

God saw how good it was. (Genesis 1:12c)

God Creates People – Genesis 1:26–2:4

Prepare to Lead

Activities At-a-Glance

GATHER TOGETHER

I Am Beautiful (Art)
In the Image of God (Craft)
Caring for the Earth (Reflection)
God's Creation Photo Frame (Craft)

EXPERIENCE WONDER

I See God (Art)
Self-Portraits (Art)
Peaceful Place (Response Activities)

WONDER MORE

Reflecting Images (Game)
Roll and Respond (Game)
Responsibility (Discussion)
Mirror Affirmations (Outreach Activity)

Supplies At-a-Glance

<i>crayons</i>	<i>small containers</i>
<i>markers</i>	<i>smocks</i>
<i>scissors</i>	<i>music and music player</i>
<i>pencils</i>	<i>diverse dolls</i>
<i>cardstock</i>	<i>plastic toy people, animals, and plants</i>
<i>hole punch</i>	<i>paper</i>
<i>ribbon</i>	<i>dice</i>
<i>tape</i>	<i>butcher paper</i>
<i>stickers</i>	<i>sticky notes</i>
<i>magazines</i>	
<i>paint</i>	
<i>paintbrushes</i>	

Suggested Books

Drawing God by Karen Kiefer
When God Made You
by Matthew Paul Turner

Tips for the Leader

- If you are new to using Celebrate Wonder, be sure to check out pages 2–10 of this Leader Guide for helpful information about implementing the program.
- All age-group specifications in each session are suggestions only. Many of the activities in this program are adaptable for all ages.
- Today's session will remind children that they are beloved children of God and made in God's image. This may bring up issues of self-esteem for some children. Be a sensitive listener to children's thoughts and feelings, and remind them that they are loved.

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: CREATIVITY

This Bible story is not only about creation, but also about the creativity God places in each of us. God creates humanity. God then shares the creative process by giving humanity a part of God's self. "Let us" demonstrates that God is not working alone. God is engaged in relationship of mutuality and shares the creative process with others.

God created people to be different and unique, just like God created the rest of the world. To be created in the image of God is as if we are mirrors of God in the world. Each of us is a reflection of something greater. Our ability to imagine and be creative is a part of how we are made in the image of God.

On the seventh day God rests, but this does not mean God ceases to act and interact with God's creation. To rest actually puts things back into motion and calls for humanity to help carry out God's creative process. We are then reminded that all is right, good, and holy; and God honors God's work and all of creation with God's blessing. It is all supremely good.

Children are naturally inclined to look at the world through a different set of eyes than adults do. They take time to examine the minutest detail in their path and stop in awe at the sight of a worm wiggling down the sidewalk. God created the world so all people would have the same sense of wonder and awe as children. To be known and loved by God is one of the most important messages we can teach our children. Help your children see the reflection of God in themselves and how they can use their creativity to help continue to create a beautiful world.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

This week, spend some time "people-watching." Intentionally observe people you know and see every day, or spend time observing people in a public setting. You can spend time sitting on a park bench or walking in a shopping mall, or just pay more attention to the people you encounter as you run regular errands. How does it feel to slow down and really pay attention to the people you encounter? Where do you see God's creativity in these people? How can you remind yourself each day that God's creativity is ongoing in you and in those around you?

Gather Together

Use the following as optional activities for when children are arriving. You may also choose to use these activities elsewhere in this session.

I Am Beautiful – Preschool

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons, hand-held mirrors

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "I Am Beautiful" (Reproducible 3A) for each preschooler.

- Give each preschooler a copy of "I Am Beautiful."

SAY: God created us all to be unique and special.

ASK: What makes you special?

- Pass around the mirrors and have each child look at themselves. Encourage the children to say "I am beautiful."
- Invite children to draw what they see in the mirror on their page.

In the Image of God – Younger Elementary

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, pencils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "In the Image of God" (Reproducible 3B) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "In the Image of God."

SAY: God made each of us with God's own hands.

- Invite the children to look at your hands. Direct the children to pay close attention to the palms of their own hands.
- Let the children compare one another's hands.

SAY: No one's hands are the same. God made each of us unique and special.

- Invite the children to copy the lines (creases) from one of their palms on to the paper hand.

