

“You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness.” (Luke 3:22)

Jesus in the Temple – Luke 2:41-52

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: JOURNEY

Luke tells us the story of Jesus’ visit to the temple with his parents when he was twelve years old, just like they did each year. When they go to leave, Jesus is missing!

At first, we may find it difficult to understand how Joseph and Mary didn’t realize Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem. By Jewish custom, at the age of thirteen a male child becomes a man. Therefore, at the age of twelve, although Jesus was still a child, he was close to being regarded as a man. Plus, they were traveling with many others who were making this pilgrimage. The Bible tells us Jesus’ parents assumed he was with their relatives and friends.

When Joseph and Mary returned to Jerusalem, they found Jesus at the temple. Even as a child of twelve, Jesus was a participant in the teaching and learning occurring at the temple. Encourage the children you teach to remember that no matter what age they are, they are important in the church family. They can listen and ask questions, and they can also teach and be an example for others.

There is a special activity today. Set it up like this: Photocopy Reproducible 5A onto card stock. Color and cut out the picture of the boy Jesus. Next, open a Bible and place the picture at Isaiah 61. Then hide the Bible with Jesus somewhere in the church building. This location is Clue 2. Next, photocopy Reproducibles 5D and 5E. Find another location to hide these sheets. This location is Clue 1. Finally, you’ll need to make copies of Reproducibles 5A, 5B, and 5C for your class. These sheets will be handed to the kids at the beginning of class. It will help the kids understand how the treasure hunt works and will help them get Clue 1 from you!

Spiritual Practice for Adults

It is often assumed, as adults, we are supposed to know everything, and that simply isn’t possible. Even as adults, we are learning, growing, and wondering. This week take time to journal. Write down the questions of faith you have. Then challenge yourself to use the phrase the next time a child in your care asks you a question you aren’t sure about: “I don’t know. Let’s find out together.”

Come Together

Come Together

Supplies: *Class Pack, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, Wonder Box, white cloth, battery-operated candle, paper map*

Prepare Ahead: *Set up a Wonder Table (see p. 3) with a white cloth, battery-operated candle, and a Wonder Box (see p. 3). Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4). Place the map inside the Wonder Box.*

- Point to the Unit 2 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4), and invite the children to wonder about what the word *journey* means.
- Invite the kids to join you in a circle.

SAY: This month we are talking about stories from Jesus' life. Our story today is about Jesus when he was still a boy.

- In this curriculum, we recommend reading stories from the *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*. Allow an elementary-age child to read the story, "Jesus in the Temple" (pp. 204–5), from the storybook.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you helping us grow in wisdom every day. Amen.

Jesus in the Temple – Preschool

Supplies: *Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy "Jesus in the Temple" (Reproducible 5A) for each child.*

- Invite the preschoolers to use crayons to color the picture.

SAY: Jesus went to the temple as a boy. But then, Mary and Joseph couldn't find him! Today we are going to look for Jesus too.

Solve the Code – Younger Elementary

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

Prepare: *Photocopy "Solve the Code" (Reproducible 5B) for each child.*

SAY: When Jesus' family went to Jerusalem for Passover one year, Jesus wanted to stay and learn in the temple. But Mary and Joseph couldn't find him!

- Invite the kids to use a separate sheet of paper to write out the key to the code on the sheet, where A=26, B=25 . . . Y=2, and Z=1.

- The answer to the coded message is: “Ask your teacher for Clue One.” Be prepared to give the whole class Clue 1 when both the younger- and older-elementary kids have finished working on the sheets. Clue 1 should lead the kids to the location in your church building where you have hidden copies of Reproducibles 5D and 5E.

Finding Jesus Treasure Hunt – Older Elementary

Supplies: CEB Bible, Reproducible Kids’ Book, pencils or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy “Finding Jesus Treasure Hunt” (Reproducible 5C) for each child.

