

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Beginning of Time: The Importance of a Six-day Creation.



Prayer for Prep: “How awesome, Father, that You created everything to enhance and sustain LIFE! Thank you! May Your Spirit enlighten my understanding of the value this gives to human life and enable me to teach that to the children.”



Key Concept: Understanding God as the Creator of all things is the foundation to understanding the value of human life.



Gospel Focus: Everything was created by Jesus and for Jesus.



Bible Story: Genesis 1.



Critical Questions:

1. How did the world and everything in it come to be?

World's Answer: Chance. From unexplained initial materials, the world and all the complexity of life developed by random chance.

WORD'S ANSWER: Design. A loving, all-powerful God created everything out of nothing.

2. Why is there suffering and death in the world in which we live?

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3. What keeps everything going?

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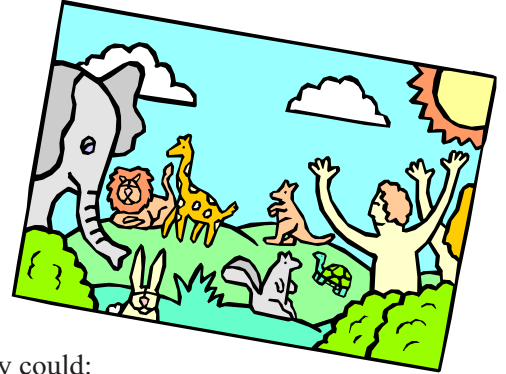


Religion

Tell the Story



Tell the creation story or read it from a children's Bible.



Act the Story

Have the children act out various parts as you read or afterwards. For example they could:

- Squat down and then “grow up” like the plants and trees God made.
- Scatter about the room to be the stars and heavenly bodies God made.
- Swim like the fish of the sea.
- Flap their arms like the birds of the air.
- Pretend they are various animals.
- Separate into boys and girls representing Adam and Eve. They can be reminded here that everything God created before Adam and Eve was for them and for them to care for.



Remember the Story



Memory verse: Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Sing the Story

Song: “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”

Echo Prayer



Dear Jesus . . .
 Thank you for making everything . . .
 Thank you for making everything for us . . .
 Thank you for loving us . . .
 Help us . . .
 Take care of . . .
 Everything You made . . .
 Amen . . .



Math

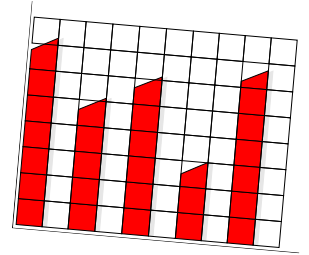
How Many Seeds?

Select several pumpkins, pomegranates, or other “seedy” fruits of various sizes and shapes. Have students predict which will have the most seeds and how many. Count the seeds and compare predictions to actual numbers. Review God’s use of seeds learned in the Science section.



Graphing Favorites

Make a “people graph” by having the children stand in line to “vote” for their favorite in each category. Start with having them “vote” for their favorite creation color. Write several on the board or on pieces of paper and have them stand in front of their favorite. Then try favorite creation foods or animals or flowers, etc. Count the results each time. Which had the most in each category? The least?

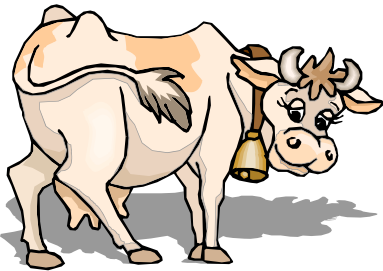
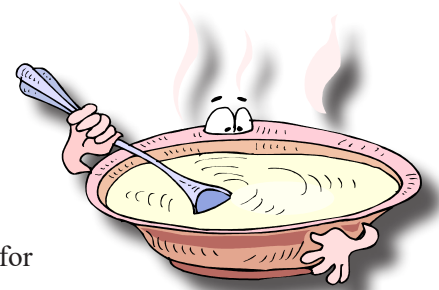


Were any the same number? God sure gives us lots of wonderful things!

Language Arts

Reading

Stone Soup – Read a version of this French folktale to the children. (See CD.) Ask the children if they can remember some of the ingredients in stone soup. Remind them how God created all of these things and still provides all of these things because of His love for us. Then talk about and/or plan to make stone soup! (See Service Learning.)



The Milk Makers – Read this story to the children. (See Bibliography.) God made some animals called mammals with the ability to feed their babies milk from their own bodies. Talk about all the products made from milk. God is so good! Look what He does for us from just one of the animals He created! He keeps our teeth and bones strong and healthy! Make a snack of instant pudding or a fruit smoothie with yogurt. (Or maybe this could be dessert for the Stone Soup Service Learning project!)



Fruit Smoothie

1 cup blueberries
 2 apples - peeled, cored and chopped
 1 1/2 cups raspberries
 3/4 cup seedless grapes
 3 tablespoons white sugar
 1 tray ice cubes
 Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.
 Pour into glasses and serve.

Science

Planting Seeds

Have the children plant seeds of fast-growing grasses, herbs, or houseplants. Two things can be observed:

- God gives the growth. Just as He created everything in the beginning for human beings, so God still allows things to grow to be used and enjoyed by people.
- God's creation requires care. Use does not mean abuse! God had Adam care for the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). He asks us to care for His creation today.



Harvesting Seeds

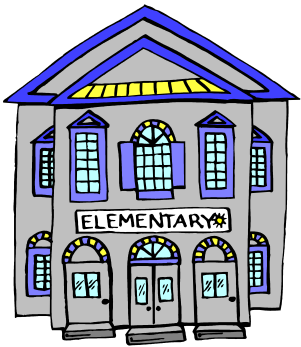


Show the children a wide variety of fruits available in your area. If possible include some that may be unfamiliar to the children. Ask, "What do all fruits have in common?" They contain seeds.



Cut the fruits open and examine and compare the seeds. Share with the children when God created the plants, flowers, and trees He made them in just the right way so they could make more of the same kind for us to enjoy. God continues to provide as part of His wonderful design!

Creation Neighborhood Walk



Take your class for a walk around the school's neighborhood. Note and thank God for the many non-living and living things He created. Remind the children how much God loves us to give us so many beautiful things. Also remind them about caring for and respecting God's creation—keeping bark on the tree to protect it, watching from a distance as squirrels gather nuts or birds feed their young, etc. Collect some appropriate "creation samples" to be used in a Fine Arts project later.

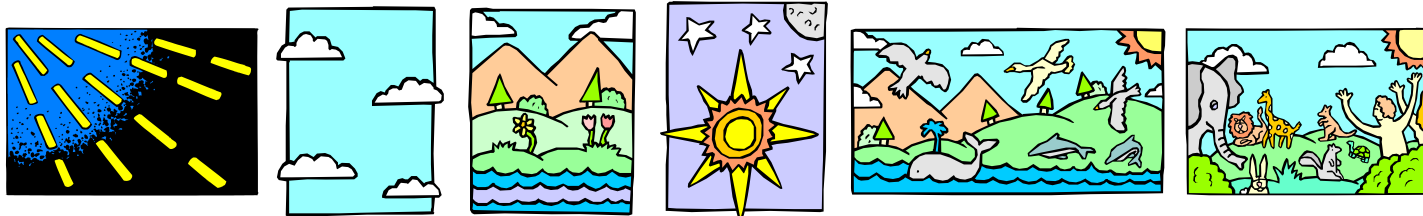
Pumpkin Seed Snack
Rinse seeds and spread on 9" x 13" pan. Drizzle 1-2 Tbsp. oil over seeds. Salt if desired. Bake at 200-250 for approximately 2 hours.



Fine Arts

Modeling the Creation

While reading the creation story from Genesis 1, make various shapes out of clay or modeling dough. Give each child a ball of dough or clay. Retell the story having the children make the shapes along with you. Later the dough can be left at a learning center for story retelling. As they work, remind them how God created all the animals for us and how He sent Jesus to show how much He loves us.



Creation Collage

Have the children make a Creation Collage from the items they collected on their neighborhood creation walk. Items can be glued on construction paper or put on construction paper and covered with clear contact paper. The various pieces of construction paper can then be combined on a bulletin board. What a beautiful world God made for us! So many different things!

Service Learning

Dear...

Pen Pals

Write letters to the residents of a local care center, assisted living community, or to the children in another pre-school or kindergarten class. Children can dictate their ideas to you and then print their names on a large letter or card. In the letter mention that the class is studying the world that God created and how special that makes all human life. Send some pictures drawn by students of things God made. Include a picture of the class if possible. He made them too!

Stone Soup Pals

Make some “stone soup” and invite another class, the pen pals, your pastor or other church workers to share in the feast!

Stone Soup Recipe (veggies may be varied)

- 1 stone, big enough that it won't get lost in the soup (quartz is a good choice because it won't break down in cooking)
- 1 tbsp. butter or vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, trimmed and chopped fine
- 1 large carrot, cut into coins
- 3 medium red-skinned potatoes (unpeeled, and cut into halves)
- 1/2 sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, pressed
- 6 cups chicken broth (or a combination of broth and water)
- 1 medium zucchini, diced large
- 1 medium yellow squash, diced large
- 1/2 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 2 cups cooked tubettini or ditalini, or other soup pasta (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Croutons



1. The first step is for your child to scrub and wash the stone thoroughly. Then, for an extra cleaning, she can drop it in a pot of water to boil while you prepare the rest of the soup together.
2. In another large pot, melt the butter or heat the oil, then sauté the onion on medium-high for 2 to 4 minutes. Stir in the celery, carrot, potatoes and red pepper, sautéing for 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds, then add in the broth. Using a spoon, fish the stone out of the other pot, add it to the soup and bring to a boil. Add the zucchini, squash, corn and pasta, cooking another 8 minutes or until the zucchini is the desired softness. Season to taste with the salt and pepper. Before serving, sprinkle on the cheese and croutons, then ladle—minus the stone—into individual bowls. Serves 6 to 8.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents:

This month we are discussing how God created the world and everything in it in six days. While some scientists dispute the biblical account of the six-day Creation, it is important for children to understand that God can do anything. We put our trust in Him and in His Word.

It is amazing to realize that all of creation was put in place to serve the crown of God's creation—human beings! The world that God gave His Son to redeem began in this miraculous way. He loved it and created it perfect—His gift for all generations.

Please help your child notice and wonder at God's workmanship. His Word called it into being; He continues to sustain it, and Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, redeemed it.

Praise God!

Field Trip/Suggestions

- **Field Trip Possibilities:** Apple orchard, pumpkin patch, farm, tree nursery, nursing home, fish hatchery.
- **Suggestion for Parents:** Take a walk around your neighborhood with your child. Observe the living and non-living things that God made. What colors does she see? What shapes can he observe? What sounds, smells, and textures can she identify? Ask younger children, "What do you see that is orange?" or "Can you find something God made that is a circle?" Have him draw a picture of his favorite part of the walk. Thank God together for His wonderful creation!
- **Suggestion for Parents:** Provide your child with opportunities to help you take care of the plants, animals, and people that God has created (watering the vegetable garden or a houseplant, feeding pets, putting out seeds for the birds, raking leaves for a housebound neighbor, etc.) Don't expect perfection, but encourage her efforts. As you work, pray together thanking God for His gifts of plants, animals, and especially the gift of life.

Resources

Annotated Bibliography:

Atkinson, Beth. *The Story of Creation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000.

Gibbons, Gail. *The Milk Makers*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1987. This book follows the process of milk making starting from the beginning—with the dairy cows.

Sose, Bonnie. *Designed By God So I Must Be Special*. Winter Park, FL: Character Builders for Kids, 1988.

Stone Soup: In this French folktale townspeople learn about sharing from hungry soldiers who teach them to make "stone soup."

Titherington, Jeanne. *Pumpkin, Pumpkin*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1986.

Walton, Sally and Stephanie Donadlson. *Show-Me-How I Can Grow Things*. New York: Smithsonian Publishers, 1995.

Web sites:

www.cph.org – Use this site to order Arch® Books such as *The Story of Creation*.

www.bettycrocker.com – Find recipes for fruit smoothies, and other snack items.

www.seaworld.org/animal-info/sound-library/index.htm – Click on "listen" to hear sounds from a variety of wild and domestic animals. For many of the animals, there is also a link to more facts about that animal.

www.make-stuff.com contains recipes [fruit smoothies, modeling clay] and project ideas [Mr. Grasshead – grass seed growing], including those that can be made for and with children.

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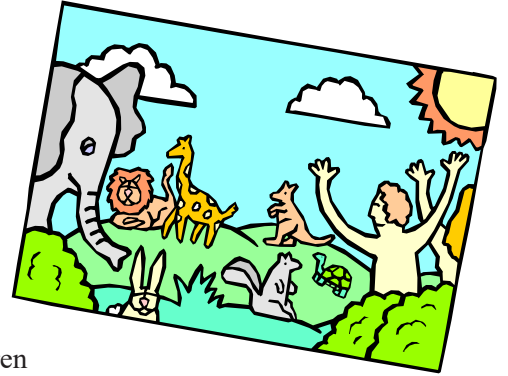
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Religion

Memory Fun!

Genesis 1:1 – *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

First Article – *I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*



Mural Fun!

Make a mural depicting all the things God made. Children may draw pictures or cut them from magazines. Arrange them in the order of the creation days. As children add their pictures to the mural, discuss how each thing supports or helps people. Have children stand in front of the pictures they added to the mural and thank God for the items they have depicted.

Charade Fun!

Play a game in which children act out something God made while the others try to guess what it is.



Teacher Sprinkle: Pretend you were one of Adam and Eve's children. What questions would you ask them?



Language Arts

Vocabulary: "Create" – To make something out of nothing.

Reading: Read the Creation story from a children's Bible. Emphasize that God's Word is true.



Writing: Let the children:

- Copy the story
- Write their own
- Illustrate it
- Read their story to kindergarten or pre-school children

Write a class poem about the things God made and the reason He made them—His love for people like us!

Alphabet Book: Make a Creation alphabet book.

Let the children work individually or in groups. The last page should read, "Thank you, God!"



Teacher Sprinkle: What would happen if animals could talk? Write a letter an animal might write.

Science



Where do Things Come from?

Plant a variety of objects in cups of soil. Include quick-sprouting seeds such as grass or beans as well as inanimate objects. Observe which objects grow and which do not. Discuss how God created plants with just His words but that He created them to grow and reproduce so that our food supply is on-going.

Trace the origins of a favorite food from table to store to farm to soil to God providing the rain and sun to make it grow.

What's Your Favorite?

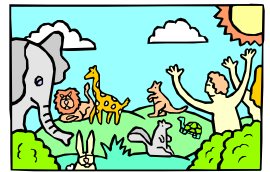
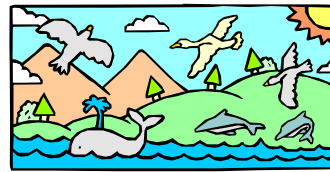
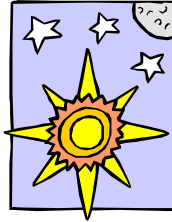
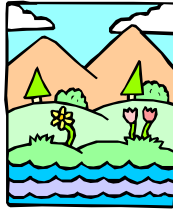
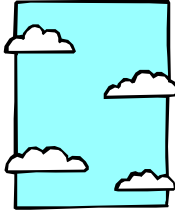
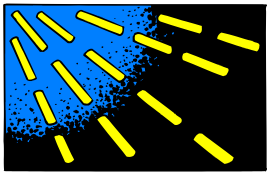
Choose a favorite part of God's creation. Bring samples of it to school and be able to tell about it (e.g. flowers, grass, trees and leaves, water, etc.).



Math

Counting

Make posters depicting what God created on each day of Creation (Day 1, Day 2, etc.). How many kinds of things made on each day can the students count? (Different kinds of plants, birds, fish, animals, etc.)



Dividing

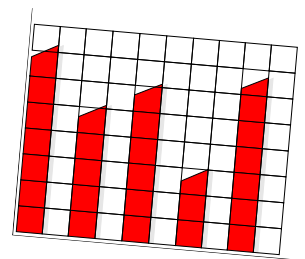
Discuss ways in which to divide a day (hours, minutes, seconds, morning, afternoon, evening, night, etc.). Note how God divided the first day in Genesis 1:5.



Graphing



God created Adam and Eve, the first man and the first woman. Make a graph of your class to indicate how many boys and how many girls. Make a graph of boys and girls in your students' families. Discuss the importance of boys and girls (men and women) in our world.



Teacher Sprinkle: What else takes six days to accomplish?

Social Studies

Where in the World do We Live?

God created land and water and separated them to provide a place for His creatures—especially people—to live and enjoy (Genesis 1:9-10). Study a globe and have the children identify areas of land and water. Find the rivers, lakes, and other physical features in the area in which you live. Discuss their usefulness and value (food, recreation, transportation, etc.). Thank God for providing those blessings.

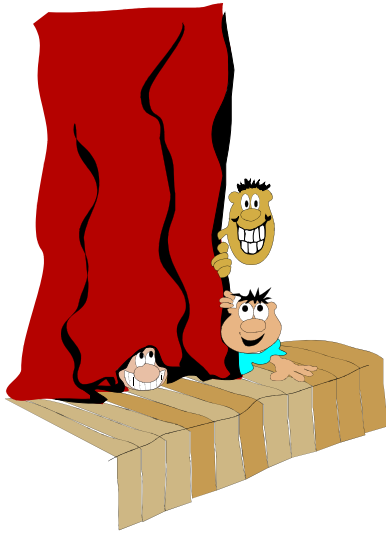


What in the World do We Do?

Discuss the kind of work Adam and Eve did in the Garden (Genesis 2:15). What kind of work do people do today—the students' parents, the students themselves? Why are these so important?



Fine Arts



Acting

Assign parts to children in the class and have them act out the story of Creation. Make props out of cardboard or construction paper.

Painting

Paint pictures using elements from nature such as rocks, pine needles, ears of corn, feathers, etc.



Sculpting

Make objects from clay. Discuss the difference between making something out of materials and creating out of nothing, like God did.



Singing



Sing songs about things God made. Example:

And God Said

by Johnnie B. Wood

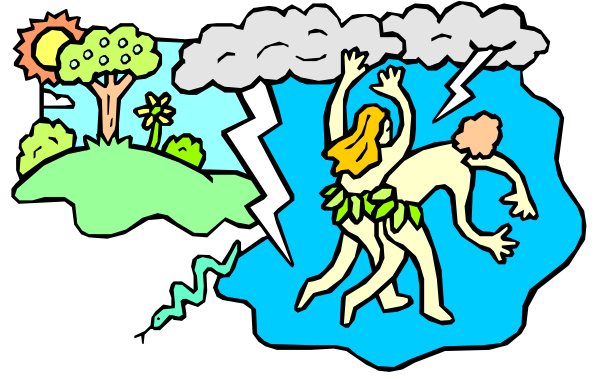
(music and lyrics on accompanying CD)

*And God said the sun should shine,
The rain should fall, the flow'rs should grow;
And God said the birds should sing,
And it was so, was so.*

Physical Activity

Acting Out

Act out the story of the Fall. Assign roles. Act out the story several times with different players. Be sure to end with God's words of hope in Genesis 3:15.



Hide and Seek

You might have to put some limits on this traditional game. One variation is to have about six children hide while the person who is "It" counts to 50. Then the seeker looks for the hiders and gets one point for everyone he or she sees within a certain time period. This version eliminates racing back to base. Be sure everyone has a turn. Or, if space permits, play the original game on the playground. Make the point that God went to look for Adam and Eve when they were hiding out of fear. He comes to us, too, when we are frightened or guilty and brings us back to His circle of care.

Service Learning



Forgiving

Ask children to think of someone they have sinned against. Write an apology to that person. Or, if someone has sinned against them, write a letter that expresses forgiveness, just as Jesus forgives us.

Raking God's World

God wants us to take care of the world He has created. Encourage children to help at home by raking leaves, sweeping sidewalks, etc. Have a campus cleanup day and pick up litter and trash.



Recycle

Another way of caring for the world and to remind the students that God makes us new again in Jesus.

Let your class be in charge of collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles to be recycled.

Give the money to Lutheran World Relief or another charity.



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Resources

Bibliography:

Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948.

Gross, Arthur. *Little Children Sing to God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Warren, Jean. *Piggyback Songs*. Everett, WA: Warren Publishing House, 1986.

Web Sites:

www.discovercreation.org (Go to: "Resources," "Bookstore," then "Books – Children") – A list of children's books, including *A is for Adam*, *D is for Dinosaur*, *Do Bugs Have Noses?* and others. Published by Alpha Omega Institute, an organization dedicated to teaching biblical and scientific evidence of creation.

www.kids4truth.com/creation.htm – A fun and interactive site that portrays the beauty of God's work.

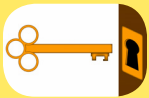
www.lifetalk.net/creation/creation7.html – Brief animated presentation of the seven days of Creation. Published by "Voice of Prophecy," a Seventh-Day Adventist Group, so be wary of links. The animated presentation, however, is useful.

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Religion

Read the Creation Account in Genesis 1

Creation Days Big Book

Take four sheets of 12" x18" white paper and arrange them as shown in illustration A. Fold over from left to right to match illustration B. Write the words "God Made the World For Us" on the outside of the front flap. Number the pages 1-7 at the bottoms of the flaps. On each flap, have students illustrate pictures of things that God created on the corresponding day of creation. Follow the prompts below. Remind the students how special life is to God that He would do all this for us to enjoy and care for.

Illustration A

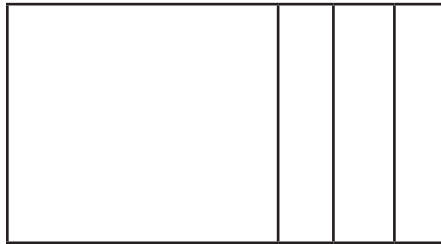


Illustration B

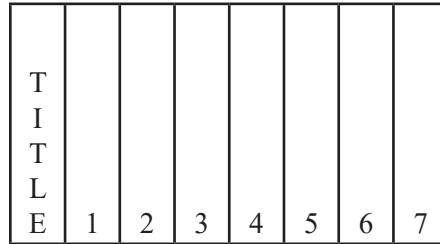
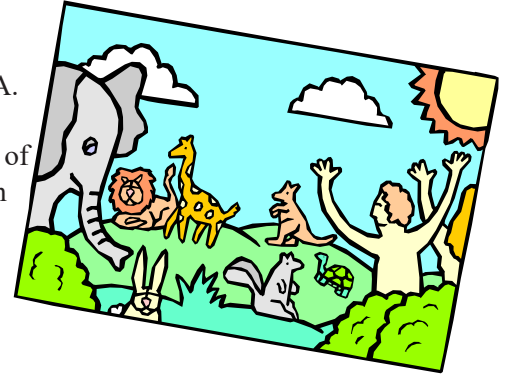


Illustration Prompts:

1. Light and Night
2. Sea and Sky
3. Land and Plants
4. Sun, Moon, and Stars
5. Birds and Fish
6. Land Creatures
7. God Rested



Creation Beyond Genesis

Creation is not only found in Genesis 1. These verses will give students the knowledge that the truth about Creation is evident all throughout the Bible: Deuteronomy 4:32, Job 38:1-11, Isaiah 42:5, Mark 13:19, Colossians 1:16, I Timothy 4:4.



Creation Prayers

Write thank you prayers to God for the beautiful creation. Model by writing a class prayer and then allow students to express themselves in their own prayers.

Creation Memory

Have the students memorize the First Article of the Apostles Creed and Luther's Explanation.



Teacher Sprinkle: If you could thank God for one part of creation, what would it be? Why did you choose this part?

Language Arts

Reading

Read the Creation story from Genesis 1.

Witness Writing

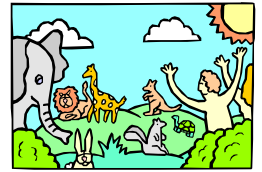
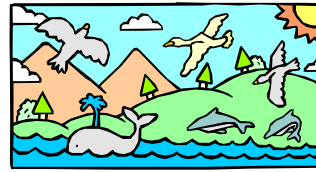
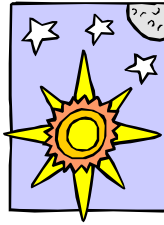
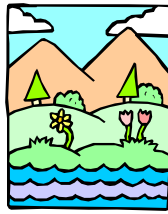
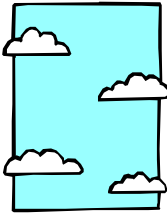
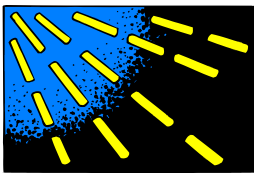
If you met someone who had not heard the Creation story, how would you recount the events? Write a “script” for this imagined discussion between you and another person.

Drama Writing

Rewrite the Creation story in the form of a drama. This drama should include the following parts: Voice of God, Adam, Eve, several animals. Also, include scenery from the garden.



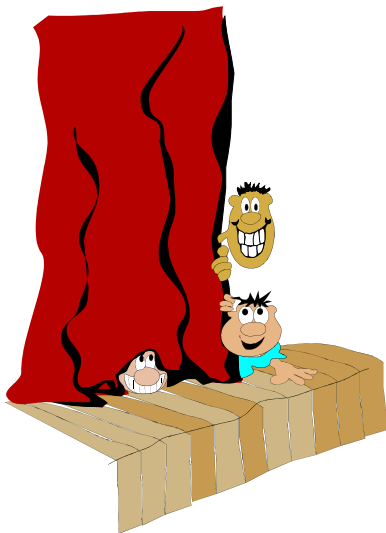
Teacher Sprinkle: What do you think it was like for Adam and Eve during Creation? Write a journal for the six days of Creation from their point of view.



Fine Arts

Creation Still Lives

Bring in several pictures of plants as well as live or artificial plants to art class. Have students draw and then paint these as still life to be part of a Creation wall to be included in your classroom.



Creation Mural

Supply students with a large variety of magazines. Allow them some time to look through the magazines and cut out examples of God’s wonderful creation. Have them make a Creation mural to be included in the Creation wall.

Creation Performance

Perform the Creation play the students wrote as a dramatic experience.

Creation Sings



Sing Creation songs such as:

*This is My Father’s World,
Earth and All Stars,
Thy Strong Word.*

Science

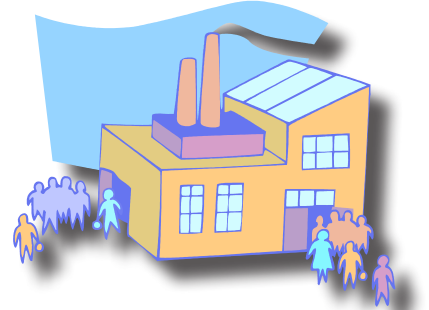
Living vs. Non-Living

Create a list of animate (living things) and also a list of inanimate (non-living things) that God created. As you make the distinction between the two, review when such things were created during the 6 days. Review why these were created—for human life to enjoy and care for.



Created vs. Made

Now make a list of manufactured items—cars, appliances, computers, etc. Discuss how God gave man the knowledge to make such things. Point out how the component parts can ultimately be traced back to God’s Creation. Dismantle an old appliance or computer or other manufactured item. Talk about where the various parts ultimately came from.



Planting and Growing and Caring

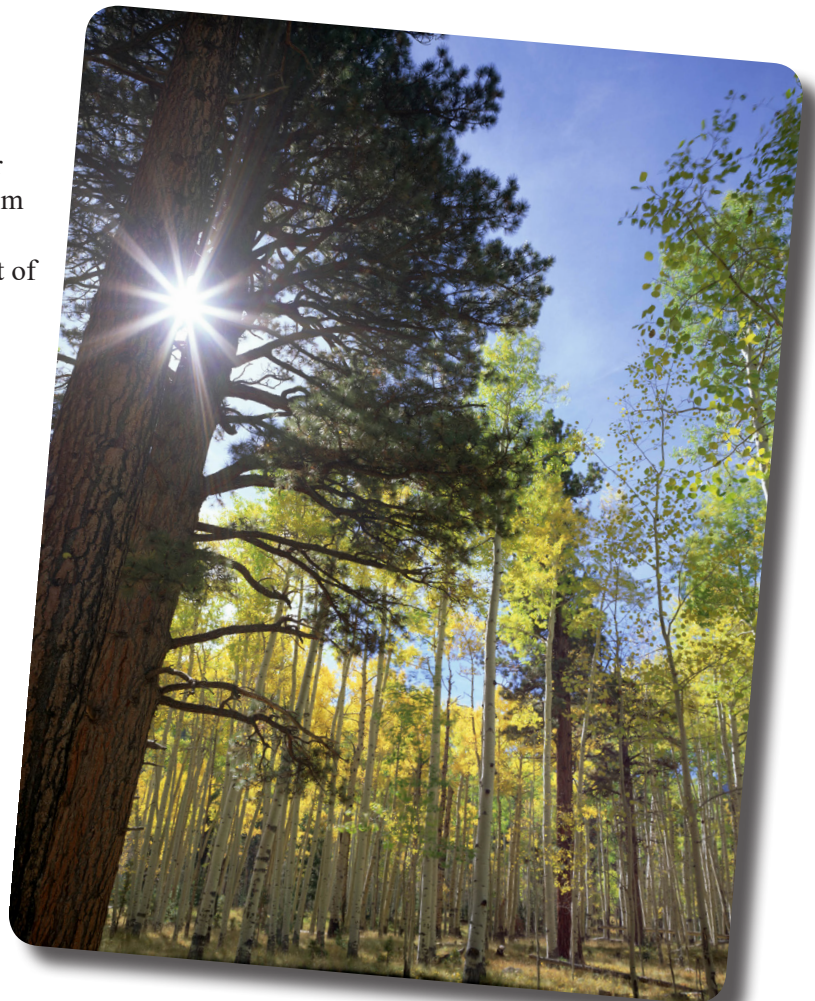


Plant a variety of seeds in cups or pots. Discuss how God gave His creation the ability to reproduce. (See Genesis 1:12.) As the plants grow discuss what they need—nutrients, water, sunlight. As your students take care of their plants, talk about how Adam was to care for the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15).

If possible, consider planting mums on the school property in the fall as your climate allows. These, too, will need to be cared for.

Take a Hike

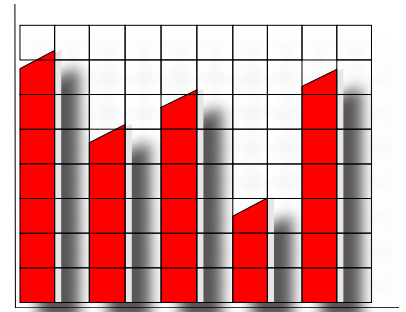
Take a nature walk with your class through the neighborhood or a nearby wooded area or near a lake or stream. Have students take note of the world around them and allow them to express their feelings about this gift from God. Collect items of creation and make them part of your “Creation wall.”



math

Graph It

Using the list made during the science lesson, graph the number of living, non-living, and manufactured items.

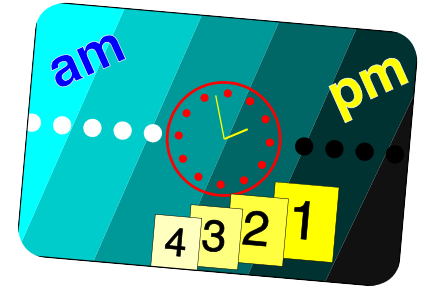


Taking Time for Time

God created time. (See Genesis 1:3-5.)

Use the seven days to refresh time concepts. Seven days in a week—how many hours? Minutes? Seconds? This pattern can be used for a variety of time-related questions.

Time is a gift from God for His creation. We can be thankful for it and use it wisely!



Service Learning

Caring for a Neighborhood Garden

If climate allows, plant a neighborhood garden. The students will need time to work on this project. Contact your local parks department to inquire about the use of a portion of a particular park near your school for the location of the garden. Or see if there is an existing garden or city flower beds that need to be cared for.

Caring for Neighborhood Neighbors



Have a senior yard work day. Ask for your congregation to assist you in gathering names of seniors who would profit from your students' assistance in yard work. This event could either take place in a single day or last over a span of several weekends. Enlist the assistance of

parents and other teachers as well.



Forgiving



Ask children to think of someone they have sinned against. Write an apology to that person. Or, if someone has sinned against them, write a letter that expresses forgiveness, just as Jesus forgives us.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents:

This month we are discussing how God created the world and everything in it in six days. While some scientists dispute the biblical account of the six-day Creation, it is important for children to understand that God can do anything. We put our trust in Him and in His Word. We will focus on the amazing fact that all of creation was put in place to serve the crown of God's creation—human beings! What value this gives to all people! The world that God gave His Son to redeem began in this miraculous way. He loved it and created it perfect—His gift for all generations. Please help your child notice and wonder at God's workmanship. His Word called it into being; He continues to sustain it, and Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, redeemed it.

Children will be faced with questions from those outside the Church as to how this is even a possibility. It is crucial that we arm our children with the knowledge to be able to defend their beliefs. Family discussions and Bible study are wonderful ways for you and your children to grow in your faith life together. Encourage your children by showing them biblical evidence of the truth of Creation.

Resources

All God's People Sing. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Atkinson, Beth. *The Story of Creation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000.

Beers, V. Gilbert and Ronald Beers. *Bible Stories to Live By*. San Bernadino, California: Here's Life Publishers, 1991.

dePaola, Tomie. *Tomie de Paola's Book of Bible Stories*. New York: Putnam, 2002.

Joyful Sounds. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Voyages® religion curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Beginning of Time: The Importance of a Six-day Creation.



Prayer for Prep: “How awesome, Father, that You created everything to enhance and sustain LIFE! Thank you! May Your Spirit enlighten my understanding of the value this gives to human life and enable me to teach that to the children.”



Key Concept: Understanding God as the Creator of all things is the foundation to understanding the value of human life.



Gospel Focus: Everything was created by Jesus and for Jesus.



Bible Story: Genesis 1.



Critical Questions:

1. How did the world and everything in it come to be?

World's Answer: Chance. From unexplained initial materials, the world and all the complexity of life developed by random chance.

WORD'S ANSWER: Design. A loving, all-powerful God created everything out of nothing.

2. Why is there suffering and death in the world in which we live?

World's Answer: Natural. Nature uses death to eliminate weaker genes and enhance the survival of the fittest. Life comes from death.

WORD'S ANSWER: Unnatural. Sin brought death into God's perfect world. But God loved the world and the life He created, and He redeemed them through Jesus. New life comes through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

3. What keeps everything going?

World's Answer: Nothing. Like a battery operated CD player, the world is playing out and headed toward a purposeless end.

WORD'S ANSWER: Something. Indeed, it is *Someone*! All things “hold together” in Jesus (Col. 1:17). God sustains everything through His powerful Word of Life and gracious love and, therefore, the world is headed with purpose toward a new beginning.



Religion

Reading



Jeremiah 10:12
(If you are using *Voyages*®, this fits well with Unit 1 Grade 5 “God’s Word Provides Wisdom” and Unit 1 Grade 6 “God’s Plan.”)

Questions



How does the Bible say the world came to be?
(Six-day Creation)

Where is this found? (Genesis 1)

Where else is it found? (Emphasize that Scripture affirms the Creation in many places. E.g. Here in

Jeremiah, Job 38:1-11, Psalm 8, Mark 10:6.)

Why did God create the world? (God’s creation of all things is the foundation for His incredible love of His human creation.)

Class Prayer



Use Ephesians 1:17-19a as a class prayer.

Use the “Find/Replace” feature on your computer to insert each student’s name where this text says “you.” Give that child the note on the day you have prayed this prayer for that child by name in your personal devotions.

Lunch Prayer



Have the students memorize and use as a lunch prayer Psalm 145:15-16: “The eyes of all look to You and You give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.” (NIV)



Teacher Sprinkle: Since God’s plan includes a new heaven and a new earth, what do you imagine it might look like? (Houses that can move vertically? The ability to “beam” places? Animals that talk?)



Language Arts

Creation Acrostic

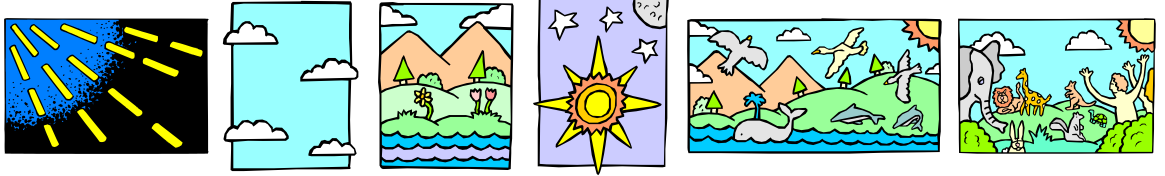
Read Genesis 1.

In your poetry study let students try an acrostic for CREATION.

(*Voyages® Unit 1 Grade 5 “God’s Word Provides Wisdom” or Unit 1 Grade 6 “God’s Plan.”*)

Example:

C – color
R – rest
E – earth
A – animals
T – time
I – image
O – oceans
N – night



Similes Activity

Challenge students to create similes for God, beginning “God is like . . .” (“God is like a river that gives life to all the creatures that come to drink.” “God is like a chocolate chip cookie stimulating my senses and making me glad.”)

Science

Science from Seuss??

Read Dr. Seuss’ book *The Lorax* and think about the theme. The author proposes that the reader is responsible for that last truffula seed. There is truth in this regarding our stewardship of God’s creation. However, also point out there is the fallacy that assumes God cannot/is not maintaining His creation Himself. Consider the sparrows and the lilies Jesus says that God is intimately aware of (Matthew 6:25-34). All of creation “holds together” in Jesus (Colossians 1:17).



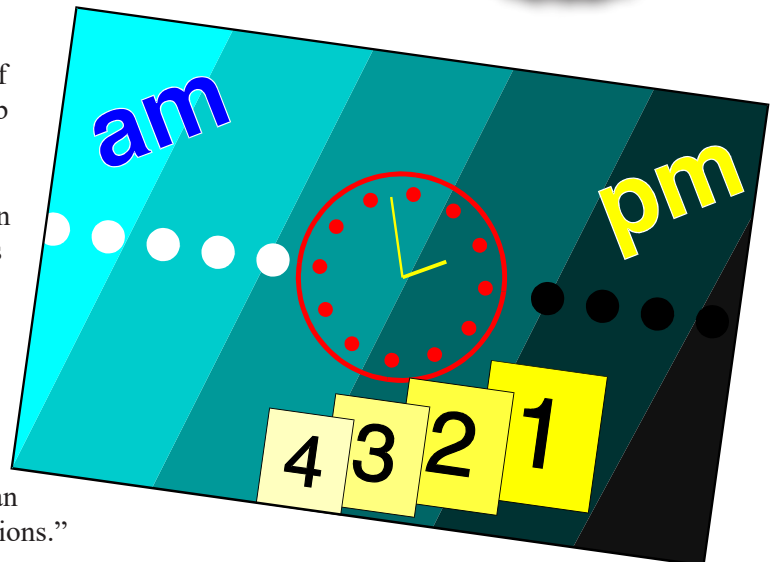
Winding Down or Sustained by God?

As you read your science textbook’s explanation of the age of the earth and references to evolution, also include reading Job 38:4-11.

Mention that Christians believe God still sustains His creation every second. Refer to Job 38:24-39:30 as the way Christians think in contrast to evolutionists’ claim that things just keep on evolving and will eventually wind down.

Then challenge students to make a case for the continued existence of birds, rain, trees, wind, rocks, stars, and people.

This exercise moves into higher critical thinking skills and can spark some good insights about the marvels of God’s “inventions.”



Social Studies

Chief Seattle's Speech

The city of Seattle is named after Chief Seattle of the Suquamish tribe of the Puget Sound Indians. In 1854 he delivered a speech to an assembly of tribes preparing to sign treaties with European Americans. The speech was transcribed 30 years later by Dr. Henry A. Smith from notes he had taken at the event. Although there is some debate about how many of Dr. Smith's own words found their way into the speech, it reflects a "natural knowledge" of the wonder of God's creation. Chief Seattle did become a Christian before his death.

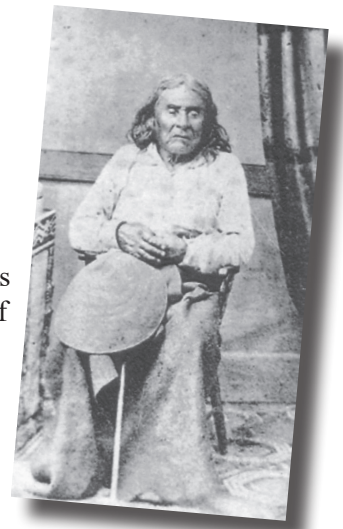
Have students discuss the questions regarding quotes from Chief Seattle's speech.

"How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing, and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people."

In what sense do we not own the land? In what sense is it "holy"?

"This earth is precious to God and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator."

Discuss ways we "harm the earth." What is the Christian's motivation to "work it and take care of it"? (Genesis 2:15)



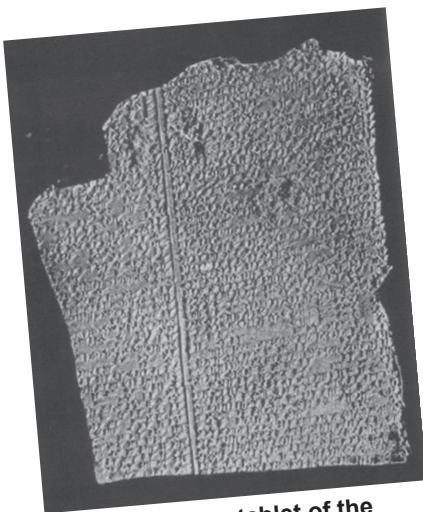
The only known photograph of Chief Seattle, taken in the 1860s.

Gilgamesh Epic

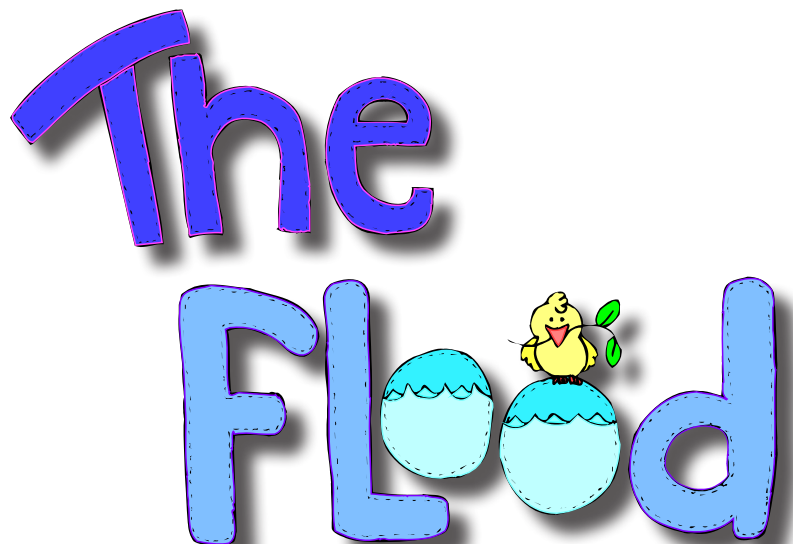
These 12 clay tablets that archeologists have found reference a catastrophic flood in which one man survives in a boat. Our very oldest written records record a flood, attribute the world's existence to Creation, and emphasize the belief in human sin.

Some historians claim that Genesis was patterned on these Sumerian beliefs.

What is a more logical and biblical explanation?



The Deluge tablet of the Gilgamesh epic in Akkadian.



Service Learning

Have students collect fall leaves. Iron the most beautiful between sheets of wax paper. Use a dry iron and work over newspapers. Trim the edges and thread fish line through a hole at the top. Give these to the pastor to put in the windows of hospital patients or shut-ins. Attach small student-written cards to each explaining their pleasure in God's invention of color. After delivering, reflect together how incredible the invention of leaves actually is and what this suggests about God.



Year Long Bulletin Board Idea

Imitating a bit of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, sketch only God's outstretched arm from the upper corner of a bulletin board. Title it: **GOD—FOR LIFE!** In this first unit, let students add hand drawn, cut out, or computer generated pictures of whatever God created that fascinates each one (stars, a lion, a sequoia, fire, angels, rocks). Staple signed, hand-written notes by each picture explaining choices.



Parent Letter Suggestions

You might include what your bulletin board represents if you used the above idea. You might also explain why you assign memory work. Children need God's Word deep in their hearts to grow in wisdom as Jesus did. (Luke 2:52) Jesus had memory work too! Share some of the words in the "Critical Questions" on the first page of this unit.

Resources

Earth and All Stars, the hymn, praises God as the maker of "marvelous things."

Poster: In bold letters put "In the Beginning God" against a large black background. This visually reminds us that God existed before creating the universe.

Seuss, Dr. *The Lorax*. New York: Random House, 1971.

Voyages® religion curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab1.htm – Text of Gilgamesh Epic.

www.answersingenesis.org – Biblical approach to the creation/evolution debate.

www.creationinstruction.org – This web site provides up-to-date information on the debate points creationists make against evolutionistic claims.

www.synaptic.bc.ca/ejournal/seattle.htm – Source of speech by Chief Seattle.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Beginning of Time: The Importance of a Six-day Creation.



Prayer for Prep: “How awesome, Father, that You created everything to enhance and sustain LIFE! Thank you! May Your Spirit enlighten my understanding of the value this gives to human life and enable me to teach that to the children.”



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Religion

The Idea of Evolution Existed at Luther's Time

Lucretius, a 1st century Greek philosopher, mocked the roll of divine work within Creation saying "[T]he theory that they [the gods] deliberately created the world in all its natural splendor for the sake of man . . . with all its attendant fictions is sheer nonsense!"

Luther Argued for a Six-day Creation

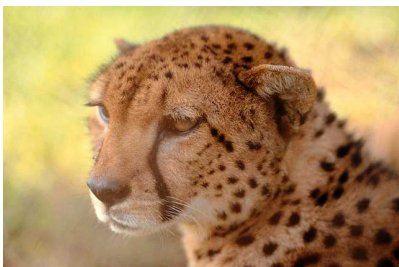
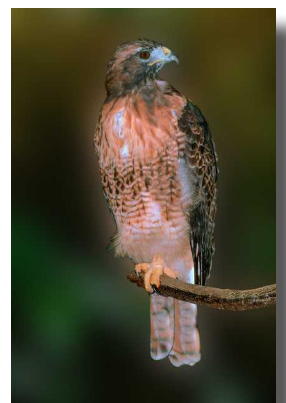
- Luther had studied Lucretius.
- Several times Luther specifically said that what Moses wrote was historical. He emphasized, "This, I say, is historical."
- Luther, aware of theories similar to modern day evolution, states: "Thus, as we human beings did not create ourselves, so we can do nothing to keep ourselves alive for a single moment by our own power."
- Luther said, "Ungodly and wicked men, who suppose that everything happens by chance, understanding nothing in the Holy Scriptures and creatures of God."
- "It is not true," Luther wrote, "as several heretics and other vulgar persons allege, that God created everything in the beginning, and then let nature take its own independent course, so that all things now spring into being of their own power; thereby they put God on a level with a shoemaker or a tailor."



Care-taking and Creation

Everything God did in Creation was for the crown of His creation, human beings. He also gave human beings the responsibility to care for His creation (Genesis 1:28; 2:15). For example, we are to give kind and considerate attention to the animal kingdom (Proverbs 12:10 and Deuteronomy 25:4).

Discuss the value that all of God's creation gives to each and every human being. (See Psalm 8)



Language Arts

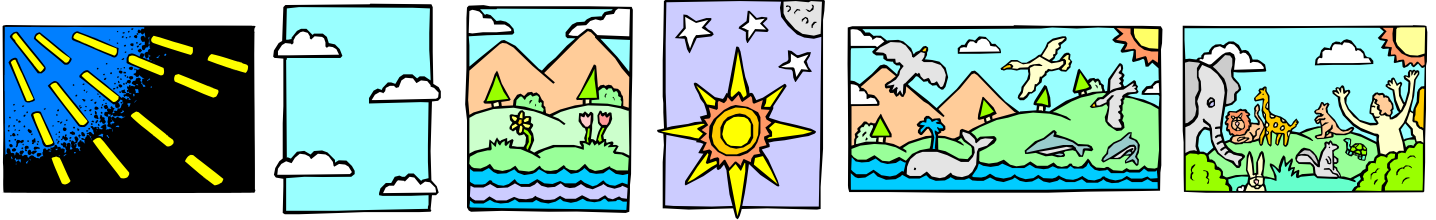
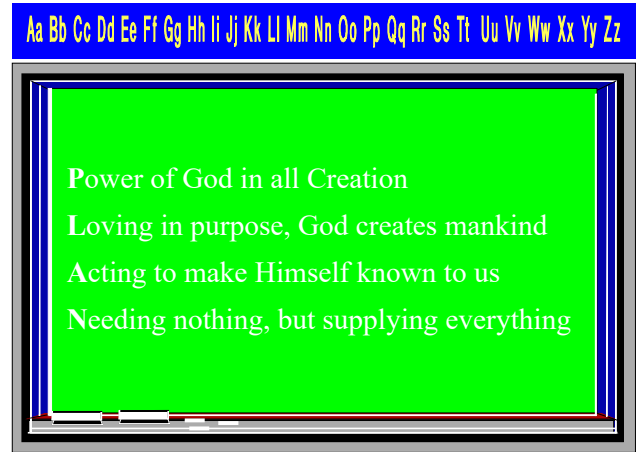
Acronym:

PLAN

Write out acronym, line by line, expanding on each line. In the future, each class can begin by going through either the last acronym or ALL acronyms to date as a means of review.

Reading

Read the Creation account in Genesis 2:1-9



Ask: Does verse one suggest that God has finished the creation of all things?

Ask: How then do we make sense of verses 5 and 9 which seem to suggest that man was created before plants and trees?

Answer: Genesis 1 tells of God's creation of all things on a vast scale. Genesis 2 is concerned with the creation and care of mankind.

Read the Creation account in John 1:1-5.

The "Word" which became flesh must also be the "Word" at work in the creation of mankind. Interestingly, Luther believed that each person was also created to be when God created Adam and Eve. Each one of us would be revealed from God's loving hands as time went forward.

Illustration



Ask the students to form a straight line using a boy and girl standing side-by-side and close together at the front. Give the boy a large sheet of paper with the word "Adam" in large letters. Give the girl a large sheet of paper with "Eve" in large letters. Stand before 'Adam' and 'Eve' and say that this is how we see humanity when Adam and Eve were created. We see only two people. Next move so that you are standing five or so feet away from the side of the line. Note that God saw all people, not just Adam and Eve, when He created humanity.



Science

Grandfather Clocks Tick Away at Evolution

Either bring a small grandfather clock or show a large picture of one to the class. Explain how the weights slowly falling down provide the energy that moves the mainspring of the clock.

Ask: What will happen when the weights hit the bottom of the clock?

Answer: The clock will stop running because there is no more energy being provided to work the mainspring.

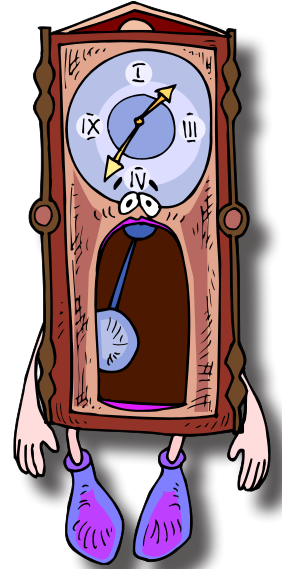
The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that the universe has a set amount of energy and when it is all used up, the universe basically comes to an end. This law means that over the billions and billions of years suggested by evolution the universe should be wearing down and not becoming more complex. Instead, a very complex and well-running universe was created in just six days.

Water Running Up Hill?

Place about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of water into a cake pan. Tilt the pan up on one side. Note that the water runs down naturally because of gravity. To make water go up hill would require the adding of additional energy.

Let a student use their hand trying to make the water go back to the top of the pan. His hand has added energy into the system. In the same way, the Second Law of Thermodynamics tells us that the natural tendency of things is to wear down, like clothes and shoes wear out over time.

Evolution suggests the opposite, that things become more complex over time. As Christians we understand that things can only become more complex, that water can only run up hill when God's loving hands continue to add energy into His creation. We call this God sustaining all things.



Social Studies

Ancient Arts and Crafts

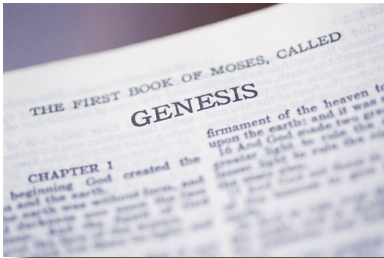
Read Genesis 4:21-22.

Ask: Noting that Adam is still alive (Genesis 4:25), what were his descendants already beginning to make?

Answer: From the beginning we see creatures made from spirit and soil within God's loving hands demonstrating their unique place within creation. Not only did they make tools to build things but they also created musical instruments that played to the soul and soothed the spirit.



Ancient Genealogies - God's Truth from Adam to Abraham



The Book of Genesis gives many details about Creation.

Ask: How confident can we be that the details are accurate?

Answer: We trust that God preserved the truth of His Word.

The Book of Genesis gives the lines of descendants from the time of Adam and Eve. Adam lived until Lamech was 5 years old. So Adam could have shared directly with Lamech what God had revealed to him concerning how things were created and how the fall of mankind took place.

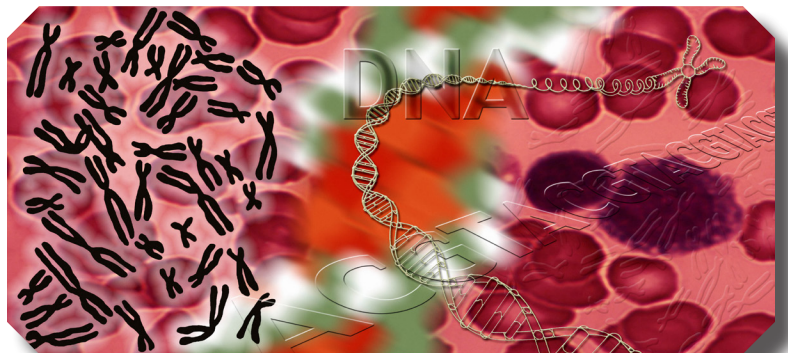
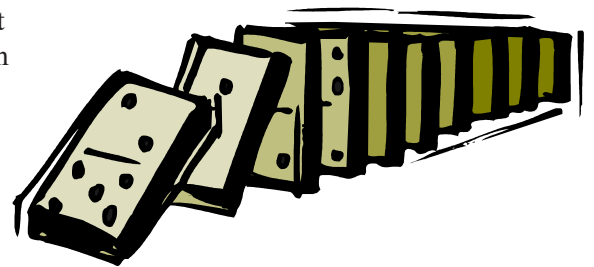
Lamech would have shared all of this with his son, Noah (Genesis 5:28-29a). Noah would have shared this with his sons, and Shem, one of the sons of Noah, was still alive at the time of Abraham. In all, there would have only been four links in the chain that brought direct information to the time of Abraham.

Math

Dominoes of Design

Allow the students to put together a design of dominoes so that when the first one is knocked over it hits the next and so forth. The design and the operation of the dominoes came from an intelligent source. God designed the heavens and the earth and created them in six days.

The human DNA is the information storage center that God's caring hand uses to create your hands, feet, and all the parts of your body. There are 75 to 100 trillion cells in the human body. If all the DNA in one human body were stretched out and joined end to end, it would go the distance of 94 billion miles! (The DNA in just one body, if stretched out and laid end to end, would go around the earth's equator three-and-a-half million times!) Adam and Eve would have had this much DNA in each of them. Truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made! (Psalm 139:14)



Service Learning

Contact the local humane society and ask if your class could plan a visit, not just to look over a variety of God's creatures, but to do some work at the center and with the animals.

Parent Letter Suggestions

Your Children Are Learning:

- God created all things in six days for the sake of human beings, bestowing tremendous value upon humanity from the very beginning.
- Martin Luther knew theories of evolution, speaking out against them and insisting that the Genesis account of Creation be taken at face value.
- There is so little genetic difference between the various races that any given two people are, for practical purposes, identical twins.
- The universe should be running out of energy, but God creates and sustains all things.
- Humans can decide on things that other creatures must act out of instinctual drives.
- The DNA in just one body, if stretched out and laid end to end, would go around the earth's equator three-and-a-half million times!

Bibliography

See CD.

Teaching For Life

For Life Because God Is—The Trinitarian Value of Human Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Triune God, Your intimate involvement in the creation, redemption, and sustaining of human life give life unparalleled value. Teach me to know, understand, and believe this so that I might teach it to the children in my class. Amen.”



Key Concept: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give inherent value to human life regardless of the stage of development or condition of health.



Gospel Focus: Our value comes from what God has done and continues to do in our lives.



Bible Story: Genesis 2-3 – The Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve.



Critical Questions:

1. How did human life begin?

World's Answer: Evolution. Through chemical combinations, genetic mutation, and natural selection, human life evolved from non-living matter into a highly complex organism over billions of years.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. With His hands, God lovingly formed Adam from the dust of the ground and made Eve from one of Adam's ribs.

2. How is death dealt with?

World's Answer: No need. Death is the evolutionist's friend, a necessary part of the process to arrive at human life, thus death existed long before humans. There is no need to be redeemed from it.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin and death. But God loved what His hands made and promised a Savior. The hands of God's Son stretched out on a cross would pay the price for redemption.

3. What sustains life?

World's Answer: Human hands. Humanity is in control of its own destiny and well being.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. God is in control through the power of His Holy Spirit, and with His hands “satisfies the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:16).



Religion

Apples and The Trinity

Read *3 in 1: A Picture of God* by Joanne Marxhausen. This book clearly summarizes the heart of the Christian faith using child-friendly sentences and illustrations. Due to the length of the book (47 pages of text) and the difficulty of the concept of the Trinity, teachers may prefer to read it over two or more sittings.

Human life is unique in God's whole wonderful creation because God formed human beings with His own hands (Genesis 2); God sent His only Son to pay the full price for the sin of the whole world; and God the Holy Spirit gives the gift of faith and sustains it. As you share other Bible stories with the children about men and women of faith (Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Samuel, Joseph, Esther, Ruth, Mary, etc.), lead them to see God's guiding, forgiving, and protecting hand going with His followers throughout their lives. God loves the children in your care, the unborn baby, the elderly neighbor, the teenager with a learning disability, and you!

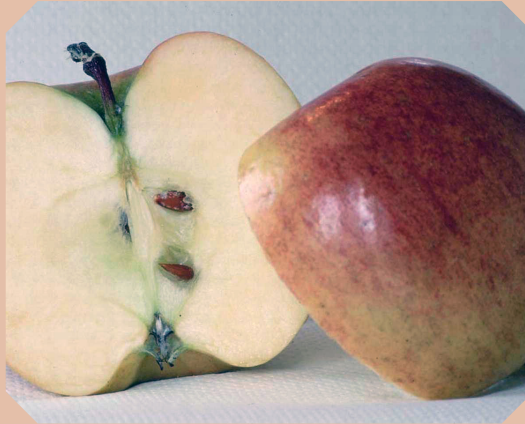


Snack: Apple Slices

Slice apples for the children.

Note: If you're reading "3 in 1: A Picture of God" by Marxhausen, review the parts of the apple and what they teach us about God as you prepare the snack together.

God created human beings with a rational mind and will. Allow the children the freedom to choose healthy toppings for their apples if they wish. Possible toppings might include low-fat yogurt, peanut butter, granola, cheese, etc.



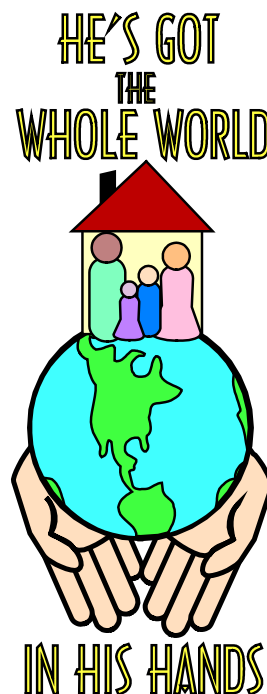
Fine Arts

Music

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands
[*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 101]

Substitute the names of class members, teachers/helpers in your church and school or your pen pals at the senior center, another school, or preschool/daycare center if your class is participating in this service project.

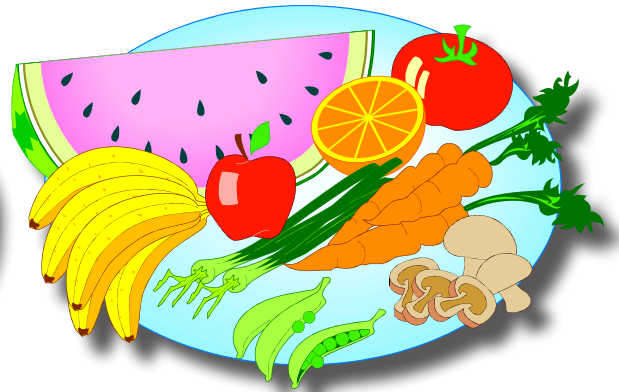
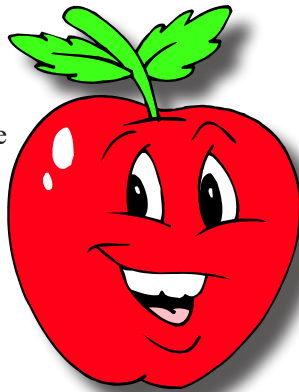
Each person is important to God regardless of age, ability, or disability.



Science

Apple Skin/Our Skin Learning Center:

Show the children an apple. Ask: Why do you think God made the apple with a skin (peel)? Acknowledge any and all answers for now. Ask the children to predict what the apple looks like under the peel. Peel the apple and have the children describe what they see. Tell the children you will leave the apple in the learning center for awhile and check on it later in the day. Allow the children to predict what might happen to the apple.



Later in the day, check on the apple again. What has changed? (It has turned brown.)

Guide the children to understand that God created apples (and many other fruits and vegetables) with skins/peels to protect the fruit/vegetable inside. In the case of the apple, the skin also protects the seeds inside from which more apples can grow.

God created Adam and Eve with skin to protect their muscles and bones underneath. Our skin helps keep bacteria/germs from getting in and making us sick.

(Remind the children that when they get a cut or scrape their parents or teachers clean the wound with antibacterial soap and cover it with a bandage to protect them from infection.)



Body Tracing

Trace around each child's body onto a long sheet of newsprint. Have the children draw and color facial features, hair, clothing, etc. Then cut out each outline. God created Adam and Eve in a special way. God created each one of us also. Each person is different yet each is a child of God—created, redeemed, and sanctified by the loving hands of our Triune God.



Social Studies

People Who Help Care for Body and Soul



God made us; Jesus died on the cross and rose again to forgive our sins; and the Holy Spirit put faith in Jesus in our hearts and keeps us in faith. God gives us many human helpers to take care of us also. As the children study the jobs of common community helpers such as firefighters, police officers, doctors, nurses, etc., remind the children of the helpers in their church and school that protect them and keep their faith "healthy." Invite your pastor or other church workers to visit your classroom and explain their jobs to the children. Add some items to your housekeeping/dramatic play center [cross, hymn book, Bible] which would help the children to role play the activities of God's helpers in their church.



Service Projects

Pen Pals (ongoing)

Each of us is a special child of God with unique interests and abilities.

Dear ...

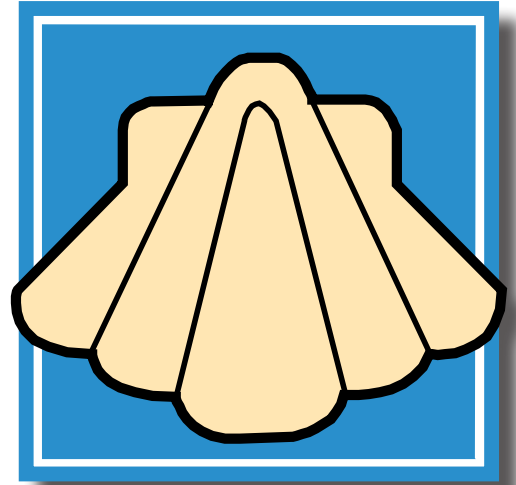
Draw a large outline of a baptism shell. Below the shell print
“_____ is a child of God.”

Reproduce enough copies for each student and each pen pal.

Note: If possible, work on the project with the pen pals from the retirement center, nursing home, daycare center, other early childhood class, etc. If this is not possible, send materials and directions along with this month's parent letter.

Provide markers, stickers, old magazines, etc. for the children to use to decorate their shells. As the children and their pen pals work side by side, remind them that although each one is different, they are all children of the “Three-in-One God”—the God who loved them so much He made them, died for their sins, and helps them to trust in Him and to love others.

Optional: Share a story time with the pen pals. Allow each group to suggest books to share. Consider reading 3 in 1: *A Picture of God* by Marxhausen or *God Chose You* by Dietrich. Sing favorite songs for and with the pen pals such as *I Was Baptized* and *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*. *Little Ones Sing Praise* is a good resource for child-friendly, theme-related songs.



Bulletin Board

“The ‘Hand’iwork of God”

Each person is a unique work of God's creating, redeeming, and sanctifying hands. Trace each child's hands onto colorful construction paper. Cut them out (or have the children cut them) and add a photo of a child's face to the front of each. Spread the handprints out over a white background under the title “The ‘Hand’iwork of God” (Genesis 2).

Optional: Have the children make actual handprints using fingerpaint. If your class is participating in the pen pal service project, ask the pen pals to send you their handprints and photos and intersperse them throughout the bulletin board.



Other Learning Activities

Field Trip

Visit the church sanctuary and stop at the baptismal font. Remind the children of what happened on their Baptism days. They were baptized in the name of our three-in-one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Sing together *I was Baptized* (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 97) or another Baptism song. Before or after the field trip read *God Chose You* Julie Dietrich.



*Baptism. I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.* by



Housekeeping Center

Provide articles of clothing/tools/accessories related to the work of community helpers (include helpers in the church) to scaffold the children's dramatic play. As they play, talk with them about how God uses many kinds of helpers to take care of us in both body and soul.



Sand/Water Table

Fill with sand, cornmeal, rice, etc. Provide cups, bowls and scoops of varying sizes and shapes. Let them feel the material in their hands. As the children experiment with the materials, talk with them about how God formed Adam with His hands out of the dust of the earth and "built" Eve with His hands from one of Adam's ribs.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Dear Parents,

This month we are focusing on the Trinitarian value of life. God the Father created us, forming Adam and Eve with His own hands. God the Son, Jesus Christ, paid for all of our sins. He hung on the cross by nail-pierced hands. God the Holy Spirit gave us the gift of faith and "holds us" in that faith. Your child is a unique person who is very valuable in God's eyes. If you have a copy of your child's baby footprints, you might wish to show them to his/her at this time and remind his/her how special he/she is to God and to you.