WONDER: What makes you unique?

Caring for the Earth – Older Elementary

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, pencils, markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Caring for the Earth" (Reproducible 3C) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "Caring for the Earth."

SAY: When God created the Earth, God put people in charge of caring for it.

ASK: How do you think people should care for the Earth?

- Encourage children to write or draw their ideas on the journal page.
- Invite willing volunteers to share their thoughts.

God's Creation Photo Frame – All Ages

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons, markers, scissors, ribbon, single hole punch, 5-by-7 photo, tape, cardstock, stickers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "God's Creation Photo Frame" (Reproducible 3D) on cardstock for each child. Cut ribbon into 3- to 4-inch pieces.

SAY: Our Bible story says God created humans in God's own image and saw that what God had created was "supremely good." That means you too! Let's make a photo frame you can put a photo in to remind you that you are God's good creation.

- Let the children decorate and cut out their frames. Then have each child make a hole at the top of their frame with a paper punch, thread ribbon through the hole, and tie it in a knot or bow to form a loop for hanging.
- Remind the children that they can put a real photo in the frame by taping the photo to the back of the frame. (Demonstrate using the photo you brought in.)

Come Together

Supplies: Class Pack, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, Wonder Box, green cloth, battery-operated candle, diverse pictures of people cut out from magazines

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.22) to use later in the session. Place the pictures of people inside the Wonder Box.

- Invite the kids to join you in a circle.

SAY: This month we have been learning about all that God created. Everything God created was good.

ASK: What did God create that was good?

- We recommend reading stories from the Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook. Allow an elementary-age child to read the story, "God Creates People" (pp. 16–17) from the storybook or read Genesis 1:26-2:4 from a CEB Bible.

PRAY: God, thank you for making each of us beautiful and special. Amen.

Wonder Time

Share a Story

Supplies: Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player

- Invite the children to join you and to sit in a circle on the floor.
- Watch the Session 3 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

WONDER: How can we care for God's creation?

Interactive Bible Story

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, Bible dress-up clothes (optional)

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy today's Take-Home Pages (Reproducibles 3F–3G).

- Invite several readers to take turns reading and/or acting out the story, one section at a time.

WONDER: How do you think God felt after creating people?

Wonder with Me

Supplies: Class Pack, Wonder Box, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Lay out the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14).

Locate and cut out the Unit 1 story figures (Class Pack—p.6) if you haven't already.

Display the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 22)

SAY: Today's Faith Word is *creativity*.

- Read the definition of creativity from the Faith Word Poster.

ASK: Is it easy to be creative? Why or why not?

SAY: God was creative in creating everything on the earth, from plants to animals and finally to people. God was creative in making you and me.

- Have a child place the animals on the Wonder Mat.

WONDER together:

- What do you think it means to be created in God's image?
- What do you think God looks like?
- Why do you think God created so many different kinds of people and living things?
- Why do you think it's important that God rested on the seventh day?

- Open the Wonder Box to reveal the pictures of people.

SAY: God made us all different and God made us all beautiful!

WONDER: What do you see in these pictures that is beautiful? What else is beautiful about God's creation?

Experience Wonder

I See God – All Ages

Supplies: paper, pencils, colored pencils, crayons and markers

SAY: Close your eyes. God is so big and so creative.

WONDER: What do you think God looks like? What do you imagine God is like?

- Distribute supplies. Invite the children to draw and color how they imagine God.
- Invite willing volunteers to share their drawings.

SAY: Each of us has a unique relationship with God, but God loves each of us the same.

- Display the drawings somewhere in your Sunday school space.

Self-Portraits – All Ages

Supplies: mirrors, table covering, paint, white paper, paintbrushes, containers of water, smocks, music and music player (optional)

Prepare Ahead: Cover the table and place water in containers.

SAY: Let's each paint an image of ourself on the paper. Use the mirrors to help you.

- Have each child look in a mirror and paint the image he or she sees on the paper.
- After the pictures are dry, hang them on the wall.

Tip: You may choose to set up two stations and let children choose or rotate between drawing God or painting their self-portraits. Play soft music while children engage with the creative process.

Examine the Bible Verse – Early and Older Elementary

Supplies: CEB Bibles

SAY: Our Unit 1 Bible verse is Genesis 1:12c Let's find it in our Bibles.

