gathering

Gather children in your worship area. Sing. Introduce the narrative.

Tell the Story

YOU WILL NEED: Precut cloud, flame and water wave.

DO: Show the cloud, flame (fire) and wave (sea), as the narrative is told. Signal children to repeat **bold** print words after you.

Moses led God's people who were freed from slavery by Pharaoh toward the **Red Sea**. **God** guided them by a **pillar of cloud** during the day and a **pillar of fire** at night. When the king of Egypt heard that **God's** peo-



ple left Egypt, he was upset, and Pharaoh changed his mind, saying, "What have we done? We freed the people who served us!" Then Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army chased the people of God. When God's people saw Pharaoh and his army, they cried out to the Lord, saying, "What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? It would have been better to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." Moses said, "Fear not! Watch how the Lord will rescue you today." The Lord said to Moses, "Lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the **sea**, dividing it so my people go through on dry ground.

The **pillar of cloud** moved behind God's people, hiding them from Pharaoh's soldiers. Moses stretched his hand out over **the sea**. The Lord divided the water. God's peo-

ple went into **the sea**, walking on dry land between walls of water. As Pharaoh's army followed, the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over **the sea**." Moses did as God said. The Egyptians had followed God's people into **the sea**, and the **waters** covered Pharaoh's army, the chariots and all the horsemen. Safe on dry land, God's people danced and sang, celebrating God's rescue. **"Sing to the Lord/for he has triumphed gloriously/ the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."**
Signal children to repeat each phrase after you.

God sent Moses to rescue God's people from slavery. God sent Jesus to rescue us from our sin. We praise and thank God for His love. **Sing to the Lord/for He has triumphed gloriously/from my sin I'm now forever free.** *Children repeat each phrase after you.*

Pray

Children repeat each sentence after you.

**Dear Jesus,
I trust Your loving care for me.
From all my sins You set me free.
Thank You, loving Savior! Amen.**

Remember the Story

BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

PRE-K & K: "In God I trust; I shall not be afraid" (PS. 56:4).

GRADES 1 & 2: "Behold, God is my Salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid" (IS. 12:2).

Activities

CREATE: Gift Art.

YOU WILL NEED: watercolor or tempera paint. Children paint colorful works of art for gifts. Option: Mat the artwork. See "Camp Serve" below.

DO: Guide children to think of words and phrases that remind people of God's care. Print, or have children print, these on gift cards. See "Camp Serve" below.

SING: Teach "Horse and Rider" song, which paraphrases God's rescue of the Israelites from Egypt in Exodus 15 (search the internet for "Horse and Rider Song"); "God Is So Good" (LOSP, P. 57).

CAMP SERVE: Gift children's paintings to individuals who need to be uplifted. Attach child-made gift cards. See "Do" above.

Sending

YOU WILL NEED: a cross.

Gather children in your "Sending Circle." Say: **God sent Moses to rescue God's people from slavery. God sent Jesus (show cross) to rescue you and me.** Pass the cross, inviting children to pray as it is received, or to quietly pass it along. As each child exits say, **God goes with you.**

Live the Story

Uncertainty in life is not a new phenomenon. The Bible informs us of crises faced by God's people long ago. Today, we can see ourselves in them. Throughout Scripture, a single theme emerges: the ongoing rescue of God's people. God sent Jesus to be our Rescuer. Forgiven and loved, we trust God's plan for us now and in the future. Read Jer. 29:11-14.



Early Childhood Devotions

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

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IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES



Rattles & Prattles

A RESOURCE FOR CAREGIVERS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS



Freed and Chosen to Serve

“...THROUGH LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER” (GAL. 5:13).



October Theme: God chose people long ago to serve.

Bible Story: Moses leads God’s people out of slavery

Scripture References: Exodus 13:17–15:21

What it teaches us: God saved His people from slavery in Egypt. They responded with praise and thanksgiving. Through the saving work of Jesus, God’s Son, we are saved from sin, death and the power of the Evil One. We, God’s people today, praise and thank God for sending Jesus to save us.

