



Noah and the Ark

Goal: To imagine being on the boat with Noah's family and the animals.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Genesis 6:8-8:22

The story of Noah and the ark is a familiar one, and one we have made bright and colorful in picture books, toys, and nursery art. A boat with friendly animals, two of each, bouncing on waves is easy to imagine. The biblical story, however, tells of the destruction of the world by a flood as a direct result to the violence and corruption of humanity. This text is paralleled in other ancient writings, particularly from the Egyptian and Babylonian religions. Needless to say, the human narrative necessitated a do-over, regardless of who was telling the story. Unique to Genesis, however, is the description of God as a creator who promises never again to destroy the earth or humankind.

Instructions are given to one man, Noah, and his family, because he was said to be a righteous man (6:9) who was blameless among the people and who "walked with God." Throughout his life, it would seem, he followed God's ways, even in the midst of the sin and chaos of the time. Certainly he had other choices he could make, but he trusted God without knowing the outcome of his story. In the same manner, Noah responded to God's call to build a gigantic boat. He acted faithfully without knowing anything more than to build the ark and gather the animals. The story reveals faithfulness in the midst of sinfulness and trust when the seemingly impossible and ridiculous (a big boat and all those animals) is required.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Children see and hear about the worst in people and about natural disasters that destroy parts of our earth. It is easy to think this is the end of the world. Why wouldn't God just want to start over? Children may share their own experiences of loss or stories about the violence of nature. Trusting God when the outcome is unknown is a major theme in this story. Children need reassurance that God is faithful to God's promise to care for the earth and God's people no matter what.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Children will be able to imagine what it might have been like to be a member of Noah's family on the ark. Encourage their funny and wise observations as they hear this story. Be ready to engage the literal questions of younger children and the more probing reflections of older children. Be prepared to receive and respond to their observations about this story of loss and recovery. In the end of the story, we hear how Noah and his family expressed their thankfulness to God. Invite children to offer their own prayers of thanksgiving as you end the session.

O God, let me be faithful when you call on me, for I may not know the reasons or what may be in store. I trust you. Amen.



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 1, 18, 25

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: watercolor
paper, water, blue
watercolor paint

choice 2: building blocks

choice 3: variety of toy
animals (stuffed, plastic,
wooden)

Exploring

choice 1: blue painted
sheets from “Guided
Play” choice 1, copies of
Grace Notes (GN) 1

choice 2: newspaper;
brown, black, and gray
crayons

choice 3: **SCM 1a, 1b**

choice 4: copies of **GN 2**

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Post **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker onto a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 3 requires more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive, and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers that you do not know personally. Tell them that today’s story is about Noah and the ark God instructed him to build to save his family and the animals from a great flood. Invite the children to choose a guided-play activity to start:

1. **Painting Water**—Give each child a sheet of watercolor paper and invite them to paint the sheet with water and blue paint. Set aside to dry and use in “Exploring God’s Grace” choice 1.
2. **Building a Boat**—Invite the children to use the building blocks or other items they find in the room to build a boat. Invite them to pretend they are on a boat.
3. **Taking Care of Animals**—Invite the children to play with the toy animals and take care of them. Ask them what animals they are playing with and how they are caring for them. Ask them what the animals need to eat or drink.

T *Transitions can be difficult for children. Do not force reluctant children to join a group activity. Instead, allow them to observe quietly from their own play area or to listen to a story read to them by an adult helper until they are ready to join the group.*

Some SCMs are used throughout the quarter. It is a good idea to keep them in an envelope or folder for further use.



Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into story time, call them to the story corner, singing “Dance and Sing”—SCM 18. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Noah Says

L B T

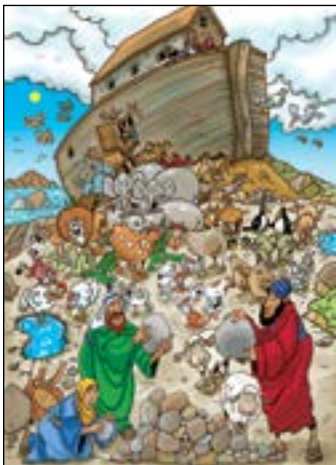
Play a game like “Simon Says” and tell the children to follow your instruction if they hear you say “Noah says.” Tell them that, if you do not say “Noah says,” they are not to follow your instruction. Use the following or make up your own. You want to move from active instructions to quieting activities.

