

Lesson #3-16 (Extended)

Jesus in the Temple

PK-2nd

Luke 2:21-38; Luke 2:41-52

Key Verse:

“...for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.”

Luke 2:30-31

[Jesus] said to them, “Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

Luke 2:49

The Point:

At the temple, Jesus is announced as the savior of the world.

Making Connections:

Revelation of the Son of Man

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

Jewish Religious Leaders



Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Story Centers (PK-K)

15 min.

Brand New Babies

Baby dolls remind us of eight-day-old baby Jesus.

Building the Temple

Build a temple with blocks.

Coming to the Temple

Explore a coloring station about the temple.

Teaching and Learning

Take turns playing teacher.

† Baby dolls and accessories

† Building blocks

† Activity Sheet #3-16.A

† Markers or crayons

† Bibles and other books

† White board and markers

† Paper

† Markers or crayons

Into the Story (PK-2nd)

Just Like Jesus

We come to learn about God.

I Love to Learn

Talk about learning.

5 min.

† Activity Sheet #3-16.A

† Baby doll

† Markers or crayons

5 min.

† Bibles and other books

† White board and markers

† Paper

† Markers or crayons

Activities a la Carte

Bible Nuts & Bolts (1st-2nd)

Who is Who in the Bible

Learning about the key Jewish religious leaders.

10 min.

- † Bible
- † Bookmark
- † Picture of a lamb or a stuffed lamb
- † Robe or pastoral garment

Learning the Story (PK-2nd)

Who Is This Kid? (Part 1)

The infant Jesus is recognized by the prophets.

10 min.

- † Bibles
- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

Who Is This Kid? (Part 2)

The boy Jesus learns in the temple.

- † Bibles
- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

Living the Story (PK-2nd)

Generations of Faith

Passing on the faith.

5 min.

- † Older members of your congregation

Worshipping Across Generations

Worship with older members.

10 min.

- † Guest from Generations of Faith activity

Singing the Story (PK-2nd)

God, I Want to Learn

Sing a piggyback song to the tune of "Frere Jacques."

5 min.

- † None

Activities a la Carte

Additional Activities

Scroll Snack (PK-2nd)

Make a snack that reminds us of how Jesus learned.

5 min.

- † Long, flat fruit snacks
- † Straight pretzel rods
- † Napkins

Good News, People! (PK-2nd)

Create a banner to share the good news.

10 min.

- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

Prophet, Prophet, He is Here! (PK-2nd)

Prophets proclaim the good news and then the Messiah comes.

5 min.

- † None

It's a New Year! (1st-2nd)

Let's make some plans.

5 min.

- † Activity Sheet #3-16.B
- † Pens or pencils
- † Envelopes

Bible Book (PK-2nd)

Optional ongoing activity.

5 min.

- † Bible Book page (found at end of lesson)
- † Cardstock or plain paper
- † Pens or pencils
- † Markers or crayons
- † Optional: three-ring binders, hole punch

Sending the Story (PK-2nd)

5 min.

- † None

Background for Teachers

Note for leaders about this “extended” lesson:

As many congregations do not hold Christian education during the week between Christmas and New Year’s, this lesson is designed to be used flexibly. If your congregation does not meet on that Sunday, this lesson is to be used the following Sunday. You will not be able to cover all of the components in one week, but you can choose based on the time frame that you have. If you do meet the Sunday after Christmas, there are enough components, and the components are slightly more involved, so they will easily extend for two weeks.

- For the Into the Story and Living the Story, there are two stand-alone options. If you meet for two weeks, use both; if you meet for one week, choose one.
- For Learning the Story, it is noted in the activity where a good break time is, should you be meeting over two weeks.
- For the Additional Activities, there are two activities more tailored toward the first part of the story, and two activities tailored toward the second.

Making Connections

This is the season of Epiphany: the season when we celebrate how God is revealed through Jesus, and the season when we focus on Jesus’ life here on earth. The previous reading was from the first part of Luke 2 on Christmas. We immersed ourselves in the familiar story of shepherds and angels found in Luke, and were left with Mary pondering these things in her heart. For this extended lesson, we join Mary in pondering it all. We focus specifically on Jesus’ presentation in the temple, and on the proclamation of John the Baptist.

