

**Gen. 9:8–17**

**Ps. 25:1–10**

**1 Pet. 3:18–22**

**Mark 1:9–15**

# A Rainbow Promise

**Goal for the Session**      *Children will find hope in God's promise to Noah.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Genesis 9:8–17

#### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Dianne Bergant

Several important aspects of this covenant should be noted. First, it was made with all of creation. Second, it was multigenerational, made not only with Noah and those present, but with all who would come in the future as well. The biblical flood narrative contains a story of deliverance and of relationship with God. God directed Noah, the only one who found favor with the Lord, to build an ark so that he and his family and some of the animals might escape the punishing waters of the flood. From this small community God then fashioned a new human family and established a covenant with that family and with the world as a whole. This is a story of deliverance and new beginnings.

#### WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Wm. Loyd Allen

The God revealed here is adaptable, touched to the heart by creation, and willing to accept hurt to keep hope alive. The God of this covenant is unchanging only in refusing to give up on creation. God keeps the future open by self-limitation when humanity threatens to close off hope by unlimited repeat offenses. God takes this risk because God's heart is touched by creation's suffering. The God declaring this covenant is not an objective judge meting out a just sentence, but a lover grieved to the heart at the beloved's violence, yet still seeking reconciliation. Readers will find divine regret throughout this covenant, but will look in vain for anger.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Jane Anne Ferguson

The creatures made in God's image may always resist God. Yet God lays down God's weapons against creation, against humankind. God puts the undrawn bow in the clouds as a personal reminder “never again” to destroy creation with a flood. In the light of that bow, the rainbow, humanity can see God as “One Who Remembers,” even in the midst of chaos, even in the midst of rebellion by creation and its creatures.

#### NOW WHAT is God's word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,” David J. Lose

The self-limitation and willingness to sacrifice divine freedom that this passage describes reach their climax in the passion of Jesus Christ, for which Lent prepares us. This passage invites us to reconsider our relationships with each other and, indeed, all creation. If God, who alone has the right to despair, judge, or destroy, surrenders the divine prerogative from covenantal commitment, might not we who have tasted this mercy look upon all persons and all things as inherently worthwhile, that is, as those things that God has called worthy?

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

**Genesis 9:8–17**

## Focus on Your Teaching

Most children are not as familiar with the season of Lent as with Advent. However, many congregations participate in a special offering during Lent, such as One Great Hour of Sharing. Children often know the story of Noah and the ark, especially about the animals. As the background for the focus scripture is reviewed, questions may come from children who were unaware of the reason for the flood or who didn't realize that Noah and his family were on the ark for a long time. Answer their questions simply and try to engage the child in conversation later if more is needed.

*God of the covenant, thank you for the second chance and for the beautiful symbol of the rainbow. Amen.*

### YOU WILL NEED

- battery-powered Christ candle
- 6 battery-powered votive candles
- purple cloth
- offering basket
- Bible
- Resource Sheet 1
- Color Pack 1, 2, 3, 4, 36, 38
- copies of Resource Sheet 2
- Singing the Feast*, [bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast)

### For Responding

- option 1: face paint in rainbow colors, paintbrushes
- option 2: white felt, white ribbon (7" lengths), ribbon in rainbow colors (8" lengths), fabric glue, permanent markers
- option 3: pipe cleaners in rainbow colors; dowels or coat hangers; string, yarn, or fishing line; florist's wire
- option 4: Color Pack 36; *Singing the Feast*, [bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast)

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, if you are using option 2 in Responding, cut two identical cloud shapes (about 3" x 5") from white felt for each child.

As you greet the children, welcome each one and ask how they listened to Jesus this week. Ask about their families.

When you are ready to begin, have the group help you arrange the purple cloth on the worship table. Place an offering basket, Color Pack 4, the Christ candle and the votive candles as described on Resource Sheet 1 (Lenten Rituals), and the Bible on it. Have the children sit down. If collected, receive the offering. Point out the purple cloth on the table, a sign that the church year has changed to a new season. Lent began on the previous Wednesday, Ash Wednesday. Ask:

✠ What do you know about the season of Lent?

Supplement what they recall with the information on Resource Sheet 1. Ask a child to find Lent on Color Pack 1. Notice that Lent ends on Easter.

