

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.)

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This month you will help each child:

- hear songs and words about God's love;
- feel glad to be at church with people who demonstrate God's love to him or her;
- participate in enjoyable activities at church.



Devotional

As you watch and learn from the children you teach, notice how anxious each one is for food to satisfy the pangs of hunger. No substitute will do! You may try distraction and play with toys, but a little one's requests for food 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 child! 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 introduces young children 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 children 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

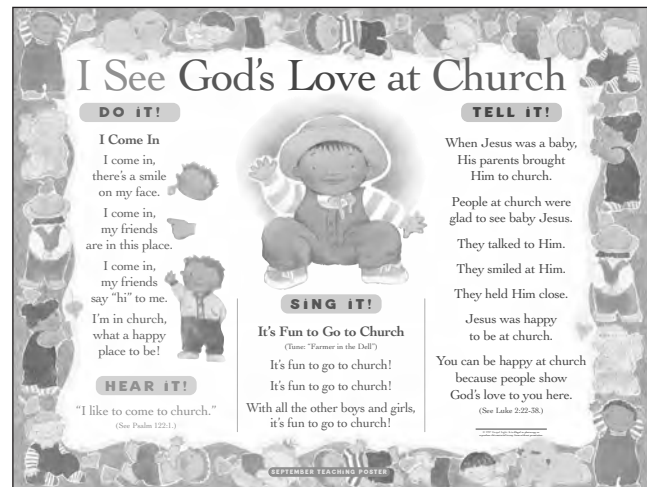
(Tune: "Farmer in the Dell")

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 Children

Choose one or more of the learning activities on pages 11-16 to provide for children 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 8.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Active Play

Building a Church

Collect

Toy construction tools (hammer, saw, etc.)
Cardboard boxes

Do

Use boxes and tools to "build" a church. Interested children may imitate your actions.



Say

God loves you, Seth.
I'm glad you came to our church today.
What is this tool used for?
I'm glad people built our church so we can come here and learn about God's love.

Climbing Steps to Church

Collect

September Bible Story Picture from *I Love to Look! or Nursery Posters*
Child's step stool, or a large wooden block

Do

Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture.
Encourage children to go up and down the step stool, or to step on and off the wooden block.

Say

Jesus came to church. Mary and Joseph brought Him to church. The people at church loved Jesus.
Let's pretend we're going up the steps to church. We can see our friends at church.
I'm happy to see you at church today. God loves you!
At church we can learn about God's love.

Driving to Church

Collect

Several age-appropriate ride-on toys (optional—child-sized chairs)

Do

Children ride on the toys, moving around the room as desired. (Optional: If ride-on toys are not available, arrange chairs to make a car. Children sit on chairs and pretend to drive.)

Say

Let's drive to church. Which car do you want to drive?
I'm glad we can come to church!
God loves you! People at church love you, too.
Thank You, God, for the people at our church.

Walking to Church

Collect

Masking tape

Do

Create a "path to church" on the floor of your room using the tape. Remove tape at end of session.

Demonstrate staying on the path while walking on it. Invite children to walk with you.

Say

Let's walk to church. Let's stay on the path together.

At church, we learn about God's love.
God loves you, Chloe.

Bonus Idea: Walk in different ways on the path (jump, tiptoe, etc.).

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Art and Sensory Play

People at Church

Collect

- Marker
- Construction paper shape or drawing of your church building for each child
- Glue sticks
- Pictures of people cut from magazines or catalogs

Do

- Print "I see God's love at church" on shapes or drawings of church.
- Child glues pictures onto church.

Say

- I'm so glad you came to church today. At church we learn that God loves us.
- Calvin, I'm happy to see you. People at church care about you.

What Did You Wear to Church?

Collect

- September Bible Story Picture from *I Love to Look!* or *Nursery Posters*.
- Pieces of fabric in solid colors approximately 8 inches (20.5 cm) square

Do

- Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture.
- Spread fabric pieces on table or floor for children to see and touch.
- Choose a piece that matches a child's shirt, dress, etc. and hold it next to the article of clothing.