Story Summary:

Jesus in the Temple

Luke 2:21-38: Jesus Is Named & Presented

Today’s Scripture is set eight days after Jesus’ birth. Mary and Joseph are taking Jesus to the temple. This trip to the temple is to name him, circumcise him, and present him to the Lord. Additionally, according to Scripture requirements, a sacrifice is made. In including these details, the readers know that Jesus will be raised in a devout Jewish household.

When they arrive at the temple, the prophet Simeon greets them. Simeon, who had been told that he would see the Messiah before his death, was directed by the Spirit to come to the temple that day. He immediately recognizes and proclaims Jesus as the Messiah. Simeon is now ready to die.

Simeon is not the only one who recognizes Jesus. Another prophet, Anna, is an elderly widow who lives at the temple and recognizes Jesus. Her response is to begin to share the good news with the community. Jesus is revealed.

Luke 2:41-52: Boy Jesus in the Temple

How could Mary and Joseph not notice that Jesus was missing? As they traveled among the crowd returning from Jerusalem, perhaps they thought that Jesus was walking with friends. They probably did not imagine that he had stayed behind, not only to learn but to teach.



After three days, Jesus' parents finally found him in the temple. They had been worried, searching everywhere, but Jesus simply replies that this is where he is meant to be. "Did you not know that I would be in my Father's house?" (verse 49). Jesus reveals his deep connection with God, but it is more than his frantic parents are able to understand.

The Point

At the temple, Jesus is announced as the savior of the world. Throughout this unit, we are looking at how Jesus reveals God to us. One of the first steps in understanding these revelations is recognizing Jesus as a legitimate avenue for us to encounter God. The point of this lesson's Scripture is for us to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. Simeon and Anna both reveal him as such, and remind us that he comes for the salvation of all!

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

Jewish Religious Leaders

The Jewish religious leaders we read about in the Gospels are not always well understood in our churches today. When we know more about each type of key religious leader in the Bible, we can better understand what is going on in parts of the Gospels. Priests led worship in the temple by making sacrifices and other offerings. One of these priests was appointed every year by the Roman governor to be the leader of the priests called the high priest. The chief priests were priests from the most respected priestly families and acted under direct order of the high priest. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem was a ruling council made up of the high priest, chief priests, scribes, and elders. Scribes were well educated and made copies of holy scrolls like the Torah. These leaders generally belonged to one of two groups, somewhat like Christian denominations today.

The Pharisees believed that the most important thing to do was to follow the Law found in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible). The Sadducees focused more on worship in the temple and, during Jesus' time, were more accepting of Roman rule.

Spiritual Practice: Worship

In the two parts of the lesson, we see the importance of a community of faith coming together. Worship can be a powerful connection point for a community of faith. In worship, we have rituals that united us and reinforce our connections. These Scripture readings show Jesus as part of a community that values these rituals. While some of our worship rituals may have changed, the importance of coming together as a community of faith to worship has not.



Lesson Plan



Story Centers (PK-K; 15 minutes)

Story Centers are mini-activities designed specifically for preschool and kindergarten students. Depending on the size of your class, you can set these up as centers for in-class rotations or do them as a whole class one after another. In most preschool and kindergarten classes, these centers along with a snack, the “Learning the Story” activity, and the “Living the Story” activity will fill the education time, but feel free to choose any activity you think would be fun and appropriate for your class.

Brand New Babies

A center is set up for students to clothe, feed, and nurture baby dolls. We will think about Jesus as an eight-day-old baby and how people already knew he was the one they had waited for.

Building the Temple

Provide blocks for students to build their own temples. In class, we will talk about how Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple for the special occasion of his naming and presentation to God.

Coming to the Temple

Set up a coloring table with the outline of a temple (Activity Sheet #3-16.A) and crayons for students to use. In class, we will talk about how Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple for the special occasion of his naming and presentation to God.

Teaching and Learning

Set up an area with Bibles and other books, paper and crayons, and a white board and markers. Allow students to take turns being the teacher. Jesus stayed behind in the temple to learn more about God from teachers.

