

Early Childhood Bible Teacher—Older Years

(Entering Kindergarten and First Grade)



Vacation Bible School

Early Childhood Bible Teacher—Older Years (Entering Kindergarten and First Grade)

African Safari Adventure— Exploring the Wonders of God's Creation

Concept Area:	The Bible
Overview:	This week the children will study the creation story in the Old Testament and hear stories about Jesus in the New Testament.
Session 1:	God Helps Us See All He Has Made (Genesis 1:1-8; Mark 10:46-52)
Session 2:	God Keeps Us Safe (Genesis 1:9-19; Mark 4:35-41)
Session 3:	Jesus Cares For Us (Genesis 1:20-23; Matthew 6:25-34)
Session 4:	God Sent Us Jesus (Genesis 1:24-31; Luke 2:1-20)
Session 5:	We Worship God (Genesis 2:1-3; Acts 16:16-34)

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VBS Unit Overview

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Session Title God Helps Us See All He Has Made	Session Title God Keeps Us Safe	Session Title God Cares For Us	Session Title God Sent Us Jesus	Session Title We Worship God
Bible Truth God made light, day, night and the sky on the first and second days of creation. God's son, Jesus, had the power to give sight to a blind man.	Bible Truth God separated the water from the land and created plants, the sun, moon, and stars on the third and fourth days of creation. Jesus has power over nature and we can trust him to keep us safe.	Bible Truth God cares for the birds and fish that he created, but he cares even more for us.	Bible Truth God made us and showed his love to us by sending Jesus.	Bible Truth God set aside a special day for us to worship him. We can worship him in many different ways.
Bible Story Days One and Two of Creation and Jesus Makes a Blind Man See (Genesis 1:1-8; Mark 10:46-52)	Bible Story Days Three and Four of Creation and Jesus Calms the Storm (Genesis 1:9-19; Mark 4:35-41)	Bible Story Day Five of Creation and Jesus Cares for Us (Genesis 1:20-23; Matthew 6:25-34)	Bible Story Day Six of Creation and God Sent Us Jesus (Genesis 1:24-31; Luke 2:1-20)	Bible Story Day Seven of Creation and Paul and Silas Worship God (Genesis 2:1-3; Acts 16:16-34)
Bible Verses In the beginning God created the world (Genesis 1:1). God made day and night (Genesis 1:5). God made the blind people see (Luke 7:21).	Bible Verses God made the sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 1:16). God made plants with seed (Genesis 1:11). God helps me. I will not be afraid (Hebrews 13:6).	Bible Verses God made the birds and fish (Genesis 1:21). God knows what you need (Matthew 6:32). God cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).	Bible Verses I am wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God made the animals (Genesis 1:25). God loved us and sent his Son (1 John 4:10).	Bible Verses Think about the wonderful things God made (Job 37:14). Be glad and sing songs to God (Psalm 9:2). Give thanks to God for he is good (Psalm 107:1).
Learning Aim Children will learn that God created day and night, the sky, and helped a blind man see.	Learning Aim Children will learn that God separated the water from the land and created plants, the sun, moon and stars. They will also learn that God helps us and keeps us safe.	Learning Aim Children will learn that God made the birds and fish and cares for them but he cares for us even more.	Learning Aim Children will learn that God made animals and people and that he loves them so much that he sent Jesus.	Learning Aim The children will learn that worshipping God is important and that we can worship him anytime and anywhere.

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
<i>Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)</i> Create light and dark designs and add clouds to the mural.	<i>Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)</i> Add sun, moon, stars, and flowers to the mural.	<i>Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)</i> Add birds and fish to the mural.	<i>Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)</i> Add animals and people to the mural.	<i>Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)</i> Add a church to the mural.
<i>Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities)</i> Art: Make a creation book. Bible Verse: Play a team Bible verse game. Dramatic Play: Create shadows Missions: Learn about Zambia and make an African drum. Nature: Play a day and night activity game. Puzzles: What's missing? Snack: Eat vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies and drink white and chocolate milk.	<i>Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities)</i> Art: Add to creation book. Bible Verse: Play a flower garden Bible game. Blocks or Puzzles: Make leaf imprints. Dramatic Play: Create a storm in a bottle. Missions: Learn about New Day Orphanage and make prayer cards. Nature: Make a Bible verse flower press. Snack: Eat flower shaped sugar cookies.	<i>Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities)</i> Art: Add to creation book. Bible Verse: Play a "Go Fish" game. Dramatic Play & Nature: Decorate a flowerpot and plant seeds or flowers. Missions: Watch a video about the children at New Day and make play-dough animals. Puzzles and Games: Examine objects and thumbprints. Snack: Eat trail mix.	<i>Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities)</i> Art: Add to creation book. Bible Verse: Build a verse game. Blocks: Play with animal and people figures and/or a nativity set. Dramatic Play: Make a Christmas card. Missions: Learn about the Rosenblad family's visit to Zambia and pack school supplies for the children. Puzzles: Play an animal charades game. Snack: Eat animal crackers and gingerbread men cookies.	<i>Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities)</i> Art: Finish creation book. Bible Verse: Play a Bible verse stick dance. Dramatic Play: Make a yummy creation snack. Missions: Learn about Samuel's trip to Zambia and pack a homeless bag. Nature: Make a stained glass window. Puzzles: Play an offering plate game. Snack: Eat yummy creation (made in Dramatic Play).
<i>Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing: "This is What the Bible Says" • Tell Bible story • Choose and read Bible verses • Play Bible Verse game • Sing: "God Made the Day" • Make life application 	<i>Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" • Tell Bible story • Choose and read Bible verses • Play Bible Verse game • Sing: "God Made the Moon" • Make life application 	<i>Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" • Tell Bible story • Choose and read Bible verses • Play Bible Verse game • Sing: "God Made the Fish" • Make life application 	<i>Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" • Tell Bible story • Choose and read Bible verses • Play Bible Verse game • Sing: "God Made the Bears" • Make life application 	<i>Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing: "The Bible is God's Special Book" • Tell Bible story • Choose and read Bible verses • Play Bible Verse game • Sing: "God Rested" • Make life application
<i>Safari's End (Closing Activity)</i> Review Bible story and verses.	<i>Safari's End (Closing Activity)</i> Review Bible story and verses.	<i>Safari's End (Closing Activity)</i> Review Bible story and verses.	<i>Safari's End (Closing Activity)</i> Review Bible story and verses.	<i>Safari's End (Closing Activity)</i> Review Bible story and verses.

How Do I Use This Guide?

Basic Information for the Teaching Team Members:

- **Unit Title:** The main focus of teaching for Vacation Bible School.
- **Session Title:** The main teaching focus for the day.
- **Bible Story and Scripture:** The Bible story for each day and the passage in the Bible from which the Bible story is taken.
- **Bible Truth:** A one-sentence statement, in language appropriate to the age group, of the main idea of the session.
- **Learning Aim:** The outcome the teachers should teach toward and expect in the life of the child for the session, stated from the perspective of the teacher. The Learning Aim is the key-organizing element for the session. It includes what the child should feel, know, and do during the session.
- **Bible Verse:** A paraphrase of the Bible verse in language appropriate for the age of the child. Bible verses are included in each activity with suggested conversation to assist teachers in utilizing the Bible with the specific activity.

Preparing and Planning for the Child:

- **Teacher Devotional:** A devotional Bible study for personal use by teachers in preparation for each day of VBS is provided as a separate file. Teachers should be prepared spiritually for each day of VBS.
- **Plan with the Bible Teaching Team:** The suggestions given are practical ways you as a team member can prepare for VBS and minister to the children God has entrusted to you.
- **Gather These Materials:** This is a list of resources you will need for the VBS session.
- **Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity):** The children will create an African safari mural each day as they come to VBS. Each day they will add something to the mural. A **Plan Sheet (Resource Item 21)** is provided for teachers.
- **Sightings along the Safari (Bible Learning Activities):** This section includes activities that the teacher will use with the children during VBS. The activities were created with the Bible story in mind. The teacher will have opportunities to apply the Bible story through Bible story conversation and guidance. A **Plan Sheet (Resource Item 22)** is provided for teachers.
- **Serengeti Circle (Bible Story Group Time):** This section provides teachers with the Bible story and group activities for application. A **Plan Sheet (Resource Item 23)** is provided for teachers.
- **Safari's End (Closing Activity):** This activity is the closing activity each day. The purpose of the activity is to review the Bible story and verses of each day. A **Plan Sheet (Resource Item 23)** is provided for teachers.
- **Parent Letter:** The **Parent Letter (Resource Item 24)** is the church's link to the home. The letter can be used as the basis for a letter to each family. There is space at the top of the letter for the church to personalize the letter.
- **Resource Materials:** These resource materials are included to aid teachers in preparing for and teaching VBS.

Suggested Schedule for Vacation Bible School

The following schedule assumes you will have three-hour sessions. Adjust the schedule to fit your particular situation.

8:45-9:10 **Greet children; begin *Gathering at the Game Reserve* Welcome Activity**
(25 minutes)

9:15-10:15 ***Sightings Along the Safari* Bible Learning Activities**
(60 minutes)

10:20-10:35 **Snack Time**
(15 minutes)

10:40-11:00 **Recreation or outside time**
(20 minutes)

11:05-11:15 **Restroom break and wash hands**
(10 minutes)

11:20-12:00 ***Serengeti Circle* Group Time & *Safari's End* (Closing Activity)**
(40 minutes)

OR

8:45-9:10 **Greet children; begin *Gathering at the Game Reserve* Welcome Activity**
(25 minutes)

9:15-9:40 ***Serengeti Circle* Group Time**
(25 minutes)

9:45-9:50 **Give instructions about *Sightings along the Safari* Bible Learning**
(5 minutes) **Activities**

9:55-10:55 ***Sightings Along the Safari* Bible Learning Activities**
(60 minutes)

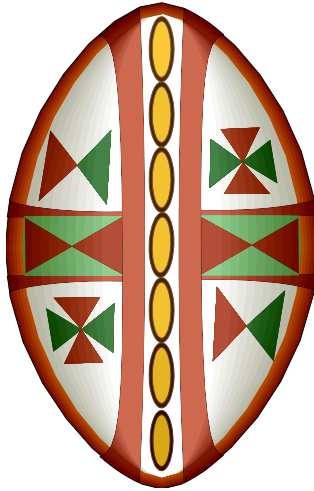
11:00-11:15 **Snack Time**
(15 minutes)

11:20-11:40 **Recreation or outside time**
(20 minutes)

11:40-11:50 **Restroom break and wash hands**
(10 minutes)

11:50-12:00 ***Safari's End* (Closing Activity) Transition games while waiting on parents to come**
(10 minutes)

Session 1



God Helps Us See All He Has Made

Bible Story and Scripture:

Days One and Two of Creation and Jesus Makes a Blind Man See
(Genesis 1:1-8; Mark 10:46-52)

Daily Bible Verses:

In the beginning God created the world (Genesis 1:1).

God made day and night (Genesis 1:5).

God made the blind people see (Luke 7:21).

Bible Truth:

God made light, day, night and the sky on the first and second days of creation.

God's Son, Jesus, had the power to give sight to a blind man.

Learning Aim:

Children will know that God created day and night,
the sky, and helped a blind man see.

Preparing for the Session

Teacher Devotional

[The comments in this devotional provide an overview of the studies for all ages in this Vacation Bible School and will help you know what is being taught in the various age groups. Give special attention, of course, to the emphases for the age group you are teaching.]

Creating things and making crafts are so much a part of childhood. From mud pies to paper dolls, very young children begin to act on their environment by using their minds and power to create. As humans, it is easy to see ourselves as creators, but in fact we are not creators. We are only *re*-creators. We take items that already exist and fashion them into something else, but Genesis 1 tells a different story. Genesis 1 tells of God's making everything from nothing and nothingness. Into the deep void, God spoke, and light came, then day, night, and sky. God's work as Creator means God made it all from nothing. God is the source of creation, and our *re*-creation depends on the stuff of his creation, including our hands, minds, and ideas.