Say

- When Jesus was a baby, He came to church. Mary and Joseph brought Him to church. You came to church, too!
- Devin, this cloth is blue, just like your shirt. You wore a blue shirt to church today.
- I'm glad you're here. God loves you!

Tire Track Roads

Collect

- Length of butcher paper
- Tape
- Crayons
- Toy cars with no small parts

Do

- Tape butcher paper to top of child-sized table.
- Let children use crayons to draw "roads" on the paper. Draw several roads yourself.
- Children "drive" cars on the roads.

Say

- I'm glad you came to church today. Marcus, how did you get here?
- Some people drive to church. Some people walk.
- I like to come to church. At church, I learn that God loves me.

Church Windows

Collect

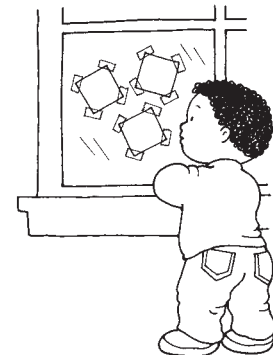
- Pieces of colored tissue paper approximately 4 inches (10 cm) square
- Masking tape

Do

- Let children watch you tape tissue-paper pieces to a window, at child's eye level if possible.

Say

- Now our window has pretty colors.
- This paper is red.
- Some churches have pretty colored windows.
- We see God's love at church. Thank You, God, for our church.



Nature Items

Collect

Variety of nature items (leaves, grass, shells, small branches)

Do

Set out nature items. Play a game like I Spy with children to help them identify and describe the items.

Say

I spy something green and skinny. Elton, what do you think it is? Yes, you pointed to the grass. God made grass. God loves us. At church we hear that God loves us.

I spy some seashells made by God. God loves us.

Who Came to Church Today?

Collect

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

Do

Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture. Help one child at a time see his or her reflection in the mirror.

Say

Look at this picture of baby Jesus. He came to church. People at church loved baby Jesus.

Paloma, who is in the mirror? You came to church today. Mrs. Boyd came to church, too. I'm glad you're here. God loves you!

I Am Loved at Church

Collect

Several pictures of babies and toddlers and several pictures of baby care items and toddler toys cut from magazines and laminated (or covered with clear Con-Tact paper)

Do

Invite children to help you match the pictures of the baby items to the pictures of babies and the toddler toys to pictures of toddlers.

Say

Where is the picture of the baby? Where is the picture of the rocking chair? We have rocking chairs at church for babies. People at church love babies.

Where is the picture of the little girl? Where is the picture of the blocks? We have blocks at church for you to play with. I love to play with you, too!

I'm glad we can come to church. We learn that God loves us.

What Do You See at Church?

Collect

Toy binoculars, or make pretend ones out of two cardboard tubes

Do

Show a child how to look through the binoculars. As child looks around the room, describe what the child is seeing.



Say

I see my friend Kayley at church.

I see a picture of Jesus at church.

What do you see at church? We see our toys. We see people who love us. Thank You, God, for our church.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Music

God Loves Me

Do

Sing the following words to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb":

God loves Nathan very much,
very much, very much.
God loves Nathan very much. I love Nathan, too.

Say

I know a song about how much God loves us. Let's sing it!

At church we learn about God's love. I'm glad we're at church together.

Bonus Idea: Play and sing along with "Together" from *I Love to Sing!* CD.

Happy Band

Collect

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

I Love to Sing! CD and player

Variety of rhythm instruments

Do

Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture. Give several children instruments. Hold one instrument yourself.

Play "A Happy Place." Children play instruments with the music.

Say

Do you see baby Jesus in this picture? He is at church. Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to church.

We're at church today. At church, we sing about God's love.

Alicia, I see that you are playing the bells. I'm glad you came to church to play the bells today.

Caleb, let's hear what the tambourine sounds like. God loves you!

Walking to Church

Collect

I Love to Sing! CD and player

Do

Play "I See You!" and/or "Welcome."

Encourage children to join you in walking around the room to the beat of the music.

Clap in time to the music as you walk.

Say

Let's pretend we are walking to church.

Marco, I'm glad you came to church today.

God loves you.



Making Music

Collect

Toy piano, toy keyboard or real electronic keyboard, or other musical toy

Do

Show one child at a time how to play the instrument.

