

Rhythms of Grace • July Year 2

Theme: Baptism-We join a Community and are named as God's own

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

Date: _____

Location: _____

Volunteer Roles:

Facilitator _____

Storyteller _____

Celebrant _____

Center Leader _____

Guide _____

Items Needed for this Session

Gathering: 10 ft. length of white banner paper, ink, black felt tip, wet sponges, towels

Storytelling: 6" felt figures: 8 'biblical' adult ones, 5 'modern day' adult ones, and 7 'baby' ones. Felt font. Felt board. (see patterns in resources)

Response Activities:

Painting Shells- white scallop shells (sold in craft/florist stores), washable paint, brushes, bowls of water to wash brushes, paper towels, fine point permanent marker

Paper Chain of Names- 8" long strips of paper, magic markers, stapler

Imaginative Play at the Font- water table or big dish tub, baby doll, shell towels

Baptism memory Game- cards duplicated from baptism pictures of adult baptism and baby baptism, 8 of each (see story cards for pictures)

Regathering: Parachute Name Game- parachute or large sheet, ping pong balls, fine tip permanent marker, elements for the Eucharistic table (see Eucharist-Book 1)

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

Dismissal: *Jesus Loves Me* with hand motions

Session Plan • Baptism • July Yr. 2

Gathering: As participants arrive, invite them to help create a “crowd” banner, using fingerprints on the paper to represent individuals in the crowd. Press fingertip in inkpad, then onto paper, repeat. Volunteer can add “eyes” and a “smile” to each fingerprint to make it look like a face. Cover the banner with many people. Wash fingers off with wet sponge and paper towel.

Storytelling: With Jesus doll, Bible and felt board story, all will gather to tell the story about baptism as joining God’s family.

Response Activities:

Painting Shells- using washable paints, allow participants to create brightly colored ornaments to remember their baptisms. When dry, add the name of the person on the shell with a permanent marker.

Paper Chain- Invite participants to write their name and the name of all their family members and any church friends on slips of paper (one name per slip) and staple them into a long chain, representing the community of Christ. Each participant’s slips get added to the growing chain to create one large chain.

Imaginative Play at the Font- re-enact a baptism by using a baby doll and water tub. Make the sign of the cross on the baby and use the Trinitarian statement, “(n.), I baptize you in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Baptism Memory Game- using 8 cards showing adult baptism and 8 cards showing a baby’s baptism, lay the cards out face-down in a 4X4 grid and play a memory game, turning over two cards at a time and collecting the pairs. Play until all the pairs are matched.

Regathering: All gather around a parachute or large sheet, holding the edges. Gently shake the parachute as the leader marks ping pong balls with participants’ names (one name per ball). The leader tosses the balls one at a time into the center of the parachute and says, “(n.) is a member of God’s family!” and the crowd responds, “Welcome, (n.) to God’s family!” Repeat until all the balls representing everyone in the room have been added to the center of the parachute. Have fun flipping the balls in the parachute! Singing *Jesu, Jesu*, leader gives participants an Eucharist element and participant brings it to the Celebrant then sits down at 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!”

Story Telling • Baptism • July Yr. 2

Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller

Gather around the felt board with the felt figures on the floor in front of the story teller. Place the felt font in the center of the board.

Our story today is from our bible (*show 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*).

And, our story today is about lots and lots and lots of people who all have one thing in common: they are all members of God's family.

How many of you live in a family? Can you tell us who lives in your house with you? (*solicit answers*).

Some of us have brothers, some of us have sisters, some of us have Mom or Dad who live with us...some of us have grandparents who live with us...and some of us might live with our uncles or cousins or people who are so close to us that we call them family.

God's family is giant. It is even bigger than this: (motion to fingerprint crowd banner from Gathering)

When we are baptized, we join God's family.

A long time ago, when the church was just beginning, people wanted to join God's family- to be close to God and to Jesus. And so, they were baptized.

Select two or three of the "Biblical adult" felt figures, and put them on the felt board near the font. Pretend to dip your finger in the font and baptize these figures.

These people had their own families that they lived with...but by being baptized, they joined a bigger family of people who loved Jesus. (*ask for volunteers to put up the rest of the biblical adult figures and pretend to baptize them by dipping their finger in the font.*) Most of the people who were baptized in the beginning were adults...but some babies were baptized, too. Sometimes, a whole family got baptized at once! (*ask for volunteers to put up a couple of babies and pretend to baptize them by dipping their finger in the font.*)

When we are baptized, we are given a special gift from God called "grace." "Grace" is not something that you can see, but it is a gift from God that makes us feel loved and included and special. It is something that we share with everyone else who is baptized. We call other baptized people our "brothers and sisters in Christ."

We are all members of God's great family, (*motion to felt board*) through baptism. Amen.
Continue by explaining the activities.