- Hand out a copy of “Finding Jesus Treasure Hunt” to each child.
- SAY:** In today’s Bible story, Mary and Joseph are looking for Jesus. We are going to look for Jesus around the church building today. Read the information on the page to get ready for the treasure hunt.
- Invite the kids to read over the information on the page.
 - When you gather the whole class together, have the older-elementary kids tell the Bible story. Then move on to the activity below.

Finding Jesus Treasure Hunt: Clue 1 – All Ages

Supplies: Reproducible Kids’ Book, clipboards, pencils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy Reproducibles 5D and 5E. Hide these sheets somewhere in your church building. You may hide them anywhere you choose. The kids will be expecting you to give them Clue 1, so you may choose to give hints about the location of Reproducibles 5D and 5E. Here are some suggestions:

Church Kitchen: The place where food gets prepared.

The Sanctuary: The place where we come together and worship.

The Library: The place where you can find lots of books.

Youth Classroom: The place where eighth-graders go to learn about God.

- Once the kids guess the location for this step in the treasure hunt, go to that spot. You will need to bring pencils and crayons along with you to that location. If the kids created a code key for solving Reproducible 5B, bring a copy of the code key along.
- Once they find the copies of Reproducibles 5D and 5E, invite the kids to work on one of the sheets. Younger kids will probably want to work on Reproducible 5D (a coloring page) and older kids will probably want to work on Reproducible 5E (a coded message).

SAY: In this week’s Bible story, Jesus was in the temple as a boy. But Mary and Joseph couldn’t find him! These sheets give us more clues to help us find where Jesus is hidden in our church building.

- Invite the kids to share how they completed the reproducible sheets.
- Both reproducible sheets give clues that will be needed at the final location where you have hidden a Bible with Jesus inside. The coloring page with a Bible indicates that a Bible is the hiding place. The coded message tells the class where in the Bible to look. Don’t give anything away! Instead, invite the class to work together to suggest solutions to the treasure hunt.
- Reproducible 5E instructs the kids to ask you for Clue 2. Clue 2 should lead to the location of the Bible with Jesus in it. Continue the treasure hunt after the story.

Wonder Time

Interactive Bible Story

Supplies: Reproducible Kids’ Book

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy “Jesus in the Temple” (Reproducible 5F) for each child.

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

ASK: Mary and Joseph couldn’t find Jesus! They went looking all over the temple area until they found him. How is that like our treasure hunt today?

Share a Story

Supplies: Celebrate Wonder DVD, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, TV, DVD player

- Invite the children to join you, sitting in a circle on the floor.
- Watch the Session 5 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

Wonder with Me

Supplies: Class Pack, Wonder Box, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Lay out the Wonder Story Mat for Unit 2 (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17). Cut out the five Bible story figures (Class Pack—p. 19).

- Place the Wonder Box on the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat.
- Show the children the Unit 2 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4).

SAY: The definition for *journey* is to faithfully follow where God leads. We are following Jesus' journey this month as he grows and follows where God leads him.

- Point to the Wonder Story Mat.

WONDER together:

- Where do you think Jesus will go on his journey?
 - How do you think the teachers at the temple felt when they listened to Jesus ask questions and teach them?
 - What questions do you have about God and faith?
- Place the figure of the temple on the Wonder Story Mat at Jerusalem.
 - Open the Wonder Box to reveal the map.

WONDER: What do you think this map has to do with today's story?

Experience Wonder

Finding Jesus Treasure Hunt: Clue 2

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book

Prepare Ahead: Hide the Bible with the picture of Jesus inside somewhere in your church building. It could be anywhere you choose. Come up with Clue 2 using the suggestions provided at the bottom of page 41 or create your own clue.

- Once the kids have figured out the answer to Clue 2, take the class to the final location of the treasure hunt.
- Tell the kids "warmer" and "colder" as they search the room for Jesus. If your class has not yet made the connection that Jesus is hidden in a Bible, you may need to provide further hints. Refer back to Reproducibles 5D and 5E as you gently suggest where the picture of Jesus is hidden.
- Once Jesus has been found, return to your classroom for the rest of today's session.