Let child experiment with the instrument.

Say

We make music at church.

You can make music, too.

I'm glad you came to church. God loves you! Thank You, God, that Carl and Katie came to church today.

I See God's Love at Church • Pretend Play

Getting Ready for Church

Collect

Dolls

Do

Children pretend they are getting dolls ready for church.

Lead children to walk to another part of the room, pretending they are going to church.

Say

Let's get ready for church. We can bring our dolls to church today. Ready? Let's go!

I want to go to church to hear about God's love.
People at church love you, Anna.

Driving to Church

Collect

I Love to Sing! CD and player

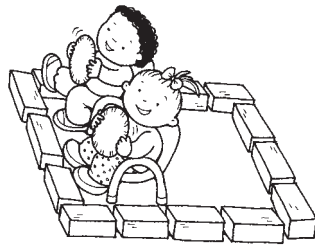
Large cardboard blocks or boxes (optional—masking tape)

Small chairs

Plastic disc or sturdy paper plate for steering wheel

Do

Arrange blocks or boxes to be a vehicle. (Optional: Use masking tape to make a large rectangle on the floor representing a vehicle.) Place chairs inside vehicle.



Encourage children to get in the vehicle and sit on chairs. Let children take turns using the disc or plate to steer the vehicle.

As you "drive," play "A Happy Place" and sing along.

Say

Evan, how did you get to church today?

Let's build a car and drive to church. Who would like to be the driver?

I'm glad you came to church today. God loves you and so do I.

My Bible

Collect

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

Several sturdy children's Bibles with pictures

Do

Set out Bibles for children to explore.

With an interested child, look at the Bible, talking about the pictures as you or child turns the pages. Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture.

Say

The Bible helps us learn about God's love.
God loves everyone! God loves you, Brandy.
Thank You, God, for loving us.

I see this picture of Jesus at church. Jesus went to church when He was a baby. People at church were glad to see Jesus. They loved Him.

Block Play

Collect

Wooden or cardboard blocks (optional—jumbo interlocking blocks)

Toy cars and people (too large to swallow)

Do

Help children build a church and one or more houses with blocks.

Show children how to drive vehicles between church and home.

Say

Let's build a house. Who lives here?

Let's build a church. How can we get to our church from home?

I'm glad we can go to church to learn about God's love.

Bonus Idea: Make rectangular shapes on the floor with masking tape. Children stack blocks on tape to make houses.

S E P T E M B E R

I See God's Love at Church • Quiet Play

How Many Are Here?

Collect

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

Do

Show and talk about the Bible Story Picture.
Count aloud the number of children sitting or standing near each other.

Say

This picture shows baby Jesus at church. He is happy to be at church. Let's count how many people are in this picture. There are five!

I see three children who came to church today. Ella, Brendan and Evan came to church. I'm glad you are all here.

God loves all of you and so do I. Thank You, God, for Your love.

God Loves Me

Collect

8½x11-inch (21.5x28-cm) sheet of paper for each child

Marker
Stickers

Do

Print the words "God loves (child's name)" on each paper.

Let children decorate their papers by placing stickers on the papers, any way they like.

Say

God loves you, Natalie.

At church, we learn about God's love.

I'm so glad that God loves Natalie. I'm so glad that God loves James.

Bonus Idea: Let children hold and look at a Bible. Say, "The Bible tells us that God loves us."

Puzzles

Collect

Several toddler puzzles

Do

Let children play with puzzles. Talk with children about God's love.

Say

Carlos, can you find where the ball goes in this puzzle?

It's fun to play with you. People at church love you, Carlos.

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

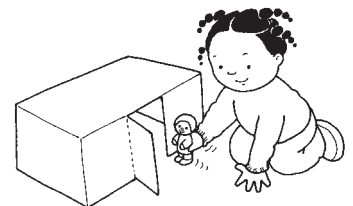
People Come to Church

Collect

Toy people
Shoe box with a flap cut on one side

Do

Show children how to "walk" people into the "church." Then set items on a child-sized table or the floor for children to play with.



Say

The boy is going to church. Now the girl is going to church.

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

Bonus Idea: Use wooden or cardboard blocks to build a simple structure.