- Noah says, “Stomp like an elephant.”
- Noah says, “Roar like a lion.”
- “Fly like a bird.”
- Noah says, “Squeak like a mouse.”
- “Sit like a frog.”
- Noah says, “Sit like a frog.”
- Noah says, “Sleep like a puppy.”

Guess Who?

L B

Use statements to describe an animal and have the children guess what animal you are describing. For example: I have big ears. I am very big. I have a trunk. . . . Elephant! Or, I am small. I fly. I make a buzzing sound. I am black and yellow. . . . Bee!



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), www.pcusastore.com.

Hearing the Story

L

Open the Bible to Genesis 7 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that today's story is about the story of Noah and the ark God instructed him to build to save his family and the animals from a great flood.

Read **SCM 1**, omitting the instructions in the parentheses. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Read the story again, prompting the children to follow the suggestions in the parentheses. After you have read the story, engage the children in conversation with the following wondering questions:

- I wonder, “What else did Noah take on the ark?”
- I wonder, “What would you take on the ark?”
- I wonder, “What do you wonder about Noah and the ark?”

L *Children who struggle with attention may have difficulty during story time. To help with focus and comprehension, suggest listening prompts, provide visual cues, or engage the children with movement.*



EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

1. Noah's Ark

L FM

Before the session, cut out the pieces of the boat from GN 1 for each child.

Give the children their sheet of blue-painted paper from “Guided Play” choice 1 and a set of three boat pieces. Have them glue the boat pieces onto the blue paper to make Noah’s ark. Invite them to draw Noah and some animals on the ark if they desire. Also, invite them to draw a picture of themselves and any others they would want to join them on the ark. As children finish their pictures, invite them to tell you about their ark and who is on it.

2. Building an Altar

C

Remind the children that Noah and his family took rocks and stacked them to make an altar to God. The altar is where they thanked God. Give the children a paper lunch bag and brown, black, and gray crayons. Invite them to color the bag like a rock. Have them stuff the bag with sheets of crumpled newspaper. Help the children tape the open end of their bag with masking tape to form a rock shape. Invite the children to build an altar (a stack or pile of rocks) with their paper-bag rocks. Gather in a circle around the “rocks” and let the children take turns saying what or who they are thankful for. After each response, all raise their hands in the air and say, “Thank you, God!”



3. Animal Pairs

F LG

Before the session, cut out animals from SCM 1a and SCM 1b and glue each one to an index card.

Without the children noticing, place the animals from one set of cards around the room. Give each child an animal from the second set and invite them to help Noah find their matching animal to go on the ark. You can repeat this again with the same animals or give the children a different animal to find. Have the children close their eyes while you place the animals for future rounds.

Suggest that, if they find an animal card that is not theirs, they can help find the child with the match or simply leave the animal card where it is so the other child can discover it.

When all the matches have been found, play a matching game together. Turn all the cards facedown and invite the children to take turns trying to match animal pairs. You may choose to use fewer sets if it proves to be too much of a challenge.

If you have more than twelve children, pair up some children to find an animal.



Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

4. Coloring Page



Hand out copies of **GN 2** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Noah’s ark. Engage the children in conversation as they color, using the following questions:

- I wonder, “What did it feel like to be on the boat?”
- I wonder, “What did Noah and his family see?”
- I wonder, “What did the ark smell like?”
- I wonder, “What did the ark sound like?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as hopping up and down, wiggling their nose, and wiggling their fingers.*

