

September

I See God's Love at Church

Jesus Came to Church

(See Luke 2:22-38.)

"I like to come to church."

(See Psalm 122:1.)



This month you will help each child:

- feel secure and comfortable at church as you demonstrate God's love to the child;
- begin to associate God and Jesus with loving people and enjoyable activities.

Devotional

As you watch and learn from the babies and toddlers you teach, notice how anxious each one is for food to satisfy the pangs of hunger. No substitute will do! You may try bouncing and tickling, rocking and caressing, but a little one's crying will not stop until physical hunger is satisfied. This is one time when the child knows exactly what he or she needs.

Read 1 Peter 2:1-3. The apostle Peter urges us to have the same single-minded drive in satisfying our spiritual needs. Unfortunately, we often allow ourselves to be sidetracked. We try a wide variety of ways to find fulfillment or to eliminate problems. But our spiritual hunger continues, often making us as cranky as a hungry baby! Peter tells us that only the pure milk of the word (see verse 2) can nourish the deepest needs of the human soul. Take time to be fed. Recognize the symptoms of your need and satisfy that hunger!

As a teacher, the gentle care you provide young children introduces them to the nurture and love of the people who love God and His Son, the Lord Jesus. Your tasks may seem to involve only the physical care of changing, feeding, playing, cuddling and singing. However, those actions must be bathed in the warmth of Jesus' love. Such love will radiate from you as you take time each day to "taste" the goodness of the Lord (see Psalm 34:8). Just as babies single-mindedly demand to be fed, demand "time out" from your busy schedule to feed your soul from God's abundant resources.



During the month of September, display this poster at child's eye level. Talk about the way in which the children in the poster are experiencing God's love at church by playing with toys and friends.

I See God's Love at Church

Do It!

I Come In

I come in,
there's a smile on my face.
I come in,
my friends are in this place.
I come in,
my friends say "hi" to me.
I'm in church,
what a happy place to be!



Sing It!

It's Fun to Go to Church

(Tune: "Farmer in the Dell")

It's fun to go to church!
It's fun to go to church!
With all the other boys and girls
It's fun to go to church!

Tell It!

Jesus Came to Church

When Jesus was a baby,
His parents brought Him to church.

People at church were
glad to see baby Jesus.

They talked to Him.

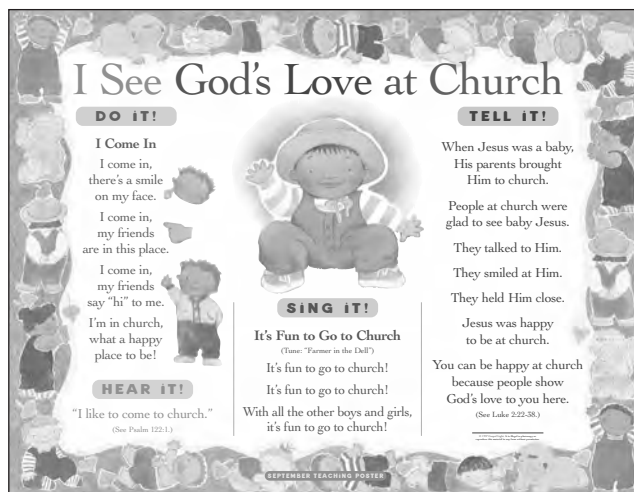
They smiled at Him.

They held Him close.

Jesus was happy to be at church.

You can be happy at church
Because people show God's
love to you here.

(See Luke 2:22-38.)



Display this poster at teacher's eye level in your nursery. Tell the Bible story, sing the song, do the finger play and repeat the Bible verse to one or more interested children.

Activities with Babies

Choose one or more of these learning activities to provide for babies during a session. Consider your facility, the number of babies and teachers and the supplies you have available as you plan which activities you will use. Continue the activity as long as the child is interested. For more information on using this curriculum, see "Why Use Curriculum?" on page 6.

Active Play

Who's in the Mirror?

Collect

Unbreakable hand mirror

Do

Hold a hand mirror so the child can see his or her face, then hands. Talk about and gently touch each part of the child's face while child looks in the mirror.

Say

Becca, God made your nose. God made you. God loves you!

I'm glad you came to church today. Thank You, God, for Becca.

Movement

What a Kick!

Collect

One or more washable stuffed animals

Do

Hold a pillow or soft toy above the baby's feet for the baby to kick.

Say

God loves you and He made your legs. It's fun to kick and play!

You play at home and you play when you go to church.



Music

Shakers

Collect

I Love to Sing! CD and player

Toy that makes noise when moved or a rhythm instrument such as a shaker

Do

Shake the toy or instrument, saying "Shake, shake, shake."

Let the baby try shaking the toy.

Play "A Happy Place" while you are playing with the baby. Shake one of the toys or instruments to the rhythm of the music.

