

Overview Chart

	Session Title and Scripture	Main Idea	Something to Remember
1	Faith in the Midst of the Flood Genesis 7:1–5	Noah trusted and obeyed.	And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him. —Genesis 7: 5
2	Laws from the Top of Mount Sinai Exodus 19:16—20:21	Moses meets God on top of Mount Sinai and brings down rules to live by: love God; love neighbor.	“The LORD summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.” —Exodus 19:20b
3	A Path through the Jordan River Joshua 3:7—4:7	We remember how God was with Joshua and the Israelites as they crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land.	“When your children ask their parents in time to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ then you shall let your children know.” —Joshua 4:21–22a
4	Twists and Turns at Mount Tabor Judges 4:4–22; 5:1–31	God is at work through good and bad, as in the story of Deborah, Barak, and Jael.	Then Deborah said to Barak, “. . . The LORD is indeed going out before you.” —Judges 4
5	The Contest on Mount Carmel 1 Kings 18:20–39	In a contest between God and other gods, the Lord indeed is God!	When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The LORD indeed is God; the LORD indeed is God.” —1 Kings 18:39
6	Tears by the Rivers of Babylon Psalm 137:1–4	The people of God in exile in Babylon wondered how to sing the Lord’s song far from home.	How could we sing the LORD’s song in a foreign land? —Psalm 137:4
7	The Gathering at God’s Holy Mountain Isaiah 56:1–8	God gathers in those who were once outsiders and invites them all to the house of prayer for all God’s people.	The Decree of the Master, God himself, who gathers in the exiles of Israel: “I will gather others also; gather them in with those already gathered.” —Isaiah 56:8 (The Message)

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8	The Baptism in the Jordan Mark 1:9–11	In baptism, the identity of Jesus is made known.	Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. —Mark 1:10 (TNIV)
9	“Follow Me!” Beside the Sea Mark 1:16–20	Jesus calls disciples to follow him and use their skills for the kingdom of God.	“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” —Mark 1:17 (TNIV)
10	The Sermon on the Mountainside Matthew 5:1—7:29	Jesus teaches his followers how to live.	Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching. —Matthew 7:28
11	The Calm on the Sea of Galilee Mark 4:35–41	Jesus the miracle-worker is in the boat and can calm stormy seas.	He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. —Mark 4:39
12	The Change on the Mountaintop Mark 9:2–10	On the mountain, the disciples find an answer to the question “Who is Jesus?”	“This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” —Mark 9:7b
13	Breakfast on the Beach John 21:1–14	Jesus shows his disciples that they can continue his ministry by following his instructions.	So they cast [their net], and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. —John 21:6b

Feedback

Tell us what you think about *Awesome Adventures: God’s People on Mountains and Seas*. Would you recommend changes? You may share your comments by writing to Curriculum Feedback, Presbyterian Publishing Corp., Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396. Or send your comments to support@pcusastore.com.



Every Sheep Counts!

Luke 15:1-7

Main Idea

Children will learn that Jesus loves them.

Something to Remember

"I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!"

—Luke 15:6 (GNT)

Background for Teachers

Shepherds—although the noble profession of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the great leader Moses; the shepherd king David; and the prophet Amos—were considered the bottom-dwellers of society by the time of Jesus. Sure, they provided a much-needed service in the way of meat, dairy products, wool, and sacrificial animals, but, nonetheless, they were considered unclean, both bodily and ritually. A shepherd's job was a 24/7 gig out in the fields with the flock, so a shepherd wasn't often seen in the synagogue and a shepherd couldn't always keep all the rules the Pharisees prescribed. This is why shepherds were lumped in with the general "sinner" population. It created a paradox: on one hand, God is compared to a shepherd and God calls leaders and kings to be faithful "shepherds" to God's people; on the other hand, shepherds were considered to be common folk that the well-to-do and keepers of the religious rules would not invite to a party at their homes.