God's creation did not stop with the first chapters of Genesis. God did not act like a giant clock-maker, starting the clock, hanging it in the heavens, and walking away to listen and observe the marking of time. Rather, God tended his creation even to the point of realizing it was going astray. God's care for his creation meant that he would redeem his world and his people by sending his one and only Son as a powerless and helpless infant. In the life and sacrifice of Jesus, all creation would have the opportunity to rejoin their Creator—to be made anew. The first light of creation became the light of redemption, available to us all.

As you teach Vacation Bible School, think of the power of God's creation and the power of his love to continue to tend and care for us through the gift of Jesus. Help the children see that God's power to create continues all around us in the light we use to see and the light that brings grace, hope, and love.

Plan with the Bible Teaching Team

- Read the Bible story of creation in Genesis 1 and the New Testament story of blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46-52. Then, read the teacher devotion to prepare your heart for teaching children this week. Thank God for creating light and being the light, both physically and spiritually.
- Copy **Resource Item 1: VBS Logo**. The logo may be enlarged for posters to advertise VBS or placed in your church's newsletter to advertise VBS.
- Use **Resource Item 2: Black and White African Animal Pictures** as needed to decorate a bulletin board or walls, or in whatever way you wish.
- Read through the ***Gathering at the Game Reserve and Sightings along the Safari*** activities and decide which team member will be responsible for planning and preparing for each activity. Prepare grocery sacks for each day and place the items for the day in each one as you gather the needed resources. You will be glad you planned ahead! There are plan sheets provided for teachers as they prepare (**Resource Items 21 and 22**).

- Prepare ahead for *Serengeti Circle* group time and *Safari's End* closing activities. There are items to gather and Bible markers to prepare. A plan sheet is provided for teachers (**Resource Item 23**).
- Copy the *Parent Letter* (**Resource Item 24**) for the children enrolled in your class. Personalize the letter by including information about other activities planned for the week of VBS. This letter can be mailed in advance to children who have pre-registered, or it can be sent home on the first day of VBS.
- Print the **Nametags** (**Resource Item 3**) for the children and teachers on white cardstock, labels, or on three to six different colors of cardstock. If labels are used, they may be adhered to the colored cardstock leaving ½" border on all sides. Laminate the nametags (**Resource Item 3**) and use a permanent marker to write the names of the children and teachers. The nametags may be used to divide the children into small groups for the *Gathering at the Game Reserve* welcome activity and the *Sightings along the Safari* Bible learning activities each day. The children will be assigned to the teacher with the same color or the same animal on the nametag. Attach the lanyards or yarn to the nametags. Each day the children will begin with the teacher with the same color nametag.
- Decide which teacher will make photos of each child or a group picture of your class. An individual who enjoys photography may be enlisted to make photographs of each child or groups of children in VBS. An African scene or backdrop could be used for the photographs. A schedule could be made so each class could come to a location during the week to have their pictures made. The photos will be used in the creation book in Session 4.

Gather These Materials

The materials are in order as they appear in the session:

- ☐ **Resource Item 1: VBS Logo**
- ☐ **Resource Item 2: Black and White African Animal Pictures**
- ☐ **Resource Item 3: Nametags**
- ☐ **Resource Item 21: Welcome Activity Plan Sheet**
- ☐ **Resource Item 22: Bible Learning Activity Plan Sheet**
- ☐ **Resource Item 23: Group Time and Closing Activity Plan Sheet**
- ☐ **Resource Item 24: Parent Letter**
- ☐ Light brown, black, light and dark blue, yellow and green butcher paper
- ☐ Scratch art paper and styluses (available from www.discountschoolsupply.com) or craft sticks (instead of styluses)
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Cotton balls
- ☐ Light brown butcher paper (to cover table)
- ☐ **Resource Item 4: Creation Books (front cover, pages 2 and 3)**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" yellow cardstock (2 per child)
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" white and light blue cardstock (one each color per child)
- ☐ White and black tempera paint

- ❑ Paint trays or pie tins
- ❑ Felt pieces (cut to fit paint trays)
- ❑ Round sponge paint brushes (available from www.discountschoolsupply.com)
- ❑ Crayons and markers
- ❑ Cotton balls (3 or 4 per child) (optional)
- ❑ Glue sticks (optional)
- ❑ Drying rack
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ Poster board (half sheets, 7 colors)
- ❑ Masking tape
- ❑ Markers
- ❑ Reading lamp (with cool light bulb)
- ❑ **Resource Item 5: Mission Story and Pictures**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" copy paper
- ❑ Map of Africa
- ❑ Coffee cans or oatmeal containers with lids (1 per child)
- ❑ Colorful contact paper or 9" x 12" construction paper
- ❑ Crayons
- ❑ Stickers (music, nature, safari animals)
- ❑ **Resource Item 6: Day and Night Activity Pictures**
- ❑ Blue poster board
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper
- ❑ Black marker
- ❑ Beanbag
- ❑ Painter's tape
- ❑ Cafeteria tray
- ❑ Objects from the room, such as, a Bible, book, plastic animal, cookie cutter, block, car, and truck
- ❑ Blanket or cloth
- ❑ **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign**
- ❑ Dry erase marker
- ❑ Vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies (one each per child)
- ❑ Napkins
- ❑ Small paper plates and cups
- ❑ Milk and chocolate milk (optional)
- ❑ Pitcher of water
- ❑ Flashlight (for transition to group time)
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (black, white, light blue, green, yellow, purple, red, pink, gray and orange)
- ❑ **Resource Item 7: Bible Verse Markers (for children)**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" cardstock (gray, yellow, blue)
- ❑ **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers (for teachers)**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock

- ❑ Lunch-size brown paper bag
- ❑ Bandage, coffee filter, and hot chocolate package
- ❑ Teaching pictures showing day and night and the sky and Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus
- ❑ Basket (for Bible markers)
- ❑ Poster board (white)
- ❑ Painter's tape
- ❑ Day and Night activity game (from nature activity)

Guiding the Session

Greeting and Welcome

The director will greet children and parents at the door. Be sure that each child is checked in properly and is wearing a nametag (see instructions for nametags in "**Plan with the Bible Teaching Team**" section). Guide the child to the teacher wearing the same color of nametag to begin the welcome activity.

Gathering at the Game Reserve (Welcome Activity)

The mural is a daily activity that is designed to be simple and completed independently as teachers greet arriving children. Each day children will complete a portion of the mural representative of the day's Bible story. Prior to VBS, teachers will prepare a mural consisting of 3 segments—the first section will be a black background for the activity depicting Day 1 of creation. The second section will be an African Savannah scene. The Savannah scene will have a light brown (for land) and light blue (for sky) background with yellow and green-fringed grass at the bottom and a blue watering hole. This scene will be the background for Session 1—Day 2 of creation, Session 2, Session 3, and Session 4. Therefore, this section needs to be the largest section. The third section will be a church setting with a light blue background and a brown church outline for Session 5 only—symbolic of the day of rest and holiness. You may prepare all the sections of the mural prior to the first day of VBS. **Each teacher will have the same group of children working on the welcome activity at the beginning of each morning.**

Materials needed: Light brown, black, light and dark blue, yellow and green butcher paper; scratch art paper and styluses (available from www.discountschoolsupply.com) or craft sticks; glue sticks; masking tape; cotton balls

Preparation: Prepare the mural background described above. Cover tables with light brown butcher paper. Cut the scratch art paper into six small pieces.

Guide the activity: Give each child a piece of scratch art paper and a stylus or craft stick to scratch away the top black layer to see the gold or silver underneath. Have the students create

their own designs to demonstrate light and dark. They could draw a sun, moon, stars or planets. Tape these to the black background of the creation mural. Then, give the children two or three cotton balls. Show them how to pull on the cotton ball to create fluffy clouds. Have the children glue the clouds to the top of the blue savannah section of the mural (Section 2).

Transition to Bible Learning Activities: When most of the children have completed their part of the mural, signal to the teachers to begin the Bible learning activities. The children will stay with the same teacher for the first activity. Then, the team leader will ring a bell or turn on and off the lights to signal time to clean up and move to the next activity. The children need to move at the same time. Decide ahead of time the order in which the children will move to the next activity. Arrange the activities in the room to make it easy to move from one activity to the next.

Sightings Along the Safari **(Bible Learning Activities)**

Art Activity: Make creation books.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Light brown butcher paper (to cover table); **Resource Item 4: Creation Books;** 8 ½" x 11" yellow cardstock (2 per child); 8 ½" x 11" cardstock (white and light blue, one each color per child); white and black tempera paint; paint trays or pie tins; felt pieces (cut to size of paint trays); round sponge paint brushes (available from www.discountschoolsupply.com); crayons and markers; white cotton balls (3 or 4 per child; optional); glue sticks (optional); drying rack

Description: Each child will make a creation book that he or she will take home at the end of the week. The children will add pictures to the book every day and form a booklet about creation. Each page has Bible verses that correlate with the activity for that day.

Preparation: Print the creation book front cover on 8 ½" x 11" yellow cardstock (one per child) Print page two on 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock and page three on 8 ½" x 11" light blue cardstock. The other piece of yellow cardstock will be used for the back cover. Cover the table with light brown butcher paper. Place white and black paint in separate paint trays or foil pie pans. A piece of felt or folded paper towels may be put in the bottom of the pans to create a stamp pad for the sponges. This controls the amount of paint on the sponges.

Guide the activity: Give the children the front cover to decorate. They may use crayons or markers. Make sure each child writes his or her name on the front cover. Give the children page two and write their name on the back of the page or let the child write his or her name. Then, the children will sponge black paint on the bottom half of page two. Hang the pictures on a drying rack or some place out of the children's reach. Next, give the children page three and have them write their name on the back of the page. On page three, the children will sponge paint white

clouds for day two of the creation story. Place the white paint trays on the table and have the children sponge white clouds in the blue sky! **Optional idea:** Cotton balls may be used to make the clouds in the sky. The children will pull apart the cotton balls to make them fluffy! Glue them on page three. The creation books will be assembled on the last day of VBS.

Bible story conversation: As the children are painting, discuss the first and second days of creation. Say, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.* Talk about how God created everything out of nothing. He created light and dark and heaven and earth. Ask the children what we would do without light. Prompt them to think about how difficult and different everything would be if we could not see.

Bible Verse Activity: Play a team Bible verse game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; poster board (half sheets, 7 colors); masking tape or Velcro® (rough side only); markers

Preparation: Cut seven large "stones" from the poster board sheets. Write the following Bible verse words on the stones: *God made the blind people see* (Luke 7:21). Have masking tape available to secure the stones to the floor. If the room has carpet, press the rough side of the Velcro® to each stone. This will hold the stone in place. Place a Bible marker in your Bible at Luke 7:21.

Guide the activity: This is a movement activity designed to encourage retention and understanding of the Bible verse. Open the Bible to Luke 7:21 and read the Bible verse to the children. Repeat the Bible verse a few times with the children. Show the children how to hop along the stones. Encourage the GROUP to repeat the words as the child hops to each successive stone. At the final stone, the GROUP will repeat the entire verse in unison. A teacher should sit on the floor near the words to assist in guiding the activity. If desired, write the words to the other Bible verses on stones, too. Use different colors of poster board to keep the verses separated.

Dramatic Play Activity: Make shadows.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Reading lamp (cool light bulb, if possible)

Preparation: Place a reading lamp in a corner of the room that has white, empty wall space so that students can create shadows with the light.

Guide the activity: Using the reading lamp, allow children to create shadows on the wall with their hands. The teacher may want to give examples of animals—open hand as if creating an alligator mouth or a horse. A helpful website for this activity is: www.shadow-puppets.com. The website gives free pictures and instructions for many animals.