You celebrate your child's birthday each year. Why not have a celebration to commemorate his/her Baptism? You could light a baptism candle if you have one (or any candle), sing a baptism song such as "I was Baptized" and pray a short prayer thanking God for making us, sending Jesus to die for us, and giving us the gifts of faith, forgiveness, and new life through Baptism.

Resources

Annotated Bibliography:

Dietrich, Julie. *God Chose You*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000. Through rhyming verse and photographic-quality illustrations by Kevin McCain, this little book shows the love of God for each of His children. He chose us long before birth and welcomed us into His family at Baptism. The book may be given on a Baptism anniversary (or on the occasion of a Baptism of an older child) as a reminder of the blessings of baptism and of being in the loving arms of our Triune God.

Fryar, Jane. *Fingers Tell the Story*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Children can respond to God's creating, redeeming, and sanctifying work using their hands and bodies to praise God and tell His story. Available on-line at www.cph.org.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Available at www.cph.org. This resource contains music, texts, guitar chords, and in some cases, suggestions for actions, for a variety of Christian songs organized by topic. Some of the topics included are Creation, Baptism, and Wiggles Out. There is also a section of piggyback songs—texts that can be used with the melodies of well-known children's songs.

Marxhausen, Joanne. *3 in 1: A picture of God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973. This book is an extended simile using an apple to help children (and adults) understand the work of our Triune God. The basic illustrations by Benjamin Marxhausen using simple lines, shapes, and color are integrated with child-friendly text that clearly summarizes the Christian faith. Order on-line at www.cph.org.

Sose', Bonnie. *Designed by God so I Must be Special*. Winter Park, FL: Character Builders for Kids, 1988. Rhyming phrases and delightful illustrations share a child's sense of wonder at how God made him/her complete with five senses, mind, body, and spirit.

God Knew Your Name words and music by James Likens; copyright 1997 StoryTunes Publishing, ASCAP. This is the title track from the *God Knew Your Name and More* CD. James Likens sings of how God values human life at every stage. Before we saw the light of day God knew our names. CD's can be ordered from www.godknewyourname.com.

Just Because words and music by James Likens; copyright 2004 StoryTunes Publishing, ASCAP. James Likens shares a lesson he learned from his grandma: We have value "just because" God made us and died to save us. CD's can be ordered at www.godknewyourname.com.

Thank You Dear Jesus words and music by James Likens; copyright 1998 StoryTunes Publishing, ASCAP. This song is a child's nighttime prayer, thanking Jesus for His care throughout the day, for dying for our sins, and because in His "loving arms . . . [He] sheltered my faith." CD's can be ordered at www.godknewyourname.com.

Web sites:

www.godknewyourname.com – For copies of the *God Knew Your Name and More* CD, the sheet music, or the *God Knew Your Name* video by pastor/ singer/ songwriter James Likens or view a copy of the lyrics to *God Knew Your Name*. Information is included regarding how to obtain permission to use the lyrics in your congregation.

www.lutheransforlife.org – See "Music/Music Videos" under "Catalog" for CDs, DVDs, and sheet music featuring Jim Likens.

Teaching For Life

For Life Because God is—The Trinitarian Value of Human Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Triune God, Your intimate involvement in the creation, redemption, and sustaining of human life give life unparalleled value. Teach me to know, understand, and believe this so that I might teach it to the children in my class. Amen.”



Key Concept: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give inherent value to human life regardless of the stage of development or condition of health.



Gospel Focus: Our value comes from what God has done and continues to do in our lives.



Bible Story: Genesis 2-3 – The Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve.



Critical Questions:

1. How did human life begin?

World's Answer: Evolution. Through chemical combinations, genetic mutation, and natural selection, human life evolved from non-living matter into a highly complex organism over billions of years.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. With His hands, God lovingly formed Adam from the dust of the ground and made Eve from one of Adam's ribs.

2. How is death dealt with?

World's Answer: No need. Death is the evolutionist's friend, a necessary part of the process to arrive at human life, thus death existed long before humans. There is no need to be redeemed from it.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin and death. But God loved what His hands made and promised a Savior. The hands of God's Son stretched out on a cross would pay the price for redemption.

3. What sustains life?

World's Answer: Human hands. Humanity is in control of its own destiny and well being.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. God is in control through the power of His Holy Spirit, and with His hands “satisfies the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:16).



Religion

Picturing What God is Like

Based on how God created and provided for Adam and Eve in the Garden, discuss how God is loving, smart, powerful, knows everything, and so on. He is also just, or fair. He must punish sin. That is why Jesus is so important. He took the punishment Adam and Eve and all of us deserve. Draw pictures representing those qualities individually or as a class.



Picturing What We are Like

How does the devil tempt us to sin? Do we give in? Then what? Lead the children to realize that we all sin, just like Adam and Eve did. We all deserve God's punishment, but Jesus is our Savior, too. When we sin we feel afraid and sad. God's forgiveness makes us feel grateful, confident, and hopeful. Have students draw pictures of things they do that deserve God's punishment. Then have them "cross" them out by drawing a cross over each.



Thank God He Cares

Talk about the people in the children's families. Let them make a list to keep at their desks. Discuss how God's Holy Spirit cares for us through others who love us. Thank God for His care through them. Pray for them individually and specifically.

Singing



Sing appropriate songs from the song books listed in the Resource section. Include songs of creation, forgiveness, and God's presence.



Teacher Sprinkle: Why was Eve a better companion for Adam than any animal could be?

Language Arts

Names, Names, Names

Look up the meaning of the names of the children in your class (your own, as well). Are they named after someone special in their family? Why? Make a certificate for each child with the meaning on it. Discuss how they fit or do not fit personalities. "Jesus" means "Savior." Why is that a good name for Him? (www.namemeanings.com provides information on the origin and meanings of names.)



Make a bulletin board using the names of all the children in your class arranged as a crossword or word search puzzle. For a free puzzle maker see www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/index.htm.

Reading

Read a book about God making people. (See *Resources*.)

Rules, Rules, Rules

List classroom rules and talk about why they are important. Rules are not meant to hurt us, but to help us get along. The rule God gave Adam and Eve helped them remember that God was in charge. When they obeyed God's rule, they worshiped Him. Be sure to make it clear that we don't know what kind of fruit was on the forbidden tree. The Bible doesn't say it was an apple.

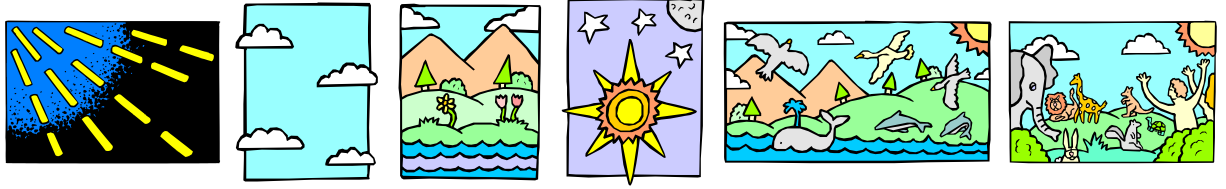


Teacher Sprinkle: Adam named all the animals. "Invent" an animal and give it a name.

Science

Eden Diorama

Children can make dioramas individually or in groups. They may use shoeboxes or other small containers. Include

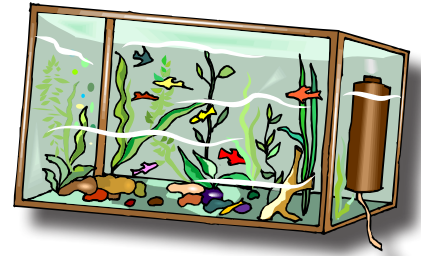


anything mentioned in Genesis 1 and 2. Allow time for them to bring objects from home if desired. A variation would be to have some children represent the Garden before the Fall and some represent it after the Fall. Be sure God is present in both.

Sustaining Life – Aquarium or Terrarium

Set up a small aquarium or terrarium including everything necessary to sustain life. Discuss how this environment requires constant care. Compare with how God created a home for His people and continues to provide for us.

(Directions for making a simple terrarium: www.rare-species.org/terrarium.html.)



Sustaining Life II

Plant two small plants. Neglect one. Water and tend to the other. Let children see the difference. God did not just create our world and Adam and Eve. He continues to provide and care for us. If you can revive the dying plant after a few days, use it to demonstrate that God can take people who are sad and sick and make them better, too.



Learning Center – Living and Non-Living

In a learning center have objects or pictures of items that are alive or not alive. Let the children classify them by putting the objects or pictures into containers. Living things move, breathe, and grow. When God breathed into Adam, Adam became alive.

Ribs Anyone?

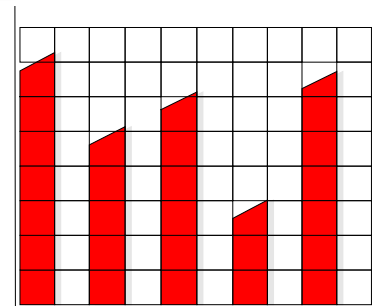
Using a picture or model of the human body, let children see where a human's ribs are located. You could also put out samples of pork ribs and beef ribs. Ribs are intended to protect our important organs such as our hearts and lungs. We don't know how God built Eve from Adam's rib, but it was the way He chose to perform this miracle. She was made by the hand of God.



Math

Family Graph

Make a class graph of the number of members in students' families. How many have one, two, three, four, . . . ? No matter how many family members we have, God created each one. Jesus died for each one. God continues to care for each one.



Kinds of Trees

Bring pictures of fruit trees and non-fruit bearing trees. Let children put them in the appropriate groups. Or, match fruit to the tree from which it comes. Do you have more pictures of fruit trees or other trees? How many more?



Social Studies

Family Trees



Use a family tree diagram to help children identify their immediate family members. Be sensitive to those who do not come from a traditional family. Or, have children make a book with a page for each member of their family. Be sure they include themselves. They could write a couple short sentences describing each member. Talk about family resemblances. God made the first humans in His image. That means humans are able to think and to love. He made us with a soul that will live forever. Include God in each family, too. Some children will want to include their pets in their family. Pets are much-loved and contribute to families in many ways, but what are some ways people are different from animals? People can speak complex languages and think complex thoughts. They have moveable thumbs and can communicate through writing. They can respond to God's love. Children of this age do not understand about spiritual souls and eternal life. Even theologians disagree about the place of animals in eternity. If questions arise, point the children to what we do know. God created the world as a special place for people. Animals are a part of that special place. We love them and are thankful for them, and we know God cares for them, too. (For family tree downloads see www.workman.com/familytree.)

Handprints of Prayer and Care

Draw around the children's hands and cut the hand shapes out (2 per child). On the fingers write the names of people in the child's family. You can write each name more than once or write more than one name on each finger. On the palm of one hand list ways God takes care of our families. On the palm of the other hand list ways our families take care of those in it, of other people, and of the world. Staple or tape the hands together with fingers intertwined to look like they are praying. Say a prayer together thanking God for His care and for each other.

Feelings Charade

Have children act out various emotions. Discuss what causes us to feel happy, sad, afraid, etc. How did Adam and Eve feel in the Garden? Let children act out the emotions as you discuss them.



Fine Arts

Child Outlines

Have children lie on pieces of butcher paper and trace around them. (Use parent helpers.) Let children draw their own physical features and clothing on the shape so it resembles each child. Cut out the shapes and display them around the room. Let children guess who each is. Note how each one is unique. Draw a heart with a cross in it on each child to remind them that God loves each one; each is special to Him.

Forming and Building

Form objects with clay and build objects with Popsicle sticks. As the children work, talk about the difference between "forming" from clay and "building" with the sticks. Which method did God use to make Adam? Which to make Eve? In both ways He used his own hands and breath to give them life and make them special.

Fruit Prints

Cut various types of fruit in half (apples, oranges, lemons). Dip them into shallow containers of different colored tempura paint. Stamp them onto a sheet of paper to make an interesting design.

Singing

Sing verses 1 and 2 of *Jesus Loves Me*.



Teacher Sprinkle: Try to draw a picture or complete some other task without using your hands.

Physical Activity

Acting Out

Act out the story of the Fall. Assign roles. Act out the story several times with different players. Be sure to end with God's words of promise in Genesis 3:15.

Hide and Seek

You will have to put some limits on this traditional game. One variation is to have about 6 children hide while the person who is "It" counts to 50. Then the seeker looks for the hiders and gets one point for everyone he or she sees within a certain time period. This version eliminates the racing back to base. Be sure everyone has a turn. Or, if space permits, play the original game on the playground. Make the point that God went to look for Adam and Eve when they were hiding out of fear. He comes to us, too, when we are frightened or guilty and brings us back to His circle of care.



Service Learning

Forgiving



Ask children to think of someone they have sinned against. Write an apology to that person. Or, if someone has sinned against them, write a letter that expresses forgiveness, just as Jesus forgives us.

Dear...

Raking God's World

God wants us to take care of the world He has created. Encourage children to help at home by raking leaves, sweeping sidewalks, etc. Have a campus cleanup day and pick up litter and trash.



Recycle

Recycling is another way of caring for the world and to remind the students that God makes us new again in Jesus. Let your class be in charge of collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles to be recycled. Give the money to Lutheran World Relief or another charity.



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Have you noticed that nothing seems to be perfect? The perfect child we had hoped for probably did not need to be taught to do wrong. Our best intentions often turn out just the opposite of what we had planned. Weeds crop up in the best-kept lawns, rain ruins family outings, and people hurt each other—even those we love.

The Bible story your child is learning this month about the Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve tells us why. We live in a sinful world, and we contribute to it. The Good News is that our loving God sent Jesus to forgive that sin and continues to love and care for us. God, our Father, loves us because He made us; that gives us great value. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and pay the price for our sin; that was at great expense.

The Holy Spirit continues to guide and keep us as God's children in this sinful world; that gives us great power. The saddest chapter in the Bible thus becomes the most hopeful—not because of man's superiority, but because of God's redemptive work and faithful promise.

Please teach and encourage your child to care for the world God has given us, appreciate the people He has provided to care for us, and thank Him for His unconditional love.

Resources

Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Gross Arthur. *Little Children Sing to God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960.

Lindvall, Ella K. *Readaloud Bible Stories, Vol. 3*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1990. (Unique stylized illustrations by H. Kent Puckett. Creation story begins on page five. Does not include the Fall.)

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Marxhausen, Joanne. *3 in 1: A Picture of God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004. (Uses an apple to illustrate the concept of the Trinity.)

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Warren, Jean. *Piggyback Songs*. Alderwood Manor, WA: Warren Publishing House, 2001.

Wolfman, Ira. *Climbing Your Family Tree*. New York: Workman Publishing Company, 2002.

Web Sites:

www.namemeanings.com (Supplies origin and meanings of names. Links to a name meanings certificate.)

www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/index.htm (Free crossword puzzle maker.)

www.rarespecies.org/terrarium.html (Directions for building simple terrarium—a complete ecosystem. Links to animal facts, photos, coloring book, puzzles.)

www.workman.com/familytree (Genealogy for kids. Free downloadable family tree charts in a variety of formats. Links to other genealogical activities. Corresponds to Climbing Your Family Tree.)

Teaching For Life

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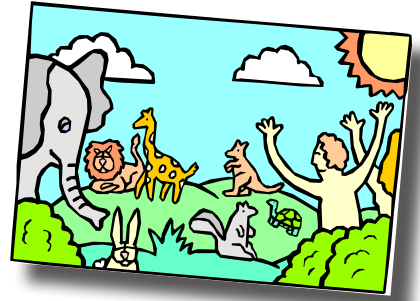
WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. God is in control through the power of His Holy Spirit, and with His hands “satisfies the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:16).



Religion

God's First Two Handmade People!

Read how Adam and Eve were created in Genesis 2:7 & 2:22. They are given special attention above all the other creatures that God made. We could say they were “handmade”! God “formed” Adam and “made” (lit. “built”) Eve.



Handmade Stuff

Have something handmade or have the children bring things that were handmade by someone special. (E.g. a scarf grandma knitted.) Discuss how being handmade gives these items special value.



The First Two People and the First Sin

Read how sin came into the world in Genesis 3:1-7. Satan, a fallen angel, gets them to doubt God's Word—“Did God really say . . .?” This is the first step in any sin.

How do we know God still loved Adam and Eve? Read 3:8-9. God came and looked for them. God searches for the lost!

How do we know God still loves us when we doubt His Word and sin? Read 3:15. God promised someday to crush Satan's head. That promise was fulfilled in Jesus! Jesus is how we know God loves us!

Making Handmade Stuff

Make cards depicting Adam and Eve's sin and God's love in bringing salvation in Jesus.



Teacher Sprinkle: What could Adam and Eve have said to the serpent instead of listening to him?

Language Arts

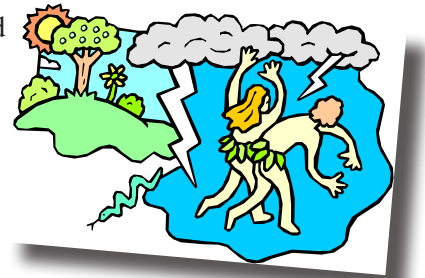
Reading

Read books about the fall of man into sin. Some examples are: *The Fall into Sin*, Concordia Publishing House; *Bible Stories to Live By*, Story 3, Here's Life Publishers

Writing

Think about how Adam and Eve must have felt after they sinned. We all sin and ask God for forgiveness. Write a prayer asking God for forgiveness on behalf of Adam and Eve.

Imagine a conversation you might have with Adam and Eve. Talk to them about what your life is like because of sin in the world. Ask them what they would have done differently if they could “go back and relive” their choice. Ask them how they felt when God found them hiding and promised a Savior. Write this imagined conversation down using proper quotation marks.



Teacher Sprinkle: Imagine that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil could speak. What might it say to Adam and Eve before they ate of it? After?

Math

Great, Great, Great Grandpa Adam!

God created Adam and Eve to live forever. But because of sin, death would eventually come to them. Because everything was perfect, it took awhile for sin to have its affect. That's why people lived so long back then. Adam lived 930 years! Based on the ages given in the list of Adam's descendants (Genesis 5:1-32), calculate how old Adam was when (see scroll at right):



Teacher Sprinkle: We will live forever? (See John 3:16)

Trees, Trees, Trees

God planted two special trees in the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:9). He planted lots of other trees as well (2:16).



Make a class list of as many trees you can come up with. Using this list, you can make a variety of graphs: deciduous versus coniferous, flowering versus non-flowering, fruit producing versus non-fruit producing, etc.

Eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil brought sin into the world. What "tree" brings salvation? (See Galatians 3:13)

Science

Garden Variety

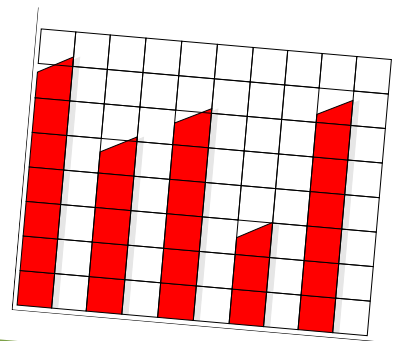
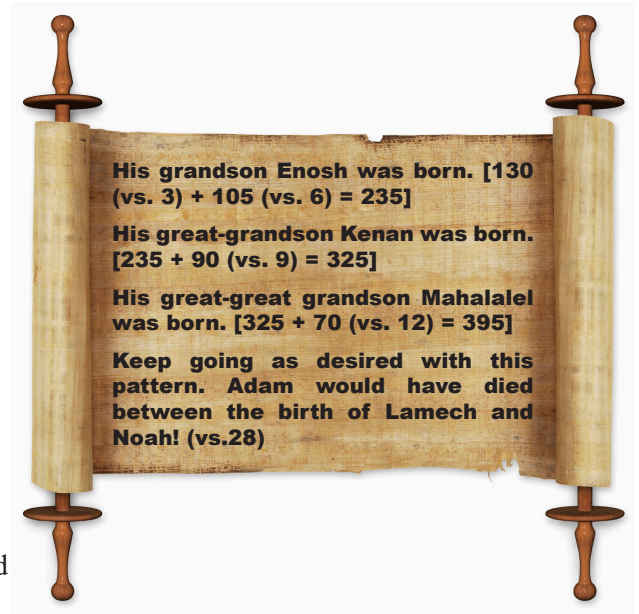
Adam and Eve lived in a beautiful garden with many, many plants. Research the plants that are native to the Holy Land. How are these plants similar to our native plants? How do they differ? Do we share any of the same native plants?

Possible Field Trip

While visiting a local nursery, get information about plants in general and what they need to live in your climate. Ask about other climates in the country.

How is Your Garden Growing?

In unit one, it was suggested that you allow students to plant a garden somewhere on school grounds. Allow the students to continue this project throughout this unit as well depending on climate.



Fine Arts

Drawing the Beauty

What do you think the Garden of Eden looked like? Obviously we can't ever imagine the beauty of it fully with our human minds, but if you could, draw what you think it might have been like.

Go outside with a pencil and a sketchpad. Lying on your back under a tree, draw what you see. Be sure to capture as many details as you are able.



Dyeing with Flowers!

Step 1.

Prepare the Fabric to accept the dye:

Purchase alum from the local grocery store. Place about 1 tablespoon of alum in 1 gallon of water and add the material that you want to dye. Bring the water/material to a boil and then simmer for 30 minutes. Rinse the material in warm water and it's ready to accept the dye.

Step 2.

Collect natural materials—flower petals, colorful plants, fruits—to make your dye.

To create a dye bath for two balls of wool yarn or three adult T-shirts, you will need a maximum of about 1-3 gallons of raw material depending on how distinct the color of material is.

Step 3.

Simmer and Strain:

After you have collected the plant or fruit that you want to use as a dye, clean up the product from all bugs and dirt, wash them, chop them and put them in a large pot. Pour water into it and bring it to boil, then simmer, cover it for an hour or two.

Strain out the plant and all other solid matter leaving the colored bath. Add the material or yarn, simmer the material in the colored bath for 30 minutes then rinse in a bath of cold water and vinegar mixture of 10 parts to 1 before washing it with a natural soap and hang to dry.



Teacher Sprinkle: Sin stains us. What washes us clean? (See 1 John 1:7)

Service Learning

Soothing the Affects of Aging

Discuss how Adam and Eve eventually got old and died. Because of the affects of sin, we age. That brings a host of problems, but also opportunity to serve. Visit an area nursing home. Using the cards from the religion lesson, share the good news with the residents that all of their sins have been washed away and they are redeemed. Isaiah 46:3-4 might be some comforting verses to share.



Plucking the Weeds of Sin

Sin affected creation itself. For one thing—weeds! Read Genesis 3:17-19. Do some fall weeding and clean up around the school or in a community park or for a member of the congregation.

A Little Bit of Eden

Gather donations of flowering plants from your school families. Take the plants to the home-bound of your congregation and sister congregations. Tell them how you are studying about Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden. Even though sin causes lots of problems, there is still beauty in what God created. This is a great and simple way to share some of that beauty and to spread the love of God through the gift of one of His many blessings to us.

You could also share that even though such beautiful flowers might wither and fall, the beauty of God's love in His Word never does. **“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever”** (Isaiah 40:8 ESV). Then share the beauty of God's Word by having the students recite memorized passages.



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Have you noticed that nothing seems to be perfect? The perfect child we had hoped for probably did not need to be taught to do wrong. Our best intentions often turn out just the opposite of what we had planned. Weeds crop up in the best-kept lawns, rain ruins family outings, and people hurt each other—even those we love.

The Bible story your child is learning this month about the Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve tells us why. We live in a sinful world, and we contribute to it. The Good News is that our loving God sent Jesus to forgive that sin and continues to love and care for us. God, our Father, loves us because He made us; that gives us great value. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and pay the price for our sin; that was at great expense.

The Holy Spirit continues to guide and keep us as God's children in this sinful world; that gives us great power. The saddest chapter in the Bible thus becomes the most hopeful—not because of man's superiority, but because of God's redemptive work and faithful promise. Please teach and encourage your child to care for the world God has given us, appreciate the people He has provided to care for us, and thank Him for His unconditional love.

Resources

Beers, V. Gilbert and Ronald Beers. *Bible Stories to Live By*. San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life Publications, 1990.

Sanders, Nancy. *The Fall into Sin*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Teaching For Life

For Life Because God is—The Trinitarian Value of Human Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Triune God, Your intimate involvement in the creation, redemption, and sustaining of human life give life unparalleled value. Teach me to know, understand, and believe this so that I might teach it to the children in my class. Amen.”



Key Concept: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give inherent value to human life regardless of the stage of development or condition of health.



Gospel Focus: Our value comes from what God has done and continues to do in our lives.



Bible Story: Genesis 2-3 – The Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve.



Critical Questions:

1. How did human life begin?

World's Answer: Evolution. Through chemical combinations, genetic mutation, and natural selection, human life evolved from non-living matter into a highly complex organism over billions of years.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. With His hands, God lovingly formed Adam from the dust of the ground and made Eve from one of Adam's ribs.

2. How is death dealt with?

World's Answer: No need. Death is the evolutionist's friend, a necessary part of the process to arrive at human life, thus death existed long before humans. There is no need to be redeemed from it.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin and death. But God loved what His hands made and promised a Savior. The hands of God's Son stretched out on a cross would pay the price for redemption.

3. What sustains life?

World's Answer: Human hands. Humanity is in control of its own destiny and well being.

WORD'S ANSWER: God's hands. God is in control through the power of His Holy Spirit, and with His hands “satisfies the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:16).

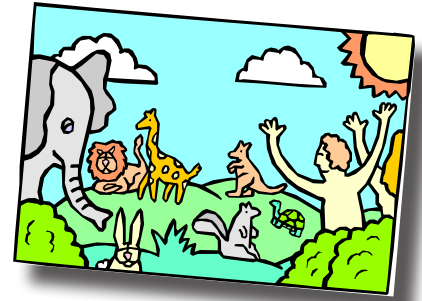


Religion

Human Uniqueness

We often remind children that God values them so much He gave His only son, Jesus. The promise of salvation flows from the value and uniqueness God gave to our first two parents.

- 1) **Special image!** What human uniqueness is found in Genesis 1:26-27? (God's image, rule over creation). This gives humans unique value even after the fall into sin (See Genesis 9:6).
- 2) **Special press!** Genesis 2:7 and 2:22 are like special inside news stories detailing what took place on "page 1." (You might illustrate this with a newspaper that has "detail stories" expanding on front page news.) Adam was "formed" and God "breathed." This combination is not seen of the animals. Eve was made/built by God's hands.
- 3) **Special gifts!** Ask: What does God give humans above and beyond what He has given to animals? (guardian angels, promises, stewardship of all creation, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in baptism, the opportunity to show His death until He comes in the Lord's Supper) In your study of the sacraments (*Voyages*® Unit 2 Grade 6) include the idea that humans are set apart from animals by God. There was no animal that was sufficient for Adam (Genesis 2:20).

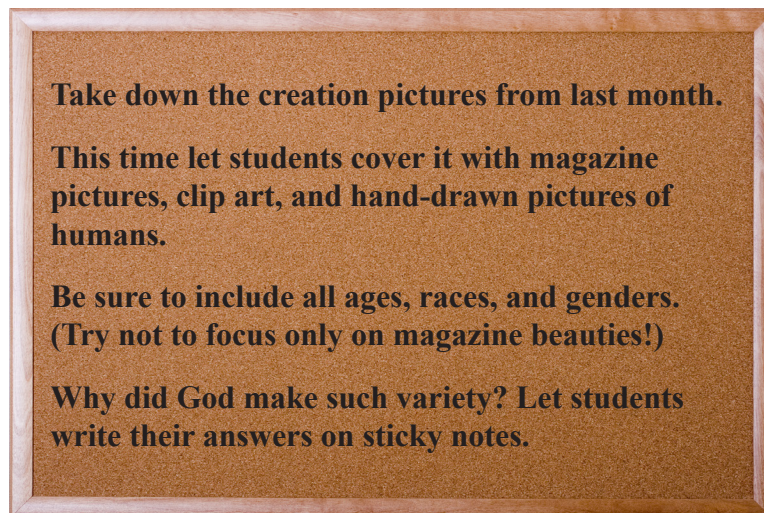


Luther's Public Confession

(*Voyages*®, Unit 2, Grade 5, *God's Word in the life of Martin Luther*) Luther is remembered for his public confessions of belief. We Lutherans still publicly confess our beliefs each Sunday. Direct the children to look in their hymnals at both the Apostles and Nicene creeds. Ask, what do we say we believe about how the world began? Contrast this to what evolutionists confess in science textbooks.



Year-long Bulletin Board Idea



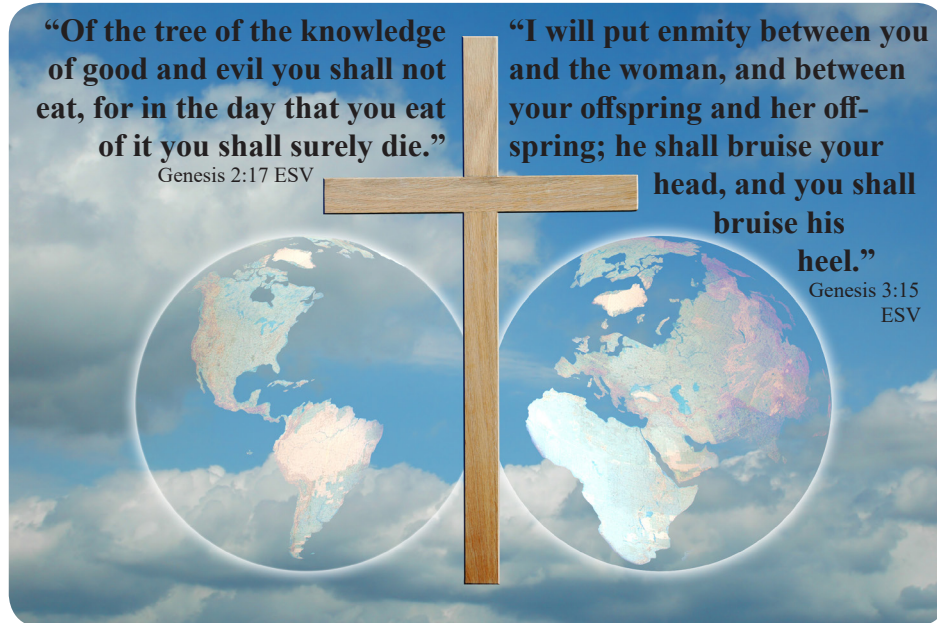
Teacher Sprinkle: Since God knows everything, why does He ask people questions? (e.g. "Where are you?" Genesis 3:9.)

Language Arts

Paraphrasing

This is a preliminary skill for research note taking. Assign paraphrasing memory verses regularly as student homework.

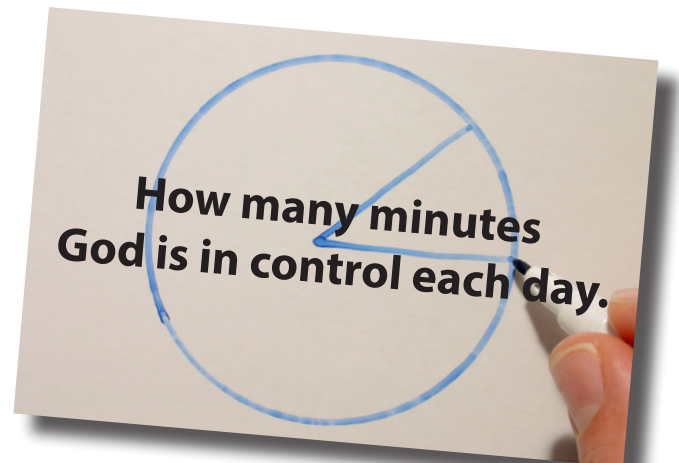
Genesis 2:17, the curse of disobedience and Genesis 3:15, the first promise of a Savior, would be particularly good since they are the initial Law-Gospel statements in the Bible.



Math

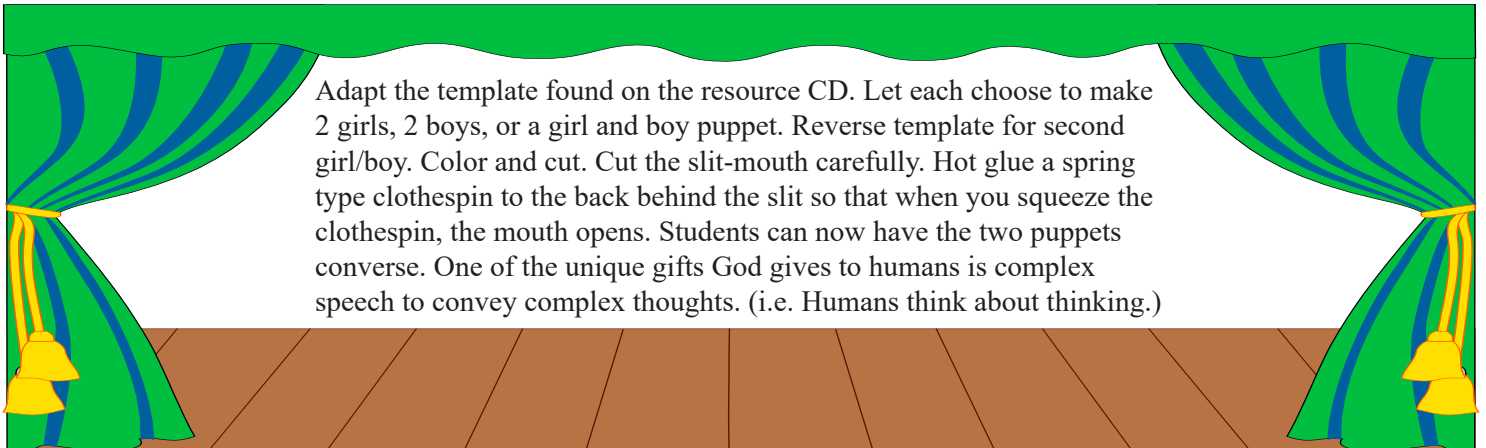
Pie Graph

To introduce the idea that a whole pie graph equals 100%, ask students to draw the pie graph titled: **How many minutes God is in control each day.**



Fine Arts

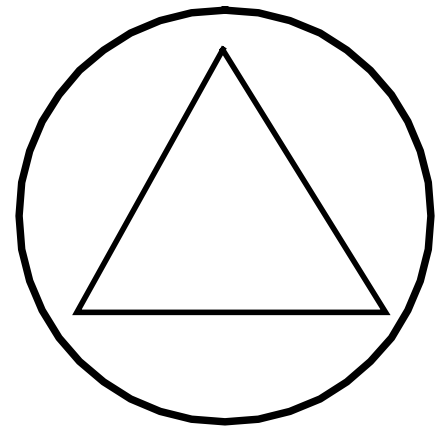
Talking Puppets



Social Studies

A God-Space

To illustrate the following point, have students cut out a circle and then cut out a triangle (representing our Triune God) from within the circle.



Ancient Civilizations



St. Augustine said, “Thou hast created us for Thyself and our heart is not quiet until it rests in Thee.” Because of the fall into sin, humans have a God-space in their spirits which is part of the most ancient records of humanity we have. In one of the earliest archeological dig sites, Catal Huyuk, shrines attest to this God-space. The ziggurat in the Sumerian city of Ur could well be the type of building referred to as the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11. (www.unmuseum.org/babel.htm) It is important to point out to students if it is implausible that animals would invent gods, then it is implausible that humans did. From our earliest records, humans feel the need to connect to a greater power. This is the way God made us because “He made us for Himself.”



Excavations at the South Area of Catal Huyuk.

The God-space is filled in the fulfillment of the promise to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15).

Have students use two strips of colored tape in the form of a cross to “fill the God space.” (i.e. put the triangle back in the circle.)

Science

Have the students read Psalm 8 which presents a high and lofty view of human life as created by God. If human life evolved or even if God used evolution to create human life (Theistic Evolution), how would the first half of verse 5 have to read? (“You made him a little higher than the apes.”)

Discuss the incredible value difference between being “higher than apes” and “a little lower than the heavenly beings” (NIV).



Teacher Sprinkle:

Has technology improved human behavior?



Service Learning

Mime Drama



Hospitals have long been associated with Christianity because we understand the great value God gives to human life. This mime drama is specifically designed for three-person teams using a small space so students can perform in individual hospital rooms.

Teach students to apply mime makeup. (www.keywood.com/mimemaup.htm explains options for mime face painting and gives brand names. Go to www.stagemakeuponline.com for the products.)

Costumes are simple: black long sleeve shirt (you might have your church name on the back or a simple logo like: “Jesus Cares” or “God—For Life!”), long black pants, white canvas shoes, white gloves. Have students practice smiling and opening their mouths without showing teeth. Also get students in the habit of not speaking when their face paint is on. This drama will take lots of practice to do well, but will bring patients laughter and a little lightening of their sometimes long days in bed. It is a service that could be performed several times during the year and even become a Junior High youth team performing monthly.

After you return, reflect together on how patients responded and how this service ministry affected the performers in turn. Emphasize always that the God-given value of human life applies whether you are sick in bed or an actor on stage!

The play itself and a list of props needed may be found on the Resource CD.

Resources

Song: *He's Got Everything Under Control* by Eddie Smith from *Sing a Song of Scripture* reminds us in song that it is not people who are in charge, but God. Available from www.lillenas.com.

Field Trip: Go to a cemetery! Ask, “Do animals bury their dead?” “Why do people have special rites for their dead?” (Ancient Egyptians had sarcophaguses, Native Americans had burial mounds, etc.) “What if reverence for human life wasn’t there?” (Think: Nazi Germany or Rwanda or abortion) You can introduce the Christian explanation of death itself by asking, “What do people believe about death?” Reference different faiths like Hindu, Islam, as well as the religion of evolution which requires as much faith without visible evidence as Christianity does! Here would also be a time to contrast science’s positive reason for death (required for evolution) to God’s negative reason (the result of sin).

Video: *A.I.*, a film about intelligent robots. It makes the point that when people toss aside reverence for the life of another sentient being, people lose their own significance. Ultimately life without conscious regard for other life destroys itself.

Books:

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin/Walter Lorraine Books, 1993. In Jonas’ perfect world, anything that might lead to pain and fear is controlled. This book provides a good look at what life-decided-by-humans could look like. Ultimately Jonas chooses to sabotage it.

Shusterman, Neal. *The Dark Side of Nowhere*. New York: Starscape Books, 2002. Jason discovers he is not simply an unusual human, but an alien transplant whose superior abilities will eventually be called upon to overtake the planet’s “lesser human species.” He must decide what to do about those he has learned to call friends.

Yolen, Jane. *The Devil’s Arithmetic*. New York: Puffin Books, 1990. A modern adolescent Jewess is taken back in time to a Nazi society that does not reverence all human life. She ends up valuing her Jewish ancestors and heritage. This leads to a good discussion about the danger of regarding any human life as subhuman.

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Religion

Luther Thought

Christ as God and Creator assures us of human value. Luther did not consider the human race as the product of chance or fortunate mutations. In Luther's view, we were crafted by the loving hands of the same One whose hands were impaled in love upon the cross. "If Christ is not true and natural God born of the Father in eternity and Creator of all creatures, we are doomed." (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 1, Page 76) If we speak of the creation of all things as if it were the product of random chance, we in effect take Christ out of the process of how human life came to be.



Handmade by God



Adam was the only creature whom God formed and then breathed into him the breath or spirit of life. From Adam God "built" Eve. God "formed" Adam from the ground as a potter forms a vessel from clay, but God "built" Eve from Adam's rib as a carpenter makes a house from wood. We are each individually crafted within the work of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

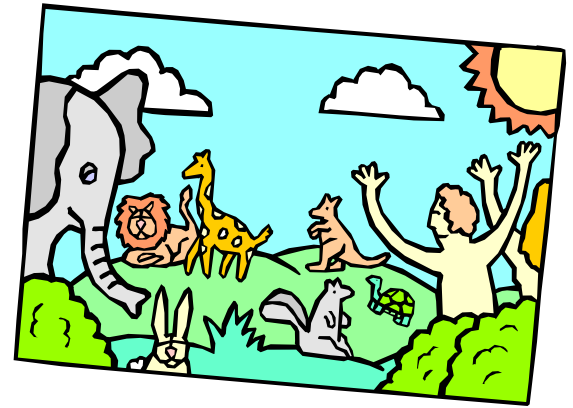
Handmade for Relationship

The hands of Christ formed us to be in relationship with God.

Read Genesis 2:19-24.

Ask: Why did the animals prove to be inadequate as true helpers or companions for Adam, but Eve filled the purpose?

Answer: The animals experienced the world totally differently than did Adam. The gap between what animals knew and experienced compared with Adam's own grasp of reality was too great. Only Eve, created with the same awareness concerning life, could really share life with Adam. The animals could be Adam's pets, but only another like Adam could be his beloved.



Read Genesis 1:26.

Ask: Why is it important that we are created in the "image" and "likeness" of God?

Answer: As Eve needed to be bone of Adam's bone and flesh of Adam's flesh in order for him to love Eve and be loved by her, so mankind needed to be like God if we were to be loved by Him and return that love. Created in the image of God we are made to relate with God in love, and not simply to be God's pet people. Spiritually, we were created bone of God's bone and flesh of God's flesh.



Language Arts

Plan

Review the Acronym from the last Unit. Remind students that God had a plan when He created all things. Reflected in that plan we see:

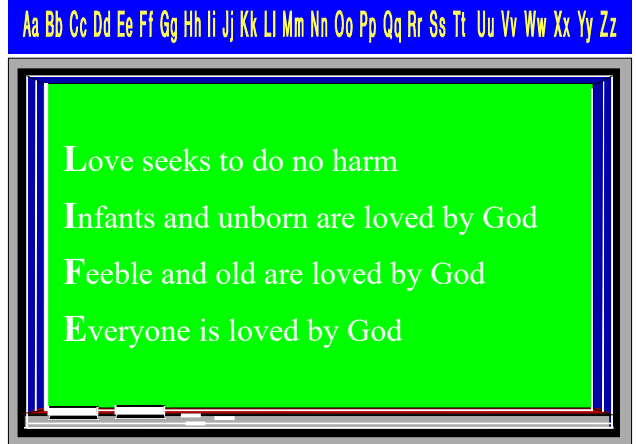
Power of God in all creation
 Loving in purpose, God creates mankind
 Acting to make Himself known to us
 Needing nothing, but supplying everything

Life

This unit's acronym (**L-I-F-E**) takes our focus from God's creation of all things and targets what is greatly valued by God—each human life.

1 John 4:8 “God is love.”

It is the nature of love to protect and care for the object of its affection. God seeks for us to demonstrate this same desire to love and protect one another. In 1 John 4:12 we read, **“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”** God's love is made complete in us as we love others. Every person, whether born or unborn, young or old, strong or feeble, is loved by God and deserves our love, protection, and care as well.



Science

For this section you will need to bring a small heater, a mixing bowl, and the ingredients to make a very simple batch of bread dough (including yeast).

Matthew 13:33: “He [Jesus] told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.” God's love is like the yeast. Love, when it is expressed and shared, builds God's kingdom.

Mix the ingredients for making bread, add yeast last. Explain that this yeast will do for the bread what love does within God's kingdom: both cause growth to take place. When the ingredients are mixed, let the students get an idea of its size by placing it into a student's hand. Next place the dough back into the bowl near the heater. At the end of the day take the dough out of the bowl and place it back into the same student's hands. It will be much larger! As yeast makes bread grow, so love actively expressed to each person makes God's kingdom grow.

Luke 10:25-27 indicates that everything important within human relationships involves love. Note to the students that you were very careful to mix the yeast and other ingredients together well. You are confident that the yeast is spread throughout. Jesus indicates that our love should not be selective. Just as God's love touches each human life, so God gives us the privilege to let our love touch each human life without exceptions.



Social Studies

The Lion That Ate No Meat

A female lion from Africa, born and raised in America, never ate meat in her nine years of life. The owners were concerned for they knew that lions naturally eat prey that are caught in the wild, but all “Little Tyke” would eat was cooked grain, raw eggs, and milk mixed together.

Then one day a visitor to their 100 acre ranch heard of the owners’ concern. He told them to read Genesis 1:30. The owners were astonished to read, **“And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.”** And it was so.”

God’s creation before the Fall does not speak of death. Evolution, however, requires death in order that the weaker members within a specie will die, making future generations stronger and more likely to survive.

Evolution speaks of death as a necessary element within the development of animal life. The Bible speaks of death as a sad consequence to human sin that is only overcome in the cross of Jesus Christ.



Have a student read Romans 8:19-21.

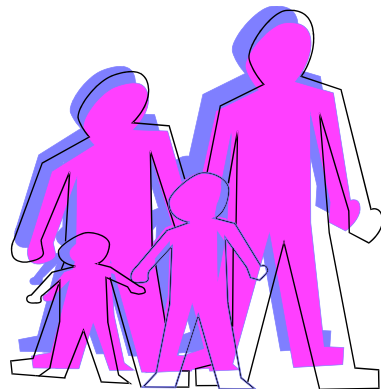
In the cross of Christ, not only do Christians receive the blessing of redemption from a decaying, deadly world, but all of nature will one day be set free from corruption. The death that came by Adam’s sin will one day be completely wiped away by the work of Christ at the cross and empty tomb.

Now read Isaiah 11:7 and 65:25.

The prophet Isaiah proclaims a future day when death will no longer be present within creation. The lions will be more like Little Tyke! They will eat straw instead of meat and there will no longer be destruction or harm.



Service Learning



Ask students to visit with their parents or guardians about some unique activities that take place daily within the routine of family living. As all individuals are unique, so all families are special and distinctive.

Request that each student ask their parent or guardian for a task that they can do for at least one week to help out within the family routine.

Math

Created Unique and in Great Variety

Have a student read Genesis 1:24-25.

Note that God created a great number of animal species, each unique from the others and having their own offspring.

Naughty Mutations

The Bible says that God created each type of animal. All animal types stayed the same and passed on the characteristics given them when they were first created. Evolution says the great variety of animal types or kinds is the result of millions of changes taking place over billions of years. The only way this can happen is through mutations.

Mutations are mistakes that take place when the body copies cells. It is supposed that a mutation takes place once in every 10,000 to 100,000 times a cell is copied. God has designed the body to deal with most of these mistakes, but every once in a while the mistake will change the animal's body. Because God created all animals "good," changes to God's original design are almost always harmful. In the very few cases where mutations seem to help the animal specie, there is **always** a loss of information, never a gain of information. Evolution requires mutations, but experience with mutations show them to be a loss of information in which they either harm the animal or give no benefit.



Scientists bred fruit flies at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. In 1910 a mutation was reported among the fruit flies being bred. Since then around 3,000 mutations have been identified. Usually the mutated fruit flies are not affected by the change or they are harmed. Never has a mutation been witnessed that has made the fruit fly better. The information God created within each creature is precisely what is needed for its life and well-being.

Read Matthew 10:29-31.

Ask: If God has regard for each sparrow, isn't it certain that God cares for each human being He has created?

Answer: Yes. God knows each person so well that He regards even the number of hairs (or lack of them) upon each person's head. God's care for human life gives value to human life at all stages and under all conditions.



Fine Arts



Make a Plate

Give each student a small lump of clay and ask them to form it into a plate of whatever shape and design they desire to make. When finished, point out that no two plates are alike even though all of them could be used to serve food. In the same way human eyes and the eyes of a horse allow for sight, but they are different and come from different sources.

Break a Plate

Place some old plates in a cloth bag and break them with the hammer. Show them the pieces. The pieces could not be put together to make a better plate. Mutations in nature take away information and do not add to the marvelous design God has formed into each animal specie.

Parent Letter Suggestions

This month your children are learning:

- Luther believed that if Christ as the Son of God was not involved in our creation we are doomed.
- We were created in the “image” and “likeness” of God so we could be loved by God and return that love.
- God loves each and every person at all stages of their development through life.
- God desires that His love leaven our entire life.
- There is a lion that refused to eat meat.
- Before the Fall there was no death in the world.
- When creation is redeemed, all animals and man will be friends.
- Evolution requires mutations, but mutations do harm and not good.

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Books:

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Ham, Ken, *The Lie*. El Cajon, CA: Creation-Life Publishers, 1990.

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Klotz, John W. Genes. *Genesis and Evolution*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955.

MacBeth, Norman. *Darwin Retried: an appeal to reason*. Harvard and Boston, MA: The Harvard Common Press, 1971.

Zimmerman, Paul A. *Darwin, Evolution, and Creation*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1959.

Zimmerman, Paul A. *Creation, Evolution, and God's Word*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.

Videos:

Answers in Genesis audio and video series by Ken Ham. This is a lengthy series of videos with a Study Guide that explores creation in view of the Bible and science.

Incredible Creatures that Defy Evolution I & II with Dr. Jobe Martin. These videos explore the complex creation of a variety of animals that make it almost impossible that they are the result of an evolutionary process.

The Wonders of God's Creation by the Moody Institute of Science. This three tape series explores the wonder of God's Creation: 1] Planet earth: Sanctuary of Life; 2] Animal Kingdom: Great Are Thy Works; 3] Human Life: Crown of Creation.

Web Sites:

www.answersingenesis.org. Answers in Genesis is an online resource offering featured articles, a creation archive, and free visual resources and cartoon downloads.

www.creationresearch.org. Creation Research Society, a professional organization of scientists and others who study origins from the perspective of a recent creation. The CRS publishes *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, a peer reviewed journal.

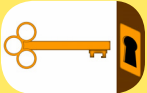
www.origins.org/menus/pjohnson.html. The Phillip E. Johnson page. Dr. Johnson is author of *Darwin on Trial*.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Very Beginning of Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord Jesus, whose conception gives value to all human life at that moment, enable me to teach the children the value You gave them from the very beginning of their lives and enable us all to value every human life from the very beginning. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s gift of life and life’s value begin at the moment of conception.



Gospel Focus: Jesus’ conception is an essential part of God’s plan of salvation and gives value and dignity to all human life at the moment of conception.



Bible Story: Luke 1:26-45 (The Annunciation and Visitation)



Critical Questions:

1. When does human life begin and have value?

World’s Answer: Not sure. Some will say at implantation. Some will say at birth. Some will even say at some time after birth.

WORD’S ANSWER: Conception. God lovingly creates and knits us together giving us value from the moment of conception (Psalm 139:13-14).

2. What value do those have whose beginning is “less than perfect”?

World’s Answer: Less. The world sees as less valuable and even expendable those whose lives are projected to be burdensome or can be used to advance a common good.

WORD’S ANSWER: Equal. The redemptive work of Jesus, beginning at His conception, gives equal value and worthiness to every human life from the moment of conception regardless of the circumstances of that conception or the imperfections brought by sin.

3. What purpose do those have who are too small to interact meaningfully with the world around them?

World’s Answer: Self-serving. The world assigns purpose to embryonic life only as a means to some end for a supposed common good.

WORD’S ANSWER: God-serving. God has a purpose for every human life from the very beginning of that life.



Religion

Read Arch® Books

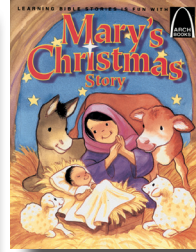
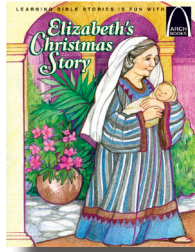
Elizabeth's Christmas Story (Luke 1:5-66)

Mary's Christmas Story (Luke 1:5-2:18)

Point out that even before He was born (and while Jesus was still a tiny embryo), John the Baptist jumped for joy inside his mother Elizabeth's body because he recognized that Jesus, his Savior, was near. If available, use a 6 month fetal model to show the size of John. The size of Jesus can be depicted by making a dot with just the point of a pin on a piece of paper. (Don't poke the pin all the way through or Jesus will be too big!)

Also, note the songs/words of praise that Mary and Elizabeth say as they praise God for His gift of Jesus.

God loved Jesus and John when they were very tiny! He loved us then, too.



An unborn baby 20 weeks from conception. John the Baptist was around 24 weeks from conception when Mary visited Elizabeth.

Fine Arts

Sing

The Butterfly Song (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 72)

Make up actions for each animal named and for the refrain, or let the children suggest actions. This song is a thank-you prayer for the gift of life and the gift of Jesus.

Oh, Who Can Make a Flower? (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 74)

Substitute the names of the children in your class and/or the names of family members, your pen pals, or workers in your church and school for the words "a flower." Remind the children that only God could make them—and He did!

Play

You are Special puppet play (Script on CD)



Fingerprint Art

God made each of us with a unique set of fingerprints. Some of the children may have been given a set of foot or handprints from the hospital when they were born. Using an ink pad, assist the children in putting prints of one or more fingers onto a blank piece of paper. Provide crayons, pens, markers, etc. for the children to make their own picture or design, integrating the fingerprint(s).

(Note: Have soap, water, paper towels, newspapers, and paint smocks ready for easy clean-up and to protect the children's clothing!)



Math

Big Boys and Girls!

Ask parents for their children's birth heights. Tape several strips of butcher paper one on top of the other along the wall. Place a line or mark at the top of each child's head. Directly below the mark, mark the height/length of the child at birth. Ask the children to write their names (or make a mark they will recognize) next to their heights.

"My how you've grown!" Share with them that although their birth heights seem really small, they actually were once much smaller. Have them draw a tiny dot on the bottom of the paper below the other two measurements. This represents their length when they were first created. Remind them that God loved them when they were smaller than the head of a pin; He loved them when they were _____ inches long; He loves them now; and He will love them when they're fully grown.



Where do You Belong? Small, Medium, or Large?

Have children work as a class or in small groups to sort objects by size. Make a circle with yarn on the floor for each "size group" of items (or use hula hoops, if available). After all the objects have been classified, ask the children into which category they belong (small, medium, or large). Ask them if they will always be in that category.

Small

Medium

Large



Discuss how much they've grown since they were first born. Share with them that they were once very, very small (too small to see with just their eyes). For almost a year they grew and grew inside their mothers. God loved them when they were very, very tiny. He loved them when they were middle-sized and ready to be born. He loved them as a tiny baby and as a toddler just learning to walk and talk, and He continues to love them today. Jesus, too, started out very, very small and grew and grew and grew until He was a grown-up and could die on the cross and rise again for our sins.

Follow-up

Divide a piece of construction paper into thirds for each child. Label the sections: small, medium, and large. Have the children draw objects (or for younger children, paste pictures of objects) that are small, medium, and large. Remind them to include themselves in one of the sections.

Language Arts

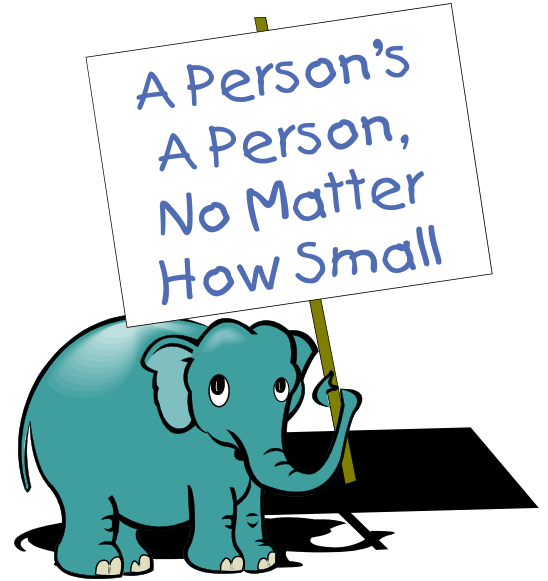
“A Person’s a Person!”

Read *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss.

Discuss the ways that Horton the elephant showed kindness to the tiny Whos.

What did Horton mean when he said, “a person’s a person, no matter how small”?

Talk with the children about how much they’ve grown. Share with them that many months before they were born they started life inside their mothers as a very tiny person, maybe about the size of the Whos in the story. Even though they were very small, they were very important to God. He had already made them a boy or girl, and He knew what color eyes, hair, and skin they would have. He had a plan for their lives, and He loved them so much He sent Jesus to die and rise again to pay for their sins.



Service Learning Project

Pen Pals (ongoing)

“I remember when I was little . . .”

The children will write, dictate, and/or draw pictures of their earliest memories. They will send these to their pen pals who will in turn write, draw, and/or dictate their earliest memories and send them back to the children.

If your pen pals are residents of a senior center or nursing home, the children will have the opportunity to hear or read about what life was like for children sixty, seventy, or more years ago!

If your class has younger pen pals, consider also sending this statement home with the children in your class asking them to have their parents and grandparents complete the sentence: “I remember when I was little . . .” As you share and discuss the memories with your class, remind your students that they were alive long before even their oldest memory. God made them inside their mothers’ bodies when they were just a tiny dot! He took care of them as they grew bigger and bigger, and He loved them very, very much (and still does)!



Science

Seeing Tiny Things

Use hand lenses (and/or a microscope if one is available) to observe tiny objects such as grains of sand, ants, seeds, and drops of pond water. Discuss with the children that they were once that tiny (even tinier). Reassure them that even before their moms knew they were going to have a baby, God knew them, loved them, and took care of them as they grew inside their moms.



Pray



Pray a prayer of thanks to God for His marvelous love.

Sing

Sing *Oh, Who Can Make a Flower?* using the suggestions under Fine Arts on page 2.



Planting Tiny Things

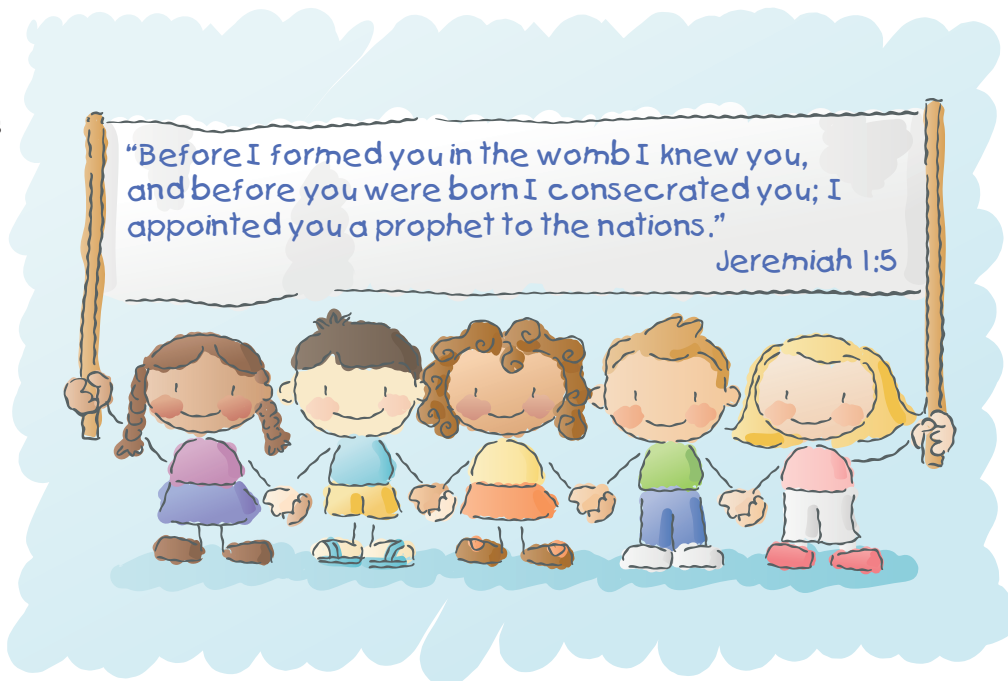
Plant a tiny seed such as a carrot seed. Tell the children that when God first made them inside their mothers' bodies they were even tinier than that seed. As they grew and grew God watched over them for almost a year until they were ready to be born. Watch the seedling grow in the coming weeks. Thank God for His many blessings, especially the gift of life!



Social Studies

"When I was Little"

Ask the children to think back to when they were "little" and draw pictures of their earliest memories. If your class has older pen pals, ask the pen pals to share their earliest memories as well. Assure your students that God knew them, loved them, and was caring for them long before their earliest memory, even before He created them smaller than a speck of dust inside their mothers' bodies. (Jeremiah 1:5)



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

In the Dr. Seuss book, *Horton Hears a Who*, Horton the Elephant stands up to all kinds of ridicule for defending and protecting his fellow creatures because “a person’s a person no matter how small.”

Your child’s life (and your own life) began as a tiny embryo, but from the very beginning God who made each of us and sent His only Son to earth to die for our sins considered us to be of great value.

The road that led Jesus to the cross began when He was conceived as a tiny embryo in Mary! This was Jesus’ life day! Your students will be hearing that story from Luke 1:26-45.

In our classroom we celebrate birthdays and Baptism birthdays; we’d like to give thanks to God with your child on his/her “life date” as well.

Read Psalm 139 this week and thank God that your self worth does not depend on who you are or what you do, but on Whose you are! Share this good news with your child each day: Jesus loves you and so do I!

Resources

Bibliography:

Dede, Vivian H. *Elizabeth’s Christmas Story*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987. (Luke 1:5-66 for children)
Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, Pantomimes, and Litanies for the Very Young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Geisel, Theodor S. (Dr. Seuss). *Horton Hears a Who*. New York: Random House, 1954.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Olive, Teresa. *Mary’s Christmas Story*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998. (Luke 1:5-2:18 for children)

Matz, Joan. *You are Special*. A puppet skit included on the CD.

Thank You Dear Jesus. Words and music by James Likens; copyright 1998 StoryTunes Publishing, ASCAP.

Web Sites:

www.cph.org – Use this site to order Arch® Books such as *Mary’s Christmas Story* and *Elizabeth’s Christmas Story*.

www.stemcellresearch.org – Promoters of embryonic stem cell research suggest that it will provide cures for many diseases. Because human life is a gift of God that begins at conception (Psalm 51:5), Christians cannot condone embryonic stem cell research because it requires killing a tiny human being in order to harvest his/her stem cells. This web site links to articles and studies that show the many ways that adult stem cells like umbilical cord stem cells have been used to treat medical conditions. Christians can support this type of research because it does not take the life of a created, redeemed child of God. This site is suggested to help you become informed on the topic and to better discuss this issue with parents.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Very Beginning of Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord Jesus, whose conception gives value to all human life at that moment, enable me to teach the children the value You gave them from the very beginning of their lives and enable us all to value every human life from the very beginning. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s gift of life and life’s value begin at the moment of conception.



Gospel Focus: Jesus’ conception is an essential part of God’s plan of salvation and gives value and dignity to all human life at the moment of conception.



Bible Story: Luke 1:26-45 (The Annunciation and Visitation)



Critical Questions:

1. When does human life begin and have value?

World's Answer: Not sure. Some will say at implantation. Some will say at birth. Some will even say at some time after birth.

WORD'S ANSWER: Conception. God lovingly creates and knits us together giving us value from the moment of conception (Psalm 139:13-14).

2. What value do those have whose beginning is “less than perfect”?

World's Answer: Less. The world sees as less valuable and even expendable those whose lives are projected to be burdensome or can be used to advance a common good.

WORD'S ANSWER: Equal. The redemptive work of Jesus, beginning at His conception, gives equal value and worthiness to every human life from the moment of conception regardless of the circumstances of that conception or the imperfections brought by sin.

3. What purpose do those have who are too small to interact meaningfully with the world around them?

World's Answer: Self-serving. The world assigns purpose to embryonic life only as a means to some end for a supposed common good.

WORD'S ANSWER: God-serving. God has a purpose for every human life from the very beginning of that life.



Religion

Pray

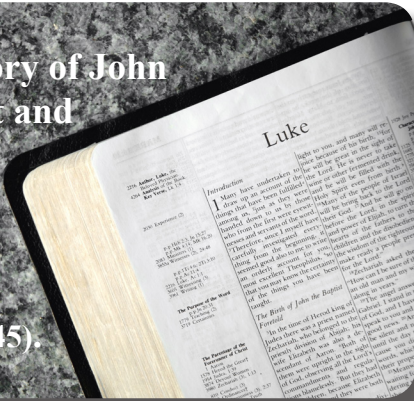


Pray for parents or friends of children in the class who are pregnant and for the baby who is waiting to be born. If you know the baby's name, use it in your prayer.



Tell

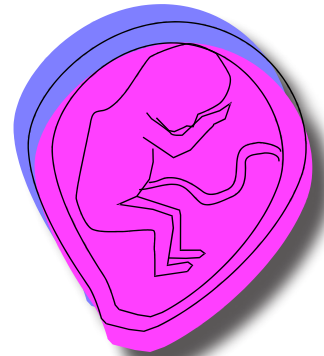
Tell the story of John the Baptist and Jesus before they were born (Luke 1:26-45).



Emphasize that it was the Holy Spirit who made John jump for joy. Talk about how these cousins would grow up to know each other even better, but that their relationship began even before they were born.

Memorize

Memorize Job 10:12: **“Your hands shaped me and made me.”** Explain that Job is talking to God. We can say the same prayer. God made each of us. He put us together before we were born.



Play

Do the following finger play together:

I'm very, very tall.	<i>Stand and stretch arms up to sky.</i>
I'm very, very small.	<i>Scrunch into small ball.</i>
Sometimes tall,	<i>Stand and stretch.</i>
Sometimes small,	<i>Scrunch.</i>
But always Jesus' child!	<i>Stand with arms hugging self.</i>



Teacher Sprinkle: Jesus was born as a baby in Bethlehem. Where did He live before He was born?



Language Arts

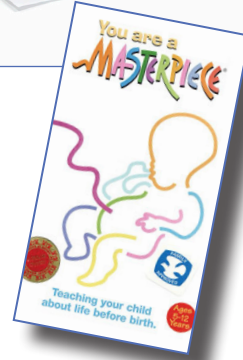
Baby Letter

Write a letter to a baby who is not yet born. Tell the baby what life will be like as an infant, toddler, kindergartner, first grader, and/or second grader. Do this activity as a class or assign it to individuals. Let students read the letter out loud. They could draw pictures to illustrate their ideas.

Point out that God loves us no matter what stage of life we are in.

Baby Story

Read a book or show a video about pregnancy. (See resource section page 6.) If available, use fetal models to preview and review the event.



Fine Arts

Knit Together

Read Psalm 139:13-14. God was intimately involved in our creation from the very beginning with “His hands”!

Assist the children in weaving or other simple designs using simple macramé knots, knitting stitches (e.g. spool knitting), or patterns for friendship bracelets. (See resource section page 6. There are also directions for a simple friendship bracelet on the CD.)

As you assist the students with the above project, point out how delicate the work is and how care must be taken. God took care in “knitting you” inside your mom. You are “fearfully and wonderfully made”!