In today's passage, a crowd gathered around Jesus; it is particularly noted that tax collectors and sinners were there. The scribes and Pharisees muttered, or at least spoke loudly enough that all could hear their not-so-subtle murmurings, how outrageous it was that Jesus kept company with the likes of those rule-breakers and cheaters. Then Jesus told a story about a lost sheep, one sheep out of a flock of one hundred, which would have been a large flock at that time. Everyone in the crowd would have understood that a shepherd would

know his sheep well. A shepherd guards his flock day and night. A shepherd does not lose sheep. If one strays, he searches until he finds it. Each sheep matters to the shepherd. In Jesus' story, one sheep strays from the flock and is lost. The shepherd searches and, upon finding the lost one, carries it back to the flock rejoicing and celebrating in the good news that the lost one is rescued and part of the flock again.

The Pharisees might have been a bit disturbed by this story. Jesus looks at them and says, "Suppose one of *you* has a hundred sheep." "No, he didn't!" they might have exclaimed. "He didn't just call us a dirty shepherd!" But he did. Not only that, Jesus let them know that the sinners that wander from the fold still belong in God's flock. We are not only to seek them and rejoice in their return, but we are also to have a party and break bread with them. Some of the Pharisees may have been fuming at that point, but Jesus reminded them that they are the caretakers—the faithful shepherds—of their people, and some of them may have ears to hear.

When we are lost and have strayed from the Shepherd's care, we matter to the Shepherd. Jesus will not let us remain lost and alone, frightened and abandoned. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will search and find us and carry us home. Great rejoicing happens when we return to the flock, for each of us matters to the Good Shepherd!



You Will Need

Assemble

- Serving tray or baking sheet with 15–20 various small objects
- Serving tray or baking sheet with 100 coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters)
- Towel

Bible Study

- Bible

Claim

- Copy of Resource Sheet 1 for each child
- Scissors
- Single-hole punch
- Cotton balls
- Glue sticks
- Scraps of black paper
- Black markers

- Pencils
- Paper
- Two large sheets of newsprint
- Markers or crayons
- Two sheep (*Cut simple sheep shapes from white paper. Use a black marker to make a face and ears.*)
- Copy of Comic Introduction for each child
- Copy of Comic 1 for each child
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons (*optional*)

Depart

- Large sheet of newsprint or craft paper with the heading "God's Amazing Son—Jesus"
- Markers and crayons
- Copy of For the Home 1 for each child
- Several copies of For the Home 2 and Comic 2 for children who will not be at the next session

Assemble

What's Missing?

Welcome the children as they arrive. Invite them to look at the tray of objects for about thirty seconds. Cover the tray with a towel. Turn around and remove one object. Show the children the tray of objects again, and ask them which object is missing. Play the game several times with the children.

Lost and Found

Invite the children to gather around the tray of small objects. Tell them to choose one of the items that they like. Invite the children to take turns sharing their name, what object they chose, and why they like it. If more than one child wants the same object, they may pass it to another person after their turn. Have the children put the objects back on the tray when they have finished.

Think of a time you lost an object, and share that story with the children. Invite them to share a time when they lost something. Ask them how they felt when they couldn't find it. Ask them to recount what they did and how they felt if they found the lost item.

What's Missing, Part 2

Show the children the tray you prepared with one hundred coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters) on it. Let the children look at it for about thirty seconds. Turn around and remove one of the coins. Show them the tray again, and ask them if they know which coin is missing. Explain that this may seem difficult or nearly impossible, but they are going to hear a story about a man who knew exactly what was missing out of a hundred!



Bible Study

1 out of 100!

Tell the children that you are going to read a story to them about a shepherd and his sheep. Tell them that they are going to act out the story as you read it. Invite two or more children to be grumbling listeners, one child to be the shepherd, and everyone else to be sheep. Designate one child to be the sheep who wanders off. Tell the children that the story you will read is from the book of Luke, one of the Gospels in the New Testament. Read Luke 15:1–7.

You may want to read the story more than once and let the children change roles. After you have read the story and acted it out, share with the children the facts and one joke about sheep and shepherds from the sidebar.

Tell the children that Jesus calls himself the good shepherd (“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. . . . I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me” [John 10:11, 14]). Engage them in conversation by using the following questions:

- How is Jesus our shepherd?
- How are we like his sheep?
- What might be some ways that we get “lost”? (see Teaching Tip)
- What do you think happens when we have been “found,” or when we find our way back to following Jesus? (see Teaching Tip)

Claim

Be the Sheep

Give the children copies of **Resource Sheet 1** and instruct them to cut the page in two along the dashed line, separating the story prompts at the top of the page from the sheep puppet at the bottom. Tell them to put the story prompts aside and cut out the sheep shape. Instruct the children to use a single-hole punch where indicated to make the leg holes. Have them carefully cut on the marked lines to the outer circle of the leg holes. The children will put their index and middle fingers through these holes. Once the leg holes are cut, have the children draw faces on their sheep and glue on cotton balls. For the final touch, have the children cut out ears from the scraps of black construction paper and glue them on to their puppets.