Bible story conversation: Talk with the children about how everything was dark at the beginning of the world. Tell them that God created light so that man could enjoy the beauty of the earth. Discuss how the blind man, Bartimaeus, could not see the sky or day or night until Jesus healed him. He could then see everything that God created. Practice the verse *God made the blind people see* (Luke 7:21). Discuss what it would be like if we could not see all of the things God created for us.

Mission Activity: Learn about Zambia and make an African drum.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 5: Mission Story and Pictures; 8 ½" x 11" copy paper; map of Africa; coffee cans or oatmeal containers with lids (1 per child); colorful contact paper or 9" x 12" construction paper; crayons; stickers (music, nature, safari animals)

Preparation: Before the session, cover the sides of oatmeal or coffee cans in colorful contact paper or construction paper. Replace the lid. Cover the lid (optional). Make a copy of the Mission Story and Pictures (Resource Item 5) on copy paper.

Guide the activity: Tell the Mission Story (Resource Item 5) about the country of Zambia. Show the map of Africa and locate the country of Zambia. Show the pictures to the children. After telling the story, guide the children to decorate the cans with crayons, markers, and stickers. Play an upbeat instrumental song and let the children play their drums. Then, sing *Jesus Loves Me* and ask the children to play their drums. Say, *In Zambia, drums are used in African music*.

Bible conversation: *Thank you, God, for music. We can use our music to praise and worship God.*

Nature Activity: Play a "day and night activities" game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 6: Day and Night Activity Pictures; blue poster board; 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper; black marker; beanbag; painter's tape

Preparation: Divide a piece of blue poster board into nine equal sections. Print the day and night pictures (**Resource Item 6**). Tape or glue the pictures of things we do during the day and night, one per square, on the poster board (creating a grid). Provide extra pictures if the children want to continue playing the game.

Guide the activity: Follow the instructions given to play two different games with the children.

Activity #1: Children will take turns tossing the beanbag on a different square and discussing whether the activity occurs at night or during the day. These answers may vary from child to child depending on varying home schedules. Talk about why we do things at night instead of during the day and vice versa.

Activity #2: Whisper a day or night activity to a child to act out. Examples include: sleeping, brushing teeth, riding a bicycle, reading a book, playing a sport, grocery shopping, walking the dog, eating breakfast or dinner, etc. The children may be divided into two teams to play the game.

Bible story conversation: In *Genesis 1:1*, the Bible tells us, *In the beginning, God created the world*. Discuss how dark and light and day and night were created on the first day and then the sky was created on the second day. Discuss what we see in the sky at night and what we see in the sky during the day.

Puzzle and Game Activity: What's missing?

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Cafeteria tray; objects from the room, such as, a Bible, book, plastic animal, cookie cutter, block, car, and truck; blanket or cloth

Preparation: Place the items on a tray. Cover them with a blanket or cloth. Place the other blanket close by to hide the object removed.

Guide the activity: Show each item to the children and talk about them. Then, cover them with a blanket or piece of cloth. Remove one item from the tray and place the object under another blanket or piece of cloth, being careful not to let the children see which object you chose. Remove the cloth and ask the children to look at the tray and decide which item is missing. Call on children who raise their hands. When a child guesses correctly, allow the child to choose an object to hide.

Bible story conversation: Talk with the children about Bartimaeus and what it might have been like for him before he could see. Discuss what things he could not fully enjoy before he could see. Discuss what things he could see and enjoy after God healed him. Ask the children to close their eyes and think about what they would miss seeing if everything were dark.

Snack Time: Eat vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies and drink white and chocolate milk.

Materials needed: **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign;** dry erase marker; vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies (one each per child); napkins; small paper plates and cups; milk and chocolate milk (optional); pitcher of water

Preparation: Write the food items on the Allergy sign. Place it in a visible location for parents to see. Place the cookies on each child's plate.

Guide the activity: Invite the children to enjoy a snack of "light" and "dark" cookies and white or chocolate milk. For children with milk allergies, offer water.

Bible story conversation: Say a thank-you prayer for the food. Review the Bible story for today.

Clean-up time: To signal cleanup time, flash the light on and off, or sing a cleanup song. Guide and assist the children as they are cleaning up the Bible learning activities.

Transition to group time: When you are ready for group time to begin, get the flashlight and signal the activity transition by turning off the lights in the room except for the bathroom light. Turn on the flashlight and lead the class to the group circle by guiding them with the flashlight.

Serengeti Circle **(Bible Story Group Time)**

Materials needed: Flashlight (for transition activity); Bible; 9" x 12" construction paper (black, white, light blue, green, yellow, purple, red, pink, gray and orange); **Resource Item 7: Bible Verse Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" cardstock (gray, yellow, blue); **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock; lunch-size brown paper bag; bandage, coffee filter, and hot chocolate package; teaching pictures showing day and night and the sky and Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus; basket (for Bible markers)

Preparation: Make an eyeglass shape from black construction paper. Write, *God made the blind people see* (Luke 7:21) with a white crayon on the eyeglass shape and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a white circle and color half of it black with a marker or crayon. Write, *God made day and night* (Genesis 1:5) on the circle and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a circle shape out of light blue construction paper. Also, cut a freehanded cloud shape out of white construction paper and glue it on top of the circle. Write, *In the beginning God created the world* (Genesis 1:1) on the cloud shape and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible.

Copy the **Bible Verse Markers (Resource Item 7)** on gray, yellow, and blue cardstock. Provide one verse per child. Place them in a basket. Copy the **Bible Markers (Resource Item 8)** onto 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock. These are the Bible markers for the entire week of VBS. Place the Genesis 1:1-8 and Mark 10:46-52 markers in the Bible.

For the Bible verse activity, gather seven sheets of various colors of construction paper and write the Bible verse "*God made the blind people see*" *Luke 7:21* on the pieces of paper, writing one word per sheet. Tape the sheets of construction paper around the room. Place the bandage, coffee filter, and hot chocolate package in a lunch-size brown paper sack. These items are not easily recognized by touch.

Sing: "This is What the Bible Says" (to the tune of "London Bridge")

"This is what the Bible says, Bible says, Bible says.
This is what the Bible says. God made the world."

Getting started: Show the children the bag filled with the three items. Choose a child to reach into your paper bag and try to identify one object by touch. Let one or two other children also try. Show the objects and explain that our eyes help us to see all the things God made. Say, *Today we are going to hear a story about God giving us light and helping a blind man see!*

Tell the Bible story: Open your Bible to Genesis 1:1-8. Say, *Listen as I tell you the story about creation. This story is found in Genesis, the first book in the Old Testament.* This book tells us how God made the world and everything in it. This week we will learn more about how God made our world and how he made us. Be familiar enough with the story so you can tell it, not just read it.

Days One and Two of Creation and Jesus Makes a Blind Man See

In the beginning, there was nothing but darkness. There was nothing to hear, nothing to see, nothing to smell, nothing to feel, and nothing to taste. Only God was there. God said, *Let there be light* and there was light to see. Day and night were created on the first day.

On the second day, God made the sky. With our eyes we can see the sky. With light, we can see the world around us. God made the sky and God made the light.

Jesus was God's Son. He could do things that people could not do. Open the Bible to the marked scripture in Mark. Say, *Now I'm going to tell you a story from the New Testament book of Mark. We hear stories about Jesus in the New Testament.*

One day a man named Bartimaeus, who could not see, was sitting on the side of the road asking people for money. He could not work because he could not see the sky or the light. When he heard that Jesus was coming down the road, he hoped that Jesus would make his eyes see again. Bartimaeus could not see Jesus but he wanted Jesus to know he was there, so he began to shout, *Jesus! Help me!* People told Bartimaeus to stop shouting but he continued to call for Jesus. Jesus

heard him and called for Bartimaeus to come to him. Bartimaeus told Jesus that he wanted to see again. Bartimaeus could not see the sky. He could not see the day, he could not see the night, but suddenly Jesus made his eyes to see again. Bartimaeus could see the sky that God made. He could see the light and all the things around him.

God made the light. God made the sky. God made the day and night on the first and second day. Jesus helped Bartimaeus see all the things God made.

Read Bible verses: Invite a child to select a marker. Whisper the Bible phrase to him and prompt him to tell it to the group. Ask the group to repeat the Bible phrase. Then, allow the child to choose a **Bible Verse Marker (Resource Item 7)** from the basket that matches the color of the one he or she chose from the Bible. The child can take the Bible marker home. Repeat until all verses have been read.

Bible verse activity: One of the Bible verses for today is *God made the blind people see* (Luke 7:21). Tell the children that you have taped words from the Bible verse on the wall around the room. Choose one child to come and get the flashlight. Tell the children that the lights will be turned off but the light from the flashlight will help find the words! Tell the child to find one word. Then, the child should give the flashlight to another child. Continue playing until all the words are found. When all words have been located, put the children in the correct order and have all the children repeat the Bible verse.

Sing: "God Made the Day" (tune—"The Farmer in the Dell")
"God made the day and God made the night.
God made the sky and God made the light."

Make life application: *Think about all of the wonderful things that you like to look at every day. Do you like to look at the beautiful flowers and trees that God made? Do you like to look at your sister or your brother smiling at you? Do you have a pet that you like to watch run around or jump up and down? God gave us eyes to see all that he made. He gave us light to see the wonderful things he created.*

Pray: *Thank you, God, for making the day and night. Thank you for helping us to see all that you created. Thank you for giving us eyes to enjoy trees, flowers, family, and friends. Thank you, God, for everything.*

Safari's End **(Closing Activity)**

This activity is the closing activity every day. The purpose is to review the creation story (what God created each day) and the Bible verses learned throughout the week. The handmade Bible markers used during the ***Serengeti Circle*** should be saved and added to the chart every day during this activity. Use this activity while waiting on parents to arrive. Keep the children

playing the game while the other teachers are greeting the parents and quietly retrieving the children from the group time area.

Materials needed: Poster board (white); handmade Bible markers (prepared for group time); painter's tape; "Day and Night" activity game (from nature activity)

Preparation: Prepare a review chart to use each day. Divide the poster board into five equal columns. Write the five days of VBS across the top of the poster board. Post the chart in the group time area so that the children can look at it throughout the week.

Guide the activity: Begin by asking the children what God made on the first day. Tape the black and white circle onto the chart and read the Bible verse printed on it. Ask the children to repeat it with you. Next, ask them to recall what God created on the second day. As they answer, tape the blue circle/white cloud shape onto the chart and read the Bible verse printed on it. Ask the children to repeat the verse. Tape the eyeglasses die cut to the chart and read the Bible verse. Ask the children to repeat the verse with you. As the week progresses and more items are added to the review chart, encourage the children to recall what they have learned on previous days. Play the day and night activity game while waiting on parents to come.

Session 2



God Keeps Us Safe

Bible Story and Scripture:

Days Three and Four of Creation and Jesus Calms the Storm
Genesis 1:9-19 and Mark 4:35-41

Daily Bible Verses:

God made the sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 1:16).

God made plants with seed (Genesis 1:11).

God helps me. I will not be afraid (Hebrews 13:6).

Bible Truth:

God separated the water from the land and created plants, the sun, moon, and stars on the third and fourth day of creation. Jesus has power over nature and we can trust him to keep us safe.

Learning Aim:

Children will learn that God separated the water from the land and created plants, the sun, moon and stars. They will also learn that God helps us and keeps us safe.

Preparing for the Session

Teacher Devotional

[The comments in this devotional provide an overview of the studies for all ages in this Vacation Bible School and will help you know what is being taught in the various age groups. Give special attention, of course, to the emphases for the age group you are teaching.]

Pop culture often portrays space as the final frontier, but God's creation is filled with frontiers. Scientists attempt to conquer unseen causes of disease in the medical frontiers, and physicists work on the tiniest bits of reality we know of to understand the nature of the universe. It would be easy for humanity to become so caught up in the complexity of life and miss the fact that God cares for us. Genesis portrays the Creator of creation and also the fact that the Creator cares for us.