Use the Gathering Ritual on Resource Sheet 1.

To introduce the theme for this session, ask:

✠ When has someone given you a second chance or allowed you to take a do-over?

✠ How does it feel to be able to do something over?

Suggest that they listen for some people who got a second chance in the Bible story.

Extinguish the candles.

### Prepare the Paths

Prepare the paths, prepare  
the paths,  
Make ready God's way of  
justice.  
(repeat)

Smooth the rough roads,  
smooth the rough roads,  
God's salvation is coming.  
(repeat)

Inviting the children to recall what they know of a story lets them know that their knowledge is important.

**EASY  
PREP**

### EXPLORING

Invite a child to get the Bible from the worship table and turn to the book of Genesis. Note that this is the first book of the Bible. The word *genesis* means "beginnings." The stories in Genesis, especially in the first 11 chapters, are about beginnings and how the ancient people of Israel imagined the beginnings.

Show Color Pack 2. Explain that this is an illustration of the happy ending of the story. Ask:

- ✪ What Bible story is this?
- ✪ What do you remember about this story?

After the children have contributed to the telling of the story, suggest that they listen to the end of the story as it is told in the Bible. Read aloud Genesis 9:8–17. Explain that a *covenant* is a special promise between two people. When God makes a covenant with Noah, we can be sure that God will keep the promise. Ask:

- ✪ What is the covenant that God made with Noah?
- ✪ Who was included in the covenant?
- ✪ Did God ask Noah to do anything to keep the covenant?
- ✪ What is a reminder of this covenant between God and us?

Show Color Pack 3. Invite the children to tell about seeing rainbows. Suggest that they remember this story whenever they see a rainbow or any part of one.

To review the more complete story briefly before moving to the options in Responding, distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (The Longer Story about Noah and God). If you think some children will have difficulty following the reading, have a leader cue them for the chorus part so they echo what the leader says or does.

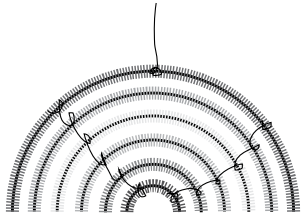
### RESPONDING

Offer at least two options so children have a choice. One might be more challenging to interest older children who can work on their own.

1. **Face Painting** Rainbows, whenever or wherever we see them, are reminders of God's covenant. Children of all ages seem to enjoy face painting. Set up a table for someone to paint rainbows on the children's faces or hands. Talk with each child to help them plan what to say when someone asks about the rainbow. This is an opportunity to invite a teen or adult to help with the group and get to know the children. Every time the children meet adults informally like this, they have another potential faithful role model in their lives.



Glue the second cloud on top of the ribbon on the first cloud.



### I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing

I'm gonna *sing* when the Spirit says *sing*,  
I'm gonna *sing* when the Spirit says *sing*,  
I'm gonna *sing* when the Spirit says *sing*,  
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

I'm gonna *walk* . . .

I'm gonna *leap* . . .

I'm gonna *praise* . . .

2. **Rainbow Door Hangers** Create a reminder of God's faithfulness that children can dangle from their bedroom doorknobs. Give each learner two identical cloud shapes cut from white felt (about 3" x 5"). Show them how to glue a loop of white ribbon to the top of one cloud. Have them glue red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple ribbons, in that order, to dangle from the bottom of the cloud. Glue the second felt cloud shape on top. With permanent marker, write *God keeps promises* on the cloud. Review what the story teaches about God and God's covenant with Noah.

3. **Lenten Mobile** Help the group mark the weeks of Lent by making a classroom mobile. Each week, a different symbol will be added. These symbols serve as reminders of the focus scriptures, as well as what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Use dowels or a coat hanger for the base of the mobile. Use string, yarn, or fishing line to hang the symbols from the mobile base. This week, the symbol is a rainbow, a reminder of how God gives new beginnings. Bend red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple pipe cleaners—in that order—into a rainbow shape, with red as the outside band. Use small pieces of florist's wire at various points to hold the rainbow together. Hang the rainbow from the mobile base and display it at the next session. The children may make individual mobiles to take home, but keep them in the learning space until they are complete.

