

Rhythms of Grace • March Year 2

Scripture: Acts 9:1-31

Theme: Paul 1- Saul's conversion from an enemy of Christ to one of this Disciples

Date: _____

Locations: _____

Volunteer Role:

Facilitator _____

Storyteller _____

Celebrant _____

Center Leader _____

Guide _____

Items Needed for this Session

Gathering: paper plates, paint sticks, masking tape, crayons/markers

Storytelling: Bible, Jesus doll, story cards, paper plate faces from Gathering

Activities:

“What’s in the Bag?”- brown lunch bags, 5 items to place in bags, pictures of the 5 items (see resources).

Make a Face- cut outs of facial features (eyes, nose, mouth, ears, etc.), oval faces of construction paper, glue.

Traveling the Road to Damascus- long beam or board to walk on, tunnel or sheet over table or chairs, small stool to step over, other items for obstacle course, colored tape to follow the road, sign with picture of city and word *Damascus*. (see resources)

Over the Wall- railing or object like a bar to hang rope and basket over, basket, rope, figure of Saul.

Regathering: *Jesu, Jesu*, elements for the Eucharistic table (see Eucharist-Book 1)

Eucharist: Eucharist prayer (see Book 1 p. 100), *Gather our Hearts*, song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99), Bible, Jesus doll, altar table, and elements (pita bread/rice crackers, juice, chalice, paten, purificator, corporal, altar cloth)

Dismissal: *Jesus Loves Me*, song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99)

Session Plan • Paul I • March Yr. 2

Gathering: Paper plates with simple line drawings of a smiling face, a frowning face, and a face with closed eye will be scattered around on the floor. Each participant will pick up one of each and attach a stick to the end (ea. person will have one of ea. (3)). If they finish before others pick up the rest of the paper plates and sort into the 3 piles. 3 faces will be used during story telling. Have participants tell which face is happy, which sad, which can't see.

Storytelling: Using Jesus doll, Bible, story cards and faces from Gathering tell about Saul's early life and then his conversion on the road to Damascusstory will end as Paul leaves Damascus to spend time in the desert. See story and cards.

Response Activities:

“What’s in the Bag?”-The five brown bags will each be filled with an item for participants to identify by touch. Pictures of each item should be on the table. Participants will choose what picture matches the item in each bag. (see resources)

Make a Face –Participants will glue facial features i.e. nose, mouth, eyes that have been cut out on oval forms.

Traveling the Road to Damascus-Participants will move through the obstacle course following the colored tape. Place the Damascus sign at the end of the course.

Over the Wall- Attach the basket to the rope. Place the rope over a railing or chair. Participant will place a Saul figure in the basket and hoist the basket to the top. Lower the basket back down, take Saul out, and set up for the next participant.

Regathering: Singing *Jesu, Jesu*, leader gives participants an Eucharist element and participant brings it to the Celebrant then sits down in the circle around the Eucharistic table.

Eucharist: Sing: Gather our Hearts

Gather our hearts, oh God.
Gather our thoughts, oh God.
Bring us together around you.

Celebration of the Eucharist

Dismissal: All sing and sign *Jesus Loves Me*,
Celebrant provides a blessing:
Celebrant: “*Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord.*”
Participant: “*Thanks be to God!*”

Storytelling • Paul I • March Yr. 2

Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller

Story cards: 1. *Father the tent maker*

2. *On the road to Damascus*

3. *Scales dropping from Paul's face*

4. *Lowered down the wall and walking into desert*

Our story today is from our Bible, (show the Bible), our book that tells the stories of God and God's people...of Jesus, (show Jesus doll), God's son... and of how much God loves us. (place hands over heart).

Today's story is from the second part of our Bible, (show Bible and divide in half). The second part of our Bible is called the New Testament. It has the stories of Jesus and the early church. (show the Jesus doll again)

Explain to the listeners: *"During the story I would like you to help me with using the three faces you have on your paper plates. When I ask you to hold up a particular face find the one that matches mine and hold it up."* (practice with group)

In the Bible, Jesus tries to help people understand how much he loves them and wants to help them. There were men in the country who did not like the message that Jesus was spreading (maybe they didn't understand it). After Jesus died, rose, and then went to heaven, these men began to hunt down the followers of Jesus. They arrested them, brought them back to Jerusalem and many died. The man I want to tell you about today was named Saul. At first he was a member of this group. This story has a second part for next month. Jesus has a plan for Saul.

Saul grew up in a small city near the sea called Tarsus. He helped his father who made tents. (*story card #1*). Saul and his family, like Jesus, were Jewish. Saul loved the language of the synagogue, remember the synagogue was like a Jewish church. When Saul grew up he decided to go to the city of Jerusalem so he could study with the best Jewish teachers. Saul studied very hard as he wanted to be one of the Pharisees, the men who worked hard to keep all of the laws in the Torah. One day he heard about the followers of Jesus. These followers of Jesus believed Jesus, was the Messiah, the Son of God. When Saul heard that he became very angry. He believed Jesus was a criminal and that he had been crucified and was dead. He believed Jesus' followers were telling lies about God and had to be STOPPED!.... This is what I think that Saul felt about Christians... ..(*hold up your sad/angry face*) *Can you find your mad or sad face?*

One day when he was traveling with others to Damascus in search of friends of Jesus so he could arrest them and have them killed, he heard a voice.... "Saul, Saul, why are you trying to hurt me?" (story card #2) Saul said, "Who are you?" All of a sudden a very bright light flashed and a voice said, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. Get up. Go into the city. You will be

told what to do.” Saul tried to get up but he couldn’t see anything...He was blind!
Which face shows that Saul cannot see?.....(*hold up your blind face*)

The men who were with him took him into the city and left him in a house there. He stayed for 3 days not eating or drinking. In the darkness a follower of Jesus came, Ananias. He told Saul, “I was sent by Jesus to lay hands on you and bless you.” Ananias touched Saul’s eyes and something like fish scales dropped to the floor, Saul could see. (story card #3) He was changed forever. He could feel the love of Jesus growing inside him. Ananias baptized Saul. What face might show how Saul felt about Christ now?.....(*show your happy face*)

When Saul regained his strength he went to the synagogue to tell his friends the good news about what had happened and how he now believed in Jesus and his teachings, the Good News. The guards tried to arrest him so he had to hide with the Christians, the other followers of Christ. One night when it was very dark a group of Christians took Saul to the city wall, hoisted him up and lowered him down on the other side of the wall to disappear in the darkness. (story card #4)

Saul went into the desert to think and pray to God. He asked God to show him what to do next. The story will continue.....

Amen.

Continue by explaining activities