Small Things Collage

Direct children to work individually or in groups to create a collage using small objects. The objects may be real or represented by pictures cut from magazines. Each of us was once as small as the point of a pin!

Lullaby Lyrics



Write and sing a lullaby. The tune can be a familiar one, such as *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, or *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*. Write appropriate lyrics together. Have children copy them. Sing them to a younger class.



Math

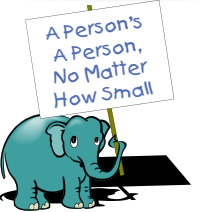
Nine Month Countdown

Use a large calendar to count back nine months from birth to see when life begins. Use a student's birthday or your own. How many weeks is that? How many days? Sometimes a baby takes a little less than a full nine months and sometimes a little longer before he or she is ready to be born. But the birth will be at just the right time according to God's plan.



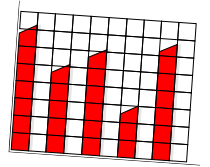
"A Person's A Person No Matter How Small!"

Read *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss. Cut a piece of paper (or other object) into small pieces to visualize that it remains the same. No matter how small you make the pieces of paper, each piece is still paper. Try this with a cookie. Does each small crumb still taste like a cookie? The same substance remains no matter how small it is. Human beings are human beings loved by God regardless of size!



Weighty Graphs

Ask each child to find out how much he/she weighed at birth. Graph the results. No matter how big or small each one was, he/she was still a full human being, loved by his/her parents and by God.

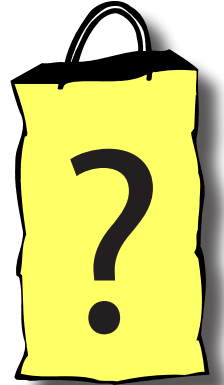


Teacher Sprinkle: Are you the biggest or smallest child in your family? Does it make a difference how big or small you are? In what ways?

Physical Activity

It's in the Bag

Prepare a "mystery bag" with familiar objects inside it. Ask children to guess what is inside by feeling. Point out that just because we can't see something with our eyes, it doesn't mean it isn't real—just like we can't see a baby before birth. But that baby is real and alive inside of mom!



Blind Man's Bluff

With eyes closed, a child must identify a classmate by feeling or by voice. The classmate is identifiable, even though he/she cannot be seen.



Service Learning

Baby Shower

Have a baby shower for a local pregnancy center. March 25 (The Annunciation of Our Lord) would be an appropriate time to have this shower. Check with the center for a list of needed items.

Mommy Shower

Make gifts for someone you know to be pregnant. Children can make simple gifts such as placemats (laminated or covered with Contact paper) or bookmarks—perhaps even the ones they macraméd. Write a note with a prayer that God will keep the baby safe. They could include an appropriate Bible verse.



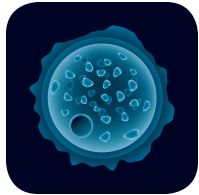
Science

Small Beginnings: Plants

Sprinkle birdseed or grass seed in moist cotton and place it in a small plastic baggie. Discuss how small the seeds are. Watch as the grass begins to grow. Discuss how life was inside such a small seed. When did the seed become grass? It was grass even before it sprouted. We were even smaller than that when we began to grow inside our mothers. Our life began then.



Small Beginnings: Animals



Borrow slides from your science teacher of amoebas, protozoa, or other one-celled animals. Let the children observe them through a microscope. Even though they are too small to see with the naked eye, they are still living beings. They eat, move, and grow. In the same way, tiny babies growing inside their mothers may be too small to see, but they are living babies who will grow bigger. They get nourishment and move and will be born when they are big enough to live outside their mother's body.

Small Beginnings: You

Ask children to bring ultrasound pictures of themselves or others. Discuss how tiny these babies are; yet, they are alive and growing. If available, compare to fetal models.



Teacher Sprinkle: What other things are very small? Bring samples.



Social Studies

Lifeline

Make a life time line. Put a dot on the time line to signify birth. Draw pictures of events after birth.



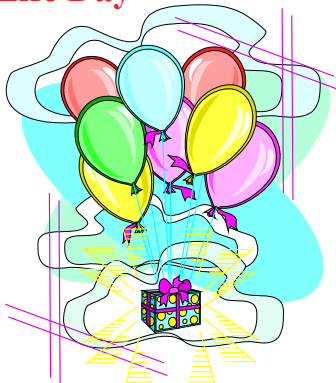
Extend the line to the left to include the time before birth. Begin the lifeline with the words, "I began to grow inside my mother."

Home Life

Talk about the things our homes provide: shelter, protection, a place to sleep, a place to eat, a place to move around. Discuss how the womb provides all those things for a growing baby until he or she is ready to be born. What is necessary to sustain life?



Life Day



The church designates March 25, nine months before Christmas, as the day to celebrate the Annunciation—Jesus' Life Day, the day His earthly life began.

Have a Life Day party with your class. Talk about when their life began—nine months before their birthday. In some cultures children are considered a year old when they are born.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

God's Word makes it very clear that life begins at conception. **"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful"** (Psalm 139:13-14). This month your child is learning to celebrate that gift of life even in its tiniest form. John the Baptist jumped for joy in his mother's womb when Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, came to visit. The same Holy Spirit who inspired such an event is active and has been active in our lives, too, since our lives began and when He gives us new life in the waters of holy Baptism.

Please use every opportunity to celebrate the gift of life with your child. You might consider marking his/her "Life Day," nine months before his/her birth as the day your child began to grow. God knew him/her from that moment on—and even before.

God is not impressed by size or appearance. The smallest of His creations is immensely loved and valued by Him. The greatest of Kings—Jesus—began as a one-celled being within His mother's womb. Please teach your child to value all of life, too.

In His service,

Resources

From Lutherans for Life (888-364-5433 or www.lutheransforlife.org):

You Are a Masterpiece DVD. The amazing world of life before birth is revealed in this live-action video. Delightful children interact with state-of-the-art computer animation and captivating in-utero photography. Crafted by medical and educational professionals, this video is sure to entertain children of all ages, even if you're all grown up! Recommended for ages 5-10. (25 min.) Item 700AV.

God's View of Life/God's Knitting Room CD. *God's View of Life* is a PowerPoint™ presentation suitable for use in elementary grades, Sunday school, or for chapel presentations. It begins with optical illusions and then proceeds to talk about the fact that how we see things is not always how God sees things. The value of life and how God views all life as precious is discussed. *God's Knitting Room* (7 min.), written by Connie Davis, president of LFL of Michigan, is appropriate for a school chapel message and describes how a baby grows in his or her mother's womb. Photos compare fetal models with common household objects (key, comb, toothbrush, drinking straw) so children can understand the actual size of a baby in his mother. Item 103AV.

Watch Me Grow Posters. Contact Lutherans For Life for more information and pricing.

Books:

Andrae, Giles. *There's a House Inside My Mommy*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2002.

Bingham, Caroline. *Human Body*. New York: DK Publishing, 2002.

Geisel, Theodor S. (Dr. Seuss). *Horton Hears a Who*. New York: Random House, 1954.

Johnson, Anne Akers. *Knitting*. Palo Alto, CA: Klutz, 2004. Six simple knitting projects for children. Includes a kit with yarn, needles, etc.

Nilsson, Lennart and Lena Swanberg. *How Was I Born?* New York: Dell, 1993.

Torres, Laura. *Friendship Bracelets*. Palo Alto, CA: Klutz, 1996. Directions for weaving simple bracelets which could be used for bookmarks.

Web Sites:

http://macrame_1.tripod.com/index.html Basic instructions and simple projects for macrame.

www.gravityteen.com/prenatal/sonograms.cfm Sonogram pictures of fetal development.

www.standupgirl.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=1 3D and 4D pictures of fetal development beginning at 5 weeks.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Very Beginning of Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord Jesus, whose conception gives value to all human life at that moment, enable me to teach the children the value You gave them from the very beginning of their lives and enable us all to value every human life from the very beginning. Amen.”



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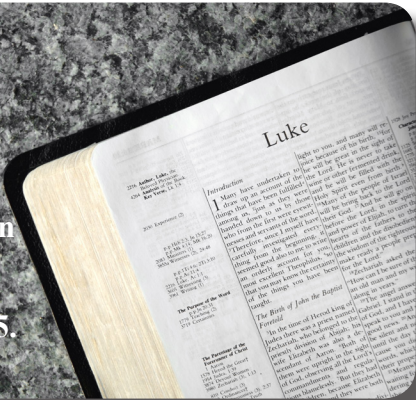
WORD'S ANSWER: God-serving. God has a purpose for every human life from the very beginning of that life.



Religion

Bible Story: Jesus' Life Before Birth

Read the
account of
the
Annunciation
from
Luke 1:26-45.



Jesus' life began when He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. This took place nine months before He was born. We celebrate the Annunciation on March 25, Jesus' Life Day!

Bible Verses: Our Life Before Birth

Have the students work in groups to look at the following passages. Have them share with the whole class how these verses show that God values all human life before birth.

Psalm 139:13-14
Jeremiah 1:5
(forming passages)

Prayer

Include students' Life Days (nine months before their birthdays) in the classroom prayers.



Teacher Sprinkle: Why is it related that the baby in Elizabeth's womb moved when Mary came to her to tell Elizabeth what Gabriel had told her? Why do you think God tells us this?



An unborn baby 20 weeks from conception. John the Baptist was around 24 weeks from conception when Mary visited Elizabeth.

Language Arts

Reading

Read Max Lucado's *You Are Special*.

Writing

Write a journal entry from Mary's point of view as to her feelings after the Annunciation.



Teacher Sprinkle: If you were Mary hearing that you were to become the mother of the Savior of the world, what would be your first reaction?



math

Life Day Computations

Have children figure out their life day. Give them a variety of dates and have them figure out the life day for those as well. Be sure to include years in the dates so the students do not simply add three months to the date! Emphasize the presence of God and His love from the very beginning and even before! Review some of the verses from the Religion section.

Life Day Charting

Using a tally chart and a bar graph break down the class's life days by months.

Example charts:

January	III
February	II
March	IIII
April	I
May	II
June	IIII
July	
August	III
September	I
October	IIII
November	II
December	III

10												
9												
8												
7												
6												
5												
4			XX			XX				XX		
3	XX		XX			XX		XX		XX		XX
2	XX	XX	XX		XX	XX		XX		XX	XX	XX
1	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX		XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.

Trimester Math

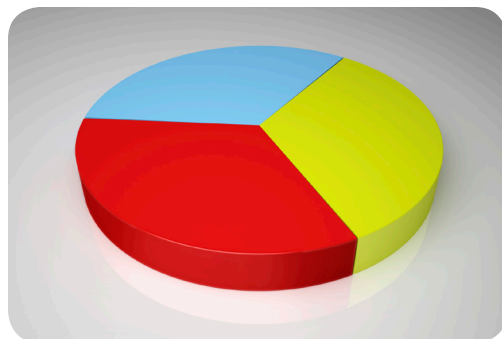
Pregnancy is divided into 3 "trimesters."

How many months in each?

How many days?

Hours?

God loves every baby in every trimester!



Science

Small Beginnings: Plants

Study a bean plant or other similar fast-growing plant looking at the different stages of life that it goes through. Discuss how a plant is still a plant even in seed form, sprout, or full-size.

Small Beginnings: Humans

Use fetal models or the *Watch Me Grow* posters (See resources.) to show human's small beginnings. We are human from the very moment of conception. We are loved by God from that moment! He gives us value from that moment! He gives all human life value from that moment!



Watch Me Grow posters are available from Lutherans For Life!

Fine Arts

A Portrait of Gabriel

Even though we are not sure what angels look like specifically, have students paint what they think Gabriel looks like. As you review the paintings, you may point out that when angels appear on earth in the Bible, they sometimes appear in human form and as men! Also review the important message Gabriel had for Mary and the fact that Jesus' life began at that moment.

Value Singing



Sing songs showing the value God places on human life such as:

- *Someone Special*
- *God Loves Me Dearly*
- *God Is So Good*
- *I Am Jesus' Little Lamb*

Before and After Marys

Draw pictures of Mary both before and after she heard what Gabriel had to say to her.



Service Learning

Welcome Basket

Make welcome baskets for new mothers, fathers, and their babies. Money to purchase the materials could be collected through the school or through the congregation.

Alternative: have a "baby giving tree" where tags could be collected from donors and actual items could be collected.



Example Baby Gift Card for giving tree:

WELCOME!

This gift has been purchased just for you with loving care from your fellow brother/sister in Christ. I hope you enjoy this heartfelt welcome to the world!

List of possible baby items needed for welcome baskets:

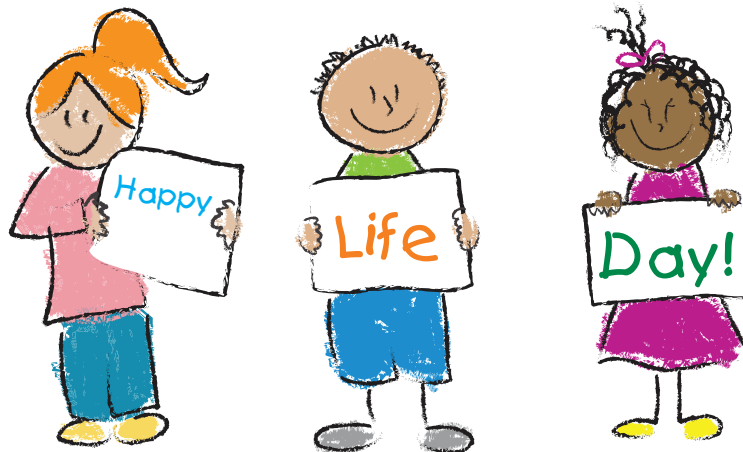
Baby Bible

Little Visits for Families and/or *Little Visits for Toddlers* (Concordia Publishing House)

diapers • pacifiers • bottles • crib sheets • baby towels and washcloths • onesies • baby wash • lotion • oil • sleepers • toys

Life Day Cards

Exchange names between the students in the class. Have each child make his/her life day "buddy" a card to be presented nine months before his/her birthday to celebrate their life day. This activity could also be done as a school-wide project.



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

We celebrate our children's birthdays and baptismal birthdays; why not celebrate our children's life day? The life day is the day of conception. In our society, life is not recognized as valuable until a cry is heard and sometimes not even then. We as parents and teachers need to show our children that life begins at conception and that God found value in their life even before they were born. We can praise God for the love that He has shown to us by telling us that even before we were born, He knew us!

In His service,

Resources

From Lutherans for Life (888-364-5433 or www.lutheransforlife.org):

You Are a Masterpiece DVD. The amazing world of life before birth is revealed in this live-action video. Delightful children interact with state-of-the-art computer animation and captivating in-utero photography. Crafted by medical and educational professionals, this video is sure to entertain children of all ages, even if you're all grown up! Recommended for ages 5-10. (25 min.) Item 700AV.

God's View of Life/God's Knitting Room CD. *God's View of Life* is a PowerPoint™ presentation suitable for use in elementary grades, Sunday schools, or for chapel presentations. It begins with optical illusions and then proceeds to talk about the fact that how we see things is not always how God sees things. The value of life and how God views all life as precious is discussed. *God's Knitting Room* (7 min.), written by Connie Davis, president of LFL of Michigan, is appropriate for a school chapel message and describes how a baby grows in his or her mother's womb. Photos compare fetal models with common household objects (key, comb, toothbrush, drinking straw) so children can understand the actual size of a baby in his mother. Item 103AV.

Watch Me Grow Posters. Contact Lutherans For Life for more information and pricing.

Books:

Andrae, Giles. *There's a House Inside My Mommy*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2002.

Bingham, Caroline. *Human Body*. New York: DK Publishing, 2002.

Johnson, Anne Akers. *Knitting*. Palo Alto, CA: Klutz, 2004. Six simple knitting projects for children. Includes a kit with yarn, needles, etc.

Lucado, Max. *You Are Special*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997.

Nilsson, Lennart and Lena Swanberg. *How Was I Born?* New York: Dell, 1993.

Torres, Laura. *Friendship Bracelets*. Palo Alto, CA: Klutz, 1996. Directions for weaving simple bracelets which could be used for bookmarks.

Web Sites:

www.gravityteen.com/prenatal/sonograms.cfm Sonogram pictures of fetal development.

www.standupgirl.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=1 3D and 4D pictures of fetal development beginning at 5 weeks.

Teaching For Life

For Life from the Very Beginning of Life.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord Jesus, whose conception gives value to all human life at that moment, enable me to teach the children the value You gave them from the very beginning of their lives and enable us all to value every human life from the very beginning. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s gift of life and life’s value begin at the moment of conception.



Gospel Focus: Jesus’ conception is an essential part of God’s plan of salvation and gives value and dignity to all human life at the moment of conception.



Bible Story: Luke 1:26-45
(The Annunciation and Visitation)



Critical Questions:

1. When does human life begin and have value?

World's Answer: Not sure. Some will say at implantation. Some will say at birth. Some will even say at some time after birth.

WORD'S ANSWER: Conception. God lovingly creates and knits us together giving us value from the moment of conception (Psalm 139:13-14).

2. What value do those have whose beginning is “less than perfect”?

World's Answer: Less. The world sees as less valuable and even expendable those whose lives are projected to be burdensome or can be used to advance a common good.

WORD'S ANSWER: Equal. The redemptive work of Jesus, beginning at His conception, gives equal value and worthiness to every human life from the moment of conception regardless of the circumstances of that conception or the imperfections brought by sin.

3. What purpose do those have who are too small to interact meaningfully with the world around them?

World's Answer: Self-serving. The world assigns purpose to embryonic life only as a means to some end for a supposed common good.

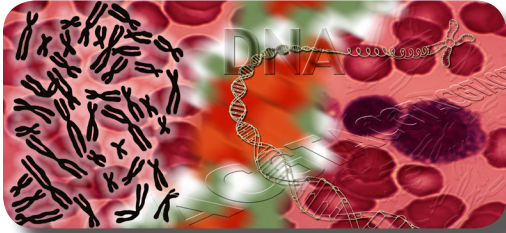
WORD'S ANSWER: God-serving. God has a purpose for every human life from the very beginning of that life.



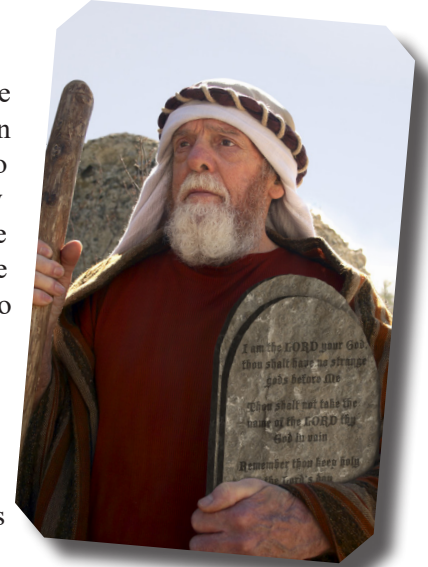
Religion

Designer Genes!

Moses (*Voyages® Unit 3 Grade 5*): As you begin this unit on Moses with the lesson of the exodus (Exodus 2), emphasize that Moses was specifically designed to lead God's chosen people. He was born to parents who were both of the tribe of Levi, the tribe designated to be priests for Israel. He miraculously survived infant persecution. He was raised to know the Egyptian royal court from first-hand experience. He learned to lead large flocks in the desert of Horeb where later he would return to receive the Ten Commandments. When he became 80 years old, he was sufficiently prepared to do the task God had called him to do even before birth!



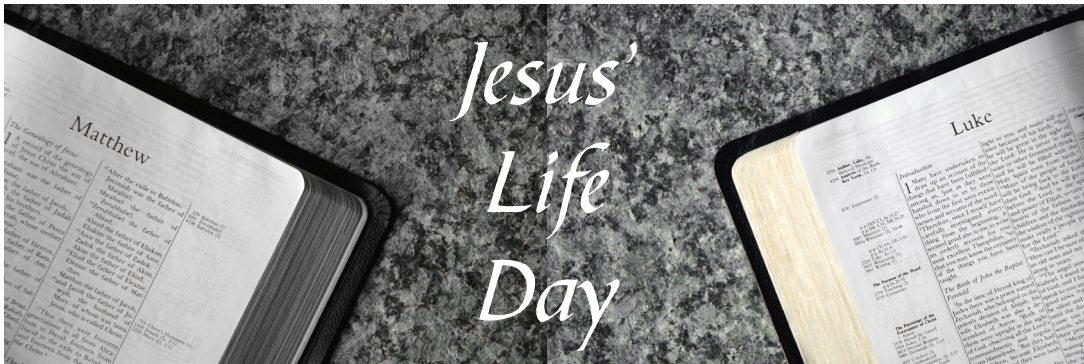
Explain: You also were exactly designed. You have “designer genes.” Your gender, race, nationality, intelligence, physique, character traits, every bit of your DNA was used by God so that you are ideal for the tasks God has for you. God had a purpose for you and valued you from the very beginning of your life.



Wall Plaque

Invite children to use calligraphy lettering to make a wall plaque of Jeremiah 29:11:

“I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord . . . plans to give you hope and a future.”

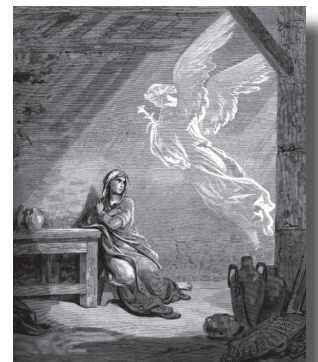


Jesus' Life Day (*Voyages® Unit 3 Grade 6*) Jesus' genealogy in Matthew 1 goes back to the founder of Israel, Abraham, who received the promise of a future descendent as Messiah (Gen. 12:2). Luke's family tree goes back to the first human, Adam, who received the very first prophecy of the Messiah (Gen. 3:15). In both cases God already knew the birth date and birth place of Jesus: from David's line in a town called Bethlehem. God also knew Jesus' “life day,” the moment Jesus became human at His conception.

Read Luke 1:26-45. Note that some days after the Holy Spirit came upon Mary and Jesus was conceived, her kinswoman Elizabeth called the unborn Jesus “my Lord.” (Luke 1:43) Jesus was still a tiny embryo probably not even implanted in Mary's womb yet! Also note how the unborn John, six months old, leaped for joy at his Savior's presence (v 44). Jesus was already a human being!

Memory Fun • Apostles Creed

Work on the second article and spend time discussing “conceived by the Holy Spirit.” This phrase not only teaches about Jesus' divinity at the moment of conception, but also our humanity. Because we were sinful from conception (Psalm 51:5), Jesus had to start the redemptive process at that point. We emphasize this to our students to instill in them a respect for the humanness of the embryo from conception.



Science

Human Beginnings

Some time this year you will be teaching about God's plan of sexuality. Here is a good time to talk about each student's beginning as a one-celled human being. Show the video *You Are a Masterpiece* or use fetal models or the *Watch Me Grow* poster. (See Resources.) Emphasize God's plan for each life which has already begun as a body and spirit. Psalm 51:5 maintains that even at conception there is original sin. From the very beginning we are in need of God's saving grace.

Human Beginnings Illustrated

Hold up a few paper white bulbs. Comment: No one except God knows exactly what flowers are inside these bulbs. Each one is different. Each one has never been seen by anyone else. Right now they exist as tiny embryos inside. They are already alive. If we prepare a good place for them, they will be born in our classroom in a month or two. Then place the bulbs in a pot of sterile mixture. Water and set in a sunny window. Keep the medium moist as the plants sprout and watch them. Students could measure and graph the growth. Name each flower stalk and have students write their "biographies" beginning with pre-birth life.

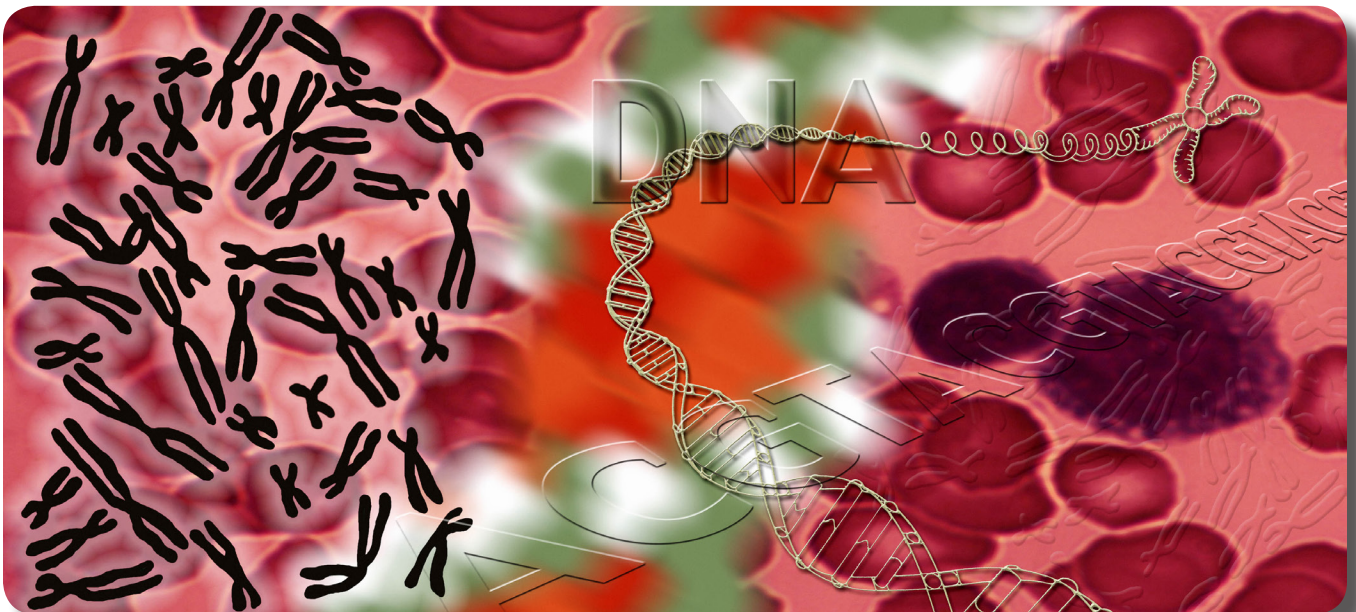


Math

Possibility Calculation

Estimates vary, but there appear to be around 30,000 genes in a strand of DNA. Calculate the number of possible combinations of 2 genes: AB and BA=2. Then do 3 genes: ABC, ACB, BAC, BCA, CAB, CBA=6. Then do 4 genes: ABCD, ABDC, ACBC, ACDB, etc=24. Look at exponential growth. Then estimate 30,000 genes!

Ask: Who set up your genetics from that first one cell? God uses this procreative process He invented to "knit us together" (Psalm 139:13).



Fine Arts

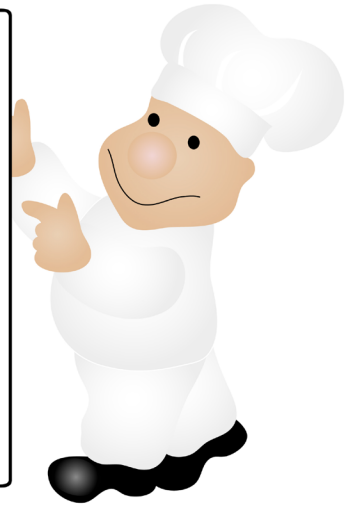
Cook Up Some History

If you have access to a kitchen, make something related to your current history unit like hard tack for the explorer's unit or Chinese pot stickers for the ancient China unit.

Have students write out the recipe and the step-by-step procedure.

Divide into groups to prepare ingredients as well as combine and cook them.

Ask: How much effort goes into preparation, combination, and completion? How much effort do you suppose God took to make you?



Language Arts

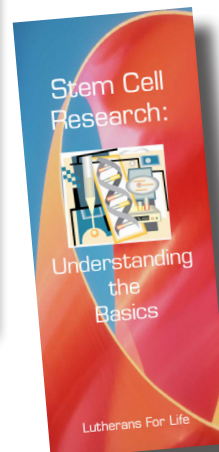
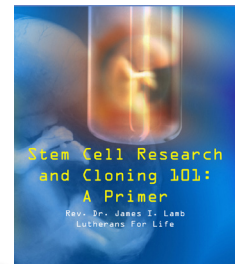
Fact or Opinion?

Use some of these Fact/Opinion statements when you study this skill:

- O A person isn't a person until he or she is born.
- F When human embryonic stem cells are used in research, a tiny person is destroyed.
- F The Bible says we are sinful from conception.
- O Whatever scientists can do is what we should do.
- F God knew each of us from before the Creation of the world.

Research Topics

When you suggest research topics for papers, include stem cell research and cloning. You will find helpful, inexpensive material listed on the Resource page.



Service Learning



Have the children write notes inviting members of their congregations to Advent services.

Get service information from the church office(s). Copies of their letters could be made and handed out at Sunday services or included in the bulletins.

Include a life day activity that has family members calculate everyone's life day as a reminder that Jesus entered the human race on the day He was conceived. That is when all life begins and has value.

Social Studies

Constitutional Rights

When you teach the history of the Constitution, you'll include the amendments. The Fifth Amendment states that no one can take the life of another without due process. Pro-life advocates point to this fundamental right. Ask: Does it apply to the baby in the womb? Does it apply to the tiniest humans like embryos in a Petri dish? YES! Our right to life exists the moment we have life—conception.

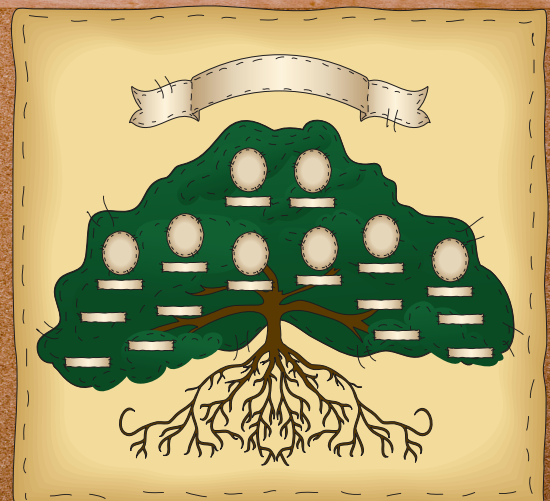


Year-Long Bulletin Board

Add the word "Designed For Life" to the God-For-Life title. In the center draw Jesus' family tree.

As a homework assignment, direct students to draw their own family trees. They may add comments like "I have my grandfather's nose," or "I have the blond hair that goes back generations," or "Mom says I have Grandma's way with flowers."

When all are up, comment that just as Jesus was pre-designed, so also God specifically set in motion the genes that produced each member of the class long before even the parents were born!



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Share the preparation God made for the announcement and conception of Jesus as Immanuel, God with us. You might include facts about Moses' pre-selection or Jesus' genealogy based on current religion lessons. This is an excellent opportunity to mention that the embryonic Jesus received recognition before birth from Elizabeth and the unborn John. Many parents have had no teaching about the Lutheran belief that life begins at conception. Your letter is an educational opportunity which could open up discussion for parents.

In His service,

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Watch Me Grow Posters. Contact Lutherans For Life for more information and pricing.

A variety of brochures, booklets, books, Bible studies, and DVDs on the beginning of life, stem cell research, cloning, etc., are available through Lutheran For Life.

Music:

Even Before I Was Born from *Sing 'n' Celebrate for Kids Vol. 2* published by Word Music. The song continues: "God knew my name, even before I was born, He had a plan."

Web Sites:

www.ethicsforschools.org: under "news review" find information on genetics and embryology.

www.stemcellresearch.org: has articles specifically about current information in adult stem cell research.

Teaching For Life

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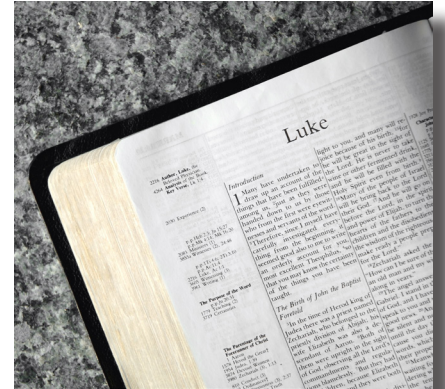
Religion

Read Luke 1:26-45

Jesus as a unique individual can be considered at many different points of His life: His three-year ministry (when, daily, the one and the same Jesus taught, healed, stilled storms, died a torturous death, and rose in victorious new life), His childhood, His birth in Bethlehem, His nine months in Mary's womb, or when first conceived in Mary.

At each and every stage, it is the same Savior of the world who is present. Each stage in the history of Jesus was important and indispensable in bringing to the world its Savior. This reading focuses on our Savior from the very beginning of His life. Some points to consider with your students:

- **The first dwelling for Jesus was not Bethlehem or Nazareth, but the womb of His mother.**
- **Because the womb was the first home of Jesus, the church Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) stated: "We confess the Holy Virgin to be Mother of God because God the Word was made flesh and became man from the very moment of conception."**
- **Mary immediately went to see her cousin, Elizabeth, who was about six months pregnant. Elizabeth's unborn child, who would grow to become John the Baptizer, leapt for joy when Jesus was smaller than the point of a needle!**



Jesus was the same individual when He was smaller than the point of a needle and when He died on the cross and rose from the dead. Every human being is the same individual at every stage of life beginning at conception.

Service Learning

Plan a field trip to a local nursing home. Bring the "LIFE" boards created by the students to use as gifts, or bring flowers, etc. As the students visit the rooms of residents, share the gifts. Ask the students to write down observations concerning what they see in each resident's room. Their list would include pictures, cards, personal items, favorite foods or candies, etc.

When together again as a group, explain that some people, like the Nazis, thought that old people as a group were a burden to society. The students learned today that each senior citizen is unique and precious, loved by God as much in their old age as at any other point in their life.

Parallel the lack of regard for human life in old age with the fact that some people consider unborn children to be a burden for one reason or another. Yet we know that God loves the unborn as much as when they grow into adulthood. God knew and valued the prophet Jeremiah even before he was conceived in his mother's womb. (Jeremiah 1:5)



Science

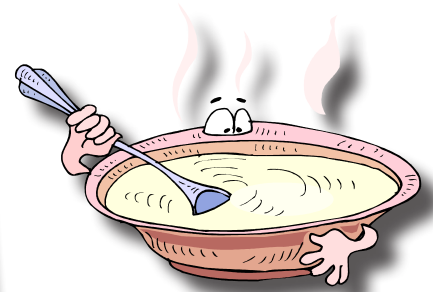
A Crystal's a Crystal No Matter How Small!

Embryology textbooks in medical schools make it clear that at the moment of conception there begins a unique life having its own genetic code that is different from that of the mother's. (For more discussion points on this see CD.) To demonstrate to the class the concept that size does not change what something is, you may grow crystals in class using the following ingredients and recipe:

Growing Crystals

Crystals are structures that are formed from a regular repeated pattern of connected atoms or molecules. Molecules continue to attach to the surface of the seed crystal, causing it to grow. Throughout the process, the composition of the crystal is the very same when it is the size of the seed and when it grows and becomes larger.

- Baking soda – 3 tsp. (possibly more)
- Water – ½ cup
- Electric hot plate
- String – 10 cm (5-6 in.)
- Small weight for string (e.g. fishing weight)
- A clear glass or vial

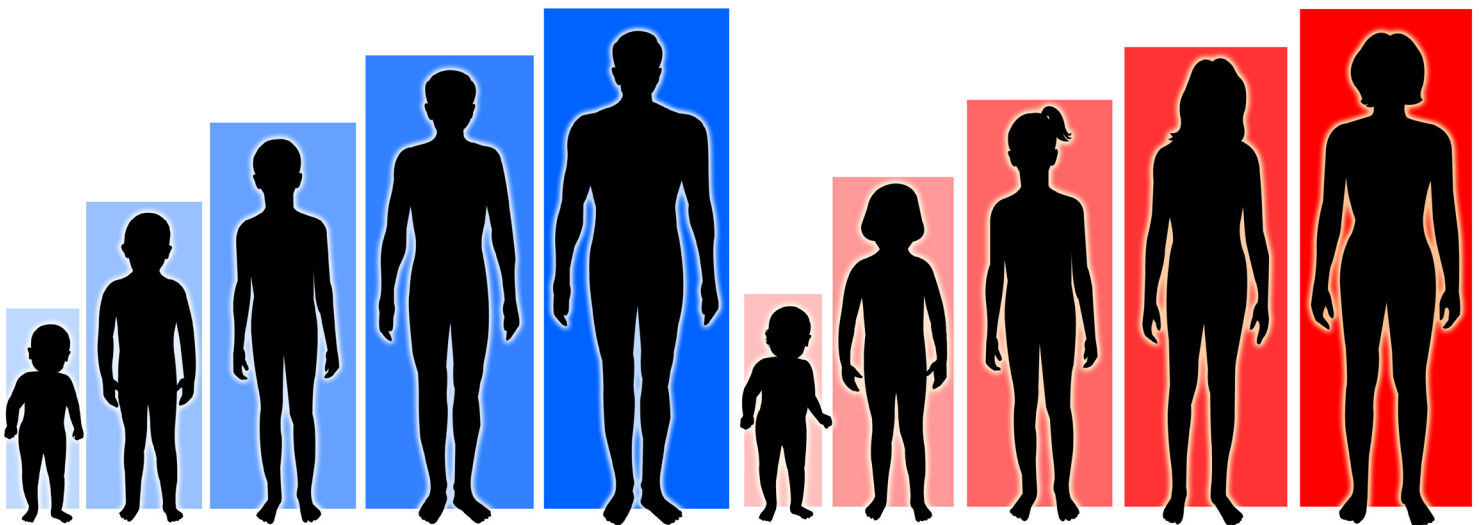


Put 1/2 cup water in pan. Dissolve in water as much baking soda as possible, stirring in 1 teaspoon at a time. Heat the solution (do not boil). Remove from heat source, stir, and add more baking soda until no more will dissolve and solution is saturated. Cool solution. Pour into a clear glass. Tie the weight onto the end of the string and hang into solution. After several days, crystals will begin growing on the string as the water evaporates.

Note again to the class, after the crystals have formed, that nothing has changed in the composition of the crystal except size. From the moment of conception nothing changes in the unity of body and soul of the developing person, except that it grows in size, and like crystals, shows its own unique characteristics. From the very beginning, you were you and you were valued by God!



Teacher Sprinkle: If you could pick an age to be for the rest of your life, what age would that be and why? Note that all the stages of life are special.



Language Arts

Acronyms

Review the **PLAN** acronym from Unit One reminding students that God had a loving plan when He created human life and the vast universe. Review the **LIFE** acronym from Unit Two which reveals that human life was at the center of God's creative enterprise.

GIFT—The new acronym makes it clear that life is a gift from the very beginning.

From the Beginning Poetry

Read Psalm 51:5.



This verse contains “Progressive Parallelism” where the last half of the verse expands on the thought of the first half. As David considers the seriousness of his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, he realizes that his sin is much greater than these two episodes.

He was sinful at birth. But it is even worse than that. He was sinful at the moment of conception. The point is that if we are sinful from conception, we are human from conception. (For a more detailed discussion of this verse, see the *GOD'S WORD for Life* commentary beginning on page 634a.)



Teacher Sprinkle: If David saw himself as a sinner from the time of conception, would he have also seen himself as a real person from the moment of conception?

Fine Arts

LIFE Art

Materials: small flat head nails, finishing nails, enough boards for each student (5 inches by 8 inches in length), green and blue spray paint, different colors of yarn, and hammers.

Before Class: lightly tap into 2 boards the flat head nails—one for each member of the class. Spray one group of nails green and the other blue. When dry, remove nails and bring them with the other materials to class.

During Class: Explain that they are going to be constructing the word “LIFE” out of nails and yarn. The green flat-headed nail stands for conception. Pound that in as the top to the “L” on “LIFE.” Next use finishing nails to outline the remainder of the word “LIFE.” (Draw out the word on the board to make it easier to place the finishing nails.) The last nail, painted blue, stands for the end of life. Pound the last nail at the base of the “E.”

Each human life is a continuum from conception to death. Tie the end of the yarn around the green nail and then form the word “LIFE” using the yarn which will be cut and tied to the blue flat-headed nail. Emphasize that as there is no break in the yarn in the word “LIFE” that they have created, so all human life begins at conception and ends at death. God alone decides when each human is to leave this world.



Teacher Sprinkle: Would anyone be present in the classroom today if they were not first conceived in their mother's womb?

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

God planned the first stage of life at my conception.

I am special to God's plan from the beginning.

For each stage of my life there is a purpose.

Time from conception to death is in the hands of God.



Social Studies

Holocaust Repeat?

Since each human being has the same genetic code from the moment of conception, the act of abortion implies that unborn humans are inferior to humans that are born.

Ask: How does this logic suggest how the Nazis in Germany viewed human life?

Answer: As the Nazis made distinctions between different races, labeling some inferior without any unbiased proof, so those who kill unborn humans have labeled them inferior even though they are completely human in every way. The unborn, like those tortured and killed by the Nazis, are simply powerless against those who have labeled them inferior and unnecessary, using medical doctors who kill them in the womb.

(For more discussion information about Hitler's "social experiment" see CD.)



Barbwire fence in Auschwitz I concentration camp in Poland.



Teacher Sprinkle: Can anyone think of a reason why another human being would be less important than another? Guide responses demonstrating that any distinction that is made is simply based on personal opinion or preferences. God values all life and seeks to protect the weak and defenseless from the very beginning!

Math

Everyone a Twin?

Using math to compare the genetic codes between members of the different races comprising humanity, mathematicians tell us that each human is almost an identical twin with every other human. Each person that we meet each day is almost an identical copy of our genetic code.

Ask: Would unborn children also be identical copies of our genetic code from the moment of conception?

Answer: Yes, unborn children would—when looking at their genetic code from mathematical similarities in structure—almost be our identical twins!

Teacher Sprinkle: If you had a jar with 10,000 black jelly beans and 1 red one, would that be almost identical to a jar filled with 10,000 black jelly beans and 1 blue one? (Clearly, the contents of the jars are almost identical. Our genetic code is almost identical with every other human being, and it never changes in us from conception until death.)



Parent Letter Suggestions

Your children are learning:

- Jesus, like every human being, was also conceived in the womb.
- The unborn cousin of Jesus sensed the presence of Jesus in His mother's womb when the body of Jesus was smaller than the point of a needle.
- The life in the womb is fully, completely, and only human life.
- As large crystals grow from very small crystals and yet always remain the same chemical substance, so fully grown adults are the end of a process that started with conception in which their genetic code remains the same from conception to death.
- God values and loves human life equally from conception in the womb to the end of life and the beginning of glory for His saints.
- Humans have no valid criteria for determining that certain human life is of less value because of race, age, or disabilities.

Resources

Booklet:

Christian Faith and Human Beginnings, prepared September 2005 by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).

Web Sites:

<http://chemistry.about.com/od/growingcrystals/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi_human_experimentation

Audio explanation that life begins at conception: http://media.gospelcom.net/aig/Volume_059/23.mp3

Teaching For Life

For Life in the Womb.

Note: Unit 3 focused on the value of life from the very beginning. This unit looks at growth and development in the womb and the value this gives to human life.



Prayer for Prep: Heavenly Father, who took on our humanity as Jesus grew in a womb, enable me to teach the children the value You give them because You formed them in their mother's womb. Amen.



Key Concept: God shapes and forms us in the womb.



Gospel Focus: Jesus passed through all the stages of our development as part of God's plan for redemption.



Bible Story: Luke 1:39-45—The Visitation (Unit 3 focused on Jesus in this encounter. Unit 4 focuses on John the Baptist at six months from conception.)



Critical Questions:

1. How does human life develop in the womb?

World's Answer: Biology. The world only sees the development of life in terms of biology.

WORD'S ANSWER: God and Biology. God does not remove Himself from the pro-creative process that He established. (Psalm 119:73, 139:13-14, Job 10:8, Isaiah 29:16)

2. How do we explain fetal abnormalities?

World's Answer: Mistakes. The world only sees genetic and developmental flaws as reasons for abnormalities.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. The affects of sin have indeed flawed the biology, but the redemptive work of Jesus reaches into the womb bringing hope and purpose. (Hebrews 2:14-17)

3. How do we deal with fetal abnormalities?

World's Answer: Abortion. Abortion has unfortunately become the "treatment" of choice for those children who do not meet certain standards.

WORD'S ANSWER: Compassion. The Holy Spirit's presence with John while still in the womb reminds us that God does not forsake those whom He has shaped and formed. (Psalm 139:15-16, Isaiah 45:11)



Religion

The Greatest Treasure Hunt

Before class hide the following clues inside plastic eggs or small gift boxes:

- Figures of an angel and Mary.
- Precious Feet pin or magazine clipping of jumping baby feet (pinned or glued to a card with the words “John jumps for joy”). (*Precious Feet pins are available from Lutherans For Life.*)
- Pictures of a baby at various stages of prenatal development. (*“Windows to the Womb,” a CD of prenatal pictures is available from Life Issues Institute: www.lifeissues.org.*)
- Shepherd figures.
- Several angel figures.
- An empty manger (or hay).



Place the final clue (baby Jesus) inside a wrapped box.

Optional: Number the eggs or boxes. Mark the final clue “treasure.” The children can find the eggs or boxes in any order then use the numbers to order them before opening them.

After all the numbered clues have been found, opened, and discussed, let the children guess what the treasure might be. Open the box together. Sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus.



Advent Calendar

Include an Advent calendar in your opening or closing devotional time each day.

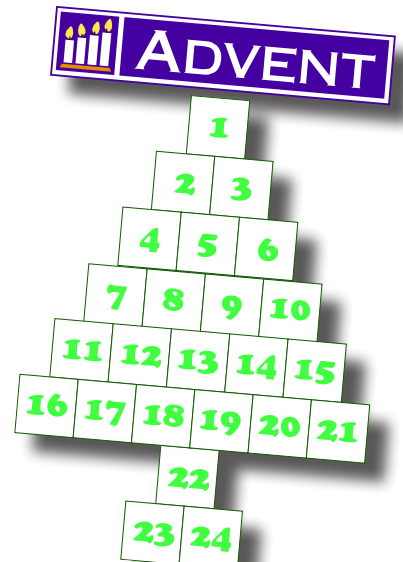
Let the children open a flap each day and talk about the picture inside.

Ask the children to share some of the ways they and their families are getting ready for Christmas.

Wonder together how Mary and Joseph got ready for the first Christmas.

Today how do moms and dads get ready for the birth of a new baby?

Thank God together for watching over His Son Jesus while He was still inside Mary and keeping Him safe so He could be born to be our Savior. Praise God for creating and protecting us.




Fine Arts

“Wonderfully Made” Christmas Ornaments

For each ornament, cut a 3" by 3" rectangle out of heavy-duty construction paper, card stock, felt, or poster board. Punch two holes near the top of the ornament, insert a piece of yarn through the holes and tie off to form a loop for hanging the ornament. Glue a photo of the child to the center of the rectangle. Type or print the words **“Fearfully and wonderfully made—by God!”** (See Psalm 139:14) on a strip of paper and glue to the bottom of the ornament below the photo. Use an ink pad or finger paint to allow the children to place their fingerprints around the photo. Add any other decorations or personal touches that you wish.



 As the children work, talk with them about the many ways each one is unique/special. They had unique fingerprints long before they were born—during the 3rd month of pregnancy!

“Known by God” Puppet Play

See *Hurray for Birthdays* puppet play by Joan Matz on CD. As they prepare to celebrate Mrs. Cow’s birthday, the meadow animals learn to value each person as a unique individual and discover that God knows each one by name and knew them even before they were born while they were still growing inside their mothers! (See Jeremiah 1:5.)

Note: This puppet play could also be performed as a skit. If there are older grades in your school, consider asking several grade school children to help you present this puppet play or make simple costumes and act it out as a skit. The older children will benefit also as they “teach” their younger friends.



“Praising Parts” Singing



Teach the children some action songs or rhymes that allow them to thank God for the parts of their bodies and to use those body parts to praise Him as baby John did while still in his mother Elizabeth’s womb.

Some possible titles are *I Have Hands* by Margaret M. Self and Jeanne P. Boozer (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 29), *The “Me” God Made* (*Fingers Tell the Story*, p. 36), and *Say to the Lord, I Love You* by Ernie Rettino and Debby Kerner (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 18), or use the verse below (or one or more of your own) to the tune of *London Bridge is Falling Down*.



*John the Baptist jumped for joy, jumped for joy, jumped for joy.
John the Baptist jumped for joy at Mary’s greeting.*

*Baby Jesus grew and grew, grew and grew, grew and grew.
Baby Jesus grew and grew inside his mother Mary.*

*I was once a baby too, baby too, baby too.
I was once a baby, too, inside my mother.*

*Jesus loved me as I grew, as I grew, as I grew.
Jesus loved me as I grew and took good care of me.*

Language Arts

Jesus – One Hundred Percent For Life!

Read *Horton Hatches the Egg* by Dr. Seuss.

Have the children join with you on the rhyming words and repetitive phrases such as “an elephant’s faithful one hundred percent.”



Discuss with the children what “faithful” means and how much is “100 percent.” Can we be trusted to be 100 percent faithful when we have a job to do?

Who do we know who never, ever, ever lets us down but always keeps His promises? Jesus is faithful 100 percent. He knew us, loved us, and cared for us when we were still growing inside our moms’ bodies. He grew inside his mother Mary’s body for nine months then was born at Christmas so He could die on the cross and rise again to pay for 100 percent of the sin of the whole world.



Developing Photos

Read Jan and Stan Berenstain’s *The Birds, the Bees, and the Berenstain Bears*.

When you get to the part where Sister Bear and Mama are at the doctor’s office viewing the new baby using the ultrasound machine, stop and show an ultrasound photo if you have one, or show some or all of the *Watch Me Grow* posters or brochures available from Lutherans For Life.

Share your awe with the children at the marvelous way God makes each person grow inside his/her mother’s body until he or she is ready to be born.



Service Learning

Pen Pals (ongoing)

Christmas Ornaments

Share the Christmas ornaments made under Fine Arts with your pen pals or share the idea and instructions with them. If your class does not have pen pals, share ornaments with residents/clients of a senior center, nursing home, or crisis pregnancy center.



Science

Baby/Mommy Match

Find and glue separate pictures of animal mothers and babies to individual sheets of durable construction paper, tagboard, or card stock.

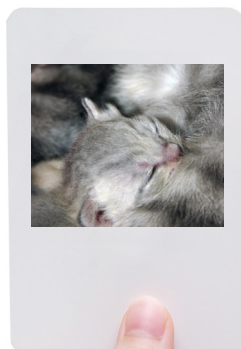


Include a pregnant woman and an unborn baby as one set.

(The *Watch Me Grow* posters and brochures available from Lutherans For Life are a good resource.)

Laminate the cards or cover them with clear contact paper.

Children can shuffle the cards and practice matching the mothers with their young.



Or play a version of the Memory Game by placing the cards face down and turning over two at a time. A successful "match" would include a mother and her baby. As the children play, discuss with them the many ways mothers care for their babies.

God loves and cares for human babies, keeping them safe inside their mothers' bodies until they are ready to be born.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

In Dr. Seuss's book, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, Horton the elephant goes to great lengths for many months to protect a baby bird until it is safely hatched from its egg. Horton's faithful concern gives us a small picture of the great love that our God has for each one of us. He formed us inside our mothers' bodies for nine months before we were born. He sent His only Son to become one of us so He could suffer, die, and rise again for the sin of the whole world. He gives us His Holy Spirit so we can believe His Word and trust in Him for eternal life. By the power of the Holy Spirit, John the Baptist leaped for joy inside his mother's womb when his Savior, still a tiny embryo, came into the room. May He grant you and your family that same child-like faith as you look forward to His coming at Christmas and His coming again!

This month we are in the part of the Church year called Advent, a time of preparation and looking forward to Christ's coming as a baby at Christmas and His coming again as our triumphant king. Jesus' mother, Mary, and his earthly father, Joseph, must have been busy preparing for Jesus' birth after they received messages from God that Mary would conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit and give birth to the Savior. God the Father watched over Mary and the baby growing inside her, just as He watched over your family as you prepared for the birth (or adoption) of your child. As you prepare for this year's Christmas celebration, ask your child what preparations Mary and Joseph may have made as they got ready for Jesus' birth. Talk with him/her about the preparations you made for his/her birth (or adoption). Thank God together for the gifts of Jesus, forgiveness, and life—past, present, and future—with Him!

Resources

Berenstain, Stan & Jan. *The Birds, the Bees, and the Berenstain Bears*. New York: Random House, 2002.

Brem, M.M. *Mary's Story*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967. (Luke 1:5-2:18 for children.)

Dede, Vivian H. *Elizabeth's Christmas Story*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House. (Luke 1:5-66 for children.)

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, pantomimes, and litanies for the very young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Geisel, Theodor S. (Dr. Seuss). *Horton Hatches the Egg*. New York: Random House, 1940.

Klusendorf, Scott. *Pro-Life 101: A Step-by-Step Guide to Making Your Case Persuasively*. Signal Hill, CA: Stand to Reason Press, 2002.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia, 1989.

Matz, Joan. *Hurray for Birthdays!* (On CD)

Web Sites:

www.lutheransforlife.org – Consider purchasing one or more of the inexpensive resources—such as the *God Created All of Me* coloring book or the pro-life bookmarks available in the children's section—as Christmas gifts for your students. A number of brochures and posters of fetal development are available.

www.str.org – This is the site for Stand to Reason. It contains many resources (including many free materials) for effectively sharing the Christian faith, including resources for standing up for life.

Teaching For Life

For Life in the Womb.

Note: Unit 3 focused on the value of life from the very beginning. This unit looks at growth and development in the womb and the value this gives to human life. However, young children thrive on repetition, which allows them to reflect on what they have learned and demonstrates familiarity with the concepts attained. Please feel free to refer to both sections when discussing this fascinating segment of God's plan for human development.



Prayer for Prep: Heavenly Father, who took on our humanity as Jesus grew in a womb, enable me to teach the children the value You give them because You formed them in their mother's womb. Amen.



Key Concept: God shapes and forms us in the womb.



Gospel Focus: Jesus passed through all the stages of our development as part of God's plan for redemption.



Bible Story: Luke 1:39-45—The Visitation (Unit 3 focused on Jesus in this encounter. Unit 4 focuses on John the Baptist at six months from conception.)



Critical Questions:



1. How does human life develop in the womb?

World's Answer: Biology. The world only sees the development of life in terms of biology.

WORD'S ANSWER: God and Biology. God does not remove Himself from the pro-creative process that He established. (Psalm 119:73, 139:13-14, Job 10:8, Isaiah 29:16)

2. How do we explain fetal abnormalities?

World's Answer: Mistakes. The world only sees genetic and developmental flaws as reasons for abnormalities.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. The affects of sin have indeed flawed the biology, but the redemptive work of Jesus reaches into the womb bringing hope and purpose. (Hebrews 2:14-17)

3. How do we deal with fetal abnormalities?

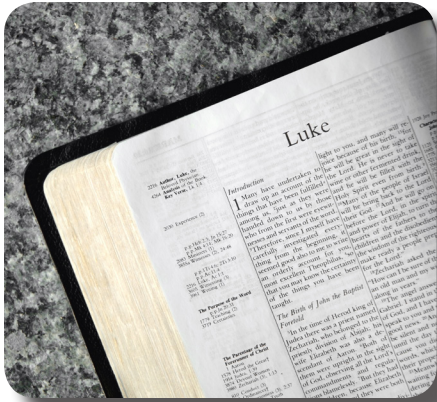
World's Answer: Abortion. Abortion has unfortunately become the "treatment" of choice for those children who do not meet certain standards.

WORD'S ANSWER: Compassion. The Holy Spirit's presence with John while still in the womb reminds us that God does not forsake those whom He has shaped and formed. (Psalm 139:15-16, Isaiah 45:11)

Religion

Baby Story

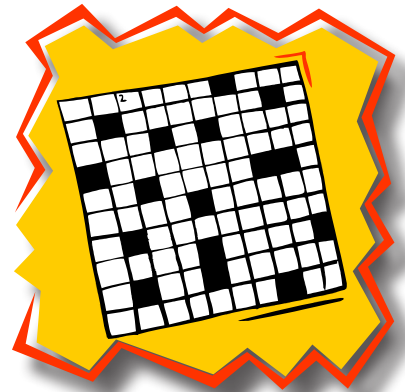
Tell the story again of Mary's visit to Elizabeth when they were pregnant with John the Baptist and Jesus (Luke 1:26-45).



Let the children “read” a rebus version included on the CD.

Baby Names

Do a crossword puzzle with names of other babies mentioned in the Bible. One is included on the CD.



Discuss the fact that each had grown inside his or her mother and that the parents were happy and thankful when their child was born.

Baby Feet



Give each child a “precious feet” or “precious hands” pin.

These pins can be ordered from Lutherans For Life. They are fairly inexpensive and would make good Christmas gifts. Perhaps your room parents or parent teacher group would donate funds for their purchase. They are the exact size and shape of an unborn baby's feet and hands at 10–12 weeks after conception.

Baby Play

Repeat the Tall/Small finger play learned last month. Point out that babies inside their moms can stretch and curl and move around and do these same things!



I'm very, very tall.
I'm very, very small.
Sometimes tall,
Sometimes small,
But always Jesus' child!

*Stand and stretch arms up to sky.
Scrunch up into small ball.
Repeat standing and stretching.
Repeat scrunching.
Stand with arms hugging self.*



Teacher Sprinkle: What can you do while you are waiting for a baby to be born? Does the nine months seem to go slow or fast? Why?



Language Arts

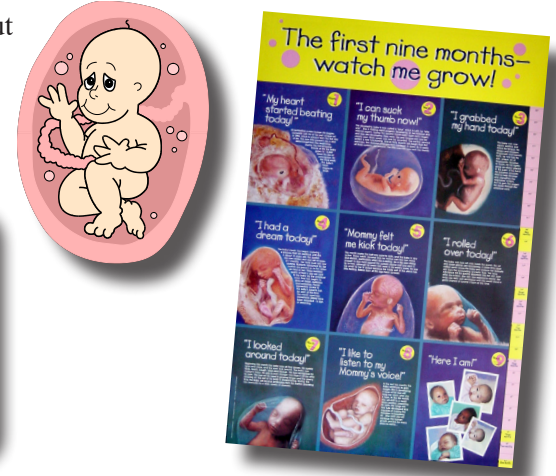
An “Inside” Story!

Vocabulary: **womb**, **pregnant**, **fetus**. Write a story using these words. Do this activity as a class or as individuals. Write the words on the board or on flash cards. Use the matching exercise on the CD. Discuss their meaning. Often “pregnant” is defined as “going to have a baby.” This is a good time to get it right. The baby is already on board!



An “Inside” Journal!

Pretend you are a baby growing in your mother’s womb. Write a journal about what you are doing and what you hear. The journal can be written together as a class. Children could also illustrate their ideas. The *Watch Me Grow* poster from Lutherans For Life is a good resource to aid in this.



An “Inside” Thank You!

Write a thank you letter or create a card for your mother for taking care of you before you were born. Help children create their cards using art paper, crayons, markers, and the like.



Fine Arts

Leaping for Joy

Play lively praise music. Provide scarves and rhythm instruments as desired. Dance to the music of a favorite hymn to praise God like John the Baptist did.



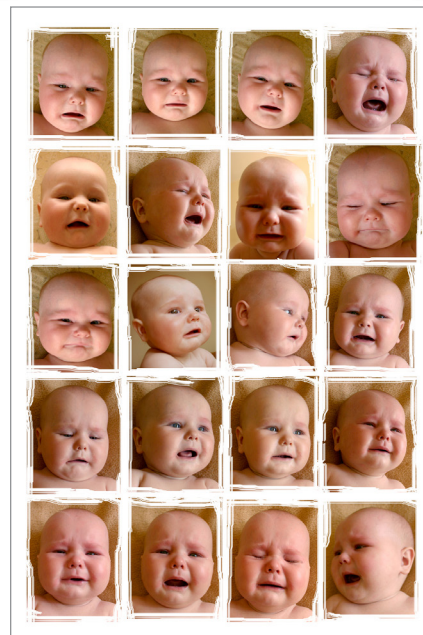
Singing for Joy

Sing *He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands*, especially the verse about the “tiny little baby.” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, CPH, p. 101)

Joyful Masterpiece

Make a collage of baby pictures.

Children may cut pictures out of magazines, or ask children to bring baby pictures of themselves and make a collage on a bulletin board. Entitle it, “**I am God’s Masterpiece.**”

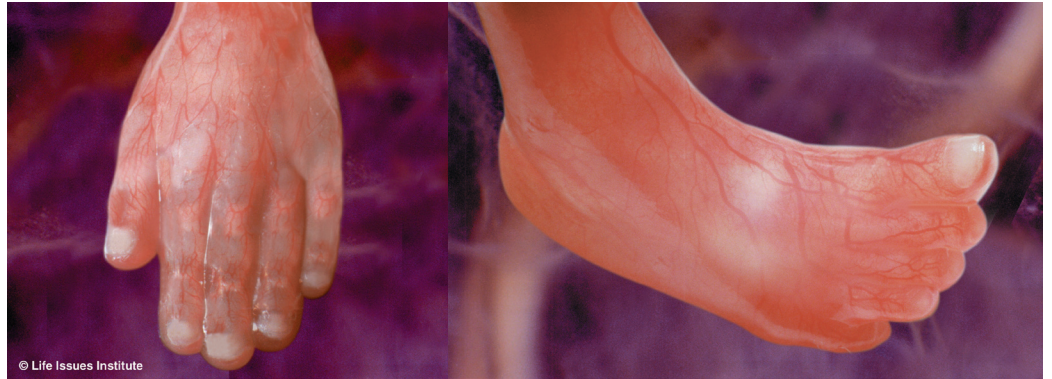


Math

Hand to Hand Comparison

Draw children's hands over the fetus's hands on the worksheet provided on the CD. Discuss different sizes and growth.

If it has not been discussed yet, point out that "fetus" is the scientific name for an unborn baby after 8 weeks. It means "little one."



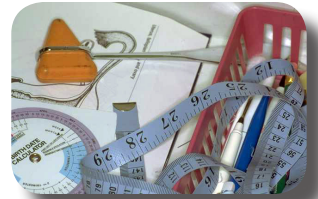
Comparison by the Foot

An unborn baby twelve weeks from conception.

Cut out picture indicating size of fetus's foot on the worksheet provided on the CD. Compare how many of these feet would equal the size of a student's foot. Measure various objects using the fetus's foot and student's foot as the unit of measure. Compare using the chart provided.

Counting the Days

When will the baby be born? Use the calendar and worksheet provided on the CD. Fill in the blanks measuring how long nine months is.



Teacher Sprinkle: Two babies who grow in the womb and are born at the same time are called twins. What are three babies called? Four babies? Draw a picture to show this.



Science

Watching Babies Grow

Human Babies

Watch *You are a Masterpiece*. This 25 minute DVD is available from Lutherans For Life.



Other Babies

Watch chicken eggs, silk worms, or butterflies develop. Children can watch creatures change and develop over a period of time. Samples are available from science suppliers or local sources. Teach the children to treat the developing life forms with respect. Prepare the children for the fact that not all will develop successfully.



You!

View sonogram pictures of babies in the womb. Even better, ask for actual sonogram pictures of the children! Some families may even have videos they may allow you to borrow. Edit the videos for length and content.



Teacher Sprinkle: What can a newborn baby do that you can do? What does he or she have to wait to do until older?

Social Studies

Talking to Mom

Talk with a woman who is pregnant. Ask a mom to come and speak with the children. Discuss how the baby is developing, what she eats to help keep the developing baby healthy, how she feels. Perhaps children can feel the baby kick or move. Pray together for the baby and its family.



Cultural Care



Compare and contrast how babies are taken care of in different cultures. Emphasize how tiny babies need others to take care of them just as they have had their needs provided for before birth. Use the chart provided on the CD.

In Asian cultures children are considered to be one year old at birth. Their first year of prenatal life is recognized. Discuss this fact as the children color the pictures of children in cultures in which a baby is considered a year old when he or she is born. Discuss why such a practice would be appropriate. (Pictures to color are available on the CD.)

Physical Activity

Baby Crawl Relay

Explain that when babies are born they can't walk; they must be carried everywhere. Before they learn to walk, most babies learn to crawl. Let children "race" from point to point by crawling like a baby. Do this as a relay so only a few students are crawling at any one time.

Baby Sounds

Babies can hear sounds while they are in the womb. Have children close their eyes and try to identify sounds you create—for example: particular songs, the sound of water running, pebbles in a can, a dog barking, etc. The sounds in the womb are muffled so ask children to cover their ears while they are listening.



Service Learning

Mommy Cards

Make cards for pregnant women in the school or congregation. Children can include favorite Bible verses, prayers, and words of encouragement. Keep a number of cards on hand to give out throughout the year.



Mommy Food

Bake cookies or prepare a snack or meal to give to a pregnant woman. Children can bake the cookies together as a class or assemble a fruit or vegetable plate. Ask students to bring items from home. Include a card or note.



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

This month we continue to celebrate the life that begins at conception and develops so miraculously in the womb. If you have sonogram pictures of your child before he or she was born, please share them and marvel at them together. Talk about how you took care of your child by eating well and protecting him/her before birth and about how happy you were when he or she was born. How did you tell people that you were pregnant? Who did you tell first? How did you get ready during those nine months of preparation? Let your child know that he or she was the focus of your love, joy, and anticipation even before he or she was born. God loved your child during those developing months as well. He saw you through your pregnancy and delivery. His hand knit together the baby that was growing within. Even children born with special needs are loved, valued by, and cared for by Him.

Just as John the Baptist jumped for joy within his mother's womb when Elizabeth visited Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, so every child is a special creation of God even before birth—loved by God, redeemed by Jesus our Savior, and cared for as he or she matures. Thank you for helping your child understand the miracle of his or her life and all of life created by God from the very beginning.

Resources

(See CD for more annotations.)

Andrae, Giles. *There's a House Inside My Mommy*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co., 2002.

Bingham, Caroline. *Human Body*. (DL Eye Wonder series.) New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 2003.

A Child's Garden of Bible Stories. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005.

Little One Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998.

Nilsson, Lennart and Lena Swanberg, Lena. *How Was I Born?* New York: Dell Publishing, 1994.

Web Sites:

www.carolina.com/category/teacher+resources.do

www.gravityteen.com/prenatal/sonograms.cfm Sonogram pictures of fetal development.

[www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/children_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/children_(C).htm)

Consider purchasing one or more of the inexpensive resources such as the *God Created All of Me Coloring Book*. Item 700B.