4. **Song** The song "I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing" (Color Pack 36, [Singing the Feast](#)) can remind the children that God's Spirit helps them to live as God's beloved children. If the children know it, encourage them to make up motions to go with each stanza and sing it with the motions.

### CLOSING

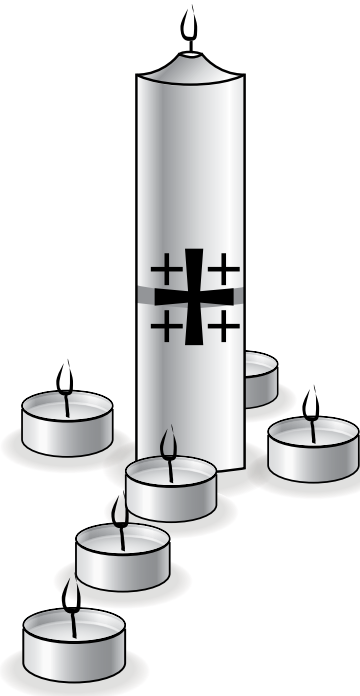
Gather at the worship table. If necessary, light the Christ candle and the votive candles. Admire the work from Responding, whether a painted rainbow or a rainbow door hanger.

Follow the Closing Ritual on Resource Sheet 1 (Lenten Rituals).

Extinguish the candles.

As you say good-bye, encourage the children to return for the next session.

## Lenten Rituals



Save this sheet for use in upcoming sessions.

### Setup

Place six votive candles in holders around the Christ candle to form a cross shape. Place Color Pack 4 next to the candle cross as a reminder to be Jesus' followers. Just as we add light to candles as we wait for the Christ child during Advent, during Lent we extinguish candles to show we are aware of the approaching death of Jesus.

### What is Lent?

The season of Lent marks the forty days before Easter, but Sundays are not counted as part of the forty days. The Lenten journey is a time to recall Jesus' journey to the cross. Traditionally, Lent is a season of reflecting on our relationship with God and how it might change the way we live. The color of Lent is purple, the color of repentance and fresh beginnings.

### Gathering Ritual

1. Light the Christ candle and the six votives, recalling that it is the season of Lent.
2. Sing "Prepare the Paths" (Color Pack 38, [Singing the Feast](#)).
3. Pray: Faithful God, open our minds to hear your word and let it change our hearts. Amen.
4. Extinguish the candle.

### Closing Ritual

1. Light the Christ candle and the six votives. Then, extinguish votive candles as a way of marking the Sundays of Lent. For example, on the First Sunday of Lent, extinguish one votive; on the Second Sunday of Lent, extinguish two votives; and so forth. On Palm Sunday, extinguish all six votive candles and the Christ candle as a symbol of Jesus' death on Good Friday.
2. Say:

**Teacher:** Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

**All:** And Jesus said we are the light of the world.

**Teacher:** How do we intend to live as followers of Jesus? Place Color Pack 4 next to the candle cross as a reminder to be Jesus' followers. (Each week, invite learners to say what they will do to live out this statement.)

Lent 1: By believing God gives us fresh starts.

Lent 2: By taking up the cross to follow Jesus.

Lent 3: By obeying God's Law.

Lent 4: By learning about God's grace.

Lent 5: By having the covenant of love in our hearts.

Palm Sunday: By following our King, Jesus.

