

STORYTELLING STATION

STATION FOCUS

The Hebrew people gave generously of their possessions, skills, and time to build the Tabernacle, a sacred place to worship God. Today, we can use our possessions, skills, and time for the church, the special place where we worship God.

SCRIPTURES

Exodus 25-40,
focusing on Exodus 25:1-9;
36:1-2; 40:34

STATION OBJECTIVES

Children will have opportunities to

- * learn about the Tabernacle, a large moveable tent built as a special place to worship God;
- * experience the sanctuary of their church as a special place to worship God;
- * discover that there are many different kinds of church buildings today.

STATION SETUP

Display a picture, poster, or wall chart of the Tabernacle.

- Pictures are available in *What's What in the Bible* by Derek Williams (page 24) or on page 13 of this unit.
- You can purchase a "Tabernacle in the Wilderness" poster at www.rockofisrael.org for \$20.00. Search the online store for TTITW.
- You can find a laminated wall chart at www.rose-publishing.com for \$13.99. Search by Product Code for 551L.

Be sure that each leader and shepherd has a copy of the Main Idea, Objectives, Bible Story, Bible Background, Check Your Facts, About the Children, Shepherd Tips, and Mission Project (pages 3-7). These photocopies may have been handed out at the Staff Meeting.

Resources

pages 3-7 and 13
picture, poster, or
wall chart of the
Tabernacle

Supplies

poster-mounting
supplies

Supplies

large, heavy piece of fabric or a small tent

WANT TO DO MORE?

Make the entrance to your space look like a tent. Pitch a small tent in front of the door, or hang fabric from the doorway in the manner of a tent flap so that the children can enjoy the fun of entering a tent as they enter the room.

SAFETY CHECK

- The church should be a place of security—a place where children can count on things and people being reliable.
- Each shepherd should know the whereabouts of every child in his or her group and where to reach a parent in case of an emergency.
- Make sure the room is large enough for the activities selected, with furniture safely pushed out of the way for drama activities.
- Create a safe environment in which children feel able to share or not share during discussions.

Resources

Bible

BIBLE STORY (5–10 minutes)

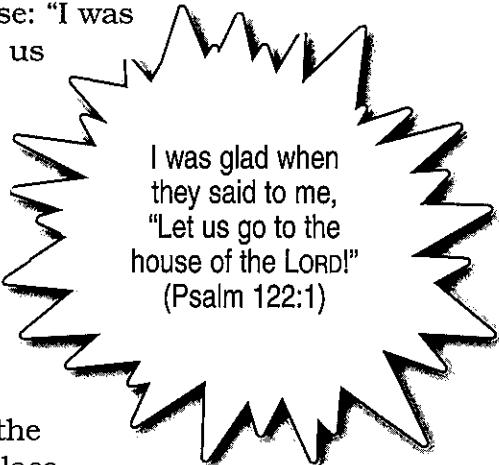
Say: After God's people escaped from slavery in Egypt, they wandered in the wilderness. God talked to Moses on Mt. Sinai, but God also wanted to be with the people. So, God told the people to build a Tabernacle, a place of worship. This is what God said:

Read Exodus 25:1-9; 36:1-2; 40:34 to the children.

Say: It has been many, many years since the Tabernacle was built! Over those years, many people have agreed with the words of our Bible verse: "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'" (Psalm 122:1).

Have the children say the Bible verse with you. Repeat it a couple of times if necessary for them to get the words.

Say: Today, we are going to explore several places of worship, and hopefully we will discover why the house of the Lord is a special place.



I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" (Psalm 122:1)

ACTIVITY OPTIONS

(45–50 minutes)

Choose from the following activities those that are appropriate for the

Note

Resources and websites are constantly changing. Check www.powerxpress.com for updates that may help you in planning.

age level of the children as your time, space, and resources allow.

○ **For All Ages**
Building a House for God

Prepare

Provide a tent for the setting of the play and Bible-times costumes for the actors.

With the Children

Hand out copies of the "Building a House for God" script (page 79). Assign roles, or let the children choose which parts they will play.