Examine the Bible Verse

SAY: Our Unit 2 Bible verse is Luke 3:22. Find it in your Bibles.

ASK: Is the Book of Luke in the Old or New Testament? (*New*) Where is Luke located in the New Testament? (*third book*) In what chapter of Luke is our verse located? (*3*) What is the verse number? (*22*)

SAY: Our Bible verse tells us how God felt about Jesus.

- Gather the kids around the Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13). Read it together.

Peaceful Place

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 114, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, book: “Old Turtle: Questions of the Heart” by Douglas Wood, paper, crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy the Unit 2 Faith Word coloring sheet (Leader Guide—p. 114) for each child. Make extra copies of the Unit 2 Faith Word coloring sheet to leave in the Peaceful Place this month.

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Invite the children to create a sign showing a cause they would like to speak up about.
- Have each child color the Faith Word coloring sheet.

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

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice – Exploring Jesus’ Journey Through Scripture

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. This month we are learning about journey, following where God leads us. We are hearing stories about Jesus’ journey. Today he went to the temple and used his voice to ask questions and teach others about God’s love.

- Guide the children through a spiritual practice:
 - Lead the children through the following litany.

SAY: God gave you a special call and leads you on your journey.

KIDS SAY: I have a special call. God leads me on my journey.

SAY: Your voice is important!

KIDS SAY: My voice is important!

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for leading me on my journey. Help me to follow your call. Amen.

- Bless the children before they leave. Touch each child as you say this blessing:
“May you feel God’s presence as you journey through the day.”

Family Spiritual Practice

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book; Leader Guide—pp. 111, 112

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy Reproducibles 5F–5G for each child. Photocopy “Celebration Chart” (p. 111) and “Family Letter” (p. 112) for any child who does not have these.

SAY: Let's take a look at your Take-Home Pages (Reproducibles 5F–5G). Ask your family to read the Bible story and participate in this week's spiritual practice with you. There's an extra activity for you to do sometime this week.

- Send home a copy of the Take-Home Pages, a copy of the Family Letter, and a copy of the Celebration Chart with each child.

Supplemental Activities

Preschoolers – Follow the Leader

- Invite the children to play “Follow the Leader” with you.
- Encourage them to follow your movements and sounds.
- After you have given them a few directions, choose one child to become the leader.
- After the child has given a few directions to the group, choose another child to be the leader.
- Play until everyone has had an opportunity to be the leader.

SAY: Jesus was a child in today's story, and he was teaching the leaders. This means he was a leader too! You can be a leader today and every day. Your voice is important!

Early and Older Elementary – Table Talk Cards

Supplies: index cards, pens or pencils

SAY: Jesus talked with the teachers and leaders of his faith community. He asked questions and gave answers. The leaders were amazed by what Jesus said and asked. I bet there are adults in your life who are amazed by what you say and ask.

ASK: If you could ask the adults in your life anything, what would you ask them? If you could tell the adults in your life anything, what would you tell them?

- Invite the children to write down their questions and thoughts on index cards.

SAY: This week invite your families to talk about the questions you wrote down. Tell them what you think and see what questions they have.

- Send the index cards home with the kids to have conversations with their families.

Intergenerational Activity – Treasure Hunt (continued)

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book

- Invite your class to reset the treasure hunt using the same locations and clues you created before class.
- Have the youth and adult classes follow the clues for the treasure hunt as outlined in this session. Instruct your class not to give anything away! See if the youth and adults can solve the clues and find where Jesus is hidden.

SAY: We had fun searching for Jesus today.

ASK: Do you think it was fun for Mary and Joseph when they couldn't find Jesus?

- Invite the kids to consider how Mary and Joseph might have felt.

SAY: Jesus was a kid, like you! He grew and grew. He became wise, and God was pleased with him. I think God is pleased with you too!