

But forgiveness is with you—that's why you are honored. (Psalm 130:4)

## **Joseph and His Brothers Reunited – Genesis 42:1–46:34**

### **Prepare to Wonder**

#### **Faith Word: Reconciliation**

The seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine arrived, just as Pharaoh's dream had predicted. Joseph took good care of the grains during the seven years of plenty, so the Egyptian people had food to eat during the seven years of famine. Egypt was not the only country affected by the drought. Canaan, where Joseph's father and brothers lived, also had a famine. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy food so they wouldn't starve to death.

When the brothers arrived in Egypt, they were taken to their brother, Joseph, to request food (although, of course, they did not know it was him). It had been many years since the brothers had seen Joseph, and they did not recognize him. But Joseph *did* recognize his brothers. Joseph devised a plan to trick his brothers and get even for selling him. Joseph wanted them to feel remorse for what they did to him.

Joseph finally decided he could not trick his brothers any longer and revealed himself to his brothers. He was so overcome by emotion, he had to hide his tears. Joseph forgave his brothers and wanted to be reconciled with them and his father. Joseph sent his brothers back to Canaan one last time. They returned with their father and the rest of the family to make Egypt their home. The family was reunited.

Forgiveness can take a long time. It may take years to work through the process of reconciling. In the story of Joseph and his brothers, reconciliation was achieved because both sides asked for and gave forgiveness.

### **Spiritual Practice for Adults**

Have you been in a situation where peace needed to be restored? How did you restore peace? When you are confronted with conflict this week practice the three S's: **Stop** before you speak, **Speak** with words of kindness, and sincerely **Say** you are sorry.

# Come Together

## Come Together

**Supplies:** *Class Pack, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, a paper heart cut in half, green cloth, battery-operated candle*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Set up a Wonder Table (see p. 3) with a green cloth, battery-operated candle, and a Wonder Box (see p. 3). Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) and Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4). Place a heart cut in half inside the Wonder Box.*

- Point to the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster, and invite the children to wonder about what the word *reconciliation* means.
- Invite the kids to join you in a circle.

**SAY:** Our story today is about how Joseph got to see his brothers again.

- Take a few minutes to talk about last week's Bible story.
- We recommend reading a story from the *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*. Allow an elementary kid to read, "Joseph and His Brothers Reunited" (pp. 48–49), from the storybook.

**PRAY:** Dear God, Joseph forgave his brothers. Help us forgive others too. Amen.

## Coin Rubbings – Preschool

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids' Book, pennies or other coins, crayons*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy Reproducible 4A for each preschooler.*

- Invite elementary kids to help the preschoolers place coins under their reproducible sheet and use crayons to make crayon rubbings.

**SAY:** In today's Bible story, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to get food. They brought silver with them to give as a gift.

## The Brothers Travel to Egypt – Younger Elementary

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons, pencils*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy "The Brothers Travel to Egypt" (Reproducible 4B) for each child.*

**SAY:** Help Joseph's brothers get to Egypt.

- Invite the kids to work out the solution to the maze on Reproducible 4B.

**ASK:** Today we will hear more about how Joseph and his brothers reunited after many, many years.

- Invite the kids to color the picture.

## Paper Pyramids – Older Elementary

*Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, scissors, tape, markers*

*Supplies: Photocopy Reproducibles 4C and 4D for each child.*

- Invite the kids to cut out the large outer square from "Paper Pyramid" (Reproducible 4C). The four smaller squares or quadrants should not be cut.
- Invite the kids to use copies of "Paper Pyramid Instructions" (Reproducible 4D) to learn how to fold the paper square from Reproducible 4C into pyramids.

**SAY:** This month we have heard stories about Joseph and his time in Egypt. Today we are learning how Joseph forgave his brothers.

- Once the paper pyramids have been folded, invite the kids to secure their pyramids with a small piece of tape.
- Invite them to write *I can forgive others* on one or more sides of their pyramids using a marker.

## Sticky Hearts – All Ages

*Supplies: paper heart cut in half, contact paper, tissue paper, hole punch, yarn, tape, scissors*

**Prepare Ahead:** Cut the contact paper into a heart shape, one for each child. Punch a hole in the top of each contact paper heart. Cut tissue paper into one-inch squares. Cut yarn into six-inch pieces, one for each child.