3. Sing "I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing" (Color Pack 36, [Singing the Feast](#)).
4. Bless:
 

**Teacher:** May God bless us, and be with us this week as we follow Jesus.  
**All:** Amen!
5. Extinguish the candle.

## The Longer Story about Noah and God

**Group 1:** God looked down and saw the earth

**Group 2:** No longer sure of what it was worth.

**Chorus:** Oh, my!

**Group 1:** People there were full of sin;

**Group 2:** They left no room for God to come in.

**Chorus:** Uh-oh!

**Group 1:** But Noah liked to walk with God,

**Group 2:** And so God gave to him the nod.

**Chorus:** Nice going, Noah!

**Group 1:** Noah, you must build an ark;

**Group 2:** Not sure where it's going to park!

**Chorus:** Parking an ark?

**Group 1:** The neighbors giggled

**Group 2:** And the animals wiggled,

**Chorus:** Parking an ark? Ha, ha, ha!

**Group 1:** But in went family to be the crew,

**Group 2:** And animals came in two-by-two.

**Chorus:** Snakes, elephants, lions, and mosquitoes?

**Group 1:** For 40 days it rained and poured

**Group 2:** Until they all cried, "Please, no more!"

**Chorus:** *(Make rainstorm noises: rub hands together, snap fingers, stomp feet)*

**Group 1:** Noah sent the raven and then the dove,

**Group 2:** Always praying to God above.

**Chorus:** Help us, God.

**Group 1:** And when the ark did come to rest,

**Group 2:** Noah offered God his best.

**Chorus:** At last!

**Group 1:** God put a rainbow in the sky

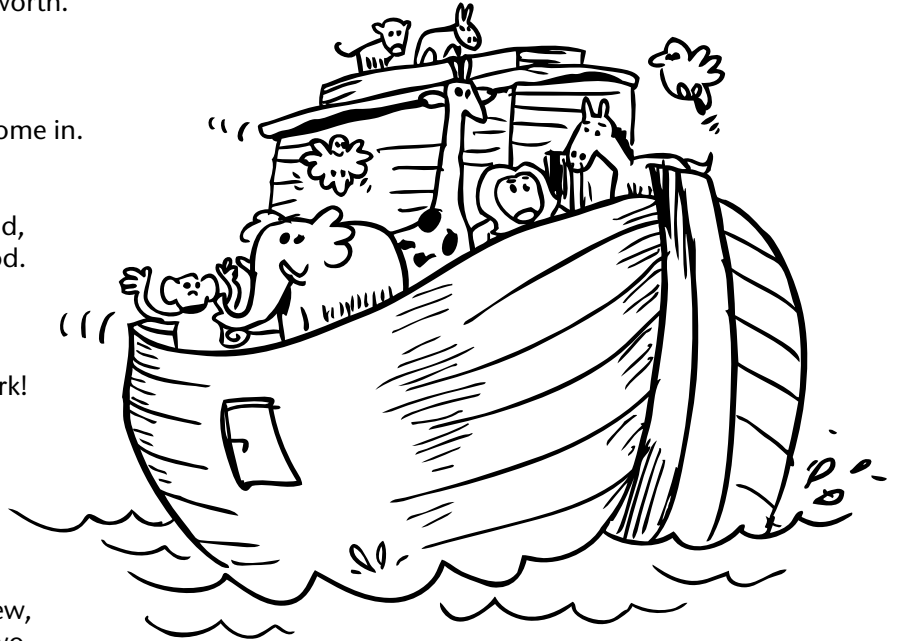
**Group 2:** And said, "You know I never lie;

**Chorus:** The rainbow sign.

**Group 1:** Never again will I send a flood

**Group 2:** That leaves the whole earth covered in mud!"

**Chorus:** A second chance. A new beginning.



**Gen. 9:8–17**

**Ps. 25:1–10**

**1 Pet. 3:18–22**

**Mark 1:9–15**

# Never Again!

**Goal for the Session** Adults will explore the implications of God’s everlasting covenant with every living creature and all generations.

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Genesis 9:8–17

#### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Dianne Bergant

Several important aspects of this covenant should be noted. First, it was made with all of creation. Second, it was multigenerational, made not only with Noah and those present, but with all who would come in the future as well. The biblical flood narrative contains a story of deliverance and of relationship with God. God directed Noah, the only one who found favor with the Lord, to build an ark so that he and his family and some of the animals might escape the punishing waters of the flood. From this small community God then fashioned a new human family and established a covenant with that family and with the world as a whole. This is a story of deliverance and new beginnings.

#### WHERE is God in these words?

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The God revealed here is adaptable, touched to the heart by creation, and willing to accept hurt to keep hope alive. The God of this covenant is unchanging only in refusing to give up on creation. God keeps the future open by self-limitation when humanity threatens to close off hope by unlimited repeat offenses. God takes this risk because God’s heart is touched by creation’s suffering. The God declaring this covenant is not an objective judge meting out a just sentence, but a lover grieved to the heart at the beloved’s violence, yet still seeking reconciliation. Readers will find divine regret throughout this covenant, but will look in vain for anger.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

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The creatures made in God’s image may always resist God. Yet God lays down God’s weapons against creation, against humankind. God puts the undrawn bow in the clouds as a personal reminder “never again” to destroy creation with a flood. In the light of that bow, the rainbow, humanity can see God as “One Who Remembers,” even in the midst of chaos, even in the midst of rebellion by creation and its creatures.