Jesus demonstrated his control over nature and its laws in various ways, but it is important to emphasize that Jesus was not doing this to become a first-century hero—or perhaps a superhero—to the people. Rather, Jesus performed the two miracles in Matthew 14:22-32 in order to meet the needs of the people.

Pray for boys and girls today in Vacation Bible School that they may sense God's power to meet our every need. This power is the same power that hung the stars in place as well as the power God showed through Jesus to meet the needs of people.

Plan with the Bible Teaching Team

- Read the Bible story of creation in Genesis 1:9-19 and the story of Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41. Then, read the teacher devotional material to prepare your heart for teaching. Pray for each teacher and child in your room.
- Prepare ahead for ***Serengeti Circle*** group time. There are items to gather and Bible markers to prepare.
- Send home the **Parent Letter (Resource item 24)** with new children today.
- Read through the ***Gathering at the Game Reserve***, ***Sightings along the Safari***, and ***Safari's End*** activities to make sure you have everything you need for Day 2. It's better to know ahead of time rather than when you arrive at VBS!
- Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** by the door with everything the children will taste or touch.
- Continue making individual pictures of each child or a group picture of the children and the teachers.
- Prepare nametags for new children.

Gather These Materials

The materials are in order as they appear in the session:

- ❑ White butcher paper
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (white)
- ❑ Dot markers

- ❑ Large star stickers (5 or 6 per child)
- ❑ White poster board (2 pieces per group)
- ❑ Yellow and orange markers or crayons
- ❑ Gold glitter or glitter glue (optional)
- ❑ Glue
- ❑ Masking tape
- ❑ Scissors (optional)
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ **Resource Item 4: Creation Books (pages 4 and 5)**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (2 sheets per child)
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (green, yellow and orange)
- ❑ Markers or crayons
- ❑ Star stickers
- ❑ Scissors
- ❑ Glue sticks
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (9 colors)
- ❑ Die-cut flowers
- ❑ Tongue depressors (9)
- ❑ Permanent marker
- ❑ Masking tape
- ❑ Florist foam (at least 12" x 18" x 2 ")
- ❑ Sentence strip
- ❑ Muslin (18" x 24" pieces, 1 per child)
- ❑ Leaves (different kinds)
- ❑ Blocks of wood (at least 1" x 4" pieces)
- ❑ Butcher paper
- ❑ 16oz water bottles (new or cleaned recycled) with labels removed (one per child)
- ❑ Large pitcher of water and funnel (if using recycled bottles)
- ❑ Blue food coloring
- ❑ Tiny plastic boats (1 per child)
- ❑ Empty dishpan or cat litter box
- ❑ Colored masking or electrical tape
- ❑ **Resource Item 9: Prayer Cards**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock
- ❑ **Resource Item 10: Mission Story and Pictures**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper
- ❑ Pictures of children at New Day Orphanage (www.newdayorphanage.org)
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" copy paper
- ❑ Glue sticks
- ❑ Crayons or markers
- ❑ Clear plastic dessert plates (2 per child)
- ❑ Dried flowers (flat as possible)
- ❑ Colored masking tape

- ❑ Yarn
- ❑ Clear tape
- ❑ Scissors
- ❑ Permanent markers
- ❑ Sentence strip
- ❑ **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign**
- ❑ Dry erase marker
- ❑ Flower shaped sugar cookies (one per child)
- ❑ Frosting
- ❑ Sprinkles (1 or 2 bottles)
- ❑ Plastic knives (one per child)
- ❑ Napkins
- ❑ Small paper plates and cups
- ❑ Pitcher of water
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ **Resource Item 11: Bible Verse Markers**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" cardstock or copy paper (red, green, yellow)
- ❑ **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers**
- ❑ Teaching pictures or magazine pictures of the sky, land, trees, plants, flowers, oceans, rivers and lakes
- ❑ Teaching picture of Jesus calming the storm
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (red, green, blue, orange, and yellow)
- ❑ Blue cloth (3' x 4')
- ❑ Star stickers
- ❑ Small flower pot
- ❑ Review chart (from Session 1)
- ❑ Bible markers (handmade, used in group time)
- ❑ Sun and rays (used in group time)
- ❑ Painter's tape

Guiding the Session

***Note: Post the Allergy Alert sign.**

Greeting and Welcome

The director will greet children and parents at the door and place a nametag on the child. Be sure that each child is checked in properly. Guide the child to the teacher wearing the same color of nametag to begin the welcome activity.

Gathering at the Game Reserve **(Welcome Activity)**

Materials needed: 9" x 12" construction paper (white); dot markers; large star stickers (5 or 6 per child); white poster board (2 pieces per group); yellow and orange markers or crayons; gold glitter or glitter glue (optional); glue (optional); masking tape; scissors (optional)

Preparation: Before the session, cut out two large white construction paper circles to represent the sun and the moon. Sunrays may also be cut out to go with the sun. One group can be in charge of coloring and decorating the sun and moon and placing star stickers in the sky on the mural. The other groups can add the flowers and more stars to the mural. Cut or die cut flowers (one per child) or draw simple flower patterns on white construction paper. If you choose to draw the flower patterns, allow the children to cut out the flowers. They need practice in using scissors to develop fine motor skills.

Guide the activity: Place the sun and moon shapes on the floor with the yellow and orange markers or crayons. Encourage the children to decorate the sun and moon with yellow and orange markers or crayons. If they want to add rays to the sun, allow them to decorate them with the markers, crayons, glitter or glitter glue. Give the dot paints to the groups decorating the flowers. Give the children stars to stick in the sky. Allow them to glue the flowers and stars, sun and moon on the Savannah section (second section) of the mural.

Transition to Bible learning activities: When most of the children have completed their part of the mural, signal to the teachers to begin the Bible learning activities. The children will stay with the same teacher for the first activity. Then, the team leader will ring a bell or turn on and off the lights to signal time to cleanup and move to the next activity. The children need to move at the same time. Decide ahead of time the order in which the children will move to the next activity. Arrange the activities in the room to make it easy to move from one activity to the next.

Sightings Along the Safari **(Bible Learning Activities)**

Art Activity: Add to the creation book.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; **Resource Item 4: Creation Books (pages 4 and 5);** 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (2 pieces per child); 9" x 12" construction paper (green, yellow and orange); markers or crayons; star stickers; scissors; glue sticks

Preparation: Print pages four and five on blue cardstock. Place the materials on the art table. They will work on day three first so the materials for day four should be on a resource table close

by. Cut green construction paper into 4" x 8" rectangles (1 per child) for the grass. Give each child a 4" x 4" square of yellow and orange construction paper for the sun and moon.

Guide the activity: Open your Bible to Genesis 1:9-19 and review with the children what God made on the third and fourth days of creation. Show the children how to snip their piece of green construction paper with scissors to resemble grass and glue it to page four. Invite them to draw flowers, trees and other plants on the page. The sun and moon may be cut from the yellow and orange squares. Encourage them to draw the shape before cutting. The sun, moon and stars will be added to page five of the booklet.

Bible story conversation: *God enjoyed making the sun, moon, stars, grass, flowers, and trees for us. We need to thank him for creating these things for us. Thank you, God, for the sun, moon, stars, grass, flowers, and trees. Why do you think God gave us the sun? What about the moon and stars?* Talk with the children about the importance of each.

Bible Verse Activity: Play a flower garden Bible game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; 9" x 12" construction paper (9 colors); die-cut flowers; tongue depressors (9); permanent marker; masking tape; florist foam (12" x 18" x 2"); sentence strip; Bible verse activity from Session 1

Preparation: Make nine die cut flowers or draw simple flowers on nine different colors of construction paper. Tape the flower shape onto a tongue depressor. Using a permanent marker, write the words, *God helps me. I will not be afraid* (Hebrews 13:6) on each flower (one word per flower with the Bible reference on one flower). Write the verse on a sentence strip.

Guide the activity: Open your Bible to Hebrews 13:6 and read the verse. Talk about times when the children may have been afraid. Encourage the children to repeat the verse with you as you point to the words on the sentence strip. Instruct the children to take turns "planting" the flowers in the florist foam in order to complete the verse. Call on a child to find the first word of the verse. Point to the word on the sentence strip to help the child find the matching word on the flower. Help the child push the flower into the foam. Continue finding the words until the Bible verse is "planted." Plant the flowers in order of the Bible verse. Encourage them to repeat the verse once their garden is planted. Repeat the activity as time allows. Play the game from Session 1 to review the Bible verse.

Blocks Activity: Make a leaf imprint.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Muslin (18" x 24" piece, 1 per child); leaves (different kinds); blocks of wood (at least 1" x 4" pieces); butcher paper

Preparation: Cut the muslin into 18" x 24" pieces. Gather many plant leaves (different kinds), and wooden blocks. Do not use the wooden blocks from your block shelf because the wood will be stained with the green chlorophyll from the leaves. Cover the table with butcher paper.

Guide the activity: Fold the muslin in half and place two to three plant leaves between the sheets of muslin. Encourage the children to take turns pounding the leaves with the wooden blocks all over its surface. Do this activity on the floor instead of a table. After pounding the leaves, remove the leaves and show the children how the leaf's imprint is left on the muslin.

Bible story conversation: *The Bible says that God made plants with seed on the third day of creation. Can you think of some different kinds of plants? Some plants and flowers are beautiful in our yards. Trees help to make our air clean, give us shade on a hot day, and even provide us a place to play. Still there are other kinds of plants we use for food. Can you think of plants that we eat? God gave us many different kinds of plants. Thank you, God, for plants!*

Dramatic Play Activity: Create a storm in a bottle.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: 16oz water bottles (new or clean recycled) with labels removed (one per child); large pitcher of water and funnel (if using recycled bottles); blue food coloring; tiny plastic boats (1 per child); empty dishpan or cat litter box; colored masking or electrical tape

Preparation: If using new water bottles, dump out two-thirds of the water before the session. If using recycled water bottles, make sure they have been thoroughly cleaned. Remove the labels from the bottles. Place water in a large pitcher and have the other items suggested on the table.

Guide the activity: Instruct the children to place the boat inside the plastic water bottle. If using recycled empty water bottles, put the bottle inside the dishpan or cat litter box before pouring the water into the bottle. Place a funnel into the neck of the bottle and assist each child in pouring water into the bottle until it is one-third full. Place 3-4 drops of blue food coloring into the bottle. Replace the lid and make sure it is on TIGHT! Place tape around the lid. Once the lid is securely placed on the bottle, encourage each child to simulate the storm in today's story by shaking the bottle and rocking the boat. Give each child the opportunity to call out *Be still!* just as Jesus did and stop shaking the bottle so the water will stop.

Bible story conversation: *Why does God send the rain?* Talk to the children about why rain is important for us and for the rest of creation (helps things grow, cools and warms the temperature, keeps the rivers, lakes and oceans full). *Have you ever been afraid during a thunderstorm? The thunder and lightning can be loud and scary just like the storm in the Bible. In Hebrews 13:6, the Bible says, God helps me. I will not be afraid. When you feel worried or scared, remember that God is with you and wants to help you feel better.*

Mission Activity: Learn about New Day Orphanage and make prayer cards.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 9: Prayer Cards;** 8 ½" x 11" white cardstock; **Resource Item 10: Mission Story and Pictures;** 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper; pictures of children at New Day Orphanage (www.newdayorphanage.org); 8 ½" x 11" copy paper; glue sticks; crayons or markers

Preparation: Before the session, copy the **Prayer Cards (Resource Item 9)** on white cardstock and the **Mission Story and Pictures (Resource Item 10)** on white copy paper. Visit the website of New Day Orphanage and click on the tab labeled "New Day Kids." Print pictures of the current children living in the orphanage. There is more information on each child when you click on each child's picture (age, things he or she likes to do). Cut out the pictures of the children you have chosen (one picture per child).