Prepare to teach

- › **Read** the story and, if possible, a study Bible.
- › **Think:** The biblical story of God saving the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt is recorded in Exodus. It is mentioned many times in the Psalms — the songs of God’s people — and often used as a reminder of how God would send His Son, Jesus, to save us. .
- › **Pray:** Dear God, long ago You saved Your people from the mean king and His soldiers. They were happy — so happy they danced and sang. You sent Jesus to save us. We thank and praise You too. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE STORY PRESENTATION

You will need

- › **Bible**; picture of Jesus (do an internet search)
- › **Pictures**: find pictures online: Moses, God's people, soldiers, walking through path in the sea and people praising. Reduce sizes to 2 inches; glue in circle shapes; color; cut out; laminate; cut out; use to make tree cookies or glove puppets. Use pieces of adhesive Velcro on the back.

Gather for Worship

Sing (use melody "Mulberry Bush"): **Boys and girls, come sit with me... Boys and girls, come sit with me, right here on the floor.**

Invocation: Sing (using melody from above): **We gather here in God's name...Father, Son and Spirit, too.**

Opening Song

Show picture of Jesus. **Jesus loves each of us. We learn about Jesus' love in the Bible.** Sing "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know" (LOSP, p. 42).

Bible Story

Show figures on the tree cookies/glove puppet; sing the story to tune "The Farmer in the Dell."

- › Show Moses. Sing **A walking we will go; a walking we will go. Let pack our things, walk through-the desert; to our new home we'll go.**

- › Show people. Sing **A walking we will go; a walking we will go.** Add soldiers. Sing **What's that I see? What's that I hear? Mean soldiers coming near.**
- › Show God's people. Sing **Let's pray and ask for help (repeat) Dear God, we need Your help right now; we're shaking — full of fear.**
- › Show the path. **God sent a big, strong wind. (repeat) He made a road right through the sea. They ran through and were free.**
- › Show people praising. **Let's sing and praise our God. (repeat) Our God saved us; now we're free — to our new home we'll go.**

Song to Sing: See the suggested song in Music and PE section below.

What the Story Teaches: Share the message from "What it teaches us" (above) in your own words.

Time to Pray

Dear God, We know You are always with us, help us and save us in times of trouble. Please help us to show our thanks by loving You and helping others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing/Benediction

(Use "Mulberry Bush" tune.) **Now it's time to say goodbye ... Now it's time to say goodbye. Remember God loves — and cares — for you.**



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

S Science and Nutrition

- > The people walked through the desert; use sensory table with sand and large seashells, and use tools to scoop sand and find shells.
- > Serve blue (color of water) gelatin or (shell) mac and cheese.

T Technology

- > Use tools to scoop sand.

R Reading and Language Arts

- > God's people went on a trip. Read *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Helen Oxenbury and Michael Rosen (Little Simon, 1997). God's people saw fish in the water as they walked. Read *Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister (North-South Books, 1999).

E Engineering

- > God's people set up tents at night. Use blankets/sheets to make tents. Sit in them and retell the story, have a snack, etc.

A Arts (art, music and physical education)

- > **Art:** Use brushes or fingers to paint colors of choice. Dry. Cut into fish shapes. Tape to windows. Pretend the story, walking on the dry path.
- > **Music and PE:** Use melody from "Jimmy Crack Corn" and sing **I clap my hands to thank our God.** (repeat twice) **He loves and cares for me.** Sing again **Stomp my feet, run around, jump up high.** Use items in the room that can be used for rhythm instruments and sing again.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS in your newsletter

God's people learned God was always with them and taking care of them. Hang a picture of Jesus in your child's room. Refer to it and remind them God is with them too.



M Mathematics

- > You will need 5 large seashells (not a swallowing hazard) and a small bucket. Use the following poem: **5 little seashells lying on the shore. I picked up one — then there were 4.** Continue the same pattern until there are all in the pail. **Look! I have 5 seashells.** Either take them out while counting (repeat the poem) or set the pail out for the children to play with.

S Social Studies

- > Remind the children God is always with them (e.g., at school, at home, on a visit to the doctor, shopping, on a road trip). (See song in "Bible Story" above).



Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



Your Feet Are Wet ... Now What?

Congratulations! You did it!

You may be wondering what the purpose is of the above words of encouragement. Read them again. Yes, they are for you. They are for you to acknowledge and celebrate!