[www.lutheransforlife.org/catalog/fetal_development_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/catalog/fetal_development_(C).htm)

The First Nine Months. Item 102B. Free (limit of 25). A brochure showing the development of the human child in the womb.

God's View of Life/God's Knitting Room PowerPoint™ presentation. Suitable for use in elementary grades. Item 103AV.

I Knew You print. Item 1606. Full color 9" x 12" prints of Jesus with a baby by Shannon Wirrenga.

Precious Feet (Item 1301) and Hands (Item 1302) Pins.

Watch Me Grow posters. Item 100P (composite poster). Item 102P (Eleven piece set). All nine months of life in the womb illustrated.

Watch Me Grow. Item 125T (English) or 125T-S (Spanish).. Brochure with photos of pre-born child developing in the womb. Uses artwork from *Watch Me Grow* poster series.

You Are a Masterpiece DVD. Item 700AV. 25 min. A live action video revealing life before birth. Recommended for children ages 5-12.

www.saregentwelch.com. Biological supply company.

www.standupgirl.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=1

3D and 4D pictures of fetal development beginning at 5 weeks.

Teaching For Life

For Life in the Womb.

Note: Unit 3 focused on the value of life from the very beginning. This unit looks at growth and development in the womb and the value this gives to human life. However, young children thrive on repetition, which allows them to reflect on what they have learned and demonstrates familiarity with the concepts attained. Please feel free to refer to both sections when discussing this fascinating segment of God's plan for human development.



Prayer for Prep: “Heavenly Father, who took on our humanity as Jesus grew in a womb, enable me to teach the children the value You give them because You formed them in their mother’s womb. Amen.”



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Bible Story: Luke 1:39-45—The Visitation (Unit 3 focused on Jesus in this encounter. Unit 4 focuses on John the Baptist at six months from conception.)



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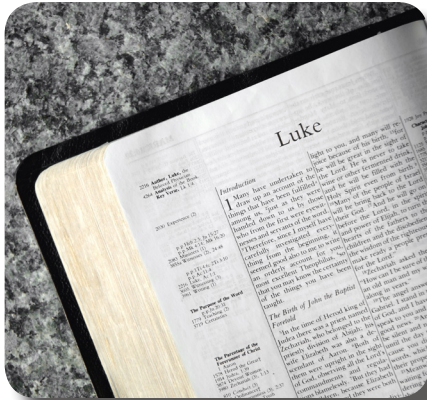
WORD'S ANSWER: Compassion. The Holy Spirit's presence with John while still in the womb reminds us that God does not forsake those whom He has shaped and formed. (Psalm 139:15-16, Isaiah 45:11)



Religion

Read and Quiz

Read the account of Mary visiting Elizabeth from (Luke 1:39-45).



Quiz Questions:

1. Who was the baby in Elizabeth's womb? (See Luke 1:13)
2. How old was he at this time? (See Luke 1:36)
3. What was he able to do? (vs. 41)
4. What was he able to feel? (vs. 44)
5. Who was the baby in Mary's womb causing all this? (vs. 43)

Point out that both John and Jesus were "little people" who could do things before they were born. So could we! You may want to use *The First Nine Months* brochure or the *Watch Me Grow* posters available from Lutherans For Life to show some of the things we did before birth. God formed us in the womb and guarded and protected us there for nine months.



Early Blessings Prayer

Write praise prayers to God thanking Him for the many blessings He gave each of us even before we were born!



Teacher Sparkle: What would you have said to Mary if you were Elizabeth? Do you think Elizabeth was surprised when John leapt in her womb when Mary came?



Language Arts

Letter Writing

Write a letter from Elizabeth to Mary telling her how you feel about her.

Journal Writing

As a continuation from the previous unit, write another journal entry from Mary after she and Elizabeth have their meeting.



Teacher Sparkle: What is God trying to get across by telling us that John leapt in Elizabeth's womb? This seems very symbolic. What do you think this means?

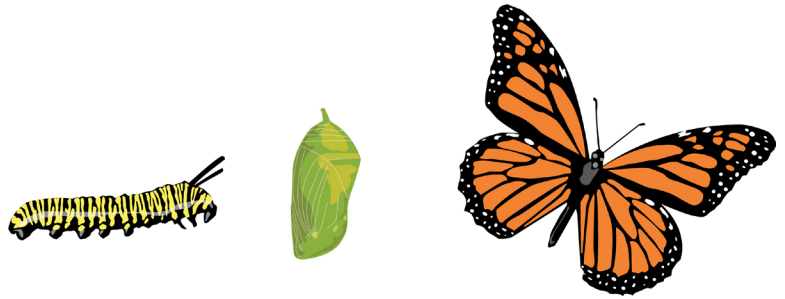


Science

Caterpillar/Butterfly Growth Chart

Order caterpillar eggs from a mail order catalog. Follow the life cycle of the caterpillars from egg to butterfly.

Graph the size of the caterpillars on a daily basis. Once they form a chrysalis, keep track of the dates of the various caterpillars marking them on a class graph. Again when the butterflies emerge, keep track on another class graph. Using these graphs, the students can compare the time span it takes the various caterpillars to go through their life cycles.



Class Baby

Have each day of the month equal one week of fetal development. Assign each student one or more days. When their day comes, they are to report on the growth of the Class Baby giving size and other developmental milestones associated with that particular week. See the resource section for helps.



Keep track of the growth on a Class Baby chart. Remind the students each day that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” as the Psalmist says. (Psalm 139:14)

You Are a Masterpiece Theater

Use the DVD *You Are a Masterpiece*. Show it on its own or in conjunction with the Class Baby project. It could be shown in its entirety at the beginning of the Class Baby project and/or a small portion each day.



Fine Arts

“Develop” a Butterfly!

Use graph paper or copy the example below and create a pattern for others to follow to create a picture of a butterfly.

As the students draw, remind them how God “knits us together” in our mother’s womb, shaping and forming us “color by color” (part by part) into who we are. We are all beautiful in His eyes!



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Directions for Graph Art

1. Color columns A-B, N-O dark blue
2. Color columns C, M cells (1, 6, 11, 12) dark blue
3. Color columns C, M cells (2-5, 7-10) light blue
4. Color columns D, L cells (1, 6, 11, 12) dark blue
5. Color columns D, L cells (2, 5, 7, 10) light blue
6. Color columns D, L cells (3, 8) yellow
7. Color columns D, L cells (4, 9) red
8. Color columns E, K cells (1-2, 5-7, 10-12) light blue
9. Color columns E, K cells (3, 8) red
10. Color columns E, K cells (4, 9) yellow
11. Color columns F, J cells (1-10) light blue
12. Color columns F, J cells (11, 12) dark blue
13. Color columns G, I cells (1, 8-12) dark blue
14. Color columns G, I cells (2-7) light blue
15. Color column H cells (1-11) black
16. Color column H cell (12) dark blue

math

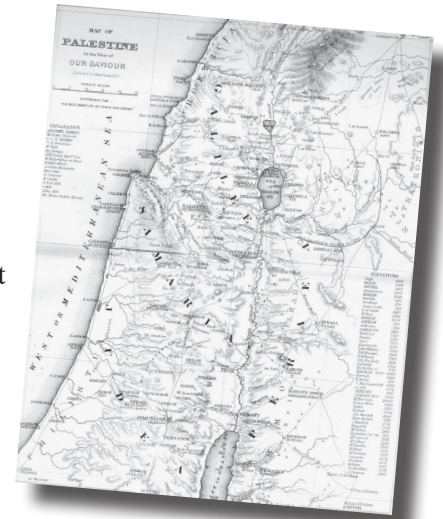
Distance

Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth right after Jesus was conceived in her by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:39). Mary lived in Nazareth. Elizabeth lived near Jerusalem. On a Bible map, determine the distance between Nazareth and Jerusalem.

If Mary walked three miles per hour and never stopped to rest, how many hours would it take her to get to Jerusalem?

How many days?

If Mary rode a donkey that walked at 5 miles per hour, how many hours, days?



Size

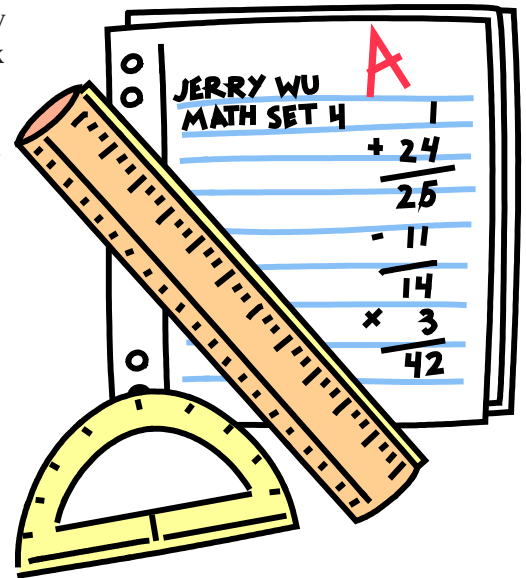
Having just begun to grow, Jesus would have been very, very small inside of Mary when she arrived at Elizabeth's house. John the Baptist inside of Elizabeth was six months old.

If Jesus was 1 millimeter tall and John the Baptist was 300 times taller, how many millimeters tall was John?

About how many inches would this be? (Use a meter stick/yard stick to help calculate and visualize this.)

Have a student "draw" a 1 millimeter dot on the board. Then have him/her draw a 300 millimeter (12 inch) line next to the dot.

Remind the students how John was jumping for joy in the presence of this tiny Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, John recognized this little "dot" as the very Son of God!

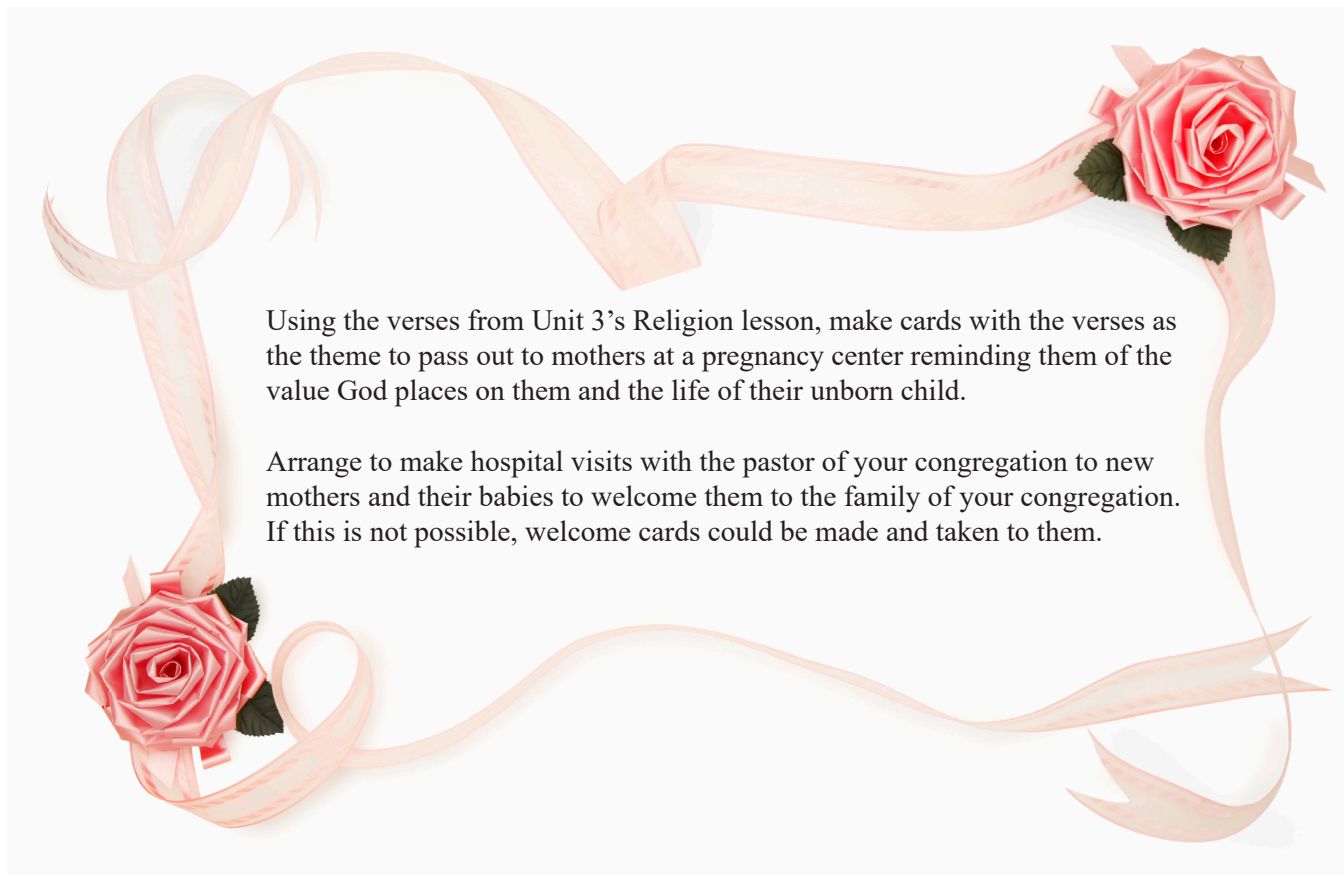


Teacher Sprinkle:

How big is God? (See 2 Chronicles 6:18.) Marvel that He would become so small for us!



Service Learning



Using the verses from Unit 3's Religion lesson, make cards with the verses as the theme to pass out to mothers at a pregnancy center reminding them of the value God places on them and the life of their unborn child.

Arrange to make hospital visits with the pastor of your congregation to new mothers and their babies to welcome them to the family of your congregation. If this is not possible, welcome cards could be made and taken to them.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Elizabeth knew in her heart the importance of the child Mary was carrying in her womb. (Luke 1:39-45) John the Baptist in Elizabeth's womb "leaped for joy" in Jesus' presence. We too need to remind our children that they and other children are valued right from the moment of conception and as they develop in the womb. We must continue to protect our children from the world's influence in bombarding them with the false notion that unborn life does not have value. We can praise God that we are so valuable to Him that He became one of us and developed in a womb just as we did.

Resources

[www.lutheransforlife.org/catalog/fetal_development_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/catalog/fetal_development_(C).htm)

The First Nine Months. Item 102B. Free (limit of 25). A brochure showing the development of the human child in the womb.

I Knew You print. Item 1606. Full color 9" x 12" prints of Jesus with a baby by Shannon Wirrenga.

Precious Feet (Item 1301) and Hands (Item 1302) Pins.

Watch Me Grow posters. Item 100P (composite poster). Item 102P (Eleven piece set). All nine months of life in the womb illustrated.

Watch Me Grow. Item 125T (English) or 125T-S (Spanish).. Brochure with photos of pre-born child developing in the womb. Uses artwork from *Watch Me Grow* poster series.

You Are a Masterpiece DVD. Item 700AV. 25 min.

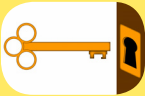
Teaching For Life

For Life in the Womb.

Note: Unit 3 focused on the value of life from the very beginning. This unit looks at growth and development in the womb and the value this gives to human life.



Prayer for Prep: “Heavenly Father, who took on our humanity as Jesus grew in a womb, enable me to teach the children the value You give them because You formed them in their mother’s womb. Amen.”



Key Concept: God shapes and forms us in the womb.



Gospel Focus: Jesus passed through all the stages of our development as part of God’s plan for redemption.



Bible Story: Luke 1:39-45—The Visitation (Unit 3 focused on Jesus in this encounter. Unit 4 focuses on John the Baptist at six months from conception.)



Critical Questions:

1. How does human life develop in the womb?

World's Answer: Biology. The world only sees the development of life in terms of biology.

WORD'S ANSWER: God and Biology. God does not remove Himself from the pro-creative process that He established. (Psalm 119:73, 139:13-14, Job 10:8, Isaiah 29:16)

2. How do we explain fetal abnormalities?

World's Answer: Mistakes. The world only sees genetic and developmental flaws as reasons for abnormalities.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. The affects of sin have indeed flawed the biology, but the redemptive work of Jesus reaches into the womb bringing hope and purpose. (Hebrews 2:14-17)

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Religion

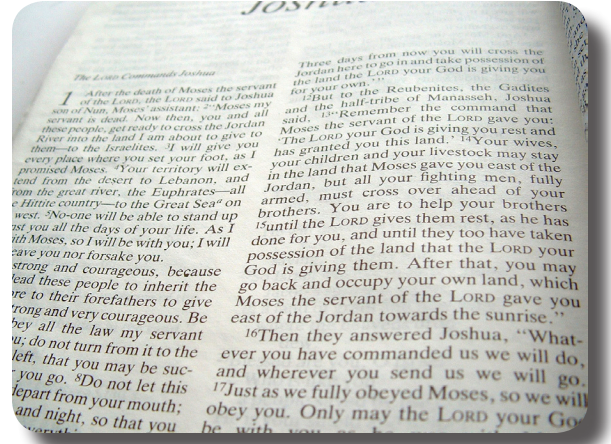
Formed for a Purpose – Joshua, Jesus, and Me!

Read Joshua 1:5-7. (For those using it, this is from *Voyages*® Unit 4 Grade 5.) The name Joshua means savior and is the Hebrew form for the Greek name, Jesus. God's purpose for Joshua was to save His people by leading them in the conquest of the Promised Land. God's purpose for Jesus was to save His people from their sins. We are all formed in the womb for a purpose. (See Jeremiah 1:5.)



Discuss the word consecrated (set apart). Because God chose us before the Creation of the world, He set us apart to be His special people with particular tasks in His Kingdom. Every person has worthwhile work to do—important work.

Cut out a large gold hand. Write: **God Formed Me** across it. Use this as the top of a mobile with string hanging down attached to words from Joshua 1:5-7 like **consecrated**, **courage**, **purpose**, **obedient**, and **never forsaken**. Then personalize each mobile with the meanings of your students' names from a baby book.



False Fruits

At the end of *Voyages*® Unit 4 Grade 6, there is a lesson about a tree and its fruit. Jesus tells His followers to look out for false prophets. You can recognize them by the things they do, their fruits. Many in the pro-death movement in our country say things that seem right, "but in the end it leads to death" (Proverbs 16:25). Challenge your sixth graders to see the "false fruit" in some of today's abortion slogans like "my body, my choice." A list of such slogans with biblical refutations is found on the CD.

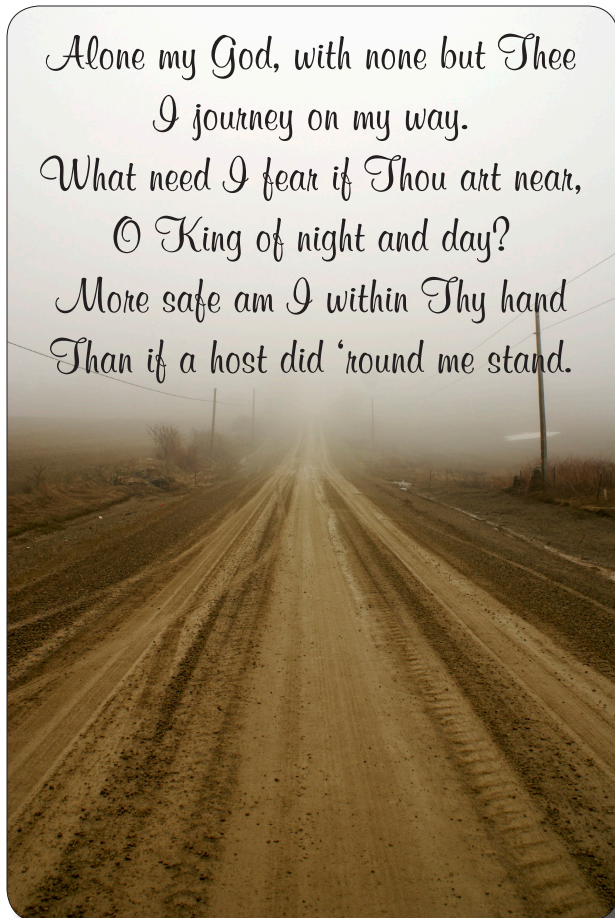
Prayer

See prayer at right.

Memory Fun

"Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" Psalm 100:3 ESV.

Alone my God, with none but Thee
I journey on my way.
What need I fear if Thou art near,
O King of night and day?
More safe am I within Thy hand
Than if a host did 'round me stand.



Social Studies

Cultural Bias



Mother Theresa spoke adamantly against abortion saying, “Abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want.” (From www.gargaro.com/mother_teresa/quotes.html.) She often spoke about this issue which was down played by the American press who emphasized her humanitarian service to the poor and untouchables. Because her abortion views were opposed by many in the press, these statements were often not included in reports. In your study of bias, word connotations, and propaganda, this is a genuine example of bias happening in America. You may want to discuss this statement with your students. “Bias is shown toward those God is forming in the womb not because of the color of their skin or because of their gender or because of their abilities, but because of where they live.”

Meet Eggster!

In conjunction with character education, let your students learn about responsibility by being simulated parents of an egg. Ask the school nurse/secretary to wear a surgical mask and bring in hard boiled pink or blue dyed eggs to which you’ve glued plastic eyes. These are eggsters. Each student will receive one and must take the egg-child everywhere this week—or hire a baby sitter. You might include a birth certificate. Students then name their babies and learn to dress them in triangular diapers. They also need to fashion some sort of cradle for carrying baby home and back.



They respond to this event by beginning a baby book which includes the standard features of name, first visitors, birth height/weight, and baby’s first day. Each page also includes a section called parent’s reflection as well as space for photos, congratulation cards, newspaper clippings, etc.

Because eggsters age faster than humans, day two of the baby book includes comments on the baby at age 2: first words, favorite toy, first steps, preferred foods, Christmas memories, and again the parent’s reflection. Students may dress the two-year-old appropriately.

The next day eggster is six. Again, a change of dress is due, perhaps now with a bicycle. Include school memories, a sample drawing, first report card, favorite books, and the parent reflection.

The next day the eggster is 10, 11, or 12 depending on the age of your students. Take photos of eggster and parent. The baby book includes talents, favorite after-school activities, camp experiences, hobbies, and the parent reflection.

The final day, eggster graduates from high school and the baby book lists the guests present, significant honors, SAT score, college acceptance letters, driver’s license, etc., and the final parent reflection.

The teacher takes all eggsters on the final day “off to college.” (If you start on Monday, the students have the eggs for five days and then you take them with you over the weekend.) The next day explain that as eggsters age rapidly, they died and went to live with Jesus, but left each parent a note.

This is your opportunity as the teacher to share the faith Jesus gives us as well as gratitude for parents as you prepare each note. Students often see their parents differently after eggster week and also see child care in a more realistic light. This is a great precursor to sex education as well.

Math

Guess My Number:

1. I'm more than 1,000,000. I have 7 digits. I'm an even number. I'm a multiple of 1000. The sum of my digits is 2. Who am I? (2,000,000—the number of couples waiting to adopt a child)
2. I'm greater than 3000 and less than 5000. I'm a multiple of 36. The sum of my digits is 9. Who am I? (3,600—the number of abortions per day.)

Ask students to calculate how many that is:

per hour –

per minute –

per second –

per year –

Total since 1973 when abortion was legalized –



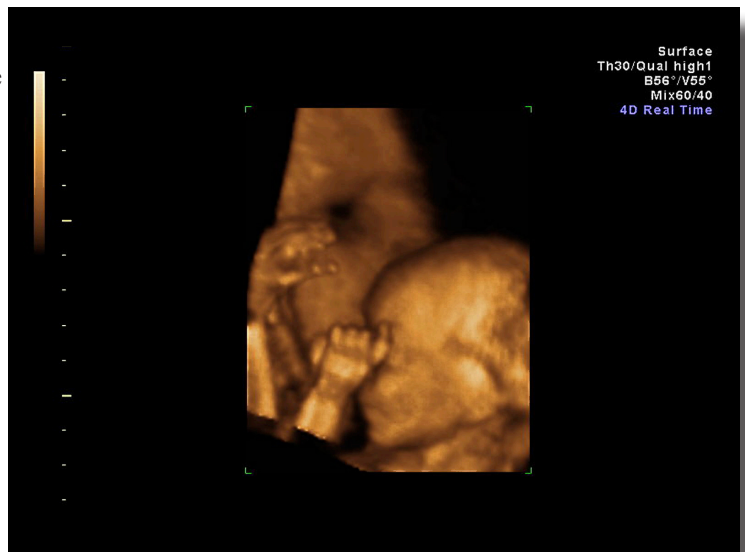
Science

Sound Pictures

One of the many amazing uses of sound waves is for sonograms of unborn children. You may have students whose parents can share the pictures.

Consider showing all or portions of *Eyewitness 2 – The Next Generation*, a DVD that shows ultrasound video imagery. It depicts fascinating ultrasound images of life before birth. Unborn babies make a case for themselves as they suck their thumbs, breathe, jump, swallow, and stick out their tongues. (This DVD also addresses abortion and is an excellent resource for churches and schools.) Available from Lutherans For Life.

You may also want to explore web sites like <http://pregnancy.about.com/cs/ultrasounds/1/bl3dusindex.htm> which show 3-Dimensional ultra sounds.



Discuss the ethical dilemma this technology now presents as parents learn about the possibility of physical deformity. Should they abort, operate with microsurgery, or allow uninterrupted birth.

You might have a few students interview a Christian doctor in the congregation or your pastor for viewpoints on this issue that these professionals undoubtedly have considered.

Fine Arts

Knit Together

Introduce Psalm 139:13-15, and then teach both genders to knit! Boys get into it often with more enthusiasm than girls if you use favorite sports teams' colors.

Ask: Why do you suppose God inspired David to use the idea of knitting to describe how God makes people? Why not baking? puzzle constructing? conjuring?



Language Arts

God's Recipe for YOU!

Let children write recipes for themselves after you share one about yourself like:

- 1 cup curiosity
- 1 cup pleasure in kids
- ½ cup love of learning
- 3 tbsp. child heartedness
- ¼ tsp. giggles
- 1 tsp. organization
- dash creativity

God not only formed us and made us unique, He has a plan for us. Have the students think about how their “ingredients” might shape what they want to do in the future. You might share your “ingredients” and how you were led to be a teacher. You could assign them to write a short “What I want to be when I grow up” essay based on their “ingredients.”



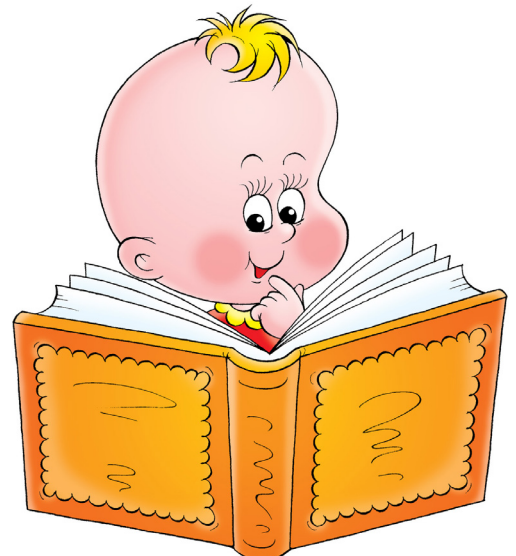
Service Learning

Sibling Prayer Journal

Prepare journals for your pastor to share with those families awaiting the birth of a child and who have a young child already in the home.

Assign each student a specific page such as a prayer for your soon-to-be-born baby sister/brother, illustrated Bible promises, what Baptism does, a decorated border page for photos of sibling(s) and newborn, a family poem, a drawing with the child/children around the new baby, a note from the pastor, and parts of Psalm 139.

These journals can then be given to the sibling when the pastor visits so that this little child also receives attention.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Share the preparation God made for the announcement and conception of Jesus as Immanuel, God with us. You might include facts about Jesus' genealogy based on current religion lessons. This is an excellent opportunity to mention that the embryonic Jesus received recognition before birth from Elizabeth and her fetus, John. Many parents have had no teaching about the Lutheran belief that life begins at conception so your letter is an educational opportunity.

Resources

Banks, Lynne Reid. *Indian in the Cupboard*. New York: Harper Collins, 1980. This book answers the question, "Does size give the larger one the right to manipulate the smaller one?" This is a good question to ask in relation to protection of the tiny unborn.

Choosing Life DVD. Item 100AV from www.lutheransforlife.org. It is important for children to understand the Christian viewpoint on this subject before they face the world's lie that only certain human lives are valuable.

I Knew You print. This is a touching painting of Jesus looking into the face of an infant with the words from Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I set you apart." Item 1606. Available from Lutherans For Life: www.lutheransforlife.org.

Ten Pro-Life Object Lessons. Item 701R from Lutherans For Life. Comes with a small plastic fetal model. For your visual learners there is nothing better than to actually see what a baby looks like before birth.

Web Site:

www.ethicsforschools.org: Click on "news review" and scroll to "abortion" for information a student might use in a research paper.

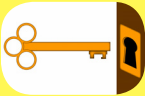
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Religion

Time in the Womb

Read Jeremiah 1:4-5.



Ask: Since God knew Jeremiah even before he came into existence in his mother's womb, is his time in the womb as important as his years as an adolescent?

Answer: Yes. The Jeremiah God knew was the same person while in the womb, when a young child and adolescent, and as he grew into manhood.

Leaping in the Womb

Read Luke 1:39-45.

Ask: What would you likely cause your body to do if you were suddenly given a gift of something you had wanted for a very long time? **Answers will vary** along the lines of jump up and down, shout out loud, yell out "YES!" Some students might even indicate that they really wouldn't get that excited. Note that each student's response to the news reflects their unique personality. Response to what we encounter demonstrates that we are persons who think, feel, and react.

Now ask: Did you see anything in the Bible reading that revealed the personality of the little human inside of Elizabeth's womb?

Answer: John leapt for joy, much like some of the students said they would jump up and down if they received a gift that they really wanted.



Teacher Sprinkle: **Ask:** Is there any reason why God would have loved Jeremiah and John less when each was in the womb? **Answer:** No. We do not draw out God's love, rather in love God creates us, takes care of us, and redeems us so that we can be with Him forever.

Language Arts

Acronyms

Review the **PLAN**, **LIFE**, and **GIFT** acronyms from previous units. Unit Four's acronym tells us that the word for describing human life in the womb is wonderful as it refers to a unique person loved by God. **FETUS** is Latin for "little one."

Refer back to Luke 1:41.

Note that the word for "baby" in the original Greek language (*brephos*) is the same word used to speak of Jesus lying in the manger (Luke 2:16) and of Timothy as a boy (2 Timothy 3:15).

Ask: Did the inspired, original writers of the Bible see unborn humans as little persons within the womb?

Answer: Yes. As Jesus was a little person in the manger and Timothy was a person as a boy, so when each was in the womb they were also persons.



Teacher Sprinkle: **Ask:** What was your favorite age when you were growing up? **Answers will vary** as selected students tell why they liked a certain age.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Frail and beautiful
Emerging but fully human
Tender to the heart of God
United from conception with our Creator
God
Special and unique from conception to
glory

Science

Carrot or Frog???

Bring with you to class a large carrot, a small carrot, and a packet of carrot seeds.

Ask: Which one of these is a frog? Let the class have its laugh.

Answer: Obviously none of these is a frog. None of them is an apple. None of them is celery. Each item represents only one thing, a carrot at different stages of its growth.



Human All the Way!

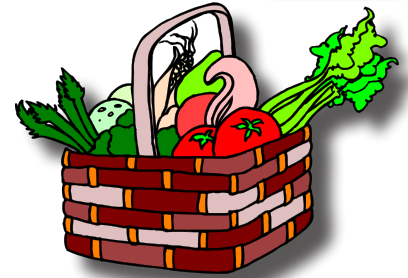
Using some of the fetal development resources listed in the Resource section, this would be a good time to explain human life in the womb.

Planting the Seed

Give each student a paper cup either already filled with potting soil or have students place the soil into each cup. Ask students to write their name on the cup that they will be using to grow a carrot. Give each student one (only) carrot seed. Have them plant the seed about 1/4th inch under the soil and water it. Place cups on a tray near a sunny window and let them begin to grow.



Teacher Sprinkle: **Ask:** What vegetable do you like the best and dislike the most? **Answers will vary.** **Ask:** Do you ever fear that while you are eating your favorite vegetable it will suddenly turn into the one you dislike to eat? **Answer:** Your favorite vegetable will never turn into something else as you eat it! It always remains the same.



Fine Arts

Shaping and Forming

Give each student a sufficient amount of clay to make a plate, cup, or some item of common usage. Using old newspaper to work over, have them form their unique creation.

Allow the students time to finish their projects.

Ask: Was there any time in the making of your clay project that you were not involved in forming what you now have in front of you?

Answer: The final product required their personal crafting which took place at each step of its development.



Social Studies

Human Beings or Not Being so Human?



Remind the students of their previous discussion concerning Nazi philosophy that highly valued some human beings but considered others as even sub-human. Even though each human being was never anything other than a member of the human race (never a frog, or bird, or flower in the field), the Nazis treated some humans cruelly. If a person was born with a defect, or feeble because of sickness or old age, or did not have the right color of skin, they could be tortured, experimented upon, and even killed by the Nazis.

Read Matthew 8:1-3.

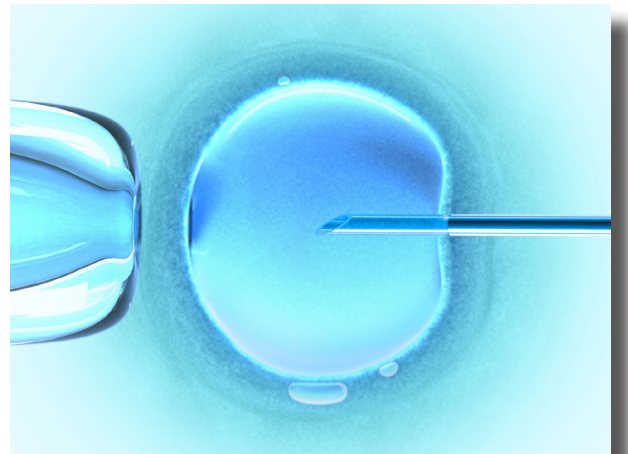
Ask: How did Jesus respond to the man who had leprosy. Did he want to put him out of his misery or help him?

Answer: When Jesus saw a man infected with a disease, He had compassion on the sick man and healed him of his disease. Understanding how Jesus loved those who were hurt by this fallen world, we also understand that each hurting, human person presents us with an opportunity to share love and compassion.



The Humanity of the Tiniest

In vitro fertilization is a process where egg and sperm are united outside the body in a Petri dish. (*In vitro* means “in glass.”) It is a widely used process. After a few days of developing, these tiny human beings are “graded” by how good they look under a microscope. If they don’t “make the grade” they are discarded. They may also be genetically tested for a variety of diseases. If any abnormalities are discovered these tiny humans are treated as if they are disposable.



Ask: If you ever broke an arm or leg, or burned a finger on something hot, did you become less important to your parents or God?

Answer: Our physical problems do not make us less as persons. We are loved by God with all our imperfections. Good parents demonstrate this same kind of unconditional love.



Teacher Sprinkle: In *in vitro* fertilization, “leftover” embryos are often frozen. **Ask:** “Can you parent a frozen embryo?” **Answer:** No, parenting involves more than providing egg and sperm. It is a God-given responsibility and a life-long relationship.

math

“Location, Location, Location”?

Make up a worksheet that uses as headings different rooms within the school that the students would have access to during the lesson period.

Some rooms might include: Classroom, Gym, Lunch Room, Kitchen, Hallway, Locker Room, etc.

Under each heading place identical math problems to be solved. The following might serve: $4 \times 4 = (16)$; $30 - 17 = (13)$; $12 + 115 = (127)$. Take the students to each of the rooms used in the headings. Direct them to complete the math problems in each room. Return to your classroom.

Ask: Did any of the answers to your problems change just because you solved them in different locations?

Answer: Because God is the author of all order in the universe, the mathematical laws remain constant even when observed in different locations. In the same way, each person remains the same whether located in the womb, in the crib, in the classroom, or in a retirement home. Location does not change what God has created.



Teacher Sprinkle: **Ask:** What different “rooms” or stages of human life can you name? **Answer:** Zygote (one cell), blastocyst (5 days), embryo (0-8 weeks), fetus (8 weeks – birth), baby, infant, toddler, child, adolescent, teenager, young adult, adult, middle-aged, elderly.

Service Learning

Meeting the Moms

Investigate to discover one or more women who are pregnant within the parish or the local neighborhood. Arrange for a time for the students to meet with the pregnant mom or moms. Ask the mom/s to share about what they have been experiencing within their wombs.

After the sharing time, ask the mom if there is any yard or household task that the class could help her complete. It would be good to alert the mom that you will be asking this question. Physical tasks might be especially difficult to do as the mom now carries another human life within her womb.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Your children are learning:

- God knows us completely before we are born
- We do not draw out God's love but He gives it to us freely
- Each of us is the same fully human person at each stage in our life
- God loves us despite our moral or physical imperfections
- Sickness and weakness are able to draw compassion from us
- Parenthood is more than conceiving a child
- God loves us as His special creation from conception until called to glory

Resources

Choices: A Pregnancy Guide by William R. Curter (book); Aspire Productions © 2005

Who Lives? Who Dies? Who Cares? DVD video from Coral Ridge Ministries (www.coralridge.org/CRMresources.asp)

Web Sites:

Christian Life Resources offers an online resource with many helpful articles pertaining to fetal development and related issues at: www.christianliferesources.com/index.php?library/list.php&subcategoryId=6

www.lutheransforlife.org

Eyewitness 2 – The Next Generation DVD (Item #134AV) of ultrasound footage. It is great to show some John the Baptist-like “leaping” to the students!

In Vitro Fertilization: Moral or Immoral? brochure (Item #1002T)

Watch Me Grow posters and brochure. See web site or catalog for details.

You Are A Masterpiece DVD (Item #700AV) is appropriate for all ages.

Internet sites for ordering displays of fetal development:

www.hh76.com/pro_life_products.asp?group_id=65&referral_id=7

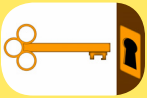
www.misspoppy.com/catalog/xcart/customer/home.php?cat=300

Teaching For Life

For Chaste and Decent Lives.



Prayer for Prep: Heavenly Father, who established marriage and family to bless and nurture Your gift of life, enable me to faithfully teach what You have established while being sensitive to the variety of family situations represented in my classroom. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Key Concept: God gives sexuality, marriage, and family and purifies us in Christ to live chaste and decent lives.



Gospel Focus: We are purified in Christ to live in purity.



Bible Story: Boy Jesus at the Temple. (Luke 2:41-52)



Critical Questions:

1. What is marriage?

World's Answer: Man made. Marriage is defined in a variety of ways to accommodate man's perversions.

WORD'S ANSWER: God ordained. Marriage is defined as a one-flesh union between a man and a woman to accommodate God's plan for family life (Genesis 2:24) and to reflect His relationship with His people in Christ. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

2. What is chastity?

World's Answer: Negative concept. Chastity is an outdated concept that only suppresses our sexuality.

WORD'S ANSWER: Positive choice. Chastity is a positive way God's children choose to live outside and inside of marriage.

3. How is chastity possible?

World's Answer: It isn't! Being sexually pure is an unrealistic expectation.

WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ. Being sexually pure is possible because the Spirit of Christ lives within us. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)



Religion

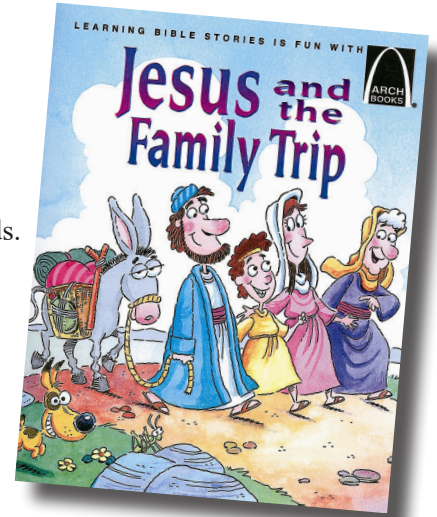
Family Faces

Read the Arch® Book, *Jesus and the Family Trip* (Luke 2:41-52).

Ask the children to show on their faces how they think Mary and Joseph felt when they:



- (a) Walked to Jerusalem with their relatives and friends.
- (b) Discovered Jesus was missing.
- (c) Found Jesus in God's house.



Family Members

Jesus is God's Son, but God also gave Him human parents to love and care for Him. Jesus had brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55-56). Share with the students the names of Jesus' brothers. God gives us our parents and other family members, too. God uses them to care for us.

Give the children a chance to write or draw about one way their families care for them. Allow them to "show and tell" their drawings to classmates if they wish.



Math

Comparing Family Members

Give children practice in using comparison words by asking them questions such as:

"Who is the oldest (youngest) person in your family?"

"Which person in your family has the longest (shortest) hair?"

Reassure them that . . .

"Big, small, short or tall Jesus loves them one and all."



Social Studies

Family Traditions



Ask students to bring an item or photo that represents a family tradition for Show and Tell/Sharing Time. It may be something that is related to a birthday celebration or a holiday such as Easter or Christmas, an artifact related to the family's ethnic or cultural heritage, or an object related to a mealtime or bedtime family ritual.



Family Booklets

Note: This activity could be spread out over several days with the children working on one page each day.

Print the page titles listed below (or others of your choosing) on the top of each paper. Read the titles to the children and ask them to illustrate each page to describe their family.

Optional: Cut pictures of people and other objects from magazines or colored advertisements. Let the children select appropriate pictures to glue their papers.

Cover – **God Gives Me My Family**

Page 1 – **My Family**

Page 2 – **Our Home**

Page 3 – **Our Favorite Colors** (shapes, animals, etc.)

Page 4 – **Our Favorite Foods**

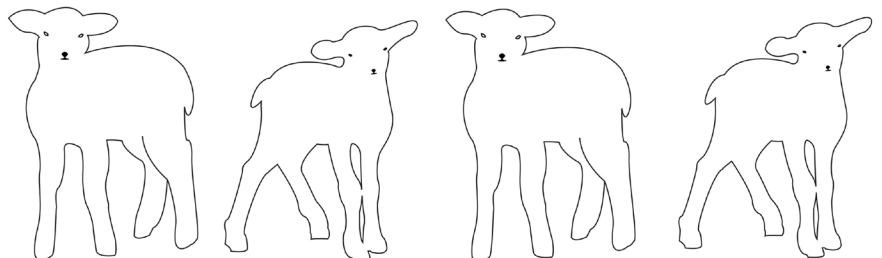
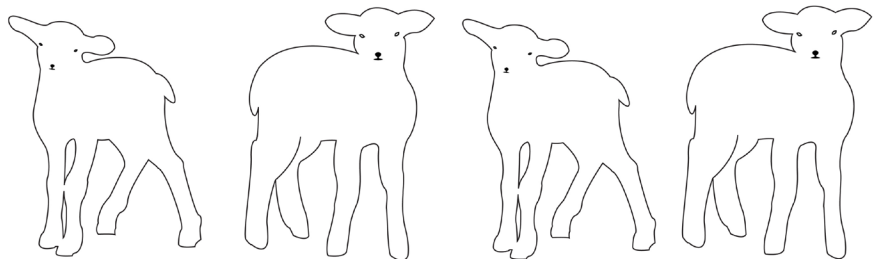
Page 5 – **Favorite Family Activities** (or **Things We Like to Do as a Family**)

Page 6 – **I'm God's Child, Too!**



For Page 6, have the children glue a cutout of a lamb to the page, add a paper heart to the lamb's chest, draw a cross inside the heart, and glue white cotton balls to the remainder of the lamb's body to represent that we are God's children, made clean and pure through faith in Jesus Christ.

(The lamb outlines to the right are on the CD. See Unit 5.)



Language Arts

Creating Family “Heirlooms”!



Provide “found objects,” buttons, beads, markers, felt, heavy-duty construction paper, foam, etc. for the children to make bookmarks and picture frames to give as gifts to other family members.

Help the children print “Jesus loves you” on each creation.

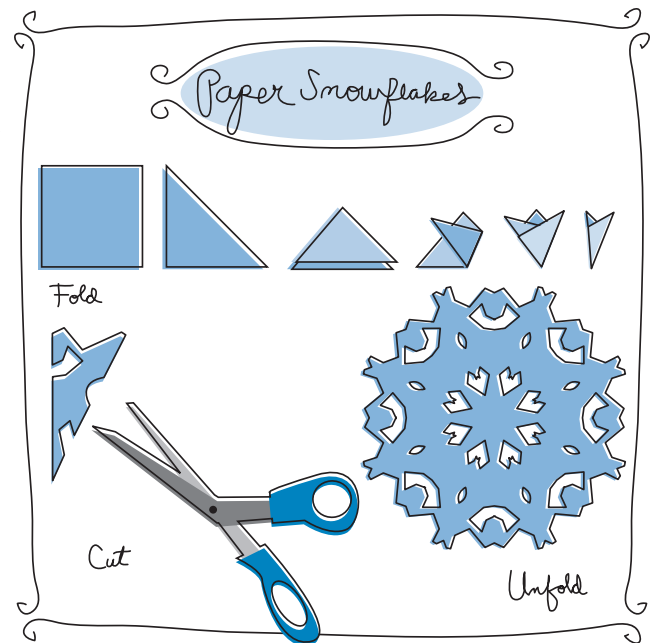
(Younger children could substitute a cross for “Jesus” and a heart for “loves.” Provide stickers or pre-cut shapes if necessary.)

Encourage the children to give the gifts to their family members with a message: “Jesus loves you and so do I.” or “I’m glad God gave me my family.”

Snow Board

Have the children fold and carefully cut out shapes of varying sizes from round coffee filters or sheets of typing paper. Or, help the children press out a design in the coffee filter using a single-hole punch. Hang the snowflakes in your classroom or on a bulletin board with the title “Jesus Makes Us Clean As Snow.”

Optional: Add photos of individuals or groups of children to the center of each snowflake or to the center of the bulletin board. Pay attention to “teachable moments” throughout the day when you can remind the children of the forgiveness Jesus won for us and helps us to share with others, including our family members.



Health

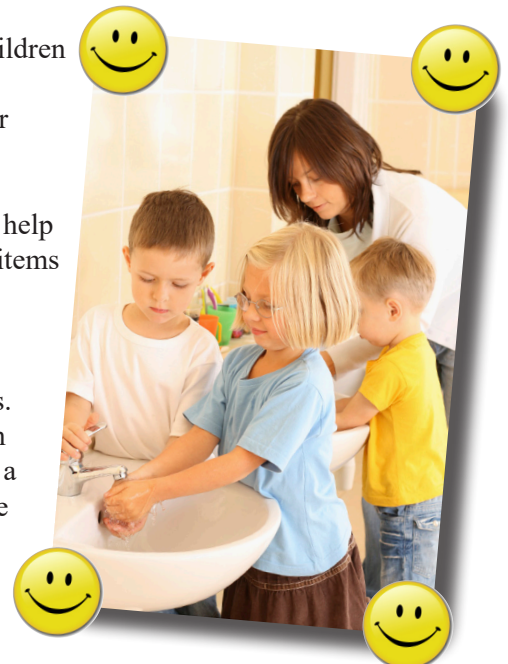
Clean Outside and Inside!

Winter is a good time of year for spreading germs and diseases. Discuss with the children things they can do to stay healthy: getting enough sleep, sneezing into their sleeves, brushing their teeth, washing their hands with soap and water before eating and after using the bathroom, etc.



As a class, mark with smiley stickers items in the classroom or school that help keep us healthy. Give each child several stickers to mark “healthy helper” items at home (with parents’ permission).

Tell the children there is one thing that needs cleaning to stay healthy, but it is something we can’t wash with soap and water. Allow the children to guess what it is. Then explain sin makes us dirty on the inside. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so we could be forgiven. He makes us clean and pure on the inside. Give each child a cross sticker to wear over his/her heart as a reminder of Jesus’ love and His presence with us always.



Service Learning Project

Pen Pals (ongoing)

Snowflakes and a Mini Concert: Make snowflakes to share with your pen pals or the residents of a nursing home or senior center if you don't have pen pals. Put on a mini concert (live or via video or audiotape) for your pen pals or the senior citizens. Sing the first two verses of *Jesus Loves Me* and the chorus from *White as Snow* by Leon Olguin or other songs about being forgiven and made clean and pure through Christ. Include some finger plays if you wish such as those found in the "My Family" section of *Fingers Tell the Story*. Encourage audience participation.



Connecting with the Home



Make available books, magazines, and activities that provide images of marriage and family life that are centered in and motivated by the love of God in Christ Jesus. Include background materials for parents, activities that parents and children can do together and age-appropriate devotions for a family prayer and devotional time. See the Resources section of this packet for help getting started.

Parent Letter Suggestion:

Dear Parents,

This month our class is learning about families. Marriage and family are truly gifts from God. No marriage or family is perfect; sin keeps us from having the perfect marriage or the perfect family life. There is good news, however, in God's Word. I John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When disagreements arise within your home, remember to stop (to remember this verse), drop (to your knees in prayer), and forgive your family members as Christ has first forgiven you.

In one of our Bible stories this month, the children will learn that even though Jesus is God's Son, God gave Him an earthly family to love and care for Him. Christian families play an invaluable role in the nurturing of God's children, but the task of being a Christian parent is certainly not an easy one. Young children aren't immune to the images of marriage and family life that are portrayed on television, in movies and videos, and on their computer screens. As a co-teacher with you, I'd like to share some Christian resources with your family to help you grow in faith in Jesus Christ together. (Explain any activities you are sending home.)

Resources

Annotated Bibliography

Barry, A.L. *Unchanging Truth in Changing Times*: The complete collection of the *What About* pamphlets. St. Louis: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 2001. This book compiles all the “What About” pamphlets written by Rev. Dr. A.L. Barry who was President of the LCMS at the time of his death. The *Christian Families*, *Homosexuality*, and *Living Together Without Marriage* sections may be especially useful in providing background information and for sharing with parents. Note: All of the *What About* pamphlets are available for download at www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=524 and may be duplicated and distributed. *Christian Families* (Item 907T) and *Living Together Without Marriage* (614T) brochures are also available from Lutherans For Life.

Fletcher, Sarah. *Jesus and the Family Trip*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998. This book retells the story of Jesus’ trip to the temple at age 12 (Luke 2:41-52).

Friedrich, Elizabeth. *Family Time Fun: Great stuff to do with your kids*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994. This book provides a wealth of simple, creative ideas for parents and children to do together. For each topic there is a Scripture reference, short meditation or faith application, and directions/recipes for one or two related activities. This book could be loaned out to the families in your classroom.

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, pantomimes, and litanies for the very young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. The “My Family” and “God’s House” sections of this book (pp. 41-46) might be especially useful with this unit. Available at www.cph.org.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Available for purchase at www.cph.org. This resource contains music, texts, guitar chords, and in some cases, suggestions for actions for a variety of Christian songs organized by topic. *God’s a Father Kind and True* by Arnold Mueller and Theodore Stelzer (p. 30) and *Love, Love, Love* by Lois and Herbert Brokering (pp. 30-31) would be especially appropriate for this unit.

Web Sites:

www.focusonthefamily.com – This site provides many supports for the Christian family, including resources for spouses and parents. There are also sections for college students, teens, and children and content reviews of current children’s movies.

www.lutheransforlife.org – This site contains many articles on pro-life issues. You can subscribe to Lutherans for Life’s free quarterly journal, *LifeDate*, via this web site (or view a PDF version right on-line.) *LifeDate* contains a section on Family Life which teachers and parents might find especially useful.

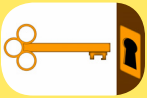
www.tyfi.org – This is the web site for The Youth and Family Institute. Here you can find directions for making a FaithChest® which can be given to families at the Baptism of a child. Congregations (or schools and preschools) could provide faith-building resource materials for the family to use in their devotional time around the family altar/FaithChest®.

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Key Concept: God gives sexuality, marriage, and family and purifies us in Christ to live chaste and decent lives.



Gospel Focus: We are purified in Christ to live in purity.



Bible Story: Boy Jesus at the Temple. (Luke 2:41-52)



Critical Questions:

1. What is marriage?

World's Answer: Man made. Marriage is defined in a variety of ways to accommodate man's perversions.

WORD'S ANSWER: God ordained. Marriage is defined as a one-flesh union between a man and a woman to accommodate God's plan for family life (Genesis 2:24) and to reflect His relationship with His people in Christ. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

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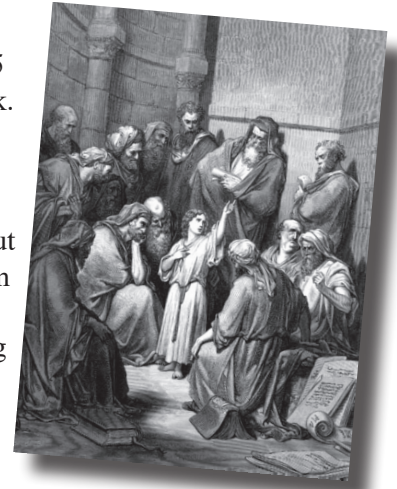


Religion

Family Comparisons

Tell or read the story of the Boy Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52). This story is in Unit 5 in the first grade *Voyages*® curriculum and is included in Week 16 of the second grade book. Discuss with children ways in which Jesus' family is like theirs. How is it different?

A sample comparison chart is included. Emphasize that God gives us families to provide nurture and care. Jesus had parents, cousins, and siblings. His parents were concerned about him and even a bit angry with him. (Children will identify with that.) He depended on them and obeyed them. His parents saw to it that he was familiar with God's House and God's rules (religious traditions). No family is perfect, but following God's guidelines and having Him as part of our families help make our families happy and help provide comfort and care when problems arise.

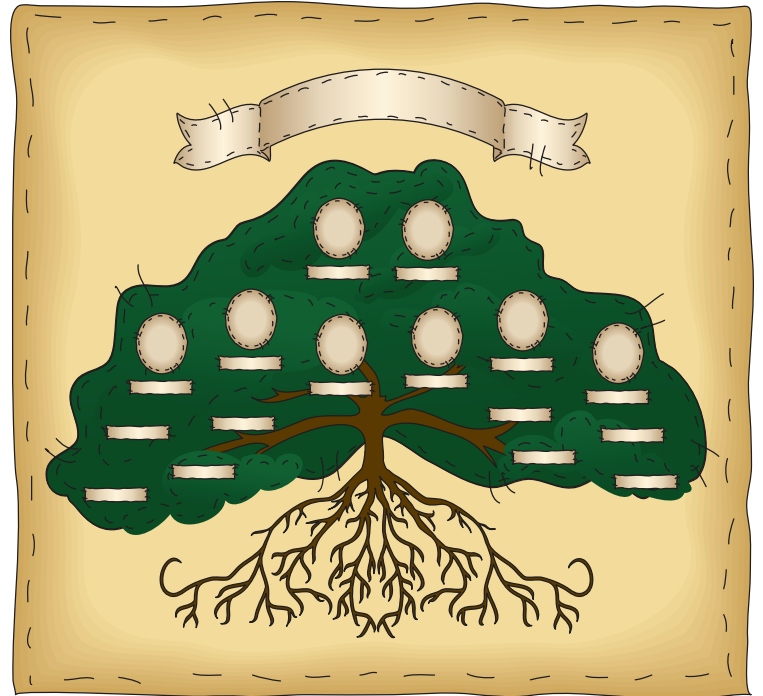


More Bible Families

Find other families mentioned in the Bible. List names of child(ren), mother, father, and other family members. (See CD Unit 5 *Jesus' Family and Mine*.)

Direct the children to work together in groups and give each group a house cutout on which is printed a Scripture reference for a Bible family and lines on which they can write the information requested. Have each group then share its information with the class. In some cases additional siblings may be mentioned in other sections of Scripture. Note that sometimes the names of family members are not specifically mentioned. (See CD Unit 5 *Bible Families*.)

Another application of this activity would be to give every child a name tag bearing the name of one of the family members mentioned. Children then have to find their families and form a group. Perhaps the group could eat lunch together or join together for some other task.



Praying for Families

Let children list family members. Make cards with names on them and distribute. Encourage children to pray for those people throughout the day or week. Specific needs could also be listed on the cards.

Make resources available such as *My Devotions*, or the various editions of *Little Visits with God*, published by Concordia Publishing House. You could send home a "Family Devotions" bag with children throughout the year or have resources available in the classroom, or print copies of appropriate devotions to send home with every child. Model in the classroom how such a family devotion could be done. Perhaps you could model the devotion during a Back to School night when many parents are present.



Teacher Sprinkle: If you were "lost" like Jesus was, where should your parents look for you? Why? What would you be doing?



Math

Families Count



Count the number of family members represented in the class.



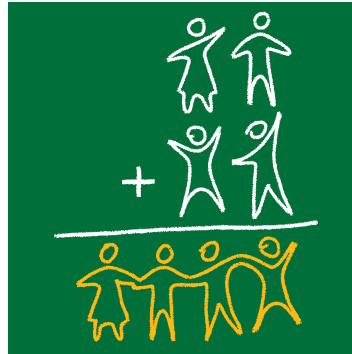
Make paper doll chains and hang them around the room. You could use these paper doll chains as part of a bar graph on a bulletin board.

Family Addition

Add up the ages of members in each family. List family members followed by their age. Let children “guess” if they don’t know. Practice addition.

Family Bingo

Play “Family Bingo” (See CD Unit 5 *Family Bingo*.) Students find other students in the class that fit in each category, who sign their names in the appropriate boxes. Allow as much time as you desire.



Teacher Sprinkle: How old is the oldest person in your family (grandparents, aunts, or uncles?)? How much older is that person than you? How old was that person when President Kennedy was shot in 1963? When the Challenger exploded in 1986? When the United States was 200 years old? When other historical events occurred?

Science

Family Characteristics

Children in families usually have genetically similar characteristics. Make a chart to demonstrate that fact. (See CD Unit 5.) Even adopted children often share habits and interests of their adoptive parents. Note that children can write in their own interest or characteristic to match up. It might be interesting for them to fill out a sheet for their siblings, too, and see how similar or dissimilar they are.

Family Food

Keep a family food diary. Make a list of healthy meals and help with the shopping and preparation. Keeping track of healthy meals and snacks demonstrates how families take care of each other.



Family Nurture

Have each family member plant a bean seed. Compare its growth and discuss what is needed to nurture it. How do family members nurture each other?



Language Arts

Family Anagrams

Make acronyms of family names. Direct children to write names of family members (as many as feasible) vertically. Then write a word that describes or relates to that person. For example:

R	Red hair
U	Understanding
T	Tall
H	Happy

Family Weddings

Interview parents and/or grandparents about their wedding day. Children can record these interviews on audio or video tape if they wish, or just fill out the information. Give each child a list of suggested questions. (See CD Unit 5.) They could also include wedding pictures.

Act out a wedding ceremony. Assign every child a part in the wedding (include wedding party, musicians, congregation, pastor, etc.) One teacher has a wedding each year for the letters q and u since they always form a pair! Talk about how important it is to include God in the ceremony and in the marriage and about the vows (promises) you are making to each other and to Him.



Fine Arts

Family Finger Play

Here is Mother, kind and dear. (Hold up pointer finger.)

Here is Father, standing near. (Add middle finger next to pointer finger. Use deep voice.)

Here is Brother, tall and straight. (Add ring finger.)

Here is Sister, swinging on the gate. (Add pinkie; make it move back and forth.)

Here is Baby, sweet and small. (Hold up thumb. Make it touch each other finger, like it is kissing. Make kissing sounds.)

Here's the WHOLE family. God loves them all! (Hold up whole hand, they fold hands in prayer. This would be an appropriate time to say a prayer for families.)

Family Collage

Make a collage of pictures of families or of students' own families. Make individual collages on paper, on shapes of houses or paper plates, or make a class collage on a bulletin board. Some children may be able to cut faces out of magazines and glue them to popsicle sticks to make stick puppets of their families.



Family Poems

Write Haiku poems about family members. Haiku poems follow the basic pattern: 1-3-5-1. The first line states the topic. The second line has 3 descriptive words about the topic. The third line is a phrase of 5 words or adds more adjectives. The last line usually repeats the first line or renames it. For example:

Dad
Strong, funny, wise
He drives the car fast!
Dad

Be lenient regarding the form. Write one together and then encourage students to write their own. Let them draw pictures to illustrate their poems. These would make nice books for Mother's or Father's Day.

Social Studies

Family Tasks

Give children a paper plate divided into sections. On each section write a specific task: cooking, doing dishes, setting the table, leading devotions, etc. In the center draw a cross as a reminder that families and the opportunity to care for each other are gifts from God. On each section, write names and/or draw pictures of the person(s) in the family who regularly does that task.



Future Families

Direct the children to draw pictures of their future families. Allow time to pray for their future mates and children and that God would lead them to a Christian husband or wife.

Discuss differences in family types as they present themselves in your class. God loves all people in all families, but His plan for the most happiness is that one man and one woman get married and stay married all of their lives so they can raise their children together. When that doesn't happen, He is sad, but He continues to love and forgive and bless. Direct the children to think about the families they will have some day. How can their future families follow God's plan?



Weddings Around the World

Let children work individually or in groups to compare wedding clothing, engagement practices, and ceremonial customs in different cultures.



Physical Activity

Family Tag

Students must form a family chain (start with a "family" of two—mom and dad) and hold hands while they play a basic tag game.

When another "family" is tagged, they all join hands together until the whole class becomes one "family."

Caution is needed so they don't "crack the whip" when they are holding hands together.

Physical labor and exercise are involved when children help with chores at home.

Let them keep track of how many minutes they work at their chores and then record them on a class chart.

Total up the length of time at the end of the week.



Service Learning

Family Help

Make and give certificates for ways to help at home. (See CD Unit 5.) Children give the certificates to their parents or family members to be redeemed by them as desired. Let them decide what service they are willing to offer and fill in the blank line. Stress the fact that these certificates are a promise and must be cheerfully done when requested.

Family Time

Spend one half-hour a day with a family member. Encourage students to pick one family member a day and just spend time together with that person—talking, listening, reading, helping.



Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

The Bible is clear that God's plan for marriage and families is that a man and a woman commit themselves to an exclusive marriage relationship and raise their children together to provide for their physical and spiritual needs. Sadly, in this sinful world, people do not always follow God's plan. Nevertheless, we want children to respect and value God's will and see it as a goal in their own lives.

Regardless of the composition of your family, be assured that God's plan also includes forgiveness and His promise of blessings for His people. As the children learn about Jesus when He was a child, they will see how His parents loved and cared for Him, just as you love and care for your children. It is our prayer that Jesus is also a part of your family and that the dedication and commitment you provide will be a reflection of His faithful love and care for us all. Children need the security of a family they can depend upon. It models their understanding of God's faithfulness. As you provide for your children's physical needs, please keep in mind the importance of their spiritual growth as you bring them to church each week, share family devotion time, pray for each other, and treat each other with the respect and commitment God has set for us as a guide.

In His service,

Resources

Books and Curriculum:

Beuschlein, Marti. *Little Boy, Jesus*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998. This book helps children understand what life might have been like for Jesus when he was a little child.

Fletcher, Sara. *Jesus and the Family Trip*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998. The story of Jesus and His trip to the temple with His family.

Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. (Songs about family)

Timothy Grows in God's Word. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House. (Included in the *Voyages*® Preschool Teacher's Kit and available separately.) Shows how Timothy learned about God from his family and grew up to be a pastor who told many people about Jesus.

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Web Sites:

www.cph.org. Resources for family devotions and children's books.

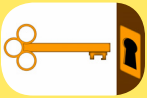
www.lutheransforlife.org/_Issue_Info/Family_Living/family_living.htm

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Gospel Focus: We are purified in Christ to live in purity.



Bible Story: Boy Jesus at the Temple. (Luke 2:41-52)



Critical Questions:

1. What is marriage?

World's Answer: Man made. Marriage is defined in a variety of ways to accommodate man's perversions.

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WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ. Being sexually pure is possible because the Spirit of Christ lives within us. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)



Religion

Read the story of Boy Jesus at the Temple from Luke 2:41-52

Acting Out

Assign students to the various parts—Jesus, Mary, Joseph, temple teachers, relatives, and acquaintances. Read the story again and have it acted out as you read stopping as needed to provide “stage direction,” etc. Repetition is good so don’t be afraid to repeat the story, if needed, to give all students a chance to participate.



Joseph and Fathers

Look up the answers to the following questions in the Bible. (Perhaps you can have the boys who played Joseph be the ones who do this or those who did not get a chance to “act”!)

1. Joseph was not Jesus’ biological father, that is, the father who gave Him life. Who was Jesus’ father? (Luke 1:35)
2. What did God ask Joseph to do? (Matthew 1:20-21)

Explain that Joseph was Jesus’ adoptive father. God entrusted the raising and care of Jesus to Joseph. Joseph willingly assumed this responsibility. (See Matthew 1:24.) You may discuss adoption here, pointing out how sometimes God uses adoption to care for and raise children. There may be adoptive children in your class or “step children” or children without fathers in their lives. It’s a challenge to be sensitive to all situations, but guide the discussion to the simple fact that God loves us and cares for us through other people, like fathers.

Mary and Mothers

Look up the answers to the following questions in the Bible. (Here maybe the “Marys” can help out!)

1. What was Mary’s reaction when she found out she was pregnant with Jesus? (Luke 1:38)

This is what God asks mothers to do, to serve Him by loving and caring for the children He gives to them.

2. What does Mary do with all the things that happen to her Son, Jesus? (Luke 2:51b)

Discuss what it means to “treasure” something in our hearts. Can the students think of things they have done that their moms “treasure”?

Jesus and Children

Even though Jesus was the Son of God, how does He honor His parents? (Luke 2:51a)

Discuss the obvious!



Language Arts

Review Luke 2:41-52 especially verses 45-46 and 49-50.

A Mother's Reflections

Write a journal entry from Mary's point of view as to how she felt when Jesus was nowhere to be found.

How did she feel as His mother when she was not sure where her son was?

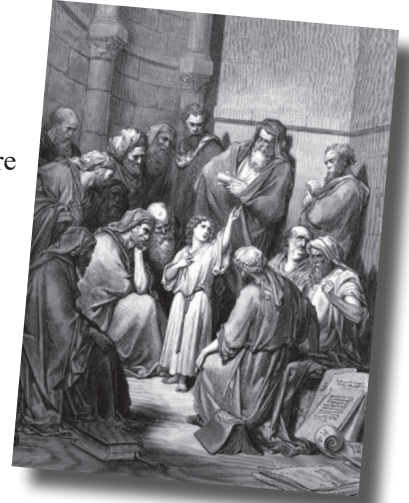
A Father's Reflections

Write a letter to Jesus from his earthly father expressing the feelings he had when Jesus was unable to be found. Be sure to include details from the Bible in this letter. Do you think Joseph was as upset as Mary? Do you think he was angry with Jesus?

