



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)
- symbolic rocks from the
previous 5 sessions
- rock with small box
resting on 2 poles
drawn on
- 2 paper plates per child
- pea gravel
- small dowel rods or
unsharpened pencils
- streamers

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) 10, 23, 29, 35–39

Music & Melodies (MM)
2017–2018

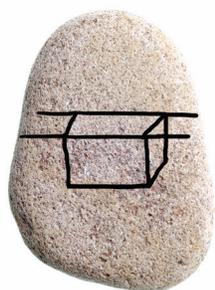
Responding

Celebrating
snack

Claiming
balloon(s)

Offering
spotlight or heavy duty
flashlight

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



Rock 6

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Post the visual schedule shown in **SCM 36–37** to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM 38–39** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Celebrating 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, symbolic rocks from the previous 5 sessions, a river rock with a small box resting on two poles drawn on it (see sidebar illustration), and **SCM 23**.

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 small 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 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 Haverim”—**MM 31; SCM 35**—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,

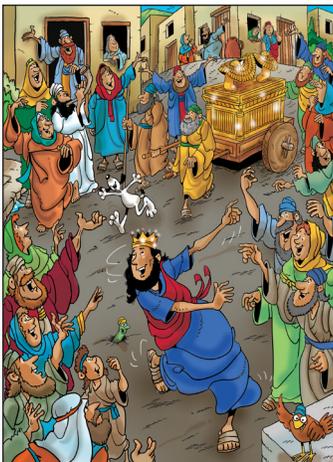
God of grace, we thank you for your presence. Amen.



Preparing to Hear the Story C L

Ask the children to review the stories of David by making reference to the symbolic rocks from the past few sessions.

Call attention to **SCM 23** and to today's new rock. 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 God was present with them. They had carried it and cared for it for years until the Philistines stole it.



Hearing the Story C 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 children to say, "Thanks be to God."

Reflecting on God's Grace

Read the story a second time, but this time invite 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, even 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 29**.

Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

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



Celebrating God's Grace



Reread the last two paragraphs on **SCM 10**. Offer that David led his people in celebrating God with a huge party that included dancing and food.

Play "Freeze Dance." Instruct children to dance freestyle to the music; but that when you pause the music, they are to freeze in whatever pose they are striking at the time. Allow for several minutes of play, then invite the group to share a snack together. Offer thanks to God for the snack and the friends to share it with. As children eat, let them talk and enjoy being together.

Wonder together:

- ▼ I wonder, "How long did David's party last?"
- ▼ I wonder, "What did God think of the party?"
- ▼ I wonder, "Is dancing and sharing food to celebrate God's grace worship?"

Praying God's Grace

Lead the group in prayer. Read the following prayer, and at the designated times (/), prompt the 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 for our church for whom we jump for joy. / Amen.

Repeat the prayer several times, until the children don't need prompting for the motions, and so they can repeat the prayer at home. Imagine together, ways you can use your body to pray at home too.



Offering God's Grace



Invite children to make a shadow picture of David and others dancing as they celebrated. Hang a piece of mural paper on the wall. Have a few volunteers stand in front of the paper in “dancing poses.” Ask children to hold the poses as another volunteer shines a light on the scene. Ensure that children do not look directly at the light. Move the light until you can see the shadow of the “dancers.” Ask the children to use crayons to trace the shadow shapes onto the paper. Remove the mural paper from the wall and ask them to color in the scene. Title the mural “We Celebrate God’s Grace.” Find a place in your church where the mural could be hung as an offering for others to remind them that the worshiping community gathers to celebrate God’s grace.

Bonus Activity

Hand out copies of **GN 1** and make **SCM 10** available to the children. Have the children work individually or in small groups to complete the activity. Invite the children to look at each row of items and ask what the items may have in common. Then ask them to put an X through the item in each row that is least like the others. Finally, ask them to circle any of the items that may have been a part of today’s story. Allow time to color the page while you wonder together about what these items may have contributed to the events in the story. Accept all answers.

LOVING AND SERVING GOD



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

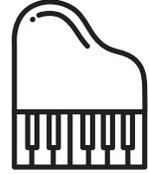
Ask children to take turns naming something they enjoyed doing together today. When everyone has had a turn (including yourself), pray:

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

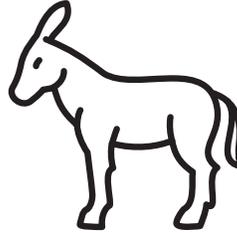
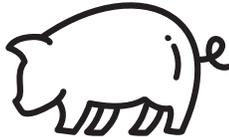
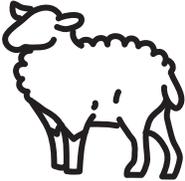
Have the children stand in a circle. Look to the child on your right and say, “God is with you.” Prompt the child to respond with a high five or fist bump, and the words, “And also with you.” The child to your right then exchanges the message of God’s presence with the child who is on his or her right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

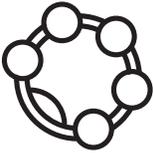
1



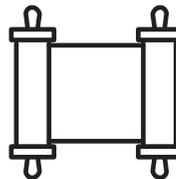
2



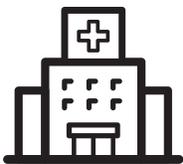
3



4



5



6