Into the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Just Like Jesus

We come to learn about God.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-16.A
- † Baby doll
- † Markers or crayons

Before class:

1. Complete one temple drawing (Activity Sheet #3-16.A) from the “Coming to the Temple” story center to use as a prop.

During class:

1. Cradle a baby doll for the students to see. **We are going to pretend this baby is Jesus. Today, Jesus is eight days old. Have you ever seen an eight-day-old baby?** *[Let students share their experiences.]*
2. **When Jesus was eight days old, Mary and Joseph took him here:** Hold up picture of temple. **The temple, to many Jewish people, was a little like this church building is to us Christians. This first visit to the temple was very important for Jesus and his family. This is when his name was given to him, and when Jesus’ mom and dad promised to teach him about God.**
3. **Now, I know you are older than eight days old, right?** *[Give students a chance to share how old they are.]* **Just like Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, your parents brought you here today. Why do you think they did that?** *[Students’ answers will vary.]*
4. **I bet you and baby Jesus have something in common: your parents want you to learn about God, too! And that is what we are here to do!**



I Love to Learn (5 minutes)

Talk about learning.

You will need:

- † Bibles and other books
- † White board and markers
- † Paper
- † Markers or crayons

During class:

1. **Today we are hearing a story about learning. When he was about twelve years old, Jesus stayed at the temple in Jerusalem to learn more about God. The temple was a little like our church, and there were many wise men there that could teach him.**
2. **How many of you are in school? What is school like? Who would like to show us what a teacher does?** Allow students to take turns demonstrating “teaching” using the elements provided. Ask them to share their favorite things about school.
3. **Jesus’ teachers did not have a white board or crayons, and their classroom did not look like ours. But just like each of you, Jesus was excited to learn more about God! Let’s learn more about God and Jesus.**

Bible Nuts and Bolts (1st-2nd; 10 minutes)

Whos Who in the Bible

Learning about key Jewish religious leaders.

You will need:

- † Bible
- † Bookmark
- † Picture of a lamb or a stuffed lamb
- † Robe or pastoral garment

Before class:

1. Mark the first five books of the Bible with the bookmark (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).

During class:

1. In this activity, students will become more familiar with key religious leaders in the Bible. Gather the group and place the supplies in the middle of the group of students.
2. **We have people who help us learn more about the Bible. Some people have a title before their name. Can you name some of those special titles?** [*Pastor, Sunday school teacher, Mom, Dad, etc.*] **We also hear about people like this in the Bible, but they had different names like priest, scribe, Pharisee, and Sadducee.**
3. **We have a collection of items here. What do you see?**
4. Hold up the picture of a lamb and say: **Priests led worship in the temple by making sacrifices and other offerings. Some offerings were animals like this lamb. Important priests were called chief priests, and the leader of them all was called the high priest.**
5. Hold up and Bible and say: **Scribes were well educated and had the responsibility of making copies of writings like the Bible. This was a long time before printers and copy machines.**
6. Open the Bible that is marked Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy and say: **Some of these leaders, especially the scribes, were in a group called Pharisees. They believed that the most important thing to do was to follow the rules in the Torah. The Torah is the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These books gave the Jewish people the rules about how to live. The Pharisees made sure people were following the rules.**

7. Hold up the robe or pastoral garment and say: **Some leaders, especially the priests, were a part of a group called Sadducees. They believed that the most important thing to do was to worship at the temple.**
8. **We often hear about people with these kinds of names in the Bible such as a chief priest or Pharisee. Knowing more about them can help us understand what is going on when Jesus talks with them in other Bible stories.**

Learning the Story (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Who Is This Kid? (Part 1)

The infant Jesus is recognized by the prophets.

You will need:

- † Bible
- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

Before class:

1. Get a large enough piece of mural paper that you will be able to trace a child on it.

During class:

1. **As we make our way through this unit, we are going to be learning about Jesus, his life, and his teachings. We are going to start a visual project today. We will keep adding to it and it will help us to get a good picture of Jesus.**
2. Have one student lay down on the craft paper to get a basic human form traced onto the paper. Then, have students sit around the paper (or papers if you are working in small groups) with markers and Bibles.
3. **As we hear today's story, think about what you learn about Jesus. We'll take breaks for you to put some information on the poster.**
4. **Our first story is from Luke 2:21-38. Jesus is just eight days old. Mary and Joseph are Jewish, and they are going to make sure that they follow the laws of the Jewish faith. What do we learn about Jesus from this?** [*He is being raised by Jewish parents who will make sure that he learns about the faith.*] Have the students add words or pictures to share this information.
5. **Mary and Joseph take baby Jesus to the temple to be named and presented to God. This is what their faith told them to do. When they came into the temple, a prophet recognized the tiny baby Jesus as the Messiah! The prophet, Simeon, rejoiced. He was so happy. What do we learn about Jesus from this?** [*Jesus is the Messiah.*] Have the students add words or pictures to share this information on the poster.
6. **Another prophet, Anna, also sees Jesus and knows that he is the Messiah. She is so happy that she wanted to tell everyone about Jesus, she knows he offers her people hope. What do we learn about Jesus from this?** [*Jesus brings hope to the people.*] Have the students add words or pictures to share this information on the poster.