Say

I'm glad you are happy.

God loves you.

My Church Song

Collect

I Love to Sing! CD and player

Do

Play and/or sing "Together" to babies as you rock, feed or play with them.

Say

Adriana, I'm so glad you are here today. We're glad to be at church with our friends.

God loves you.

Tip

Babies like to hear the same song over and over.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Activities with Babies

Pictures and Books

Families at Church

Collect

September Bible Story Picture from *I Love to Look!* or *Nursery Posters*

One or more sturdy books picturing families

Do

Hold a baby while looking at the pictures. If baby is interested, talk about families coming to church.

Point to and name each family member pictured. Relate the baby and his or her family to the people in the picture.

Say

This is a picture of Jesus. When Jesus was a baby, His parents brought Him to church.

Daniel, your dad brought you to church today. I'm glad you are here.

Madison, here's a picture of a big brother. You have a brother, too. You and your brother come to church. Thank You, God, for Madison and her brother.

Tip

Babies will want to explore the book with hands and mouths. Clean a book that has been in a baby's mouth.

Playing at Church

Collect

September Poster from *Nursery Posters* displayed at child's eye level

Do

Hold a baby in your arms or on your lap while you are near the photo and talk about the children in the photo.

Say

These children are playing with toys just like you play with toys at our church.

I'm glad you're here. God loves you and I do, too.

Quiet Play

The Cooing Game

Collect

Brightly colored toy

Do

Show a baby the toy. When the baby responds by cooing, imitate the baby's sound. Then give him or her a hug.

Continue imitating any other sounds the baby makes, smiling and nodding at the baby to encourage communication.



Say

I love you and God does, too!

Story Time

Do

Hold a baby in your lap, facing you. Say, "I'm going to tell you a story."

Tell a story about the baby coming to church. Use short sentences, pausing after each one to let the baby respond with coos or other sounds.

Say

I'm going to tell you a story.

Maria woke up today. Her mommy put her clothes on. Then Maria came to church with her mommy and daddy. At church, Maria played with the toys.

I like to tell you stories. It's fun to hear you talk. God loves you, Maria.

Activities with Toddlers

Choose one or more of the learning activities on pages 13-16 to provide for toddlers during a session. Consider your facility, the number of children and teachers and the supplies you have available as you plan which activities you will use. The best kind of teaching for toddlers will happen as you take advantage of teachable moments as children play and experience the learning activities you have provided. Continue an activity as long as one or more children are interested. For more information on using this curriculum, see "Why Use Curriculum?" on page 6.

Active Play

Build It!

Collect

Cardboard or wooden blocks

Do

Slowly build a tower, describing what you are doing and counting each block. Knock down the tower, or let child knock down the tower.

Encourage the child to build the tower again.

Say

I am putting one block on the floor. Now I'm putting another block on the floor. One, two. There are two blocks in our tower.

God made your hands. You can use your hands to play at home and at church.

Tip

While you are building a tower with a child, say, "Isaiah, you can only knock down your own tower. Eden gets to knock down the tower she built."

Copy Cats!

Do

Imitate a movement the child makes, or ask the child to wave or clap hands and then imitate the action.



Say

God made your hands and feet. I can see you are having fun waving and clapping.

It's fun to come to church. I'm glad you are here!

Teddy Bear

Collect

Two teddy bears (or other washable stuffed animals)

Do

Give a toddler a teddy bear and hold one yourself.

Act out the words of this poem with your teddy bear.

Teddy Bear, Turn Around

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around.

Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground.

Teddy bear, teddy bear, I'll hug you tight.

Teddy bear, teddy bear, say "goodnight!"

Say

God loves you! God made your arms to hug your teddy bear.

Empty and Full

Collect

Two large containers (boxes, dishpans, etc.)

Small toys (too large to swallow) or blocks

Do

Children move toys from one container to the other. If the child empties a container say, "All gone! It's empty now!" Go to the other container and say, "It's full now!"

Say

I'm glad you came to church today. God loves you!

Thank You, God, for loving Annie.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Activities with Toddlers

Art Play

Coloring Fun

Collect

Large sheets of white construction paper
Jumbo crayons

Do

Children color on paper. Identify the color of crayons child uses.

Say

Tyler, you're having fun drawing. I'm glad you like to draw.

God made your eyes to see these colors. God loves you. Thank You, God, for Your love.

Tip

If the child puts the crayon in his or her mouth, say, "Keep the crayon on the paper, not in your mouth."

Sticky Pictures

Collect

Large square of clear Con-Tact paper
Masking tape
2-inch (5-cm) colorful fabric and paper squares

Do

Tape Con-Tact paper (sticky side out) to wall at children's eye level. Invite children to attach fabric and paper squares to the sticky paper.

