

Rhythms of Grace Worship • March Year 3

Theme: Jesus Blesses the Children

Scripture: Matthew 19: 13-15

Date: _____

Location: _____

Volunteer Roles:

Facilitator _____

Storyteller _____

Celebrant _____

Center Leader _____

Guide _____

Items needed for this Session

Gathering: used children's clothing (shirts and pants), either newspaper or sheets (material to stuff the clothing), balloons or colored beach balls, one for each figure to make the head, baby dolls for each child

Storytelling: Jesus doll, Bible, Storytelling page, mannequins from gathering baby dolls.

Response Activities:

Sandpaper Art- sandpaper cut into crosses, iron, white paper, crayons

Blessing Boxes- small unpainted boxes from craft store, paints, strips of paper with different ways to count your blessings each day, see Resources

Jesus Says Hopscotch- foam squares or circles with a set that says; "Je, Sus, Says, Let, The, Children, Come"

All About Me- large cut outs of children, pictures of items that the participants could use to describe themselves i.e. soccer ball-like playing soccer; piano-like playing the piano, dog-have a dog or like pets; swimming pool-like to swim, stickers and other embellishments

Regathering: **Baby Relay-** baby dolls, *Jesu, Jesu*, 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* song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99 and CD Yr. 2 additional resources)

Sessions Plan • Jesus Blesses the Children • March Yr. 3

Gathering: On arrival, children will use newspaper or material to crumple and stuff small children's shirts and pants to create children mannequins (balloon or beach ball heads) then they will pick up a baby doll to hold during story telling.

Storytelling: Using the mannequins from the Gathering along with the Jesus doll, Bible, and baby dolls, use the Storytelling page to tell how important children are to Jesus.

Response Activities:

Sandpaper Art- Participants will color crosses made out of sandpaper and a volunteer will use a warm iron to transfer the colors to a white paper.

Blessing Box- Participants will paint small wooden boxes and then receive strips of paper with different ideas for each day about counting our blessings (i.e. name two friends who you saw today). Blessing ideas in Resources but add your own too!

Jesus Says Hopscotch- Play hopscotch stepping on the words and repeating the phrases as they jump.

All About Me- Cut-out pictures are to be glued on the large outlined images to tell others about who you are (i.e. likes, pets, family, etc.) Add stickers or other embellishments.

Regathering: Baby Relay- Using baby dolls and working in two teams, the participants will work together to relay all the baby dolls to Jesus. When completed, have group sit for Eucharist and share their cut outs above.

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 the blessing:
Celebrant: "Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord"
Participant: "Thanks be to God!"

Storytelling • Jesus Blesses the Children • March Yr. 3

Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller.

As the gathering is finished have older children (able to move the mannequins) or volunteers stay with the figures behind the group assembled. As you tell the story you will be playing the part of Jesus. If you have other adults willing to help they could be the disciples who block the children at first.

Our story today is from the 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 comes from the part of our Bible (*hold the Bible again and divide it appropriately*) that tells about Jesus's life. It is the second part of the Bible called the New Testament. In today's story Jesus is talking about children. Maybe you can think about what He is saying about children, and about you. After I tell you the story today we will all have a chance, if you want, to be a part of the story as we retell it.

There was a time when Jesus had spent a long time talking with people and healing people. He went to sit for a few minutes. As he did, parents brought their children to him to place his hands on them and pray for them (*have the mannequins and baby dolls brought to you*). The disciples scolded the people telling them to take the children away and not to disturb Jesus (*have a few adults play the disciples, here they pretend to block the way of the mannequins and baby dolls*). But, Jesus told the disciples and the parents, "Let the little children come to me, and do not keep them away" (*as you say this motion to all dolls and mannequins to come closer, take the dolls in your arms*). The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these". He then placed his hands on them, prayed and blessed them (*bless each of the dolls and then the mannequins*) and then each child.

Depending on your community you might have a little wondering about, What Jesus says about children or begin the role play following immediately after the story.

(Ask the children who would like to help retell the story as characters in the story: children, disciples, Jesus, or parents. Continue until everyone who wants to, has had a chance.)

Amen!

After an appropriate pause, the Storyteller goes to explain the activities of the day.