



## David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem

**Goal:** To celebrate God's presence as the people did when David returned the ark.

### RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

#### . . . In 2 Samuel 6:12b-15, 17-19

The ark of the Lord ("chest" CEB) represented the presence of God with the people of Israel. It was an important sacred object because it was a visible sign or symbol that the God who had delivered the people from Egypt was continually present now in the community of faith.

King David brought the ark to Jerusalem, David's city. This led to great rejoicing for the people and the king. David sacrificed an ox and a choice cow. David was "dancing for the LORD with all his might, but he wore only a linen cloth. He and everyone else were celebrating by shouting and blowing horns while the chest was being carried along" (vv. 13-15).

The whole community was celebrating the coming of the ark and what it meant to the people of faith. Exuberant joy led to festive celebrations. Their faith was their source of joy. King David offered a sacrifice and then "he blessed the people in the name of the LORD All-Powerful. He gave all the men and women in the crowd a small loaf of bread, some meat, and a handful of raisins, and everyone went home" (vv. 18-19). God's grace brought forth the people's gratitude!

#### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

The visible symbol of the ark or covenant box helped David and the Israelites remember God's presence with them. Receiving the ark in Jerusalem was a time of great joy and celebration. Invite the children to name the ways they know God is present with them. Sometimes it happens in worship, or maybe when they see a baptism or participate in communion. Or they might recognize that God is present when they help someone else, extending God's love and care. As children name the places when they know God is present, they could offer a response such as, "Thank you, God!"

#### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

This is a story full of drama, excitement, joy, and even dancing. Children know what it's like to wait for something and then to experience the event, like a birthday party, sharing joy, fun, and food. As children share their own stories, they could also share some of the food like David had—raisins and bread. Consider extending this celebration to the larger church with the children offering food and blessings to church members on their way to worship.

*Dear God, inspire me through today's story to experience the joy and wonder of your presence. Amen.*



## Supplies

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

audio recordings  
(see p. vii)

rocks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6  
cut from **SCM 20, 24**

2 paper plates per child

pea gravel

small dowel rods or  
unsharpened pencils

streamers

**Stories, Colors & More**  
(SCM) **10, 20, 24, 25, 31,**  
**37–41**

**Music & Melodies (MM)**  
**2017–2018**

## Responding

### Claiming

balloon(s)

### Offering

trail mix, ingredients  
collected from  
participants, scoops,  
small resealable plastic  
bags, stickers

### Bonus Activity

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

## 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.

“Claiming God’s Grace” and “Offering God’s Grace” require more prep.

### Welcoming and Preparing

**LG A B M MS**

Welcome each child with, “Grace and peace be with you, (*name*).” Prompt children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite children to help prepare the worship space. Provide a candle, a Bible, the rocks 1–6 cut from **SCM 20** and **24**, and **SCM 25**.

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 paper plates and pea gravel for making tambourines. Place two plates on top of one another, bottom sides out, and staple along the bottom curve leaving a “pocket” opening at the top. Add pea gravel in the “pocket” and continue stapling around the edges to close. Children may use crayons to decorate their tambourines.

Provide each child a small dowel rod, streamers and tape. Encourage them to tear off lengths of streamer and secure them to the dowels in order to create streamers they can wave.

Set the tambourines and streamers aside until Hearing the Story.

### Singing

Gather the group together in the worship space. Play “Shalom Havarim”—**MM 31; SCM 37**—and sing along. Encourage the children to use the tambourines and streamers as they sing the song.

### Praying

Turn on the candle.

Allow for a couple of moments of silence. Invite children to consider and name ways they know God is with them. As children take turns naming God’s presence, lead the rest of the group in shaking their tambourines and saying, “Thank you, God!” in response to each offering.

Conclude by praying,

God of grace we thank you for your presence. Amen.



### Preparing to Hear the Story C L

Ask the children to review the stories of David by making reference to rocks 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Call attention to rock 6 and display **SCM 25**. Wonder together what the images on them may represent. Offer that the pictures are of the “Ark of the Covenant.” Explain that the “ark” was a box, and that it was very important to the Israelites. Inside the ark were the stones on which the Ten Commandments had been carved. For the Israelites, this box was the most holy object they had. It served as a reminder that they were God’s people and that God was present with them. They had carried it and cared for it for years until the Philistines stole it.



### Hearing the Story L

Have a child open the Bible to 2 Samuel 6 and place the open Bible on the worship table.

Read the story from **SCM 10** or ask a volunteer to read. Use your voice and expression to make the story engaging. Encourage children to shake their tambourines and wave their streamers when the story sounds celebratory.