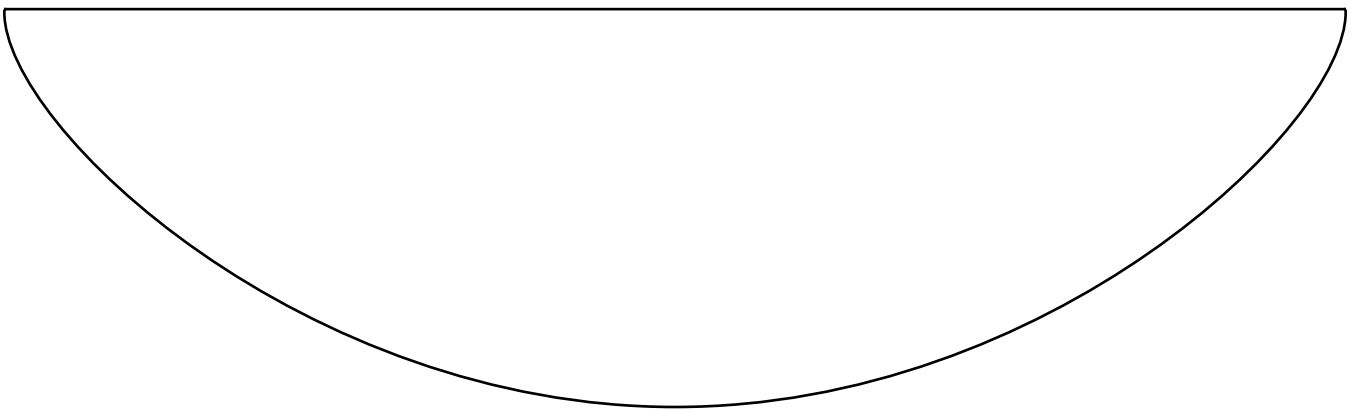
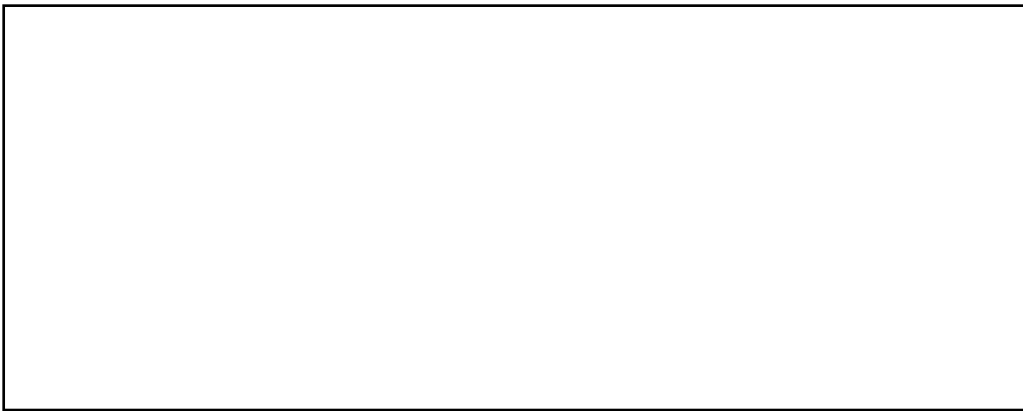
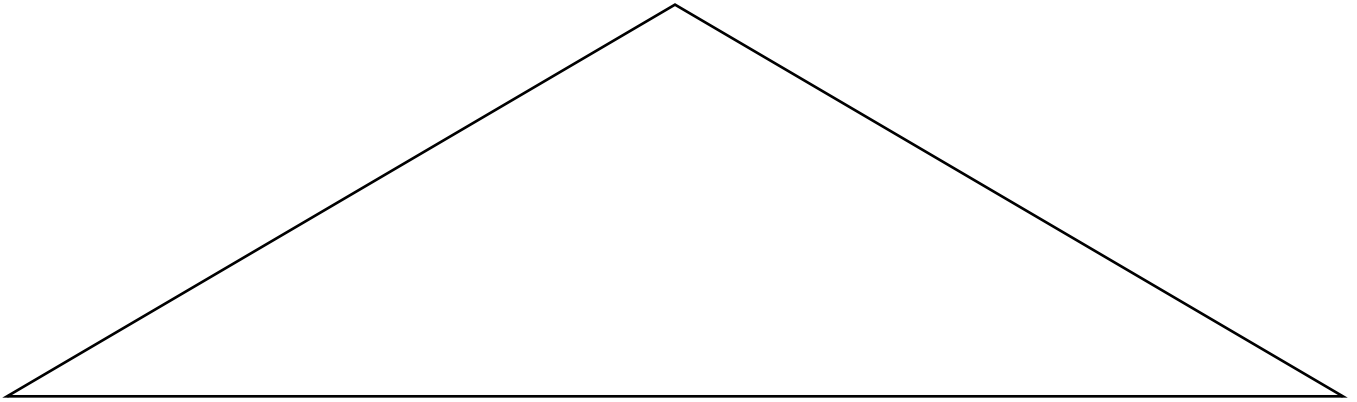
LOVING AND SERVING GOD