Let the actors dress in the Bible-times costumes. Show them the tent where the action of the play will take place.

Have older children read their parts. Let younger children mime as you read the script.

After reading the play, clarify any questions the children may have, particularly if this is one of the first groups to come to the Storytelling Station and they have not yet heard the Bible story several times.

○ **Ask:** What gifts did the children bring in the play? What materials were used in building the Tabernacle?

In the play one of the children said, "God makes sure that we have what we need." Is that true for you? In what ways?

For All Ages
Churches

Prepare

The magnificent book *Churches* by Judith Dupré presents fifty-nine churches that represent the great variety of churches that exist in our world today. Spend some time enjoying the book yourself. Then choose five of the churches that show a variety of the types of churches to present to the children.

With the Children

Open your Bible and read Exodus 25:8. Then hold up the book *Churches* by Judith Dupré.

○ **Say:** This book shows the great variety in Christian churches in our world. Let's look at and learn about several of these churches.

Show the children the five churches you selected. Read or summarize the

Resources
 "Building a House for God" script (page 79)

Supplies
 Bible-times costumes
 a tent

Resources
 Bible
Churches by Judith Dupré

Supplies
 drawing paper
 pencils
 colored pencils



Talk Tip

If you could visit one of the churches we saw, which one would it be? What questions would you have for the people you would meet there?

Resources

Bible

Supplies

mural paper
tape
tempera or poster
paint
brushes
water
paint shirts

Talk Tip

We do not always feel happy when we come to church. Something sad may have happened, or maybe we would rather be doing something else. Is it still possible to be glad we are in God's house even when we do not feel glad about other things?

text about each church. As you look at the pictures of each church, talk with the children about what they see and hear.

Ask: Of what is this church made? How is light used in this church? How long did it take to build this church? What is unusual or unique about this church? What do you think is the mood inside this church?

Have each child choose one of the churches they have seen and imagine what it would be like to have worked on that church or to worship in it. Then ask them to record their imaginings in writing or drawing.

Option: Invite someone to talk to the children about the things within your church that have special meaning.

For Younger Children

I Was Glad

Prepare

Make arrangements with your pastor for the children to lead Psalm 122:1—"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'"—as a call to worship in the Sunday morning congregational worship service.

Tape a sheet of mural paper to the wall. Make the sheet as long as possible, but also short enough that the number of children in your group can hold the sign in front of them when they say Psalm 122:1 in the worship service.

With the Children

Read Psalm 122:1.

Ask: What makes people glad about coming to church? What makes you glad about coming to church? *(Allow some time for the children to tell their own stories about being glad to come to church.)*

Practice saying the Bible verse (Psalm 122:1) several times with the children. Encourage the children to look glad as they say it.

Have the children put on paint shirts, and then show them the mural paper you have provided. Give them paint, brushes, and water.

Say: Let's create a mural of people coming to church. When you paint the people, make them look glad that they are able to come to the church to worship God.

When the pictures are ready, ask the children to tell about the people they have drawn. What stories can they tell about why each person they have drawn is glad to come to church.

Tell the children they will be leading Psalm 122:1, the Bible verse they have learned, as the call to worship in the congregational worship service. Help them to practice the verse again, holding their mural in front of them.



For Older Children

Sacred Places

Prepare

Read the book *Sacred Places* by Philemon Sturges, including the introductory information. The book is available from public libraries, or your church library may have a copy.

With the Children

Read the text of the book *Sacred Places* by Philemon Sturges without showing the children the pictures.

Show the pictures in the book to the children. Go through the book again, encouraging the children to look closely at the illustrations.

Ask: What is a sacred place? What do people do in sacred places? What place is sacred to you?

The illustrations in the book use a technique called paper relief. Paper relief is created by creating the parts of the picture with pieces of paper and gluing them onto the background. The final picture will be three-dimensional.

Give each child a piece of posterboard. Let them use the supplies you have provided to create simple paper relief pictures of their sacred places. The pictures may be as complex or simple as desired.

When the pictures are ready, let each child show his or her work and talk about the sacred place it represents.