Gather the children and write a story together. Ask the children to think of names for their sheep. Use the story prompts and compile their answers into a story.



Sheep:

- Live in a flock and have best friends.
- Can learn their names.
- Have a great sense of hearing and a wide range of vision, but a poor sense of sight.
- Can recognize individual faces—both sheep and humans—and remember them for several years.
- Cannot get up if they fall onto their backs. They need help or they could die.
- Cannot defend themselves. They will go the wrong way unaware of the dangers around them. They need a shepherd.

Shepherds:

- Know each sheep. They don't need ear tags to identify them.
- Stay with the sheep if they are out at night.
- Don't lose sheep! If one wanders off, a shepherd will search for the sheep.
- Will defend the sheep against wild animals.

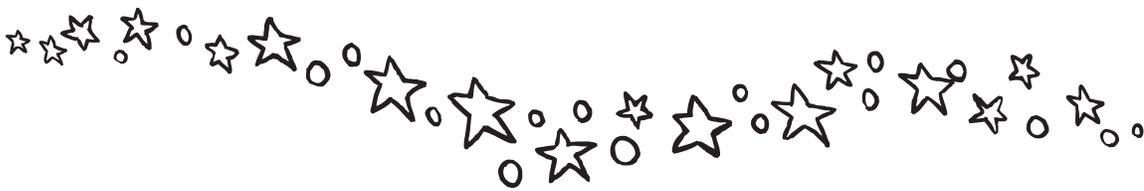
Joke:

Where does a shepherd take a sheep to get a haircut? To the baa-baa shop!



Teaching Tip

Metaphors are difficult for younger children to understand. You may want to ask this question if your group is primarily older children. Help them understand that being “lost” is not just in a physical sense, but how we may “lose our way” from following Jesus.



Ninety-nine Sheep

Form the group into two teams. Give each team a sheet of newsprint and a marker for each child. Tell the teams that when you give the signal they will each draw a flock of ninety-nine sheep. Say "Go!" and let the children draw. While the children are drawing, hide the two sheep you prepared. When the groups have finished drawing, have someone from the other team count the sheep to make sure there are ninety-nine sheep. Tell the children that one sheep must be lost because there should be one hundred sheep in the flock. Have the teams search for the lost sheep you have hidden. Rejoice and celebrate when each team's sheep is found.

Comic Book

Hand out a copy of **Comic Introduction** to each child. Invite older children to pair up with younger children and read the introduction page together. When they finish reading, hand out copies of **Comic 1** to read together. If there is extra time, they may begin to color the pages.

Teaching Tip

In each session, you will add a news story and picture to the newsprint or craft paper labeled "God's Amazing Son—Jesus!" Keep the paper and display it in subsequent sessions.



Teaching Tip

Share your class newspaper with the congregation. Display it each week on a bulletin board or in a prominent place in your church.

Depart

Read All about It!

Gather the children together and draw their attention to the prepared sheet of newsprint or craft paper with the heading "God's Amazing Son—Jesus!" Tell the children that they are going to make a newspaper telling of the good news about Jesus. Invite a child to write the headline "Every Sheep Counts" as the first story. Ask the children what they want to remember about the story they heard today. Write one or two suggestions for the news story. Invite a child to draw a simple picture next to the news story.

Hear All about It!

Invite the children to repeat after you with a "shout out" echoing your lines:

Hear all about it!
Celebrate!
Jesus loves me!
I'm so happy!

