



Here I Am, God

(based on 1 Samuel 3:1-4:1a)

Young Samuel lived in the sanctuary with the priest Eli. Samuel spent his days helping Eli because Eli was getting old and couldn't see very well.

Every day, Samuel would light the lamps, sweep the floors, and look after the sanctuary. And every day Samuel would learn more about God from Eli.

One night after Samuel had helped Eli to bed, he went to his own sleeping place and lay down to sleep.

Just as he was drifting off to sleep, Samuel heard a voice calling to him, "Samuel! Samuel!"

The young boy immediately jumped up and ran to Eli's room, "Here I am!" he cried. "What do you need?"

"I didn't call you," Eli replied. "It must have been a dream. Go back to bed."

Samuel went back to his bed and tried to go to sleep.

Once again, he heard the voice calling to him, "Samuel! Samuel!"

And again Samuel jumped up and ran to Eli's room. "Here I am!" he cried. "What do you need?"

Eli woke up with a jump. He was confused. He knew he hadn't called Samuel, so he said, "Samuel, I didn't call you. Please go back to bed."

Samuel did as Eli asked, but once again he heard the voice calling to him, "Samuel! Samuel!" Now Samuel was starting to get worried. He jumped out of bed and ran to Eli.

When Samuel came into his room for the third time, Eli realized what was happening. Eli understood that it was God who was calling Samuel.

"It is God's voice you are hearing," Eli explained. "When you hear God's voice calling your name say, 'Here I am God. What do you want me to do?' Now go back and lie down."

Samuel went back to his room and lay down. He listened carefully for the voice. Once again, Samuel heard God call his name, "Samuel! Samuel!"

This time, Samuel replied, "Here I am, God. What do you want me to do?"

God spoke to Samuel about things to come and gave him a message for Eli. Samuel had become one of God's prophets because he listened for God's voice.



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Samuel heard God's voice calling in the night and he went to Eli for confirmation. Wonder together how we hear God's voice today and who we go to for confirmation. What is God calling us to do, and who helps us discern God's call in our lives?
- Play a game where one person closes their eyes. Others in the room say the person's name. The person tries to identify who is speaking their name.



Responding to God's Grace

- Listen to the YouTube video "Vivaldi Autumn The Four Seasons" (bit.ly/FourSeasonsAutumn). Listen to this quiet, joyful music. Move your arms and sway to the music. Pretend to be orchestra conductors. Listen for as long as the children enjoy the music.
- Samuel heard the voice of God when he was getting ready to go to sleep. When you are in bed, think about what God would like you to do.
- Watch the YouTube video and sing along to "Here I Am Lord w/ Lyrics (Chris Bray)" (bit.ly/HereIAmSong).

Celebrating in Gratitude

- For a fun treat and to remember that Samuel was sleeping wrapped in a blanket when he heard God's call, make pigs in blankets. Use small cocktail sausages and crescent roll dough from the refrigerator case in the grocery store. Cut the dough into triangles. Place the sausage at the base of the triangle and roll it up to the point. Bake, following instructions for the dough.
- Celebrate that God has things for you to do. You may not hear God's voice like Samuel did, but God's call to action comes through others. Wonder together what you as individuals or your family can do to respond to needs in your community. There are many needs. Make a list. Pray together. Make a plan to follow through on one action.
- Pray this prayer:
*Here I am, God. What do you want me to do?
Amen.*

Note: bit.ly web addresses are case sensitive.