Who Is This Kid? (Part 2)

The boy Jesus learns in the temple.

You will need:

- † Bible
- † Mural paper
- † Markers and crayons

Before class:

1. Cut multiple pieces of mural paper large enough to trace a child on each.

During class:

1. **We are going to hear a story about a time when Jesus was a boy. While we do that, we will draw pictures of each of you at similar times in your life.** Trace each student onto a large piece of mural paper. Give them crayons and a space to work.
2. Turn to Luke 2:41-52 in the Bible
3. **As we turn to the second half of our story, Jesus is now twelve years old. He has traveled to Jerusalem with his family. On your picture of yourself, draw a picture of a place you have traveled to. It might be your grandpa and grandma's house, a store, church or school, or even some place far away.** Allow students time to draw. If there is time, have them share their responses.
4. **Jesus did not go home with his family. Instead, he stayed behind at the temple. He wanted to learn more about God from some of the wise men there. Who teaches you about God? Draw a picture of that person.** Allow students time to draw. If there is time, have them share their responses.
5. **Jesus stayed behind in the temple, which was a place to worship God, like our church. What is your favorite part of our church, where you feel the closest to God? Draw a picture of that part of our church.** Allow students time to draw. If there is time, have them share their responses.
6. **We come together here at church to learn about God and Jesus. Let's put our drawings aside, and think about ways to tell other people about Jesus, too.**



Living the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Generations of Faith

Passing on the faith.

You will need:

- † Older members of your congregation

Before class:

1. Invite some older members of your congregation to share with your students how they encounter God.

During class:

1. **In today's story, Simeon and Anna greet and recognize Jesus as the Messiah. We know from the story that they are both older people. Throughout their lives, they have stayed committed to their religious community, always looking for God's presence in the world.**
2. **Can you think of any older people in our community? Let's go find some of them and find out about how they learned about God.**
3. Take students to talk with elderly members of your congregation, either the ones you have prearranged, or any who are willing to converse. Guide the students through their conversations with them. Some sample questions might be: **Did you go to Sunday school? Where did you first learn about God? Where do you see God in the world today?**



Worshipping Across Generations (10 minutes)

Worship with older members.

You will need:

- † Guests from Generations of Faith Activity

Before class:

1. Invite the same or different older members to worship together with your class.

During class:

1. **We learned about who told our new friends about Jesus. Now we are going to spend some time worshipping Jesus together.**
2. Use songs that both generations know. Invite students and adults to share some of their favorite stories. Pray together.
3. **It is important that we share the story of Jesus together, and that we spend time worshipping together. Just like Jesus learned from the teachers in the temple, we can also learn from people who are older than us.**

Singing the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

God, I Want to Learn

Sing a piggyback song to the tune of “Frere Jacques.”

God, I want to
learn about you
every day, every way
tell me all your stories,
fill me with your glory,
help me stay, never stray.

Additional Activities

Scroll Snack (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Make a snack that reminds us of how Jesus learned.

You will need:

- † Long, flat fruit snacks
- † Straight pretzel rods
- † Napkins

Before class:

1. Before serving any food, always check with participants or caregivers for students who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

During class:

1. **When Jesus was in the temple learning more about God, his teachers would not have had books like we have today. They would have used something called a scroll. A scroll is a long piece of parchment, or paper, that is rolled up.**
2. **We can make a snack that looks like a scroll.** Give each student at least two pretzels and one length of fruit. Show them how to roll the fruit snack around the pretzels to make a scroll.
3. **Before we eat our snack, let's pretend that we are reading about God. What does your scroll say about God and God's love for us?** Invite students to share their thoughts.

Good News, People! (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Create a banner to share the good news.

