



Deep Friendship

Goal: To name ways we can be loyal in friendships.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In 1 Samuel 18–20

Sometimes friendships point us to deep grace that accepts us as we are, even when we feel undeserving of such a blessing. We respond in deep gratitude since we have been given a great gift.

The friendship of David and King Saul's son, Jonathan, was a meaningful expression of caring friendship. Through all the difficulties David encountered in his relationship with Saul, Jonathan remained constant and loyal to David, even when David was an outlaw and hunted by Saul.

When their friendship was established, we read that "Jonathan thought as much of David as he did of himself" (18:1) and "Jonathan liked David so much that they promised to always be loyal friends" (18:3). Jonathan warned David when Saul sought to kill him because Saul feared David was trying to take over Saul's throne (19:1–3). Jonathan interceded with Saul and brought David and Saul together (19:4–8). But further attempts at reconciliation failed. When Saul threw a sword at Jonathan, he knew his father still wanted to kill David (20:33). Jonathan warned David and they parted, weeping (20:41). This was a friendship that remained loyal and faithful throughout many troubles.

This deep friendship was a sign of God's grace for which Jonathan and David were grateful.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

The story of David's friendship with Jonathan is a good follow-up to last week's story about an adversarial relationship with Goliath. As they hear the story of David and Jonathan, they can listen for the kinds of things they did that made this a good friendship. Children can be invited to talk with people during the week about friends they have and bring back stories to share. This could provide a nice connection with the story for next week about Abigail who acted like a friend to David.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

As you tell the story of David's friendship with Jonathan, be aware of the children in your group. As you invite them to tell stories about their friends, be sensitive to the quieter more introverted children, making sure there is space for all to share. Some children may not have as many friends as others. Remind them it's not about competition. Jonathan stayed friends with David through some very difficult situations with Saul. This story invites children to consider whom they know who might need them to be a friend. It's also good to help them remember to look around people at church and invite them to be friends with an older adult or someone with special needs.

*Dear God, help me to know that you are my friend.
Help me to be a good friend too. Amen.*



Supplies

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

audio recordings
(see p. vii)

rock photos 1, 2, and 3
cut from **SCM 20**

copies of **Grace Notes**
(**GN 1**)

Stories, Colors & More
(**SCM**) **7, 20, 23, 30, 35,**
38–41

Music & Melodies (**MM**)
2017–2018

Responding

Praying

craft sticks, markers

Offering

2"-wide, clear plastic
packing tape, copies
of **GN 2**

Bonus Activity

copies of **GN 3**

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Post the visual schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM 40–41** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Offering God’s Grace” requires more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing



Greet the children by name and with the words, “The grace of Christ be with you.” Prompt the children to respond with the same words.

Invite children to help prepare the worship space. Offer a candle, a Bible, and rocks 1, 2, and 3 cut from **SCM 20**. Also include **SCM 23**.

Bookmark 1 Samuel 18 and place the Bible on the table.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s Responding in Gratitude activities and suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing.

Provide copies of **GN 1** to children and encourage them to interact as they play “Get to Know Your Friends Bingo.” Adjust instructions for the size of your group. A smaller group may have a certain amount of time for children to secure as many initials as possible; a larger group may be asked to play until someone can “bingo!” Make sure to ask that they speak to and get initials from each child in the group before doubling up and asking a friend to initial twice.

After playing, ask:

- ▼ What interesting things did you learn about your friends here that you didn’t know before?
- ▼ How do friends get to know one another?

Comment that today’s Bible story is about two very best friends.

Singing

Gather the group together in the worship space. Play “For the Beauty of the Earth”—**MM 2**; **SCM 30**—and sing along.

Praying

Turn on the candle. Invite children to close their eyes and breathe deeply. Encourage them to imagine God as their friend, who loves them deeply.

Offer this prayer:

God thank you for the grace of your son, Jesus, who calls us “friend.” Show us how to be faithful friends to others. Amen.



Preparing to Hear the Story C L

Call attention to **SCM 23**. Work as a group to make up a story about the friendship of the people pictured. Sit in a circle and start the story with a few sentences about these two friends, then ask the person to your left to add to the story until you say “pass;” the person to their left will pick it up and so on around the circle. Let each child add anywhere from a few words to a few sentences to the story. Upon completion, ask a couple of follow-up questions about the story they created.

Recall together what you have learned about David over the last two weeks. Use the rocks from the worship table to help. Offer that today’s rock shows a symbol of two friends.



Hearing the Story L

Have a child open the Bible to 1 Samuel 18—20 and place the open Bible on the worship table. Comment that this story stretches over several chapters.

Read **SCM 7** or ask a volunteer to read. Use your voice, expressions, tone of voice, and feelings to make the story as engaging as you can.

