

Gospel According to Dr. Seuss

A One Room Sunday School Program

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Week 1: Me & You

Bible Verse

I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set apart. Your works are wonderful—I know that very well. (Psalm 139:14)

Theme

Every person is wonderfully and uniquely made by God

Seuss Summary: *My Book About Me, By ME, Myself*

With a mix of serious (and seriously silly!) “Yes” and “No” questions; fill-in-the-blanks; images to complete, and simple writing activities, *My Book About Me, By ME, Myself* encourages children to write and draw their own biographies.

Bible Background

Psalm 139 is one of the best known psalms with its affirmation of God’s role as creator, not only of the universe, but as the divine parent of every human being. According to the Psalmist, every part of us is made by God -- mind, body, emotions. The term “wonderfully made” is translated from adjectives used to mean “miracle.” So then, our very existence as complex beings is one of the miraculous acts by which we know God exists. Not only are we made in God’s image (Genesis 1) but each detail about us was crafted by God. This is yet another affirmation for children and a building block for healthy self-image.

Activity

Supplies: “All About Me” printable and pencils

PREP: Make copies of the “All About Me” printable.

- Give each child an “All About Me” printable and a pencil.

- Have children complete the printable by filling in the appropriate information.
- Collect the printables to use later in the session.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *My Book About Me, By ME, Myself*

PREP: Complete the pages in *My Book About Me, By ME, Myself*.

TIP: This is an excellent session for a pastor or lay-leader who does not regularly serve in ministry with children to guest lead.

- Ask children to sit down in a circle for the story.

SAY: This book is a little different than most because it's co-written by me! This way you can get to know a little about me.

READ: *My Book About Me, By ME, Myself*

ASK: Are there any other things you may want to know? (*allow children to ask a few questions*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: One of the great things about this book is that it changes all the time depending on who is writing it with Dr. Seuss. It's a great reminder that every person is unique.

READ: Psalm 139:14 to affirm every person is wonderfully made by God.

ASK: What do you think it means to be "wonderfully made"? (*miracle*)

SAY: God made every person with the same attention to detail and craftsmanship as when God made the whole universe. God doesn't make trash or junk. Every bit of you should be celebrated with awe and wonder from the way you look to the things you love even your quirky ways. Every person is a miracle!

Activity

Supplies: "HATS Off To You" printable, pencils or pens, scissors, 12x18 construction paper in various colors, glue sticks, a camera or smartphone, and "All About Me" printables completed earlier

PREP: Ask older adults to join this session as guests to be interviewed by the children. Be sure to have enough volunteers for groups of two. Print copies of the "HATS Off To You" printable onto 11x17 paper.

- Pair an older and younger child together.
- Explain that each team will interview one of the older adults from the congregation using a special "HATS Off To You" printable. Also mention that each child will share his/her "All About Me" printable with their small group.
- Return each child's "All About Me" printable and give each team an "HATS Off To You" printable and a pencil. Point out that there is space below each question to write the information. Encourage children to use their best penmanship.
- Direct children to share their "All About Me" printables first as a way of introducing themselves. Then, children may take turns asking and writing down questions.
- Assign each team an older adult to interview. Encourage groups to find a quiet space for the interview.

- Take a picture of each group during the interview to use in a display. If time allows, print the pictures before the end of class.
- When children complete their interviews, ask them to glue the “HATS Off To You” printable onto a piece of construction paper to create a nice border for a display. If possible, ask children to do the same with their group picture.
- Complete a display by showcasing each group’s “HATS Off To You” printable and picture (optional: each child’s “All About Me” printable) where others in the congregation can see.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Gracious and Loving God, we are so thankful that you crafted each of us in unique and wonderful ways. Help us to always find ways to celebrate these qualities. We are thankful for our whole church and learning more about each other. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 2: Sizable Matters

Bible Verse

What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)

Theme

Everyone is important to God no matter how big (or old) they are.

Seuss Summary: *Horton Hears a Who*

In the Jungle of Nool, Horton the elephant hears a faint voice on a passing clover. He realizes there very small people on the clover who need help so he puts the clover in a safe place. But the other animals don't believe him. They don't believe their are people so small that they live on the clover. They think Horton is a fool and they steal the clover and hide it. No one believes Horton but he doesn't give up. There is an entire world on that clover and he is determined to save them because "a person's a person no matter how small!"

Bible Background

As part of a much larger discourse, these verses offer a striking promise of God's love and care, not only for every one of God's creatures but indeed for every hair on their heads. This is powerfully comforting, especially to children who often think they are "too small" or feel unimportant. If God knows every single sparrow in the sky, and every single hair on our heads, that means there is nothing too great or too small for God to care about. God cares for and loves children and adults alike. This passage offers children an important reminder that to God everyone, no matter their size or age, is precious and worthy of God's attention.

Activity

- Invite children to sit in a circle. If you have a large group, form two circles.
- Explain the game of telephone. An adult will begin the game by whispering a short phrase into the ear of the person to his/her right, then that person will whisper what they hear to the next person, and so on, until the person at the other end receives the given word or phrase and says it out loud.
- Play the game as time allows.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: DVD of *Horton Hears a Who* (25 mins), DVD player, and television

- Gather children together so that everyone can see the television.

SAY: It can be hard to hear when someone whispers in your ear. Just imagine how hard it was to hear the voice of something that lives on a speck of dust. Horton hears the voice and reasons there must exist a person, too small to be seen, but who is definitely there. But, the other animals don't believe him. Let's watch.

- Watch *Horton Hears a Who*.

ASK: Why didn't the other animals believe Horton? (*the Whos were too small to see or hear*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

READ: Matthew 10:29-31 to hear that God cares about even the littlest things like the hairs on our head.

ASK: What do you think it means that God knows all the hairs on your head?

SAY: This is Jesus' way of telling us that God cares for every single, itty-bitty piece of the world. God can see and hear even the smallest of voices and concerns. That means, no matter our size, God cares about you and loves you.

Activity

Supplies: a timer, and for each team you will need a pair of chopsticks, a chopstick helper, pom-poms in three sizes, bowls or a dividing tray to separate pom-poms by size, and a cup

TIP: Ask a local Asian food restaurant or market or Noodles & Company to donate chopsticks and chopstick helpers.

PREP: Divide the pom-poms by size into individual bowls or a dividing tray and place them at one end of the room. Put an empty cup for each team at the other end of the room as the starting point.

- Divide children into teams to run a relay race.
- Show kids the different size pom-poms and explain that each size is worth a different point value: Large is 1 point, Medium is 2 points, and Small is 4 points. The team with the most points wins.
- Demonstrate how to use the helper-chopsticks to pick up a pom-pom. Assure kids it is okay to use both hands to hold the chopsticks, if needed.
- Point out that just like Horton had to be careful with the Whos, children will need to carefully hold the chopsticks to carry the pom-poms as fast as possible in the relay.
- Play as time allows.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Holy God we give you thanks that you see even the smallest in the world and care for them. Help us to hear others calls Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 3: Stars in Our Eyes

Bible Verse

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

Theme

Every person is created by God. We are both alike and different from one another, but God called all of us very good.

Seuss Summary: *The Sneetches*

In *The Sneetches*, some Sneetches have green stars on their bellies while others do not. “Those stars weren’t so big. They were really so small. You might think such a thing wouldn’t matter at all.” But they did. The stars were as a source of discrimination until Sylvester McMonkey McBean came to town with a machine to add and remove stars. Suddenly the Sneetches are forced to question their differences.

Bible Background

In the first chapter of the Bible, we learn God created all things and human beings were the culmination of this orderly and intentional work. Of all that God created, only humans are made in the image of God and described as “very good.” Much can be said about what it means to be made in the image of God, including that God created people to have intelligence and imagination, capable of creativity and love. But perhaps above all, for children, it’s important to understand that they are created by God and in God’s image. This is a basic building block for their self-image as a person who is worthy of respect and love the same as every person.