**SAY:** There are many ways to experience reconciliation. Reconciliation is like bringing two pieces of a heart together.

- Show the children the paper heart cut in two. Tape the two pieces together to complete the heart.

**SAY:** Hearts can be put back together when you forgive.

- Peel off the paper from the contact paper heart for each child.
- Invite each child to place the tissue paper on the sticky side of the heart.
- Tie the yarn through the hole in the top of the heart.

**WONDER:** How do you think God feels when you forgive someone?

# Wonder Time

## Interactive Bible Story

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids' Book*

**Prepare Ahead:** Photocopy today's Take-Home Pages from the *Reproducible Kids' Book*, 4F–4G (pp. 77–78). "Joseph and His Brother Reunited" is written in short sections that are one to three sentences long. Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15).

- Invite several readers to take turns reading the story one section at a time.
- Read through the story.

**SAY:** Joseph's story had lots of ups and downs! God helped Joseph find the strength to forgive his brothers. As a result, Joseph and his brothers came back together as a family.

## Share a Story

**Supplies:** *Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player*

- Invite the children to join you, sitting in a circle on the floor.
- Watch the Session 4 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

## Wonder with Me

**Supplies:** *Class Pack, Wonder Box, scissors*

**Prepare Ahead:** Lay out the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat (Class Pack—pp. 7 & 18). Cut out the final Unit 1 story figure of Jacob, Joseph's father (Class Pack—p. 6), if not already done.

- Place the Wonder Box on the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat.

**SAY:** We have heard many Bible stories about the Faith Word, *reconciliation*.

- Show the children the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4).

**SAY:** *Reconciliation* means to bring peace between persons who have disagreed.

- Point to the words on the Wonder Story Mat.

**SAY:** This word is *reconciliation*, which means to bring peace to people who disagree. This word is *forgiveness*. You forgive so you can be reconciled and stay friends.

**WONDER** together:

- What might have happened if Joseph had tricked his brothers?
  - Do you think Joseph and his brothers could have reconciled—become friends again—if Joseph tricked them?
  - Place the Bible story figure of Jacob on the Wonder Story Mat.
  - Open the Wonder Box to reveal the “broken” heart.
- WONDER:** Do you think Joseph’s heart was broken when his brothers hurt him? How do you think Joseph’s heart felt when he reconciled with his brothers?

## Experience Wonder

### What Am I Feeling?

*Supplies: posterboard or large sheet of paper, marker*

- Put the kids in pairs. If possible, pair a younger kid with an older kid.
- SAY:** This month we have been learning how Joseph’s brothers treated him badly.
- ASK:** What did Joseph’s brothers do?
- Take a moment to review the beginning of Joseph’s story. Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob. As a result, the brothers treated Joseph horribly.
- SAY:** Sometimes it can be hard to understand why people do what they do. Maybe Joseph wondered why his brothers had been so mean to him.
- On the posterboard, write down all the emotions the class can think of (happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, jealousy, and so forth).
  - Play a game in pairs. In this game, have the kids take turns making different expressions. Have the partners guess what emotion is being acted out.
- SAY:** When we try to understand how someone else feels, that can make us feel compassion for others. Maybe Joseph could forgive his brothers because he understood how they must have felt.

### Examine the Bible Verse

**SAY:** Our Unit 1 Bible verse is Psalm 130:4. Find it in your Bibles.

**ASK:** Is the Book of Psalms in the Old or New Testament? (*Old*) Where is Psalms located in the Old Testament? (*about the middle of your Bible*) In what chapter of Psalms is our verse located? (*130*) What is the verse number? (*4*)

- Gather the kids around the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster. Read it together.

**ASK:** What is the reference for our verse? (*Psalm 130:4*)

**SAY:** Our Bible verse helps us understand that forgiveness comes from God. We will learn about forgiveness and reconciliation as we hear more about Joseph's story.

## Peaceful Place

**Supplies:** *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*, suggested book: *"Molly & Mae: A Friendship Journey"* by Danny Parker and Freya Blackwood, grain containers to sort, two-piece heart puzzles, paper, crayons or markers

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Have the children sort the grain and match the hearts.
- Give each child paper, and have each child draw a picture of her or his family.