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

### Reflecting on God’s Grace B

Read the story a second time, but this time invite the children to mimic the actions in the story: to form a procession (and wave their streamers), to rejoice and sing, to play their instruments, to leap, jump, twirl, and dance.

Wonder together:

- ▼ I wonder, “What did the scene look like, sound like, and smell like, as David and the Israelites celebrated the return of the covenant box?”
- ▼ I wonder, “Did everyone think it was a good idea for the king to dance and sing in front of his people?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What does this story tell us about David?”
- ▼ I wonder, “How do we celebrate God’s goodness here in our community of faith?”

### Singing

Give God an offering of music. Play and sing together “God Is So Good”—**MM 3; SCM 31**.

Turn off the candle.



## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

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



If you have a child with a latex allergy, consider blowing air into a zip-closure bag and sealing it. This may be a little more difficult to keep in the air.

### Claiming God's Grace



Provide a balloon (or more than one if your group is large or you want to increase the challenge). Have children spread around the room and challenge them to bounce the balloon into the air without letting it hit the ground. Play music as they play. Allow for several minutes of fun and gather the children to sit. Explain that the covenant box was always carried and was never to touch the ground.

Wonder together why the Israelites wouldn't want the ark to touch the ground.

Offer that the community honored the ark, cared for the ark, and celebrated its return together. Wonder about times your church community has celebrated together.

- ▼ I wonder, "What celebrations have you enjoyed?"
- ▼ I wonder, "What made them special?"

Comment how special it is to celebrate God together in our church community.

Explain that one way we celebrate our church family is by taking care of our space. Brainstorm ways your group can care for your church's space. If not mentioned, include: straighten the hymnals, stack chairs, or dust the pews.

Plan to do an act of service to care for your church building.

### Praying God's Grace



Lead the group in prayer. Read the following prayer and at the designated times (/) prompt children to make the motion described in the prayer. Offer that in this way, you are praying with words and with bodies.

Dear God, help us to be people who celebrate your goodness;  
who raise our hands / in praise to you;  
who leap / in excitement over your grace;  
who spin in circles / when we feel full of your love;  
and who are not afraid to clap our hands loud / when we  
witness your presence.

Thank you especially for our church, for whom we jump for  
joy . / Amen.

Imagine together, ways that you can use your body to pray at home too.



### Offering God's Grace

FA

*Before the session, contact each family and ask for a contribution to the trail mix (dried fruit, nuts, seeds, chocolate chips, or small candies).*

Recall that one of the ways David celebrated the return of the ark was to provide food for all the people in Jerusalem. Have children scoop the trail mix or dried fruit into plastic bags. Be mindful of any food allergies. Zip bags closed and decorate them with stickers. Together, practice a simple phrase, such as, “God is with us,” to say when the bags are distributed. Have children hand out bags as people leave the sanctuary or during the fellowship time.

### Bonus Activity

LB

Distribute Bibles and read 2 Samuel 6:1–5 aloud, together, by letting children read one or two verses at a time. Hand out copies of **GN 1**. Have children work individually or in small groups to complete the activity. Use this as an opportunity to recall and retell the story of David dancing before the ark. Wonder together why this was such a special occasion for David, and how it felt for him to be in the presence of God.

(Note: The activity is based on the New Revised Standard Version Bible. If you use another Bible translation, the activity may not work.)

## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG

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

Ask children to take turns naming something they enjoyed doing together today. When everyone has had a turn (including yourself), pray:

Thank you, God, for the grace you share through your people and for all the wonderful times we have to celebrate you.  
Amen.

Ask parents and caregivers for their e-mail addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit [gracesightings.org](http://gracesightings.org).

Have the children stand in a circle. Look to the child on your right and say, “God is with you.” Prompt the child to respond with a high five or fist bump, and the words: “And also with you.” The child to your right then exchanges the message of God’s presence with the child who is on his or her right side. The message moves around the circle, passing from child to child and ending with you. Invite all of the children to join with you in saying, “Praise God! Amen.”



# QUESTIONS AND VERSES

(2 Samuel 7:18-29)

## Adoration/praise

For what actions did David praise God?  
What words did David use to describe God?

## Confession

What do you learn about the kind of person David was from the question he asked God?

## Thanksgiving

What did David give thanks to God for, regarding himself, his family, and his people?

## Covenantal relationship

What were the commitments and responsibilities of each party in this relationship?

## Supplication/asking

What things did David ask of God?