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

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The self-limitation and willingness to sacrifice divine freedom that this passage describes reach their climax in the passion of Jesus Christ, for which Lent prepares us. This passage invites us to reconsider our relationships with each other and, indeed, all creation. If God, who alone has the right to despair, judge, or destroy, surrenders the divine prerogative from covenantal commitment, might not we who have tasted this mercy look upon all persons and all things as inherently worthwhile, that is, as those things that God has called worthy?

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

*Genesis 9:8–17*

## Focus on Your Teaching

Recent years have seen unprecedented disasters due to flooding. Tsunamis, the overflowing of rivers, and the rising of sea levels have destroyed the lives and livelihood of millions. These disasters cause many adults to bring deeper questions to the story of Noah and the Flood than how all the animals could fit in the ark. Encourage your group to embrace these questions as they read and study the story today.

*Lord, speak anew to me through this old story, that I might know you more deeply and help others to do the same. Amen.*

## LEADING THE SESSION

### YOU WILL NEED

- Bibles (including several study Bibles)
  - purple cloth
  - cross
  - six votive candles, matches
  - board or newsprint
  - markers, pens
  - copies of Resource Sheets 1, 2
  - copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session
- For Responding
- option 1: board or newsprint and markers
  - option 2: guest speaker on disaster response efforts
  - option 3: information on climate change and species extinction

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, if you will be using option 2 in Responding, invite as a guest speaker someone who has survived a natural disaster or who works in disaster response efforts. Inform your guest of the content of today's session. Invite your guest to talk about how he or she has seen God at work in the midst of disaster to bring healing and hope, and how the church can be a sign of God's presence in such times. If you will be using option 3 in Responding, bring information on climate change or care of creation from your denomination's Web site.

Greet participants by name as they arrive. Invite them to help you arrange the purple fabric in the center of your learning space and place the cross and votive candles on it.

Draw attention to the worship space you have created. Explain that as this is the first Sunday in Lent, you will light one of the votive candles. As you light the candle, ask adults to reflect on this question: What words or images do you associate with the word *covenant*?

Allow a few moments for silent reflection. Invite those comfortable doing so to offer a word, phrase, or image that comes to mind. Tell the group that you will explore in today's biblical story the first covenant God makes.

Pray the following or a prayer of your choosing, then extinguish the candle:

*God of all creation, your love and mercy are deeper and wider than we often imagine. Open our hearts to know the love that flows from your heart toward all that you have created. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### EXPLORING

Form two groups and read aloud Genesis 9:8–17, alternating verses between groups. Ask learners what words and phrases they heard repeated multiple times in this passage (e.g., *covenant, every living creature, all flesh, never again*). Write these on a board or newsprint.

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on Genesis 9:8–17). Ask a volunteer to read the “What?” excerpt on Resource Sheet 1. Invite the group to discuss:

- ✿ Often we think of “covenant” in terms of God’s relationship with God’s chosen people. How does today’s story broaden our understanding of the word *covenant*?

Invite learners to recall the lesson earlier in the quarter on Genesis 1. Ask:

- ✿ What do the waters of Genesis 1 and the waters in the flood story symbolize?
- ✿ What does the “bow” God sets in the sky symbolize?

Ask the group to look at notes in a study Bible. If they have trouble finding the information, explain that the bow likely refers to the archery bow of the divine warrior. Hanging the bow in the sky is a sign that the war is over and chaos has ended. The bow is to serve as a reminder of the covenant to whom? (See Genesis 9:14–16.)

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (The Unilateral Covenant) and pens. Invite learners to form small groups and work on Resource Sheet 2. (They will also need Resource Sheet 1.) Allow about ten minutes for this exercise.