For Older Children

Tabernacle Research

Prepare

Select several Bible reference books that include information about the Tabernacle. For example, you may choose such books as the *International Children's Bible Field Guide* by Lawrence Richards (pages 51–52), *What's What in the Bible* by Derek Williams (pages 24–25), or any Bible reference book in your church library that is written in a way that children can read it. If you used books in the Station Setup for pictures of the Tabernacle, check those books for information that is appropriate for older children.

Open several copies of the Bible to Exodus 25–40.

Spread out the books on a table, making sure you have at least one book and one Bible for every two to three children.

Resources

Sacred Places by Philemon Sturges

Supplies

posterboard, 18-by-24-inch sheets
construction paper in a variety of colors
rulers
pencils
scissors
glue sticks
cellophane tape

Resources

Bibles
International Children's Bible Field Guide by Lawrence Richards, *What's What in the Bible* by Derek Williams, or other Bible resource books that include information about the Tabernacle

Supplies

paper
pencils



Building the Tabernacle

Talk Tip

What information did you learn that surprised you the most?

With the Children

Say: Today you are going to do some research on the Tabernacle.

Divide the children into groups of two or three. Have each group select one person to be the recorder.

Point out the books that are available.

Say: You have ten minutes to do your research. Look for something you do not already know about the Tabernacle. There are plenty of books available for each group. Trade the books you use with other groups to be able to see several books.

Allow time for research. Then, have each group report its findings to everyone.

Resources

Bible

CLOSING (5 minutes)

Gather the children in a circle.

Ask: What is one thing you learned about churches today? What is one thing you learned about our church?

Say: No matter what a church is like, it is a place to worship God.

Close by reading Psalm 100.



Building a House for God

Based on Exodus 35:4–36:7

Setting: in front of an Israelite family tent, camped near Mt. Sinai

Characters: an elder of the tribe

6 boys and girls (or a number to fit the size of your group)

Bezalel (BEZ-uh-lel)

Oholiab (oh-HOH-lee-ab)

Elder: Our tent of worship is almost completed! We have a fantastic Tabernacle here in the desert. Bezalel and Oholiab, you have done great work.

Bezalel: God gave us the skills we needed. When God told Moses to put me in charge of the workers, I knew why God had blessed me with building and artistic skills.

Elder: Yes, God certainly had a plan.

Oholiab: Everyone whose spirit was joyful brought materials to use in the sanctuary. It's not hard to build when you have such enthusiastic people!

Elder: Even some of these children brought gifts.

First child: I had an onyx that a lady in Egypt gave me when we left. I was glad to give it! Moses said Oholiab would use it in the Tabernacle.

Second child: And I had a wooden box made from acacia. Moses said we would need a lot of acacia wood in the Tabernacle, so I gave the box right away.

Third child: My mother has been busy for weeks. She and the other women sing all day as they weave the big tent of goats' hair to cover the Tabernacle.

Fourth child: Bezalel, how did you know how to make the Tabernacle? Did Moses figure it all out?

Bezalel: Oh, no! When Moses was on Mt. Sinai, God told him exactly how to make the Tabernacle, down to the last little bit of embroidery. At first I wondered how we would ever get all that done!

Elder: I wondered where we were going to find gold and silver and fine twisted linen and red dye. We had been gone from Egypt for almost a year.

Fifth child: I know, I know! We carried it out of Egypt. That's why God caused the Egyptians to give us jewelry and other fine stuff as we left.

Oholiab: (*chuckling*) Then a funny problem came up. After we got started, people came every morning with more gold and more silver and more acacia wood. We had too much! We had to ask Moses to tell the people not to bring any more offerings.

Sixth child: I guess it's like the manna, the water, and the quails. God makes sure that we have what we need.

Elder: Now we have a beautiful worship tent that we can carry with us when we move to the Promised Land of our ancestors. God will go before us if we trust God and are obedient!

Adapted from *One Room Sunday School, Reproducible Activities*
written by Myrtle Felkner, Fall 1996.
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Notes



STORY