Guide the activity: Tell the **Mission Story (Resource Item 10)** to introduce the children to the New Day Orphanage. Show pictures of the orphanage and the children you have chosen to use on the prayer cards. Allow the children to choose a child's picture to glue on the inside of the **Prayer Card (Resource Item 9)**. Instruct the children to write about themselves and draw a picture on the card.

Bible conversation: Say, *Let's pray for these children.* Pray for the children by name if possible.

Nature Activity: Make a Bible verse flower press.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Clear plastic dessert plates (2 per child); dried flowers (flat as possible); colored masking tape; yarn; clear tape; scissors; permanent markers; sentence strip

Preparation: Write the verse *God helps me. I will not be afraid* (Hebrews 13:6) around the edge of one plate with a permanent marker. Or, print the verse on a sentence strip for the children to copy. Encourage all the children who are willing to try and write the verse.

Guide the activity: Instruct the children to place a piece of yarn to make a hanger on the back of one plate and secure it with clear tape. If the children are writing the Bible verse, give instructions to write the verse around the edge of the other plate. Instruct the children to lay their flowers on the plate with the Bible verse printed on it. Then, demonstrate how to "press" their flowers by placing the plate with the yarn on top of the flowers and press the plate down (plates nest together to hold the flowers in place). Allow the children to help you place the colored masking tape around the edges of the plate to secure the two plates together.

Bible story conversation: *In Genesis 1:11, the Bible says, God made plants with seed. He created flowers that we can enjoy smelling and seeing. These flowers grew from a small seed. What would a seed need in order to grow into this beautiful flower? Talk about the sun, shade, rain, dirt, and food and how God provides each one of them so that the flower can grow. God gave this flower everything it needs to grow just like he gives you the things you need to grow and be healthy. God cares about you and is there to listen to you anytime you want to talk to him. He loves to listen to your thoughts and feelings and wants to know about anything that is important to you.*

Snack Time: Eat flower shaped sugar cookies.

Materials needed: Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign; dry erase marker; flower shaped sugar cookies (one per child); frosting; sprinkles (1 or 2 bottles); plastic knives (one per child); napkins; small paper plates and cups; pitcher of water

Preparation: Write the food items on the Allergy sign. Place it in a visible location for parents to see. Place a cookie and a small amount of frosting on each child's plate. Place a cup of water at each child's place. Place some clear tape over some of the holes in the sprinkle bottle. This will limit the amount of sprinkles on the cookies!

Guide the activity: Invite the children to ice the flower cookie if desired. Pass the sprinkle bottles around so each child can add sprinkles to their cookies.

Bible story conversation: Say a thank-you prayer for the food. Review the Bible story for today.

Clean-up time: To signal cleanup time, flash the light on and off, or sing a cleanup song. Guide and assist the children as they are cleaning up the Bible learning activities.

Transition to group time: When most of the activities are cleaned up, announce to the children that you will be playing a game. Tell them to listen to your instructions and when you call out *freeze*, they are to stop and freeze in that position. Suggestions include hopping, marching, or

acting like different animals. Wrap up the activity by having the children tip toe toward the group time circle before calling out *freeze* one last time.

Serengeti Circle **(Bible Story Group Time)**

Materials needed: Bible; **Resource Item 11: Bible Verse Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" cardstock or copy paper (red, green, and yellow); **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers;** teaching picture or magazine pictures of the sky, land, trees, plants, flowers, oceans, rivers and lakes; teaching picture of Jesus calming the storm; 9" x 12" construction paper (red, green, blue, orange, and yellow); blue cloth (3' x 4'); star stickers; small flower pot

Preparation: Cut a red sailboat die cut or draw a sailboat on red construction paper. Write: *God helps me. I will not be afraid* (Hebrews 13:6) on the sailboat and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a green earth outline die cut. Glue the green earth outline onto a circle of blue construction paper (creating the water background). Write: *God made plants with seed* (Genesis 1:11) on the earth and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a strip of yellow construction paper and draw a sun and moon and stick star stickers on it. Write: *God made the sun, moon, and stars* (Genesis 1:16) on the yellow strip and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Place the large piece of blue cloth to illustrate the storm with the children in the group time area.

Make a sun for the **Bible verse activity** by cutting a circle from a large piece of yellow construction paper. Cut out nine rays from orange construction paper and write: *God helps me. I will not be afraid* (Hebrews 13:6) on the rays (writing one word and the reference on each ray).

Print the **Bible Verse Markers (Resource Item 11)** on red, green and yellow cardstock or copy paper. Make one verse per child. Place them in a small flowerpot. Place the Bible markers (**Resource Item 8**) in the Bible story references.

Getting started: Begin by reviewing what God created on Days 1 and 2. Then say, *God had more to make! Listen to see what he created on Days 3 and 4!*

Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" (tune—"Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")
"The Bible is a special book, special book, special book,
The Bible is a special book. It tells God made the world."

Tell the Bible story: Open your Bible to Genesis 1:9-19. Say, *Listen as I tell you the story about creation. This story is found in Genesis, the first book in the Old Testament.* Also have a marker in Mark 4:35-41. Be familiar enough with the story so you can tell it, not just read it.

Days Three and Four of Creation and Jesus Calms the Storm

On the first day, God made light, day and night. On the second day, God separated the waters and made the sky and the seas and then formed the land. God saw that this was good. Trees, plants, and flowers began to grow on the land just as God planned. All this happened on the third day.

On the fourth day, God put stars and planets in the sky. The sun would give light in the day and the stars and planets would give light at night. Everything God made was good.

God made the water—in the bathtub, the oceans, rivers, and lakes. *Now, we're going to hear a story from the New Testament. This story takes place on a lake!*

Open your Bible to Mark 4:35-42. *Mark is the second book in the New Testament.* I need your help telling this story! Jesus and his helpers were in a boat on a lake when a thunderstorm began. Give these instructions: 1. Rub your hands together for light rain; 2. Snap your fingers for raindrops; 3. Pat your legs and then stomp your feet for a thunderstorm. Choose two children to hold the blue material at each end creating "waves" by moving it up and down. Begin telling the story.

One day Jesus and his helpers were in a boat going across a lake. As the boat sailed across the lake, Jesus was tired and decided to rest. A wind began to blow. The rain started to fall (rub your hands together). Then, big raindrops started to fall (snap your fingers). The boat began to rock back and forth. Lightning flashed in the sky. Thunder made the men afraid (pat your legs and stomp your feet). The water from the waves began to pour into the boat (move the blue cloth to make waves). The men woke Jesus up and cried for him to help them before they drowned. Jesus stood up and calmed the storm. Jesus told them not to be afraid. The helpers were amazed that Jesus could stop the storm and keep them safe.

God made the water and the land. God made the sun, moon, and stars. Jesus had the power to make the water and the storm calm down to keep his friends safe.

Read Bible verses: Place the red, green, and yellow Bible markers in a flowerpot. Invite a child to select a marker from the Bible. Whisper the Bible phrase to him and prompt him to tell it to the group. Ask the group to repeat the Bible phrase. Then, allow the child to choose a Bible verse marker from the flowerpot that matches the color of the one he or she chose from the Bible. The child can take the Bible marker home. Repeat until all verses have been read.

Bible verse activity: Read Hebrews 13:6. Using the sun and rays, allow the children to repeat the verse and place the rays in the correct order around the sun.

Sing: "God Made the Moon" (tune—"The Farmer in the Dell")

"God made the moon and stars in the sky,
God made the sun that shines so high."

Make life application: *Are there times when you feel afraid? Jesus' disciples were afraid of the storm. Jesus showed that he cared for them by calming the storm and making them feel safe again. In Hebrews 13:6, the Bible says, God helps me. I will not be afraid. God created water, rain, land, and many other things. Jesus has power over everything God created. He listens when you talk to him. When you feel afraid you can ask Jesus for help and Jesus will always hear you, anytime and anywhere!*

Pray: *Dear Jesus, thank you for listening to me when I am afraid. Thank you for caring for me!*

Safari's End **(Closing Activities)**

(Use this activity while waiting on parents to arrive. Keep the children playing the game while the other teachers are greeting the parents and quietly getting the children from group time.)

Materials needed: Review chart (from Session 1); Bible marker (handmade from group time); sun and rays (from Bible verse activity); painter's tape (for adhering to poster board)

Preparation: Gather the review chart, the handmade Bible verses from group time and the sun and rays from the Bible verse activity.

Guide the activity: Begin by asking the children what God made on the third day of creation. Tape the earth die cut onto the chart. Next, ask them to recall what God created on the fourth day. Tape the sun, moon, and star Bible marker in the appropriate place. Finally, tape the sailboat die cut to the chart and read the Bible verse. Ask the children to repeat the verse with you. Review the Bible verses from Session 1. Place the sun and the rays on the floor and have the children place the sunrays in the correct order while waiting on parents to come.

Session 3



Jesus Cares For Us

Bible Story and Scripture:

Day Five of Creation and Jesus Cares For Us
Genesis 1:20-23 and Matthew 6:25-34

Bible Verses:

God made the birds and fish (Genesis 1:21).
God knows what you need (Matthew 6:32).
God cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).

Bible Truth:

God cares for the birds and fish that he created, but he cares even more for us.

Learning Aim:

Children will know that God made the birds and fish and cares for them but he cares for us even more.

Preparing for the Session

Teacher Devotional

[The comments in this devotional provide an overview of the studies for all ages in this Vacation Bible School and will help you know what is being taught in the various age groups. Give special attention, of course, to the emphases for the age group you are teaching.]

Many children have a pet at some point in time. These pets usually become the responsibility of the parents in most homes.

Think about the domestic dogs, cats, or fish that are neglected. Some grow sick and even die because of captivity and dependence. They cannot seek the natural way of feeding themselves like their wild relatives in the animal kingdom. In the same way, houseplants become dependent on their gardener to sustain life.

The animals and plants in our homes are not that different from our human lives on earth in relation to God, our Creator and Sustainer. We are dependent on God for each breath we take. While we cultivate food and build shelter, God provides the resources for these developments. We are using what God provides for us. We depend on God for our very existence.

In our lifetimes, advancements have been made to help us become healthier and smarter, travel farther and faster, and communicate over long distances, but our needs remain the same. Help boys and girls realize that God is the source of food, life, and love.

Plan with the Bible Teaching Team

- Read the creation story in Genesis 1:20-23 and the story of how God cares for us in Matthew 6:25-34. Also, read the teacher devotional material for more insight into the scripture.
- Gather and prepare the needed items for ***Serengeti Circle*** group time. Hide small feathers around the room.
- Send home the **Parent Letter (Resource Item 24)** with new children today.
- Read through the ***Gathering at the Game Reserve***, ***Sightings along the Safari***, and ***Safari's End*** activities to make sure you have everything you need for Day 3.
- Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** by the door with everything the children will taste or touch.
- The group picture or pictures of each child should be completed today so there is ample time to print the pictures.
- Prepare nametags for new children.

