

## Unit 1: BFFs

**Faith Focus:** Jesus is our friend.

*Friends love all the time. (Proverbs 17:17)*

### SESSION 5

## GROW IN FAITH

### Friends Share—Matthew 26:17-35

Many of the stories we know about Jesus' ministry involve a meal of some kind. The act of eating together fostered fellowship and friendship. In this story, Jesus sent his disciples into Jerusalem to make preparations for a celebratory meal. Jesus broke bread and shared wine with his disciples.

During the meal, Jesus spoke of the disciple who would betray him. Jesus was trying to prepare his disciples for his death. The disciples did not appear to understand what Jesus was talking about. But as readers of the story, we can see that the food shared and the words spoken were preparing Jesus' friends for his departure. Just like the disciples, we too are Jesus' friends, and we are called to remember him. Each time you share a meal with your friends and family, remember Jesus. Fellowshiping with one another is one way we follow Jesus' teaching to love one another. It is difficult to dislike someone when you are sharing a meal together.

- Explore Communion elements.
- Share a snack together.
- Talk about remembering Jesus.

## SESSION OUTLINE

### COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend

Friendship Plate (Craft)

### FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

### FUN WITH FAITH

Friendship Bracelets (Crafts)

Sharing and Tasting (Snack)

### SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

## SUPPLIES

crayons

scissors

glue

clear plastic plates

CEB Bible storybook

TV and DVD player or  
streaming device

sticky notes

pencils

elastic string

various beads including  
letter beads

small plates and napkins

large plates or serving  
platters

red and green grapes

different breads (pita,  
naan, matzo, yeast bread,  
crackers, and so forth)

handwashing supplies

item to use as a sharing stick

# COME TOGETHER

## Prepare to Learn

**Supplies:** All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

**Prepare Ahead:** Set up your area with the supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15), Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23), and Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Spring Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the bread and cup sticker on the Session 5 space.

**SAY:** We are learning about how Jesus invites all people to be his friends and to follow him.

**ASK:** How do you follow Jesus each day?

## Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend

**Supplies:** All-Ages Class Pack, crayons

**Prepare Ahead:** Display the Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23). Photocopy "My Favorite Meal" (Leader Guide—p. 40) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "My Favorite Meal."

**ASK:** What is a favorite meal that you share with people you care about?

**SAY:** In our Bible story today, we will hear about one special meal that Jesus shared with his community. This meal was so important that we still remember it today, and we remember Jesus whenever we eat together.

- Give children time and space to color the page and share their thoughts aloud.

## Friendship Plate

**Supplies:** Activity Sheets, scissors, glue, clear plastic plates

**Prepare Ahead:** Tear out "Friendship Plate" (Session 5 Activity Sheet) for each child.

**SAY:** In our Bible story today, Jesus will share a meal with his friends.

**ASK:** Who do you eat with each day at home? at school? at church? for celebrations?

- Give each child an activity sheet.

- Have the children cut out the pictures of friendship. Help each child glue the pictures to the top of one plastic plate, then glue the other plastic plate on top of the first one with the pictures in between. You will be able to see the pictures through the clear plastic plates.

**SAY:** When we eat together, we can remember Jesus' friendship. We can remember that Jesus wanted us to make friends with many different people. We can share food as a sign of friendship and community.

## FAITH CONNECTIONS

### Read the Story

**Supplies:** *CEB Bible storybook*

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of Jesus and the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-35) from your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

**SAY:** There are lots of stories in the Bible about people eating together. Jesus ate with his friends and invited lots of different people to join them.

**ASK:** How do you think Jesus' friends (the disciples) felt when Jesus invited people to eat with them?

### Big Faith Video

**Supplies:** *Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device*

- Watch the Session 5 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Share the questions on the screen with the children. You may also choose to add your own questions. Give children time to share their responses and ideas.

**ASK:** What was your favorite part of the video?

### Faith Response

**Supplies:** *All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, pencils, crayons*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Display the Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) and Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) if you haven't already.*

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you: "Friends love all the time" (Proverbs 17:17).

**SAY:** People share love in many different ways. People can share love with their families, friends, neighbors, church family, and even the whole world!

**ASK:** How do you share love with people? How do people share love with you?

**SAY:** Our Bible verse reminds us that friends share love all the time. That means even when it's not easy, friends do their best to love each other.

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.

**ASK:** What is it like to share love when it is difficult?

- As the children share aloud, invite each one to draw or write a response on a sticky note and add it to the poster.

## FUN WITH FAITH

### Friendship Bracelets

**Supplies:** elastic string, various beads including letter beads, scissors

**Prepare Ahead:** Cut 6" lengths of elastic string, two for each child.

**ASK:** How do you and your friends show that you care about each other?

**ASK:** What do you share with your friends?

- Give each child two lengths of elastic string. Direct the children to make friendship bracelets, one for themselves and one to give to a friend.
- The children may wish to use letter beads to spell "friends" or "BFFs" or a name.
- Help the children tie knots in the string so the beads will not fall off.

### Sharing and Tasting

**Supplies:** small plates and napkins, large plates or serving platters, red and green grapes, different breads (pita, naan, matzo, yeast bread, crackers, and so forth), handwashing supplies

**Prepare Ahead:** Wash the produce and prepare large plates or serving dishes with the food on them. Place one type of food on each plate.

- Gather the children around a table. Give each child a small plate.
- Place the large plates with the different kinds of food in the middle of the table.

**ASK:** What do you think Jesus ate with his friends? What do you like to eat with your friends?

**SAY:** When Jesus shared the special meal that we read about in our Bible story, he was sharing bread and wine with them. Today in church we remember that meal when we share bread and juice. Communion is a special time when we remember how Jesus shared a meal with his friends, but you can also remember Jesus and his friends any time you eat or drink.

- After cleaning hands, pass the plates of food around the table, giving each child a chance to take what they wish to try. Direct the children to wait until all have been served before eating. Once all the plates have been passed, say a prayer and then taste the food one item at a time.

**PRAY:** God, we thank you for the food we share. We remember how Jesus shared with his friends, and we ask that you help us share with our friends. Amen.

*Tip: Be sure to check for any allergies before serving food. Encourage children to try new foods, but try not to pressure anyone to eat anything they do not want to eat.*

## SHARE YOUR FAITH

### Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

**Supplies:** All-Ages Class Pack, item to use as a “sharing stick” such as a ruler or toy wand

**Prepare Ahead:** Display the Spring Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21). Photocopy the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 91–92) as needed.

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

**ASK:** What do you know about Jesus as a friend that you want to share with others?

**SAY:** Learning about Jesus helps us have faith in Jesus. We can have faith that Jesus loves us and will help us be a good friend to others. God sent Jesus to the world to help us have faith.

- Gather children into a circle. Invite them to pass around a “sharing stick” and one at a time, share something they know about how Jesus is a good friend. Make sure each child has a chance to share.
- Invite the children to pray with you.

**PRAY:** God, thank you for sending Jesus to share your love with us. Help us follow Jesus’ example of being a good friend each and every day. We love you. Amen.

- Send the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter and activity home with each child who has not yet received them.
- Also send home any activities or items made during today’s session.

Draw your favorite meal.