Activity

- Gather children in the middle of the classroom.

- Explain that you will call out something descriptive, like “wears glasses, and doesn’t wear glasses,” and each child will move to the appropriate side of the room.
- Call children back to the middle of the room and repeat with other creative descriptors (hair color, clothing, number of siblings, hobbies, etc.).
- On the last round, while children are still in two groups, ask the following questions about fairness.

ASK: Is it fair if one group gets a special snack but the other group doesn’t? Is it fair for that group to pick the game to play or the show to watch? Is it fair for that group to always win the game or get the best seats?

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *The Sneetches*

- Ask children to sit down in a circle for the story.

SAY: Let’s see what Dr. Seuss has to say about all this in his book *The Sneetches*.

READ: *The Sneetches*

ASK: What was different about the two groups of Sneetches? How do the Sneetches treat those who are different from them? Do you think it’s fair or right to treat people differently because of the way they look? What about those who act differently?

SAY: We learned earlier that there are many things that make people different from one another. Sometimes it’s the color of our hair or what we are wearing or something about our families or what we enjoy doing.

ASK: Do you think any of those things make some people better than others?

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

READ: Genesis 1:27 to discover God created all people in the image of God.

ASK: What is the one thing all people share in common? (*the image of God*) What do you think it means to be created in the image of God? (*we are special among all God's creation; create like God; imagination; thinking; know right from wrong; etc.*)

SAY: In another part of the Bible we learn that all those things that make us different, like what we enjoy doing or what we wear or the color of our skin or hair, don't mean anything because everyone is the same in Jesus (Galatians 3:28). That doesn't mean all of a sudden we look exactly the same or do exactly the same thing, we are still unique people, but that above all else we love each other first and foremost as children of God.

ASK: How can we help make sure everyone is treated fairly in our class and our church?

Activity

Supplies: [Thumball Who Are You?](#)

TIP: Thumball Who Are You? is available to purchase online. You can make a similar ball by using a permanent marker to write "get to know you" type questions.

- Ask everyone stand up and form a circle.

- Explain the purpose of the game is to get to know each other better and help us see that even though we are all different, everyone is a child of God.
- Show children how to gently toss the thumbball to another player.
- When a child catches the thumbball, his/her thumbs will land on two questions. Instruct children to pick one question to answer. Encourage other children to help early readers with the questions.
- Once a child answers a question, lead the whole group in saying “Thanks, child of God.”
- Continue to play until everyone has a had a turn or longer as desired.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Thank you God for bringing us together. Help us remember that it’s silly to judge others like the sneetches did. Give us courage to celebrate what makes us different and wisdom to know that we are all created in your image. May we go from this place knowing we are loved by you and should love all others. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 4: Fear Not

Bible Verse

This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)

Theme

We can't runaway from fear but we can face our fears knowing God is with us

Seuss Summary: *What Was I Scared Of?*

This is one of Dr. Seuss' short stories. It is about an unnamed narrator who has never been afraid of anything before and is suddenly terrified by an empty pair of green pants. The pants suddenly seem to be everywhere, seemingly following the narrator. Eventually the narrator is cornered by the pants and screams and yells for help until suddenly the pants began to cry. The narrator realizes the pants are just as scared of him as he is of them.

Bible Background

This passage both recognizes the reality of fear and the power of faith to overcome it. God commands Joshua to not be afraid because God is with him. Joshua is able to overcome his very real fear because he believes in faith that God's word is true that, indeed, the Almighty God will lead the way and surrounded him as he faces his fear. Wether it's feelings of inadequacy, a phobia, or being scared of green pants, fear is a powerful emotion that can cripple us. God's command to not fear coupled with a promise of God's abiding presence can be very comforting to children who often deal with (typical) fears like things that go bump in the night, animals, or a teacher's harsh rebuke.

Activity

Supplies: props for each phobia (optional)

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Explain the word “phobia” means “fear” and there are hundreds of different phobias.
- Play a guessing game to see if children can guess the fear by its name. Use the props to add humor or help them guess.
 - Nomophobia - fear of losing cell phone contact
 - Catoptrophobia - fear of mirrors
 - Arithmophobia - fear of numbers
 - Selenophobia - fear of the moon
 - Genuphobia - fear of knees
 - Octophobia - fear of the number 8
 - Sesquipedalophobia - fear of long words
 - Acerophobia - fear of sour foods
 - Porphytophobia - fear of the color purple
 - Omphalophobia - fear of belly buttons
 - Consecotaleophobia - fear of chopsticks
 - Peladophobia - fear of bald people
 - Phobophobia - fear of phobias

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *What Was I Scared Of?*

SAY: A lot of those fears seem silly to us but to some people they are very real fears. Let’s see what Dr. Seuss has to say about fears.

READ: *What Was I Scared Of?*

ASK: How did the narrator try to deal with his fear of the green pants? (*denying, running away, hiding*) Do you think you would be afraid of green pants moving on their own? What are some things you're afraid of? (*allow time to share*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: The narrator in our book tried a lot of different ways to get away from those scary pants, but when he finally faced off with them, he discovered they were just as scared. And they became friends! Joshua overcame his fear by trusting in God and facing his fear.

READ: Joshua 1:9 to hear God's command not to fear because God promises to be with us.

ASK: Can you guess how many times the Bible says "fear not"? (*365, one for every day of the year!*)

SAY: God tells us not to be afraid for a very important reason. Because God is with us. When we are scared, God is there to help us be brave and strong enough to overcome our fears. It may still take time, but we can always trust that we are not facing those fears alone.

ASK: Does anyone want to share about a time you overcame a fear? (*allow children the opportunity to share but be ready with a brief story of your own*)

Activity

Supplies: green construction paper, scissors, pants pattern, drawing paper, crayons and markers

NOTE: This activity was inspired by the book *It's Not a Stick* and the wonderful imaginative activities of transforming a stick into anything other than a stick.

PREP: Copy the pants pattern onto green construction paper. Cut out the pants.

- Give each child a piece of drawing paper and a pair of green pants.
- Explain to them that one way we can conquer fear is by laughing and making the very thing we fear something silly.
- Challenge kids to turn the pair of green pants into something silly by using their imaginations to manipulate, cut, draw (anything goes!) the pants into a new picture.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Almighty God, help us to know we are never alone when we are afraid because you are with us. And with you, we can face our fears and overcome them. Let us be strong in you and never allow fear to hold us back from the joy of life. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"

Week 5: Don't be Judgy

Bible Verse

But why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on your brother or sister? We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God. Because it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God. (Romans 14:10-11)

Theme

Don't judge something just because it's different

Seuss Summary: *Green Eggs and Ham*

This much beloved classic is about Sam-I-Am who wants the narrator to try green eggs and ham. But the narrator adamantly and consistently refuses to try the new food. Sam-I-Am offers to serve it in a number of different places with a whole host of different companions, but still the narrator refuses until the very end of the book when the narrator finally gives in and tries the green eggs and ham to discover he loves it! Even more, he comes to life Sam-I-Am.

Bible Background

Paul is writing to the Christians in Rome to encourage them in the practice of hospitality and compassion for all. He is aware of the diversity among the Roman Christians, of which diet is only a small example, and he wants all to understand that one group is not more right than the other but instead everyone should follow God's example of welcoming all into the church. Children are keenly aware of the diversity around them and that some people look different or have different ideas and beliefs will not be surprising. The challenge of this passage is to look beyond those differences to offer love and welcome to all rather than judgment based on trivial differences or things outside of moral right and wrong.

