

Unit 2: Promise Builder

Faith Focus: God keeps God's promises.

The LORD carried out just what he had promised. (Genesis 21:1)

SESSION 8

GROW IN FAITH

God's Promise to Sarah—Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

In the twenty-four years after they left their home in Haran, Sarah and Abraham must have wondered how God was going to make a great nation out of them when they didn't have any children. However, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, three men appeared at Abraham's tent. Abraham extended hospitality to them. What Abraham didn't know was that these three men were messengers from God. During their visit, the men told Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son. Sarah, listening at the door of the tent, laughed at this outrageous suggestion. After all, she was ninety years old. But soon their son Isaac was born. The name Isaac means "he laughs." Isaac was another reminder of God's promises to Abraham. As God promised, Abraham would have many descendants, beginning with Isaac.

- Find ways to enjoy laughter and joy together.
- Help children understand the importance of keeping a promise.
- Notice similarities and differences in friends and in community.

SUPPLIES

crayons

pencils

colored pencils

markers

scissors

string or ribbon

hole punch

sticky notes

feelings/emotions chart

construction paper

beanbag

*TV and DVD player or
streaming device*

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—God Keeps
God's Promises

Emotion Masks
(Craft/Drama)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

Big Faith Ages 3–6
Leader Guide • Fall 2024

FUN WITH FAITH

Laugh Together...or Don't!
(Game)

90 and Counting
(Math)

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

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 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19) 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 baby sticker on the Session 8 space.

SAY: We are learning how God keeps God's promises. Sometimes we have to wait, but we can trust that God always keeps God's promises to us. When promises are kept, we may feel great joy!

ASK: When do you feel joy? Where do you feel joy? Who brings you joy?

Faith Focus—God Keeps God's Promises

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

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19). Photocopy "Church Family" (Leader Guide—p. 58) for each child.

SAY: Our faith focus for today is "God keeps God's promises." One thing God promises us is that God loves us all the time. We often experience God's love for us through the people around us in our community.

ASK: Who shows you God's love?

- Give each child a copy of "Church Family." Direct the children to draw people in their church family (or even just in the children's group).

ASK: Who's in your church family?

Emotion Masks

Supplies: Activity Sheets, crayons or markers, scissors, string or ribbon, hole punch

Prepare Ahead: Tear out "Emotion Masks" (Session 8 Activity Sheet) for each child.

SAY: In our Bible story, Sarah had lots of different emotions—from sadness to worry to confusion to joy! Our feelings are a gift from God, and they help us experience our world.

- Give each child a copy of "Emotion Masks."

- Have the children color and cut out the masks and then punch out the holes. Tie ribbon or string through the holes to make the mask wearable.
- Use the mask while you read the Bible story to enhance the emotions in the story. Show children how to change the mask from one side to the other.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: CEB Bible storybook, masks made in the previous activity

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of Isaac’s birth from Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 in your favorite CEB Bible storybook.
- Use the emotion masks made earlier while you tell the story. Have children respond to the different emotions of Sarah by showing either the happy or sad side of the mask.

ASK: What emotions did Sarah feel during our story? What emotions did you feel while I read the story?

SAY: First, the special visitors to Abraham and Sarah said that Sarah would have a baby. This was very confusing. Then, God made sure that Sarah would have a baby! Wow, what a surprise! God kept God’s promises of always being with Abraham and Sarah and caring for them, even helping them build a family.

Big Faith Video

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

- Watch the Session 8 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 do you wonder about what happened next to Abraham and Sarah?

Faith Response

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, markers, pencils, feelings/emotion chart

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) and Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) if you haven’t already. Locate a simple feelings/emotions chart to show the children.

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

SAY: Our story today told us about how God kept God’s promises to Sarah. Even though Sarah trusted in God, she was still surprised when she was able to build a family—just like God had promised!

SAY: Like Sarah, we feel a lot of different emotions throughout our lives. Sometimes we laugh, sometimes we cry, sometimes we are scared or happy or anxious—God can handle all of our feelings, because God keeps God’s promise to care for us all the time.

- Show children a feelings/emotion chart.

ASK: How are you feeling today? What emotion do you feel when you think about God keeping God’s promises?

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Invite each child to draw themselves as a baby on a sticky note and put it on the poster near the baby.

Tip: Depending on the size of your group, you may choose to keep or remove the sticky notes from previous sessions.

FUN WITH FAITH

Laugh Together...or Don’t!

SAY: Sometimes when we talk about God, we feel like we have to be very serious. But in our Bible story today, we read that Sarah laughed when the special visitor told her that she could have a baby. It’s OK to laugh and feel silly and rejoice, even when we talk about God.

ASK: When is it a good idea to laugh at something? When is it not a good idea?

- Gather the children in a circle, facing outwards.
- Tell the group that they will be doing silly laughs and then copying each other.
- Choose one person to begin by doing a silly laugh. All the other children must copy them exactly, and not keep laughing. Then it is the next person’s turn to offer a silly laugh for everyone to copy.
- Try this activity facing into the circle as well.

ASK: Was it easier to do this while facing into the circle or out of the circle?

SAY: When Sarah had a baby, she named him Isaac, which means “he laughs.” Laughter is good for our bodies and our spirits. We laugh when we feel joy.

90 and Counting

Supplies: construction paper, scissors, markers

Prepare Ahead: Cut construction paper into smaller squares. Number the squares 1 to 90.

SAY: The Bible story tells us that Sarah was ninety years old when she had baby Isaac.

ASK: Can you count to 90?

- Encourage children to use the numbered squares to help them count.
- Practice counting to 90 together in different ways. Count by 5s or 10s, or count in a silly or serious voice. Then challenge the children to count backwards.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, beanbag

Prepare Ahead: Display the Fall Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21).
Make copies of the Unit 2 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 93–94) if needed.

- Gather the children together in a circle.

ASK: What have you learned about God today?

SAY: God keeps God’s promises to us, even if they take a long time and even if we don’t recognize them right away. God promised Abraham and Sarah a family, and when Sarah was ninety years old, they had a baby that brought them lots of joy.

- Give a child a beanbag. Encourage the child to say one thing that brings them joy. Continue in the circle by passing the beanbag around until everyone has had a chance to share.
- Invite children to pray with you.

PRAY: Repeat after me: “Dear God, thank you for giving us the gift of laughter. Thank you for keeping your promises to us and loving us. Amen.”

- Send the Unit 2 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 8 Church Family

Draw some of the people in your church family.