Gather These Materials

The materials are in order as they appear in the session:

- ❑ Die-cut or patterns of birds and fish (one of each per child)

- ❑ 9" x 12" white construction paper
- ❑ Small feathers
- ❑ Flat 8mm or 3/4" metallic discs or flat sequins
- ❑ Glue sticks
- ❑ Masking tape
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ **Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 6)**
- ❑ 8 1/2" x 11" blue cardstock (one sheet per child)
- ❑ Bird, fish, and seashell stickers
- ❑ Markers and crayons
- ❑ Blue cellophane or plastic wrap
- ❑ Clear tape
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ 3' long dowel rod (1/2" diameter)
- ❑ Yarn
- ❑ Donut magnet
- ❑ Paper clips
- ❑ Blue butcher paper
- ❑ 9" x 12" orange construction paper
- ❑ Sentence strip
- ❑ Bible verse activities from Session 1 and 2
- ❑ Plastic 4" or 6" flower pot (1 per child)
- ❑ Brown butcher paper
- ❑ Permanent marker
- ❑ Fun foam stickers (flowers or nature items)
- ❑ Potting soil
- ❑ Rye grass seed or small flower plants
- ❑ Small scoops
- ❑ Cat litter boxes or dishpans (3)
- ❑ Large vinyl or plastic table cloth
- ❑ Small spray bottles
- ❑ Glad® Press 'n Seal multipurpose sealing wrap
- ❑ **Resource Item 12: Mission Story and Pictures**
- ❑ 8 1/2" x 11" copy paper
- ❑ "Just for Fun" video (www.newdayorphanage.org)
- ❑ Play-dough (homemade or purchased)
- ❑ Safari animal cookie cutters
- ❑ Sandwich size zipper bags (optional)
- ❑ Permanent marker (optional)
- ❑ Magnifying glasses
- ❑ Nature items to examine, such as, feathers, plants, rocks, and leaves
- ❑ Poster board (white, half sheet)
- ❑ Washable stamp pads
- ❑ Permanent marker

- ❑ Baby wipes
- ❑ **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign**
- ❑ Dry erase marker
- ❑ Fruit-flavored O-shaped cereal
- ❑ O-shaped oat cereal
- ❑ Goldfish® crackers
- ❑ Mini marshmallows
- ❑ Raisins
- ❑ Foam bowls (5)
- ❑ Plastic spoons or small scoops (5)
- ❑ Sandwich size zipper bags (one per child)
- ❑ Napkins
- ❑ Pitcher of water
- ❑ Cups
- ❑ Permanent marker
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers**
- ❑ 9" x 12" construction paper (pink, blue, and orange)
- ❑ **Resource Item 13: Bible Verse Markers**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" cardstock or copy paper (pink, blue, and orange)
- ❑ Fish bowl
- ❑ 12" x 18" construction paper (red)
- ❑ Gift bag
- ❑ Small box of raisins
- ❑ Piece of clothing
- ❑ Picture of a house
- ❑ Toy car
- ❑ Review chart
- ❑ Handmade Bible verses (used in group time)
- ❑ Fish puzzle (used in group time)
- ❑ Painter's tape

Guiding the Session

***Note: Post the Allergy Alert sign.**

Greeting and Welcome

The director will greet children and parents at the door and place a nametag on the child. Be sure that each child is checked in properly. Guide the child to the teacher wearing the same color of nametag to begin the welcome activity.

Gathering at the Game Reserve **(Welcome Activity)**

Materials needed: Die-cut or patterns of birds and fish (one of each per child); 9" x 12" construction paper (white); small feathers; flat 8mm or $\frac{3}{4}$ " metallic discs or flat sequins; glue sticks; masking tape

Preparation: Die-cut or cut patterns of fish and birds on white construction paper. Place feathers to decorate the birds and metallic discs to decorate the fish in each group.

Guide the activity: Instruct each child to decorate the birds by gluing feathers onto them and to decorate the fish by gluing metallic disks onto them. Write the child's name on back of the bird and fish so they can take them home at the end of the week. Use masking tape to attach the fish and birds to the African Savannah section (Section 2) of the mural.

Transition to Bible learning activities: When most of the children have completed their part of the mural, signal to the teachers to begin the Bible learning activities. The children will stay with the same teacher for the first activity. Then, the team leader will ring a bell or turn on and off the lights to signal time to cleanup and move to the next activity. The children need to move at the same time. Decide ahead of time the order in which the children will move to the next activity. Arrange the activities in the room to make it easy to move from one activity to the next.

Sightings Along the Safari **(Bible Learning Activities)**

(Today, the Dramatic Play and Nature Activities are combined in order to decorate and plant the seeds or flowers. Extra time may be added to each activity).

Art Activity: Add to the creation book.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; **Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 6);** 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" blue cardstock (one sheet per child); bird, fish, and seashell stickers; markers and crayons; blue cellophane or plastic wrap; clear tape

Preparation: Print page six of the creation book on blue cardstock. Cut blue cellophane or plastic wrap into 10" x 6" pieces (one per child). Place page six of the creation book, bird, fish, and seashell stickers, markers, crayons, blue cellophane, and clear tape on the table.

Guide the activity: Talk about what God created on day five of creation. As you talk about the birds, encourage the children to draw birds or use stickers on the top of the page. They may add a sun, clouds or whatever they would like to the picture. Then, read the verses about God creating the fish. Instruct the children to draw fish or use fish stickers on the bottom half of the page.

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They can add seashell stickers or other stickers they would find under water. After the children have finished, help them cover the bottom half of the page with the blue cellophane. Use the tape to secure it at the top and around the backside of the paper. This helps to create a "horizon" to visually separate the sky from the sea. Make sure the child's name is on this page.

Bible story conversation: As the children work on their page, review what God made each day of creation. Remind them that in Genesis 1:21, the Bible tells us on the fifth day *God made the birds and fish*.

Bible Verse Activity: Play a "Go Fish" game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; 3' long dowel rod (1/2" diameter); yarn; donut magnet; paper clips; blue butcher paper; 9" x 12" orange construction paper; sentence strip; Bible verse activities from Session 1 and 2

Preparation: Make a magnetic fishing pole by tying a piece of yarn to the end of a dowel rod. Then, tie a donut magnet to the end of the yarn. Die-cut or cut out five fish shapes from orange construction paper. Place a paper clip on the mouth of the fish. Write one word of the Bible verse, *God cares for you* (1 Peter 5:7) on each fish. Make extra fish and write the other two verses (one word per fish) on the fish. Follow directions below with each verse. Cut a "pond" out of blue butcher paper to place the fish for the fishing game. Write the Bible verse on a sentence strip for the children to see.

Guide the activity: Open the Bible to 1 Peter 5:7. Read the verse and point to the words on the sentence strip as you read. Show the words on the fish as you read the verse again. Choose one child to "fish" for the first word. Show the word on the sentence strip if the child needs help. Place the first word on the floor. Ask the child to choose a friend to go next. Continue the game until all the words and the Bible reference have been "caught!" Say the verse as a group. Throw the fish back into the pond and play the game again. If time, play the Bible verse games from Sessions 1 and 2.

Dramatic Play and Nature Activities: Decorate a flowerpot and plant seed or flower plants.

Team members responsible: _____ and _____

Materials needed for dramatic play activity: Plastic 4" or 6" flowerpot (one per child); brown butcher paper; permanent marker; fun foam stickers (flowers or nature items)

Materials needed for nature activity: Potting soil; rye grass seed or small flower plants; small scoops; cat litter boxes or dishpans (3); large vinyl or plastic table cloth; small spray bottles; Glad® Press 'n Seal multipurpose sealing wrap

Preparation for dramatic play activity: Cover the table to be used with light brown butcher paper. Gather one flowerpot per child. Place the foam stickers on the table.

Preparation for nature activity: Place the tablecloth on the floor close to the table. On the tablecloth, place all three cat litter boxes or dishpans. In the first dishpan, fill it with potting soil and place a small scoop in the soil. Place the rye grass seeds in a small bowl. Place a plastic spoon in the bowl. In the second dishpan, place the rye grass seeds and the flower plants. In the third litter box, place the spray bottles. Put the sealable wrap (to cover the pots) and a permanent marker (to write the names on the pots) close by to cover the pots.

Guide the dramatic play activity: Children will decorate their pots using the foam stickers. Write each child's name on the bottom of a pot with a permanent marker.

Guide the nature activity: After the children decorate their pots, ask them to sit on the floor with the other teacher and plant their seeds or flower. Show them how to hold their pot over the potting soil as they gently fill their pot two-thirds full. Then, have the child move to the next box and plant some seeds or a flower. Return back to the soil and add a little soil to the top of the seeds or the flower. Then, have the children walk to the last box where they will water their plants with a spray bottle. After the seeds or flowers are planted, cover them with the sealable wrap. Cover the flowers with a bigger piece to form a cap over the flower.

Bible story conversation: Say, *Thank you, God, for the beautiful flowers you created. Thank you for our beautiful world. God made the flowers and he cares for them but he cares for us even more.*

Mission Activity: Make play-dough animals.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 12: Mission Story and Pictures;** 8 ½" x 11" copy paper; "Just for Fun" video (www.newdayorphanage.org); play-dough (homemade or purchased); safari animal cookie cutters; sandwich size zipper bags (optional); permanent marker (optional)

Preparation: Make a copy of the **Mission Story and Pictures (Resource Item 12)**. If possible, watch the "Just for Fun" video on the website by going to the website and clicking on the tab labeled "movies." The video shows a little boy named Francis making animals out of dirt and water. If it's not possible to watch the video, talk and show pictures of safari animals. Purchase or make play-dough so the children can create animal shapes. Find safari animal cookie cutters so the children can create an animal.

Guide the activity: Show the video of Francis and talk about the games and activities the children do in Africa. Tell the story (**Resource Item 12**) and show the pictures. After the story, say, *Let's make some African safari animals out of play-dough*. Assist the children in flattening the play-dough and pressing the cookie cutter animal shape into the play-dough. If the children are taking the animal home, place the shape into a sandwich size zipper bag. Write their name with a permanent marker on the bag.

Bible conversation: Pray for the Tidwell family as they minister to the children at New Day.

Puzzle and Game Activity: Examine objects and thumbprints.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Magnifying glasses; nature items to examine, such as, feathers, plants, rocks, and leaves; poster board (white, half sheet); washable stamp pads; permanent marker; baby wipes

Preparation: Place the nature items and magnifying glasses on the floor. Place the poster board, stamp pads, and baby wipes on the table

Guide the activity: Show the children how to look at the objects under the magnifying glass. Talk about what they see—veins of the leaves, small insects, and indentations in the rocks. While children are viewing these objects, begin getting the children's thumbprints to go on the poster board. Show the children how to press their thumb onto the stamp pad and then press it on the poster board. Write each child's name under his or her print. Encourage the children to examine the thumbprints under the magnifying glass. Discuss how God made each one different. Discuss the size, shape, and lines on each finger. Talk about the fact that each thumbprint is different from the other thumbprints.

Bible story conversation: Talk about how God thought carefully about each and everything he made. *Thank you, God, for making the flowers, trees, birds, fish, and all of us!*

Snack Time: Make and eat trail mix.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign; dry erase marker; fruit-flavored O-shaped cereal; O-shaped oat cereal; Goldfish® crackers; mini marshmallows; raisins; foam bowls (5); plastic spoons or small scoops (5); sandwich size zipper bags (one per child); napkins; pitcher of water; cups; permanent marker

Preparation: Place all the snack items in separate bowls. Place the spoons or scoops in the bowls.

Guide the activity: The children can scoop the ingredients and place them in their bag. They may choose not to have some of the items. Write the children's names on the bag with a permanent marker.

Bible story conversation: Before the children eat the snack, say a thank-you prayer to God for the trail mix and water.

Clean-up time: To signal cleanup time, flash the light on and off, or sing a cleanup song. Guide the children as they are cleaning up the Bible Learning Activities.

Transition to group time: When you are ready for group time to begin, tell the children that you have hidden feathers around the room. Instruct them to start looking and bring one feather to group time. If a child finds more than one feather, remind the child to leave it so another child can find it.

Serengeti Circle **(Bible Story Group Time)**

Materials needed: Bible; **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers;** 9" x 12" construction paper (pink, blue, and orange); **Resource Item 13: Bible Verse Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" cardstock or copy paper (pink, blue, and orange); fish bowl; 12" x 18" construction paper (red); gift bag; small box of raisins, piece of clothing or sock, picture of a house, and a toy car

Preparation: Cut a child shape or draw a child pattern on pink paper and write: *God cares for you* (1 Peter 5:7). Place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a bird shape from blue construction paper and write: *God knows what you need* (Matthew 6:32) on it and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut an orange fish shape and write: *God made the birds and fish* (Genesis 1:21) on it and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Place Bible markers (**Resource Item 8**) in the Bible story references.

Copy the **Bible Verse Markers (Resource Item 13)** on pink, blue, and orange cardstock or copy paper. Make one verse per child. Place them in a fish bowl.