Activity

Supplies: two identical and unmarked plastic jugs, orange juice, salt, water, green and blue food coloring, and cups

PREP: Before class, pour the orange juice into one jug and add green food coloring. Fill the second jug with warm (or hot depending on the time it will have to cool) water and add salt and blue food coloring.

- Gather children together for a taste test of the two liquids.
- Show both drinks to the kids and inquire which one they think will taste the best. Then, ask if they would like to try the drinks.
- Allow children who are willing to taste test one or both drinks.

ASK: Did you expect the drinks to taste different based on the way they looked? Do you think it's a good idea to judge something based on how it looks? (*allow the children to ponder and share ideas, be sure to affirm all ideas as valid wonderings*)

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: DVD of *Green Eggs and Ham* (25 mins), DVD player, and television

- Gather children together so that everyone can see the television.

SAY: Dr. Seuss wrote a fun book about a person who refuses to try green eggs and ham even though Sam-I-Am insists it is yummy. Let's watch the story together.

- Watch *Green Eggs and Ham*.

ASK: Why do you think the narrator refused over and over again to try green eggs and ham?

SAY: Many people think Dr. Seuss wrote this book to help people understand how silly it is to judge others simply because they are different than you.

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

READ: Romans 14:10-11 to discover that God does not want us to judge one another.

SAY: This Bible verse is an important reminder to all of us that God doesn't judge us based on things like skin color, family members, or where we live and those who want to follow God's ways should show the same kind of love to others.

ASK: What does the word "prejudice" mean? (*opinion that is not based on reason or experience*)

SAY: In our book, the narrator was prejudice against green eggs and ham. He didn't like them even though he never tried them! Sometimes we judge others before we know anything about them. That's prejudice. And God has called us to love all and to be kind even when others are different than us.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Holy God, help us to keep an open mind and not be quick to judge something simply because it is different. Send your spirit to encourage us to love always and never be prejudice. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"

Week 6: Imaginations Gone Wild

Bible Verse

The Lord has filled him with the divine spirit that will give him skill, ability, and knowledge for every kind of work. He will be able to create designs, do metalwork in gold, silver, and copper, cut stones for setting, carve wood, do every kind of creative work, and have the ability to teach others. (Exodus 35:32-34a)

Theme

Made in the image of God, we have imagination to use our God-given gifts to create something new

Seuss Summary: *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!*

This book is about all the amazing “thinks” one can think and the endless possibilities and dreams of the imagination. It celebrates creativity and encourages children to think about thinking!

Bible Background

These verses from Exodus are a description of Bezalel’s many talents given by God to construct the meeting tent but of course Bezalel is not the only person who is given creativity and imagination. Indeed, many have expressed an understanding that creativity and imagination are marks of being made in the Image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Though we are not the same as God, like God humanity creates. It is part of our essential being as those made in the image of God. Children are perhaps most in tune with this God-given creativity because they experience reality very different than adults who often feel pressure to conform. Kids will find empowerment in knowing their imagination is in fact God-given.

Activity

Supplies: blank drawing paper and crayons

- Give each child a blank piece of paper and access to crayons.

- Ask kids to draw a picture with black water, a white sky, a boat, and bloogs blowing by. Be sure to give no further suggestions or instructions to allow children to create independently.
- After about five minutes, ask children to complete their pictures and bring them to the circle area.
- Turn to page with “Think of black water. Think of a white sky...” in *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!* and show the picture to the kids.

ASK: How is your picture different than Dr. Seuss’ illustration? Did you draw “bloogs” the same as Dr. Seuss and others? Why?

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!*

SAY: Dr. Seuss had an amazing imagination and created a whole different world full of fantastical animals, people, and even silly words like “bloogs.” And in this very special book, Dr. Seuss wants to encourage all of us to be creative and tap into our imaginations.

READ: *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think!*

ASK: What are some of the “thinks” Dr. Seuss imagines? Can we think of things that don’t exist or things that are impossible? (*yes*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: In an earlier lesson we learned people are made in the Image of God. We wondered about the meaning of being made in God’s image. One of the most common thoughts is that being made in God’s image means we also have the gift of creativity. Just as God created all things, humans can create new things.

ASK: What are some of things God imagined and created?
(*everything!*)

SAY: God made us to have an imagination. And God has given us gifts to put that imagination to work. In our story for today, we learn about a man named Bezalel who was chosen to help build and design the meeting tent because he had a lot of amazing skills.

READ: Exodus 35:32-34a to learn about Bezalel's skills.

ASK: Bezalel was very talented, what are some of your talents? How could you use those talents to honor God like Bezalel?

SAY: It is good to use our creativity and imagination to think of and make new things. God gave us these gifts to use and if we need any more motivation than that, just think of all the "thinks" Dr. Seuss inspired!

Activity

Supplies: pipe cleaners and tinfoil (equal amounts for each child or team)

PREP: Tear off same size sheets of tinfoil to provide each team with several sheets.

TIP: This activity is also great for individuals. Choose the option that works best for your group of children.

- Count children off by numbers to create random teams.
- Give each team the same number of pipe cleaners and sheets of tinfoil.
- With no other instructions, encourage the teams to work together to come up with something create using only the supplies provided.

- Allow enough time so that each team can share about their creation.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Holy God, help us to keep an open mind and not be quick to judge something simply because it is different. Send your spirit to encourage us to love always and never be prejudice. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 7: Gimme!

Bible Verse

The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some have wandered away from the faith and have impaled themselves with a lot of pain because they made money their goal. (1 Timothy 6:10)

Theme

Stuff isn't the most important thing in life but rather loving God and loving others

Seuss Summary: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*

Perhaps Dr. Seuss' most well known story, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* is the story of a very grouchy, very pessimistic, solitary creature called the Grinch. Because he is so miserable, the Grinch attempts to put an end to Christmas by stealing everything -- decorations, gifts, food -- from the homes of the nearby Whos. In spite of his efforts, the Whos still celebrate Christmas with joyful singing. At this the Grinch considers perhaps Christmas is more than he thought and suddenly his heart grows three times larger. He returns everything to the Whos who welcome him to their festivities.

Bible Background

In this section of 1 Timothy, the author is challenging Christians to choose between serving God or self-serving. The goal of course is to encourage people to choose serving God. This particular verse is not speaking against money itself but rather how we use money. For Christians, when shared with a spirit of generosity that is in keeping with God's desires, wealth can and does much good to love others. The warning, though, is very clear: Wealth used only to serve oneself can lead only to unfaithfulness because money becomes "a god" and the goal of life rather than loving God and loving others. We all live in a world that runs on money and we cannot have a decent existence without money, and yet the challenge for Christians is to not allow money to become all consuming. Children are as

susceptible, if not more, to the lure of money (or at least all the stuff it buys) as adults. Challenge children to think about how serving God and others is a way to avoid the temptation of materialism.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: DVD of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (25 mins), DVD player, and television

- Gather children together so that everyone can see the television.

SAY: I bet many of you are familiar with today's Dr. Seuss story. It's a Christmas favorite and it has an important message for us about what is truly important in life every day of the year.

- Watch *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*.

ASK: Why do you think the Grinch hated Christmas so much?

SAY: The Grinch stole everything from the Whos -- decorations, gifts, food -- but they still celebrated Christmas by joining hands and singing. The Grinch was shocked by this because he was sure that he had ruined Christmas when he stole all the stuff from Whoville.

ASK: Why do you think the Whos were still able to celebrate Christmas?

SAY: The Grinch had it wrong. He thought he could just take everything away from the Whos and he would take away their happiness and they would be miserable too. But, the Whos didn't care about that stuff. Nothing that was truly important was missing because they still had each other and could celebrate God together.

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

READ: 1 Timothy 6:10 to hear the warning against materialism.

SAY: The Whos knew that happiness doesn't come from money or the stuff it can buy. They celebrated even without their stuff because they knew what was truly important doesn't come from a store.