Gather the whole group again and invite participants to compare insights from their small-group discussions. Note that, like the first creation account in Genesis, this text likely comes from the time of the Babylonian exile. Invite the group to discuss the following:

- ✿ How might this story have brought comfort and hope to a people in exile?
- ✿ How might it bring comfort and hope to those experiencing chaos or disaster today?

EASY  
PREP

## RESPONDING

Choose one or more of these activities, depending on the length of your session:

### 1. **Journey to the Cross** Read the following quote:

To see and know God as the “One Who Remembers” us, corporately and individually, with love and forgiveness in the midst of life’s chaos with all its pain and suffering, is to discover redemption. Hearing this story on the First Sunday in Lent we begin our walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem, understanding in a deeper, fuller way the God who sent him and whom he served.

—Excerpted from Jane Anne Ferguson, *Feasting on the Word, Year B, Volume 2* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 28.

Then ask a volunteer to read the “Now What?” excerpt on Resource Sheet 1. Then invite the group to discuss:

- ✿ How do both authors connect Genesis 9 with the beginning of Lent?

Say: “During the season of Lent, we follow Jesus to the cross, where God’s self-limiting, self-giving love finds its ultimate expression. The Lenten season calls us to repent of our resistance to God and remember our creaturely limits. Knowing our utter dependence on God’s mercy, we seek to show the same mercy to others, to love others with the same self-limiting and self-giving love.”

For option 2, as an alternative to a guest speaker, bring information about Camp Noah, a program for children who have experienced natural disasters: [www.lssmn.org/camp\\_noah](http://www.lssmn.org/camp_noah).

Invite participants to offer ideas for practices of self-limiting and self-giving love. Write these on the board or newsprint. Encourage each person to commit to at least one of these practices for this Lenten season.

- 2. Disaster Response** When natural disasters strike, the church can provide a very tangible sign of God's covenant with all people and all creation. Through disaster relief efforts, God's people communicate to victims that they are not alone and that God has not abandoned them.

Introduce the guest speaker and tell the class that the guest will talk about how he or she has seen God at work in the midst of disaster to bring healing and hope. Agree with the speaker about how much time is available to speak in order to allow time for a brief discussion. He or she should also mention any volunteer opportunities.

After a brief discussion time following the guest's presentation, conclude with this question:

- ✿ What are ways this group or our community can better help victims of disaster and give them hope?

- 3. All Living Creatures** The focus text invites discussion about how people of faith might respond to issues of climate change and care for creation in light of God's covenant with all living creatures for all generations. Share information from your denomination. Invite adults to discuss individual and congregational responses to what is read.

## CLOSING

Invite participants to tell how they would respond, in one or two sentences, if a family member or friend asked them what they learned today. If some have family members participating in this curriculum at different age levels, encourage them to talk together about what they are learning sometime during the coming week.

Pray the following or a prayer of your choosing:

*Gracious and merciful God, we thank you for your unfailing commitment to your whole creation, and for your unfailing commitment to us. Forgive our self-centered, short-sighted ways. Help us to value and care for your creation as you do, and to work toward its healing. We pray in the name of Jesus, through whom you took upon yourself the pain of creation, and through whom you promise to reconcile all things on earth and in heaven. Amen.*

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session, or e-mail it to learners during the week. Encourage them to read the focus scripture and the resource sheet before the next session.

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### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

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The self-limitation and willingness to sacrifice divine freedom that this passage describes reach their climax in the passion of Jesus Christ, for which Lent prepares us. This passage invites us to reconsider our relationships with each other and, indeed, all creation. If God, who alone has the right to despair, judge, or destroy, surrenders the divine prerogative from covenantal commitment, might not we who have tasted this mercy look upon all persons and all things as inherently worthwhile, that is, as those things that God has called worthy?