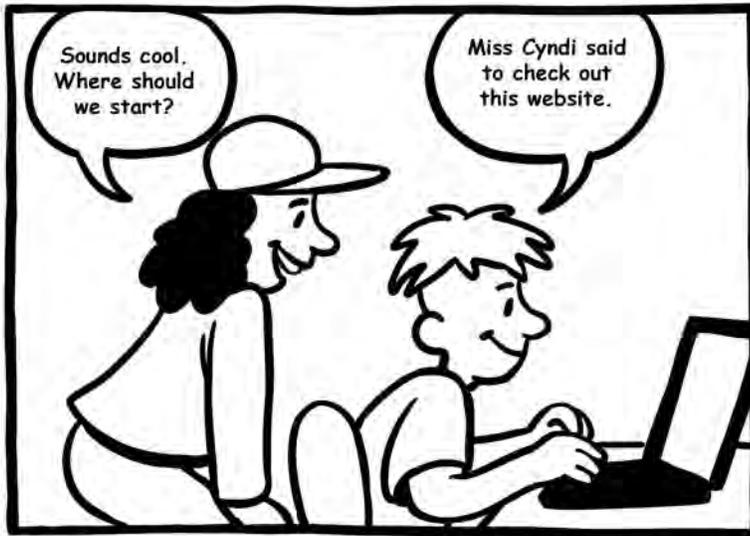
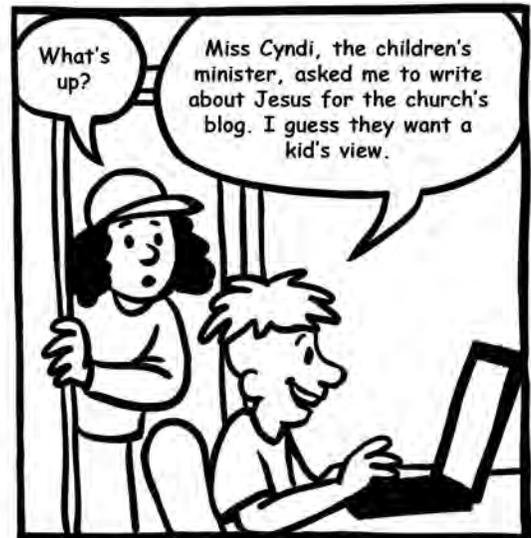
SEND HOME

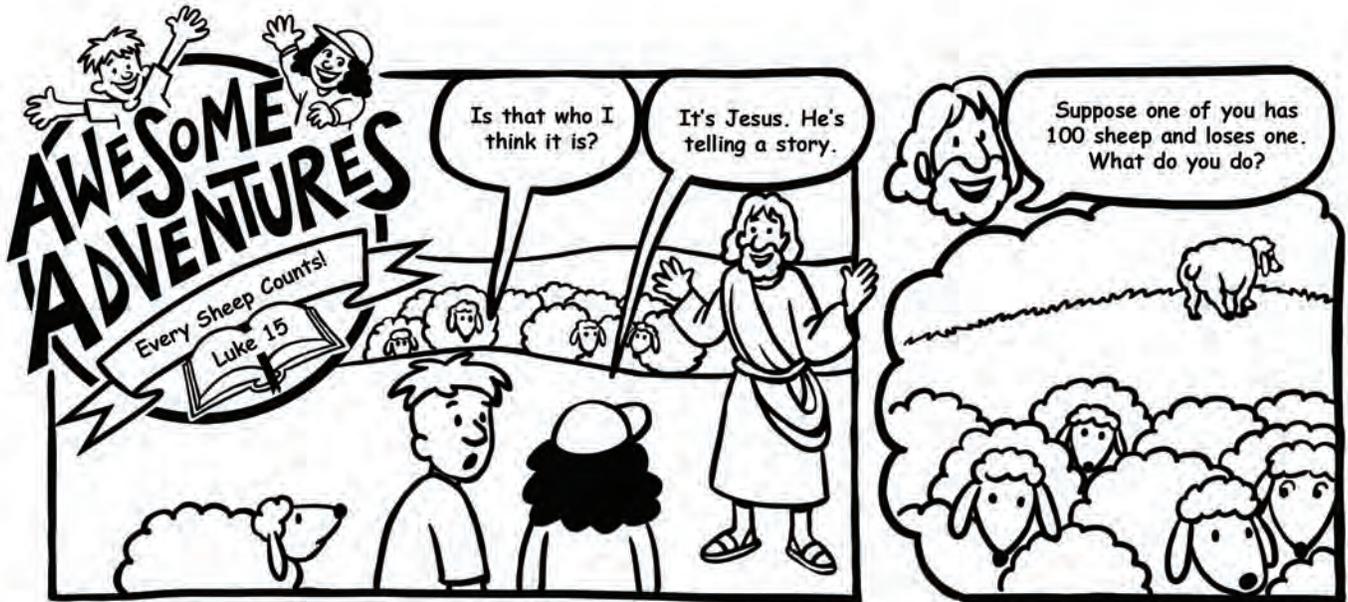
- Sheep puppet
- Copy of Comic Introduction
- Copy of Comic 1
- Copy of For the Home 1