ASK: What do you think is most important in life? (*allow for a variety of answers*)

SAY: It's okay that we have stuff and we need to have money to buy the things we need, but we can never let that stuff become number one in our lives. The Grinch thought stuff was what made Christmas so special, but like the Whos we know that Christmas is special because it celebrates the birth of Jesus. And everyday is another opportunity to love God and love others.

Activity

Supplies: yarn, bottle caps, scraps of wood and fabric, cardboard tubes, egg cartons, gallon jugs, cardboard juice containers, plastic containers with lids (yogurt, cream cheese, etc.), cords (telephone, USB, chargers, etc.), paper, markers and crayons, scissors, and masking tape

TIP: The purpose of this activity is to challenge children to play with materials commonly found around the house that were not purchased specifically as a toy. Any materials or combination of materials would be appropriate, even just giving them a ball of yarn to make up a game would work.

- Show children the supplies you have gathered. Explain that all of these materials were free and with a little imagination can be turned into something fun.
- Challenge them to think creatively about how to use these materials to make a game.

- Be sure to encourage children to use their imaginations and limit influencing their projects.
- Allow time for each child to share about his/her game.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Holy God, help us to be faithful to you and remember that stuff isn't the most important thing in life. Don't let us fall into the trap of being a grinch. Inspire us to be like the Whos and seek after joy and happiness through loving you and loving others. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"

Week 8: Bustin' Balloons

Bible Verse

All who lift themselves up will be brought low. But all who make themselves low will be lifted up. (Matthew 23:12)

Theme

Don't let pride get in the way of loving God and loving others instead be humble and willing to compromise

Seuss Summary: *The Zax*

There are two kinds of Zaxes, the North-Going Zax and the South-Going Zax, who never go the other way, or east or west for that matter. One day in the Prairie of Pax, a North-Going Zax and a South-Going Zax run into each other. Both are trying to get to their desired locations, but neither will move out of the way to let the other one pass. For 59 years they stand facing each other too proud to compromise (they could take a step east or west!) and the world just continues to pass them by. Because of their pride, there is no happy ending for the Zaxes.

Bible Background

At the beginning of Matthew chapter 23, Jesus is addressing the crowds and disciples regarding the religious leaders. Jesus acknowledges the religious leaders' talents and knowledge and yet he cautions his followers to do as they say but not as they do. Jesus is highly critical of the religious leaders whose actions are completely contrary to the teachings of God. Even more, they are unwilling to humble themselves to see their mistakes. Jesus pointedly accuses the religious leaders of self-righteous pride and urges his followers to act with humility. It is important to help children understand the difference between healthy self-esteem and pride in accomplishments versus the self-righteous pride Jesus warned his followers against.

Activity

Supplies: balloon and tack

TIP: In this simple object lesson, the balloon needs to burst at just the right moment. You can hold a tack between two fingers so it can't be seen and use to prick the balloon at the exact time.

- Gather children in the circle area.

ASK: What are some things we can do with a balloon? (*decorations, make animals, use as a ball, etc.*)

SAY: Sometimes we're like a balloon. We can get all puffed up with pride (*start blowing up the balloon*). We think we are the greatest, the very best, and everyone else should think so too (*blow*). We think we are always right and everyone else is wrong (*blow*). Maybe because we are so good looking (*blow*) or maybe because we are so smart (*blow*) or maybe because we can stand on one leg (*blow*) or curl our tongue (*blow*) or wink with both eyes (*blow*). But sooner or later, if we keep getting all puffed up on pride, something will burst our balloon (*pop the balloon*).

ASK: What is pride? (*self-importance, unreasonable self-esteem*)

SAY: Pride is when we get all puffed up with our own self-importance.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *The Zax*

SAY: Dr. Seuss wrote a very funny book about pride called *The Zax* and their foolishness of letting pride get in the way of life.

READ: *The Zax*

ASK: Why was the Zaxes' pride so bad? (*allow children to answer affirming their thoughts on the story*)

SAY: The Zaxes were so full of pride they were unwilling to budge, to even go a half a step each to the left or the right, to help themselves or the other. It was a totally silly situation!

ASK: Can pride be a good quality to have? What are some examples of when you were proud of something? How was that different than being a Zax?

SAY: When we are proud of something like an award at school or winning a game or drawing an awesome picture, it's a good thing. It goes bad and because Zax-like pride when we let it go to our head and get all puffed up thinking we are the very best and no one else is as good.

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

Read: Matthew 23:12 to hear Jesus' instruction for humility.

SAY: Jesus wanted his followers to know humility is the better way than pride. Those who puff themselves up and act as though they are so much better than others, are not following the way of Jesus. Jesus is the only person ever to live without sin because he was both fully God and human, but he didn't go around boasting about his greatness. Instead, he showed great humility in caring for others before himself, being friends with outcasts, and giving glory to God first and foremost.

ASK: What are some ways we can show humility? How can we be humble in our actions with others?

SAY: Being proud of our accomplishments and talents is okay as long as it doesn't become Zax-like. And the way we keep from turning into Zaxes is by learning and practicing humility.

Activity

Supplies: a hula hoop, 3-4 cones the same height, a beach ball, a ping pong ball (or similar small object), and jump ropes (or masking tape)

PREP: Set up a station for each game. Balance a hula hoop on top of 3-4 cones so that it is elevated off of the ground. Designate a relay start and finish line using jump ropes.

TIP: Depending on the size of your group, you may want to set up more than one station for each cooperative game.

- Divide the group in half.
- Explain that there are two game stations and that each group will have a chance at both.
- At station one, children will work together to step over the hula hoop with each foot without knocking the hula hoop off the cones. Then, once as many children as possible are inside the hula hoop, one by one they will exit, again being very cautious not to knock off the hula hoop.
- At station two, children will work in pairs to carry either the beach ball or ping pong ball from start to finish (the smaller object will be harder!). But, they have to carry it back to back, elbow to elbow, knee to knee, or forehead to forehead.
- Be sure children know that working together and listening to each other is key to both games. Working together is a great way to learn humility.

- Play as time allows. Half way through, switch group games.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Almighty God, you created and rule over all things and yet your Son humbled himself to become human like us so that we could better know your ways. Help us remember to walk humbly every day and to not fall into the trap of getting too puffed up with pride. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 9: Life is Messy

Bible Verse

Create a clean heart for me, God; put a new, faithful spirit deep inside me! (Psalm 51:10)

Theme

Sin makes a mess of our lives but no mess is too big for God

Seuss Summary: *The Cat in the Hat*

The icon image of Dr. Seuss' collection of work, the Cat in the Hat is an eccentric character. In the book by the same name, the Cat visits the house of two young children, Sally and Sam, who are having a very dull day while their mother is away. The Cat invites himself in, reassuring the kids their mother won't mind, and ignoring repeated objections from the children's fish, the Cat shows the children a few of his tricks in an attempt to entertain them. In the process he and his companions, Thing One and Thing Two, wreck the house. But before leaving, the Cat cleans everything up and then disappears just before the children's mother comes home. And the story ends wondering: "What would you do if your mother asked you?"

Bible Background

Psalm 51 is perhaps the best known of the seven so-called penitential psalms, given that name by the early Christian church for their use during the season of Lent. These psalms focus on an acknowledgment of personal sin and a sincere desire to repent. In fact, it has long been used as a prayer of confession when individuals (and congregations) have gone astray. The good news of Psalm 51, as with the liturgical practice of prayers of confession, is that faith isn't primarily about our sins but about God's grace.

Activity

Supplies: recycled/scrap paper, masking tape, and two boxes or large garbage bags

PREP: Use masking tape to divide the room down the middle to create two areas. Wad up pieces of recycled/scrap paper to make 50-100 balls and store half in each box or garbage bag.