## The Unilateral Covenant

Read the following excerpt:



This covenant also reveals the unity of all creation, the intractable sinfulness and undeserved blessedness of humanity, and all of creation's total dependence upon God's active compassion. Creation, including humanity, is one. What affects part affects all. The deep purpose of nature is diversity in unity under God's ownership. Yet humanity consistently fails to accept its given limits and attempts to take possession of life into its own hands, contaminating the cosmos with violence and fear. All creation suffers the consequences (9:2–6), but this is not the first or last word to Noah's kind. The first and last words are, "abound on the earth and multiply in it" (9:1, 7). In spite of all evidence to the contrary, humanity and creation are blessed, for God remains loyal to the disloyal. Humanity proves intractable in its sin, so God changes strategy. Since humanity does not end the downward spiral of violence, God covenants to do so. Humanity and the cosmos are ultimately dependent for survival upon a life force beyond creation, a God willing to initiate an intervention.

—Excerpted from Wm. Loyd Allen, *Feasting on the Word, Year B, Volume 2* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 28–30.

Respond to the statement "Creation, including humanity, is one. What affects part affects all." Where do we see evidence of this today?

Where do we see evidence that "humanity consistently fails to accept its given limits," and that "all creation suffers the consequences"?

Read again the last three sentences of the above excerpt. Note the words "God changes strategy." How might this be seen as leading ultimately to the cross?

Read the "Where?" and "So What?" excerpts on Resource Sheet 1.

What in the authors' comments do you find helpful for your understanding of the flood story and the covenant that follows?

How has your image of God changed or expanded in any way by reflecting on this text?

# *Joining the Feast*

Year B, Spring  
First Sunday in Lent—Day of Pentecost



# What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

## The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

## The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each of the passages.

## Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

A helpful feature in this section of *Joining the Feast* is the inclusion of the stories on the focus scriptures from the multi-age course. These stories can be used in the children's time during worship. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

## Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in the *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

## Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

## Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.

## Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

*Joining the Feast* helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

*Joining the Feast* can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this, we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching which considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim



# CHILDREN'S BULLETIN

First Sunday in Lent



## God's Promise to Noah based on Genesis 9:8-17

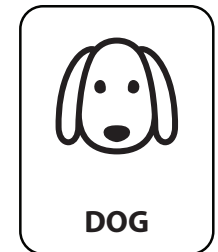
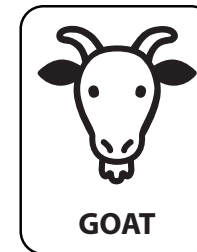
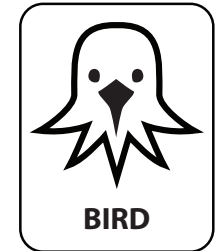
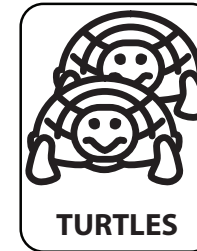
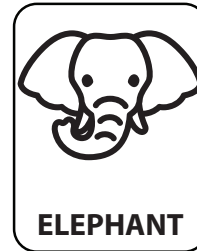
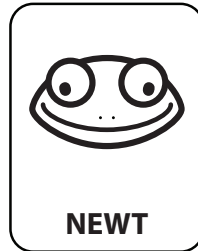
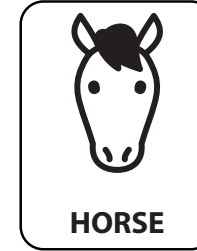
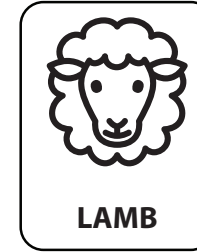
*Long ago, God looked at the earth,  
no longer sure of what it was worth.  
People there were full of sin;  
They left no room for God to come in.*

*But Noah loved God with all his heart.  
God said, "Noah, you must build an ark!"  
His family went aboard to be the crew,  
And animals came in two-by-two.*

For 40 days it rained and poured, and the earth was flooded. When the flood waters went down and the ark came to rest, God put a rainbow in the sky and said:

"When I send clouds over the earth, and a rainbow appears in the sky, I will remember my promise to you and to all other living creatures. Never again will I let floodwaters destroy all life. When I see the rainbow in the sky, I will always remember the promise that I have made to every living creature. The rainbow will be the sign of that solemn promise" (Genesis 9:14-17, Contemporary English Version).

Pretend that Noah found a way to make sure all the animals got on the ark. In the spaces below, write the order he loaded them using the last letter of one animal to begin the first letter of the next animal and so forth until all the animals are on the ark. (example: turtles - skunk.)



_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____