You have entered into a new school year that has likely begun in a way that has never been done before. Social distancing with early childhood students — how can that really be done?! Effective cleaning of toys children use — is that really possible?! Wearing masks — can teachers really do that all day?!

Perhaps you have started the year with in-classroom learning and have learned much about new processes and regulations related to COVID-19. Or, perhaps you are working with home-based learning and are providing activities and resources to students with the assistance of technology. No matter which direction your teaching has started or is now progressing toward, your feet are wet, and you can decide whether to continue or back up. Hopefully, you notice the water isn't too cold, and you feel safe to wade in a bit further! The school year is just beginning!

This is certainly a time of learning and growth for many educators. Regular practices are being stretched, especially in the field of early childhood education where hands-on, in-person engagements (with teachers and peers) are the foundation for children's learning. Even if you are having in-class learning, there are likely practices and protocols that make you scratch your head. And, if you are engaged in home-based learning, there are certainly practices that make you contemplate if you are doing the right thing. Do not second-guess yourself and let doubt overshadow the ministry work you are doing. Yes, the work may be different



than what you are used to, but you are moving forward in sharing Christ-filled education with your students; it just may look different.

It is easy to let the media, dissatisfied and stressed-out parents or even grumbling colleagues complain and to begin to agree with their narratives. Be on your guard! You are a servant of Christ, sent to work in the mission field of early childhood education. Nowhere does it say in Scripture, or in your educational training, that your work would be easy and without struggle. Nowhere does it say that your plans will always go just as you thought. However, Scripture does say, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (JER. 29:11). Scripture also shares that "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her

when morning dawns” (PS. 46:5). Each day, know that God provides encouragement, endurance, strength and perseverance to serve in the ministry in which He has called you. Do not let Satan creep into your mind and heart and begin to crumble that which He has built for you! You are called, and sent, to serve in His ministry!

Now, for a while, think about the students in your care. How have they grown during this unique period of time? How have they overcome trouble and unfortunate situations in which they have no control? What areas do your students have that need attention from you? What can you do to help contribute to their overall well-being?

It is still being fully determined how the COVID-19 will most impact young children. For now, many early childhood scholars are talking about the need for enhanced social and emotional learning opportunities. For many children who have been kept at home, or isolated from their regular social interactions, engagement with others, especially peers of the same age, will be important. These typical peer social engagements help develop self-regulation and executive function skills, which are needed for lifelong success. The absence of opportunities to engage in activities that build these areas will need attention for many students in your care.

As a servant in Lutheran schools, spiritual care is also of priority. Many families have not had the same regular opportunities to engage in worship with fellow Christians in a congregational setting. In well-known research done by Becker, Bertels and Morgenthaler (1999), it was determined that young children gain much spiritual acuity by participating in worship with their families. Spiritual activities done in the early years provide opportunity for children to grow deeply in their faith. Regardless of what your students have done for their family worship in recent months, how have you (and the rest of your colleagues) worked to foster the love of Jesus in your students’ hearts and minds? How have you brought the light of Christ into the homes of your students through technology and personal relationships? In addition, how are your colleagues growing in their faith? How is their



worship engagement? Be sure to provide support and encouragement for colleagues as they continue forward in their active faith-life too.

As you reflect on what you have found successful in the first weeks and months of this new school year, remember to build from the areas you found beneficial, whether big or small. Never before have educators been required to twist the delivery and focus of their classroom learning with such swift and unplanned timing. Yes, it is a challenge, but it is also a feat where progress and growth can be made.

In conclusion, spend time thinking about Martin Luther and the changes he encountered during the Reformation. He wanted changes; the church at that time was not being truthful, and Luther wanted to make sure people knew the truth about Scripture. This October, be sure to spend time reading about Martin Luther. His life was not always easy, but he knew God’s promise of love, grace, mercy, forgiveness and salvation. He got his feet wet, and he didn’t look back — Luther kept on walking. Thanks to the determination and perseverance of Martin Luther, you have a very special ministry setting in which to serve today.

Peter M. Becker, Gary L. Bertels, and Shirley K. Morgenthaler, *Children in worship: Lessons from Research* (River Forest, IL: Pillars Press, 1999).

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