

Unit 1: Masterpiece

Faith Focus: God is creative.

We are God's accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things. (Ephesians 2:10)

SESSION 5

GROW IN FAITH

God Creates Through Grace—Jonah 1–3

Today's Bible story begins with Jonah receiving a message from God to go to Nineveh with a warning from God to the people. Some say that Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh because he did not want to listen to God. But Nineveh was also a place where enemies of the Israelites lived. Jonah does not want to preach to Israel's enemy. So Jonah ignores God and runs away. He gets on a boat, is thrown overboard, and is swallowed by a whale (or a very big fish). God has the fish vomit Jonah onto dry land. God again tells Jonah to go to Nineveh and warn the people to repent. This time Jonah goes. In the end, God extends grace to both the Ninevites and Jonah. Children will probably like this action-packed story. After all, it involves vomit! They might ask if the story is true. Many biblical scholars believe that it is a parable like the ones Jesus tells. The important thing is that God's creative storytelling helps us learn more about God and how we can share the story of God's love.

- Help children retell the story of Jonah.
- Encourage children to tell their own creative stories.
- Discuss what stories help them learn about God.

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn
Faith Focus—God Is Creative
Jonah at Sea
(Art)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story
Big Faith Video
Faith Response

FUN WITH FAITH

Making Kind Choices
(Drama)
Follow the Leader
(Movement)

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

SUPPLIES

crayons
colored pencils
markers
scissors
glue sticks
blue tissue paper
blue construction paper
TV and DVD player or
streaming device

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

Prepare Ahead: Set up your area with supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15), Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23), and Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Fall Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the whale sticker on the Session 5 space.

SAY: God created everything, including people. God created each person to be unique and wonderful. God created us so that we could help each other and help take care of creation. And God creates through grace, by loving us and giving us opportunities to choose to do good things.

ASK: How do you choose what is right or good to do? Who helps you know what is right and good?

Faith Focus—God Is Creative

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, crayons, colored pencils

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23). Photocopy "Jonah's Path" (Leader Guide—p. 40) for each child.

- Show children the Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster.

SAY: Our faith focus for today is "God is creative."

ASK: How do you see God's creativity in the world? in your community? in your life?

SAY: God told a man named Jonah to help God share God's word with all people. Jonah wanted to help, but he was scared and unsure, so he didn't follow God right away. God was with Jonah the whole time he was scared and unsure, and God helped Jonah choose the right and good way to follow God's path.

- Give each child a copy of "Jonah's Path." Give children time to color the page and then trace Jonah's path.

Jonah at Sea

Supplies: Activity Sheets, glue, various shades of blue tissue paper and/or construction paper

Prepare Ahead: Tear out “Jonah at Sea” (Session 5 Activity Sheet) for each child.

ASK: Have you ever had to do something you didn’t want to do?

- Give each child a copy of “Jonah at Sea.”
- Show children how to tear various shades of blue tissue paper and glue them onto the water area of the picture.

SAY: Jonah loved and followed God, but sometimes he didn’t want to do what God wanted him to do. Jonah traveled far on the sea as he figured out what was right to do. God was with Jonah when he was traveling, helping Jonah choose what was right and good.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: CEB Bible storybook

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of Jonah from Jonah 1–3 in your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

ASK: What feelings do you think Jonah has throughout our story?

SAY: God was with Jonah all the time, even when he was in the belly of the big fish and even when Jonah wasn’t sure how to follow God. God gave Jonah a second chance to choose what was right—that second chance is sometimes called “grace.” God created grace for Jonah, and God creates grace for us too.

Big Faith Video

Supplies: Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device

- Watch the Session 5 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Share the questions on the screen with the children. You may also choose to add your own questions. Give children time to share their responses and ideas.

ASK: What was the happiest part of this story? What was the saddest part? the scariest part?

Faith Response

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, blue tissue paper, glue

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) and Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) if you haven't already.

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you.

SAY: Our Bible story today told us how God was creative by giving Jonah another chance to do what was right and good. God showed Jonah grace.

ASK: When have you had a second chance to choose what is right or good? What does it feel like when you get to try something again?

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Invite each child to pick a piece of blue tissue paper and glue it to the last section of the Faith Response Poster.

SAY: The blue reminds us of the water in Jonah's story. When we see water, we can remember God's grace.

FUN WITH FAITH

Making Kind Choices

- Invite children to stand side by side in a line facing you.

SAY: Every person has to make choices. Sometimes the choice is simple, like what you will eat for breakfast. Sometimes the choice can be difficult, like what to do when a friend says something mean or when you see someone crying. God gives us creativity so we can choose what to do when we have to make a choice.

- Tell the children you will say a situation out loud and then they will have to act out what to do in that situation.
 - You find a lost dog in the park. Will you ignore it or tell an adult so you can find its owner?
 - Your friend at school is crying. Will you comfort your friend or ask an adult for help?
 - Your teacher needs help cleaning up the class pet's cage. Will you volunteer or will you wait for someone else to do it?
 - Your grown-up needs you to clean your room. Will you clean your room or will you play games?
 - You find a dollar bill on the street outside a store. Will you return the dollar to the store or will you keep it?

- You need to apologize to someone and you're nervous. Will you apologize even though it is hard or will you not apologize?

ASK: How did it feel to act out what your choice would be?

Follow the Leader

Prepare Ahead: Make sure the area is clear of any tripping hazards.

- Invite children to spread out in your space.

SAY: God gives us opportunities to follow God's way, just like God asked Jonah to do. We can always know God will be with us and will give us grace so we can have a chance to try again.

- Tell children that they will close their eyes and listen for the sound of your voice.
- When the children's eyes are closed, walk around the room and encourage children to follow the sound of your voice. Some children may open their eyes, and that's okay.
- Tell the children to open their eyes.

ASK: How did it feel to have to follow my voice? Was it easy or challenging?

SAY: When we try to follow God, it can be hard to follow God's voice. Jonah had a hard time following God, too! But God gives us more opportunities to follow the way that is right, good, and kind.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Fall Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21).

Make copies of the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 91–92) if needed.

ASK: What have you learned about God?

SAY: God is very creative! God gives us creativity so that we can choose what is good and right to do in the world.

- Invite children to gather in a circle. Invite them to join you in prayer.

PRAY: Repeat after me: "Holy God, thank you for giving us grace when we need a second chance. Thank you for showing us that we can always turn around, try again, and choose to follow you. Amen."

- Send the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter and activity home with each child who hasn't received them.
- Send home any activities or items made during today's session.

REPRODUCIBLE SESSION 5 Jonah's Path

Trace Jonah's path as God creates grace for Jonah and the people he meets.