You will need:

- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

Before class:

1. Ask about a good place for you to hang a large sign for maximum visibility.

During class:

1. **As soon as the prophet Anna met Jesus, she began to praise God and share the good news of Jesus with the community.**
2. **We are also supposed to share the good news, so today we are going to make a large poster to share the good news of Jesus with our community!**
3. Put mural paper in a place easily accessible by all the students. You could work together to decide on a phrase you would like to write across the banner (Jesus is the Messiah, etc.), and then have the students decorate it.
4. Invite the students to help you display it somewhere highly visible in your church building.

Prophet, Prophet, He Is Here! (PK-2nd; 10 minutes)

Prophets proclaim the good news and then the Messiah comes.

You will need:

† Nothing

During class:

1. This is a simple variation on “Duck, Duck, Goose.”
2. Students use “prophet” for “duck,” and “He is here!” for “goose”.
3. **In this game, everyone listens carefully to what the leader has to say, waiting anxiously for what they are confident is coming. As people waited for the Messiah, they listened carefully and anxiously to the prophets, and were so excited to hear “He is here!”**

It Is a New Year! (1st-2nd; 5 minutes)

Let's make some plans.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-16.B
- † Pens or pencils
- † Envelopes

Before class:

1. Make one copy of Activity Sheet #3-16.B for each student.

During class:

1. **Just as we are starting a new season in the church, we are starting a new year. The new year is often a time when we think about what things we want to try to do.**
2. **I am passing out a sheet with some questions for you to think about. You will write or draw your answer on the paper. When we are all done, we will seal them into these envelopes and you can take them home to open in a year, and see if you've accomplished your goals.**
3. Distribute the Activity Sheets, pens or pencils, and envelopes. Have students write instructions to themselves on the outside of the envelope so they remember not to open it for a year. Help those who need it.

Bible Book (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Optional ongoing activity.

You will need:

- † Bible Book page (found at end of lesson)
- † Cardstock or plain paper
- † Three-hole punch
- † Pens or pencils
- † Markers or crayons
- † Optional: three-ring binders, hole punch

Before class:

1. Make copies of this week's Bible Book page on cardstock or copy paper for each student.

During class:

1. Pass out Bible Book pages.
2. Read the bottom of the Bible Book page aloud, reminding students of what they learned in the lesson.
3. Have them put their names on their pages, and draw a picture of something they particularly liked or remember from story in the middle of the page.
4. Optional: Collect and three-hole punch the pages, and put them in individual binders for each student to be kept at church until the end of the year. If you wish, you can investigate other options for binding the Bible books through a local print shop at the end of the year instead of using a three-ring binder.

Sending the Story (PK-2nd; 5 minutes)

Students will gather in a circle. Go around the circle and insert their name in the following:
[Name], **named and claimed, you are a beloved child of God!**

Prayer

Before ending class, make a point to come together to pray.

For #3.16A:

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

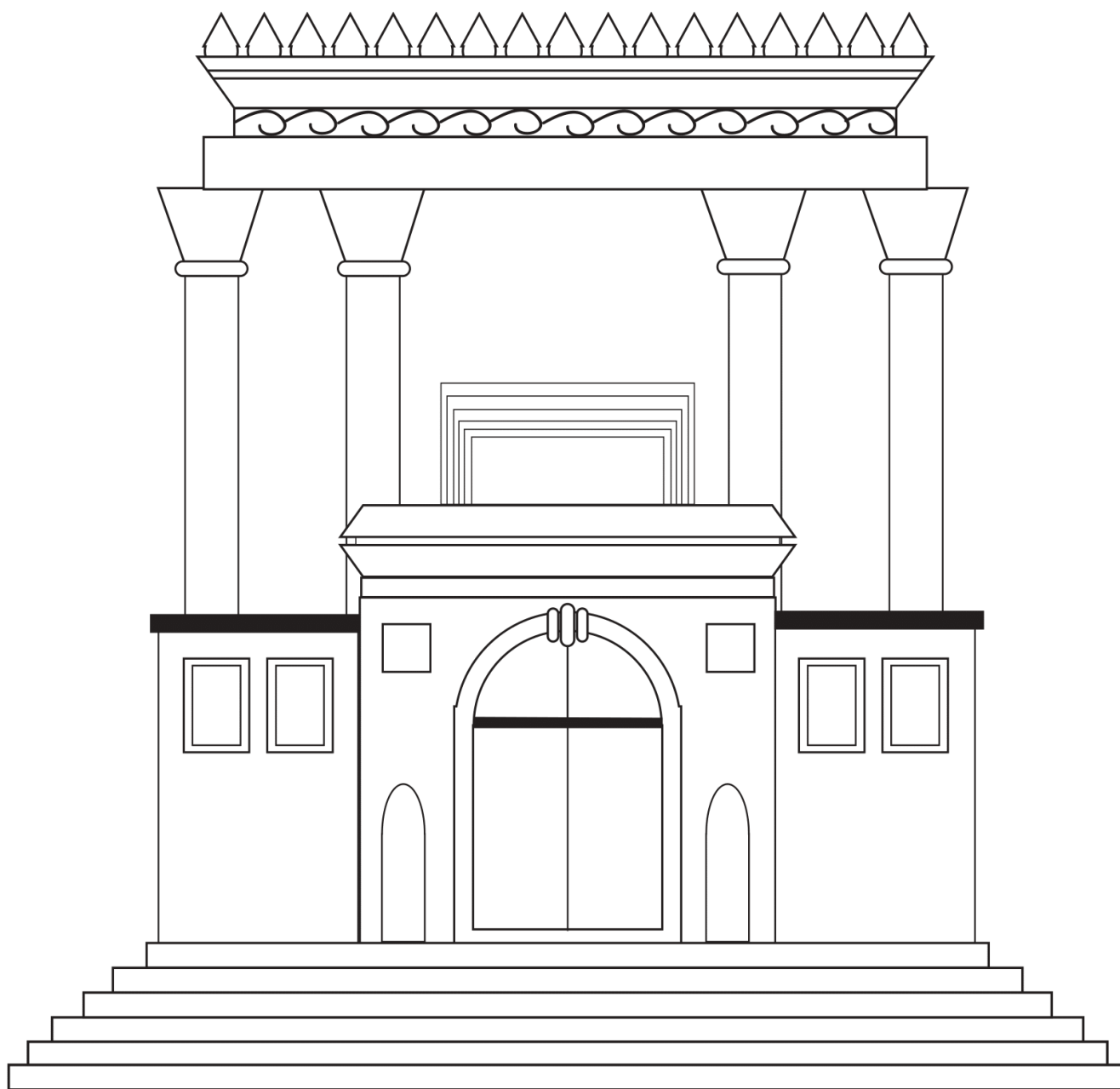
Thank you for giving us this place where we hear the good news that you are in our lives and in the world! Help us to share this good news with the world by our words and our actions. Amen.

For #3.16B:

God, help us to remember that we are each beloved. Help us to remember that you are revealed through our love. Thank you for this community that helps us to grow in your love. Amen.

Coming to the Temple

Explore a coloring station about the temple.



It Is a New Year

Let's make some plans.

Today's date is: _____

Today, I am _____ years old.

By one year from today, here are three things I plan to do:

This is one thing about myself that I hope will still be the same:

This is one thing about myself that I hope will be different:

Whatever happens in this year, I know that I am a beloved child of God, and always will be!

Signature

Date

Jesus in the Temple

Luke 2:21-38; Luke 2:41-52

The Point:

At the temple, Jesus is announced as the savior of the world.



The Story @ Home

PK-2nd

Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story

Narrative Lectionary, Year 3 (2020-2021)

Lesson #3-16

Luke 2:21-38; Luke 2:41-52

Last Week

Last week, we heard the traditional story of the birth of Jesus, the promised Messiah (Luke 2:1-20).

This Week

This week tells two stories of Jesus at the temple: one when he is brought by his parents and encounters Simeon and Anna, and the second as an older child learning from his elders (Luke 2:21-38; Luke 2:41-52).

Story Summary

Mary and Joseph take the infant Jesus to the temple. When they arrive, the prophet Simeon greets them. Simeon had been told that he would see the Messiah before his death. He immediately recognizes and proclaims Jesus as the Messiah. Simeon is now ready to die. Another prophet, Anna, recognizes Jesus and begins to share the good news with the community. Twelve years later, Jesus reveals his deep connection with God by staying behind to study at the temple, but it is more than his frantic parents are able to understand.