Family Reflections

Families come in all sorts and sizes. Many of those different family types may be represented in your classroom. Love does not change in each of those types of families. God uses all sorts of families to care for us.

Have your students write about their families. Some suggested guidelines:



What is a typical day like at your house?

Write about your siblings.

Draw a picture of your pet and tell about the funniest thing its done.

Use a variety of adjectives to describe your family and what you love about them.



Teacher Sprinkle: How do you think your family would feel if you were missing? Write a journal entry about it.

Math

Time Lost!

How long was it before Mary and Joseph realized Jesus was missing?
(Luke 2:44)

How long would it have taken to get back to Jerusalem?

If the total number of days Jesus was missing was 3 (Luke 2:46), how many days did Mary and Joseph actually spend searching in Jerusalem?

If verse 46 means they searched 3 days after they got back to Jerusalem, how many days total was Jesus missing? (Answer = 5. 1 day traveling away from Jerusalem, 1 day traveling back, and 3 days searching.)

How many hours is 5 days? Minutes? Seconds?

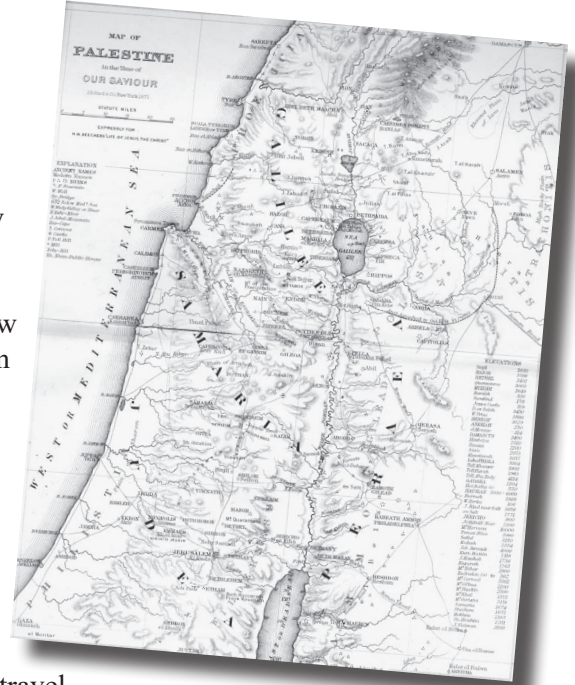
Time Traveled

If Jesus and His family traveled to Jerusalem every year, how many previous trips had they made?

If it is roughly 80 miles from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and the caravan could travel approximately 10 miles per day, how many days would it take to reach Nazareth?

How long would it take your family if you drove from Nazareth to Jerusalem in your car going 60 miles per hour?

How many total miles had the family traveled in all their trips to Jerusalem?



Science

God gives animals families too! Have fun with the students learning the names of animal dads, moms, and babies.

ANIMAL	DAD	MOM	BABY
Deer	Buck	Doe	Fawn
Elephant	Bull	Cow	Calf
Fox	Dog	Vixen	Pup
Goat	Billy	Nanny	Kid
Horse	Stallion	Mare	Foal
Chicken	Rooster	Hen	Chick
Swan	Cob	Pen	Cygnets



Social Studies

Genealogies and Jesus

Marriage and family are the building blocks of society. They work because they were God's idea!

Look at the genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:23-38. Have fun with the students pronouncing/ mispronouncing the names! Are there any they recognize? With whom did Jesus' "family tree" begin? (vs 38)

Marriage and family were God's idea from the very beginning. Read about the institution of marriage in Genesis 2:24. Emphasize some simple facts about marriage. God gave us marriage:

- To have children.
- To raise children.
- To teach children about the world in which they live.
- Most importantly, to teach children about their God and His love in Jesus.

Use the genealogy chart on the CD and have students write in portions of Jesus' genealogy. Have the students take a chart home and see how far back they can trace their family.



Fine Arts

Using construction paper, make a mosaic of Jesus in the temple or any other scene from this Bible story.

Have each child bring in a photo of their family. Using these photos, create a montage of family photos and label it "Our Families" displaying it as a bulletin board for the school to see. This could also include the essays the class wrote for the Language Arts lesson.



Service Learning

Family Day

Suggest your school have a “family day.” Invite the families to join one another for a day or portion of a day of games, fellowship, and food. Allow your students to make invitations for the day and to pass them out to other families in the school.

Adopt a Family

Check with your pastor or human care team to see if there is a family in the congregation with a particular need. “Adopt” this family as a class. Provide for specific needs if possible. Make and send encouraging cards that express God’s love and care.



Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

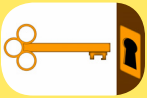
We as members of the family of God are given a task to tell others about Him. The best place to start is in our own homes. We need to continually instill in our children the value of our families. Have dinner together every night. Ask one another about the day. Be sure to allow the children to tell you about how they are as well as your sharing about your day. This will show your children that you value them. We are so blessed to have our children in our lives and we need to let them know that we love and value them and their thoughts and feelings daily as they continue to grow in faith.

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Bible Story: Wedding at Cana. (John 2:1-11)



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Religion

Preparing

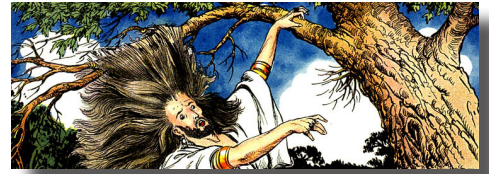
This unit's Bible story, John 2:1-11, may be used to bridge from weddings to marriage. (See the commentary on the CD.)

As there are preparations for weddings and celebrating weddings, so there are preparations for marriage. For your students, part of that preparation is not "safe sex" but "saved sex."



No "Safe" Sin

2 Samuel 13-18 tells the story of David's sons who reflect David's lack of sexual and moral self control. (*Voyages*® Unit 5 Grade 5) When David had sex apart from marriage with Bathsheba, future events were set in motion that he did not anticipate. There is no such thing as "safe sex" outside of marriage. Is there safe theft? Safe murder? Safe perjury?



Push a rock gently into one side of a ball of clay. Explain, "This is a lie that you got away with." Push the rock in further. "This is the next lie you got away with." Repeat this until the rock is pushed out of the clay, leaving a tunnel. "This is the hole in the soul of a liar." Drop several smaller rocks through the hole. "Now lies come easily. Sometimes even when you wish you could stop lying, you can't. You need soul repair and only Jesus can do that."

So did this person really safely lie? After discussion, comment that God tells us over and over there is no such thing as "safe sin." Sex outside of marriage is not "safe" either for the body or the soul.

Following the Crowd or Jesus?

"When Jesus saw a crowd around him, He ordered the disciples to cross to the other side." (Matthew 8:18 *Voyages*® Unit 5 Grade 6) In this lesson, students learn that Jesus' disciples must give up being one of the crowd and follow Him and His will, two very difficult values for 6th graders!

Brainstorm together a list of what being "part of the crowd" entails. Consider "in" clothing that is often immodest or overly expensive. Include ungodly talk that the "in" crowd expects like lewd jokes and gossip. Clique exclusion should be listed.

Next ask, "What one command did Jesus give all disciples?" (John 13:34) Have them memorize this verse! Such "real love" is described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Describe how each "love is" phrase relates to loving each other. How do they relate to not "following the crowd"? Finally, and most importantly, discuss how Jesus shows such love to us.



Language Arts

Literary Element: Theme

In your introduction of theme, examine the first three commandments as well as the first set of petitions of the Lord's Prayer. The theme is clearly holiness, God setting apart His people as His own exclusively (naming Himself Father does this as well); God expecting to be treated with the highest esteem by a name distinct from all others; and God's calling for the primacy of His will and His kingdom remembered especially one day each week.

How effective is God's theme of putting God first before even my basic needs? What actions would this perspective affect in spending money, in our desire to worship, in our choice of media, and especially in light of this unit, in our gender relationships? Many would evaluate God's theme as restrictive, definitely not practical since it puts "me" out of the center of "my" life. After a bit more thematic discussion, conclude by asking, "How did Jesus evaluate God's theme in His discussions on money, worship, choice of media, and gender relationships? What was His ultimate expression of putting God's will before His own?"

Thank You Letters

Divide the class into groups of girls and groups of boys. Give each group a clipboard with a paper titled: Good things about being my gender. Explain, "Your group will have six minutes to list as many good things as you can. Go!"

After six minutes, exchange the clipboard with same gender groups to add more if they can in four minutes. Return the lists to the original groups and have each student then select his/her top 10 good things. Assign writing thank you letters to God for making me a boy/girl.



Who Am I?

Who I am through baptism significantly affects my choices, including sexual purity, because of the powerful Spirit inside me (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Have students look up the passages and complete the sentence, "I am . . ." (You could also add this to any lesson on self identity, self esteem, godly values, or character analysis.)

I am salt and light for others. (Matt 5:13-14)

I am a child of God. (John 1:12)

I am Jesus' friend. (John 15:15)

I am a slave of righteousness. (Romans 6:18)

I am a temple, a dwelling place, for the Holy Spirit.
(1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19)

I am part of Christ's body—the Church. (1 Corinthians 12:27)

I am God's handiwork created for work in His kingdom. (Ephesians 2:10)

I am a member of a chosen race, a royal priesthood. (1 Peter 2: 9-10)

I am only a visitor to this planet in which I temporarily live. (1 Peter 2:11)

I am an enemy of the devil. (1 Peter 5:8)



Math

As you study unit ratios for comparisons, use these statistics:

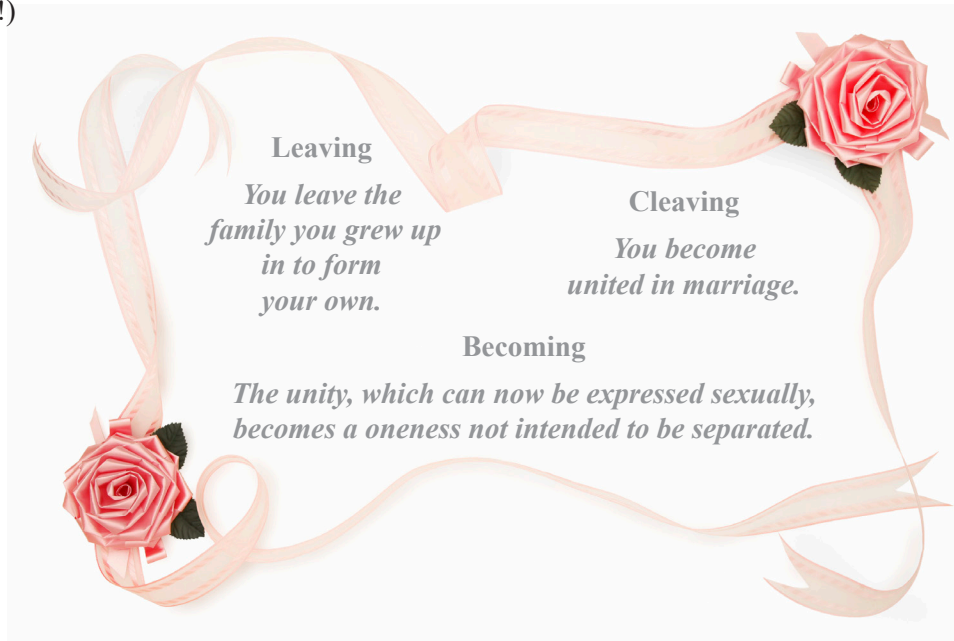
57 percent of marriages of people who have lived together before marriage end in divorce compared to 30 percent of people who did not cohabit before marriage divorcing.

(National Survey of Families and Households quoted at www.leaderu.com/critical/cohabitation-socio.html)

Social Studies

Marriage

Marriage is a product of Paradise! Note that God instituted marriage before sin came into the world (Genesis 2:24). The idea of marriage and family come from God and from the foundation of a society. Help your students see and remember the progression God outlines in these verses by writing on the board “**Leaving – Cleaving – Becoming.**” (King James language, but easy to remember!)



God sees marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman and the context for sexual activity and the raising of children.

Discuss God’s definition in contrast to societal practices: sex before marriage, living together before marriage, homosexual sex and “marriage,” adoption of children by homosexuals, etc.

Conclude with the high honor God gives to marriage as a reflection of His relationship with His people in Christ. (Ephesians 5:22-23)



Teacher Sprinkle: Why do you think Jesus used “bride and groom” to describe His relationship with His people?

Medieval Chivalry

In your medieval unit, have students research the honor codes held by knights. They will find that chastity is mentioned as part of “courtly love.” A knight was to honor a particular lady with deeds of bravery and sonnets, but always keep his gentle distance.

Chastity is a positive choice that honors God and our future spouse by saving sexual activity until marriage. You might have the class discuss how their elevation of chastity and gentleness comes to us today. For example, honoring the “gentler sex” is still done when men take off hats indoors, open doors for women, or expect boys not to roughhouse with girls.

You may review the story of Todd Beamer who did what he could aboard United Flight 93 on 9/11 or of the New York City firemen who risked their lives to save others. In our day as in medieval times, men continue to see themselves as protectors and providers. Similarly, believing that the function of women was to nurture and network for the family still exists. Titus 2 reflects this in some respects as does Proverbs 31.



Science

Staying Pure

A discussion on chastity could be worked into discussions or experiments about water purity. For example, compare pond water to tap water under a microscope, discuss what goes into producing the popular “bottled waters,” or discuss what factors contribute to pollution in streams and lakes.

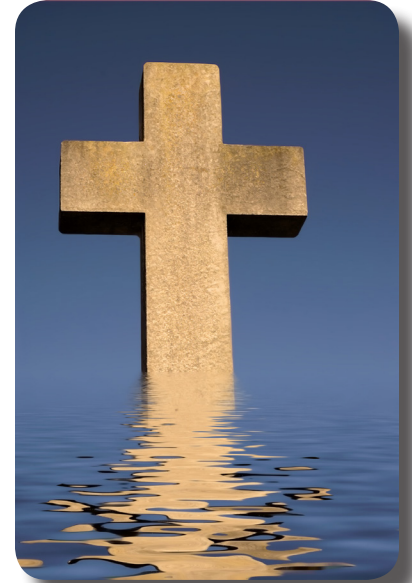
Two simple points to consider:

To go from polluted to pure, pollutants and impurities need to be removed or filtered out.

To keep purity, pollutants and impurities need to be kept out.

We have been purified through Jesus Christ. Our bodies are worthy to be His temple. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) In Christ, God calls us to purity of living. One of the ways to strive for this is avoiding that which “pollutes.” (1 Corinthians 6:12-18)

There are many “pollutants” you could discuss that need to be avoided—certain movies, internet sites, magazines, stories, etc. But an important—especially at this age—and positive choice is choosing your friends.

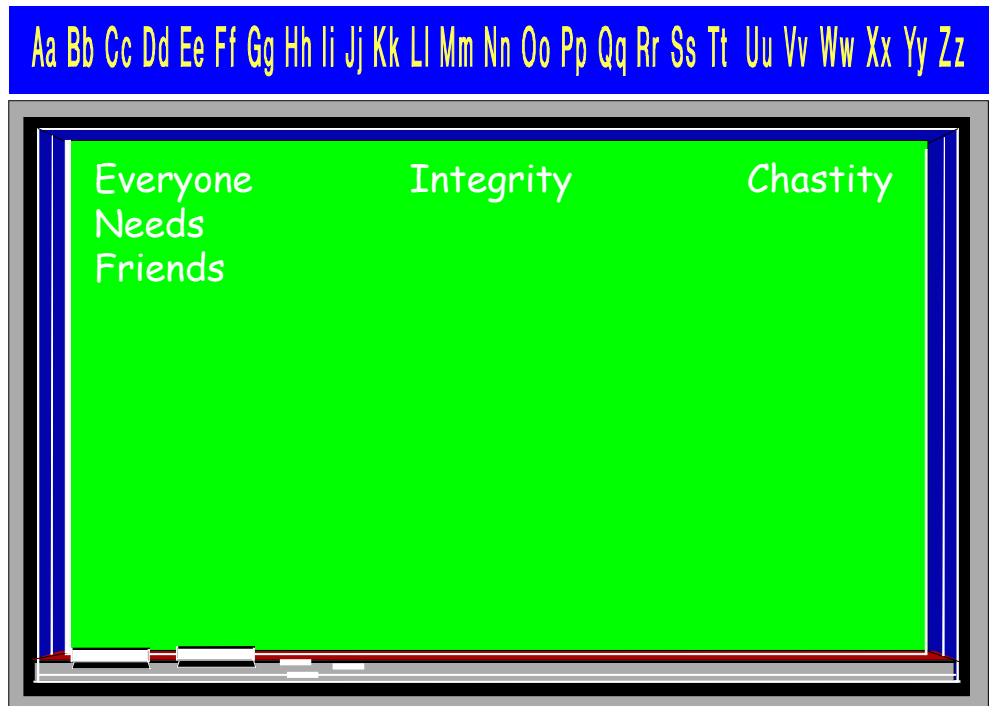


A “Friendly” Exercise

On the right side of the board write “Chastity.” On the left side write, “Everyone Needs Friends.” In the middle write “Integrity.” Explain that chastity is living a sexually pure life and waiting for marriage for sexual activity. Integrity means keeping what you do in line with what you believe.

Ask, “What makes integrity hard?” Lead the discussion to point out the importance of having friends with like values.

(If you would like to do more in-depth teaching about adolescent social growth and friendship groups, see this section on the CD.)



Service Learning



Make a simple craft item to give to your pastor as gifts from the church to members celebrating 25th or 50th wedding anniversaries.

The craft might be something like Proverbs 31:10-12 written in calligraphy or words cut from anniversary cards and shellacked onto plaques.

Year-long Bulletin Board

Change the title to read: **God for Holy Life**. Cover the board background with a world map. From a mission board or Lutheran World Relief (see Resources) pamphlets, cut out pictures of people. Back these pictures as well as some from your church directory with church building cut-outs. Staple them to the world map in the countries they come from.

Explain: The word “holy” means set apart. God set apart a people for Himself. In Christ, we are that holy, set apart nation. (1 Peter 2:9) We act in godly ways because (1) we are God’s family and we bear His name, (2) by our behavior, we let others know someone unique empowers us.

Ask: “How can other kids know you are one of God’s set-apart people?” You might brainstorm under the categories: looks, words, actions. Include modesty under looks, honesty under words (including over the phone), and chaste behavior under actions. Ask each student to select a person on the bulletin board and write how that person might be living a holy life now.

Resources

Books

Patterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. New York: Harper Collins, 1977. Recounts the story of friendship choices between a preadolescent boy and girl which help the main character understand the gifts of friendship beyond gender attraction.

Zolotow, Charlotte. *The Facts and Fictions of Minna Pratt*. New York: Harper Trophy, 1994. Tells a girl’s musings as she enters gender attraction through her music, again emphasizing social skills and friendship.

Web Sites

www.cph.org – Concordia Publishing House has *Lasting Friendship Skills* by C. and K. Bickel, a curriculum that helps build common friendships and social skills.

www.exodus-international.org – This web site discusses various issues for homosexual people including how to overcome it through the power of the Holy Spirit and the church. There are specific materials for adolescents.

www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=4861 – Click on the continent first, then on the specific country for pictures and information about what LCMS is doing there in mission work. Use the pictures for the bulletin board idea.

www.lutheransforlife.org – Look in the catalog at *Purity, Mystery, and Modesty* (Item 903T), a brochure by Linda Bartlett. This inexpensive pamphlet will give you a good selection of passages to help students know what the Bible says God expects of His people regarding purity. There are other materials more for preteens and teens listed in the section under “chastity” that might be useful in your parent letter.

www.lutheranworldrelief.org – Like the site above, students can find pictures and information on specific missions.

www.youngwomenshealth.org – “Safety on the internet: a guide for Teens” and “Friendship” are two topics covered here that have valuable information for your parent letter like reminding parents to insist that if their child is on myspace.com or facebook.com, etc. that the account should be marked “private” so that pedophiles don’t have the ability to get to it easily.

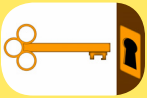
www.win.net/insightsys/question.htm – Copy just the section of questions on extrovert/introvert to use with students. Modify as needed. For my class, I mixed up the questions.

Teaching For Life

For Chaste and Decent Lives.



Prayer for Prep: Heavenly Father, who established marriage and family to bless and nurture Your gift of life, enable me to faithfully teach what You have established while being sensitive to the variety of family situations represented in my classroom. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Key Concept: God gives sexuality, marriage, and family and purifies us in Christ to live chaste and decent lives.



Gospel Focus: We are purified in Christ to live in purity.



Bible Story: Wedding at Cana. (John 2:1-11)



Critical Questions:

1. What is marriage?

World's Answer: Man made. Marriage is defined in a variety of ways to accommodate man's perversions.

WORD'S ANSWER: God ordained. Marriage is defined as a one-flesh union between a man and a woman to accommodate God's plan for family life (Genesis 2:24) and to reflect His relationship with His people in Christ. (Ephesians 5:22-33)



2. What is chastity?

World's Answer: Negative concept. Chastity is an outdated concept that only suppresses our sexuality.

WORD'S ANSWER: Positive choice. Chastity is a positive way God's children choose to live outside and inside of marriage.

3. How is chastity possible?

World's Answer: It isn't! Being sexually pure is an unrealistic expectation.

WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ. Being sexually pure is possible because the Spirit of Christ lives within us. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Religion

Read Luke 2:41-52.

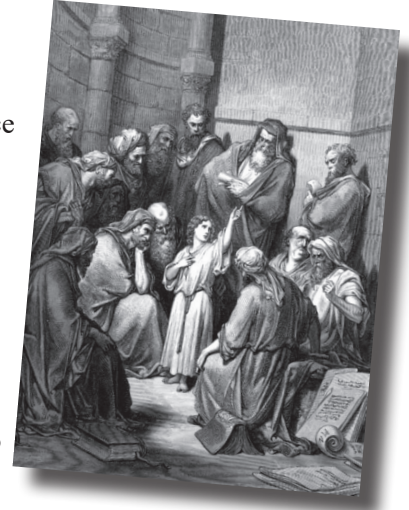
Jesus was part of a family in which His parents showed concern for His safety and demonstrated the importance of religious life within families. Jesus respected His parents and placed God the Father at the top of His priorities. We, too, respect our parents and place God above all things.

Read John 2:1-11.

Jesus valued and celebrated the meaning of a man and a woman being united for a lifetime through marriage. Weddings require many preparations. What is often missed is that marriage preparation begins with character formation. A good marriage is born from a man of good character joining together with a woman of good character. A person of good character has, among other traits, self-discipline. A person of good character has learned to put things together in the proper time frame, even if it requires waiting for the right time to enjoy the gifts of God when it is best for all.

Seeking to lead a chaste life (a life lived free from sexual relations with another person before marriage), is also a way of preparing for marriage. Chastity allows us to save our total intimacy for just one person. It is a great gift that we bring to our marriage partner, but it requires years of preparation and self-discipline.

Sadly, because of sin, even committed Christian couples go through a divorce. They are usually the first to say how hurtful and unfortunate divorce is to the family, and wish that it could have been avoided



Teacher Sprinkle: What can you share about weddings you have attended?

Fine Arts

A “Three Point” Marriage

Materials: popsicle sticks or larger wooden hobby sticks, hot glue gun, paint or magic markers.

Using three hobby sticks, glue them together at the tops to make a triangle. Ask the students to draw a cross at the top—you may wish to have pictures of various styles of crosses.

At the base corners of the triangle, have them write “father” on one corner and “mother” at the other corner. If the sticks are large enough, you may even have them draw a picture representing a father and mother.

Draw two arrows, one pointing from the father and the other from the mother, toward the cross. Review again how the father and mother grow closer to each other as they are drawn closer to Christ. Suggest the students bring this home and explain what they have learned to their family using their triangle.



Teacher Sprinkle: What is the glue that keeps you attached to Christ? (Faith)

Language Arts

Review previous acronyms. The new acronym celebrates the bodies God gives us. Our bodies allow for sexual intimacy, which bonds us with another person within a shared oneness in Christ.

Bonded – Marriage is intended to be a bonding between one man and one woman until one lays the other into the arms of God at death.

Oneness – Marriage is to include Christ. A wise couple will weave Christ into their marriage that it may be strong to endure the tests of time. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

Determined – Preparation for marriage begins early in life. We are created with sexual feelings. Sexual feelings are to be celebrated within marriage, and this requires self-discipline and chastity until our wedding day. Our culture tells us not to wait for marriage, but to use sexuality in a recreational manner like playing a game of basketball or tennis. Television shows, movies, magazines, the internet—most carry the message that sex is for recreation and not procreation. In fact, having children is to be avoided in the process of pursuing sex as a recreational pleasure.

Yielding – Christians who have fallen to the message of the world and sinned sexually before marriage need to know they can be forgiven. They can claim a chaste life after receiving God's forgiveness. Once forgiven, they can seek to live a chaste life and enter marriage with a clear conscience.



Teacher Sprinkle: What is the difference between procreation and recreation? **Answer:** Procreation is the God-given gift of bringing another human being into the world. Recreation, although it can bring certain benefits, is self-centered activity designed to give oneself pleasure and does not necessarily help or benefit anyone.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

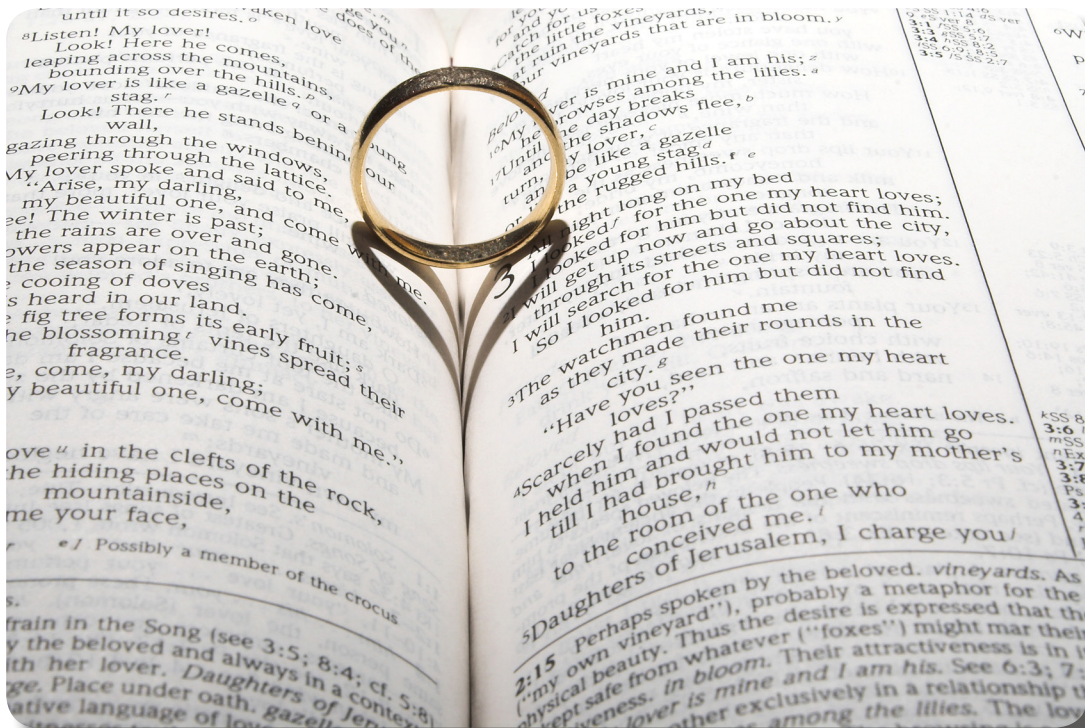
BODY

Bonding with one person for a life-time

Oneeness through Christ

Determined to avoid sexual temptation

Yielding to God's grace and forgiveness



Science

Note to the teacher: Our purity in Christ is our motivation for sexual purity. It is important for students to have knowledge of STDs, not as motivation or “scare tactics”—which does not work—but so they are aware of the realities of the world in which they live. Because of the sensitive nature of this subject, each teacher must decide what to present to the class, and how to present it best. There are definitions and more information about the major STDs on the CD. Some of the information, for certain situations, should not be shared.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

- STDs are infectious diseases that spread from person to person through intimate contact.
- STDs can affect boys and girls, men and women, and rich and poor people of all races.
- Almost one out of five Americans will be treated for STDs by the age of 21.
- STDs do not always cause death, but many STDs cannot be cured and will cause a lifetime of discomfort and inconvenience and may lead to infertility.

There is protection against getting STDs.

- Most all STDs are passed through sexual contact.
- Chastity is the only certain protection against getting STDs.
- A quotation from *TeenHealth*, an Internet resource addressing teen sexuality and STDs: “The younger a person starts having sex, the greater his or her chances of becoming infected with an STD.”

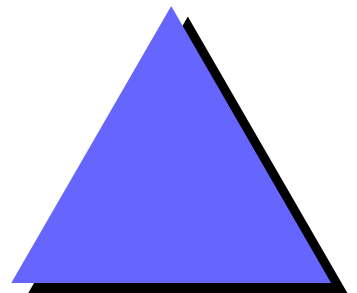


Teacher Sprinkle: Is human sexuality good or bad? From God or the devil?

Math

A Positive Love Triangle!

The triangle is the strongest geometric figure known to man (show or draw a triangle which has three connected points). Hundreds of triangles are worked into skyscrapers to give them strength. They may be “hidden” in the design as the architect spreads the load over the connected points.



A young man once prepared for his wedding day by carving a cross and a triangle. The cross was placed at the top of the wedding cake and the triangle was laid over the arms of the cross. The couple imagined Christ at the top of the triangle, and each of them on either side at the base of the triangle. The goal in their marriage was for each of them to grow closer to Christ. This automatically drew them closer to each other. (Show the students how two points moving toward the apex grow closer to each other as they grow closer to the top.)

In their walk with the Lord, a boy and a girl can grow close to each other as their faith deepens; they can become good friends. Sex for recreation is easy, but it doesn’t build friendship. In fact, when a teenager becomes sexually active with another teen, they often lose interest in each other and stop growing as friends. A young girl once said, “Girls use sex seeking to be loved. Guys tell girls they love them seeking to get sex.” In each case, sex before marriage is often the first step in destroying a friendship.



Teacher Sprinkle: What are some ways a husband and wife can grow closer to Christ?

Social Studies

What is a Family?

Parable for Reflection

Dandy loved to ride horses. When one would die, another he'd buy. When one day his riding horse died, to the market went Dandy to get a fine steed.

"Here's a good horse for you, Dandy," the merchant proclaimed, but Dandy was shocked at what he must pay.

"How much is that cow?" asked Dandy aloud.

"Half of the horse," said the merchant with glee, "for the cow gave no milk to the farmer and me."

Dandy looked at the cow with feet of four, and ears of two, a stout nose, and short hair galore. "It's a fine horse you have there for half the price," he told the merchant as he paid the charge, and off road Dandy on his brand-new horse?



Questions to Consider

Why didn't Dandy want to buy the horse?

Answer: Its price was too high and demanding.

Are there relationships less demanding than a family consisting of a father, mother, and children?

Answer: Yes, a man and a woman living together without getting married avoid legal responsibilities.

Did the cow really become a horse simply because it better fit the fancy of Dandy?

Answer: No, the cow remained a cow even if Dandy imagined it to be a horse.

The DLT-2001 Dictionary/Thesaurus gave the primary meaning of family as "brood, issue, offspring, progeny."

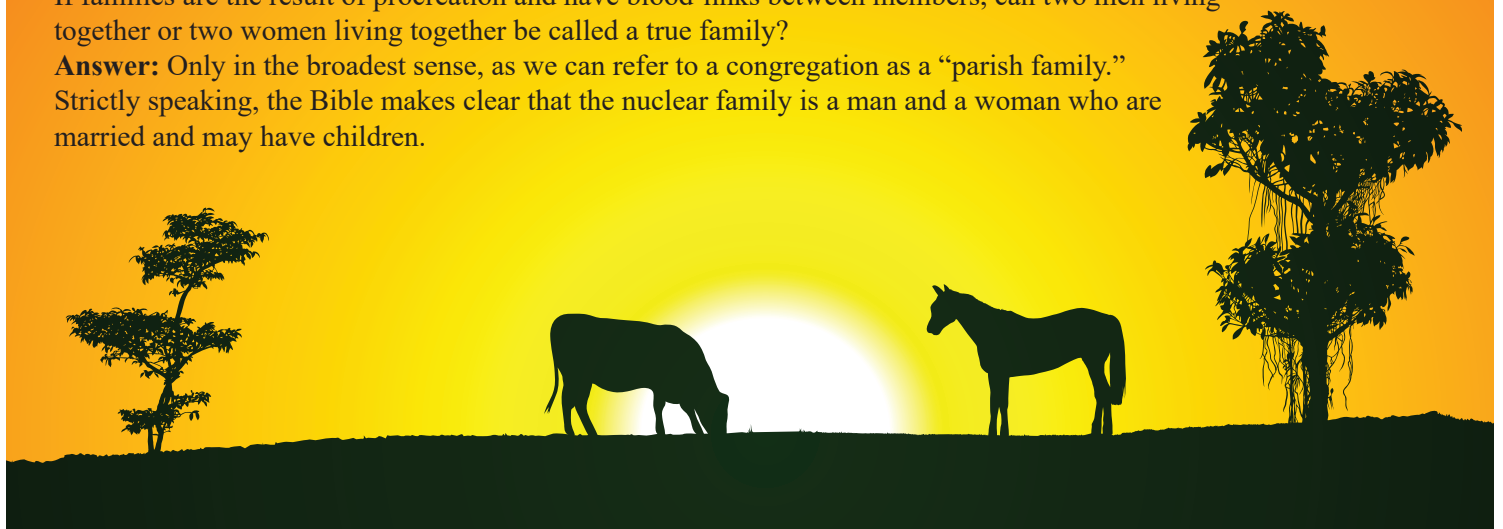
What do all these words suggest about the meaning of a true family?

Answer: Families are the result of procreation and adoption and have links between generations.

If families are the result of procreation and have blood-links between members, can two men living together or two women living together be called a true family?

Answer: Only in the broadest sense, as we can refer to a congregation as a "parish family."

Strictly speaking, the Bible makes clear that the nuclear family is a man and a woman who are married and may have children.



Today many living situations are called a "family," but many of these would be considered sinful from the teachings of the Bible. In a survey discussed in the May 1991 issue of the American Psychological Association APA Journal, we see what psychologists understand by "family" in the following quote: "The decline of the nuclear family is the single greatest threat to America's mental health, says a new survey of psychologists."

Service Learning

Most areas have a pro-life pregnancy center to help teens and adults deal with an unplanned pregnancy. Plan a field trip to the center.

At the center ask a worker to share how the center helps women and men when they are troubled by an unplanned pregnancy.

Before leaving, ask what the class might do to support the work of the agency. This could involve some work at the center, or it could be planning a drive to secure items that the center gives away to help a woman during her pregnancy.



Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Your children are learning:

- Jesus was part of a family that lived out their faith.
- Marriage takes a lifetime of building good character.
- Human sexuality is good within marriage.
- Chastity before marriage is the only certain way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases.
- The nuclear family is composed of a married man and woman and their children.
- Many human relationships are called “family” but fail the definition of a “nuclear family” and often are labeled as sinful within the Bible.
- As a husband and wife are drawn closer to Christ, they grow closer to each other.
- Becoming sexually active outside of marriage can hurt friendships.

Resources

Books:

Bartlett, Linda. *Men, Women, and Relationships (Building a Culture of Life Across the Generations)*: Available from Lutherans For Life. Item #901BS: [www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/family_living_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/family_living_(C).htm)

Hancock, Jim and Kara Powell. *What (Almost) Nobody Will Tell You About Sex*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

Web Sites:

MedlinePlus–Sexually Transmitted Diseases:

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/sexuallytransmitteddiseases.html

Talking to Kids About STDs:

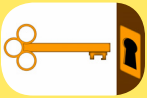
kidshealth.org/parent/infections/std/talk_child_std.html

Teaching For Life

For Life and Loving them Both.



Prayer for Prep: “Gracious God, You love us unconditionally. Guide me in this lesson to share that unconditional love with my students and to teach them how it applies when people make mistakes. In Jesus name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God neither condones sin nor condemns sinners, and calls His people to love and serve both baby and parents involved in a pregnancy outside of marriage.



Gospel Focus: The cross of Christ enables us to be both forgiven and to “sin no more.”



Bible Story: The Adoption of Baby Moses (Exodus 2:1-10)



Critical Questions:

1. Who is a child conceived outside of marriage?

World's Answer: An inconvenience. The world's focus is on *something* getting in the way.

WORD'S ANSWER: A creation of God. The Word's focus is on someone who is the work of God's hands.

2. Who are the unwed mom and dad?

World's Answer: Unlucky. The world sees them as people who need to “fix” their mistake.

WORD'S ANSWER: The Word sees them as people in need of the repentance and forgiveness that come from God in Christ who has “fixed” all our mistakes through His cross and resurrection.

3. What is our response to such a situation?

World's Answer: Abort the child. The world offers a so-called “quick and easy” fix.

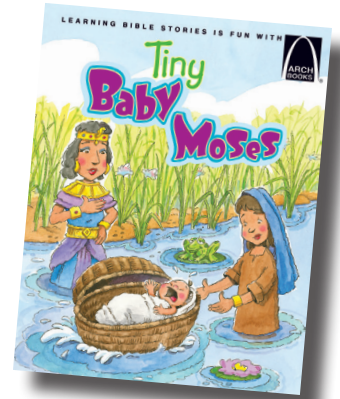
WORD'S ANSWER: Love them both. The Word offers help and hope for parents and child through the Spirit of Christ at work in His people.



Religion

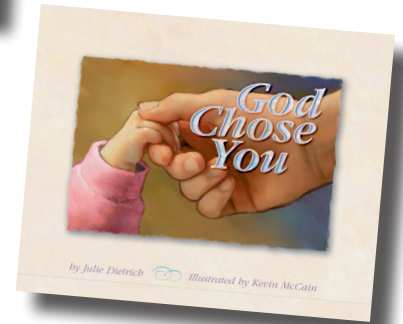
Baby Moses: From One Family to Another—with Love

Read the Arch® Books, *Tiny Baby Moses* or *The Princess and the Baby* to or with the children. Introduce the word “adoption.” The princess, pharaoh’s daughter, did a very loving thing when she adopted baby Moses. Moses’ mom and dad also showed love when they made a plan for baby Moses to be adopted so he could have life. Moses’ sister also watched out for Moses until he was found by the princess. God was with Moses, and He used Moses’ birth family and his adoptive family to protect and to care for him. Ask the children to name specific ways their family members have shown love to them. Make valentines for family members to say “thank you” (for life, for taking care of me, for loving me, etc.).



Welcomed into God’s Family—with Love

Read *God Chose You* by Julie Dietrich. The princess adopted Moses and welcomed him into her family. At our Baptism, God washes us clean from our sin and welcomes us into His family as well. Make thank-you valentines for God. Include thanks for the gift of life, for Jesus, and for making us part of His family through Baptism. Put the valentines together on a bulletin board as a public prayer and confession of faith.

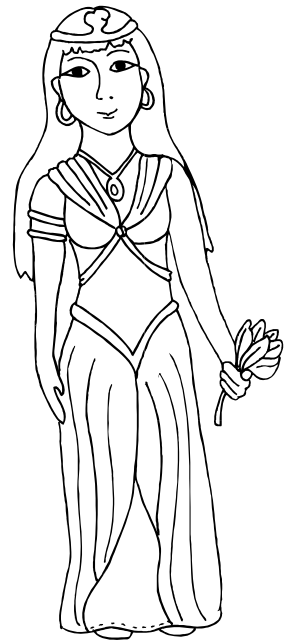


Language Arts

The Sequence of Love

God worked through many people to keep baby Moses safe. Use Arch® Book illustrations, simple drawings, or photos cut from catalogs or magazines to represent the characters and important objects in the Bible story. Attach flannel (or Velcro®) to the back of each scene or character and let the children retell the story using a flannel board or Velcro® strip. What happened first? Second? Third?

Optional: String a clothesline across a center area. Let the children clip the story pieces in order to the clothesline.



Fine Arts

Family Valentines

Provide “found objects,” buttons, beads, markers, felt, heavy-duty construction paper, foam, etc. for the children to make valentines, bookmarks and picture frames to give as gifts to other family members. Help the children to print “Jesus loves you” on each creation. (Younger children could substitute a cross for “Jesus” and a heart for “loves.” Provide stickers or pre-cut shapes if necessary.) Encourage the children to give the gifts to their family members with a message: “Jesus loves you and so do I,” “I’m glad God gave me my family,” or “Thanks, Mom and Dad, for the gift of life!”

“I was Baptized” – with Action!

At adoption, an infant or child becomes a full member of a new family. God makes us His children in Baptism. Sing *I was Baptized* by Arnold Mueller (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 97) with the following actions:

1. Pretend to sprinkle water on your head.
2. Smile and point to your face.
3. Put hands out front with palms down. Swing hands in (crossing right hand over left) then back out again quickly.
4. Point up.
5. Shade eyes with hand palm down and look down.
6. Smile and point to face.
7. Hug self.

“We Love” – with More!

Sing *We Love – Because God First Loved Us* (1 John 4:19) found in *Little Ones Sing Praise* page 54. Have students play rhythm instruments in place of the claps if desired. Then substitute the following phrases for “we love.” Make up others of your own, or let the children suggest verses.

1. We forgive (because God first forgave us).
2. We share (because God first shared with us).
3. We care (because God first cared for us).
4. We’re family (because God made us His own).
5. End with the original Bible verse.



Necklaces – “Adopted by God” or “A Child of the King”

Option 1: You will need light-colored tag board or cardstock, pattern pieces (Baptism shell or king’s crown), hole punch, yarn, crayons or markers, sequins or other flat decorative items (optional), clear contact paper, and scissors. Trace the crown or shell pattern onto tag board and cut out (one per child). Print “Adopted by God” or “a Child of the King” on each necklace. Allow room above these words for the child to print his/her name and to add other decorations if desired. Punch one or two holes in the top of the nametag for the string. Cover the nametag with clear contact paper. Help the children string yarn through the holes and tie to form a necklace.

Option 2: Make the necklaces out of salt dough (1 part salt, 1 part flour, diluted with a little water to a workable consistency). Remember to poke a hole near the top for the string. After the salt dough hardens, paint with tempera paint and seal with shellac.

Social Studies

Conversation with an Adoptive Parent (Family)

God cares for babies and children by putting them into families with people who care for them. Sometimes the family is made up of a mom and a dad and one or more children. Sometimes, however, the mom or dad can't take care of the baby by themselves. They want him or her to have a good home with a lot of love. (Review the story of Baby Moses.) We call this adoption. Adoption is a very loving action that God uses to put children into caring Christian families.

Invite an adoptive parent to share what it means to her/him to be a parent. If the adopted child was from another country or culture, he/she might also wish to bring some items representative of that culture to show the children.

Optional: Invite an older child or adult who has been adopted to share with the preschoolers or kindergarten class what adoption has meant in his/her life.

Adoption is a very loving action that God uses to put children into caring Christian families.

www.lutheransforlife.org/Adoption/adoption.htm

Science

Sink or Float!



Partially fill a plastic dishpan with water, or use a sand and water table for this activity. Provide boats and other objects for the children to play and experiment with. Guide their thinking by asking questions as they play. Which objects sink? Which ones float? Can they get a sinking object to float? How? Will a floating object sink? How? Why do you think this object floats and that one doesn't? Then ask, "Would a basket float?" How did baby Moses' mother keep the basket dry inside so Moses would be safe and the basket wouldn't sink?

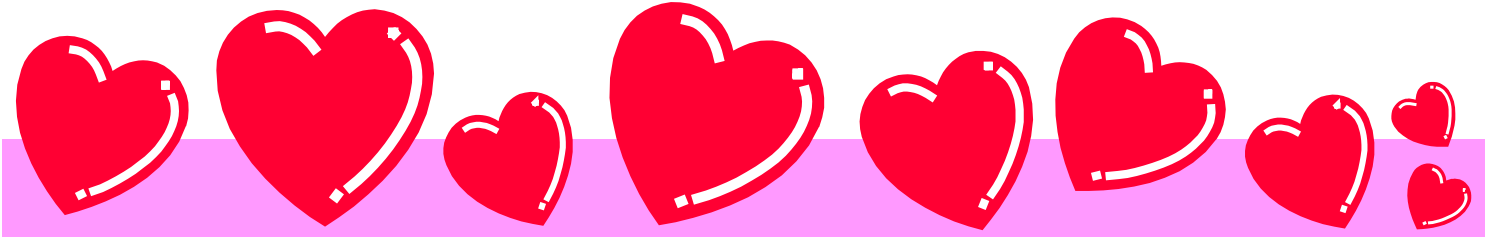
For-Life Connection: God used water to keep baby Moses safe until the princess found him and adopted him. Show a baptismal shell (or a picture of the baptismal font). God used the water of Baptism to wash away our sins, to give us the Holy Spirit and faith, and to adopt us into His family.



Service Learning Project

Pen Pals (ongoing)

Provide colored construction paper, scissors, doilies, etc. for the children to make valentines for their pen pals. Help them to copy simple phrases or verses such as “Jesus loves you” or “God is love” onto the valentines. For younger children, print the phrases on strips of paper for the children to paste onto the valentines.



Adopt a Grandparent

To help children further understand the concept of adoption and to give them a chance to interact with a member of another generation, “adopt” a grandparent or grandparents as a class. This person would visit the classroom from time to time to read to or with the children, teach a craft or skill, share information about his/her culture, etc. The children in turn could write letters to or make cards for their adopted grandma or grandpa, prepare a special snack or meal to share with him or her, and/or include “Grandma” or “Grandpa” in their indoor or outdoor play. The Adopt-a-Grandparent service learning project could be as simple or as complex as you choose. It is recommended that the adopted grandparent not be related to any of the children in the class. Consider adopting a member of your sponsoring congregation. Both the grandparent(s) and the children will be blessed by the experience.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Dear Parents,

This month the focus all around us is on love. The world's view of love is often quite different than God's view. God doesn't love us because we deserve it; He loves us in spite of our sin. Romans 5:8b says, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (NIV) That's amazing Fatherly love. God's love for us in Jesus Christ motivates us to love and to forgive others. He gives us His Spirit to help us to show this love to others both within and outside our families. Our class has been (will be) learning about the adoption of baby Moses and talking about adoption as one of the ways God creates loving homes for His children.

A man who had been adopted met his birth mother and told her, "Thanks for giving me life." By placing him for adoption, this woman not only gave her son life, but she allowed him the chance to be part of a loving Christian family where he grew in faith and prepared for his future as a loving husband, father, and leader in his church. This month your child will learn of another true adoption story, the story of baby Moses (Exodus 1:8-2:10). God used the love of both Moses' birth family and his adoptive mother to prepare him for his future of service to God and His people. May God bless you and your family as, motivated by God's love for you in Christ Jesus, you reach out to others with acts of kindness and love, not only in this month of love but throughout the year!

In His Service,

Resources

Annotated Bibliography:

Dietrich, Julie. *God Chose You*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000. This short book with beautiful illustrations celebrates God's welcoming of us into His family through Baptism.

Dietrich, Julie. *Tiny Baby Moses*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003. This Arch® Book retells the Bible story (Exodus 1:8-22 and 2:1-10) of how God used baby Moses' birth family and adoptive mother to save his life so he could grow up to serve as a leader of God's people.

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, Pantomimes, and Litanies for the Very Young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. The "I Can Help!" Finger Plays (pp. 48-49) and "Shhh, Shhh, Don't Let the Baby Cry" Bible story pantomime (p. 51) would be especially appropriate for this unit. Available at www.cph.org.

Kramer, Janice. *The Princess and the Baby*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970. This Arch® Book of the story of baby Moses is no longer in print, but teachers may be able to locate a copy in a church or school library.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Available for purchase at www.cph.org.

Web Sites:

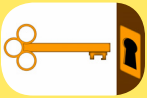
www.lutheransforlife.org – This site includes many resources regarding adoption, including both PDF files of articles and Bible studies that can be viewed and printed and inexpensive booklets and brochures available for purchase online. Links to adoption web sites are included as well.

Teaching For Life

For Life and Loving them Both.



Prayer for Prep: “Gracious God, You love us unconditionally. Guide me in this lesson to share that unconditional love with my students and to teach them how it applies when people make mistakes. In Jesus name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God neither condones sin nor condemns sinners, and calls His people to love and serve both baby and parents involved in a pregnancy outside of marriage.



Gospel Focus: The cross of Christ enables us to be both forgiven and to “sin no more.”



Bible Story: The Adoption of Baby Moses (Exodus 2:1-10)



Critical Questions:

1. Who is a child conceived outside of marriage?

World's Answer: An inconvenience. The world's focus is on *something* getting in the way.

WORD'S ANSWER: A creation of God. The Word's focus is on someone who is the work of God's hands.

2. Who are the unwed mom and dad?

World's Answer: Unlucky. The world sees them as people who need to “fix” their mistake.

WORD'S ANSWER: The Word sees them as people in need of the repentance and forgiveness that come from God in Christ who has “fixed” all our mistakes through His cross and resurrection.

3. What is our response to such a situation?

World's Answer: Abort the child. The world offers a so-called “quick and easy” fix.

WORD'S ANSWER: Love them both. The Word offers help and hope for parents and child through the Spirit of Christ at work in His people.

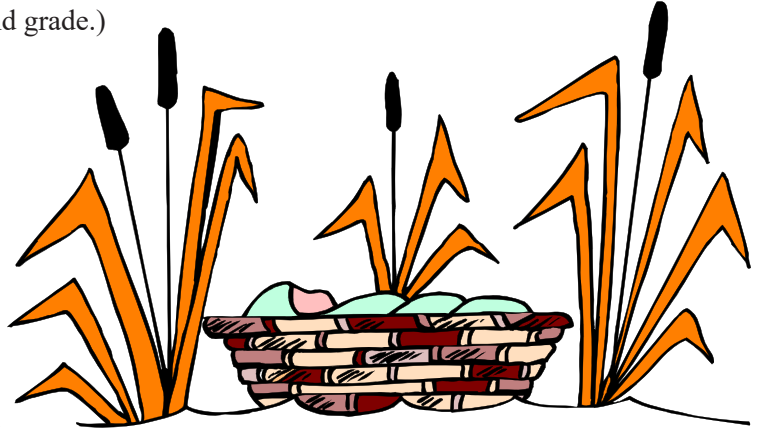


Religion

Moses—Twice Loved!

(Exodus 2:1-10) (*Voyages*® page 34, first grade; page 52, second grade.)

Read or tell the story. Emphasize the fact that Moses' family loved him and cared about him deeply, but it was not safe for him to be with them. They did what was best for him by allowing him to be adopted into the Egyptian family. God prepared the heart of Pharaoh's daughter to love and care for him, too. Moses' own (birth) family never stopped loving him.



Prayer and Share

Discuss why Moses' parents could not continue to care for him. Why was it a sacrifice for them to let Pharaoh's daughter raise him? What advantages would Moses have being raised in her home? Pray for all parents who love their children so much they choose to let others raise them and love them, too. Be sensitive to the fact that some children in your class are probably adopted. Allow them to share any information they feel comfortable sharing and continue to emphasize that children who have been adopted are twice-loved—by their birth parents and by their adoptive families. They are also loved by God, who guides their lives and circumstances.

Needing the Love of a Family

If possible, show pictures of children you know of who are waiting for adoption. Some foster care agencies or foreign adopt-a-child groups publish these. Talk about these children's needs and how important it would be for them to have a permanent family. Pray together for them and for others.

Loved into God's Family



Read Ephesians 1:1-5.

Discuss how we became part of God's family. Adoption is a beautiful picture of our relationship to God. We were born sinful and not a part of His family. But because of Jesus and through the work of the Holy Spirit, we now belong to Him. We have all the rights and privileges of heaven.



Teacher Sprinkle: Children usually look like their parents. If we are adopted into God's family, how can we look like Him? How will we act and treat others because He is our Father?



Language Arts

Family Acting

Act out the story of Moses being found by Pharaoh's daughter. Let children take turns in the various roles of Moses, his mother, his father, Miriam, soldiers, Pharaoh's daughter, her helpers, etc. The beginning "short" entitled "Babysitter in de Nile" in the *Duke and the Great Pie War* Veggie Tales® movie tells the story of this section of Scripture. You could show that as a "starter."

Family Poetry

Write a poem about your family. Write a poem about Moses' family. How are they the same? Write the poems together as a class or assign it to individuals or groups. They should be similar in demonstrating the parents' love and the care they provide for their children.



Family Reading

Read a story about adoption. A variety of books are listed in the Resources section.

Fine Arts

God's Family Singing



Sing *Our Church Family* (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p.11) or choose a song that focuses on the Church as being God's family. We are all members of God's family and, so, brothers and sisters in Christ.

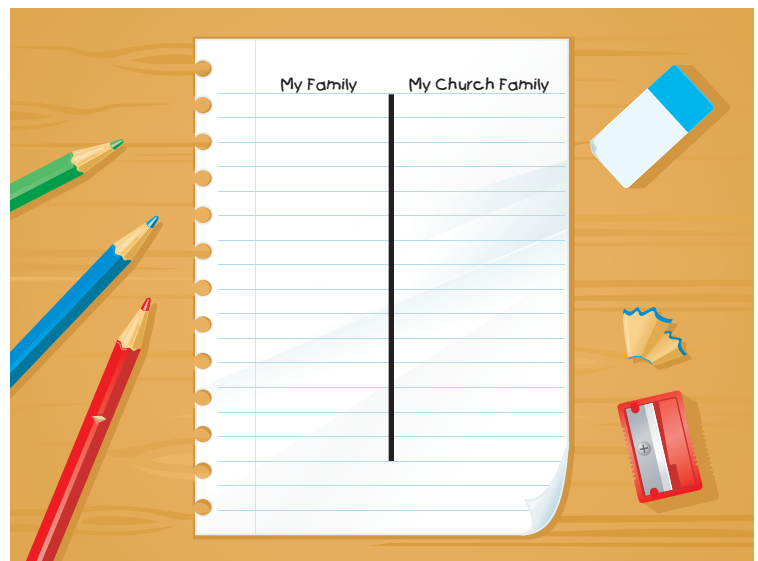


God's Family Drawing

Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. On the left, write the title "My Family." On the right, write the title, "My Church Family." Direct children to draw pictures of their family on the left and of them worshiping in church on the right.

God's Family Tags

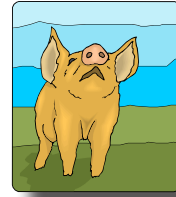
Using index cards, have the children make name tags for themselves. (See template on CD.) On the card, direct them to draw pictures that indicate they are children of God (e.g. crosses, a picture of Jesus and them). Laminate the cards, punch holes in them, and let the children wear them in the classroom.



Science

Tiger Pigs???

The animal kingdom gives us examples of a mother's love and the care adult animals provide for those in need. (See story and pictures on the CD.) Note that both the tiger and the piglets benefited from the new relationship. Ask the children to look for other examples. Make a bulletin board with the title: "Mothers Love their Children"



Special Children/Special Families

Some children have special needs and need special parents to care for them. What would a family have to do to be ready to adopt a child who is blind or who could not walk? Talk about these medical conditions and how they affect a child's life.

Allow children to walk about the room with their eyes closed led by a companion, or bring in a wheelchair and let everyone use it for a brief period. Discuss the accommodations that would have to be made to help a child who had these needs be part of a family. If you have children with special needs in your class, let them talk about how their families help them. Focus on the joys and blessings of having diversities in a family and how everyone can help each other.



Birth Mom/Adoptive Mom

Without getting into a lot of detail, explain that a birth mother physically gives birth to a baby. It grows inside her and is born at the right time. An adoptive mother did not give birth to a baby, but once the child is given to her family, she loves and cares for it just like a birth mother would. The point is to make sure children understand the correct vernacular and concepts. Avoid referring to the "real" mother. Both mothers are very real. God merely gave them families in different ways. Children call both their birth and adoptive parents "Mom" and "Dad."

Math

Number of Children

Contact your local county adoption agency. How many children are waiting to be adopted in your state? Compare this to the number of children in your class/school/church.



Moses' Life Line

Make a time line of Moses' life on butcher paper and hang it on a wall. Have groups of children draw pictures of his birth family, the Egyptians, Miriam with him in the river, the Pharaoh's daughter finding him, Miriam talking to Pharaoh's daughter, Pharaoh's daughter holding him with his birth mother by her side, etc. Then post the pictures in the appropriate sequence on the time line, or have children hold the pictures and stand in the correct order.



Mystery Message!

Use the code sheet on the CD. The message reads, "I have called you by name. You are mine." This is God's Word to all of us whom He has called into His family. Students could also write their own coded messages.



Teacher Sprinkle: How many children could fit in your house? Draw a plan that shows where everyone would sleep.

Social Studies

Discussing Adoption

From another country: If a child in your class or school has been adopted from another country, find that country on a map or globe and share information about it. Discuss the fact that children don't have to look like their adoptive parents. What do all children have in common?

With adoptive parents: Ask adoptive parents to talk with your class. The family could have a child in your class or not. Be sensitive to the feelings of the child. Ask the parents to bring appropriate pictures and share how God has put them together as a family.



And the adoptive home: Make a list on the board of characteristics of a "good home." Emphasize that it is not the material things that matter; it is the ability to provide a stable, loving atmosphere. However, where would the child sleep? Is there a place to play? How could a visitor to the home know that love is prevalent there?



Teacher Sprinkle: If you could have been adopted into any family in the world at any time, which would you choose? Why?

Physical Activity

Stand/Sit Game

Begin with all children sitting in chairs. Call out a qualifier like, "If you are a boy, stand up." All those who meet the criteria stand. Intersperse directions to sit down. For example, "If your birthday is in August, sit down." Children will be changing position as the game progresses. Be sensitive to characteristics that may be embarrassing; for example, don't call attention to any disability or bad behavior. Speed up the pace as able or desired. Note how children are different in some ways and alike in others. End by saying, "Everyone who is in God's family, stand up." Regardless of our outward qualities, God loves us all the same. Conclude with a prayer.

Play the "Family Tag" game you played in the last unit.



Service Learning

Adopt a Child

Check into adopting a child as a class with well-respected organizations like the Christian Children's Fund (www.christianchildrensfund.org).

Foster Child Supplies

Collect backpacks or other school supplies for a foster child agency.

Be a Buddy!

Ask the kindergarten teacher or preschool director if you could team your class up with a younger class. Assign specific children as "big" and "little" buddies. Let your students read to their buddies, do an art project together, sit in chapel together, or engage in some other activity. You might want to set up time for buddies on a regular basis. Sharing God's love with another child demonstrates the same nurturing qualities as those found in adoption.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Dear Parents,

Adoption is a wonderful picture of the way all of us come into God's family. He chose us to be His own and keeps us His own forever. This month's lesson reminds us that God makes earthly families in a variety of ways. Some children are born into them; others are chosen despite the circumstances of their birth. Both are equally loved and accepted. Families who have made such a choice are usually eager to share their stories and encourage others to do the same.

This month's focus is on the blessings of adoption. Older children are studying about God's will as it pertains to abortion, but it is appropriate for young children to focus on the value of each baby or child and to see the joy that comes when those who need a home for their child are provided one and those who seek to love a child are given one to love. All families are God's gifts to each other.

Moses is the example mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 2:1-10. Because the Egyptians were killing all the male Hebrew babies in order to keep the Hebrews subservient to them, Moses' life was truly at risk. His mother was willing to make great sacrifices to save him and provide him with all his physical needs. The pharaoh's daughter also received the wonderful gift of a son. God worked everything out for good.

If your family is faced with an unplanned pregnancy, please consider God's directives to respect and preserve the life He created. Countless couples long for the opportunity to raise a little one in God's ways. If you are moved to add to your family, please consider adoption. Infants, siblings, older children, and children with special needs are longing and waiting for someone to love and care for them in Jesus' name. I will be happy to supply you with a list of resources you might find helpful.

Serving Him,

Resources

Books:

Dellinger, Annetta E. *Adopted and Loved Forever*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987. Simple answers for children who have questions about adoption. Includes Christ-centered application that we are all adopted members of God's family.

Gilman, Lois. *The Adoption Resource Book*. New York: Harper Collins Publishing, 1998. Adoption classic for parents to read with their young children and a reference resource for couples interested in adoption.

Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

For a listing of excellent children's books on adoption, see the CD.

Web Sites:

www.lutheransforlife.org/_Issue_Info/Family_Living/family_living.htm

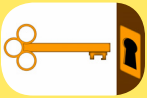
www.cph.org. Resource information for adults on adoption.

Teaching For Life

For Life and Loving them Both.



Prayer for Prep: “Gracious God, You love us unconditionally. Guide me in this lesson to share that unconditional love with my students and to teach them how it applies when people make mistakes. In Jesus name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God neither condones sin nor condemns sinners, and calls His people to love and serve both baby and parents involved in a pregnancy outside of marriage.



Gospel Focus: The cross of Christ enables us to be both forgiven and to “sin no more.”



Bible Story: The Adoption of Baby Moses (Exodus 2:1-10)



Critical Questions:

1. Who is a child conceived outside of marriage?

World's Answer: An inconvenience. The world's focus is on *something* getting in the way.

WORD'S ANSWER: A creation of God. The Word's focus is on someone who is the work of God's hands.

2. Who are the unwed mom and dad?

World's Answer: Unlucky. The world sees them as people who need to “fix” their mistake.

WORD'S ANSWER: The Word sees them as people in need of the repentance and forgiveness that come from God in Christ who has “fixed” all our mistakes through His cross and resurrection.

3. What is our response to such a situation?

World's Answer: Abort the child. The world offers a so-called “quick and easy” fix.

WORD'S ANSWER: Love them both. The Word offers help and hope for parents and child through the Spirit of Christ at work in His people.



Religion

Moses – Loved and Cared for Through Adoption (Exodus 1:1-2:10)



Mom I: The mom who gave birth to Moses put him in the Nile in a basket. Why was this an act of love and caring?

Mom II: The mom who would raise Moses as her own drew him out of the Nile. (Moses means “to draw out.”) Why was this an act of love and caring?

Explain how adoption is an act of love that seeks what is best for the baby. Sometimes it’s just not possible for the mom who gives birth to a baby to raise that baby. Placing that baby for others to care for is a great act of selfless love. But it’s not easy! Discuss with the students how Moses’ birth mom must have felt placing him in that basket.



Discuss how Pharaoh’s daughter must have felt finding Moses and taking him out of the water.

Watched Over

Moses’ big sister, Miriam, watched over Moses as he went from Mom I to Mom II. Who else was watching over him? (Joshua 1:5)



Teacher Sprinkle: If you were Miriam keeping watch over your brother as he traveled down the Nile River, what would you be thinking?

God’s love and care were at work through both of Moses’ moms! Look up one or more of the following and discuss how God cares for us all. Choose one as a memory verse.

Psalm 55:22; 56:3

Matthew 28:20

Hebrews 13:6

1 Peter 5:7

Adopted by God

Point out how God adopts us as part of His family (Ephesians 1:1-5 and Galatians 4:4-7).

What waters did God use to bring us to Him?

If possible, you may want to “travel” to the baptismal font in the church. The entire lesson could be taught there!



Language Arts

Read

Have the children read Moses' story from *Tomie dePaola's Book of Bible Stories* or another age-appropriate Bible story book.

Write

Write Moses' story from Miriam's point of view. Direct the students to only include events that Miriam herself would have witnessed. For example:

- The water of the Nile.
- How it might have looked along the bank.
- Did any animals look at or swim by the basket?
- Did it bump a log?
- Pharaoh's daughter and attendants.
- Her conversation with Pharaoh's daughter.

Write the story of Moses into a reader's theater format. Act it out in class as part of a Fine Arts lesson.



Teacher Sprinkle: Think how Moses' birth mom must have felt:

- (1) placing him in the water,
- (2) when she was able to care for him again, and (3) when

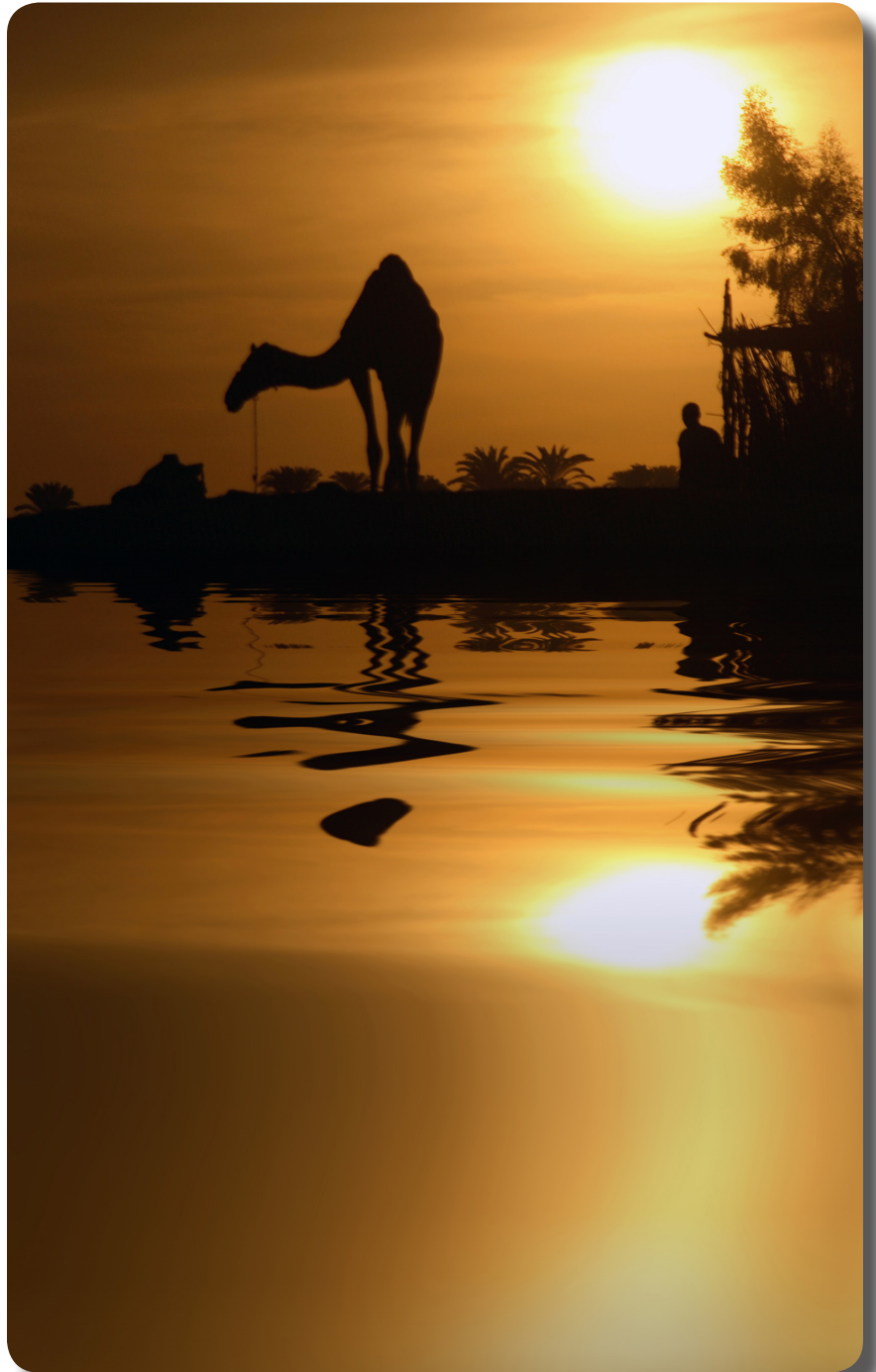
she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter. Write descriptive words for each incident.