*Tip: All of the supplies/activities suggested for the Peaceful Place are optional.*

## Go in Peace

### Spiritual Practice – Exploring Reconciliation Through Forgiveness

**SAY:** Spiritual practice is something we do to help us connect to God. It doesn't have to be the same spiritual practice all the time, but it can be. There is no right or wrong way to do spiritual practice. This week we will practice what we should do to keep peace between persons who might disagree. Think of the three S's.

- Guide the children through spiritual practice:
  - **Stop** before you speak and think about what you will say or do. (*Hold your hand out in a stop motion.*)
  - **Speak** in words of kindness. (*Cup your hand around your mouth.*)
  - **Say** you are sorry if you were wrong. (*Hold out your hand.*)

**PRAY:** Repeat after me: "God, help me be a messenger of forgiveness and reconciliation. Amen."

- Bless the children before they leave. Touch each child as you say this blessing: "May you always carry forgiveness in your heart. God bless you."

## Family Spiritual Practice

**SAY:** Let's take a look at your Take-Home Pages for today (*Reproducibles 4F–4G*). Ask your family to participate in this week's spiritual practice.

# Supplemental Activities

## Preschoolers – Retell the Story with Song

**SAY:** We are going to learn the last verse to the Joseph song.

- Have the children interact with the Unit 1 Bible story figures (Class Pack—p. 6) as you sing the song.
- Sing the verse to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.”

**SING:** Oh, Joseph shared the food. His brothers, Joseph loved. / Oh, Joseph shared the food. His brothers, Joseph loved. / His brothers came to buy some food; they brought their father to Egypt. / And Joseph shared the food. His brothers, Joseph loved.

**WONDER:** What part of Joseph’s story did you like the best? What part didn’t you like? What is something you learned from the story?

## Early Elementary – Find the Missing Piece

**Supplies:** Reproducible Kids’ Book, scissors, letter-size envelopes

**Prepare Ahead:** Photocopy “Joseph and His Brothers Reunited” (Reproducible 4G) for each child. For each child, cut out the pieces and place in an envelope. Then remove one piece from each envelope, and hide the pieces around the room.

**SAY:** Sometimes conflict makes us feel like we are broken into pieces or something is missing. God helps us put our pieces back together when we experience reconciliation.

- Give each child an envelope of heart puzzle pieces. Do not tell them that they each have a missing piece.
- Invite the children to put their heart puzzles together. Give them time to realize they are all missing a piece.
- Encourage the children to search around the classroom for their missing pieces. As each child finds a piece, have him or her see if the piece completes the puzzle. If the piece belongs to someone else’s puzzle, encourage the child to find the person who needs the found piece.

## Older Elementary – Beach Ball Review

**Supplies:** beach ball, Sharpie marker, painters’ tape

**Prepare Ahead:** Write the review questions on strips of painters’ tape and place them around on the beach ball before today’s session.

- Gather the children in a circle wide enough to allow space to either toss or roll the ball between one another. Wherever the child's left thumb lands is the question they will answer.

Review Questions:

1. What animals were in Pharaoh's dream?
2. What is our unit memory verse?
3. How many years did they have famine in Egypt?
4. How many brothers did Joseph have?
5. What does *reconciliation* mean?
6. What was the name of Joseph's youngest brother?
7. What was your favorite activity we did the past four weeks?
8. What is something new you learned about the story of Joseph?

## Intergenerational Activity – Food Collection

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids' Book; cookie-making ingredients and supplies as listed on Reproducible 4E; napkins; disposable plates; optional: milk, disposable cups*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy "Oatmeal Cookies" (Reproducible 4E) for each group.*

**Tip:** *Check for food allergies prior to the start of this activity.*

- Put the kids, youth, and adults into groups who can work together to make cookies. Be sure each group has a mix of kids, youth, and adults.

**SAY:** We've been learning about the life of Joseph and his brothers. When there was no food in the land, Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain. Grain is found in lots of foods we enjoy, even cookies!

- Hand out copies of Reproducible 4E and supplies to each group.
- Invite the adults in each group to give the kids and youth instructions for making the cookies.
- While the cookies are baking, kids, youth, and adults may do other activities.
- Ask a volunteer or multiple volunteers to keep an eye on the cookies as they bake.
- You may plan to have the groups come back together after Sunday school or worship to enjoy their cookies. Or you may choose to have groups bag up the cookies and give them to someone special in your church or community.