Practice: Worship

We look at worship as a powerful connection point for a community of faith. In worship, we have rituals that unite us and reinforce us. More importantly, in worship we have opportunities to encounter God together. As a family, take time to worship together, in your church or in your home.

The Point

At the temple, Jesus is announced as the savior of the world.

Bible Nuts & Bolts

Jewish Religious Leaders

When we know more about each type of religious leader in the Bible, we can better understand what is going on when Jesus encounters them. Priests led worship in the temple by making sacrifices and other offerings. Scribes were well educated and made copies of holy scrolls like the Torah. These leaders generally belonged to one of two groups. The Pharisees believed that the most important thing to do was to follow the Law found in the first five books of the Bible. The Sadducees believed it was more important to worship in the temple.

Next Week

Jesus encounters his cousin, John the Baptist, and Jesus' public ministry begins (Luke 3:1-22).

Family Discussions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. Help your child to imagine what it would have been like to be the people contained in the stories. What is God's message to them—and to us?

- ✚ Talk with your child about how you picked out their name. How do names connect us as a family?
- ✚ Anna was so excited to share the good news of Jesus. When have you been so excited about something that you went right out and shared it with other people?
- ✚ Share stories about your child's baptism day. What did your family/congregation do to celebrate that day?

Family Devotions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions: Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together. Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today? Read aloud from the Daily Readings below. Discuss the questions following each. End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotion time. (Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with YOUR household's context and patterns. What works best for you?)

Sunday—Read Luke 2:21-38

Jesus is brought to the temple at eight days old to be circumcised and named. The prophets Simeon and Anna recognize him as the Messiah. Make and decorate name cards for each family member to use at family meals.

Monday—Read John 1:14-18

Jesus came to earth as a real, human infant. In what ways do you see "Jesus with skin on" in your midst?

Tuesday—Read Psalm 23

These words are common during times of mourning, such as at funerals. What phrases do you find the most comforting?

Wednesday—Read Jeremiah 23:1-4

The Lord promises to return the flock who have been scattered. Gather a number of cotton balls. Scatter them by spreading them around, and then gather them again as you listen to this reading.

Thursday—Read Matthew 2:1-12

If you have a nativity scene in your home, read this story together near it. If you do not, search for images of the wise men, or magi, online.

Friday—Read Matthew 2:13-15

As you read this story about Mary and Joseph fleeing with the baby Jesus, "flee" to a different room and hide under a blanket. Use a flashlight to read as you huddle together in hiding.

Saturday—Read Luke 2:39-40

Mary and Joseph returned with Jesus to their hometown of Nazareth. Have a little homecoming celebration that they are home.

Family Discussions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. Help your child to imagine what it would have been like to be the people contained in the stories. What is God's message to them—and to us?

- ✚ Talk with your child about how you picked out their name. How do names connect us as a family?
- ✚ Anna was so excited to share the good news of Jesus. When have you been so excited about something that you went right out and shared it with other people?
- ✚ Share stories about your child's baptism day. What did your family/congregation do to celebrate that day?

Family Devotions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions: Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together. Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today? Read aloud from the Daily Readings below. Discuss the questions following each. End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotion time. (Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with YOUR household's context and patterns. What works best for you?)

Sunday—Read Luke 2:41-52

In Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover, twelve-year-old Jesus gets separated from his parents and stays behind in Jerusalem. Do research together about the Festival of Passover. Try out some traditional Passover food.

Monday—Read Genesis 17:9-14

This Scripture gives the explanation of circumcision as a sign of the covenant between Abraham, his descendants, and God. Sing and do the actions for the song "Father Abraham."

Tuesday—Read Exodus 13:1-2

In this Scripture, the Lord commands Moses to consecrate the firstborn male of each family. We are all a part of God's family. Say a prayer of thanks for each member of your family.

Wednesday—Read Leviticus 26:3-6

God promises peace to all the land. Pray together for people or situations that are in need of peace.

Thursday—Read Leviticus 26:7-13

The Lord promises to be with the people of Israel, to keep them safe and provide for them. Go on a walk with your family. Take time to notice the details of God's creation.

Friday—Read Malachi 4:4-6

Make a heart shape with your hands. "Pass" the heart around to each member of your family and share one thing that you love about that person.

Saturday—Read Isaiah 62:10-12

Use blocks or train or car tracks to build a road together as you read this passage.