What's in a Name?

"Moses" means to "draw out." Have students research what their names mean? Does the meaning describe them?

What other name has been given to us? (Acts 2:38) What does His name mean? Review our adoption as God's child discussed in the Religion section.

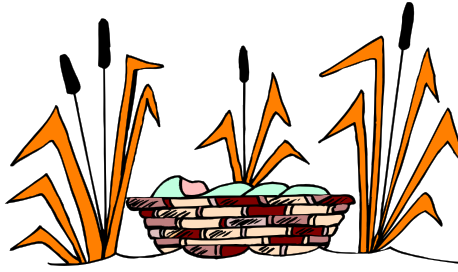
Also see Galatians 3:27 and Acts 11:26.



Fine Arts

Basket Boat

Cut an oatmeal container in half so that it resembles a basket. Using paper and other materials such as yarn, reeds, etc. make a basket for Moses. This basket saved him from Pharaoh's terrible command to kill the male babies.



Talk about another "boat" that God used to save people and how it relates to our adoption in baptism. (See 1 Peter 3:20-21.)

Nile Diorama

Have students research what the Nile River actually looks like. Using various materials, make a diorama of the river.



Nile Drama

Using the reader's theater plays written in Language Arts, dramatize the Moses plays.

Sing Songs of God's Love and Care



God, Our Father, Hear Your Children (Little One's Sing Praise)

I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus (Little One's Sing Praise)

God's Care (Little One's Sing Praise)

I'm With You (Little One's Sing Praise)

Social Studies

Lutheran Adoption Network

In a supervised setting, have the children look at the web site www.lanadopt.org. Let them browse the site looking for pictures of adopted children, stories of adoptive families, the process of adopting, and other things they might find interesting. Share in a group some of the things they learned.



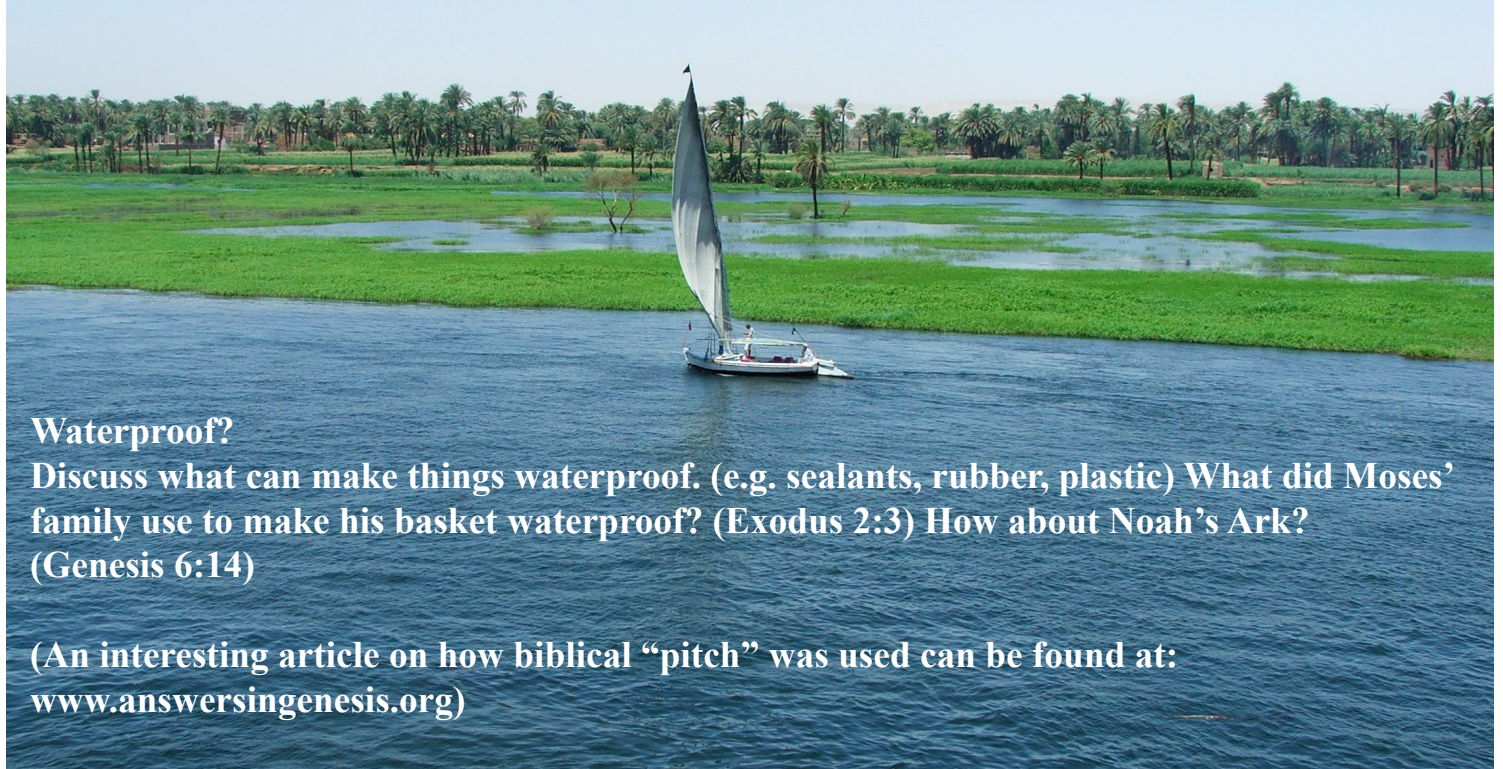
Parent Visit

Have parents of adoptive children visit with the class and share their experience. (Be sensitive to the particular needs of any children you know to be adopted.)

Social Studies

Research

Research the region around the Nile River in Egypt. What types of animals and plants live there? Incorporate this into the Fine Arts diorama, the theater plays, or written stories in Language Arts.



Waterproof?

Discuss what can make things waterproof. (e.g. sealants, rubber, plastic) What did Moses' family use to make his basket waterproof? (Exodus 2:3) How about Noah's Ark? (Genesis 6:14)

(An interesting article on how biblical "pitch" was used can be found at: www.answersingenesis.org)

Math

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

The Nile River is the longest river in the world at 4,160 miles. Using 4,000 miles, have the students figure how long it would take to travel its length in a boat going 40, 80, and 100 miles per hour.

Which is longer, the Nile River or the distance from New York to San Francisco? Choose various other places and determine which is the longer trip.

How Many Families?



According to the National Adoption Center (www.adopt.org), there are 115,000 children in foster care waiting to be adopted. How many families would it take to give them all a home if each family adopted 2? 3? 4?

Say a prayer for these children.



Service Learning

Pregnancy Centers offer help to young moms trying to make decisions about how best to love their baby. Have someone from a local center speak to your class about referring such moms for adoption. Find out what items they might need to give to these young moms—diapers, wipes, etc. Collect such items as a class. Perhaps involve other classes or the entire school.



Parent Letter Suggestions

Dear Parents,

This month your children will be learning about adoption and families. The story of Moses is a wonderful example for children to learn about the positive aspects of adoption. Moses was destined to die according to the law of Pharaoh. His mother made a difficult choice, motivated by love, when she placed him in that basket in the Nile River. God blessed that choice and provided for Moses' care by having him taken into the family of Pharaoh himself! Adopted children have families that give them life and families that care for them in life. In your family devotions, discuss adoption and how it is often the best and most loving thing to do for each family involved. Pray for families considering adoption that God would guide them. Pray for the many children in foster care who have not been adopted that God would find them a family. Remind your children they are all precious and how we have all been adopted into God's family through the washing of baptism where we receive the name of Jesus.

Serving Him,

Resources

Books:

Little One's Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Tomie de Paola's Book of Bible Stories. New York: Putnam Juvenile, 1990.

Web Sites:

Lutheran Adoption Network: www.lanadopt.org

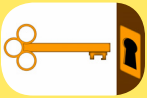
Adoption Information from Lutherans For Life: www.lutheransforlife.org

Teaching For Life

For Life and Loving them Both.



Prayer for Prep: “Gracious God, You love us unconditionally. Guide me in this lesson to share that unconditional love with my students and to teach them how it applies when people make mistakes. In Jesus name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God neither condones sin nor condemns sinners, and calls His people to love and serve both baby and parents involved in a pregnancy outside of marriage.



Gospel Focus: The cross of Christ enables us to be both forgiven and to “sin no more.”



Bible Story: The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11)



Critical Questions:

1. Who is a child conceived outside of marriage?

World's Answer: An inconvenience. The world's focus is on *something* getting in the way.

WORD'S ANSWER: A creation of God. The Word's focus is on someone who is the work of God's hands.

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World's Answer: Abort the child. The world offers a so-called “quick and easy” fix.

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Religion

Read John 8:1-11.

Here we see the key concept for this lesson—God doesn't like sin, but He does love sinners. Ask the students how this would apply to someone in their school who becomes pregnant outside of marriage. (See questions to the right.)

Below are some thoughts that relate this key concept to the *Voyages*® curriculum or that may be used independently. Further development of each of these may be found on the CD.

Waiting

Ecclesiastes Time – *Voyages*® Unit 6 Grade 5: Ecclesiastes 3 talks about balances during life. In our age, convenience and instant time seem paired as entitlements and are revered as idols. Faster is better; wait implies never. Solomon's wisdom tells a very different message. There is a season for every activity under heaven (3:1). Talk about stewardship of time. Waiting for the proper times can avoid bad times.

Planning

Asa – *Voyages*® Unit 6 Grade 5: Though Asa experienced God's power, he later allied with the ungodly leader, Ben-hadad, as a way out of his fears. If you've taken the suggested field trip to a crisis pregnancy center, comment in this lesson that the agency Planned Parenthood, the largest provider of abortions in the country, is similar to Ben-hadad. Unwed teens turn to ungodly leaders as a way out of their fears instead of turning to Jesus and His church. Planning for parenting can begin right now as the students learn to include God. (See CD for a suggested activity.)



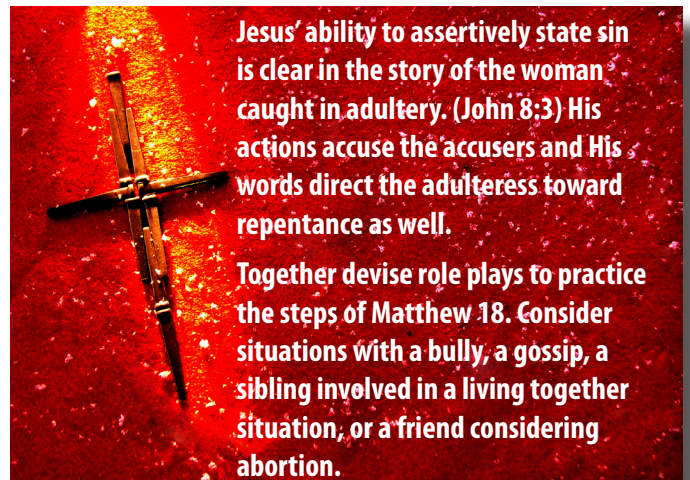
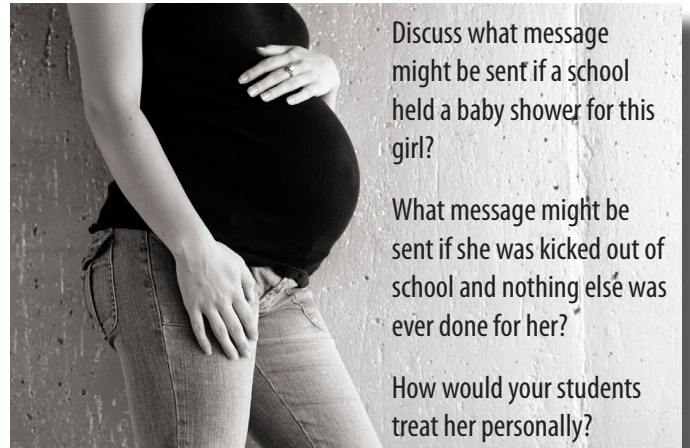
Teacher Sprinkle: What if the Virgin Mary went to a Planned Parenthood clinic?

Forgiving

Forgiving those who sin against you: *Voyages*® Unit 6 Grade 6. In Matthew 18, God tells us the steps to take when dealing with people who sin against us. To avoid making this lesson legalistic procedures, stress Jesus' reason for it all, "you have gained your brother" (18:15).

Committing

Jesus teaches about divorce: *Voyages*® Unit 6 Grade 6: Why do you think God wants people to know each other really well before they commit to marriage? This will lead naturally to issues of divorce and also living together before marriage. If you want to pursue these discussions, there is guidance on the CD.



Language Arts

Adoption Report

In assignments of research reports, consider adoption. The Lutherans For Life web site has many resources. Have them specifically include statistics that compare the number of infants adopted compared to those aborted. There are no unwanted babies, only unfound parents!

Setting Evaluation

Examine how setting plays a part in fiction and nonfiction. Start with the more obvious influences of setting in historical fiction and survival stories. Move on to realistic fiction, visual media, and scientific nonfiction. How does setting influence the reader/viewer in today's world? Some "setting" examples for discussion:

- Homosexual parents or characters are portrayed as normal and those opposed as bigots in movies and stories.
- Sex is casual and unmarried couples "hook up" as accepted practice in sitcoms.
- When evolution is assumed as fact in science programs and books.
- Abortion is portrayed as a positive choice in medical and legal TV shows.

What message does setting subtly send? As part of any text or media evaluation, examine what is not said and not shown. Make this more striking by imagining an early Christian reading or watching the material under discussion. How might this person respond to the casual use of God's name, the passive viewing of violence or sexual content, or unbiblical statements as fact?



Science

Protecting the Young



Mammalian mothers naturally protect their young. This is also true for humans. Mothers instinctively protect their babies and birth bonding sometimes surprises a reluctant mother with its powerful emotions. That's why a mom making an adoption plan for her baby faces a difficult but heroic sacrifice that denies herself and gives the child a better future with two parents. References like these integrated into ordinary lessons are what distinguishes a Lutheran education from a secular one. Isaiah 66:13.

Friend Indeed

As a result of sexual education studies, students may turn to you as a trusted adult. Sometimes students have a sibling or friend who is unwed and pregnant and want advice on what to say and do. Some things to offer:

- Sexual sins can be confessed, repented, and forgiven.
- Make sure they are aware of the non-judgmental help and guidance from Christian pregnancy centers. The love and forgiveness of Christ abounds in these centers.
- Offer a positive statement of the adoption option.
- Encourage the student to refrain from gossip, but instead to keep the unwed mother in prayer, be a faithful companion, and remind her that God still holds her future with His promise of good purpose. (Jeremiah 29:11)
- Look at the Resources section for suggested pamphlets and resources to offer.

Social Studies

Orphan Trains



In your study of US history during the late 1800s, refer to orphan trains. Homeless children were sent by railroad from New York City to the Midwest where couples could select them at local stations. Children were fostered or adopted. Many interesting stories take place. (Photos courtesy of the National Orphan Train Complex, Concordia, Kansas. For more information go to www.orphantraindepot.com and www.orphantrainriders.com.)

Marriage and Family



Have students research state marriage laws.
What rights and protections does a marriage license grant?
How does this compare to cohabiting couples?
Why do you think society regulates marriage?
What if there were no such laws?

Service Learning

Pregnancy Center Field Trip

Because we are Jesus' body, the Church, we do not condemn anyone, but offer support to repent and reconnect. Take a field trip to a local pregnancy center. Find out how the class can assist, possibly with collating, baby sitting, or sponsoring a Christmas baby-gift drive. Awareness of support systems for the pro-life choice could help students assist friends during teen years.

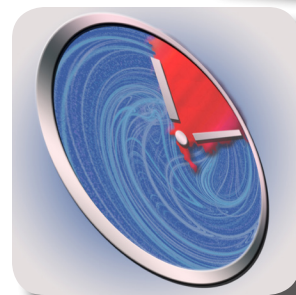


Math

Sad Numbers

If there are 3,600 abortions per day, how many is that per hour, per minute, per year?

If there are 2 million couples waiting to adopt a child, what is the ratio of babies desired to babies destroyed?



Year-Long Bulletin Board

Change the title to read, "God for Covenant Life." On one side place 3X5 cards with the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20.

Be sure to point out that it is a redeeming God who gives these commandments (20:2). God did not go into Egypt and say, "Keep these commands and I'll see what I can do about getting you out of here." He got them out of there! He redeemed them and now shows how redeemed people live.

Under each card have a student summarize class discussion on how this commandment helps human relationships. (The CD contains a guide for this discussion.)

Assign ten other students the task of taking/finding a photo/picture to illustrate each. Put the pictures on the right side of the bulletin board out of order. Students should use yarn to connect verse to picture. Place a cross in the middle so the yarn must pass over it. Jesus forgives the failures of our relationships and moves us to make good decisions.

I'm Adopted Chapel

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Use the opportunity of leading chapel as a time to help students plan. On the board write up the worship elements:

invocation, confession of sins, confession of faith, listening to God's word, praise, prayer, faith sharing, and benediction.

Then write the theme: "I'm Adopted." Base the chapel and liturgical elements on Ephesians 1:4-5. (The CD contains some direction and ideas.)

Resources

Book:

Lowry, Lois. *The Silent Boy*. New York: Houghton Mifflin/Walter/Lorraine Books, 2003. A girls' book by award winning author, Lois Lowry which in her subtle, gentle way shows the consequences of unwed pregnancy on not only the mother, but others around her. A Christian author, Lowry uses a lamb for her inference regarding the silent boy's final action.

Help Lines:

800-395-HELP is a hotline to find a local pregnancy resource center.

888-217-8679 is a hotline for Lutherans For Life's Word of Hope post-abortion and pregnancy counseling.

Both lines would be worth sharing with students as something to tell a friend/family member.

Web Sites:

www.lutheransforlife.org (see "Catalog")

Teens Helping Teens (Choice and Consequences/Problem Pregnancies)

The Adoption Option

Welcome a Little Child

Why not Just Live Together?

www.peopleoffaith.com/christian-movie-reviews.htm: links many Christian web sites that review current movies.

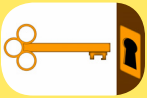
www.lanadopt.org: is the web site that can help find Lutheran adoption agencies in your state.

Teaching For Life

For Life and Loving them Both.



Prayer for Prep: “Gracious God, You love us unconditionally. Guide me in this lesson to share that unconditional love with my students and to teach them how it applies when people make mistakes. In Jesus name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God neither condones sin nor condemns sinners, and calls His people to love and serve both baby and parents involved in a pregnancy outside of marriage.



Gospel Focus: The cross of Christ enables us to be both forgiven and to “sin no more.”



Bible Story: The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11)



Critical Questions:

1. Who is a child conceived outside of marriage?

World's Answer: An inconvenience. The world's focus is on *something* getting in the way.

WORD'S ANSWER: A creation of God. The Word's focus is on someone who is the work of God's hands.

2. Who are the unwed mom and dad?

World's Answer: Unlucky. The world sees them as people who need to “fix” their mistake.

WORD'S ANSWER: The Word sees them as people in need of the repentance and forgiveness that come from God in Christ who has “fixed” all our mistakes through His cross and resurrection.

3. What is our response to such a situation?

World's Answer: Abort the child. The world offers a so-called “quick and easy” fix.

WORD'S ANSWER: Love them both. The Word offers help and hope for parents and child through the Spirit of Christ at work in His people.



Religion

Read John 8:1-11.

Who sinned in the account?

Answer: Everyone except Jesus were sinners. One of the traits of sin is that it seeks to hide behind the sin of others. Jesus sees the sinfulness of the woman, but He also sees the sin of those who were condemning the woman.

Did Jesus show forgiveness toward the woman?

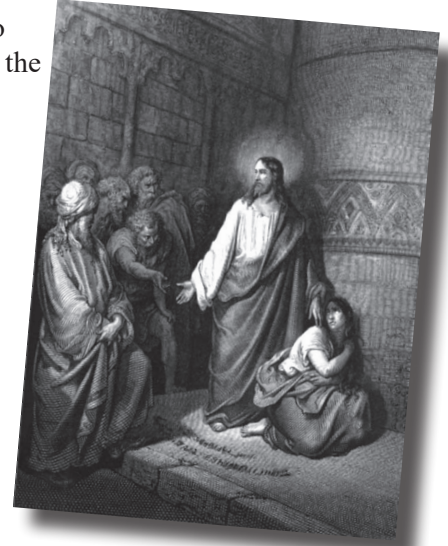
Answer: Yes. The fact that He did not condemn her for her publicly known sin demonstrates forgiveness.

Did Jesus show forgiveness toward the other sinners present?

Answer: Sadly, the other sinners slipped away in their sin and never had the opportunity to experience the compassion of Jesus toward sinners.

Did Jesus accept the sin of the woman He forgave?

Answer: No, He did not accept her sin. Although He was forgiving of her past, He told her to live her future without continuing in sin.



We can love and forgive those who sin, but that doesn't mean that we accept the sin that they have done. We can—and should—love and help a couple who have conceived a child in sin, but we don't and shouldn't accept the sin of sexual relationships outside of marriage.

Language Arts

Review the previous acronyms. The acronym for Lesson Six, “TWO,” reminds us that it takes two individuals to make a third person. If the two parents of a new child are not secure in a marriage relationship, the future for the child is “on shaky ground.” With Christ in a marriage relationship, the child's future can be “built on the Rock.”



Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

TWO

Takes two to make three

With a child comes mutual responsibility

Once turned on to Jesus, we receive His love and forgiveness

The woman in John 8:1-11 had many sexual relationships. Discuss what it would have been like for a daughter born from the woman's relationship with one of the men. The child may not know who her father was. Who would provide food, clothing, and shelter? She wouldn't have the influence of a father and may be looked down upon by others because of how she was born—especially in the culture of her day. Have students write a short story about such a daughter. Suggest a “happy ending”—she meets Jesus!

Science

A Good Foundation Prevents Erosion

Mix water and sand together in a child's sand bucket or other container so that the sand will "set up" and retain its shape when turned upside down in a tray or cake pan and the bucket is removed. Place a toy house or something representing a house on top of your formed sand.

Discuss the affects of water erosion. Demonstrate by pouring water from a sprinkling can over the house on the sand. Observe how the sand foundation erodes away and the house eventually falls.

Foundations are important! Now place a brick or flat rock in the pan. Place the house upon it and sprinkle with water. This solid foundation does not erode.

Ask a student to read Matthew 7:24-29. Note that Jesus uses this same illustration. He tells us that it is the wise person who puts His word into practice. The Bible contains the Word of God. The Bible tells us that we are to be sexually pure and that a man and woman should be married (Matthew 19:4-6) and then have children. United with Christ in marriage, a man and woman discover a strong foundation for having children.



Math

The World's Negative Math

$$3 - 1 = 0$$

This equation is true every time three individuals—mother, father, and an unborn child—become lessened by one because the unborn child is aborted. That adds up to nothing in the sight of God.

The world offers a quick fix for couples who face an unwanted pregnancy. The big three-fold abortion lie is, "It's your only choice, but don't worry, it won't hurt much and it will all be over soon." The world's math makes abortion add up to a good solution.

God, on the other hand, sees nothing good in the killing of one of His human creations. The killing of an unborn human is a big negative. Negative feelings such as guilt, anxiety, and depression often follow an abortion.

God's Positive Math

$$3 + \text{Grace} = \text{Hope}$$

God however, can add grace to the formula presented when a couple faces an unwanted pregnancy. His grace can allow for forgiveness and healing, and with these come hope! His grace empowers our love and grace. Instead of subtracting an unborn child from a family through abortion, adoption can add a child to parents seeking a new son or daughter.

God's math leads to positive conclusions as it redeems bad situations.

Social Studies

My Yard's Better than Your Yard!



This section can involve either a field trip into the neighborhood or pictures that show different houses, some having well groomed yards, and others that are not. The idea is to create an opportunity for the students to discuss what makes a neat yard and what doesn't. Obviously, if you are doing this as a field trip, you must be careful how you lead the discussion concerning those yards that are less tidy than others.

During the field trip or as you review the pictures, ask students what homes they like and what homes seem to be less desirable. Discuss possible reasons why some homes are not as well kept up: Economic—cannot afford improvements or upkeep; Apathy—do not really care how things look; Physical—unable to take care of the property; Social—a perceived neighborhood “standard.”

Note that it would be possible for someone with an untidy yard to make it seem less unsightly by drawing attention to another backyard that is far worse. In the same way, sometimes we seek to draw our attention away from our sin by pointing to someone who has done something wrong that is either very public, very bad, or both.



Sometimes those who sin, even in a big way, come from families that are having problems or that have not been built on Christ and His word. With a poor foundation, it is easier for them to fall into sin.

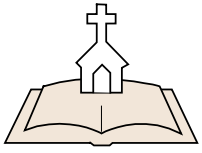
Before God, we need to remember that all sin is condemned. Big sins are condemned and little sins are equally condemned. Sins done by those with a poor foundation for life are condemned, but so are the sins committed by Christians. Each of us stands before God guilty of sin, and it does no good to compare ourselves to others.

God, however, is always ready to forgive those who have sinned. He seeks to draw us to Himself again through Word and Sacrament. He wants us to be refreshed in His grace and to build our future upon the rock of His revelation, the Bible.



Fine Arts

Materials: Drawing paper, either paints with brushes, crayons, or colored pencils.



Ask the students to think of a creative way to represent God's Word as a foundation. After they

have drawn the foundation, have them draw what would be their ideal family—mother, father, children.

After the drawings are done, allow the students to show their picture, explaining the foundation they created and what they see as their ideal family.

If drawing a picture of an ideal family seems difficult, you may also ask them to draw their ideal family crest. Point out that this crest is a symbol of that family whether the children are added biologically or through adoption.



Service Learning

Discover families within the congregation or community that have adopted children. Contact such families ahead of time, and see if they would be willing to allow the students to do some chore or task that would be helpful to them around the house or in the yard. (It would need to be age appropriate, of course.)

If there are families that are willing to participate, plan an afternoon field trip with students and adult advisors going to the homes to do the projects.

At the homes, determine in advance how the students will explain that they are doing these tasks to express their appreciation for adopting a child and giving that child a home.

If the parents of the adopted child feel that it is appropriate (this would need to be checked out in advance), allow the children to express to the adopted child how much he/she is appreciated and valued within the community.

If there are no families with adopted children readily apparent, perhaps the children could do some small fund-raiser and use the funds to place a small add in the local paper thanking couples who have adopted children.



Parent Letter

Your children are learning:

- Everyone except Jesus is a sinner from birth.
- Jesus welcomes the sinner but wants us to turn away from sin in our lives.
- Stable families, built on God's Word, provide a solid foundation for children.
- It does no good to hide our sin behind the sin of others.
- The killing of an unborn human is a big negative.
- God's math leads to positive conclusions for even bad situations.
- Gratitude for families that have adopted children.

Resources

Books:

Peter, Berlin. *A Personal Touch . . . on Adoption*. Los Angeles: Personal Touch Publishing, 2005.

Peters, SuDawn. *Hidden for Glory: Destined for Adoption*. Fulton, Kentucky: The Master Design, 2002.

Help Line:

800-395-HELP is a hotline to find a local pregnancy resource center.

888-217-8679 is a hotline for Lutherans For Life's Word of Hope post-abortion and pregnancy counseling.

Web Sites:

www.destinedforadoption.com

www.family.org

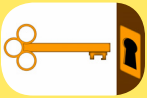
www.lanadopt.org is a web site that can help find Lutheran adoption agencies in your state.

Teaching For Life

For Life and Healing Broken Hearts.



Prayer for Prep: “Heavenly Father, for Jesus’ sake, forgive my sins and help me forgive others, and then use me to teach and model Your forgiveness to my class. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s forgiveness in Jesus brings healing for the guilt and regret of sin.



Gospel Focus: Jesus died for *everyone* and for *every* sin.



Bible Story: Jesus Anointed by the Sinful Woman. (Luke 7:36-50)



Critical Questions:

1. Who dies in an abortion?

World's Answer: No one. This is not a human person with protected rights of any kind.

WORD'S ANSWER: Someone. This is someone created by God’s hands and for whom Jesus died.

2. Who is wounded in an abortion?

World's Answer: No one. The world consistently denies any effect of abortion on women.

WORD'S ANSWER: Many. The Word reminds us of the weight of sin and guilt and points us to the One whose nail-pierced hands bring healing. (Isaiah 53:5)

3. How do we receive healing?

World's Answer: Not needed. The world says, “It will all be over soon.”

WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit “richly and daily” brings God’s forgiveness in Jesus through Word and Sacrament.



Religion

Clean Hearts (Liturgy Connection)

“Create in me a clean heart, O God.”

Tell the children these words from Psalm 51 that we sometimes sing in church are part of a prayer of King David. **(Hold up a white heart.)** David had sinned against God **(print the word “sin” in brown marker inside the heart)** and then committed another sin (murder) to try to hide his first sin. **(Print the word “sin” again in big black letters inside the heart.)** **Ask:** Was David’s sin too big that God couldn’t forgive him? **(No.)** God forgave David’s sins and gave him a pure, clean heart. **(Hold up a fresh white heart.)** When we tell God we’re sorry like David did, God has promised to forgive all of our sins too—even the really big, bad ones—because Jesus died for all of us and for every sin. (1 John 1:8-9)

Optional: Conclude with the *God is Full of Love* litany (*Fingers Tell the Story*, p. 83).



The One Who Cleans – Jesus Died for All Our Sins Object Lesson

Read or tell the story of the sinful woman who anointed Jesus’ feet. (Luke 7:36-50)

Dialog with the children: The woman in the Bible story had done bad things. Simon thought she was a very bad person. The woman knew that she had been very bad, but she also knew that Jesus could help her. What did Jesus tell the woman? **(Your sins are forgiven.)** What about Simon? Was he a sinner, too? **(Yes. Simon thought that he was pretty good, but he needed Jesus’ forgiveness just as much as the woman did.)** Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the whole world. He was punished in our place for “big” sins and “little” sins. Let’s think of some “big” and “little” sins. I’ll write them on these sticky notes, and we’ll stick them on the cross at our classroom altar.

Attach the sin notes to the cross.

Then pray together:

Dear Jesus/We are sorry/for the bad things/we say, think, and do./ Please forgive us./ Thank you, dear Jesus,/ for dying for us/ to forgive our “big” sins/ and our “little” sins, too./ Amen.



Technology

Deleting Sin!

(Use after reading/telling the story of the sinful woman who washed Jesus' feet. (Luke 7:36-50))

Ask the children to excuse you for a moment while you finish typing a note for someone. Go to the computer and begin to type. **Say:** Oops! I made a mistake. I added an extra word. I wonder what I should do now?

One or more children will probably come forward and tell you to press the "Delete" key. If they don't, **say:** I wonder what this "Delete" key is for?

Use the "Delete" key to correct your mistake. Express your joy that the mistake has been corrected and that you can finish typing your letter. Cheerfully thank the children and God for their help in solving your problem.



Say: This reminds me of someone else who had a problem. Do you remember the Bible story of the lady who washed Jesus' feet? She had a much bigger problem than I did. The Bible says she had been very, very bad and everyone knew it. How did Jesus help her? What did Jesus tell her? (*Her sins were forgiven.*) When Jesus forgives, it's like hitting the delete key! But there is more to this story! (You may continue now or use the next section at a later time.)

"Pasting" Peace!

(Review as necessary.) Jesus said something else to the woman who had done bad things.

Read Luke 7:50 aloud from the Bible. **Say:** When you sin (disobey God) how does it make you feel inside? (Give some age-appropriate examples such as pushing a classmate, taking a toy that belongs to someone else, fighting with a sister or brother, etc.)

The woman who washed Jesus' feet must have felt pretty awful inside, too, so awful that she cried and cried. But Jesus forgave her sin and gave her peace in her heart. When we pray to Jesus and ask Him to forgive our sins, He does so because Jesus died for every sin—"big" and "little"—on the cross. Jesus gives us peace and healing inside our hearts, too. He helps us not feel so awful about our sin.



Object lesson ideas: Have the children gather around the computer monitor again. (Before starting this section type the word "Peace," highlight, copy, and then delete it.) Type the word "Sin." Highlight and delete. Now paste in the word "Peace."

Use a white heart as was used in the Religion section and write the word "peace" on it.



Science

Planting Seeds

Plant vegetable or flower seeds in potting soil in paper, foam, or plastic drink cups. Watch together as the new life comes out of the ground in the coming days or weeks.

Explain that the seed that was planted had to die, but because it died a new plant could be “born.” Jesus Christ had to die on the cross even though He had not done anything wrong (**He is perfect**). He died so that all of our sins (“big” and “small”) could be forgiven and we could have a new life that lasts forever.



Math

Bigger and Smaller (Greater Than and Less Than)

Set up pairs of objects (or groups of objects) for the children to count (or measure), compare, and label with “bigger” or “smaller,” “more” or “less.” (*Hint: If you use word cards to label the piles, include a visual cue on each card for pre-readers.*)

After the children have completed the tasks, **ask**: Could we put sins into piles? In other words, are some sins (like murder) worse than others (like telling a lie)? Let the children discuss this for awhile. Then **say**: Although people put sins into groups, God hates all sins, big and little. But, Jesus died on the cross to forgive every sin from the tiniest to the “hugest.” When we confess our sins to Jesus (**admit them and tell Him we’re sorry**) He forgives us and gives us clean, peaceful, happy hearts. (1 John 1:9)



Social Studies

Signs of Spring Neighborhood Walk



Take a walk as a class around the neighborhood. What signs of spring can the children see? After the walk discuss: In many parts of the United States, most trees and plants appear dead during the winter. In March and April signs of life return, including buds, flowers, and migrating birds. Some birds and other animals lay eggs or give birth in the spring as well. When Jesus died on the cross for our sins many people were very, very sad. Jesus didn't stay dead, however. He came alive again on Easter morning. Because Jesus is alive we know that God forgives our sins—no matter how big or how bad they are.



Close by praying a thank-you prayer together. Let each child offer a thank-you for something he or she saw on the walk. Close by thanking Jesus for forgiving all sins—big and little.

Fine Arts

Songs and Finger Plays:

- *I Have the Joy (Little Ones Sing Praise)* Because Jesus forgives all of our sins (both big and little) we have joy, peace, and Jesus' love down in our hearts.
- *Jesus Loves Me, This I Know (Little Ones Sing Praise)*
- *I Am Sorry, Jesus (Little Ones Sing Praise)*
- *God Loves Me Dearly (Little Ones Sing Praise)*
- *Who Could Take Our Sins Away? (Fingers Tell the Story)*
- *Jesus, I Am Sorry (Fingers Tell the Story)*
- *God is Full of Love (Fingers Tell the Story)*



Service Learning Project

Pen Pals (ongoing)

Make crosses to share with your pen pals the Good News of forgiveness through Christ's death and resurrection.

Directions: Color craft sticks with brown markers. Glue the sticks together to form a cross. Print "forgiven" on a small strip of paper. Cut a heart out of red construction paper. Paste the paper strip across the front of the heart, and glue the heart to the cross.
Optional: Glue a magnet to the back of each cross.



Fix-it Shop

Ask the children to bring in broken toys, books, or other repairable items. Ask the class's adopted grandparents (see Unit 6), senior citizen pen pals, parents, or older students in your school to assist the children at the "Fix-it Center." The children may wish to donate the "new again" books and toys to a homeless shelter, hospital, or other community agency. For life connection: When Jesus forgave the sinful woman (Luke 7) He healed her sin-broken heart and gave her peace. When Jesus forgives our sins He heals our hearts and gives us peace also.

Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parents,

Have you ever heard someone say, "I'm never going to forgive you for this!" or "I'll forgive her, but I just can't forget." Maybe you've said or thought those words yourself. Maybe you've also felt that God may be saying them to you. During this season of Lent, our class is remembering the wonderful gift God gave to us when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die in our place on the cross for all of our sins. Your child has been learning that no sin is too bad that Jesus won't forgive it. That Good News is not just for children. Jesus' death and resurrection made it possible for everyone who trusts in Him to have forgiveness and healing for all sins, even those that seem to us to be "too big" to be forgiven such as abortion or murder. (1 John 1:8-9)

Resources

Books:

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, Pantomimes, and Litanies for the Very Young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. The *When Jesus Died and Rose Again* Finger Plays and *I'm Sorry* Litanies would be especially appropriate for this unit.

Jahsmann, A.H. & Simon, M.P. *Little Visits with God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957; revised copyright 1995. First published in 1957, this devotion book for families with young children is still relevant today. These devotions could also be used by the teacher for opening and closing the day. The stories related to the topic of forgiveness, such as *Where to Get Forgiveness*, *How to Get Clean on the Inside* [King David], and *More Wonderful than Soap* would be especially appropriate for this unit.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Music, texts, guitar chords, and in some cases, suggestions for actions, for a variety of Christian songs organized by topic.

Web Site:

www.lutheransforlife.org – See *GOD'S WORD for Life* Bible.

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For Life and Healing Broken Hearts.



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Bible Story: Jesus Anointed by the Sinful Woman. (Luke 7:36-50)



Critical Questions:

1. Who dies in an abortion?

World's Answer: No one. This is not a human person with protected rights of any kind.

WORD'S ANSWER: Someone. This is someone created by God’s hands and for whom Jesus died.

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3. How do we receive healing?

World's Answer: Not needed. The world says, “It will all be over soon.”

WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit “richly and daily” brings God’s forgiveness in Jesus through Word and Sacrament.



Religion

Forgiveness Stories

Tell or read a story from your *Voyages*® curriculum that illustrates God's forgiveness. Some possible stories include:

Grade 1

Zacchaeus Has a Friend. (Unit 6, p. 184)

Jesus Dies on the Cross. (Unit 7, p. 242)

Jesus Changes Paul. (Unit 8, p. 268)

Grade 2

Jacob and His Family Sin. (Unit 1, p. 34)

A Forgiving Father. (Unit 5, p. 170)

Jesus is Crucified. (Unit 7, p. 230)



See also the Arch® Books and other suggested readings in the Resource section. These stories from God's Word illustrate that God loves and forgives sinners. His death on the cross redeemed all people. All who believe in Him will be saved. Although all sins are equally serious in God's eyes, to humans some sins appear more important than others. There is no sin too "big" for God to forgive. His grace covers all. It is vital that children know this biblical truth. God loves them all the time, even when they are "bad." He is willing to forgive totally and completely.

Luther's Forgiveness Story

Tell the story of Martin Luther and his joy at learning that God had forgiven his sins. Luther is a graphic example of a man consumed by guilt who found joy and freedom in the Gospel message. Several resources are listed which communicate his story to young children.



Forgiveness List

Make a class list of sinful things children often do or say. Write the list on the board or on chart paper. Are some sins worse than others? Discuss the idea of "big" or "little" sins. Every sin is the same in God's eyes. Jesus died for every one of them—big or small.

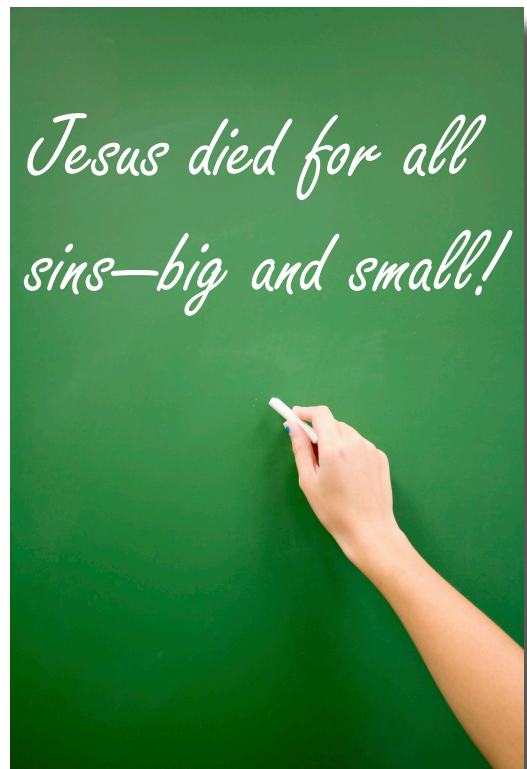
Ask God to forgive all the sins you have done. Practice saying the words, "I am sorry. Please forgive me," and the words, "God forgives you, and I forgive you." Take turns saying, "You are forgiven because Jesus died for you on the cross."

Forgiveness Drawing

Ask the children to apply the previous exercise more personally. Direct them to draw a picture of a time they did something wrong. Then give each child a cross to glue over the picture. God has forgiven that sin.



Teacher Sprinkle: Is any sin too big for God to forgive? Why or why not?



Language Arts

Forgiveness Word Search

See the Word Search on the CD. You can create your own word search at www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/words/search/



Echo Forgiveness

See Echo story of the story of Zacchaeus on the CD. You could also create your own. Children could “tell” this story to another class or at a church or chapel service.

“God Forgives Me” Book

Direct children to make books individually or in groups. On the top of each page write, “When I _____,” and illustrate a specific sinful action. Then at the bottom of each page write, “God forgives me.” See the template on the CD.



Fine Arts

Forgiveness Songs



Choose a song that speaks of God’s love and forgiveness. Some suggestions (from *Little Ones Sing Praise*) are:

Jesus Loves Me (Especially the second verse). Sing it, too, in the different languages printed at the bottom of the page.

Amigos de Cristo (Emphasize God loves people in every country).

I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus.

I’m Sorry.

God Loves Me Dearly.

Jesus Loves the Little Children.



Forgiveness Art

It cannot be stressed too much that forgiveness comes through the cross of Jesus.

Woven Cross: Cut a cross shape out of a piece of construction paper. Cut vertical slits about an inch long in appropriate places on the cross. Have the children weave strips of a contrasting color through the slits. Fold the extra paper back and glue.

“Shrinky Dink” Cross: The teacher should put the crosses in the oven and take them out. This activity could also be done as a science project. (See CD for specific directions.)



Math

Cross-word

Do a “crossword” number puzzle in the shape of a cross. (See CD)

Timeline

Make a class timeline of your day indicating the good things and problems that occur. Make the timeline on butcher paper and hang it on a wall. At the end of the day, erase the bad behavior items or cover them with a cross. Be sure the children know that God forgives us each time we sin and confess that sin. We have a fresh start and can strive to do better in Jesus!

Decoding

See the code sheet on the CD. The message reads, “Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace.” Students could also write their own coded messages.

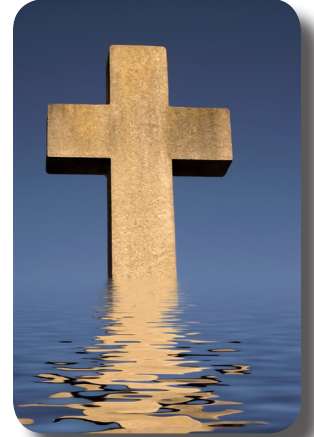


Teacher Sprinkle: How many crosses can you count in your classroom? In the church? In the whole school? In your house?

Science

Overflowing Forgiveness

Demonstrate how God’s forgiveness makes our hearts “clean.” You will need a can of cola, two clear pitchers, and a large bowl to catch the “overflow.” Fill one pitcher about half full with clear water. Tell the children that when God created Adam and Eve they were pure and clean. They had no sin. But when sin entered the world, people’s hearts became unclean. Pour the can of cola into the clear water, making it dark. Then God washed us clean through baptism and His grace. Pour more clear water into the pitcher containing the cola until the clear water displaces the colored water and the pitcher contains clear water again. This may take awhile. Practice so you know how much water is needed. Now God sees us as His perfect children—completely forgiven and pure in his eyes. This enables us to live as His children and forgive others.



Covered in Red

Demonstrate with a red filter how Jesus’ blood covers our sins. On a piece of white chart paper, use a red marking pen to write a list of things we do wrong. Then cover the page with a piece of clear red plastic or cellophane. You will no longer be able to see the list because the red paper filters out the color. That is the way God looks at us. He sees the blood of His Son, not our sins. We’re covered!

Erased

Discuss how an eraser makes marks disappear. Give each child a cross-shaped eraser. Discuss how God erases our sins—big and small. An eraser rubs the color of the pencil lead off the paper. It sometimes creates heat due to the friction caused by the rubbing. That is the way God forgives our sins. He takes them away just like the eraser takes the marks away. (Small cross-shaped erasers are available from Concordia Publishing House.)



Teacher Sprinkle: What are “cruciferous” vegetables? Why are they called that? How are they good for you?

Social Studies

Acting Out

Act out situations in which a child is doing or saying something that is sinful (e.g. calling someone a bad name, hitting, stealing, talking back to a parent). Then have the person who has done the sinful behavior say, "I was wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me." The person sinned against can respond, "I forgive you for _____." The class as a whole can respond with, "God forgives you." Repeat the role-play several times so many children can actively participate.



Same Love, Different Language



Learn how to say, "God loves you," in several different languages. Jesus died for all the people in the world—not just in our own country. Ask children from different cultures to find out how to say the phrase and share the information with the class. You could make a bulletin board with children from other countries saying the words. The refrain to *Jesus Loves Me* is translated into Navajo, Indian, Spanish, Chinese, and African at the bottom of page 42 in the book, *Little Ones Sing Praise*, published by Concordia Publishing House. The phrase, "Jesus loves me," is illustrated in sign language on the bottom of page 43 in the same book.

"Really Bad" People?

Discuss how police officers help us by putting dangerous people in jail. Can those who are in such trouble be forgiven? Why? Point out that no matter what someone has done, God can still forgive. Refer to the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). That doesn't mean that there are no earthly consequences, but even the worst criminals can go to heaven.



Teacher Sprinkle: Find some famous people (presidents, sports figures) who made mistakes when they were young, but then went on to do great things.



Physical Activity

Cross Parts

See how many crosses you can make with body parts. Encourage children to be creative. Use fingers, arms, legs, toes, and any combination thereof. How many more crosses could be made by two children working together? By the whole class?

Cross Hopscotch

Play hopscotch. This traditional children's game uses a variety of patterns. Choose the cross shape for this activity.



Service Learning Project

Care Center Visit

Sing songs of God's love and forgiveness at a local care center. Call ahead to set up a time. Prepare the children ahead of time for what they may see and how to talk to the older residents. Make extra "Shrinky Dink" crosses to take along. Let the children interact with the people to whom they are giving the crosses. Remember to smile and share God's love with them.



Taking it Home

Encourage the children to carry the lesson of God's forgiveness into their own homes and neighborhoods. Tell three people this week of God's forgiveness in Jesus. Ask for forgiveness. Forgive others.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

The behavior of young children is constantly scrutinized and directed by the adults around them. They know that they often do not meet the expectations placed upon them. They know the burden of feeling guilty.

God's Word brings the refreshing news that they are forgiven. Jesus' death on the cross paid for all their sins. They are free—free to live in joy and free to live lives of willing obedience to the God who loves them so much.

Adults, too, know the feeling of guilt. We may have carried the burden of sin in our hearts for years. Listen to your children tell of God's forgiveness for you, too. No matter what we have done or left undone, God sees us as holy because when He looks at us, He sees Jesus. Since we have been forgiven, we can also forgive ourselves and others. That is the message of the Gospel.

If some sin is heavy on your heart, please feel free to talk to your pastor or another trusted Christian brother or sister to reassure you personally of God's full and free gift of salvation for you. Model that forgiveness to your children, too, so that they see God's unconditional love in the way they are treated each day. Together, you can celebrate that gift with each other and share it with others who need to hear the Good News of God's love for them.

Resources

Books:

Bergt, Carolyn. *The Adventures of Martin Luther*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999.
 Borchertding, Gwen. *The Good That I Should*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.
 Gross, Arthur. *A Children's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948.
 Kearns, Becky Lockhart. *The Prodigal Son* (Arch® Book). St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.
 Kolbrek, Loyal A. (Editor). *Zacchaeus* (Arch® Book). St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994.
Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.
Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Also available from CPH: Martin Luther Flannelgraph, Martin Luther Minicurriculum, *The Story of Martin Luther*.

Web Site:

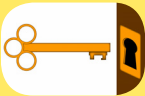
www.superkids.com/aweb/tools/words/search/

Teaching For Life

For Life and Healing Broken Hearts.



Prayer for Prep: “Heavenly Father, for Jesus’ sake, forgive my sins and help me forgive others, and then use me to teach and model Your forgiveness to my class. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s forgiveness in Jesus brings healing for the guilt and regret of sin.



Gospel Focus: Jesus died for *everyone* and for *every* sin.



Bible Story: Jesus Anointed by the Sinful Woman. (Luke 7:36-50)



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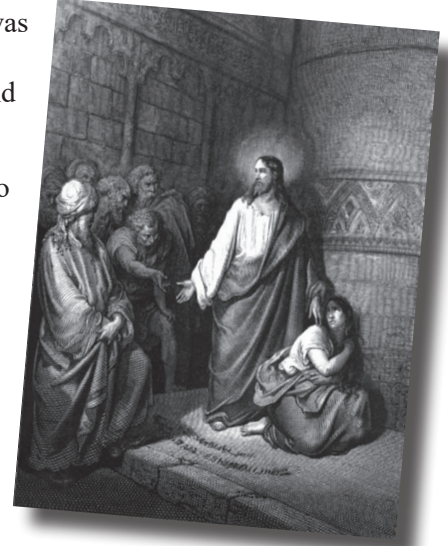


Religion

Jesus Loves Sinners

Read the account of Jesus being anointed by the sinful woman from Luke 7:36-50. Guide the children's understanding with the following questions.

1. What did the woman do that showed she felt bad about her sins and was not good enough to be loved? (She wept enough tears to wash Jesus' feet. Washing feet was only done by the lowliest of slaves. Kissing and anointing feet instead of the head showed how lowly she felt.)
2. How did the Pharisees feel about this woman? (She was someone who had done terrible sins. Jesus shouldn't even let her touch Him.)
3. Jesus tells a story. What was He teaching in this story? (He forgives "big" sins and "little" sins. Those who have had many and horrible sins forgiven love Jesus because they understand how undeserving they are. Others, like the Pharisees, love little. They think they are pretty good and don't need much of Jesus' forgiveness.)
4. Is there really a difference between "big" sins, like murder, and "little" sins, like disobeying parents? (No. Jesus died for everyone and for every sin. We all need His forgiveness.)
5. What else did this woman receive along with her forgiveness? (Go in PEACE!)



Up in Smoke!

Have children write sins they have either committed or any "bigger" sins they can think of like murder, stealing, etc. and place them in a box. After all of the sins have been placed in a box, move them to a pan that is deep enough to hold a flame. Take the pan outside to a safe place and light the paper on fire to symbolize forgiveness. Point out that even though there is ash left over in this case, with Jesus' forgiveness remnants of their sins are completely removed. (If it's windy and you are adventurous, toss the ashes into the air and let them blow away!)



Seeking Forgiveness and Forgiving

Think of a time when you have committed a sin against someone else.

Write a prayer to God asking Him for forgiveness because of what Jesus has done.



Think of a time when someone sinned against you.

Write that person a letter letting him/her know that you have forgiven them.



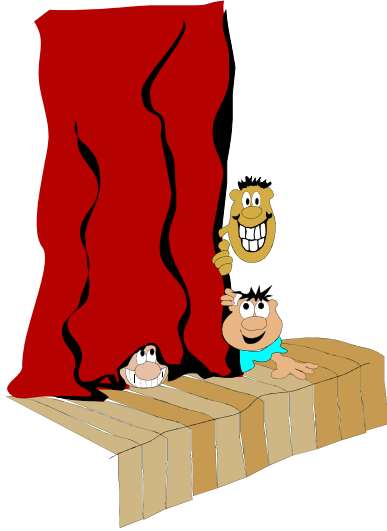
Teacher Sprinkle: Are there any sins you think Jesus will not forgive? Are there any sins that you would consider hard to forgive? Do you think Jesus will still forgive us even if we commit one of those "big" sins?

Language Arts

Sinful Woman's Letter

Write a letter to Jesus from the point of view of the sinful woman. What do you think the woman would say to Jesus after she was so publicly forgiven by Him?

A Drama of Forgiveness

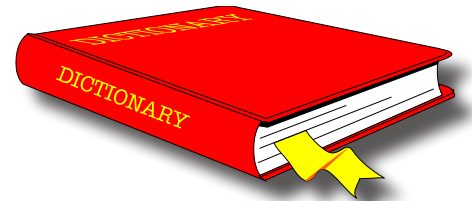


Working in groups, write a play to dramatize the Bible story. Use this in a fine arts lesson.



Defining Forgiveness

Using a dictionary, look up the definitions to the word “forgiveness.” How do these definitions apply to the story of Jesus and the sinful woman?



Look up the following Bible verses about forgiveness. Write definitions based on these.

Isaiah 43:25

Psalm 103:11-12

Micah 7:18-19

“So Long Sin” Synonyms

Create a list of synonyms for the word “forgiveness.”

How many words can you come up with as a class?

absolution, acquittal, amnesty, charity, clemency, compassion, condonation, dispensation, exculpation, exoneration, extenuation, grace, immunity, impunity, indemnity, justification, lenience, lenity, mercy, overlooking, palliation, purgation, quarter, quittance, remission, remittal, reprieve, respite, vindication



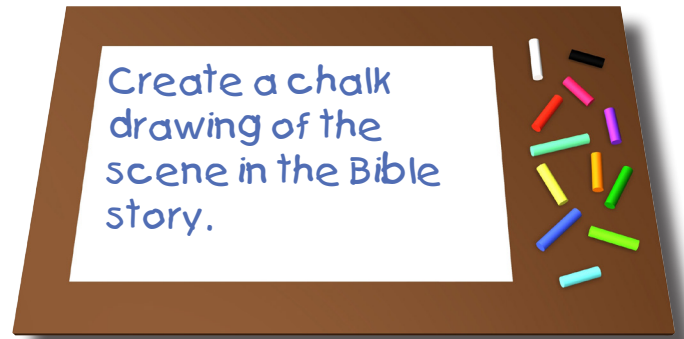
Teacher Sprinkle: If you were one of the guests at the dinner, how would you feel if Jesus had forgiven this “despicable” woman in front of you?

Fine Arts

Drawing the Story

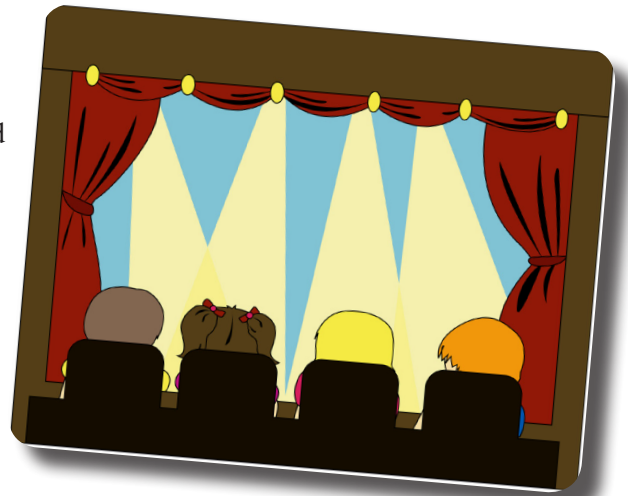
Explain that “reclining at table” (Luke 7:37) meant just that. The tables were low to the floor and people reclined on their stomach or side with their head towards the table. This would mean the feet extended away from the table making them easily accessible for washing.

Create a chalk drawing of the scene in the Bible story. This would be a good scene to illustrate depth and perspective. Drawings could be from the point of view of someone sitting at the table watching the woman wash Jesus’ feet or from someone watching the whole thing from across the room.



Dramatizing the Story

Use the play written in the Language Arts lesson or just do an impromptu rendition. You could use a table with its legs folded up and prop it up 12-18 inches with boxes. Provide some food or do this as part of “snack time.”



Singing the Story

Write songs talking about the forgiveness that is ours through Jesus. Since the Psalms are songs, read one or more of the following for ideas.

Psalm 51:1-12

(You might ask if they have ever heard verses 10-12 sung anywhere!)

Psalm 79:8-9

Psalm 103:1-5

Sing some forgiveness songs from *Little Ones Sing Praise*.

“Jesus Loves Me, This I Know”

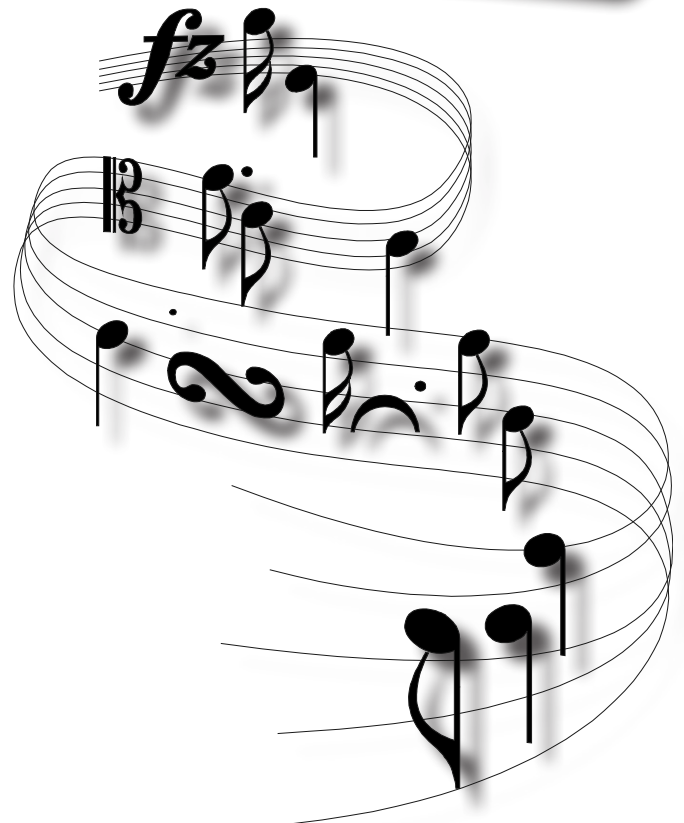
(p. 42)

“I Am Sorry, Jesus”

(p. 14)

“God Loves Me Dearly”

(p. 85)



Math

Fourth Grade – Percentage of Love

Using the same translation for consistency, have the students count the number of words in 1 Corinthians 13:1-7. Then count the number of times “love” is used. What percent of the words are “love”?

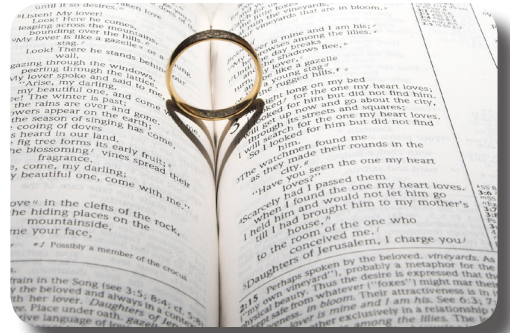
The kind of love described here can only come from God through Jesus. It is this great love that moves Him to forgive our sins.

Third Grade – Roman Math

Write the following chapters and verses from Romans on the board. Have the students convert them to Roman Numerals.

5:8	V:VIII
8:35-39	VIII:XXXV-XXXIX
13:9	XIII:IX

Discuss what each verse tells us about God’s love.



Service Learning

Washing Feet

Allow any of the students who wish to take part in a foot washing. It is a very symbolic role playing of what Jesus did with the woman. Talk about how Jesus forgave even the most sinful woman and treated her with respect. Can we, too, in our everyday lives learn this lesson from Jesus and forgive those who have sinned against us?

You can also talk about the time Jesus washed feet! Read John 13:1-15. Jesus took the form of a slave (Philippians 2:5-8) in order to forgive our sins by dying on the cross. He calls on us to put others before ourselves to forgive them and to serve them.

Dirty Jobs

To “live out” the idea of doing the lowliest of tasks, have the class come up with a list of “dirty jobs,” those no one else really wants to do. (E.g. picking up yucky trash in ditches after the snow has melted, scooping up “dog doo” from people’s yards, cleaning gutters and drains of soggy leaves along the street by the school [Be safe!], etc.) Let the students be creative and then let them get “down and dirty”—preferably some day after school or on a weekend!



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This month we will be talking about the refreshing news from God that they are forgiven. Jesus' death on the cross paid for all their sins. They are free—free to live in joy and free to live lives of willing obedience to the God who loves them so much.

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Serving Him,

Resources

The Holy Bible

Little Ones Sing Praise, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Christian songs for young children.

Teaching For Life

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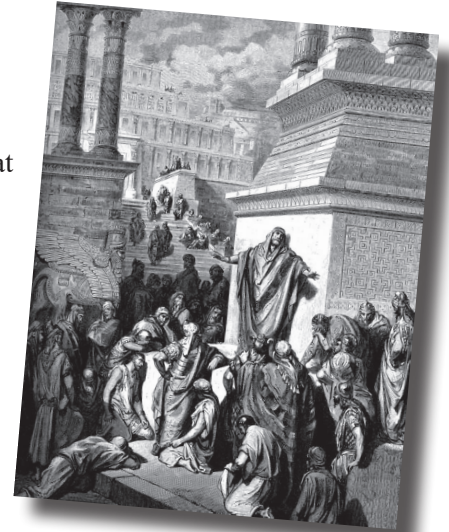


Religion

Mercy for Bad Guys

Voyages® Unit 7, Grade 5: In the lesson on God's mercy to Nineveh, a really bad and sinful city, help the students understand the movement of repentance. Make it clear that repentance is God's work in us and God, in His mercy, moves us along through the power of His Word.

- Confess (Psalm 32:5)
- Ask for forgiveness and mercy (Psalm 25:11)
- Ask for heart repair (Psalm 51:10)
- Receive God's mercy and cleansing in Jesus (1 John 1:9)



Plot Nineveh's Repentance Event Line

They hear Jonah's message from God (3:4); believe God (3:5); confess, fast, dress in sackcloth (3:4, 6-8a); cry for forgiveness and mercy (3:8b-9); and receive mercy (3:10).

Target Practice

The CD contains an excellent activity that illustrates how Jesus' being "pierced for our transgressions" (Isaiah 53:5 NIV) makes forgiveness possible for every one and for every sin.



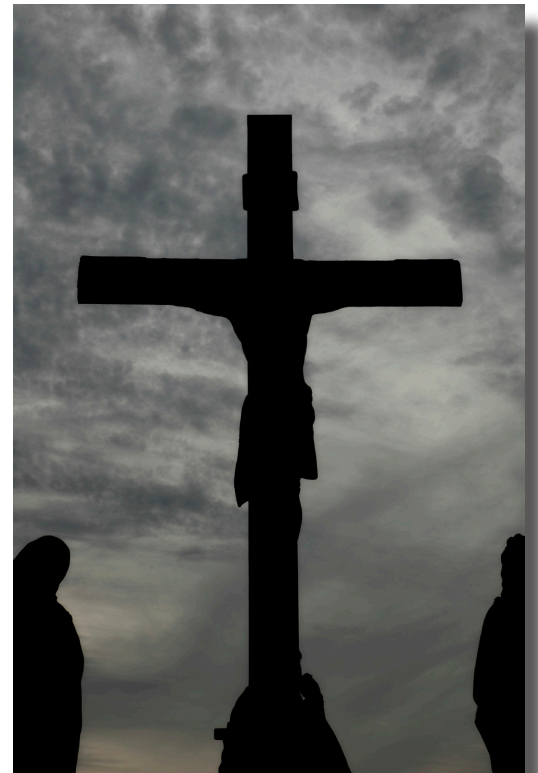
Message from a Scar

Voyages® Unit 7, Grade 6: Use this activity for the lesson "Jesus teaches about sheep and goats." (Matthew 25:31-46) Have students compare 25:34 and 25:41. See if they can discern a striking contrast here often overlooked. God prepared Heaven for people, not Hell. He prepared Hell for the "devil and his angels." God doesn't want people there. So, how do you avoid Hell and attain eternal life? You need to be a "sheep" (32). You need to be "righteous" (46), i.e. perfectly good.

Have students make a list of some of their good ("righteous") deeds. Make one for yourself.

Ask: "So what can we offer God on Judgment Day that makes us righteous?" We could hold up a list of good deeds. Share some on your list and/or have some students share theirs. "But what could God hold up?" The other list! We can never be perfectly good. Point to a scar on your body or see if any of the students have scars. Scars usually result because we were careless or did something we shouldn't. What if every time we sinned it showed up on the outside as a scar? No amount of plastic surgery could fix us!

Ask: "What did Jesus' body look like on the cross? Whose "scars" were those?" Now have someone read Romans 3:21-26. The righteousness we need to get into heaven is based upon what God has done for us in Jesus. Therefore, the payment for every sin for everyone has been made. Through confession of our sins and faith in the payment made, we receive this forgiveness. When God looks at us through the scars of Jesus, He does not see our scars!



Homework!

Encourage students to use the *Target Practice* or *Message from a Scar* lessons with friends who are feeling ashamed for something they have done.

Language Arts

Article Distinction

Note the difference between the adjective articles “the” and “a” by using this sentence:

“Jesus chose to be *the* Lamb of God in order that I can be *a* lamb of God.”

“My Bad” vs “mea culpa”

The Latin term, “mea culpa,” (my fault) was used in ancient confessional liturgies and in some English ones today. For example, from the service of Compline (LSB 253), “I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault.” These words were said with much the same emotional cry as the tax collector in the temple, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” (Luke 18:13) Ask the students to write about a time when they felt this sense of guilt. Afterward, contrast this to today’s casual expression, “my bad.” The Bible says that confession is good for the soul. Why? What happens when it becomes a flip comment? (Recall who received mercy in the story Jesus told about the tax collector and the Pharisee in Luke 18:9-14.)