ASK: Is Genesis in the Old or New Testament? (*Old*). Where is the Book of Genesis located in the Old Testament? (*first book*) In what chapter of Genesis is our verse located? (*1*) What is the verse number? (*12*)

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

ASK: How does it feel to know that God created you and calls you good?

Peaceful Place – Preschool and Early Elementary

Supplies: copies of the Unit 1 Faith Word (Reproducible Kids' Book 1F), Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, Drawing God by Karen Kiefer, When God Made You by Matthew Paul Turner, diverse dolls, plastic/toy people, animals, and plants, paper, crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Make copies of the Unit 1 Faith Word Coloring Page (Reproducible 1F) if you have not done so already.

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Encourage children to color the Faith Word Coloring Page or draw the favorite part of today's Bible story.
- Invite children to retell the creation story using the toys provided.

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

Wonder More

The following activities are supplemental to the session. Depending on your time, you may choose to skip these activities and go to the "Go in Peace" section.

Preschool – Reflecting Images

SAY: The Bible story today tells us that people are made in God's image. An image is like a picture: it looks like you, but it isn't the real you. We can create things like God, but they won't be exactly what God created. That's OK!

- Divide the children into pairs. Assign one child to be the leader and the other child to be the image.
- Have the children face each other. The leader will make a movement, and the "image" will do the same movement. Have them switch places after a few minutes.

WONDER: Was it hard to do exactly what the other person did?

Early Elementary – Roll and Respond

Supplies: a single die cube

- Invite the children to gather together in a circle and place the single die in the middle.
- The children will take turns rolling the die. Depending on the number the child rolls, he or she will answer the following:
 1. What is one thing you like about yourself?
 2. What is one nice thing you could say about someone in the group?
 3. What is one thing you want others to know about you?
 4. What makes you happy?
 5. What is one way you can be kind to someone else?
 6. What is something you are grateful for?
- Invite the first child to roll a single die and answer the question that matches the number on the die. Play the game as long as time and interest allows.

Older Elementary – Responsibility

Supplies: large sheet of paper, marker, tape

SAY: In the Bible story, God gave humans responsibility for caring for all the earth, including ruling over all the other creatures that God created. Let's discuss what it means to be responsible.

- Write the word *RESPONSIBILITY* at the top of a large sheet of paper.

WONDER: What traits do you think a responsible person has?

- Write the children's responses on the large sheet of paper. Post this list in your classroom as a reminder about being responsible.

WONDER: What are some things you are responsible for?

- Allow the children to name their responsibilities.

WONDER: Now that you have all of these ideas about how to be responsible (*point to the list*), how will you approach your responsibilities? Will you do them differently or the same? Will you complete your responsibilities without being reminded to do them?

Intergenerational Activity – Mirror Affirmations

Supplies: sticky notes, markers

Prepare Ahead: Obtain permission to place sticky notes on mirrors in the church.

SAY: Let's show love for our church family and boost their self-esteem by reminding them of how God sees them.

- Give each person a marker and some sticky notes. Have the participants write messages such as "You are made in God's image," "You're supremely good," and "You are awesome!"
- Have the participants form groups and place the sticky notes on mirrors in the church.

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice – Exploring Creation Through Beauty

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons or markers, scissors, music and music player (optional)

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "People" (Reproducible p.96), making sure that you have one person image per child.

- Gather the children in a circle.

SAY: Today we learned that we are all a special part of God's creation.

ASK: What makes you special? What makes you good?

- Give each child a blank person.
- Play soft music and allow children time to draw themselves on their blank person.
- Collect the children's art and save it to use in the next session.

PRAY: God, thank you for creating so many beautiful and different people for us to get to know. Amen.

Family Spiritual Practice

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book; Leader Guide—p. 128

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Family Celebration Letter" (p. 128) and the Take-Home Pages (Reproducibles 3F–3G) if you have not yet done so already.

SAY: Let's look at your Take-Home Pages for today. Ask your family to participate in the Family Spiritual Practice. Encourage your family to help you with the pages.

- Send a copy of the Take-Home Pages with each child.
- Send a copy of the Family Celebration Letter home with each child who has not yet received one.