

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

Jesus Heals – Luke 4:38-44

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: JOURNEY

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all recount the story of Jesus healing Peter’s mother-in-law. In Luke, Peter is referred to as Simon and had not yet become one of Jesus’ disciples. We don’t often think about the disciples’ families. Simon Peter was obviously married, since he had a mother-in-law. She appears to have lived in Peter’s house with Peter and his wife, which was common practice at the time. As no father-in-law is mentioned, it is likely Peter’s mother-in-law was a widow.

When Jesus arrived at Peter’s house, he finds Peter’s mother-in-law sick with a fever. In the Gospel of Luke, the story says Jesus ordered the fever to go away. The very next verse tells of the woman serving Jesus a meal. This is not an attempt to illustrate Jesus and others in the house as demanding, but rather to demonstrate the immediacy and completeness of the woman’s recovery. Peter’s mother-in-law felt so much better that she was ready to get up and serve Jesus out of her gratitude.

After Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law, people with all kinds of sicknesses were brought to Jesus. Luke tells us Jesus put his hands on each one of them and healed them. The Gospels contain many stories of Jesus healing people. Jesus cared about people. He cared not only for their spiritual well-being, but also for their physical well-being. Healing was a way for Jesus to show his compassion for people, as well as serving as a sign of the power that was given him by God.

When we follow Jesus’ example of how to live, we will show compassion for those around us. Opportunities to care for others present themselves every day.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Along life’s journey we are given opportunities to follow Jesus’ example and extend care to those around us. How might you extend care to someone in your life or community this week? Pray to God for opportunities to help someone this week.

Come Together

Come Together

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

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 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4). Place the heart 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 healing Peter's mother-in-law.

- In this curriculum, we recommend reading stories from the *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*. Allow an elementary-age child to read the story, "Jesus Heals" (pp. 212–3), from the storybook.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for healing people. Please be with the people we know who are sick today. Amen.

Jesus Heals – Preschool

Supplies: *Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy "Jesus Heals" (Reproducible 9A) for each child.*

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

SAY: Jesus went from place to place healing people.

Help a Friend – Younger Elementary

Supplies: *Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons or markers*

Prepare: *Photocopy "Help a Friend" (Reproducible 9B) for each child.*

SAY: Peter's mother-in-law was sick. When Jesus saw her, he had compassion for her. Have you had compassion for and helped a friend? Use crayons to draw a time when you helped a friend.

- Invite the kids to draw a picture of a time when they helped a friend.

ASK: How did you help the friend?

SAY: We will hear how Jesus helped by healing in today's Bible story.

Healing Word Search – Older Elementary

Supplies: CEB Bible, Reproducible Kids' Book, pencils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Healing Word Search" (Reproducible 9C) for each child.

SAY: Jesus traveled around teaching about God's kingdom and performing miracles. Many times, Jesus healed people who were sick. Find the words related to the healings Jesus performed during his ministry.

- Invite the kids to solve the word search.
- Have the kids work together if they wish.

Stars and Constellations – All Ages

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "January Stars and Constellations" (Reproducible 9E) for each child.

- Invite the kids to look over the star pictures on the page.

ASK: Do you recognize any of the star pictures on the page?

SAY: This sheet shows some of the same stars and constellations that we saw in December, along with new ones that are familiar as winter stars and constellations.

- Use this opportunity to see if any kids in your class have tried to find star pictures in the sky.

SAY: This fall, we began looking at the night sky to see star pictures. If you are having trouble finding these shapes, here's a tip.

- Point to Orion on the star chart.

SAY: Orion is the figure of a man. His belt has three bright stars that are pretty easy to find in the winter sky. If you can find the belt, you might be able to find some of the other stars and constellations

- Invite the kids to take the sheets home and look at the sky!

SAY: Looking at stars gives me a sense of awe!

Wonder Time

Interactive Bible Story

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Jesus Heals" (Reproducible 9F) for each child.

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

SAY: Jesus went to the synagogue to worship God. After Jesus left, he used the power of God to heal Simon's mother-in-law. Then Jesus healed many others.

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 9 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 final Bible story figure (Class Pack—p. 19), if not already done.

- 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. In today's story, Jesus journeys to Peter's house and heals Peter's mother-in-law.

- Point to the Wonder Story Mat.

WONDER together:

- How does it feel to have a fever?
- What do you think Peter's mother-in-law felt when her fever went away?
- Why would Jesus heal people?
- Place the figure of the heart on the Wonder Story Mat near Capernaum.
- Open the Wonder Box to reveal the heart.

WONDER: Why should we show compassion to one another?