- Gather children in the middle of the classroom.
- Divide the class into two teams with one on each side of the line.
- Dump half the paper balls onto each side of the line.
- Explain to the children the goal of the game is to clean up their team's side by throwing the balls to the other side of the line. The team with the cleanest side when time is called wins.
- Ask children to return the paper balls to the boxes or garbage bags to use later.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: DVD of *The Cat in the Hat* (25 mins), DVD player, and television

- Gather children together so that everyone can see the television.

SAY: Life is messy sometimes. And messes sometimes happen in innocent ways, like when you're just trying to have fun on a dull day. That's exactly what happens in *The Cat in the Hat*. Let's see what the Cat gets into to create such a big mess.

- Watch *The Cat in the Hat*.

ASK: Do you think the Cat was trying to make a mess? (*allow children to respond, answers are likely to vary*)

SAY: The Cat is a really crazy kind of character with a lot of tricks. He makes a huge mess in Sally and Sam's home but he does clean it up.

ASK: When you make a mess, who cleans up? (*children, parents, etc.*) Are there some messes that you can't clean up? (*it's a trick question but honor the answers offered as good ideas*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: That was a tricky question. We can clean up a lot of messes in life, like when our room is trashed or we're dirty from playing outside, but there isn't a way for us to clean up our hearts.

READ: Psalm 51:10 to learn God can may our hearts clean again.

ASK: What do you think the Bible means by "heart?" (*emotions, internal feelings, spirit*)

SAY: The psalm isn't talking about a heart that pumps blood throughout the body. In the Bible, "heart" is often used to talk about a person's feelings or emotions, like happy or sad, loving or angry.

ASK: When you know you've done something wrong, how do you feel? (*allow for answers*)

SAY: Feeling down or sad about ourselves or things isn't good. God wants us to live everyday full of joy and happiness. But, messes happen. We make mistakes. We sin.

ASK: What does "sin" mean? (*knowingly disobeying or acting in a wrong way*)

SAY: We all sin and do things we know we should not do. We all mess up and make mistakes. God wants to give us a "clean heart" again, but we need to be ready to ask for God's help. We can do this through a prayer of confession. Confession means admitting we've sinned and messed up. It's something you do when you really feel sorry for how you have acted. When God hears these prayers of

confession, God responds with love and grace! God forgives our sins. Remember, there is no mess too big for God's love.

Activity

Supplies: white paper lunch bags, red construction paper, glue sticks, markers, and paper wad balls from earlier

PREP: Cut strips of red construction paper.

NOTE: The practice of prayer can often be enhanced by tangible acts, like using beads or coloring. Children may find the practice of writing down sins and "tossing" them to God beneficial.

TIP: Make an extra hat to use on *Week 14: Let's Celebrate!* for Seuss Charades.

- Explain to kids they are going to make a hat like the Cat's to use in a game.
- Give each child a white paper lunch bag.
- Show children how to open their lunch bags and roll down the top to create a hat brim.
- Have children use glue sticks to attach strips of red construction paper to make stripes on the bag.
- Be sure each child writes "Create a clean heart for me, God" (Psalm 51:10a) on his/her hat.
- Give each child 5-10 paper balls.
- Challenge children to a simple game of toss using the paper hats and balls by placing their hats on the floor so the open end is up, then tossing in the balls while standing three or four feet away.

- Encourage children to use the game as a reminder no mess is too great for God to clean up. Children can write down mistakes or sins on a piece of paper before tossing into the hat as a physical act of an inward prayer of confession.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Merciful God, we know all too well that we sin and mess up. We are so thankful that your love is greater than any mess and you are willing to forgive us. Help us find courage to come to you in prayer. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 10: Oops & Uh-ohs

Bible Verse

But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from everything we've done wrong. (1 John 1:9)

Theme

Everyone makes mistakes and the best thing we can do is apologize, and ask for God and others to forgive us

Seuss Summary: *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*

King Derwin is tired of the same weather year after year and he demands for something new. His magicians create Oobleck. The next morning the pageboy, Bartholomew Cubbins, sees the Oobleck falling from the sky is causing all sorts of problems and tries to warn others. Finally Bartholomew finds the courage to tell the king how foolish he is for causing the Oobleck mess and that he has to stop it by saying he is sorry. At first the king refuses but finally says "I'm sorry" and at the exact moment the Oobleck stops falling.

Bible Background

This passage addresses the need for continued confession and pardon for mistakes and sins in the life of the believer. Even more, it makes clear that this process is only possible because of God's character. God is both loving and just. One is no more dominate than the other; it is always both/and - God is loving *and* just. So then, God's love has provided a way for us to satisfy God's justice through confession of sins, which God forgives or decides "to let go." Children are taught from an early age to say "I'm sorry," but they can often lack understanding of its importance. As this passage teaches, an apologize isn't a way to simply appease others but is a way to make amends with God and others for mistakes.

Activity

Supplies: water, cornstarch, green food coloring, a large bowl,

measuring cups, a baking sheet, dice, toothpicks, paper clip, a bouncy ball, a toy car, a large sheet of paper and markers

PREP: Make a batch of Oobleck by mixing together two parts cornstarch and one part water with a few drops of green food coloring. Pour the finished Oobleck into a baking sheet.

TIP: Oobleck is the right consistency when it flows out when you tip the bowl but feels like a solid when you touch the surface. If it's too thick to flow, add a little more water.

- Gather children around a table with the baking sheet filled with Oobleck in the center.
- Explain to children that you are going to experiment with a mysterious substance called Oobleck to see if objects will sink or float.
- Show the children the objects for the experiment and take a prediction vote for each object: Will it sink or float? Record the votes on the large piece of paper.
- Test each object. Be sure to roll the dice, ball, and toy car across the Oobleck. Recording the findings (the dice, ball, and toy car should float because they are in motion whereas the toothpicks and paperclips will sink because they are static).

ASK: Was that what you expected to happen?

SAY: Oobleck is a pretty cool substance because it's both a solid and a liquid. It totally defies all the rules of science!

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*

- Ask children to sit down in a circle for the story.

SAY: We are going to learn a little more about Oobleck and all the trouble it created in the kingdom of Didd.

READ: *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*

ASK: What was your favorite part of the story? (*allow for a few answers*) Why do you think it was so important for the King to apologize? (*allow children to answer, gently guiding the discussion to acknowledge an apology takes responsibility for one's actions*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: In the story, the King's apology magically fixes everything, but that doesn't always happen in life. Even when we apologize, sometimes the damage is already done and can't be fixed. But there is still some good news.

READ: 1 John 1:9 to discover God forgives all our mistakes when we apologize

ASK: Why do you think God is willing to forgive us when we apologize? (*because God loves us*)

SAY: I'm willing to bet that at some point or another, everyone here has said "I'm sorry" and didn't really mean it. But, that doesn't work with God. God knows our hearts and if we really mean what we say when we apologize. God wants us to be sincere when we say those words to God and to others.

ASK: What does it mean to be sincere? (*truthful, real, serious, heartfelt*)

SAY: The Bible is full of stories about people who made mistakes. Some of those mistakes were really big and hurt a lot of people. In the Gospels, we learn that Jesus' closest friend Peter made a big

mistake when he denied knowing Jesus not just once but three times (Matthew 26:69-75).

ASK: Anyone know what Jesus did to Peter? (*Jesus forgave Peter*)

SAY: God is always ready to forgive us when we apologize for the mistakes we make. As followers of God, we should offer the same kind of forgiveness to others when they apologize. Saying “I’m sorry” to others who we have hurt and accepting another person’s apologize when we are hurt is the first step toward cleaning up the mistakes that were made -- to cleaning up the Oobleck in life!