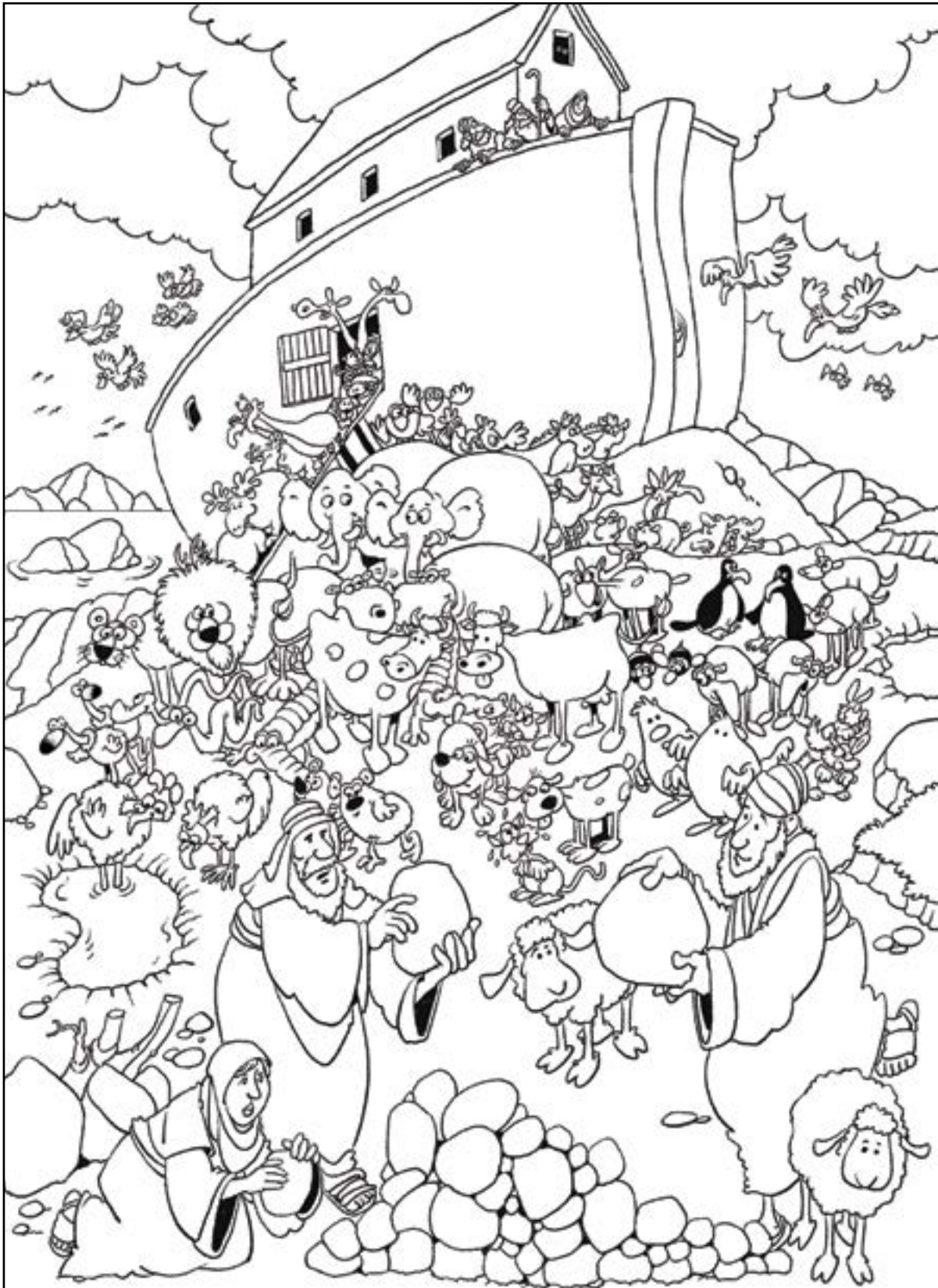
Call the children together, singing “Rise and Shine”—**SCM 25**. Repeat words and phrases as it seems appropriate.

Call the children to snack time. Remind the children that Noah and his family gave thanks to God. Invite the children to take turns saying something they are thankful for as your prayer today.

As the children leave, bless them: “(Name), say, ‘Thank you!’ to God every day. The grace of God is with you.”



Noah and the Ark



Noah and his family gave thanks to God for keeping the animals and them safe during the great flood.