Characterization by Action



Authors infer how a character feels by showing action. Give the example of the sinful woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears and dried them with her hair in Luke 7:36. What do her actions suggest regarding herself? Jesus?

When might someone feel full of amazement at Jesus’ mercy? (Summarize answers with, “When the repentant sinner hears the good news of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, especially when the sin seems so great. Use as an example a woman who repents and is forgiven for the sin of abortion.)

Have each one look for a spot in recent writing where they can show emotion by action rather than stating it.

Social Studies

Judicial Remorse

As you study the judicial branch of the government, consider giving a more challenging assignment to gifted students. Research the effect of stated remorse on the outcome of judicial sentencing. Suggest googling “remorse” + “judicial sentencing” for information.

Ask them to conclude their report with a paragraph comparing their findings with what happens when they sincerely apologize to a parent at home and the subsequent punishment. How does true remorse affect God? The angels? (Luke 15:10)



Teacher Sprinkle: Does remorse and forgiveness for a sin always mean no consequences for that sin?



Math

Percent

What percent of pregnancies are terminated? (Trick question! 100 percent of pregnancies are terminated either by giving birth, miscarriage, or abortion.)

Approximately 25 percent of pregnancies end in abortion. Have the students calculate 25 percent of their class size. Have that many students stand. That's how much bigger this class should be.

If there are 3250 abortions every day, how many women each day are affected? (3250!)

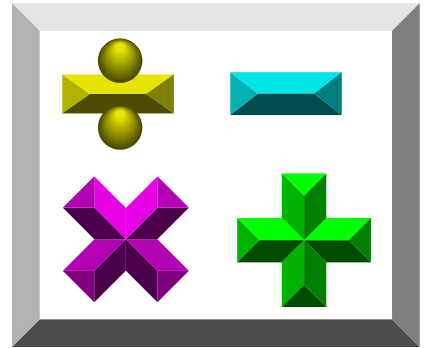
Discuss how such women might feel about themselves compared to those who give birth. Remind students again of the hope that all repentant sinners have in Jesus.



Estimation

When you study estimation, ask the children to write down an estimate of their sins in one day using rounded numbers. Double this for the things they should do that they don't do (omission sins). Multiply this by 300 for 365 days in a year. (We're underestimating.) Multiply by 10 for an underestimate of their age unless someone is younger than 10.

As they look at an underestimate of sins in their lifetimes, ask, "How many sins are allowed to be considered fit for heaven?" (zero) How does God's justice-mercy equation work?



Me alone = God's wrath and just punishment for me.
Jesus + grace = God's mercy for me.



Teacher Sprinkle: Explain the equation: 1 abortion = 1 dead + 2 wounded?

Science

Animal Study

Discuss the difference between a submissive response in animals—cowering, tail between legs—and shame in humans—feeling bad about themselves because of sin.

What is the source of an animal's submissive response? Instinct, learned response.
 What is the source of human shame? God's Law written on our hearts.

Discuss how this shows that humans are more than "advanced animals." Talk about the difference between shame and humility. (Humility is acknowledging our helplessness before God and trusting in His mercy.) The Gospel of forgiveness in Jesus helps women who have had abortions move from shame to humility.



Teacher Sprinkle: Which state of matter: solid, liquid, or gas, does guilt feel like?

Fine Arts

Body Language

Students may not know that a sense of guilt affects a person's body language. Often a parent can "just tell" when a child is lying. Let volunteers give examples of this. Ask volunteers to portray such guilty "language"!

Painters suggest emotion by body position as in James Seward's *Who Will Love Him More* depiction of the sinful woman.

If equipment permits, have students find the painting *Who Will Love Him More* on the Internet (www.buychristianart.com/seward/who_will_love_him_more.htm) and/or project it. Discuss the "body language" in the painting.

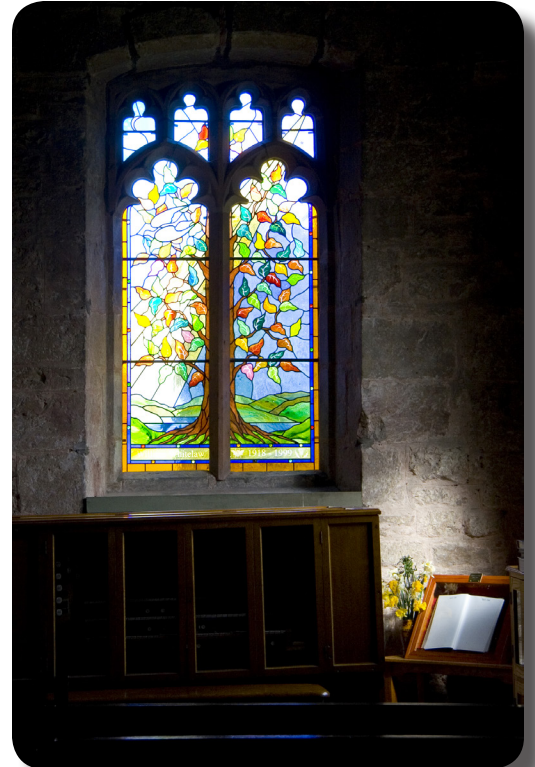
Mood Music

Give students cards to hold up: anger, joy, sadness, fear, shame. Play various pieces of classical music and have students hold up what that music evokes in them. Ask volunteers to explain specifically what the music did. Then ask what kind of music would be playing in the background of a scene of Adam and Eve in the garden, of Adam and Eve with the snake, of Adam and Eve after they'd eaten the fruit, of Adam and Eve hearing Genesis 3:15 from God.

Play or have played the accompaniment to the Offertory from the various worship settings in the front of your hymnal. Which one do students think best portrays the words:

"Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with your free Spirit."

Explain that these words are from David's prayer in Psalm 51:10-12 where he is sorrowful over his great sins of adultery and murder. It is a great prayer for all sinners and one we know God will answer through Jesus.



Service Learning

String a Verse

Explain that sometimes people in the hospital feel that God is punishing them. When the pastor visits, he brings news of Jesus' forgiveness and God's resultant acceptance.

Write Bible verses on cards, a word or phrase per card. If someone in the hospital or a care center needs something to do to pass the time, have them string the cards together. This way they can think about the verse word by word.

Use verses like: Hebrews 8:12; 1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13; or Ephesians 2:4-5.



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

What if you received the following e-mail?

“In response to this morning’s request for forgiveness, we’re sorry to inform you that you have exceeded your coverage for sins. Our records show that yesterday alone you erred seven times in the area of self-interest. In addition, your prayer life is substandard when compared to others of like age and circumstance. Your prevailing attitude toward your neighbor appears to be either “out of sight, out of mind” or “keep up with the Joneses.” Because of your sins, you fall into the high risk category for continued service. Grace does have limits, after all. Therefore we wish to inform you that Jesus sends His regrets and hopes you will find some other form of coverage. Have a nice day.”

This month we will be discussing the fact that grace does not have limits! No such e-mail could ever be sent! But people, because of the nature of their sin, sometimes feel like God’s grace might be limited. The story of the sinful woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears reminds us of God’s limitless mercy in Christ (Luke 7:36-50).

(You may want to comment on the Lenten emphasis on repentance and include special worship opportunities.)

Serving Him,

Resources

Books:

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Web Sites:

www.afterabortion.org has trusted information on post-abortion syndrome.

www.lutheransforlife.org has a variety of materials dealing with post-abortion.

www.word-of-hope.org – Word of Hope is Lutherans For Life’s post abortion ministry. There is a toll-free national hotline (888-217-8679). Word of Hope brochures are also available.

Teaching For Life

For Life and Healing Broken Hearts.



Prayer for Prep: “Heavenly Father, for Jesus’ sake, forgive my sins and help me forgive others, and then use me to teach and model Your forgiveness to my class. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”



Key Concept: God’s forgiveness in Jesus brings healing for the guilt and regret of sin.



Gospel Focus: Jesus died for *everyone* and for *every* sin.



Bible Story: Jesus Anointed by the Sinful Woman. (Luke 7:36-50)



Critical Questions:

1. Who dies in an abortion?

World's Answer: No one. This is not a human person with protected rights of any kind.

WORD'S ANSWER: Someone. This is someone created by God’s hands and for whom Jesus died.

2. Who is wounded in an abortion?

World's Answer: No one. The world consistently denies any effect of abortion on women.

WORD'S ANSWER: Many. The Word reminds us of the weight of sin and guilt and points us to the One whose nail-pierced hands bring healing. (Isaiah 53:5)

3. How do we receive healing?

World's Answer: Not needed. The world says, “It will all be over soon.”

WORD'S ANSWER: Through Christ’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit “richly and daily” brings God’s forgiveness in Jesus through Word and Sacrament.



Religion

Read Luke 7:36-50.

Illustrating the Point

Ask: What is more dangerous to a person who is very thirsty, poison in a glass that smells terrible and looks even worse, or poison in a glass that has the aroma of sweet fruit and looks luscious? Illustrate with a glass of clear water and a glass of pond or muddy water.

Answer: Poison in a glass that tempts us to drink it. Even a thirsty person wouldn't want to drink a liquid that looked and smelled gross.

The Point

Ask: What person is in the greatest danger of God's anger, one who does not recognize their sin or seeks to hide it, or the sinner who admits to their sin and feels sorrow because of it?

Answer: The person who does not admit personal sin is in the greatest danger before the holiness of God. On the other hand, those who confess their sin experience God's grace and forgiveness. Psalm 32:5, "**Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD'—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**" NIV

Application of the Point

Note that before a person admits personal sin, there can be feelings of great sorrow and unrest. Psalm 32:4: "**For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.**" NIV

Ask: How do we know the woman described by Luke felt great sorrow?

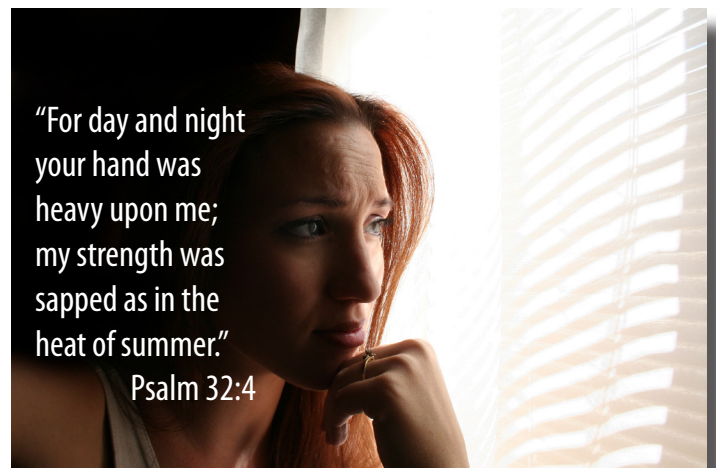
Answer: She wept. Her sorrow and repentance dripped on Jesus' feet. Imagine the depth of sorrow that produced enough tears to wash feet!

This unit seeks to help the students understand the great guilt and regret that eventually burden those involved in having an abortion. The sorrow that comes from realizing you participated in a choice that led to the death of your own child can be so overwhelming that no amount of tears can express it. When kept inside, this sorrow can result in all kinds of destructive thinking and behavior. (See CD and the quote by Dr. David Reardon for specific examples.)

Even more so, this unit seeks to help students understand the limitless scope of God's grace and forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

Ask: If a boy or girl, man or woman, who has been involved in an abortion, feels sorrow and asks for forgiveness, will God forgive this sin?

Answer: Yes. God always forgives the sin of a repentant heart. What's more, God gives more! He also gives peace in the place of sorrow. Note that Jesus says to the woman: "**Your faith has saved you; go in peace.**" (v 50)



Language Arts

Review previous acronyms. The acronym for Lesson Seven, GRACE, suggests God's love and forgiveness is offered to all people and is able to cover all sin.

To practice the proper use of punctuation and quotation marks, have the students write a brief conversation in which a Christian uses the points of the acronym as a guide to share God's grace with someone who has committed a "big" sin, like the woman in Luke 7:36-50 or a woman today burdened by the sin of abortion.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

GRACE

God loves every single person.

Rebellion and sin are at work in each of us.

Admitting our sin we can be forgiven.

Comforted, we boldly face the future.

Eternity with God is our destiny.

Fine Arts

Materials: colorful inexpensive or unused porcelain or glass cups and drinking glasses (one for demonstration and one for each student), glue appropriate for bonding glass and porcelain to paper, heavy weight 8" x 11" construction paper or poster board in a variety of colors, heavy-weight paper plates, a large five-gallon bucket or pail, and a four foot long 2" x 4" piece of wood.

Show students the colorful demonstration cup. Note its beauty and function. Place the demonstration cup into the bucket and break it into smaller pieces. Explain that sometimes people's lives are broken into pieces because of mistakes that they make.

Place the broken pieces onto one of the paper plates. Explain that the students are going to, one by one, place their cups into the bucket, break it into smaller pieces, and then put the pieces onto a paper plate. Carefully administer the process as each student breaks their cup or glass.

Ask each student to select a piece of construction paper or poster board. Tell them that they are to glue the pieces of their broken glass onto the paper to make something beautiful (such as a decoration, stained glass window, etc.).

After students have made their artwork, and while they are setting up, gather the class around each work as its student crafter explains what they have made. Make a positive comment about each student's project.

Explain that God can take the broken pieces of a bad decision and make a future that becomes beautiful, but different. God's love and grace in Jesus Christ can bring healing and beauty out of brokenness and an ugly situation.



Science

In the animal kingdom, wolves will often fight among themselves over territorial rights. At the end of what is often a very ferocious encounter, the losing wolf will turn its neck allowing the other wolf an opportunity to deliver a fatal bite. When this happens, the winning wolf will not kill the other wolf, but lets it go, effectively taking over the disputed territory. Turning the neck to allow for a fatal blow is called an “appeasement response.” The stronger wolf, seeing that the other is weaker and cannot win, does not kill, but releases what had threatened its position.

One argument used to defend the right to abortion compares the unborn child of an unplanned pregnancy to a thief breaking into the house. Killing such an intruder is therefore acceptable the argument goes. Many women buy into this worldly argument and are blinded to the fact that their baby is frail, weak, and fully human. Later, when the reality hits of what they have done and that there were life-giving alternatives, they are filled with such grief they feel they cannot be comforted. (See Matthew 2:16-18 for a picture of deep sorrow over the death of babies.)

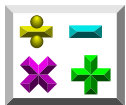
Such women—and the fathers of aborted babies as well—need to know Jesus can forgive and heal them, even as He did for the woman who anointed His feet with her tears. (Luke 7:36-50)



Math

Abortion's Numbers

Remind the students that in the United States alone, around 3,250 abortions take place each day. (Current statistics are available from Lutherans For Life.) Have them calculate the number of abortions taking place each minute in the United States. How many seconds pass by between abortions? Have the class be perfectly silent for 3 or 4 minutes. Have someone time the calculated seconds and rap on the desk or table each time another baby dies in an abortion.



Using the above daily figure, have students calculate the number of abortions per year.

For every abortion, at least ten other people are affected—the mother, father, grandparents, siblings, etc. How many people are affected every year by abortion in our country? The math is easy, but the result is staggering.

Tell the students that many of those having abortions feel pressured to do so, and are working with false and misleading information. Sadly, many of these millions of women who have had abortions, and many of the men who fathered the aborted children, will later feel great grief, regret, and pain. This creates a mission field of millions who need the hope and comfort of the Gospel of Jesus.



Social Studies

David Reardon, in his book, *The Jericho Plan*, quotes a pregnancy center counselor as saying, “When I began this work, I was mostly concerned about the unborn. But after working with so many young girls who have had abortions, what saddens me most is how abortion destroys the joy of their youth, and strips away every last shred of their innocence. Nothing can make a young girl feel more worthless and despicable than having killed her own child.”

Ask: Do you think there are girls in our communities and schools who have had an abortion?

Answer: Let students respond, concluding that there are likely a number of girls in their communities and schools who have had abortions. Note that you are aware that some in the classroom may know the names of some of those girls.

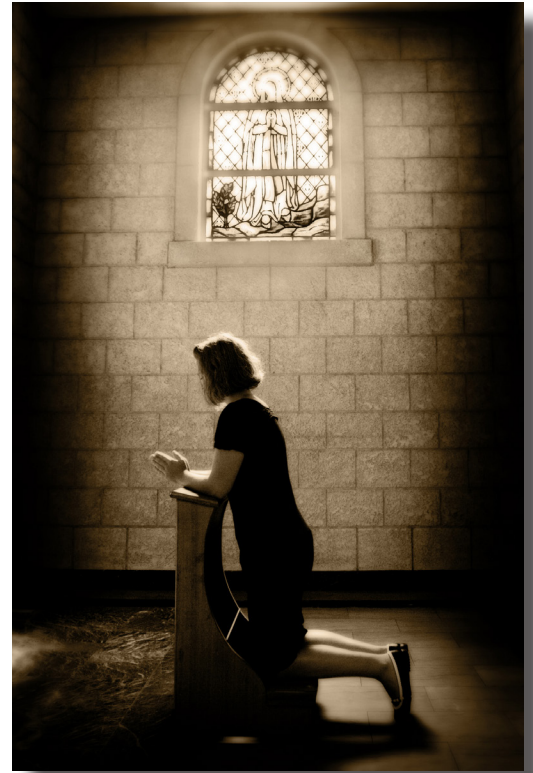
Ask: If the counselor just quoted is correct, do you think there may be girls who are really hurting in their communities and schools?

Answer: After discussion, note that the girls who have had an abortion may at first feel relief, even happy, about being out from under a very real pressure. In time, however, many of these girls may have deep pain and grief. It may occur much later in life. The average time for the real pain to surface after an abortion is nine years.

Girls who have had abortions need to know the power of God’s grace. They have not done the unforgivable sin. Repenting of their past, they can hear Jesus saying to them, “*Your sins are forgiven . . . Go in peace.*” (Luke 7:48-50)

Assignment

Consider using a theme like “The affects of abortion on women” or “on our country” as an essay assignment. See Post-Abortion Resources.



Service Learning

The key concept of this unit is **RESTORATION**. God restores the repentant sinner through Christ, no matter what lies in the past.

Find a room in your church or school that is in need of some cleaning and minor repair. As you prepare to bring the students to that room, have with you the supplies that will be needed to do the work that you plan to complete.

After arriving, point out that if the room were always properly maintained, it wouldn’t need the kind of restoration that you will be doing to fix it up.

Do the cleaning and repair.

Conclude by noting that we also do not always properly maintain our lives. We do things that mess up our lives. By the power of the Holy Spirit, messed up lives can be restored and be better than ever!



Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Your children are learning:

- Hidden sin is more dangerous than sin which is confessed.
- Jesus receives all sinners and forgives all sins.
- Those who have participated in an abortion can confess their sin and receive forgiveness and peace.
- God's grace reaches to embrace every person in every situation.
- Those who have abortions often later experience trauma and guilt.
- 3,250 abortions of pre-born babies take place each day in the United States.
- Millions of women are in emotional pain because of a past abortion, and need to know that in God's grace they can be forgiven and restored.

Serving Him,

Post Abortion Resources

Books:

Michels, Nancy. *Helping Women Recover From Abortion*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1988.

Reardon, David C. *The Jericho Plan – Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing*. Springfield, Illinois: Acorn Books, 1996.

Hotline:

Word of Hope Post-Abortion Hotline: 888-217-8679.

Web Sites:

www.afterabortion.org – The most comprehensive and authoritative source on the web for post-abortion trauma and its effects is the Elliot Institute.

www.lutheransforlife.org/Life_Issue_Info/After_the_Abortion/after_the_abortion.htm

[www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/after_the_abortion_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/after_the_abortion_(C).htm)

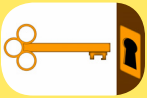
www.word-of-hope.org

Teaching For Life

For Life When Life Isn't Good.



Prayer for Prep: “Good and gracious God, You have shown the full extent of Your love, not through the absence of suffering in our lives, but through Your presence in the suffering and death of Your Son. Therefore, assure me of Your love and presence in my life in all circumstances, and help teach this assurance to the children. Through Christ my Lord, Amen.”



Key Concept: God's good and gracious will for His people is at work in the midst of suffering.



Gospel Focus: The greatest good of all time came from the greatest suffering of all time—Jesus on the cross.



Bible Story: Jesus heals the man born blind. (John 9:1-7)



Critical Questions:

1. What is the source of suffering?

World's Answer: Bad luck. The world does not acknowledge any root cause of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. God created a perfect, suffering-free world. Sin brought suffering and death.

2. How do we deal with suffering?

World's Answer: Eliminate the sufferer. Increasingly the world turns to death to solve the problem of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Illuminate the cross. The death and resurrection of Jesus solved the ultimate source of suffering.

3. How do we deal with those suffering?

World's Answer: Hasten death. The world sees death as a friend and the compassionate relief of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Support life. The Word sees death as our enemy defeated by Jesus and exhorts us to be compassionate by carrying “each other's burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)



Religion

Jesus at Work in Sadness – John 9:1-7

Tell the story of Jesus' healing of the man born blind. Ask children to play the parts of the man born blind, the man's mom and dad, Jesus, and the disciples.

The disciples asked Jesus why the man was born blind. **Ask:** What was Jesus' answer? **Answer:** "So that God could show what He can do for him" (John 9:3b *GOD'S WORD for Life*). **Ask:** What did God do for the man? **Answer:** He healed his eyes so he could see for the first time ever.

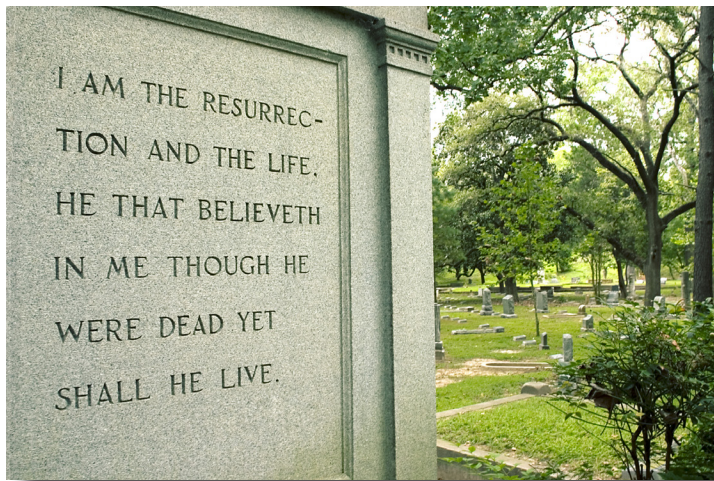
Ask: Do you remember when we learned about Adam and Eve and the first sin? **Answer:** Adam and Eve had to leave the garden and their lives were no longer perfect. When sin came into the world so did sickness, weeds, storms, fire, fighting/war, and death. We sometimes call these bad things "suffering." But God didn't leave us alone to suffer all the bad things that came into our world because of sin.

Ask: Who did God send to help us? (Hold up a cross.)

Answer: Yes, God sent Jesus to suffer for us on the cross. Jesus took the punishment we deserved for our sins. But after Jesus suffered and died, what happened next? Yes, He came alive again! God raised Him from the dead. He is with us always (Matthew 28:20), and He helps us in our suffering. Jesus also uses us to help others. We can show love to others who are suffering and tell them how much Jesus loves them. (If you are going to use the Lutheran Hour Ministries Global Care Packages project, you might introduce it here.)



Bulletin Board: "The Son Shines through our Sadness"



Review Old and New Testament Bible stories studied earlier this year. Hold up a picture of a person from the Bible who experienced sadness or suffering. Ask the children to tell what bad or sad thing happened to Hannah, Joseph, baby Moses, etc. Print the name of the person and a short description of his/her suffering on a raindrop/teardrop cut from light blue construction paper. For example, Hannah had no children.

Next, have the children tell how God helped the person in his/her suffering. God gave Hannah a baby, Samuel. Print the way that God helped on a construction paper sun.

Repeat the process for several other Old and New Testament stories.

Finally, hold up a cross. Remind the children that Jesus' suffering and death on the cross paid for all our sins. Then show the empty tomb. Jesus died and rose again, and everyone who believes in Him will live forever with Him in heaven. (Make a teardrop/raindrop and sun for this final story as well.) Display the teardrops/raindrops and suns on a bulletin board with the title "The Son (place a cross next to or behind the word "Son") Shines Through our Sadness." If you wish, connect the raindrops/teardrops to the suns with colored yarn or plastic wrap forming a rainbow.

Social Studies

Blessed through Serving

Ask a deaconess, pastor, doctor, nurse, missionary, or other worker whose job involves ministry to sick, weak, poverty-stricken, or suffering people to describe how they serve Jesus by serving others. How have their own lives been blessed by the people they have served?

Global Care Packages

Through the Lutheran Hour Ministries website teachers and children can access interactive lessons/activities that teach children about another culture and introduce the Global Care Packages (formerly By Kids for Kids) mission service project.



Children send boxes of school supplies, toys, and Bible storybooks in the recipient's own language to other children in developing countries. Children have an opportunity to serve as Jesus' hands and feet as they reach out to help suffering children and to share the Good News with them that Jesus loves them and has died and risen again for their sins!



Service Learning Project

Pen Pals (ongoing) – “The Son Shine of the Resurrection”



Make Easter butterfly sun catchers for your pen pals or the residents of a local senior center, nursing home, or assisted living apartment.

Pre-cut the butterfly shapes from brightly-colored construction paper. (Older children may trace the shapes and cut them out themselves.) Crease the butterflies' wings in several places and cut shapes into the folds (just as you would do when making a snowflake), or use a hole punch to punch holes into each of the wings.

Let the children dab glue around the holes and apply small pre-cut pieces of colored tissue paper to one side of the butterfly. Print “Jesus lives!” on the other side. Give the gifts to your pen pals or senior friends to put on their windows.

As the sun streams through the window pane, they can have the reassurance that the Son who suffered pain and death for them is also *with* them in times of trial and suffering.

Language

Braille “Jesus Loves You” Bookmarks

Jesus used mud to heal the man born blind, and the man gave glory to Jesus and told others what He had done for him. People who are blind today can learn to read in a special language of raised dots called Braille. They can read with their fingers how much Jesus loves them.

Make Braille bookmarks that say “Jesus Loves You.” For a downloadable PDF Braille alphabet chart go to www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/braille/index.html (National Braille Press). Place clear school glue over each dot to simulate the effect of the raised Braille letters.

Science

Hearing and Seeing Again!

Jesus used mud made from spit to heal the man born blind. Jesus continues to help and heal people today. He has given scientists, engineers, doctors and nurses the ability to design and use new technologies that help people see and hear again.

Invite an eye doctor, surgeon, or audiologist to visit your classroom and explain how the eye or the ear works and how new technologies can restore sight and hearing.

Optional: Ask a parent, church or school staff member, or congregational member who has had successful Lasik surgery or who wears a hearing aid or cochlear implant to share with the children the miracle of being able to see or hear again. Praise God together for the blessing of technology!



Fine Arts

“Jesus” Song

Sing this traditional song together. Then substitute one or more of the alternate phrases for the final line.

Optional: Let the children come up with additional phrases for the final line.

*Je-e-sus, Je-e-sus.
Jesus in the morning,
Jesus at the noontime.
Je-e-sus, Je-e-sus,
Jesus when the sun goes down.*

Alternate phrases for the final line:

*He is with me when I'm feeling sad.
He takes care of me when I'm sick.
He is with me when I'm all alone.
He is with me when I'm far from home.
He is with me when it's raining outside.*



Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parent,

“Why do people get sick?” “Why did Grandpa have to die?” “Why did Andy get cancer?” “Why, why, why?” Young children wonder about the purpose of suffering in our world. Adults are often troubled by such questions as well. Suffering wasn’t part of God’s plan for our world. Troubles and suffering entered the world as the result of sin. The Good News for our children and for each of us is that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for that sin. He suffered and died in our place, and He understands our suffering. During this (upcoming) Easter season, we remember and rejoice that Jesus Christ rose from the dead victorious over sin, death and the devil. Jesus is with us in our suffering, and He uses times of suffering for our good. (Romans 8:28)

Resources

Books:

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, Pantomimes, and Litanies for the Very Young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. The “When Jesus Died and Rose Again” Finger Plays are appropriate for the Lenten/Easter seasons. “The Blind Man” pantomime (p. 65) lets children tell with words and actions the story from John 9:1-7.

Jahsmann, A.H. & Simon, M.P. *Little Visits with God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957 (revised copyright 1995). First published in 1957, this devotion book for families with young children is still relevant today. These devotions could also be used by the teacher for opening and closing the day. The stories related to the topics of trouble and suffering, such as “Some Troubles are Good” and “What Heaven is Like” (a boy who finds out he is blind comforts his mom by telling her he will see again in heaven), would be especially appropriate for this unit.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Lucado, M. (with Lucado, J., A., & S.). *The Crippled Lamb*. New York: Scholastic, 1994. Although this is a Christmas story, Max Lucado’s fictional account of a lamb who, because of his disability, gets left behind in the stable by the shepherds would be appropriate in this unit as well.

Web Sites:

www.blhs.org – This is the web site of Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services. Bethesda is a Lutheran organization that serves persons with developmental disabilities, their families and congregations. Bethesda offers many educational resources, including helps for sharing the Gospel with persons with developmental disabilities.

www.cph.org – Concordia Publishing House’s Arch® Book line of children’s Bible stories (available through this web site) includes two categories that would be especially useful this month—Miracles and Easter. The New Testament section contains stories about New Testament followers of Jesus, including Paul and Stephen, who faced great suffering for their faith but for whom God brought blessings out of the suffering.

www.lhm.org – Click on the “Our Ministries” tab to find *Global Care Packages* information.

www.lutheransforlife.org – This site contains resources and links for a wide variety of “For Life” issues. The GOD’S WORD for Life Bible may be purchased through this web site. This Bible in the *GOD’S WORD* translation includes commentaries on many For Life topics written by Lutherans for Life Executive Director Rev. Dr. James Lamb. The “Theology of the Cross” commentary (pp. 1334a and b) explains suffering in the context of the cross.

www.nbp.org – National Braille Press.

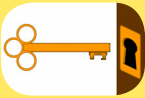
worldrelief.lcms.org - The LCMS World Relief/Human Care web site provides information about persons in need throughout the United States and the world, as well as descriptions of how Christians can be the hands of Christ to a world in need. Educational resources and outreach projects specifically geared for children can be accessed through this site as well.

Teaching For Life

For Life When Life Isn't Good.



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Religion

Healing Stories

Tell or read the story of Jesus healing a blind man (John 9:1-7) in the *Voyages*® Grade 2 curriculum (p. 192) or from another Bible story book. See the Resource section. The Grade 1 *Voyages*® curriculum includes the story of Jesus healing the man with leprosy and the woman's daughter (Unit 6, Week 22). The Grade 2 curriculum also includes the healing of the paralyzed man and the healing of Peter's mother-in-law (Unit 6, Week 23).

Find stories in the Bible of other people who were sick and whom God healed. Other examples of healing:

Healing a Man with a Paralyzed Hand (Mark 3:1-5)

Healing of Two Blind Men (Matthew 20:29-34)

Healing of a Deaf Man (Mark 7:31-35)

Healing of Blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)

Healing of a Disabled Woman Who Could Not Stand Up Straight (Luke 13:10-13)

Healing of 10 Men with Leprosy (Luke 17:11-19)

Peter and John Heal a Lame Man (Acts 3:1-8)



Remind the children that God loves us even when we are sick or disabled. Sometimes He does not heal us on this earth. That does not mean He doesn't love us. He cares for us and helps us in our weakness. Someday, in heaven, we will be perfectly healed forever.

Healed or Not, We Pray

Encourage children to identify those they know and love who are going through difficult times, either with a temporary illness or major disability. List the names and pray for them. Remember to thank God for healing when it occurs. Thank God for healthy bodies and emphasize that they are a gift from God. We don't deserve them because of anything we do, just as people with disabilities don't deserve to be in that condition because of a particular sin. When sin entered the world, sickness entered it, too. We know God loves us and will care for us even when things are difficult. He does not send disabilities as a punishment for any particular sin. All of our sins were completely forgiven when Jesus died on the cross to pay for them.



Healing Banner

Make a banner that says: **God Loves and Cares for Everyone**

The banner is a way of keeping God's care of all people in mind. You could trace letters for children to color or have them make the letters as a collage. Perhaps you could cover the letters with cotton swabs or Q-tips®, adhesive bandages, or other health-related items.

Continue to emphasize that disabilities and illness are not a part of God's judgment for particular sins. Instead, He often uses illness to show His glory. When He does heal us on this earth, we can praise Him and tell others.



Language Arts

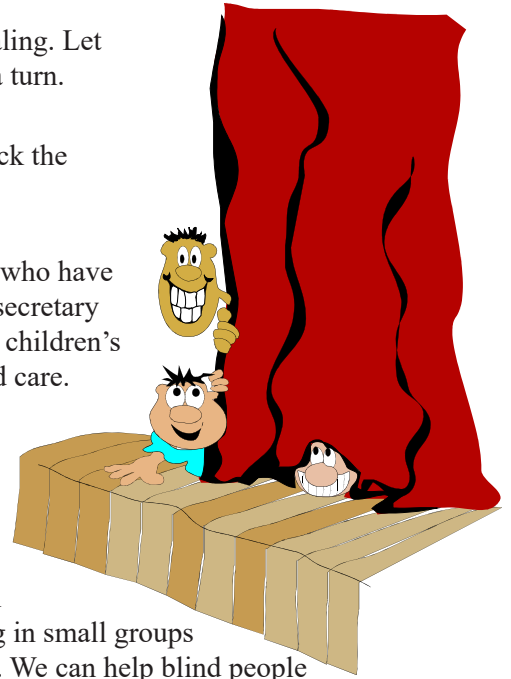
Acting – Act out the story of Jesus healing the blind man or of other stories of healing. Let students play various roles in the scenarios. Repeat the role-plays so everyone gets a turn.

Reading – Read stories/books about people who have overcome disabilities. Check the Resource section or your local libraries. God often uses a disability as a blessing.

Writing – Write letters to children who are in the hospital or to people you know who have disabilities, encouraging them and reminding them of God's love. Ask your church secretary for such a list, or take cards that are not addressed to any specific child to your local children's hospital. Be sure the message is positive and affirming and expresses God's love and care.

Identifying – Help students identify with those who cannot see. Show examples of books printed in Braille. Contact Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc. for samples of Bibles and other religious literature being printed for the blind.

Have children describe objects as if describing things to a blind person. Let children take turns closing their eyes and trying to guess what a friend is describing. Working in small groups allows more children to participate. People who are blind cannot see for themselves. We can help blind people by telling them what we see, giving directions, etc.



Teacher Sprinkle: Learn a song with sign language to convey its meaning to people who cannot hear.

Fine Arts

Singing – Sing songs thanking God for our bodies and reminding us of His love even when we are ill or disabled. Choose a song that speaks of God's love and forgiveness. Suggestions:

From *All God's People Sing*: 195, 174, 260, 245, 107

From *Little Ones Sing Praise*: 14, 15, 34, 76, 94



Role Playing – Role-play ways to help people with disabilities. See the Developing Sensitivities web site in the Resources section for ways to talk to or physically help a visually impaired person. Pair up helpers with children using crutches, wheelchairs, etc.

Dancing – “Dance” to music using only your arms and with your eyes closed. Play music of different tempos and moods and encourage children to move their arms and upper bodies to the music. Give them scarves or ribbons as props. Even people with disabilities can enjoy and respond to music and other pleasures.

Painting – Paint a picture without using your hands. Let children figure out how to accomplish this task. Some may take off their shoes and use their toes. Others might put the paintbrush in their teeth or in the crook of their arms. Many people with disabilities are able to create masterpieces with much patience and creativity.



Science

Eye Examine – Look at a diagram of the human eye and marvel at how wonderfully our eyes are made and thank God for them. Use the book listed in the Resource section or find one in the library. Your science teacher might have a 3-dimensional model the children could examine.

Eye Care – Make a poster showing how to take care of our eyes. Guide the children in listing visual health and safety precautions: not running with sharp objects; not poking objects into the eye; eating green leafy vegetables, carrots, cabbage; sitting back from the TV; not spending too much time at the computer screen; getting regular eye checkups, etc. Work individually or in groups to create posters. Suggest titles like, “Caring for God’s Gift of Sight.”

Eye Aid – Look through a variety of lenses and compare how they magnify. If children in the class (or you) wear eyeglasses, show how they magnify words or pictures on a piece of paper. Do not let children wear glasses which belong to others, but hold the lens over a page. Also use magnifying glasses of varying strengths. Discuss how eyeglasses help people see. The Resource section lists books about children who learn they must wear glasses and how they make the transition. Glasses are a form of healing from God!



Helpful Devices – Ask an orthopedic doctor or physical therapist to bring a variety of prosthetic devices to show the class how amazing they are by allowing people with disabilities to function. Give children a “grabber” and let them experience the difficulty involved in using it to pick up small objects and also the assistance it gives in reaching objects otherwise inaccessible. God provides help for His people in a variety of ways.



Teacher Sprinkle: What would you miss the most if you could not see?

Math



Two-by-Two – Count how many body parts come in sets of two (like the eyes). The list could include eyes, ears, arms, hands, legs, feet, and kidneys. Discuss God’s wisdom in creating us with a “spare” of many of our body parts.

God’s Help through Devices – Graph the number of children in the class who wear glasses, hearing aids, casts, or other helpful devices. Make sure children included in the various categories do not feel negative attention being placed on them. Discuss what a blessing these devices are and how much they help the person who uses them. They are gifts from God.

Make a code for the words: **He was able to** see. In previous lessons children have decoded messages already written. This time let them use a key to write the message. Use a simple key such as 1 = A, 2 = B, etc.



Teacher Sprinkle: How many steps does it take to get from your car to your classroom? How would you get there if you could not walk?



Social Studies

In the Dark – Try to go through a whole hour with eyes closed. Let children take turns living in a visually dark environment for awhile. Then discuss ways they could still function and what was difficult.

Special Guest – Ask a person who is blind or has a disability to talk to your class and demonstrate some everyday coping skills. Let the children be amazed at how competent and creative they can be. Have the person talk about their disability and answer questions. It demystifies the disability and focuses on the human being involved. Emphasize how God has cared for this person or brought about good through them. Have the class pray for the person.

What Helps? – Make a poster illustrating devices which are used in public places to help people with disabilities. Ask the children if they can think of other devices that would be helpful. Let them draw a picture of their invention and explain it to the class.



Classroom Aids – Most educational supply stores carry dolls representing a variety of disabilities. Include them in your play areas, and also include bulletin board and teaching pictures that include people with disabilities.



Physical Activity

Obstacles – Make an obstacle course that is challenging, but not too difficult. Let children cover their eyes, use crutches or a wheelchair, put a marble in their shoes or simulate a disability in other ways. Pair each with a helper. Discuss the difficulty involved and the necessity of a helper.

Marco Polo – Let children not actively participating form a ring as a boundary. In this game one child closes his eyes and repeatedly calls out, “Marco.” Other participants in the “pool” respond with, “Polo.” The child who is “It” tries to find and tag another player, who then becomes the one calling out, “Marco.”

Legless Travel – Move from one side of the room or field to a finish line without using legs. Children can maneuver by rolling or scooting. Some may think of carrying each other. The point is that our legs are very important to us, and it would be hard to be without their use. People with disabilities are to be admired, prayed for, and appropriately and respectfully assisted.



Service Learning

A Friendly Visit – Visit a rehab center, nursing home, or children's hospital and take cards to residents or see if there is a task like replacing crutch tips.

User Friendly? – Evaluate the user-friendliness of your church and school for people with disabilities. Make a list of suggestions for making your facility more user-friendly for people with disabilities. Then let them write a polite letter to the appropriate leader with their findings.

Friendly Tapes – Read stories into a tape recorder to be given to children who are visually-impaired. Take the tapes to a local hospital or school for the blind.

Best Friend – Contact a local 4-H club or Guide Dogs for the Blind or a similar organization to arrange for someone to speak to your class about guide dogs or assistance dogs. Encourage families to consider becoming a part of such an organization.



Parent Letter Suggestion

An excellent sample letter is on the CD.

Resources

Books:

- All God's People Sing*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992. Christian songs for a variety of ages.
- Brown, Marc. *Arthur's Eyes: An Arthur Adventure*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1986. A classic about eyeglasses and helping children see the advantages of wearing them.
- Burkart, Jeffrey A. *Down through the Roof* (Arch® Book). St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001. The story of Jesus healing the paralytic brought by his friends and lowered through the roof.
- Cowley, Joy. *Agapanthus Hum and the Eyeglasses*. New York: Puffin Books, 2001. For grades 1-3. Agapanthus is an accident-prone girl who is always losing or breaking her eyeglasses until her mother shows her how to keep them safe.
- Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948.
- Little Ones Sing Praise*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.
- London, Sara. *The Good Luck Glasses*. New York: Cartwheel Books, 2001. For grades 1-2. Helps children with the transition of wearing glasses for the first time.
- Warren, Jean. *Peggyback Songs*. Everett, Washington: Warren Publishing House, 1986.
- Voyages®* curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Web Sites:

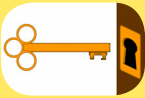
- www.allaboutvision.com/resources/anatomy.htm – A site that contains an illustration of the human eye and other general information and links.
- www.guidedogs.com – A site that explains the training and uses of guide dogs in assisting people with disabilities.
- www.lbwinc.org – Information about Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc..
- www.uic.edu/com/eye/LearningAboutVision/EyeSite/DevelopingSensitivity/index.shtml – Tips for developing sensitivity toward visually impaired people and for helping them in practical situations.

Teaching For Life

For Life When Life Isn't Good.



Prayer for Prep: “Good and gracious God, You have shown the full extent of Your love, not through the absence of suffering in our lives, but through Your presence in the suffering and death of Your Son. Therefore, assure me of Your love and presence in my life in all circumstances, and help teach this assurance to the children. Through Christ my Lord, Amen.”



Key Concept: God's good and gracious will for His people is at work in the midst of suffering.



Gospel Focus: The greatest good of all time came from the greatest suffering of all time—Jesus on the cross.



Bible Story: Jesus heals the man born blind. (John 9:1-7)



Critical Questions:

1. What is the source of suffering?

World's Answer: Bad luck. The world does not acknowledge any root cause of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. God created a perfect, suffering-free world. Sin brought suffering and death.

2. How do we deal with suffering?

World's Answer: Eliminate the sufferer. Increasingly the world turns to death to solve the problem of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Illuminate the cross. The death and resurrection of Jesus solved the ultimate source of suffering.

3. How do we deal with those suffering?

World's Answer: Hasten death. The world sees death as a friend and the compassionate relief of suffering.

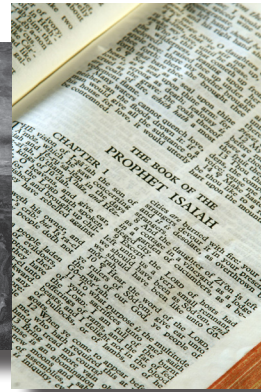
WORD'S ANSWER: Support life. The Word sees death as our enemy defeated by Jesus and exhorts us to be compassionate by carrying “each other's burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)



Religion

Healing Predicted

Have individual students or groups of students read these prophetic verses: Isaiah 29:18, 35:5, 42:7. Tell the students that these verses pointed ahead in time to some of the things that the Savior (Messiah) would do. Ask them to share what the prophet Isaiah predicts in these verses.



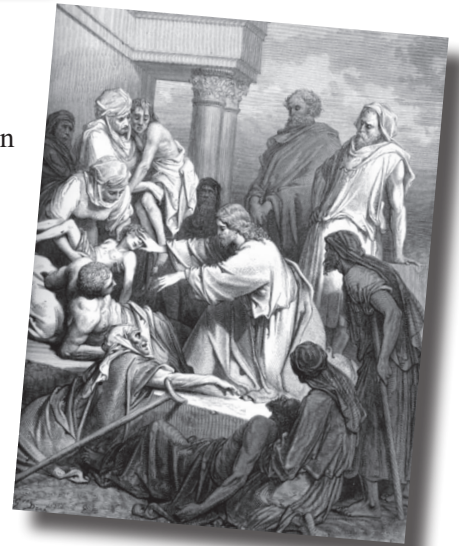
Healing Given

Now have students read some passages in which Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled.

Mark 10:46-52; Matthew 12:22; John 9:1-7. Jesus healing the deaf and blind points to Him as the Savior.

Spend some time discussing the unit's theme passage, John 9:1-7. Guide the discussion with the following questions:

1. How long had this man been blind? (He had always been blind!) Have students imagine what it would be like to never have seen anything. How would you know what something "looked" like?
2. What did Jesus' disciples think was the cause of the man's blindness? (Some specific sin that he or his parents had done.)
3. But what reason does Jesus give for the man's blindness? (v 3) The man was born blind so Jesus could heal him! No one understood the sad situation of a little baby, a young boy, a teenager, a man who could not see. But Jesus knew the purpose of this all along.
4. God doesn't always heal, but He always has a purpose for every life. Ask the children if they know anyone who is blind or can't hear or has some other sickness or injury that limits what they can do. (Maybe there is someone in your class.) How is God at work in their lives?



Healing Prayers

The man born blind didn't even have to ask Jesus to heal him, but perhaps he had prayed many years for healing. Have the children write a prayer to Jesus as if they were the blind man.

Now have them write a thank you prayer as if from the blind man.

Next, ask the children to write prayers for the people mentioned above.



Teacher Sprinkle: God heals us from all types of sickness. Even when He doesn't, we know He loves us because the most troublesome sickness is that of sin sickness. What has Jesus done about that?

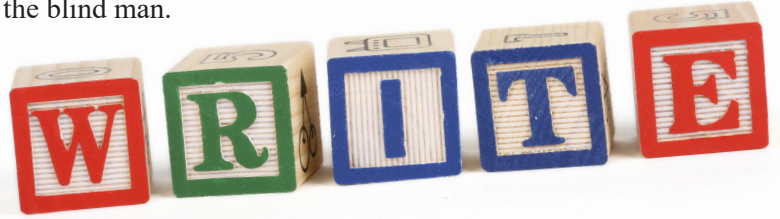


Language Arts

Writing

Poetry – Write a poem telling the story about the healing of the blind man.

Essay – Imagine it is five years after the miracle of Jesus healing the blind man. Write an essay on how you think he is doing now. What is his life like? What would be different? What would be the same? What would his relationship to Jesus be?



Interview – Write an imaginary interview with the blind man. Ask about growing up blind. What was that like? Ask him questions about his perspective of what has happened and what he thinks of Jesus. Be sure to include possible answers he may give to those questions.

Fine Arts

Singing

I Wonder as I Wander (Joyful Sounds 19)

In the first verse, discuss what “on’ry” means. The miracle of Christmas is that Jesus would come at all to save the likes of us. But He did! A Savior born in a manger is the Savior of **EVERYONE!** Relate this to people who have disabilities. All people are valued by God in Jesus.

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die
For poor on’ry people like you and like I;
I wonder as I wander out under the sky*

Other Songs:

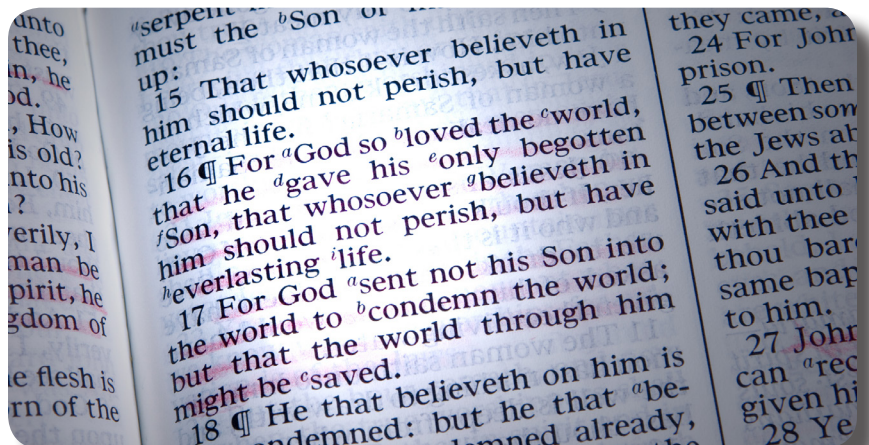
Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive (Lutheran Service Book 843), *Love in Christ Is Strong and Living* (Lutheran Service Book 706).



Tissue Cross

Using squares of tissue paper and a cross outline, attach the tissue paper to the cross with liquid starch. Once completely covered with tissue paper, paint over the tissue paper with more starch to make a more sealed project.

Make the point that because Jesus took all our punishment on the cross, we know things like blindness or sickness are not punishments from God. Because of the cross, we can be assured of God’s love no matter what!



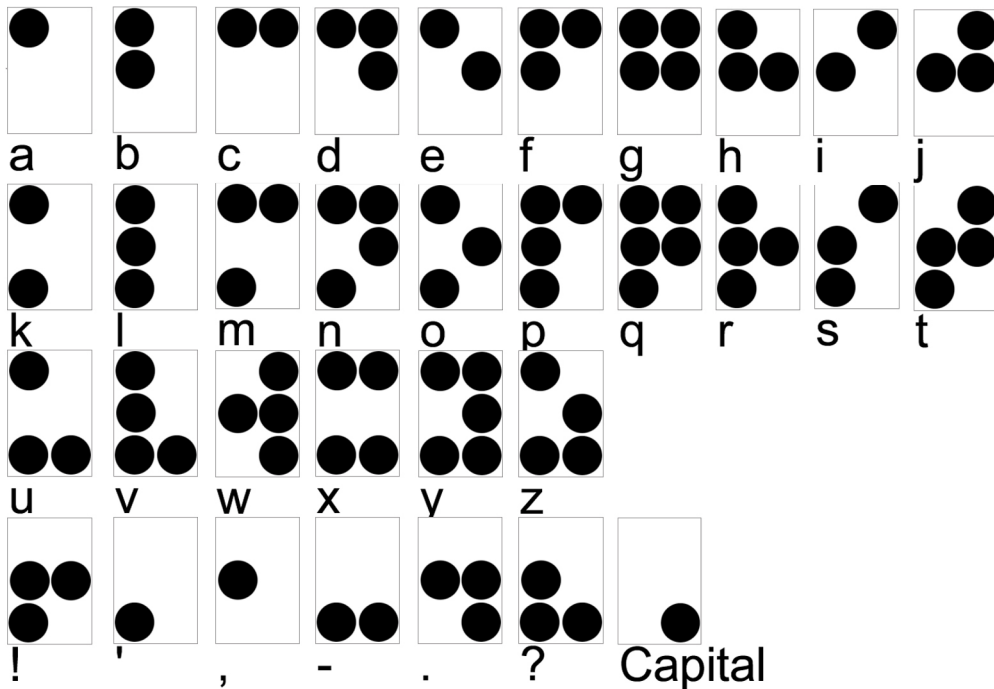
Science

Are your students aware that Braille was invented by a blind 15-year-old boy named Louis Braille? It is a great story and can be used to reinforce the unit's key concept that God works in and through our infirmities.

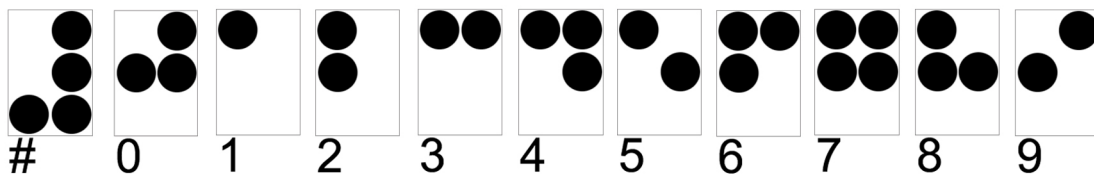
Have students research Braille and how it was started. When was it first used? Why was it created? Who created it? The "Braille Bug" site at www.afb.org/braillebug is an excellent site designed for 3-6 graders. It provides the story of Louis Braille and also a variety of games and learning activities.

Print out the free alphabet card from the site (www.afb.org/braillebug/braille_print.asp) or copy this page. Have students write their names in Braille.

Braille Alphabet



Numbers



Math

Numbers in Braille are the first 10 letters of the alphabet where a=1 and j=0 (shown above).

Have students write out and calculate some simple math problems using Braille or do a portion of their math homework in Braille!

Service Learning

Letting Others Know They Are Cared For

- If your school's congregations have large-print service folders, arrange to have students hand those out on a Sunday morning. Ushers would know which folks generally use one.
- Collect Braille books and other items to donate to those locally who may need them.
- Record a tape or CD. Have children read Bible stories, sing some songs, or read some of their poems written in Language Arts. Make these available to local care centers or veterans homes, etc.
- Visit the children's ward of a local hospital and read stories and share the message of God's love in Jesus and the value He gives to every life.

Physical Activity

Obstacle Course

Create an obstacle course in your classroom or gymnasium. Have students go through the course blindfolded. Have a "seeing" helper with each in case they wander from the path!

God is with all of us and guides, protects, and uses us regardless of our physical or mental limitations.



Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parents,

Suffering is all around us. In the story of Jesus healing the man who had been blind since birth, He tells His disciples the man's blindness was not a result of the sin he had committed nor that of the sin his parents had committed. Rather it had been placed in this man's life in order for Christ to be able to heal him. God was glorified through this man's blindness.

We often do not look at our own suffering as having a reason or we see it as punishment from God. But Jesus took the punishment for all sins upon the cross. It is the cross that assures us we are loved no matter what our circumstances. If God loved us enough to give up His only Son for us, He will not now forsake us. The cross assures us that our God is a God who can bring good out of bad situations. The cross assures us that God has a purpose for every life.

We want your children and you to know that it is not the absence of suffering in our lives that is the mark of God's love. Rather, His love assures us of His presence and purpose in the midst of our suffering.

In Christ,

Resources

Books:

Lutheran Service Book. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006.
The Holy Bible
Joyful Sounds. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977.

Web Sites:

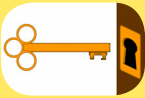
www.afb.org – American Federation for the Blind
www.lbwinc.org – Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc..

Teaching For Life

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Religion

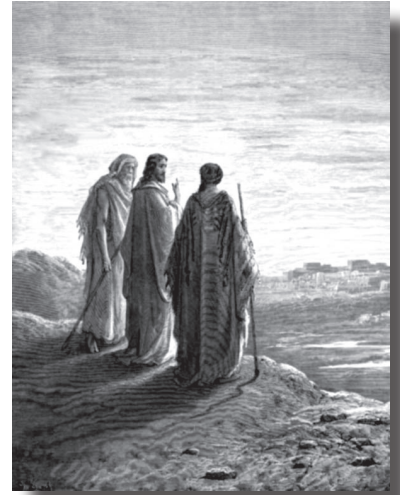
Transfiguration Sight

Voyages® Unit 8 Grade 5: When you teach “The Transfiguration” note that the disciples didn’t see Jesus’ glory until they were fully awake. (Luke 9:32) What might we see if we too were “fully awake”? Jesus often taught a new way of seeing—valuable prostitutes and beggars, murder-thinking name callers, powerful penitent pray-ers, and glory through humble obedience. What examples can students name that are distorted ways of seeing in our lives today?

Examples: beauty=goodness, intelligence=excellence, weakness=shamefulness, dependence=inferiority, wealth=value, disabled=pitiful.

In this unit’s Bible story of the man born blind (John 9:1-7), how did Jesus help the disciples “see” more clearly regarding the reason for the man’s blindness?

(For more insights and exercises, see the CD.)



Suffering Crucifixion

Voyages® Unit 8 Grade 6: Given the fact that Jesus carried all the suffering for sin that had ever been and would ever be, it is amazing that He lasted through Good Friday at all! It is always good to read the text in Matthew 27:4-50 and then read silently Psalm 22. Notice the hope from verse 22 onward—in which your class is included! So why does God allow suffering now since Jesus has already paid the terrible price of sin? Brainstorm possible answers. Here are several:

- Natural consequences of sinful choices; e.g. having an accident while driving drunk.
- Fall-out from the choices of others; e.g. if your parents decide to divorce, you can’t live as a family anymore.
- Discipline; e.g. if you experience poverty’s hardships, you may later become compassionate to others as well as understand genuine value.
- Praise opportunity; e.g. if you suffer like the man born blind, you may end up bringing Jesus glory and praise.



(For more insights and activities, see the CD.)



Teacher Sprinkle: If there were no pain, could there be compassion? Courage? Self-sacrifice?

Year-Long Bulletin Board

On the left side of your **God—For Life** title, vertically place three large white hand prints. On the first write: **Hand Created**. On the second write: **Hand Redeemed**. On the third write **Hand Held**. Attach strings to a brad by each hand. On the right side of the bulletin board place cut out pictures from Sunday school, VBS, and religion curriculum depicting various Bible stories or modern day events. Students may then correctly match hand to picture. In other words, do the stories relate most to creation, redemption, or sanctification.

On the CD:

Hand Story – The difference between holding on and being held.

Lunch Five Fingers Prayer – Something the students can teach to younger children.

Devotion Shoes – Illustrating the importance of friendship.

Language Arts

Value Line

Make a line with tape on the floor. One end says: “Absolutely Not.” The other end says: “Absolutely Yes.” Students stand anywhere on the continuum that represents their belief on the statement you read. Possible statements:

- People should be valued and judged by what they contribute to others.
- Generally people deserve the suffering they endure.
- You shouldn’t “judge a book by its cover.”
- In the end, love always overcomes evil.
- It’s just as hard to cope with success as to cope with failure.
- When someone’s pain is extreme and there is no hope of a cure, it’s better to put them out of their misery.
- In the real world, looking out for number one usually means I’m better off.
- It’s best to live one day at a time.
- Nine times out of ten, the popular decision is the right one.

Notice which statements spark extreme differences and follow this activity with a debate on those statements giving first one side and then the other three minutes each to state their positions. After this round, give each side three more minutes to rebut the other side’s point of view.



On CD: Theme Study – An activity to develop common themes that teach each person’s unique value.

Interview Skills

As you teach good questioning and active listening, model the skills with a guest like a special education teacher or the sibling of a handicapped family member to your class. Another possible guest might be someone who works as a personal assistant to handicapped children in their homes periodically to give the caretaker a day out. Some churches sponsor day-care or once-a-month care for this same purpose so consider the service-givers as possible interviewees also.



Silent Day



Enjoy a unique day when your voice needs a rest!

Print up some signs for yourself as well as the day’s schedule so you can point to them.

Students must use body language (no mouthing words) or write/draw in order to communicate.

Alert them ahead for your signal (knocking on the door or flicking the lights) as an eyes-on-me signal.

Keep it up whenever you pass under the doorway into your room or all day if you can control that.

Many people in our world experience life this way: the deaf, the speech delayed, those with voice disabilities, and new immigrants.

Talk about this experience of struggle the following day. What are the weaknesses? strengths? Hopefully students will understand that compassion is a gift given to us by those who call it forth.

Social Studies

World War II – Atrocities against Children

Many books deal with the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews, but don't examine the brutal destruction of handicapped children which took place beforehand. (See CD for a brief summary and references for further study.)

Ask: What does a culture's dealings with people with disabilities say about the values of that culture? (Apply this to U.S. legally required wheel-chair access in public buildings, handicapped parking spaces, legally-allowed abortions of babies who are disabled.) Discussion may lead you to recall that the basic original sin in humans was wanting to decide between good and evil themselves instead of leaving the whole issue up to God.

Current Events

Our society views personal suffering as so abhorrent, we need to avoid it or end it. There is almost always some news regarding end-of-life issues, promised cures from questionable research regarding human embryos, and continued defense of abortion rights especially in cases of fetal abnormalities. See Lutherans For Life's web site, www.lutheransforlife.org, for current, life-related news. Use these to discuss the value that God, in Christ, gives to all human life.

Netherlands Research



Have an eager student or the entire class research euthanasia in the Netherlands (a good example of the "slippery slope." The International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide is a trusted source of information. www.internationaltaskforce.org/holland.htm



Science

Survival of the Fittest?

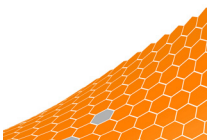
In the animal kingdom, the "unfit" generally do not survive. Why doesn't "survival of the fittest" apply to human beings?

Famous People with Disabilities

Have students do an Internet search and see if they can find famous scientists with disabilities.



Math



Talking Polygons

Personify irregular and regular polygons talking to one another. Keep in mind that both have value in mathematics.

Fine Arts

Classical Music

In your study of Classical music, mention that Beethoven composed his 9th Symphony while nearly completely deaf. Play parts of it. He never heard it as we do.



Service Learning

Prayer Station



If your church has a prayer vigil between 3 p.m. Good Friday and sunrise Easter morning, have students prepare one station. Let them come up with something tactile that helps the pray-er recall times of suffering (individual thorns, partially ripped gray fabric hearts). Let them choose a Bible verse for the person to meditate on (Romans 5:3; Romans 8:18; 1 Peter 4:16; 2 Corinthians 4:18). Put it on 3" x 5" cards or highlight it in Bibles placed in the station.

Consider taping some music to listen to that lifts up the pray-er or the Pastor's voice saying the Aaronic benediction, "May the Lord bless Thee . . . May the Lord lift up His countenance upon Thee and give Thee peace."

If all the prayer stations have spaces in a journal for writing thoughts, a prompt for this station might be: When have you felt alone, abandoned by God? Students can letter "I am with you always, Matthew 28:20" onto stickers for participants to place over what they've written in the journal.

Care Center Visit

If your church does not have a structured prayer vigil as above, perhaps some of the ideas could be incorporated into a care center visit. Read the verses to residents. Leave the verse cards with them. Pray with them and for them. Sing or play a keyboard or piano. The goal is to let them know they are cared about. God is at work in their lives.



Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parents,

Why do children and loved ones have to suffer with disabilities, diseases, and other impairments? Our natural response is to find someone to blame, and that someone often turns out to be God.

God is not the source of suffering. He created a perfect world with perfect people. When Satan introduced sin, he also brought the results of sinfulness—including fear, hopelessness, sickness, and death. Since then God has been present in our world and has been at work according to His will and purpose. He brings blessings in the middle of suffering and will not forsake those who trust in Him. On the cross He solved the ultimate source of suffering and made it possible to bring about the eternal well-being of His people.

The Bible stories this month have to do with people who were healed of their diseases and disabilities by God's power and love. He makes it clear that these victims were not suffering because of any specific sin they had committed, but that even in suffering, His glory was made known.

This does not mean that those whose prayers for healing do not seem to be answered are not loved by God. His glory is evident in them even as they deal with difficult situations. Ask any Christian who has cancer or a chronic disability. Each will tell you that God's peace and power is evident to them even during their illness. Lance Armstrong, champion bicyclist and cancer survivor stated, "If I had to choose between winning the Tour de France and having cancer, I'd choose cancer." God uses suffering to bring about unimaginable blessings.

Your children are learning that God loves all people equally—the disabled as well as the healthy. He demonstrated His love for everyone on the cross of Jesus. He has the power to answer prayer and heal people according to His perfect timing—either in this world or the next. In this world He gives us the privilege of lovingly understanding and assisting those who need us.

In Christ,

(A great idea for a parent "Easter Basket" for those emotional "yo yo" adolescents can be found on the CD.)

Resources

Web Sites:

www.internationaltaskforce.org/holland.htm

www.lutheransforlife.org – Lutherans For Life has a brochure *God's Love in Human Suffering* which discusses why we don't housebreak cockroaches, but do train pets as this relates to a cause of suffering.

www.joniandfriends.org – Joni and Friends is a ministry to all disabled. Joni Tada became paralyzed in a diving accident and has since worked extensively in Christian circles.

www.specialolympics.org – Click on "Volunteer" which lists a variety of volunteer tasks. "Contacting your local program" will give you specific dates and locations near you. Consider this when choosing service projects.

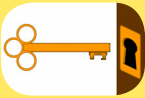
(A list of books and other resources may be found on the CD.)

Teaching For Life

For Life When Life Isn't Good.



Prayer for Prep: “Good and gracious God, You have shown the full extent of Your love, not through the absence of suffering in our lives, but through Your presence in the suffering and death of Your Son. Therefore, assure me of Your love and presence in my life in all circumstances, and help teach this assurance to the children. Through Christ my Lord, Amen.”



Key Concept: God's good and gracious will for His people is at work in the midst of suffering.



Gospel Focus: The greatest good of all time came from the greatest suffering of all time—Jesus on the cross.



Bible Story: Jesus heals the man born blind. (John 9:1-7)



Critical Questions:

1. What is the source of suffering?

World's Answer: Bad luck. The world does not acknowledge any root cause of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Sin. God created a perfect, suffering-free world. Sin brought suffering and death.

2. How do we deal with suffering?

World's Answer: Eliminate the sufferer. Increasingly the world turns to death to solve the problem of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Illuminate the cross. The death and resurrection of Jesus solved the ultimate source of suffering.

3. How do we deal with those suffering?

World's Answer: Hasten death. The world sees death as a friend and the compassionate relief of suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: Support life. The Word sees death as our enemy defeated by Jesus and exhorts us to be compassionate by carrying “each other's burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)



Religion

The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-7)

Ask: For how long had this man been blind? **Answer:** He was born blind, so there never was a time when this man had sight. He left the dark womb into a greater world of darkness.

Ask: What do the disciples assume to be the cause of this man's blindness? **Answer:** They assumed sin, either on this man's part, or his parents, was the cause of the blindness. In effect, they see it as God's punishment for a particular sin done by either the man or his parents. Note that Jesus completely disagrees with His disciples' assumption. An individual's sin was not the cause of this man's blindness.

Ask: What was the reason for the man being born blind? **Answer:** That the work of God might be displayed in this man's life.

Ask: What work of God is seen in this man's life? **Answer:** The miraculous power and compassion of God was seen as Jesus takes away the dark blindness.

Note: This man had likely suffered all his life not only with his blindness, but the spiritual blindness of others who also thought that sin was the reason for his affliction. He may have been shunned and scorned.

Ask: Does it seem fair that God would make a man blind and a social outcast until adulthood simply to make a point by healing him? **Answer:** This man's sightless condition was not the result of an individual's sin. Jesus tells us this directly. Therefore the man was not being punished. It was the sin of all humanity in the Fall of the Garden of Eden that broke our perfect world. In the brokenness of creation people are born with various defects or become sick. It was our broken world that allowed for this man to be born blind. Yet God in His love and mercy would seek out this man, reversing the effects of the Fall, and giving the blind man back his sight.