Activity

Supplies: water, cornstarch, green food coloring, bowls, small cups (5oz) or measuring cups, markers, ziplock bags, and hand washing supplies

PREP: Use a marker to make a line at the half way point on a small cup to use as an easy measurement tool for the two to one ratio of cornstarch to water.

- Give each child a bowl and a small cup.
- Show children the measuring mark on the outside of the cup. Explain that they will use this cup to measure out the ingredients to make Oobleck.
- Have each child to fill his/her cup to the very top with cornstarch and then pour it into his/her bowl.
- Show children how to properly measure the water by filling the cup only to the line before adding it to their bowls.
- Tell children to use their hands to mix the ingredients together while you add a few drops of green food coloring.

- Ask children to wash their hands once their Oobleck is mixed.
- Encourage children to play with their Oobleck and then take it home in a ziplock bag.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Forgiving God, we are so grateful that you love us and have provided a way for us to make things right when we mess up. Help us to always seek forgiveness in you and others and for others through all the oops and uh-ohs of life. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 11: A Butter Way

Bible Verse

Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children. (Matthew 5:9)

Theme

God calls us to be peacemakers rather than to use violence to solve conflicts

Seuss Summary: *The Butter Battle Book*

Written as a cautionary tale, *The Butter Battle Book* is an allegory of the Cold War. The Yooks firmly believe bread should only be eaten with the butter side up while the Zooks believe just as strongly bread should only be eaten with the butter side down. The story is about how the Yooks and the Zooks have completely and totally segregated with growing animosity and violent acts until finally they both stand ready to launch a Bitsy Big-Boy Boomeroots to completely wipe out the other.

Bible Background

The Beatitudes are among the most recognizable passages in the Bible and begin Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount." Jesus is calling his disciples to live in a new way, one contrary to the world, but one that will point to the promised future of God's kingdom on earth. It's important to not spiritualize the beatitudes as something that will happen only in heaven or when Jesus returns. Christians are called to participate in God's transformation of the world by living these rules here and now. To make peace, then, is one of the rules for the Christian life. Children know living by rules better than most, but encourage them to think of this as not a rule but a way of being more like Jesus and how he would handle tough situations.

Special Note

This lesson talks about violence and war, which could lead to a deeper conversation and opportunities to listen to children's

concerns. It's important for you as the leader to feel prepared to engage this lesson. One of the best resources to address common concerns and questions adults have when engaging children in discussions about war and violence is [available online through UNICEF](#).

Activity

- Gather children in the middle of the classroom.
- Explain you will ask a “would you rather...” question and they will need to choose between two different options by moving to the designated side of the room.
 - ... wear only striped shirts or polka-dotted shirts for life?
 - ... have blue teeth or no hair?
 - ... eat a cookie or a brownie?
 - ... be able to fly or have super strength?
 - ... kiss a pig or a goat?
 - ... be able to only whisper or shout?
 - ... sit in a pool full of marshmallows or M&Ms?
 - ... always walk on your hands or always walk backwards?
 - ... live where it's really cold or really hot?

ASK: Did it bother you when someone picked a different option than you? Were any of these questions worth fighting over?

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *The Butter Battle Book*

- Ask kids to sit down in a circle.

SAY: Those were very silly questions but good examples that we all have different opinions. But sometimes, even a simple disagreement can turn into a serious situation when one side doesn't understand the other side or the other side is just different. Dr. Seuss wrote a book about a silly dispute that turned really serious.

READ: *The Butter Battle Book*

ASK: Why do you think the Zooks and Yooks didn't get along?

What could the Zooks and Yooks have done differently to prevent going to war with each other? *(allow children to answer)*

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: Conflicts come in all sizes and sometimes they get bigger and bigger over time, like over generations of Zooks and Yooks. At times, conflicts lead to violence and war.

ASK: What is war? *(allow for a variety of answers with careful attention; if children seem to be struggling to make something clear, it may be helpful for you to summarize what you have heard to help them clarify)*

SAY: War is scary. I get scared when I hear about any kind of violence happening in the world. I worry about the people who may be hurt or killed and their families.

It hurts so many people and causes massive destruction. Sometimes it doesn't even end the conflict. But if it does, the cost is very high because so much is already lost. God doesn't want us to kill each other or make war, but instead calls us to live the way of Jesus.

READ: Matthew 5:9 to hear the call to make peace.

SAY: Jesus wants his followers to make peace. He didn't just want us to try really hard but do to it. As disciples, we are called to look for peaceful solutions to conflict rather than using violence.

ASK: What do you think is the most important thing to do when you want to end a conflict peacefully? *(talk)*

SAY: When we talk with each other, we make space to hear the other side and hopefully create opportunities to solve the problem through compromise or even agreeing to disagree. Not all conflicts have the potential to lead to war, but every conflict can end peacefully if we are willing to try.

ASK: Does anyone want to share about a conflict in your life, like perhaps a fight with a sibling or friend? How could you find a peaceful solution? *(allow for some open time of sharing but carefully guide the discussion to stay on track)*

SAY: The Zooks and the Yooks were so caught up in being right about how to eat buttery bread, they were willing to use huge guns to totally kill off the other side. That's crazy! Thankfully Jesus has asked us to follow a better way to be peace makers.

- Show children the very last page of *The Butter Battle Book*.

ASK: If you were going to write or draw one more page, how would you end the story of the Zooks and the Yooks? *(allow for discussion as time allows, be sure to acknowledge each child's idea and affirm their participation)*

Activity

TIP: This activity can be done as a large group or in small groups. The larger the group, the more complex the game becomes. If you have a lot of younger children, it may work better in smaller groups of three or more.

- Ask children to form a circle, shoulder to shoulder.
- Have each child reach into the center of the circle and grab a hand of a kid standing across the circle. Do the same with the second hand but be sure each child is holding hands with two different people.
- Explain the purpose of the game is to untangle the human knot without letting go of hands. Be sure to emphasize the problem and the need to talk out ideas and work together.
- Children may need to change their grip to be more comfortable, but they cannot let go of hands to undo the knot.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Peaceful God, in Jesus you showed us that love is the greatest power. Help us to love others by always seeking to make peace whenever we are challenged by conflict. Give us strength not to fight but to talk out our differences. Amen.

- Explain that when you say “Go in peace,” everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say “To serve God!”

Week 12: Go Green

Bible Verse

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants too. (Psalm 24:1)

Theme

God asked people to be stewards of the earth and each person has a role in caring for the earth

Seuss Summary: *The Lorax*

Long before “going green” was hip, Dr. Seuss wrote *The Lorax* as a cautionary tale with an important message: If we don't take responsibility for the stewardship of the environment, then our own world will soon be like the one the Lorax left behind. In a ruined town, a little boy is looking for answers and wants to know the story of the Lorax. He goes to see the Once-ler, an elderly inventor/manufacturer named Doc Brown. Doc Brown tells the boy how he came across a valley of truffula trees and brown bar-ba-loots, and how his careless ways ruined the land but also, and most importantly, what can be done to turn things around.

Bible Background

The opening verse of Psalm 24 clearly establishes God's sovereignty and ownership of the earth and all its contents. And God has given to humanity the role of stewards (Genesis 1:28). A steward manages for the owner. That means humanity is appointed by God to care for all earth's resources for the good of all species to maintain God's good creation. This is the Biblical command to “go green.” The odds are good children have heard the phrase “go green” many times before but they may not fully understand its meaning or its connection to faith. Empower children to see practices like not wasting energy and resources or trashing the earth with air, land, and water pollution, as a faithful way to live as stewards of God's creation.

Activity

- Ask children to carry over a chair and sit side by side like in a stadium.
- Explain that you are going to do “the wave.” Describe to children how one person on the end will briefly stand and raise his/her arms in the air and immediately upon stretching to full height, the child will return to his/her seated position just as the next child begins to stand. This way, “the wave” will move across the whole line.
- Practice doing “the wave” several times. Try it will pairs of children going up and down at the same time.