For the **Bible Verse Activity**, draw a large, simple fish shape on the red construction paper. Write the words of the verse *God cares for you* (1 Peter 5:7) on the fish and cut the fish into "puzzle" pieces (about 6 or 8 pieces). Place the pieces in a gift bag. Gather a box of raisins, sock or other piece of clothing, a picture of a house, and a toy car.

Getting started: Say, *Your mom and dad take care of you everyday. I brought some things today that are clues about some of those things. As I hold up an object, see if you can guess what I'm thinking!* Show the raisins and call on a child to guess how this item helps take care of them (parents provide food). Then, show the sock or other piece of clothing (parents provide clothes for us to wear). Show the picture of the house (provides a place live). Lastly, show the picture of the car (provides a way for us to get from one place to another).

Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" (tune—"Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")
"The Bible is a special book, special book, special book.
The Bible tells us that God made the birds and fish."

Tell the Bible story: Open your Bible to Genesis 1:20-23. Say, *These verses will tell us what God created on Day 5. Is Genesis in the Old or New Testament? That's right—the Old Testament.* Tell the story in your own words using lots of conversation.

Day Five of Creation and Jesus Cares for Us

On the first day, God made light, day and night. On the second day, God made the sky. On the third day, God made water, land, and plants. On the fourth day, God made the sun, moon, and stars but God was not finished with his work.

On day five, God saw that the water, oceans, and rivers were empty, so he made fish to swim and dive under the waves. God looked at the sky and made birds to fly and soar through the air. He told the birds to have babies and fill the sky with little birds. He told the fish to have babies and fill the water with little fish. God looked at all he had made and said, *This is good.*

God made water and he filled the water with fish. God made the sky and he filled the air with birds. God takes care of the birds and fish. God takes care of people, too.

Open your Bible to the marked Matthew 6:25-34 scripture. Say, *Now listen to our New Testament story. It is found in Matthew, the first book of the New Testament.* Jesus knew that people sometimes are afraid or worry about clothing, food, and their bodies. Jesus wanted the people to know that God cares for them just as he cares for the birds and fish.

Jesus told the people to stop worrying about their bodies. He told them that God made them and he would care for them. He also said not to worry about the kinds of clothes they wear. There are many more important things to worry about than clothing. God makes the flowers with many pretty colors. God gives birds a place to live and food to eat. He takes care of us, too. Jesus reminded the people to do what God says and he would take care of them.

Read Bible verses: Invite a child to select a Bible marker from the Bible. Whisper the Bible phrase to him and prompt him to tell it to the group. Ask the group to repeat the Bible phrase. Then, have the child reach into the fish bowl and pull out a Bible verse that is the same color as the shape he chose. Repeat until all children have a Bible verse to take home.

Bible verse activity: Place the fish puzzle pieces in a gift bag. Choose a child to reach into the bag and pull out a piece of the puzzle. Ask the child to place it on the floor. Continue choosing children to pull the pieces of the puzzle. As they find pieces that go next to each other, have them put them in place. When the puzzle is complete, say the verse aloud. Repeat several times.

Sing: "God Made the Fish" (tune—"The Farmer in the Dell")

"God made the fish that swim in the sea.
God made the birds that fly over me."

Make life application: *God cares about our feelings, what we do, what we think and what we need.* Discuss that God is always with us to listen, help, and love us. *We can tell God how much we love him.*

Bible story conversation: *After making day, night, sky, land, water, plants, the sun, moon, and stars, God still was not finished making wonderful things. On the fifth day he made fish and birds. God made so many wonderful things, but he loves us more than anything he created. He created us and wants us to be happy and not to worry about anything.*

Pray: *Thank you, God, for caring about us so much. Thank you for always being with us. We love you. Amen.*

Safari's End **(Closing Activities)**

(Use this activity while waiting on parents to arrive. Keep the children playing the game while the other teachers are greeting the parents and quietly getting the children from group time.)

Materials needed: Review chart; handmade Bible verses (child, bird, and fish); fish puzzle (used in group time); painter's tape

Preparation: Gather the painter's tape and the shapes used as markers during the "Read Bible verse" activity. Place the fish puzzle pieces back into the bag.

Guide the activity: Begin by asking the children what God made on the fifth day of creation. Tape the fish and bird shapes onto the chart. Next, hold up the child and ask if anyone remembers the verse on the child shape. Review the verse together and tape the child shape to the chart. As time allows, review the previous days. Re-work the fish puzzle if there is time.

Session 4



God Sent Us Jesus

Bible Story and Scripture:

Day Six of Creation and God Sent Us Jesus
Genesis 1:24-31 and Luke 2:1-20

Bible Verses:

God made the animals (Genesis 1:25).
I am wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14).
God loved us and sent his Son (1 John 4:10).

Bible Truth:

God made us and showed his love to us by sending Jesus.

Learning Aims:

Children will know that God made animals and people and that he loves them so much that he sent Jesus.

Preparing for the Session

Teacher Devotional

[The comments in this devotional provide an overview of the studies for all ages in this Vacation Bible School and will help you know what is being taught in the various age groups. Give special attention, of course, to the emphases for the age group you are teaching.]

How could a God love his creation so much that he would provide so many rich, wonderful, and mighty things and then allow human beings the opportunity to destroy the work of his hands through disobedience and sin? When humanity chose to do things their own way instead of God's way, the impact was not only on people but also on all of creation. All of creation groaned when human beings chose to disobey. God made man and woman and gave them everything, including the choice to be faithful to him or not and the consequences of that choice. The choice they made was to follow their way instead of God's way. We still make that choice.

In response, it would have been easy for God to walk away and allow humanity to die with their choices. Instead, God gave humanity and, indeed, creation, an opportunity for redemption.

God made us and offered us choices. Now God is saving us from the consequences of our wrong choices—the punishment of an eternity without him, his peace, and his love. When baby Jesus came to this earth, God emptied himself into the form of a baby destined to live and die for us. The Creator gave and gave and continues to give to us.

As you teach the Christmas story along with the creation story, help boys and girls see that God loved us so much that he both created us and saved us. God did not stop at creation. He did not stop at Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection. He continues to love us and save us today. We can depend on God.

Plan with the Bible Teaching Team

- Read both the Old and New Testament stories for today found in Genesis 1:24-31 and Luke 2:1-20. Read the teacher devotional. You are laying foundations for faith as you teach these young children. Pray for each one by name and ask God to give you wisdom as you teach today.
- Prepare for ***Serengeti Circle*** group time. There are items to gather and Bible markers to prepare.
- Read through the ***Gathering at the Game Reserve***, ***Sightings along the Safari***, and ***Safari's End*** activities to make sure you have everything you need for Day 4.
- Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** by the door with everything the children will taste or touch.

Gather These Materials

The materials are in order as they appear in the session:

- ❑ **Resource Item 2: Black and White African Animal Pictures**

- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper or cardstock
- ☐ People die cuts or magazine pictures of adults, children, and babies
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ **Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 7)**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (one per child)
- ☐ Photographs of the children or the entire group
- ☐ Animal print paper (available from craft stores or from www.discountschoolsupply.com)
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Animal stickers
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Beanbag or sock (homemade beanbag)
- ☐ Jingle bells, rice, or beans (items to fill homemade beanbags)
- ☐ Nativity die-cuts (one set per child) or old Christmas cards depicting the nativity story
- ☐ 9" x 12" construction paper (dark blue)
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Glitter glue (optional)
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Sentence strips (4)
- ☐ Plastic animals
- ☐ People stand-up figures;
- ☐ Wooden blocks
- ☐ Nativity set (optional)
- ☐ **Resource Item 14: School Supply List for Children in Zambia**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper
- ☐ Video: Kabonga School – Zambia (located at <http://vimeo.com/116872082>)
- ☐ **Resource Item 15: Mission Story and Pictures**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper
- ☐ School supplies (collected before and during VBS)
- ☐ Computer paper or shoeboxes (standard size)
- ☐ Paper grocery bags or brown shipping paper
- ☐ Clear tape and mailing tape
- ☐ Extra packing paper or bubble wrap
- ☐ Tongue depressors
- ☐ Animal stickers
- ☐ 16 oz. plastic cup
- ☐ **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign**
- ☐ Animal crackers and gingerbread men cookies
- ☐ Paper plates and cups
- ☐ Pitcher of water
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ 9" x 12" construction paper (white, manila, blue)

- ❑ **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers (already copied)**
- ❑ **Resource Item 16: Bible Verse Markers**
- ❑ 8 ½" x 11" cardstock (white, tan, and blue)
- ❑ Small nativity set
- ❑ Christmas wrapping paper
- ❑ Gift box (box and lid wrapped separately in Christmas wrapping paper)
- ❑ Tongue depressors (5)
- ❑ Animal stickers (5 animals that are distinctively different in physical size)
- ❑ Review chart
- ❑ Handmade Bible verses (from group time)
- ❑ Painter's tape
- ❑ Animal charade game (from puzzle activity)

Guiding the Session

***Note: Post the Allergy Alert sign.**

Greeting and Welcome

The director will greet children and parents at the door and place a nametag on the child. Be sure that each child is checked in properly. Guide the child to the teacher wearing the same color of nametag to begin the welcome activity.

Gathering at the Game Reserve **(Welcome Activity)**

Materials needed: Resource Item 2: Black and White African Animal Pictures; 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper or cardstock; people die cuts or magazine pictures of adults, children, and babies; crayons or markers; glue sticks; scissors; masking tape

Preparation: Before the session, make sure the savannah section of the mural has enough space for animals and people. If not, add some blue paper to the mural. Print the black and white animal pictures. Make enough copies so each child will have one animal to place on the mural. Place the animals and people pictures on the table but do not cut them out. Give the children the opportunity of cutting with scissors. Place the crayons or markers on the table for them to color the animals and people if using the patterns. ****Choose four of the animals to make extra copies for the Bible Verse Activity during group time. Each child will need one animal.***

Guide the activity: As children come to your center, tell them that today they will hear that God made animals and people. Give instructions as needed to begin the activity. As they complete their animal and people, give them masking tape to adhere them to the savannah section (Section 2) of the mural.

Transition to Bible learning activities: When most of the children have completed their part of the mural, signal to the teachers to begin the Bible learning activities. The children will stay with the same teacher for the first activity. Then, the team leader will ring a bell or turn on and off the lights to signal time to cleanup and move to the next activity. The children need to move at the same time. Decide ahead of time the order in which the children will move to the next activity. Arrange the activities in the room to make it easy to move from one activity to the next.

Sightings Along the Safari **(Bible Learning Activities)**

Art Activity: Add to the creation book.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 7);** 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (one per child); photographs of each child or of the entire group; animal print paper (available from craft stores or from www.discountsschoolsupply.com); glue sticks; animal stickers

Preparation: Print page 7 of the creation book on blue cardstock. Before the session, glue each child's picture or the group picture on page 7 of the creation books. Cut animal print paper into small squares (about 1"). Place the glue sticks on the table (one per child).

Guide the activity: The children will create an animal print frame around the picture with the animal print squares. Animal stickers may be offered to place on the top half of the page.

Bible story conversation: As the children create their animal frame, talk about all the animals that God made. Then, talk about God sending Jesus to us. In Psalm 139:14, the Bible says, *I am wonderfully made. Thank you, God, for sending Jesus and making us.*

Bible Verse Activity: Build a Bible verse game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Bible; bean bag or sock; jingle bells, rice, or beans (items to fill homemade beanbag)

Preparation: Make or purchase a beanbag. A simple beanbag may be made from a sock. Simply fill the sock with rice, beans, or jingle bells. Push them to the bottom of the sock. Then, tie the sock in a knot. Cut off the top of the sock if it's too long.