Conclude the reading by saying, “Word of wisdom, word of grace,” and prompt the children to say, “Thanks be to God.”

Reflecting on God’s Grace C L

Just as you told a friendship story during “Preparing to Hear the Story,” retell this story in the same way. You may begin with a sentence to get children started, and then ask the child to your right to add what they remember. Each time you say, “pass,” continue around the circle allowing children to fill in details of the story they just heard.

Praise them for working together to retell the story of David and his friend, Jonathan.

Wonder together:

- ▼ I wonder, “Why did Jonathan keep his promise of friendship to David even though his father, King Saul, was against it?”
- ▼ I wonder, “Was Jonathan ever afraid to stand up to his father?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What kinds of things did David and Jonathan talk about?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What is most important about having a friend; about being a friend?”

Singing

Give God an offering of music. Play and sing together “God Loves You, and God Loves Me”—**MM 27; SCM 35**. Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

Claiming God's Grace

Lead children in conversation about what makes a faithful friend. Consider qualities that make a good and faithful friend. Invite stories about experiences children have with faithful friends; share your own experiences too.

Comment that David and Jonathan's friendship was like a chain that stayed connected and could not be broken.

Cut strips from construction paper and invite children to write the qualities of a faithful friend, names of faithful friends, or examples of strong friendships they have witnessed (for example, mom and her best friend, etc.). Write one per strip and use the strips to create a paper chain.

Offer a prayer of thanks over the chain for God's gracious gift of faithful friends; work together to hang the chain in your space and leave it through the remainder of the David stories this quarter.

Praying God's Grace

Ask:

- ▼ Have you ever been worried about a friend?
- ▼ How can we faithfully help friends when we are worried about them?

Write "Thanks," "Please," and "Awesome" on newsprint. Comment that one way of being a faithful friend is to pray for our friends. And one way of offering a faithful prayer could be to offer "Thanks" for a friend, to ask God to "Please" be with them or help them in a certain way, and to ask God to help you be an "Awesome" friend, too.

Provide 3 craft sticks and a marker for each child. Have them write one of the words on each of the sticks.

Lead your group by asking them to hold each stick and in turn, offer a prayer to God of "Thanks" for a friend, "Please" help this friend, or help me be an "Awesome" friend.

Encourage children to commit to praying this "Thanks, Please, Awesome!" prayer each day this week.



Offering God's Grace

L LG

In today's story, the arrows that Jonathan shot were a sign of his friendship to David. Wonder together:

- I wonder, "What are some of the happiest times you have shared with friends?"
- I wonder, "What is important about having friends?"
- I wonder, "Why would it be important to God for us to have friends?"

Invite the children to think of a friend and make a friendship bracelet to share with them. Distribute copies of **GN 2**, markers, and scissors. Invite the children to write or draw a message to their friend on one of the arrows.

When they have finished, give them 2 strips of the packing tape that are long enough to cover the arrow (about 10.5"). Have the children carefully place the tape over the design on the front and the back of the paper, then cut the arrow out. Show them how to fold the arrow with end points together so they can cut the dotted line. It is important to not cut past the end of the line, so you may need to help younger children.

To wear the bracelet, bring the arrow point around to the tail end and push the point up through the slit and gently work it through until it catches. If time allows, use the other arrows for other friends or for themselves.

Bonus Activity

LD

David and Jonathan worked out a secret code that Jonathan could use to warn David. Hand out Bibles and invite a volunteer to read more about it in 1 Samuel 20:19-22 and 35-42. Have you ever worked out a secret code?

Invite children to decode the message in the "Codes of Friendship" activity on **GN 3**. Ask children to write or draw messages of greeting or caring to others in your group on the blank space of **GN 3**. Share the messages when all have completed the activity.

Answer: Run away, my friend, for Saul is after you.



Ages 8-10

Deep Friendship

October 15, 2017



LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Invite the children to gather and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Ask them to consider people they know who might need a faithful friend. Imagine ways they can each be a faithful friend this week.

Pray this echo prayer together, prompting the children and giving them the chance to speak aloud during the prayer:

Ask parents and caregivers for their e-mail addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit gracesightings.org.

God we are grateful for faithful friends.

Thank you for those who have been a faithful friend to me . . .

(invite children to speak those names)

God help me to be a faithful friend to . . .