ASK: Has anyone ever done “the wave” in a big crowd? (*allow one or two children to share their experience or share one from your experience*)

SAY: The cool thing about “the wave” is that it always starts off with just one or two people but it quickly catches on and travels through the whole crowd. It’s a fun way to show how just one person can make a difference.

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: DVD of *The Lorax* (25 mins), DVD player, and television

- Ask children to return their chairs and gather together so that everyone can see the television.

SAY: Dr. Seuss wrote a book about how one person made a difference... a bad difference. But, it’s also a book about how one person, a young boy, has the power to make things right. It’s the story about Once-ler and the Lorax.

- Watch *The Lorax*.

ASK: What do you think the boy will do with the truffula seed the Once-ler tossed to him? What would you do if you were the boy?

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: We saw how the Once-ler destroyed everything because he was greedy. Only at the very end, when everything was in ruin, did he realize the value of the trees.

READ: Psalm 24:1 to discover everything on the earth belongs to God.

SAY: Everything belongs to God and God asked us to be stewards of creation.

ASK: Does anyone know what a steward does? (*takes care or manages for the owner*)

SAY: A steward is someone who cares for the owner's property. God has asked us to be stewards of God's creation. Each and every one of us is responsible for taking care of God's earth. When we think about a planet with billions of people, we might wonder what one person can do. Just remember "the wave." One person can start something that will catch on and suddenly a whole bunch of people are doing it together. And together, we can care for the earth and make sure it is always the good creation God made.

Activity

Supplies: pledge cards, pencils, hole punch, scissors, and yarn

PREP: Before starting this project, find a tree on the church grounds that is easily accessible for children to tie on their pledge cards.

- As a group, brainstorm some ideas for caring for God's creation. (*recycle materials, pick up trash, turn off lights, plant a tree, etc.*)

- Give each child a pledge card and a pencil.
- Ask each child to write a simple pledge to do one thing to help care for God's creation. Be sure children write their first name only and age on the pledge card.
- Explain to children that they will tie their pledge to a special tree on the church grounds. Before going outside, have each child make a hole punch in his/her card and cut a piece of yarn.
- Outside at the tree, have each child read aloud their pledge before tying it onto the tree with a piece of yarn.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together around the "pledge" tree.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Creator God, thank you for the gift of creation. Help us to see anew the wonders of the earth and work every day to be good stewards of your creation. Keep us faithful to our pledges of stewardship and show us new ways to be good caretakers of the earth. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"

Week 13: Off We Go

Bible Verse

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don't be troubled or afraid. (John 14:27)

Theme

God is with you wherever life takes you

Seuss Summary: *Oh, The Places You Will Go!*

Oh, the Places You'll Go! was the last book Dr. Seuss published in his lifetime. It's the story of a young person, referred to simply as "you," who sets off into the world to see what life will bring, encountering all sorts of crazy adventures along the way. With his signature whimsy, Dr. Seuss addresses life's ups and downs with encouragement to find success through it all and hope for the future.

Bible Background

These comforting words are part of Jesus' farewell discourse, found only in the Gospel of John. Jesus promises to give his disciples "peace." Though a reference to the Hebrew greeting *shalom*, this peace is much more than a greeting. It describes a special gift from God. This peace is not the absence of something -- war, hardship, conflict -- but rather a positive, active presence equated with light, joy, and truth. Nothing in the world can offer such a gift. This is not peace from trouble, but the capacity to have peace in the midst of trouble. Children experience new things all the time and are pushed into new situations that can be scary, but these words offer comfort that no matter what is happening, God is with them.

Activity

Supplies: large piece of paper and markers

- Gather kids in the circle area.

- Invite children to share places to go. Encourage children to think beyond everyday places (i.e. college, other countries, medical school, etc.)
- Record ideas on a large piece of paper title “Places To Go!”

Dr. Seuss

Supplies: the book *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

SAY: We have come up with a great list of places to go. It’s important to have dreams and have adventures in life. That’s exactly what Dr. Seuss had in mind when he wrote *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

READ: *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

ASK: What does the author mean when he talks about “bang-ups” and “hang-ups?” (*tough times, bad experiences, etc.*) Does everyone experience these? (*yes*) Can you control these things? (*not really, sometimes they just happen*)

Bible Point

Supplies: Bible

SAY: Life is full of ups and downs, but the good news is that through it all, God is with us. In the Gospel of John, Jesus explains the gift of God’s presence in our lives.

READ: John 14:27 to hear Jesus give the gift of peace

ASK: What do you think Jesus means when he give us “peace?” (*allow for a variety of answers*)

SAY: We often think of peace as the opposite of war or violence, but in this case it means something difference. It’s a special kind of peace only God can give. It’s God’s presence in our hearts helping

us to be calm and unafraid even when we are facing something challenging or scary.

ASK: How does it feel knowing God is with you all the time? (*allow children to answer, you may also want to share*)

SAY: Just knowing we don't face life alone can be very comforting. As you grow up and go to new places and experience new things, remember God is always with you. In the good times and the bad times, God's peace is with everyone who believes in Jesus.

Activity

Supplies: [world map](#)

PREP: Setup a station for each game to allow children to rotate and experience the various games from around the world.

- **India: Five Stones**

Supplies: 5 small smooth stones

- Show children where India is located on the world map. Point out the Himalayas, the world's highest mountain range.
- Explain the game of five stones is believe to have originated in Ancient Asia 1200 years before Jesus was born. It is played by two or more players using five small stones. The object of the game is to complete a set of trows before the other players.
- Demonstrate how to play five stones by gently throwing all five stones and catching them with the back of your palm.

- **Africa: Mancala**

Supplies: cardboard egg carton, scissors, glue, and 48 dried beans

PREP: Create a mancala board by cutting off the lid of a

cardboard egg carton. Then cut the lid in half length wise and place the two halves under the bottom part with the cups. Extend the pieces about 2-inches to each side and glue in place.

TIP: A [mancala game](#) may be purchased online.

- Show children the continent of Africa on the world map. Share that Africa is home to some of the world's most magnificent animals. Be sure to point out where Ethiopia is located near the east coast of the continent, in what is called the "Horn of Africa."
- Explain mancala is a type of game rather than the name of one particular game. The way it is played depends on where in the world it is played, but the general sequence of play is the same. The earliest evidence of the game is from Ethiopia about 1300 years ago. The object of the game is to collect the most playing pieces.
- Review with children at the station the rules of play on the "Mancala" printable.
- **Netherlands: *Spijkerpoepen***
Supplies: string, a nail (or a bolt), and a bottle

PREP: Attach a nail (or a bolt) to a string.

TIP: Learn to pronounce [spijkerpoepen online](#).

- Show children where Netherlands is located on the world map. Tell children sometimes this country is called Holland. In addition to beautiful art and architecture, the huge tulip fields are a must see.
- Explain the name literally translates as "nail pooping" and is a popular game with Dutch children that requires good coordination and concentration.

- Demonstrate how to play the game by fastening the string around the waist or to the backside of the player's pants. The goal of the game is to get the nail into the bottle only by squatting (no hands allowed!).

- **China: Tangram**

Supplies: "Tangram Template" printable, "Tangram Patterns" printable, heavy paper, and scissors

PREP: Print copies of the "Tangram Template" onto heavy paper "Tangram Patterns." Carefully cut along the lines of the tangram template to separate the seven pieces.