Say

Tyrell, you put a red paper on our sticky paper. It's fun to make a sticky picture.

I'm glad you came to help us make our sticky picture. God loves you.

God's Wonders

Mirror Fun

Collect

Unbreakable hand mirror

Do

Let each toddler have a chance to hold and look into the mirror. Talk about each part of the child's face.



Say

Can you see your brown eyes in the mirror? God made your eyes. God loves you.

I'm glad you're here today at our church.

What's in the Bag?

Collect

Fabric or paper bag
Variety of small child-safe items with different textures such as toy car, fabric ball, wooden block, etc.

Do

Place items inside bag. (It's OK if child sees you.) Invite child to put his or her hand in the bag and try to find one of the items. Talk about whichever item the child removes.

Say

What's in the bag, Zachary? You found the red block! Let's see if you can find some more toys in the bag.

I'm glad you came to church today to play with our toys. God loves you!

Music

Fun at Church

Collect

September Teaching Poster from *Nursery Posters*
Toys

Do

Move close to one or more children while they are playing with toys and begin to sing the song on the poster, substituting words describing what a child is doing. For example, if the child is playing with cars, sing "It's fun to play with cars."

Say

I'm glad Chino is having a good time at church today.

I like being with Chino at church. God loves you, Chino. Thank You, God, for Chino.

Together Actions

Collect

I Love to Sing! CD and player

Do

Play "Together" on CD. Sing along with the song, following along with the action suggested in the song. If children remain interested, substitute other actions for "make smiles" (wave hands, clap hands, etc.).

Say

We're so glad to be together today. I see Lily. I see Daniel. I see James.

We're having fun singing and smiling.

Pictures and Books

Books and Toys

Collect

September Poster from *Nursery Posters*
Several sturdy books that picture toys

Do

Take a book to where children are playing with toys. Compare the toys they have with the pictures in the book or the poster.

Say

It's fun to play with trucks. It's fun to come to church. I'm glad you are here.

Tip

Toys that are being ignored should be removed from sight to avoid clutter. Toddlers need open space more than they need a vast array of toys.

I Spy!

Collect

Several sturdy books that picture children

Do

Look at a book with a child. As you look at a page, say "I spy a girl who is playing with a doll." Ask the child to point to the girl and pause to see if child responds. If the child does not respond, point to the picture yourself. Repeat "I Spy!" activity as you continue to look through the book.



Say

It's fun to come to church and play with our friends. At church we learn that God loves us.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Activities with Toddlers

Pretend Play

Doll Play

Collect

One or more dolls or washable stuffed animals

Do

Give a toddler a doll or stuffed animal. Ask, "Where is the doll's head?" Repeat the question with other body parts: ears, legs, tummy, nose and eyes.

Suggest the child do specific things with the doll such as: feed the doll, tickle the doll's tummy, rock the doll, wrap the doll in a blanket.

Say

You're rocking the baby just like mommies and daddies rock their babies.

Mommies and daddies love their babies. God loves you, too.

Driving to Church

Collect

Several toy cars

Box or large block representing your church

Do

Sit on the floor with a child. "Drive" a car to the "church." Invite a child to drive a car to church, too. Talk about being glad to come to church.

Say

Let's pretend we're driving these cars to church. I'm glad to come to church. At church I hear that God loves me. God loves you, too, Emma. Thank You, God, for loving Emma.

I'm glad you are at church today.

Tip

Expect that children will use toy cars or other toys in a variety of ways. A toddler is likely to pretend to drive the car for a moment or two, and then wander off with the car to another area of the room. Be ready for teachable moments to use the suggested conversation.

Quiet Play

Match It!

Collect

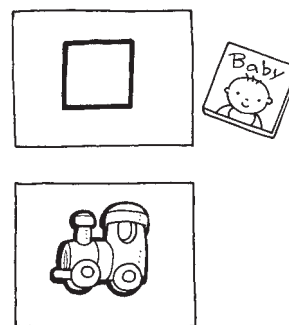
Several toys with shapes that a toddler will recognize (book, block, car, etc.)

Paper

Jumbo crayons

Do

While child watches, trace around one toy on paper. Show the child how the toy and the shape match. An older toddler may be able to match the toy and shape by him- or herself.



Trace around several other toys, matching each toy to the shape. As children are interested, they match the toys and shapes and/or color on the shapes.

Say

We're playing with the toys. I like playing with you at church.

God loves you and so do I.

What's Hidden

Collect

Several large paper or plastic cups

Several toys (too large to be swallowed) that will fit inside the cups

Do

Place a cup over each toy. Give the child time to remove each of the cups.

Toddlers will want to repeat this game over and over again!

Say

God loves you. God made your hands. We are having fun using our hands.

When we come to church, we can play together. I'm glad you are here today.