Looking Ahead

For Session 2:

Make a welcome mat with the words "Jesus Welcomes Me All the Time!" You may make the mat in whatever way you choose. Whatever type of mat you make, be sure to adhere it to the floor so the mat doesn't slip as children walk on it.





Let us know when your child may miss a session and we will send home the comic-book page and the For the Home sheet so you can have a Bible adventure wherever you are.

Main Idea

Children will learn that Jesus loves them.

Something to Remember

"I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!"

—Luke 15:6 (GNT)

In class today . . .

. . . we began learning about God's amazing Son with the story of the Lost Sheep. The children heard how the shepherd left his flock of ninety-nine sheep to find the one missing sheep. In John's Gospel, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd" (10:11). The children learned some facts about shepherds and sheep, and considered how Jesus is like a good shepherd and how we are like sheep. They made sheep puppets and wrote or told stories about their lost sheep.



Talk with your child about . . .

. . . a time you lost something and how you found it. Talk about the excitement of finding the lost item. In our Bible story, the shepherd wanted to celebrate the finding of the lost sheep with neighbors.

If your child is old enough, talk about what you want your child to do if he or she should become separated from you at an event or store. This may be an upsetting subject for some children. Approach the subject with confidence, assuring your child that, just as we prepare for a fire with a fire drill plan, we prepare for being separated with a plan as well.

Jokes

As a way of reducing stress, some people say, "Laughter is the best medicine!" Think up some funny sheep jokes or other animal jokes to ease. Here are a couple of jokes to begin.

Question: What do you get if a sheep walks under a cloud?

Answer: A sheep that's under the weather!

Question: Where does a sheep keep his money?

Answer: In the baaaaank.

Math in the Home

For younger children, have them find things in the house they think are at least one hundred in number, and count!

Older children can think of all the ways you can end up with one hundred as the answer with multiplication or division. Make math arrays (patterns of rows and columns) that total one hundred—for example, five rows of twenty items. Wow! It would be hard to recognize that one sheep was missing!

Read a Book

Share a retelling of the Lost Sheep parable with your child.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep by Claire Miller.

Arch Books Bible Stories. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008.

Arch Books Bible Stories also has the companion parables Jesus told about being found: *The Lost Coin* and *The Parable of the Prodigal Son*.

Comic-Book Adventures



We have a summer-long collection of comic-book pages that introduce us to Jake and Anna, two children who have an adventure learning about God's amazing Son as they travel back in time to explore the Bible stories themselves. If you save each week's comic-book page, your child can make his or her own book of Bible adventures by coloring the pages, making a cover, and binding the pages into a book. The comic book will be a good reminder of all the stories your child will hear this summer.

Be the Sheep

Note to teacher: Photocopy this resource sheet for each person.

Materials: Scissors, single-hole punch, glue sticks, cotton balls, black markers, black construction paper scraps, pencils

Directions: Cut this page in half along the dashed line. Follow the directions on the bottom half to make a sheep puppet. Use the story prompts to write a story from the point of view of the lost sheep.

Story prompts:

- ? What's your name?
 - ? Where are you?
 - ? What do you like to do?
 - ? Who is your shepherd?
 - ? How did you get lost?
 - ? How do you feel being lost?
 - ? How were you found?
 - ? What happened when you were found?
-

Sheep Pattern

Directions:

1. Cut out the shape below.
2. Punch holes using a single-hole punch where indicated.
3. Carefully cut on the marked lines to the outer circle to make leg holes.
4. Draw a face on your sheep with a black marker.
5. Glue cotton balls to the sheep.
6. Cut out ears from black construction paper and glue them onto your sheep.
7. Put your index and middle fingers through the holes in the sheep to make your sheep's legs.