(invite children to speak those names)

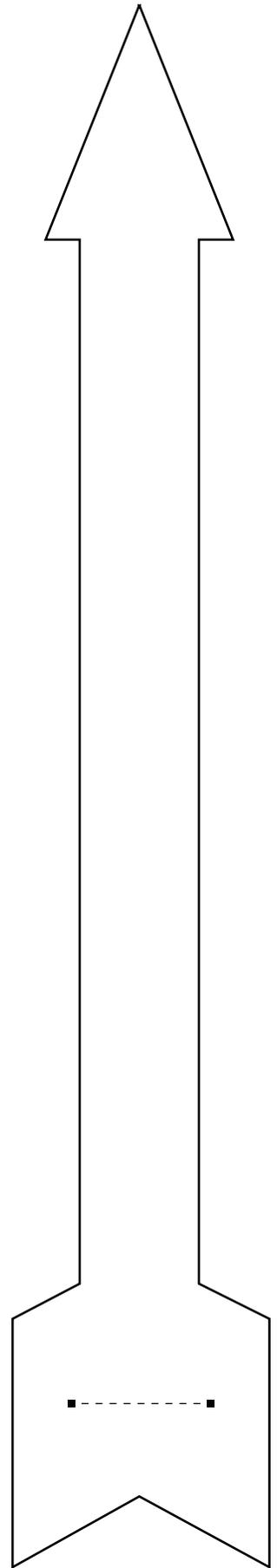
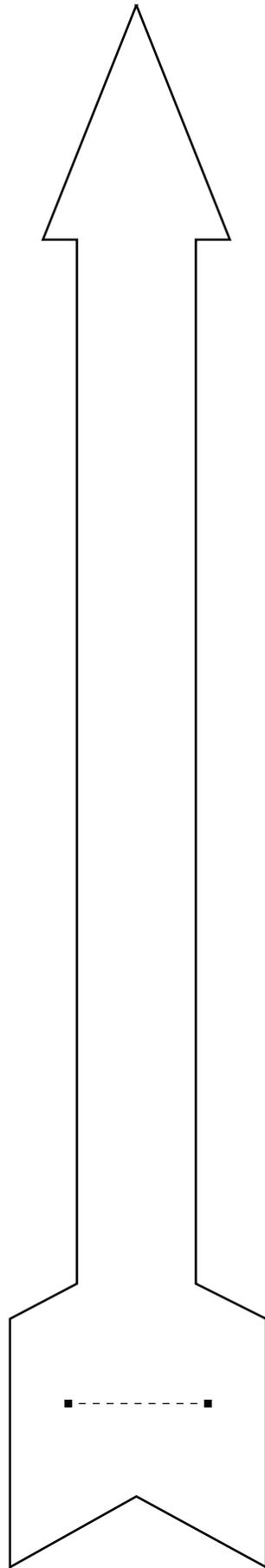
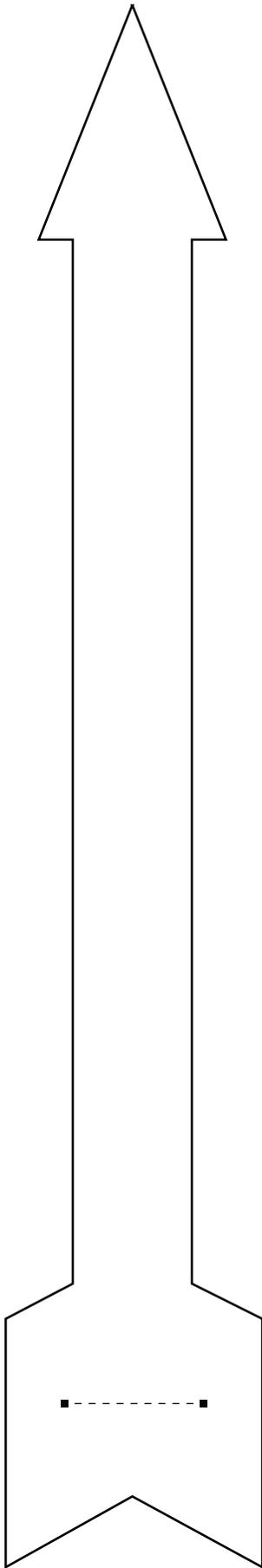
Thank you for the grace of friendships. Amen.

Send the children with the following: Go in peace to be a good friend to others.

Get to Know Your Friends

B I N G O

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| is the oldest child in their house | likes superheroes | likes to eat salad | can ride a bike | has a birthday this month |
| was born in the same month as you | can recite a Bible verse from memory | enjoys video games | plays a sport | lives in a different state than their grandparents |
| has visited another country | has neat handwriting | FREE | can count to 10 in Spanish | has pierced ears |
| shares a bedroom with a sibling | moved here from another town | doesn't like pizza | has been in a wedding | has a pet |
| likes to play outside | can tell you something about David from the Bible | enjoys reading books | likes to ride horses | is the youngest child in their house |



KEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M |
| Z | Y | X | W | V | U | T | S | R | Q | P | O | N |
| N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| M | L | K | J | I | H | G | F | E | D | C | B | A |

IFM ZDZB, NB UIRVMW, ULI HZFO RH ZUGVI BLF