- Show children where China is on the world map. Explain there is a lot to see in China including the Great Wall and The Forbidden City, which is actually a palace with 9,000 rooms!
 - Share with children the word "tangram" means "seven pieces of cleverness." It is a very old Chinese puzzle game that uses seven pieces to make pictures.
 - Invite kids at the station to invent their own tangram picture or to use one of the tangram puzzles as a challenge. Children may lay the tangram pieces over the printed puzzle and move them around until they fit or use the page simply for guidance.
- **Egypt: Senet**
- Supplies:** "Senet Board" printable, 7 dry kidney beans, and 7 dry white beans, 4 craft sticks, and markers

PREP: Print the "Senet Board" onto heavy paper. Use markers to color one side of four craft sticks.

- Show children where Egypt is located on the world map.

- Explain ancient Egypt was one of the first civilizations. It began over 3000 years before Jesus was born -- we are closer to Jesus' birth than the first Egyptians! There is a lot to see in Egypt like the pyramids Giza and the Great Sphinx.
- Review with children at the station the rules of play on the "Senet Board" printable. Be sure to explain the special squares have hieroglyphs, a very early form of writing that used pictures instead of letters.

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Amazing God, thank you for creating such a wonderful world to explore and experience. But most of all, thank you for being with us through the highs and the "bang-ups" of life by giving us your peace. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"

Week 14: Let's Celebrate!

Ending the series with a special "Celebration Sunday" is an opportunity to wrap-up the series with a variety of activities including games, crafts, and food. Below are some ideas but be creative and use what works best for your group!

Get Going Games

Seuss Charades

Supplies: Seuss hat from *Week 9: Life is Messy*, "Seuss Titles" printable, scissors, glue stick, construction paper, and timer

PREP: Print "Seuss Titles" printable and cut along the dotted lines to create cards. Use a glue stick to attach each book title card onto slightly larger pieces of construction paper.

- Divide children into two teams for charades.
- Explain the rules of play:
 - Each team will choose a player to act out a Seuss book by picking a title from the hat while his/her teammates try to guess the book before time runs out.
 - If the team guesses correctly before time runs out, then the team gets one point. If time runs out before the team correctly guesses, then the other team gets a chance. If correct, the other team gets the point.
 - Regardless of who gets the point, play goes back and forth between the teams.
 - The team with the most points at the end wins.

The Cat's Red Box

Supplies: a shoe box with lid, household objects (an orange, a sock, a small toy, anything!), red paint or construction paper, utility knife, contact paper, and a timer

PREP: Turn an ordinary shoe box into the Cat's red box where Thing 1 and Thing 2 are kept by either painting it red or wrapping it with red construction paper. Cut a small hole on one end of the box large enough for a finger to poke inside. On the other end of the box, cut a 2-inch square and cover it with contact paper.

- Explain to children the purpose of the game is to guess the household object in the box before time runs out.
- One child, the Cat, will hide a household object in the red box.
- The other children will have two minutes to try to guess what is inside the box by asking questions.
- After one minute, children may touch the object through the finger hole and/or look at it through the cloudy window.
- Allow children to take turns being the Cat and picking a household object from the collected materials.

Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat Card Game

Supplies: [Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat Card Game](#)

- Follow the instructions for this activity-filled card game challenging kids to discover crazy combinations for gross motor play.

Thumball Move Your Body

Supplies: [Thumball Move Your Body](#)

- Gather children in an open area to form a circle.

- Recall how the Cat could do all kinds of crazy tricks in The Cat in the Hat.
- Explain the purpose of the game is to have fun with skills used when playing sports, enjoying hobbies and performing exercises.
- Show children how to gently toss the thumbball to another player.
- When a child catches the thumbball, his/her thumbs will land on two movements. Instruct children to pick one of the movements to act out in the middle of circle. Encourage older children to help early readers with the questions.
- Add to the game by having other kids guess what the child is doing or how the skill is commonly used when playing sports, enjoying hobbies and performing exercises.

Crafts and More!

Seussville Activity Pages

Supplies: [Random House printable pages](#), crayons and markers, pencils

PREP: Choose and print activity pages from Random House's website that will work best for your class.

- Provide children with a variety of activity pages related to the Dr. Seuss books featured in this series.
- Allow children access to crayons, markers, and pencils to complete the provided activities.

Fork Truffla Trees

Supplies: paint in a variety of bright colors, white construction paper, forks, and markers

TIP: These would make beautiful cards to give to volunteers who help in ministry with children.

- Show kids how to dip the bottom of a fork into paint and then press it down onto white construction paper to create lines in a circle pattern to make a truffla tree top.
- Be sure to have children wipe off the fork before dipping it into a second color.
- Tell children to add a stripped truffla trunk using markers.

Seuss Magnets

Supplies: craft sticks, scissors, markers, wiggly eyes, glue dots or school glue, and magnet tape

- **Thing 1 and Thing 2**
Additional Supplies: blue feathers and scraps of white paper
 - Give each child a craft stick and a piece of magnet tape to attach to one side of the craft stick.
 - Explain how to create the body of Thing 1 or Thing 2 by coloring the bottom half of the craft stick red using a marker.
 - Show children how to attach blue feathers to the top of the craft stick to create hair.
 - Have children glue on wiggle eyes or use a marker to draw on eyes. Use a marker to draw a smile.

- Provide a small piece of scrap paper to cut into a circle with “Thing 1” or “Thing 2” written in the middle. Use glue to attach to the craft stick.

- **The Cat**

Additional Supplies: dried rigatoni and bowtie pasta, red and white paint, paint supplies

TIP: It may be easier for children to pre-glue the dried pasta onto craft sticks to create the Cat.

- Give each child a craft stick and a piece of magnet tape to attach to back side of the craft stick.
- Between the dried pasta, have children glue on wiggle eyes or use a marker to draw on eyes. Use a marker to draw a smile and whiskers.
- Explain how to create the Cat’s hat by painting the dried rigatoni with red and white stripes. Then, paint the bowtie pasta with red paint.

- **Truffla Tree**

Additional Supplies: 1-inch pieces of yarn in a variety of colors

- Give each child a craft stick and a piece of magnet tape to attach to back side of the craft stick.
- Explain how to create a truffla tree top by gluing on various pieces of 1-inch yarn.
- Have children color the craft stick in signature truffla trunk stripes using markers.

Seussical Snacks

Seuss Juice

Ingredients: red Hawaiian punch and lemon-lime soda

- Mix together equal parts of red Hawaiian punch and lemon-lime soda.

Truffla Tree Treats

Ingredients: fruit loop cereal, mini-marshmallows, and butter

Supplies: popsicle sticks, large bowl, wax paper, shallow baking pan, and access to a microwave

- Line a shallow baking pan with wax paper.
- Combine 6 cups of mini-marshmallows and 1/4 cup of butter in a large bowl and microwave for 2 minutes or until melted.
- Add 8 cups of fruit loops to the marshmallow and butter and mix well.
- Form the cereal mix into plum-size balls using your hands and place on wax paper.
- Poke a popsicle stick into each treat ball to create a Truffle Tree trunk.
- Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Green Eggs and Ham

Ingredients: square pretzels, white Hersey kisses, and green or mint M&M's

Supplies: wax paper, shallow baking pan, and access to an oven

- Preheat the oven to 200 degrees.

- Line a shallow baking pan with wax paper.
- Place pretzel squares on the baking sheet and top each one with a white Hersey kiss.
- Bake for 3-4 minutes to soften the chocolate.
- Remove the cookie sheet from the oven and immediately place a green M&M on top of each kiss and gently press down.
- Place the pan in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes or until the chocolate hardens.

Ending Huddle

Prayer Huddle

- Gather children together in a circle.
- Ask them to put their hands in the middle of the prayer huddle.

PRAY: Amazing God, we are so grateful for the ways you teach us about how to follow Jesus. Thank you for Dr. Seuss' fun and fantastical books that have helped us learn more about you and being disciples. Amen.

- Explain that when you say "Go in peace," everyone will lift their hands out of the huddle and say "To serve God!"