Experience Wonder

Cheer Packages

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book; party favor bags; party favors or kids' meal toys, small packs of crayons, dollar-store coloring books, and so forth; crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Cheer Package Tags" (Reproducible 9D). Purchase small trinkets for the children to put into Cheer Packages

- Hand out copies of Reproducible 9D to the class.

SAY: Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, and it cheered her up so much that she made a meal for Jesus and his friends to show her gratitude. We all need cheering up from time to time. Today we are going to assemble Cheer Packages for our pastor to take to people from our church community who are in the hospital.

- Invite the kids to assemble Cheer Packages using the items you've purchased.
- Encourage the children to decorate the Cheer Package Tags and attach them to the bags.

SAY: These will certainly cheer our church family up!

- Give these packages to the pastoral team who is responsible for hospital visits.

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: "How to Heal a Broken Wing" by Bob Graham, paper, crayons

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy the Unit 2 Faith Word coloring sheet (Leader Guide—p. 114) for each child.

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Invite the children to make thank-you cards for someone who has cared for them when they were sick.

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. This month we are learning about *journey*, following where God leads us. We are hearing stories about Jesus’ journey. Today Jesus went to Peter’s house and healed his mother-in-law. Part of Jesus’ ministry included caring for the bodies of the people in his community.

- Guide the children through a spiritual practice:
 - **SAY:** We’re going to do a body prayer.
 - **PRAY:** Christ be with us. (*Spread out your arms.*)
Christ before us. (*Place your arms in front of your body.*)
Christ behind us. (*Turn around.*)
Christ in us. (*Place your hands on your chest.*) Amen.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for being with me on my journey. 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 9F–9G for each child. Photocopy “Celebration Chart” (p. 111) and “Family Letter” (p. 112) for any child who does not already have these.*

SAY: Let’s take a look at your Take-Home Pages (*Reproducibles 9F–9G*). 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 – Pretend Play

Supplies: adhesive bandages, stuffed animals and baby dolls, medical toys

SAY: Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law.

ASK: Who helps heal people today?

SAY: Doctors, nurses, parents, emergency medical workers, dentists, veterinarians, and so many others! Let's pretend to heal our stuffed animals and baby dolls.

- Invite the children to pretend to be modern-day healers.

Early Elementary – Picture My Family

Supplies: large sheets of drawing paper, pencils, crayons, colored pencils

- Hand out large sheets of drawing paper, pencils, crayons, and colored pencils to the kids.

SAY: When Jesus got to Peter's house, Peter's mother-in-law was sick and Jesus used God's power to heal her.

- Have the participants think about the people in their families. Try to get them to think about as many people in their families as they can.
- Invite the kids to draw a picture of the people in their families. They can include grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and their immediate families too.
- Use this activity to help kids understand the relationship between Peter and the woman who was healed. The woman was his mother-in-law. Who in their family has a mother-in-law?

Older Elementary – Blob Tag

SAY: In Jesus' time, people who were sick were excluded from the community. Jesus healed the people in his community because he wanted to make sure no one was excluded. He wanted everyone to be included.

ASK: Who is excluded in our community? How can we help include them?

SAY: Jesus' dream is to have everyone be together. To celebrate this, we are going to play Blob Tag. One person will be "IT." When IT tags someone, that person will join hands with IT and tag the class together. If you get tagged, you join hands with the "blob," until everyone has gotten tagged and is a part of the blob.

- Choose one child to be IT.
- Play Blob Tag until everyone has been tagged.
- Continue playing until everyone is tired and ready to move on.

SAY: I am grateful for the ways Jesus showed us how to include others. I encourage you to be on the lookout for people who are left out and find ways to include them.

Intergenerational Activity – Ways to Help

Supplies: large sheet of paper or markerboard, markers

- Lead a discussion with the participants in your class. The youth and adults may be more aware of the way your church is helping others in your community.
- Kids naturally want to help. Sometimes churches forget to include kids in opportunities for helping in the community. Use this discussion to help find ways for the kids too.

ASK: What are some of the ways our church is helping other people in our community?

- Invite the participants to share the ways your church helps. Write the answers down on the large sheet of paper or markerboard.

SAY: We learned that Jesus' ministry involved teaching people about God and healing people using God's power. Our church teaches people about God. Our church also helps people in our community in many ways.

- Begin to discuss ideas for ways the kids in your class could help too. Perhaps there are programs or activities happening in the life of your church where kids could be included as helpers. Be creative and write down the ideas that are generated on the large sheet of paper or markerboard.
- Think about people in your church who are leaders in various ministries. Who will need to be included as you plan to include the kids in your class?

SAY: We have many ways to help people in our community!