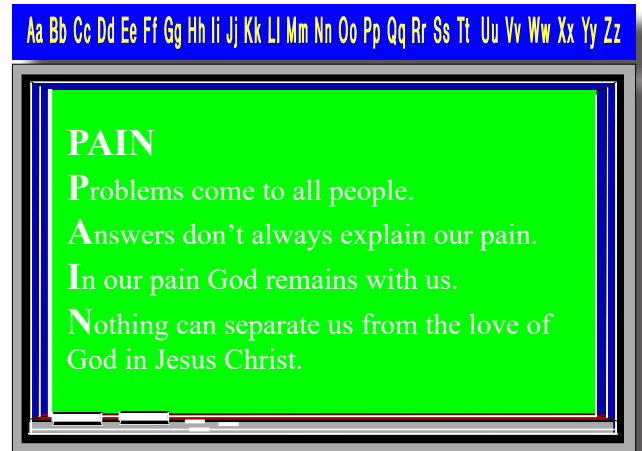


Language Arts

Review the acronyms from previous lessons. The acronym for this lesson—**PAIN**—admits to the reality of evil and pain within human experience, but also God’s abiding presence and purpose in our suffering.

The man born blind mentioned in John’s Gospel:

- Experienced many difficulties in life because of his blindness. Not only the practical problems that blindness brings, but also the pain that comes from rejection and humiliation.
- There is no indication the blind man understood why God had permitted him to be born sightless.
- When Jesus says, “that the work of God might be displayed in his life,” our Lord implies that God is working with the blind man and others that knew him. This means that God is present with this man in his suffering.
- The love of God for the blind man is made evident when Jesus, in the depths of His care for this man’s condition, heals him and gives him back his sight.



Science

The Protection of Pain—Physical and Emotional

All healthy humans experience pain, but each of us experience our own form of pain. It varies with each person, with an almost infinite variety of forms. Strangely, while we all know pain, when we try to explain it, we find description almost an impossible task.

The science of pain happens as tissue damage is detected by sensory neurons that relay messages to the central nervous system. Items contacting our body that have the potential of harming us are detected by specialized nerves that are found in the skin, muscle, and viscera. These damage-sensing neurons respond to tissue damage and can cause a sensation of pain when they are activated. (A pin pressed lightly on a teacher’s finger might help keep attention!)

Pain, although uncomfortable, is God’s gift that helps protect our bodies from situations that could harm us. Sometimes we also experience emotional pain. **Ask:** Do you think that a woman facing an unwanted pregnancy will usually experience emotional pain? **Answer:** Yes, any difficult situation can give rise to emotional pain.

Note that this pain also can have a positive outcome, protecting both the pregnant woman and her pre-born child.

If the emotional distress motivates the mother to give birth to her child, then she is protected from a number of complications that can arise during and after an abortion procedure. And, obviously, the child is given the opportunity to grow and learn of God and His grace and love.



Social Studies

Russian Population Decline

Late in the fall of 2006 a Los Angeles Times article reported that Russia has lost the equivalent of a city of 700,000 people every year since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Ask: Can you name some cities in The United States that have a population of 700,000 people? **Answer:** Answers will vary, but both Baltimore and San Francisco have populations of about that amount. Note that when communism came into Russia, atheism, the idea that no religion can influence the culture, was the official government position. Without Christ and His will influencing the culture through His people, bad things began to happen.

Ask: What things might be causing so many deaths in Russia? **Answer:** Russia has one of the fastest-growing AIDS epidemics because its people were not guided by God to use their bodies in holy ways. Add to this alcohol and drug abuse along with a very high suicide rate, and we see why Russia's population is shrinking.

Ask: What do you think the abortion rate is in Russia? **Answer:** Because Russians have not been taught to honor God's will, they grab hold of the world's answer to an unwanted pregnancy and abort the pre-born child. In 2005 there were 100,000 more abortions than births in Russia. That means that 1/7th of Russia's declining population is caused by abortion.

Discuss how well Christianity is influencing U.S. culture.



Math

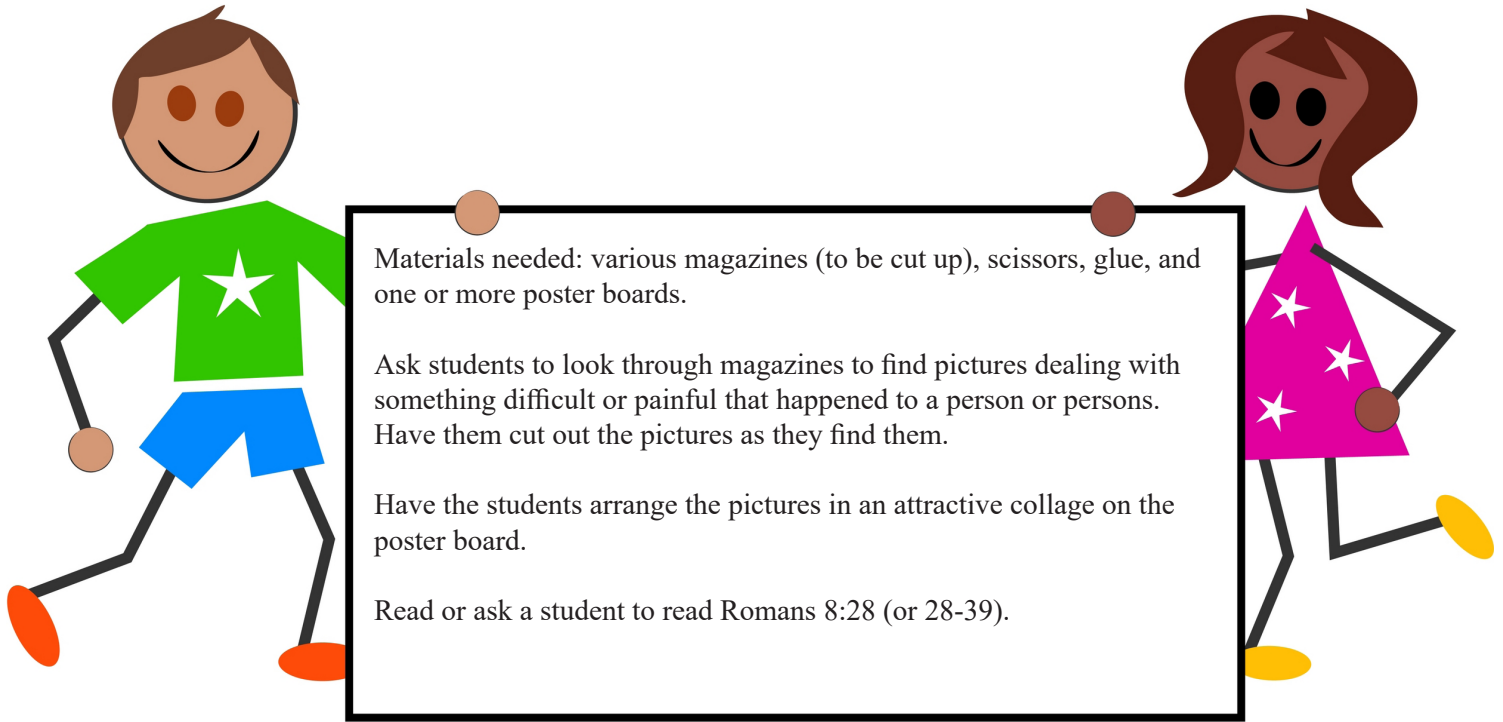
Calculating Russia's Future

Let's look at what will happen to the population in Russia if the present trend of losing 700,000 people a year continues. **Ask:** What will the population of Russia be in the year 2080 if the present trend of losing 700,000 people from its population each year continues? **Answer:** If the present trend continues, Russia's population, calculating from the year 2008, will drop by over 50 million by 2080. $[(2080-2008) \times 700,000 = 50,400,000]$

Ask: How many more abortions compared to live births will there be over that same period. **Answer:** $100,000 \times 72 = 7,200,000$ more abortions than live births when Russia reaches 2080 if the present trends continue.



Fine Arts



Point out that at the end of history, when Christ returns, we shall see that God has ordered all things, even times of difficulty and suffering, into something beautiful, and it will last forever.

Service Learning

Using the Internet or some other agency, find the nearest Veterans Administration Hospital. Make a contact with either the chaplaincy office or the administrative office and ask if it would be permissible for students to write letters to some of the patients at the hospital, and if so, what would be the way they would like you to send them to the hospital.

Request the students to write letters of appreciation to patients at the hospital. The letters could include their appreciation, hope for a speedy recovery, note that the student will be praying for them, etc.

Send letters to the Veterans Administration Hospital per their instructions.

**DURING CLASS,
EXPLAIN TO THE
STUDENTS THE
SACRIFICES THAT
MEN AND WOMEN
MAKE WHO
SERVE IN THE
ARMED FORCES
TO PROTECT OUR
FREEDOM.**



**FREEDOM IS GOOD, BUT IT COMES AT A COST
FOR SOME OF OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL.**

Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parents,

Your children are learning:

- God can work through our suffering and pain to reveal His grace and glory.
- We can wrongly conclude that someone is suffering because God is punishing them.
- Pain, although uncomfortable, is God's gift that helps protect our bodies from situations that could harm us.
- Emotional pain of a woman facing an unwanted pregnancy can lead to positive outcomes for her and her baby when she avoids abortion.
- Without God and His will shaping the culture, bad things began to happen. In 2005 there were 100,000 more abortions than births in Russia.
- There will be 7,200,000 more abortions than live births when Russia reaches 2080 if present trends continue.
- At the end of history, when Christ returns, we shall see that God has ordered all things, even times of difficulty and suffering, into something good. (Romans 8:28-39)

Resources

Books:

Anderson, David Paul. *Great Evil . . . Good God*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Rivercity Press, 2006.

GOD'S WORD for Life Bible. Available from Lutherans For Life (www.lutheransforlife.org/gwfl.htm)

Lewis, C.S. *The Problem of Pain*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. (Original copyright © 1940 C.S. Lewis Pte. Ltd. Copyright restored © 1996 by C.S. Lewis Pte. Ltd.)

Westberg, Granger. *Good Grief*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Fortress, 2005. (Published for Augsburg Fortress by Hallmark Inc. Original edition copyright © 1971, 1962 Fortress Press.)

Web Site:

www.lutheransforlife.org/Life_Issue_Info/End-of-Life/end-of-life.htm

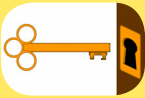
Many of the articles on this page will be resources for Unit 9 but the following will be helpful for this lesson: *Human Worth, Living and Dying; Living Life Under the Cross; An Able God for Disabled People; Better Off Dead?; The Child in Us; Making Life and Death Decisions in Hope*.

Teaching For Life

For Life at Life's End.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord of Life who has won victory over our enemy death through Your death and resurrection, enable me to live in the hope that You give and guide me as I teach this hope to Your children. In Your holy name, Amen.”



Key Concept: God gives life value and purpose and decides the time of our death.



Gospel Focus: Christ's victory over death and the grave makes death a gain and makes life meaningful.



Bible Story: Paul writes a letter from jail. (Philippians 1:20-26)



Critical Questions:

1. Who determines the time of our death?

World's Answer: We do. The world says that we should have the right to determine the time and manner of death.

WORD'S ANSWER: God. There is a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:2), but that time is in God's hands. (Psalm 31:15)

2. How do we view death?

World's Answer: A friend. The world sees death as a friend to save us from suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: A defeated enemy. Christ's death and resurrection defeated death and make it a door to life.

3. How do we view life?

World's Answer: “Eat, drink, and be merry.” The world seeks pleasure.

WORD'S ANSWER: Purposeful. As long as God gives life, God gives life purpose.



Religion

A Visit from the Apostle Paul

Ask your pastor, an “adopted grandfather,” or another member of your church or school staff to visit your classroom in the role of the imprisoned Saint Paul (see Philippians 1:20-26). Interview Paul about the struggle he faced as he longed to go home to be with Christ, yet wanted to live and continue to serve Him and others.

The following questions/answers are offered as a place to start, but allow the children to ask questions as well. Be sure to prepare the person playing Paul with a list of starter questions and answers.



Questions:



Why are you in prison? (I was put in prison for preaching about Jesus.)

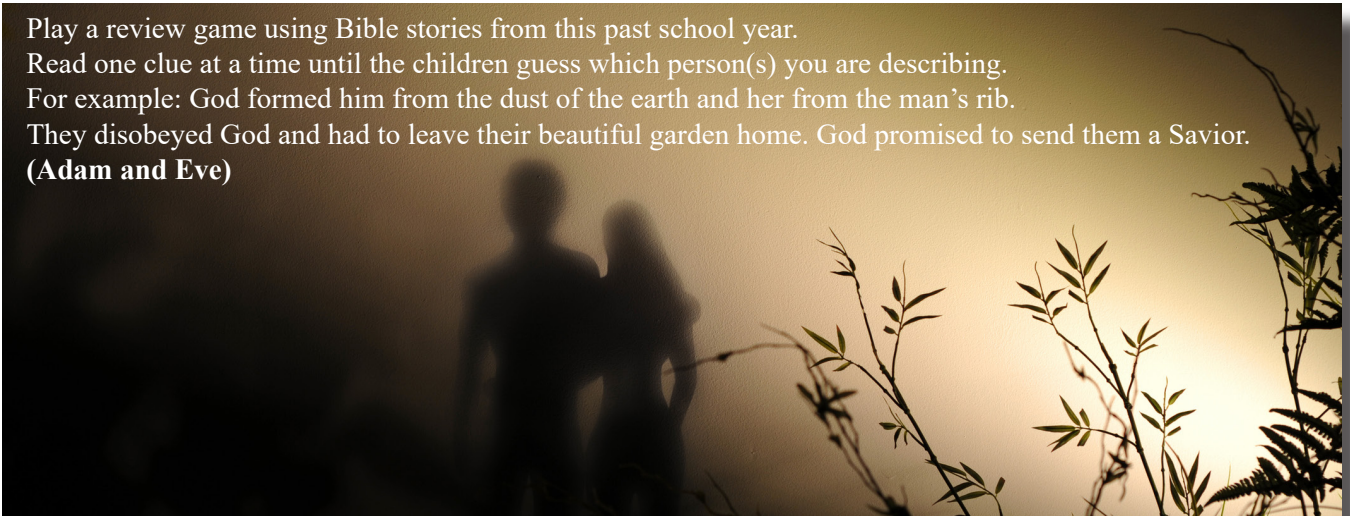
Are you scared? (I don't know what is going to happen to me, but I do know that Jesus is always with me. He was with me when I was stoned, when I was shipwrecked, and when I was bitten by a poisonous snake, and I know He will be with me whether I live or die.)

Are you afraid of dying? (I suppose everyone is a little. But I look forward to going to heaven to be with my Savior, Jesus Christ. That helps calm any fears I have.)

What did you mean when you wrote, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”? (Philippians 1:21 ESV) (If I die, I'll get to be with Jesus in heaven, but if I live He can use me to tell more people that He loves them and died for them.)

Heroes of the Faith Memory/Review Game

Play a review game using Bible stories from this past school year.
Read one clue at a time until the children guess which person(s) you are describing.
For example: God formed him from the dust of the earth and her from the man's rib.
They disobeyed God and had to leave their beautiful garden home. God promised to send them a Savior.
(Adam and Eve)



When the children have guessed correctly, attach a picture of the person(s) to a bulletin board or a clothesline strung across the room. Use pictures from the religion curriculum or cards from a children's Bible trivia or memory game. Then add a photo of a friend or relative who is at home with Jesus.

Ask the children what all the persons on the board or clothesline have in common. Were they perfect or without sin? **(No. With the exception of Jesus, all of them sinned and needed a Savior.)** Students might mention that all of them are dead. Ask, “Where are they now?” **(In heaven with God.)** Why are they in heaven? **(Jesus died for their sins on the cross, and God gave them the gifts of forgiveness and faith.)** Say or sing John 3:16 together. You can sing it to the tune of *Three Blind Mice* if you repeat the last three words of the verse. Jesus is with us now (review Matthew 28:20), and someday we will be with Him in heaven along with all the believers who have died before us.

Social Studies

Memorial Day

Tell the children that Memorial Day began after the Civil War as a way to honor soldiers who had died. Ask what they know about how Memorial Day is celebrated in your community. If they mention only picnics, vacation from school, going to the beach, etc., explain that in some communities special ceremonies and/or parades are held to honor those who have died serving their country in wartime. Some families put flowers on the graves of relatives and friends during Memorial Day weekend.



Christians can say “thank you” to God for giving the gift of faith to friends and relatives who have died and now live in heaven with Him. Describe such a sainted relative or friend of yours. Then model a short prayer of thanks for that person’s life and God’s gift of eternal life. Give the children the opportunity to thank God for friends and family members that are in heaven and for the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus.

(See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_Day for additional background information about Memorial Day.)

Science

Nature Walk

Take a nature walk around your school or center’s neighborhood. Observe signs of new life such as eggs or baby birds in a nest, tadpoles in a pond, or a mother or father pushing a new baby in a carriage. Point out the different kinds of trees and bushes that are native to your community. Explain that evergreen trees (conifers) and bushes keep their leaves (needles) all year round. They remind us of God’s gift of eternal life to all who trust in Jesus. Note: If evergreen trees are not found in your area, explain that Christmas trees grown in the northern United States are types of evergreens or conifers.

Mother’s Day Plants and Flower Pots

Plant flower seeds in disposable drink cups. Decorate the “pots” with markers, glitter, or spongy stickers. Add a felt “Thanks, Mom, for life!” banner on a craft stick to each flower pot.

Thanks, Mom, for life!



Language

Read a Book

Read *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch. Remind the children that God's love is even greater than that of the mother in the story. He loved them before He formed them inside their mothers' bodies. He is with them as they grow bigger and bigger each day. He will be with them when they are all grown up and even when they are very old. Some day He will take them home to heaven to live with Him forever.



Make a Book: *Life – God's Wonderful Gift*

The children can make the booklets to take home and read with their families or to give as a Mother's Day gift. A sample outline:

Page 1

God made me special. (Use finger paints to make a handprint and a footprint.)

Page 2

God gave me a family. (Children can draw their family members or cut out magazine photos and label each person.)

Page 3

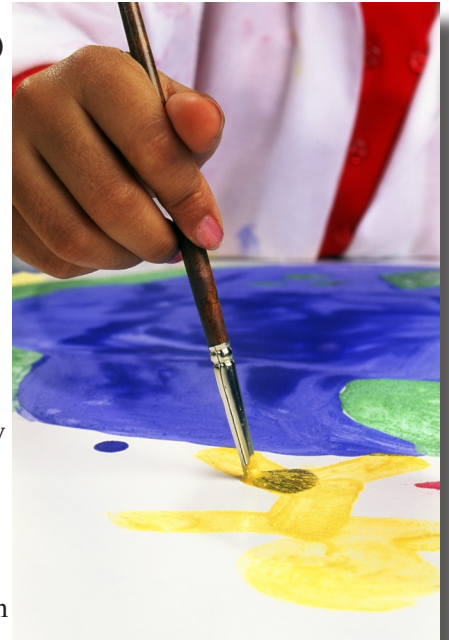
God gives me what I need. (Children can draw or cut and paste pictures of food, clothing, homes, etc.)

Page 4

God gave me Jesus. (Use a drawing of baby Jesus from the religion or Sunday School curriculum. Have the children glue a piece of cloth or a cotton ball to the baby for a blanket.)

Page 5

Someday I'll live in heaven. (Ask the children to draw what they think heaven will be like. Include a sticker or picture of Jesus.)



Fine Arts

Heavenly Litanies

Use the "We're Going to Heaven" and "Heaven is My Home" litanies (pp. 88-89 of *Fingers Tell the Story*) to reinforce the Gospel message that God's gift of life continues for eternity in heaven for all who trust in Jesus.

In each litany, the children respond to each teacher phrase with the words of the title.

If desired, add additional teacher phrases appropriate to your setting.



Service Learning Project

“God’s Gift of Life” Mural

Working with adopted grandparents, pen pals from a senior center, or older students, have the children (and their helpers, too) complete the following sentences using words and illustrations:

1. What I like best about being alive is . . . (*I’m thankful to be alive because . . .*).
2. Heaven will be great because . . . (*I want to live in heaven someday because . . .*).

Display the children’s (and adults’) work on a bulletin board or a newsprint mural with the sentences/pictures of life on earth on one half and the sentences/illustrations of life in heaven on the other half. Place a picture of Jesus near each section to remind the children and all who view the display of Saint Paul’s words from Philippians 1:21 ESV:

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Note: If you have pen pals in another community, send the sentence starters to them to complete and return for a cooperative mural.



Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parent,

This month has several holidays that help us remember and give thanks for God’s gift of life. We give thanks for the gift of mothers and families as we celebrate Mother’s Day. Near the end of the month we will remember those who have passed from this life to eternal life in heaven through faith in Christ Jesus. Many of our activities this month will focus on appreciating God’s gift of life on earth while looking forward to the joys of eternal life in heaven with Jesus.

As the school year comes to a close, we have been (will be) reviewing many concepts and lessons learned throughout the year. We will be remembering our “faith ancestors,” giving thanks to God for their lives and their faith, and rejoicing that they have passed the life-giving Good News of Jesus on to us so that someday we, too, will be with Him (and with them) in heaven. We give thanks for you as well and the partnership we share in teaching the life-giving Good News of Jesus to your children!

In His Service,

Resources

(Expanded annotations may be found on the CD.)

Books:

Anderson, H. C. *The Little Match Girl*. New York: Putnam, 1987. This book with its beautiful illustrations could be tied to a discussion of the many gifts that God gives us in this life as well as the peace and joy we have to look forward to someday in heaven.

Barker, P. *What Happened When Grandma Died*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982. This 32-page book is intended for use with children ages 4-9 to provide comfort and understanding at the time of a loved one's death based on the promises in God's Word.

Bohlmann, K. *Grandpa, Is There a Heaven?* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001. In this 32-page book for children ages 4-7 a grandfather answers a child's questions about death from a biblical perspective and encourages his grandchild to go to God's Word for answers.

Fryar, Jane (Ed.). *Fingers Tell the Story: Fingerplays, Pantomimes, and Litanies for the Very Young*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Jahsmann, A.H. & M.P. Simon. *Little Visits with God*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957; revised copyright 1995.

Little Ones Sing Praise: Christian Songs for Young Children. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Marxhausen, J. *Heaven Is a Wonderful Place*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004. This book was originally published under the title *If I Should Die, If I Should Live* and is written for children ages 4-8.

Munsch, R. N. *Love You Forever*. Scarborough, Ontario: Firefly, 1986. A mother's lifelong love for her child is chronicled in this predictable book with repetitive phrases. Robert Munsch's story provides a wonderful opportunity for connecting the mother's love to God's eternal love for us that begins even before our conception and continues even after our death.

CD:

Likens, James. *God Knew Your Name and More*. The poignant words of each selection on this CD focus on God's creating, redeeming, and sanctifying work beginning with conception and continuing throughout our lives until He calls us safely home to Himself in heaven.

Web Sites:

www.cph.org – Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_Day

www.godknewyourname.com – The *God Knew Your Name and More* CD is available for purchase through this site along with other musical resource materials by James Likens.

www.lutheransforlife.org – This site contains a wide variety of resources and links on end-of-life and other life issues.

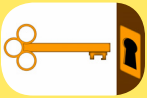
The *GOD'S WORD for Life* Bible may be purchased through this web site. This Bible, in the *GOD'S WORD* translation, includes 38 commentaries on many For Life topics.

Teaching For Life

For Life at Life's End.



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Bible Story: Paul writes a letter from jail. (Philippians 1:20-26)



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3. How do we view life?

World's Answer: “Eat, drink, and be merry.” The world seeks pleasure.

WORD'S ANSWER: Purposeful. As long as God gives life, God gives life purpose.



Religion

Jesus Raised

Tell or read the story of Easter. *Voyages*® Curriculum Grade 1, Unit 8, “Jesus Lives.” *Voyages*® Curriculum Grade 2, Unit 7, “Celebrate Easter.” See also the Arch® Books listed in the Resource section.

Jesus Raises

Read stories about Jesus raising other people from the dead. The story of the raising of Jairus’s daughter is told in the *Voyages*® Curriculum, Grade 2, Unit 6. See also the Arch® Books listed in the Resource section.

Crowns of Life

Tell about or draw pictures of family members or friends who have died. Draw crowns of life on their heads. The crowns could be made out of gold paper or foil. Have the children label their pictures. Make them into a bulletin board or class book with a heading such as “God Gives Us Life—Forever.”

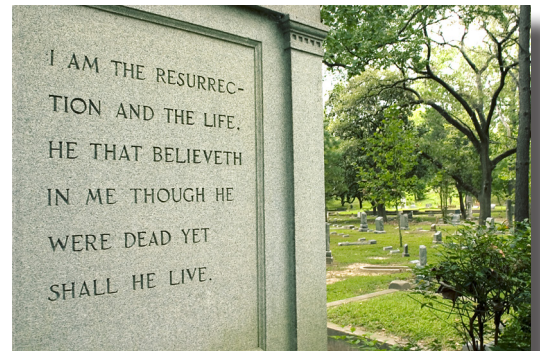
Witness of Life

If possible, ask a family member to speak to the class about their trust in God’s care and the comfort they have in knowing their loved one is in heaven. Christians give a powerful testimony of God’s grace at such a time. Be sure to choose the person carefully. Young children are easily impressed. The message must be positive and Christ centered. Perhaps someone on your staff has had such an experience.



Visit a Funeral Setting

Go into church before or after a funeral or memorial service to see flowers, pictures, and other symbols of eternal life. Let the children see how the church is arranged. Look at the flowers. Often families display pictures of the deceased person’s life. Discuss how death is the last event in the earthly life of a Christian. Now that person lives on in heaven. Be sensitive to children’s feelings. Don’t force anyone to participate if that person does not feel comfortable. This should be a gentle and positive experience. You might want to notify parents of your plans and obtain their permission.



How We Get to Heaven

Read Philippians 1:21. Discuss why Paul was sure that he would get to heaven and it would be a “gain.” Then talk about how we get into heaven. Use the *How Do You Get to Heaven* puzzle on the CD.



Teacher Sprinkle: What are you looking forward to doing or seeing in heaven?

Language Arts

Heavenly Reading

Read *Heaven is a Wonderful Place* by Joanne Marxhausen (Concordia Publishing House).

Heavenly Writing

Write and illustrate a book about heaven. This activity could be done individually, in small groups, or as a class. Be sure to include Jesus. He is the focus of eternal life. Being with Him is what the joy of heaven will be all about. Remind the children that there is much we do not know about heaven. They are drawing things that make them happy now, but in heaven we will probably have a different outlook. We do know angels will be there. Other Christians who have died will be there. There will be no crying or sadness.

Heavenly Search

Do the “Heaven is a Wonderful Place” word search puzzle on the CD. If the puzzle is too difficult, give the children hints by pointing out where the words begin or which direction they run.

Heavenly Acrostic

See the “Heaven Acrostic” on the CD. Suggestions might be:

HAPPY
ETERNAL
AWESOME
VERY BEAUTIFUL
EASTER
NO TEARS



Teacher Sprinkle: What question do you want to ask God when you are in heaven?



Fine Arts

Singing in Heaven

Sing with gusto songs of praise like we will sing in heaven. See CD for suggestions.

Angels in Heaven

There will be angels in heaven. Draw angels or make an angel collage. Three-dimensional angels can be made by making a cone shape for the body and adding a head, wings, and halo. Provide doilies, gold foil, glitter, and other sparkly pieces.

Mansions in Heaven

Make a mural of heaven, including your own “mansion.” You could combine this activity with the above. Refer to Jesus’ words in John 14:1-4.

Resurrection Symbol

Make or paint a butterfly. See the CD instructions for making a “stained glass” butterfly. Other craft ideas are also available at www.enchantedlearning.com.



Science

Dead or Alive?

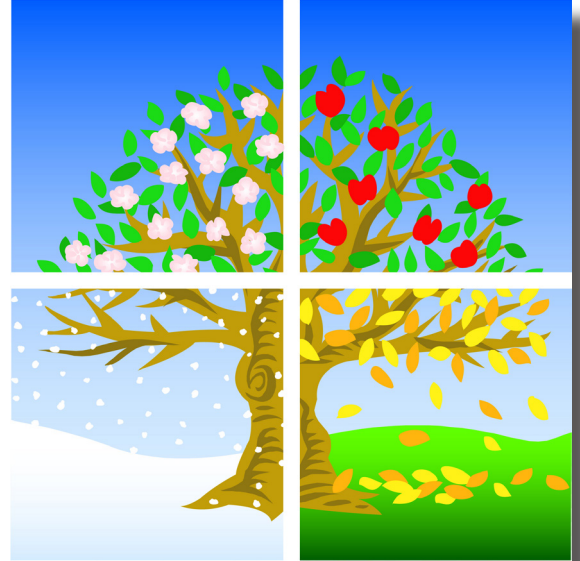
Compare living and non-living things. Bring in pictures or samples of things that are alive and things that are not. Living things move, eat, grow, reproduce, breathe, respond to stimuli. Some things were never alive, such as a rock. Other things were once alive but are now dead. When people die they are no longer alive here on earth, but the saints are alive in heaven. Our souls go to be with Jesus. Our bodies will be raised on the last day. That will be a wonderful event!

Spring to Life

Watch new life emerge in the spring. Look for buds on trees that were formerly bare or grass sprouting out of the dry earth. God renews the earth each spring, just as He gives new life to those who have died.

Life's Seasons

Draw pictures of a tree in the four seasons of the year (life cycle). Fold a sheet of paper into fourths. In each quadrant draw a scene representing spring, summer, fall, and winter. Note the cycles of living, dying, and rebirth. For example, draw a tree with buds and flowers to represent spring, the same tree full of leaves in the summer, the same tree with colorful foliage in the fall, and the same tree with bare branches in the winter. To make the picture more interesting, have the children glue small flowers on the tree branches in the spring, cut pieces of leaves in the summer, candy corn in the fall, and cotton or marshmallows in the winter.



New Life

Watch butterflies emerge. Butterfly larvae can be purchased through school supply or science supply catalogs. Butterflies can be released into a garden or open space. Point out how God gives life. The new life that emerges is more beautiful than the former. Information is available at www.enchantedlearning.com. See the Resource list for children's books on the subject.

Math

Butterfly Bar Graph

If you did butterfly hatch, make bar graphs to show how many emerged.



God's Time Clock

Make clocks with words, "My Times Are In God's Hands." Write the words on white paper plates. Write numerals on the plates to form the face of a clock. Attach construction paper hands with a paper fastener so the hands turn. Discuss how time is God's gift to us. No one knows how long he or she will live on this earth. Our lives and the length of them are in God's hands. In heaven we will have no need for clocks.



Twelves

Read the story of the healing of Jairus's daughter (*Voyages*®, Grade 2, Unit 6; A Child's Garden of Bible Stories). Note that the girl had lived 12 years. Make a list or chart or bulletin board display of things that come in sets of 12—for example, doughnuts, eggs, numbers on a clock, rolls, etc.



Teacher Sprinkle: We will be in heaven with Jesus forever. How high can you count? Forever is even more than that!

Social Studies

Death and Burial Customs

Every culture has customs centered around death and burial. Egyptians buried kings with items to be used in the afterlife. In Japan, ancestors are worshipped. We believe that in heaven we will no longer need earthly things. We remember our relatives with joy, but worship only God. Demonstrate respect for other cultures, but remind the children that we believe what God's Word tells us. See the Resource section for links to learn more about the above customs.

Tombstones and Their Stories

Show pictures of tombstones or memorials and read what is on them. Usually the marker will list the name, date of birth, and date of death. Sometimes other comments are printed, such as: Beloved Mother, At Peace With Jesus, Champion Fisherman. Discuss what we can learn about the life of a person by reading what is on the grave marker. What would be a good phrase to put on a grave marker to show what we believe? See the Resource section for information about tombstones and Christian symbols.

Military Funerals

Military funerals honor the person who served his or her country. There are many interesting rituals involved. See the Resource section.



Physical Activity

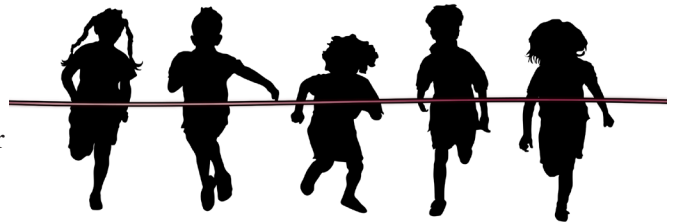
Scarf Dancing

Provide colorful scarves and encourage the children to move to praise-type songs. This is an opportunity to express the joy and freedom Jesus gives us.



Crossing the Finish Line

Use a stop watch to time how long it takes children to get from one line to another using a variety of ways, such as walking, hopping, or running. It doesn't matter whether it takes a short time or a long time, everyone crosses the finish line. In the same way, some people live for a long time; others for a short time, but everyone's life on earth ends one day. We know our lives then continue in heaven.



Service Learning

Praying For the Comfort of Others

Ask the church office for names of people who have recently lost loved ones or whose loved ones do not seem to have long to live. Pray for them as a class. Write a note or letter to the family you are praying for.

Baking and Singing to Comfort Others

If opportunity arises, let the children bake cookies or make sandwiches for a funeral reception. Ask the pastor if it would be appropriate for them to deliver the food in person and, perhaps, to sing a song of comfort or praise.



Parent Letter Sample

Please see the CD for a sensitive and educational letter to parents on the focus of this unit.

Resources

Books:

Arch® Books (Concordia Publishing House) Bible stories written in rhyme for children:

Get Up, Lazarus! Schkade, Jonathan. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

He's Risen! He's Alive! Bader, Joanne. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002.

Jesus Returns to Heaven. Baden, Robert. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005.

Mary Magdalene's Easter Story. Hartman, Sara. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005.

My Happy Easter Book. Truitt, Gloria. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005.

Stephen Stands Strong. Stiegemeyer, Julie. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

The Story of the Empty Tomb. John, Reading. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998.

Gross, Arthur. *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948. A variety of Bible stories told in simple words for young children.

All God's People Sing. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992. A variety of Christian songs for children.

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Christian songs for young children.

Maier, Paul. *The Very First Easter.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999. Christopher's parents give him a description of the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection. He discovers his link to that event.

Voyages® curriculum. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001.

Web Sites:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_burialking/ – Information about ancient Egyptian burial customs.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tombstone#Inscriptions – Information about tombstones, their inscriptions, and Christian symbols.

www.answers.com/topic/ancestor-worship – A reference for teachers to learn about ancestor worship in other cultures.

www.answers.com/topic/military-funeral – Resource information regarding military funeral customs. Pictures and sounds included.

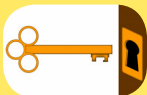
www.enchantedlearning.com – Information regarding butterflies, eggs, and other scientific subjects written for children.

Teaching For Life

For Life at Life's End.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord of Life who has won victory over our enemy death through Your death and resurrection, enable me to live in the hope that You give and guide me as I teach this hope to Your children. In Your holy name, Amen.”



Key Concept: God gives life value and purpose and decides the time of our death.



Gospel Focus: Christ's victory over death and the grave makes death a gain and makes life meaningful.



Bible Story: Paul writes a letter from jail. (Philippians 1:20-26)



Critical Questions:

1. Who determines the time of our death?

World's Answer: We do. The world says that we should have the right to determine the time and manner of death.

WORD'S ANSWER: God. There is a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:2), but that time is in God's hands. (Psalm 31:15)

2. How do we view death?

World's Answer: A friend. The world sees death as a friend to save us from suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: A defeated enemy. Christ's death and resurrection defeated death and makes it a door to life.

3. How do we view life?

World's Answer: “Eat, drink, and be merry.” The world seeks pleasure.

WORD'S ANSWER: Purposeful. As long as God gives life, God gives life purpose.



Religion

Paul's Prison Ponderings – Life or Death?

Read Philippians 1:20-26. Point out that Paul wrote this while he was in prison facing possible death. Through discussion, guide your students in understanding the following:

- Paul's struggle between wanting to be with Jesus in heaven and also desiring to accomplish God's will for him in his life.
- It's okay for people to want to be with Jesus. Point out how the elderly sometimes can't wait to "go home to heaven." Maybe students will know of someone like that.
- It's okay to want to keep on living. God made us to live and to serve Him. Point out how it's okay for people with cancer, for example, to "fight for life" and want to keep living. Maybe students will know someone like this.
- Finally, point out that God knows what is best and He is the One who decides whether we live or die.

Personal Prison Letters

Have your students pretend they are in prison like Paul. Ask them to write letters to others sharing the Good News of Jesus and how He is with us and at work in our lives no matter what.

Paul's Other Prison Time

Paul may have spent a total of seven years in prison. Teach concordance use by having students look up other times Paul was in jail.

Read some of these passages and compare how he is expressing his feelings in them:

Acts 16:16-40

Acts 21:27-22:30

Acts 23:23-26:32

Acts 28:16-31

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (Like Philippians, written from prison.)



Teacher Sprinkle: Imagine you are Paul. How does it feel to know you may die for the Lord? Are you comforted by the fact that you will be in heaven or are you gripped by fear? (Even though we know heaven will be wonderful, it's okay to have fears about dying.)

Language Arts

Paul's Prison Point of View

Ask students to write a short essay about Paul's time in prison from Paul's point of view. Let them use their imaginations to describe the surroundings, what they got to eat, where they slept, etc. Be sure they include how Paul felt wondering whether he would live or die.

Prisoner Prayer

Write a prayer to God on behalf of Paul.

You may use this to teach the parts of prayer in the acronym:

A-C-T-S:

Now have students rewrite the prayer as necessary to make it a general prayer for prisoners in jail.

Use these in class to pray for prisoners each day.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

ACTS

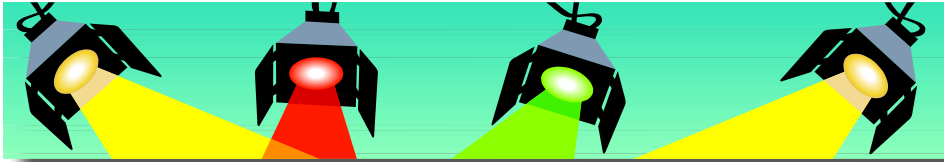
Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

Prison Drama



Work in groups to have students write a drama based on their essays from above.

Heaven is a Wonderful Place

Read *Heaven is a Wonderful Place*. Have students write their feelings about death in letter form. Read these together (one on one) and discuss any fears the children may have about death. Be sure to clear up any misconceptions they may have as well. This is a great opportunity for you to really get to know your students. It will also provide for an opportunity for you and your students to have some one-on-one discussion about some very important matters.



Teacher Sprinkle: Suppose the jail keeper was listening to Paul's thoughts and reading his letters. What do you think his response would be to Paul?



Fine Arts

Heavenly Songs

Sing several songs about eternal life including the ones listed here and others you may want to include.

Amazing Grace (All God's People Sing 63)

I Am a "C" (All God's People Sing 124)

We Praise You, O God (All God's People Sing 256)

I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus (Little Ones Sing Praise 24)

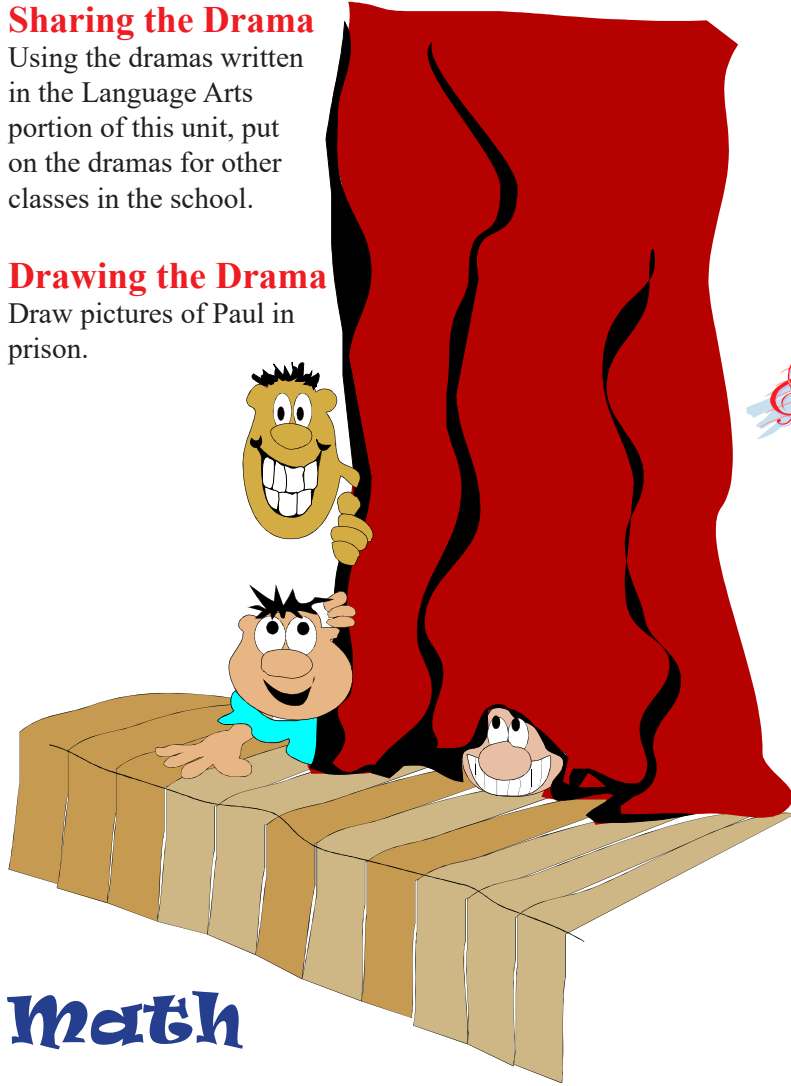
If Anybody Asks You Who I Am (Little Ones Sing Praise 98)

Sharing the Drama

Using the dramas written in the Language Arts portion of this unit, put on the dramas for other classes in the school.

Drawing the Drama

Draw pictures of Paul in prison.



Math

Length of Life

Using the following examples, determine a person's length of earthly life:

1932-2004

1886-1923

1980-2008

1687-1718

1946-1993

1872-1960



Using the above examples of earthly life spans, determine how many days each person was alive, hours, minutes, seconds.

Science

What's Needed for Live Plant Experiments

Using several plants, conduct the following experiments to see what plants need to live.

1. Using two identical plants, place one in a well-lit area and one under a dark box. Water each one the same way for the same number of days. After two weeks, compare the two plants. Which one is thriving and which one is struggling?
2. Using two identical plants, place them both in the same light location. Water one of them as needed and do not water the other one. After two weeks, compare these two plants. Is one healthier than the other?
3. Using two identical plants, place them both in the same light location. Water them both as needed. Talk to one of the plants. Give it lots of verbal attention and be very kind to it. Do not speak to the other plant at all when watering and caring for it. Watch these two plants over several weeks. Is there any truth to the notion that plants do better when given attention or is it an "old wives tale"?



Teacher Sprinkle: What do we need to live with the kind of hope Paul had in prison? (See Matthew 4:4)

Botanical Center Visit

Visit a local Botanical Conservatory if possible. Ask for a tour. Have the guide point out locally grown plants and compare them to plants in other regions of the world. If there is a desert or rain forest, how do these differ from the plants seen in your region?

When back in the classroom, note how God has made each student different and has a unique purpose for each of them.



Bring Good From Waste

Get a wooden, plastic, or metal bin with tight fitting lid. Add moist, drained bedding to bin. Place 1-2 lbs. of "red wiggler" worms in bin. Bury food waste in the bedding several inches deep. Harvest compost after a few months.

If this is not realistic to do, you can still explain the process. Bring some commercially prepared compost to school. Point out how the waste and decay is used to make something useful.

God is at work even in the bad things in our lives (like Paul in prison) bringing good and accomplishing His purpose.



Service Learning

Intergenerational Game Day

Invite several seniors from your congregation to the class for an afternoon. Supply the group with several board games and music. Encourage the seniors and students to engage in active play with one another in order to promote intergenerational activity and camaraderie.



Care Center Visit

While visiting a nearby care center, consider participating in an activity such as pushing wheelchairs, decorating the residents' rooms, reading to a senior. Perhaps some students can read their essays from Language Arts or Bible verses that emphasize the joys of heaven.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

The end of life is often a scary idea for young children. Having honest, open discussions about this topic will help alleviate fears. Be sure to remind your children of the gift they have received through Jesus Christ. He has saved us all from our sins and because of Him, we are going to live forever in heaven with Him. Remind them that God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to take our place in front of the devil. He has won for us eternal life and because of that love, we are never going to have to face sin, death, and the devil alone. He has won the victory for us. Like Paul in Philippians 1:20-26, whether we live or die, we belong to God in Christ.

Resources

All God's People Sing. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Holy Bible

Little Ones Sing Praise. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Marxhausen, Joanne. *Heaven is a Wonderful Place*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

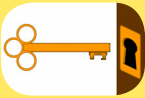
McDowell, C. Forrest and Tricia Clark. *Home Composting Made Easy*. Costesia Press, 1998.

Teaching For Life

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3. How do we view life?

World's Answer: “Eat, drink, and be merry.” The world seeks pleasure.

WORD'S ANSWER: Purposeful. As long as God gives life, God gives life purpose.



Religion

Forever and Ever

Voyages® Unit 9 Grade 5 – Once Judgment Day is past, the verses from Revelation for this lesson paint a vivid picture of our future in the New Jerusalem where the River of Life flows, spanned by the Tree of Life. Jesus will no longer sit at His Father’s right hand in heaven, but on an earthly throne where we will live under His constant light in pain-free bliss. Who wouldn’t want this to come soon! Paul talks about this in this unit’s Bible verse when he says, “To die is gain” and “to depart and be with Christ is better by far” (Philippians 1:20-26 NIV).

Ask: Have you ever wondered why God allows people who are suffering to keep on suffering instead of taking them to heaven while we wait for the New Jerusalem? This should open the door for questions and discussion. You might mention that people sometimes say “I don’t have anything to live for” or someone says of an ill person, “She’d be better off dead.” Then read what the Bible says in: Psalm 139:16; Job 14:5; Psalm 31:15; Deuteronomy. 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6.

Ask: What do these verses say about suicide, mercy killing, and who decides the time of death? Before students answer, say, “Give me five!” (Students must write at least 5 sentences of their own thinking.) Share.

(For more good discussion ideas and exercises, see the CD.)

Persecution and Martyrdom

Voyages® Unit 9 Grade 6 – The lesson refers both to the imprisonment and flogging of the apostles who continued to speak boldly against the Sanhedrin’s orders as well as Stephen’s martyrdom. Tradition says all the apostles suffered persecution and that all were martyred except possibly John.

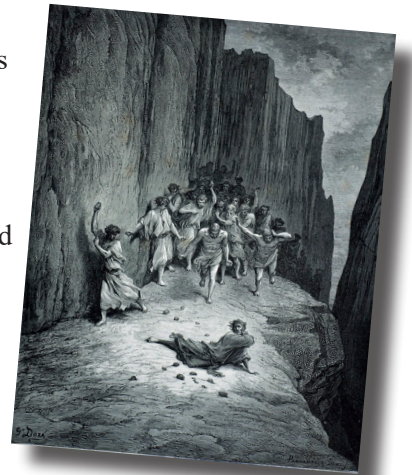
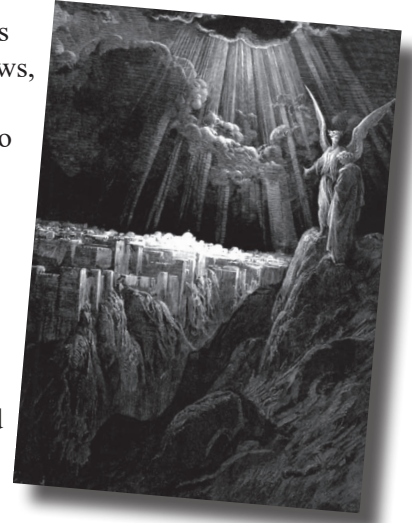
Read Acts 5:41.

Ask: How does anyone get to the place where they “rejoice because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name” like the apostles and martyrs did? Why was Paul in this unit’s Bible story (Philippians 1:20-26) willing to be martyred? If no ideas flow, try a simpler question: Why would you take a stand on something like another child hurting your little brother or a teacher saying your correct test answer is wrong? Put up a flow chart:

1. There **IS** right and wrong and it matters.
2. I have the truth.
3. Justice requires me to speak up because I can’t be passive about this. It’s important to me.

Homework Assignment

Ask two adults (you may ask over the phone), “What do you believe in so strongly that you’d be willing to suffer ridicule or even pain for?” Post these on a bulletin board. Tell students you expect them to read the answers and be ready to write their own as a later assignment.



What is left of an African Church that had been caught in the middle of civil war.

Language Arts

Debate

As part of your communication skill teaching do the following activity. Label five students with the following personalities:

- 35-year-old woman doctor
- 25-year-old illegal immigrant
- 3-year-old son of a wealthy banker
- paraplegic veteran
- middle aged movie star (select someone current)

The year is 2050 and the planet has been invaded by aliens. Each government has been told to reduce its population by two fifths. Only three of the above people will survive. Which three should be selected? Let each of the five give some reasons why they should be chosen to live.



Hebrew Memory

One of the Old Testament Hebrew's greatest fears was that the next generation might forget God's hand in the past and then not be able to see God's hand in their own time. Brainstorm together a set of questions for students to use with grandparents on tape/video to preserve the record of God's hand in their lives.



Reading Critically

Compare two current articles you've chosen, one from www.internationaltaskforce.org and one from www.compassionandchoices.org. The former takes a pro-life stance and the latter pro-death.

Highlight phrases which identify the authors' viewpoints and purposes. Notice any subtle shadings, punn words, or other persuasive techniques. Summarize the author's main points. Then judge whether the author has been clear, concise, and correct.

(For more details and suggestions on the above, see CD.)

Science

Health and Wellness

As an introduction to this unit, consider 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20, **"You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."**

Move from this into a discussion of our responsibilities for our bodies as well as the bodies of others from a stewardship point of view. Mothers and fathers care for the bodies of their children; spouses for each other; family members for older extended members; and the church for widows, orphans, and those in need. Anything intentionally done to harm our own or someone else's body, whether pre-born or senile, is a sin against the Creator of that body and against the church's dictum to bear one another's burdens. As long as God gives life, then He, in Christ, gives that life meaning and purpose.



Social Studies

Medieval Times—Last Rites

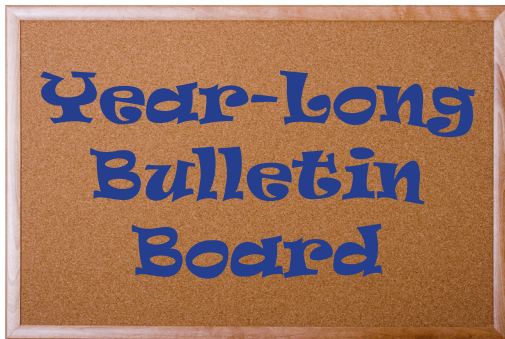
Invite your pastor to talk to the class about last rites. What is the history of this practice? Why don't Lutherans believe in this? How did this tie into the Roman Catholic belief in purgatory and into Luther's objection to indulgences? What do Lutheran pastors do in terminal situations today?

Funeral Home Field Trip

Visit a funeral home that serves your church. Ahead of time, send questions the children have to the funeral director to include in the tour. You might make sure one question is: Besides the service format, is a Christian's funeral different from an unbeliever's in any way you've experienced? You might also visit the cemetery and compare today's grave stones which include the person's name and dates to other ancient civilizations' or other religions' grave markers.



(For further study and ideas see Roman Empire and Branches of Government on the CD.)



On your *God—For Life* bulletin board, use again the large Michelangelo-like hand you started the year with.

This time place small timelines labeled with each child in your class showing various events like birth date, baptism date, this year's date, and an open space for death date.

Write out Psalm 31:15 (“**My times are in your hands**”) around the hands.

Service Learning

Vitamins for the Soul

For homework, ask each student to collect a favorite Bible verse from parents, siblings, friends, and choose one themselves. Bring them in typed using size 10 font on narrow strips of paper. Then roll these tightly around a toothpick and slip them into empty gelatin capsules you buy from the pharmacy. Put all the pills in an old vitamin bottle labeled “Vitamins for the Soul.” Present these to your pastoral staff to take on visits to the hospital. If you really like this, get the whole school involved by bringing it up in chapel.



Senior Gifts

Make any of the following for the seniors you've been connected to this year: (1) Audio/video tape songs including rehearsal and chapel performances. (2) Make hanging bird feeders by pounding a nails into small boards. Then spear suet or fruit to it. (3) Collect dice, pencils, and copies of Yahtzee game paper to box up. (4) Plant seeds under grow lights in transportable containers. (5) Invite seniors to a taping session where you've transferred student's favorite written work into small, illustrated booklets. Have each senior read the book onto a cassette for a grandchild. (Note where to turn the page by a bell or signal.) Encourage the senior to make side comments into the recorder. Then have students help the senior mail the booklet and tape to their designated recipient.



math

In 1970, the U.S. population over age 65 was 2 percent. In 2000 it rose to 12.5 percent of the population. What was the percentage increase?

Discuss the implications of our continually growing and aging population in terms of how it may affect the acceptance of assisted suicide and euthanasia. What does it say about the need for Christian churches to be involved in end-of-life care?



Parent Letter Suggestion

Write out parts of Isaiah 46:3-4 NIV: “Listen to me, O house of Jacob . . . you whom I have upheld since you were conceived, and carried since your birth. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he...who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you.”

Mention that every age level from infancy to senior has developmental needs.

The elderly repeat memories of moments important to them as they work to articulate their legacy to a world they will soon leave. Just as God stretches us to learn patience from toddlers and teens, so God also created us to learn what’s really valuable from God’s gray-haired saints.

Learning to value and care sacrificially for others

is one of the many spiritual lessons children receive in a Lutheran school to combat the throw-away culture that surrounds us.

Help parents to be aware of why your school celebrates Grandparents’ Day and why your class interacts with older adults. You might include the following poem:

*Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, “A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all nor be afraid!”*
Robert Browning

or

*O God, You have taught me from my youth,
And to this day I declare Your wondrous works.
Now also when I am old and grayheaded,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to this generation,
Your power to everyone who is to come.*

Psalm 71:17-19



Resources

Books:

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*. New York: Farrer, Straus and Giroux, 1985. The author places the main character in the dilemma of whether to live out her God-ordained life span to choose for herself an age to live eternally.

Cooney, Barbara. *Miss Rumphius*. New York: Puffin, 1985. This is a picture book, useful in theme study introduction, but also with a strong message about the wisdom of the aged among us to set the sights of the younger generation.

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1932, 1998. This book is a classic that might be introduced to upper level students. It shows a world where the government makes major decisions and offers a glimpse of the “slippery slope” today’s government and medical ethics people struggle against.

Paul, Donita. *Dragonspell*. Colorado Spring, Colorado: Waterbrook Press, 2004. This is a high fantasy adventure and in it, old Granny Noon is shown to be wise and important to the kingdom. This would be true of books like *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck as well.

Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*. New York: Dell Yearling, 2002 and Dell Laurel Leaf (paperback), 2003. The author places Phillip with an old man as both are stranded on a deserted island. The value of aged people is portrayed clearly.

Hymns:

Abide with Me (Lutheran Service Book 878). *Lutheran Worship* has verses relating to death and is often used at funerals. It would be a good hymn to memorize along with *I Am Trusting Thee Lord Jesus* (Lutheran Service Book 729).

Web Sites:

www.compassionandchoices.org

www.iaetf.org has many articles on what is going on with assisted suicide world wide. For more on what is current in Oregon check “Eight Years of Assisted Suicide in Oregon”.

www.lifecyclebooks.com has an inexpensive booklet called *Imposed Death* which gives a good introduction to euthanasia. You’ll also find other booklets and pamphlets of interest on abortion and dating.

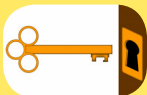
www.lutheransforlife.org – *What about Death and Dying?* is a concise brochure written at a level most students would understand. The section on what happens after we die is particularly straight forward. The pamphlets *The Basics on Advance Directives* and *Ventilators, Feeding Tubes, and other End-of-Life Questions* address the pros and cons of living wills and offers a way to get a more specific directive which circumvents some of the hazards in living wills—good information for your staff.

Teaching For Life

For Life at Life's End.



Prayer for Prep: “Lord of Life who has won victory over our enemy death through Your death and resurrection, enable me to live in the hope that You give and guide me as I teach this hope to Your children. In Your holy name, Amen.”



Key Concept: God gives life value and purpose and decides the time of our death.



Gospel Focus: Christ's victory over death and the grave makes death a gain and makes life meaningful.



Bible Story: Paul writes a letter from jail. (Philippians 1:20-26)



Critical Questions:

1. Who determines the time of our death?

World's Answer: We do. The world says that we should have the right to determine the time and manner of death.

WORD'S ANSWER: God. There is a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:2), but that time is in God's hands. (Psalm 31:15)

2. How do we view death?

World's Answer: A friend. The world sees death as a friend to save us from suffering.

WORD'S ANSWER: A defeated enemy. Christ's death and resurrection defeated death and makes it a door to life.

3. How do we view life?

World's Answer: “Eat, drink, and be merry.” The world seeks pleasure.

WORD'S ANSWER: Purposeful. As long as God gives life, God gives life purpose.



Religion

Read Philippians 1:20-26.

As Saint Paul writes this letter he is imprisoned in Rome. He is not sure if he will be set free or sentenced to death. He is in prison because he spoke openly concerning Jesus as the Messiah and the Savior of all people.

Discussion Questions

Ask: What did Saint Paul seek in his desperate situation, escape through death or release from his prison cell?

Answer: He was willing to live or die, seeking only that God's will would be done.

Ask: What did the apostle prefer of the two options?

Answer: He would rather die so that he could go to heaven and be with Jesus.

Note that the reason he concludes it is best not to die is that as he lives, he is also able to serve. Serving others is more important than selfishly seeking the benefits of heaven and an end to the uncomfortable, even torturous, conditions within his imprisonment.



Ask: Is there anyone in the class who has a grandparent or relative living in a nursing home who requires lots of care?

Response: If there is a student, ask them to describe the living situation of the relative. If not, explain what it can be like for such a person—to be fed by others, dressed by others, even requiring others to help them to the bathroom.

Ask: Would it be better for that person to die and be with Jesus in heaven?

Answer: Yes, as with all Christians, in heaven we will be made perfect and be free of all pain, sorrow, and difficulties. Point out, however, there remains a purpose to each person's life so long as God keeps them in this world. Note that you will come back to this point later.

Paul Althaus, in his book *The Theology of Martin Luther*, shares this quote from Martin Luther, "We should be happy to be dead and desire to die," pointing out that death is only "the narrow gate and the small way to life."



Language Arts

The acronym for this lesson—**END**—recalls that our death does not mean that God does not love us.

What for the unbeliever leads to eternal despair and separation from God, has through the cross and empty tomb become a doorway to paradise for all believers.

Have students write a short essay that expands on each point above and relate it to Paul in prison.



Fine Arts

Materials needed: Two large poster boards (cardboard stock about 2 feet by 3 feet), piano wire, tape, glue, and markers.

At the end of the day, ask the students to go home and look around for small objects that could be used to represent things that will be found in heaven and things that will not be allowed into heaven. For example, someone might bring a thorn to represent the piercing pain that will not be allowed into heaven. Another might bring a feather to represent angels who will be in heaven.

When the fine arts period begins, mark at the top of one poster board “NOT ALLOWED IN HEAVEN” and on the other, “WHAT WE MAY FIND IN HEAVEN.”



One by one, have the students bring their item/s and explain what they represent as something not allowed in heaven or expected to be in heaven. Use whatever best attaches the item to the poster board (wire punched through the poster board, tape, or glue).

When all the items are explained and attached, place them in plain sight for the next few weeks as a reminder of the work of Christ on the cross and at the empty tomb. Because of faith in Christ the saints will be protected in heaven from all pain and sorrow and will experience great joy and love.

Before removing the poster boards, ask the students what they remember concerning the items on each poster board and what they indicate about our future life in heaven.

math

Physician assisted suicide is legal in the state of Oregon. During 2006, 65 prescriptions for lethal medications under the provisions of the Death with Dignity Act (DWDA) were written. Of these, 35 patients took the medications, 19 died of their underlying disease, and 11 were alive at the end of 2006. In addition, 11 patients with earlier prescriptions died from taking the medications, resulting in a total of 46 DWDA deaths during 2006. This corresponds to an estimated 14.7 DWDA deaths per 10,000 total deaths.

Using the above data, have students figure a variety of percentages—percent of patients who took medications, percent who died before doing so, etc. (The most current data may be found at www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/pas/ar-index.shtml)

Based on discussion already held about Paul's words in Philippians 1:20-26, what is true "Death with Dignity" for the Christian? (Dying with faith in Christ, the assurance of heaven, and according to God's timing not ours.)



Science

Withdrawing or Withholding Medical Treatment

A variety of treatments exist for those with terminal illness depending on the nature of that illness. Radiation or chemotherapy may slow the disease, extend life, and sometimes even cure or put the disease into remission. Medications may be taken to control symptoms or to alleviate pain. Although they are basic human needs, food and water are often defined as "medical treatment."

Is it appropriate for a Christian to withhold a treatment that is being used in dealing with a terminal illness?

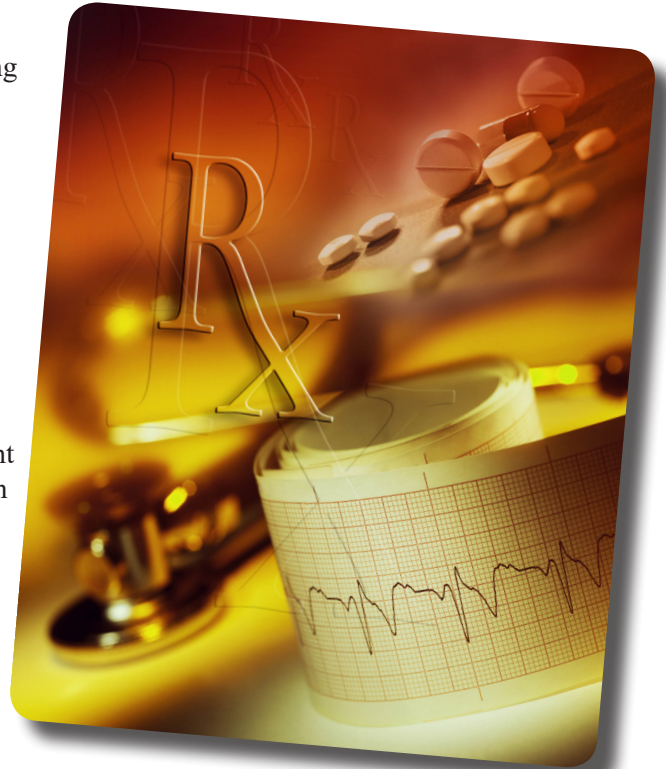
The first question to ask is whether the treatment is prolonging the dying process or working to defeat the dying process. If the treatment has no hope of restoring health but may actually be doing more harm than good, then we are not prolonging life, but the dying process.

Share the following example: Morphine can be used to lessen the pain of a terminally ill patient. Its use has the down side that it can make it more difficult to breathe. It would be appropriate to give morphine to a sick patient to lessen pain. It would not be appropriate to give a large dose of morphine with the *intent* that the patient would stop breathing and die.

Another example: Ventilators and feeding tubes can give comfort to sick patients and allow for other treatments to perhaps help a person get better. If, however, these medical procedures have no hope of helping the person, but rather prolong the process of dying, caring family members may decide not to use these medical procedures. It would not be God-pleasing to refuse these medical techniques simply to cause a person to die.

Bottom line: We can and should allow the dying to die. We must never intend for the death of the living.

Christians are called upon to care for, not kill, those with terminal conditions. When decisions are difficult and there is uncertainty, we fall back upon the grace of God in which we live through Jesus Christ.



Social Studies

In the November 30, 2006, broadcast of *BreakPoint*, Chuck Colson made the following observation:

England's prestigious and influential Nuffield Council on Bioethics has recommended that babies born before twenty-two weeks be given no special treatment to save their lives. Claiming to have the "best interests" of these babies at heart, the Council stated—and read this carefully: "We view [the baby's] interests in living or dying, or in avoiding an 'intolerable' life . . . as more important than the interests that others may have in any significant decisions made about him or her"—like parents, I guess. If babies are born after twenty-two weeks, the Council said, intensive care should be given only if both doctors and parents agree on it.



Note that there are many individuals who have disabilities who enjoy life; but if they were born under the current recommendations of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, they would not have had the opportunity to grow into adulthood.

Ask: Do disabilities reduce the quality of life for those having them or those who help care for individuals with disabilities?

Answer: Individuals with disabilities can enjoy life and contribute to society just like any other person. Those who care for them can discover that caring for another draws out the quality of compassion. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian and pastor who resisted the Nazis during World War II, once noted that it is the weak among us who draw out the qualities of compassion and humaneness within society.

Ask: How would you feel if you were a parent and your baby was going to be born with a disability, but the government insisted on death for the child rather than treatment?

Answer: Answers will vary, but most parents would be devastated if the government assisted in the killing of their child rather than treating a medical condition affecting their child.

Remind students that meaning and purpose in life are not based upon what we are able to do but upon what God does through us. God can be at work whether we are healthy and active or severely disabled and confined to a bed.

Parent Letter Suggestion

Dear Parents,

Your children are learning:

- Disabled and disadvantaged individuals are able to contribute to the well being of society.
- God gives meaning and purpose to every life.
- Saint Paul would have rather died, leaving behind his terrible circumstances, but preferred to continue to live that he might serve others.
- Death, for the faithful saint, is a doorway to heaven.
- It is not God-pleasing to use death to escape difficult circumstances.
- In heaven, the saints experience great joy and have left all sorrow and sadness behind.
- We live in God's grace in Christ and can trust in Him when situations at the end of life are not clear and decisions are difficult.

Resources

Books:

Brighton, Louis A. *Concordia Commentary, A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture, Revelation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999. (Study on chapters 21 and 22.)

Lowrey, Lois. *The Giver*. Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2006.

Marxhausen, Joanne. *Heaven is a Wonderful Place*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004. A great book to use with children.

Web Sites:

www.breakpoint.org – This web site features the *BreakPoint Commentaries* of Chuck Colson.

www.internationaltaskforce.org – A secular site providing information regarding end of life issues. The director, Rita Marker, has spoken at Lutherans For Life conferences.

www.lutheransforlife.org/Life_Issue_Info/End-of-Life/end-of-life.htm – End-of-life materials from Lutherans For Life. The ones that would fit with this lesson include the following:

The Basics on Advance Directives: Thy Will Be Done

Before I Die - A Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues

Better Off Dead? by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Terri Schiavo: The Critical Issue by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Ventilators, Feeding Tubes and Other End-of-Life Questions