Guide the activity: Stand with the children in a circle. Open the Bible to 1 John 4:10. Say the Bible verse with the children several times, *God loved us and sent his Son* (1 John 4:10). Explain

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the game. You will say the first word of the verse then toss the beanbag to a child in the circle. The child will say the first two words of the verse then toss the beanbag back to the teacher. The teacher will say the third word of the verse and then toss the beanbag to another child in the circle. That child will say the first three words of the verse. Continue in the same manner until the entire verse and reference have been said. Then the bean bag will be passed around the circle, slowly at first, with each child saying a word of the verse as the bean bag is passed to him or her. The group can try to say the verse faster and faster or practice one of the other Bible verses as time allows.

Block Activity: Play with animals and people figures and/or play with nativity set.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Plastic animals; people stand-up figures; blocks; nativity set (optional)

Preparation: Place the animals, people, and blocks in the block center. Build a fence or make a zoo cage around the animals and/or play with the nativity set.

Guide the activity: Let the children use their imagination to play with the animals and people. For example, they may choose to use blocks to make a "zoo" or a house for the people. The children can also act out the Christmas story as they play with the nativity set.

Bible story conversation: *God made animals different from people. God loves each of us. Thank you, God, for making and loving us. Thank you, God, for Jesus.*

Dramatic Play Activity: Make a Christmas card.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Nativity die-cuts (one set per child) or old Christmas cards depicting the nativity story; 9" x 12" construction paper (dark blue); glue sticks; glitter glue (optional); crayons or markers; sentence strips (4)

Preparation: Prepare a set of nativity die cuts for each child in the class or locate old Christmas cards with pictures of the nativity scene. Cut the pictures off the cards. Fold a piece of dark blue construction paper in half. Place glue sticks, glitter glue, and crayons or markers on the table. Write "God sent us Jesus" on four sentence strips for the children to use as an example.

Guide the activity: The children will arrange and glue the nativity die cuts or a picture of a nativity scene to the front of their card. Glitter glue may be used to embellish the die cuts or pictures. On the inside of the cards, show the children the sentence strip with the words "God

sent us Jesus." Encourage them to write the words. If it's too difficult for the younger children, write the words for them. Write the child's name on the front or back of the card.

Bible story conversation: As the children are making their cards, review the Bible stories. Ask, *What did God make on the sixth day of creation? What very special gift did God give to us? Thank you, God, for Jesus.*

Mission Activity: Pack school supplies for children in Zambia.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 14: School Supply List for Children in Zambia;** 8 1/2" x 11" white copy paper; Video: Kabonga School – Zambia (located at <http://vimeo.com/116872082>); **Resource Item 15: Mission Story and Pictures;** 8 1/2" x 11" white copy paper; school supplies (collected before and during VBS); computer paper or shoe boxes; brown grocery bags or brown shipping paper; clear tape and mailing tape; extra packing paper or bubble wrap

Preparation: Make a copy of the **School Supply List (Resource Item 14)** and the **Mission Story and Pictures (Resource Item 15)**. Show the video: Kabonga School – Zambia (located at <http://vimeo.com/116872082>). The children will see pictures and hear the needs of the school as Rev. Adam Camp, a pastor from Rosemont Church in LaGrange, Georgia, shares stories from his mission trip. This video will help your children understand how the school supplies will help these children. If possible, ask Sunday School departments or the entire church to purchase the items listed on the school supply list (**Resource Item 14**). Cut the shipping paper to fit the box before the session. Place boxes around the church to collect the school supplies. Then, the collected items may be divided up between the VBS classes. A letter may also be sent home with the children on the first day of VBS to ask the children to bring some of the items by day four. Send the boxes to:

First Baptist Church Rotan
201 N McKinley Ave.
Rotan, TX 79546

Guide the activity: Tell the **Mission Story (Resource Item 15)** before packing the boxes. After telling the story about the orphanage, talk about the school supplies and how they will be used in Zambia. Show the video if possible. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for all the people who purchased the supplies for the children. Guide the children as they pack the boxes. Put bubble wrap or extra paper into the box to keep the supplies from rolling around. After the items are securely placed in the box, place the lid on the box and secure it with tape. Then, wrap the box with the brown shipping paper. Let the children help with putting the clear tape on the seams. After the session, you can cover all the seams with the clear mailing tape. Place a label with the address to FBC, Rotan. Place your church's return address so they will know who sent the supplies!

Bible story conversation: *Thank you, God, for the children in Zambia. Thank you for all the school supplies that were given for the children.*

Puzzle Activity: Play an animal charades game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Tongue depressors; animal stickers; 16 oz. plastic cup

Preparation: Put animal stickers on the ends of tongue depressors. Include animals found on the farm, at the zoo, in the wild, and pets. Put the craft sticks, sticker end down, in a cup.

Guide the activity: The children will take turns drawing a stick out of the cup and acting out the animal pictured. They can make the sound of the animal, too. The other children will try to guess which animal is being acted out. Before the game begins, remind the children to raise their hand if they want to guess. The child who guesses correctly can pull the next stick.

Bible story conversation: *Say, God made the animals on day six. Thank you, God, for animals.*

Snack Time: Eat animal crackers and gingerbread men cookies.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign; animal crackers and gingerbread men cookies; paper plates and cups; pitcher of water

Preparation: Put two or three of each kind of cookie on the children's plates. Pour a cup of water for each child.

Guiding the activity: As the children eat their cookies, review the Bible story for today.

Bible story conversation: Say a thank-you prayer for the food. Say, *Thank you, God, for the animals you created. Thank you for making all of us!*

Clean-up time: To signal clean-up time, flash the light on and off or sing a clean-up song. Guide the children as they are cleaning up the Bible learning activities.

Transition to group time: Get the extra black and white African animals pictures (**Resource Item 2**) that were copied for the welcome activity. When the children begin coming to group

time, give each child an animal. When you are ready for group time to begin, describe one of the animals and ask all of the children who have that animal to switch seats. Continue until all animals have been described. This is a good game to change seats of children who may not need to sit together! Place the African animal mats in the group time area.

Serengeti Circle **(Bible Story Group Time)**

Materials needed: Bible; 9" x 12" construction paper (white, manila, blue); **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers; Resource Item 16: Bible Verse Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" paper (white, tan, and blue); small nativity set; Christmas wrapping paper; gift box (box and lid wrapped separately in Christmas wrapping paper); tongue depressors (5); animal stickers (5 animals that are distinctively different in size)

Preparation: Cut a white horse shape and add black stripes to resemble a zebra. Write, *God made the animals* (Genesis 1:25) on the zebra and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a person shape from the manila paper and write, *I am wonderfully made* (Psalm 139:14) on the person and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a baby shape from blue paper and write, *God loved us and sent his Son* (1 John 4:10) on the baby and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Place the **Bible Markers (Resource Item 8)** in the Old and New Testament references for the Bible story. Wrap a boxed nativity scene set.

Print the **Bible Verse Markers (Resource Item 16)** on white, tan, and blue paper. Make one verse per child. Wrap a gift box (box and lid wrapped separately) in Christmas giftwrap. Place the Bible verse markers in the wrapped gift box.

For the ***Bible Verse Activity***, prepare tongue depressors with the words *I am wonderfully made* (Psalm 139:14) written on the sticks (one word and reference per stick). Place five animal stickers on the end of the craft sticks, choosing animals that are distinctively different in physical size. Place the smallest animal on the stick with the first word. Place the second word on the animal that is a little bigger than the first. Continue until all the words and the reference are in order.

Getting started: Show the children the wrapped present (the nativity scene set) and ask them to guess what it might be. They may say a present or gift. Tell them today's Bible story talks about God giving us a wonderful present. Say, *We will un-wrap this gift after we hear what God created on Day 6! Can you guess what God created on Day 6?*

Sing: "The Bible is a Special Book" (tune—"Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")
"The Bible is a special book, a special book, a special book.
The Bible tells us God made you and me."

Tell the Bible Story: Open your Bible to Genesis 1:24-31. Say, *God still had more to create! Listen to hear what he created on day six.*

Day Six of Creation and God Sent Us Jesus

On the first day, God made light, day and night. On the second day, God made the sky. On the third day, God made water, land, and plants. On the fourth day, God made the sun, moon, and stars. On the fifth day, God made fish for the water and birds for the air.

On the sixth day, God looked at the land, plants, and trees. He began to make animals to live on the land—cows, horses, antelopes, and elephants. God saw that this was very good but he was not finished yet. He saved the best part for last. God made people and he gave the people a great gift. He told the people that the land, sky, water, plants, and animals were theirs to take care of and enjoy. God saw everything he had made and it was very good.

God made the animals and God made people. God even gave the people the land, sky, water, plants and animals to enjoy. But, God had a special gift to give the people. God loved people so much that he gave the best gift of all! *Slowly un-wrap the box until the children can see the nativity scene. Take it out of the box and ask the children what they know about this story.* Open the Bible to Luke 2:1-20. Say, *this story is found in Luke, the third book in the New Testament. Remember, we find stories about Jesus in the New Testament. Listen as I tell you the story.*

Mary and Joseph were making a long trip. Mary was going to have a baby. The young couple had to travel a very long distance from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem. The king had said that everyone had to be counted. When they arrived in Bethlehem, there was not a room for them to sleep and rest. The only place they could stay was in a stable where the animals were kept. While they were there in the stable, baby Jesus was born. God had promised to send Jesus. They wrapped the baby in strips of cloth and placed him in the feeding trough called a manger.

Near this stable, there were shepherds taking good care of their sheep. An angel told them the good news that a special baby had been born. The angels sang thank you songs to God. The shepherds ran to see the baby. They could not believe that they would be the first to see this special child. After the shepherds saw the baby, they went everywhere telling the good news that God had sent a special baby!

God loved people so much that he sent his one and only Son to be a baby. This baby's name was Jesus and he would show people how to love God. God made people and gave us the greatest gift of Jesus.

Read Bible verses: Invite a child to select a Bible marker from the Bible. Whisper the Bible phrase to him and prompt him to tell it to the group. Ask the group to repeat the Bible phrase. Then, show the child the wrapped gift box. Ask him to remove the lid and find a Bible verse that is the same color as the one he chose from the Bible. He may take this Bible verse home. Repeat until all verses have been read.

Bible verse activity: Hold the craft sticks with the animal stickers or lay them in front of you so the children can see the animals. Call on a child to decide which animal is the smallest. Let the children order the animals on the sticks from the smallest to the largest. Then, read the words on the sticks to the children. Let them practice saying the Bible verse. Play the game again if time allows.

Sing: "God Made the Bears (tune—"The Farmer in the Dell")

"God made the bears that climb in a tree.
God made the children--Just like me!"

Make life application: *The shepherds were so happy to see the baby Jesus. After they saw him, they told everyone! Who can you tell about Jesus? What will you say?*

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for making animals and for making us. Thank you, most of all, for sending your Son, Jesus, to help us learn how to love you. Amen.*

Safari's End **(Closing Activities)**

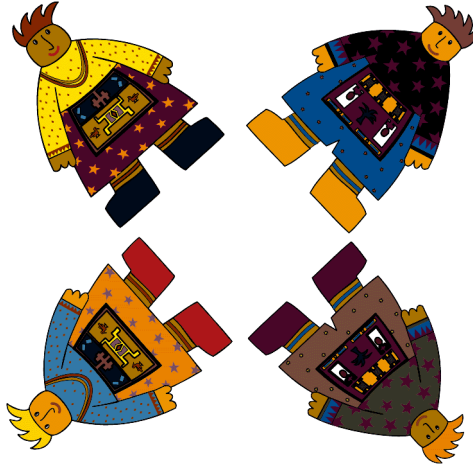
(Use this activity while waiting on parents to arrive. Keep the children playing the game while the other teachers are greeting the parents and quietly getting the children from group time.)

Materials needed: Review chart; handmade Bible verses (zebra, person, baby); painter's tape; animal charade game (from puzzle activity)

Preparation: Place the review chart, the handmade Bible verses, painter's tape, and the animal charade game in the group time area.

Guide the activity: Begin by asking the children what God made on the sixth day. As they answer, tape the zebra and man on the chart. Encourage the children to remember the Bible verses. Show the baby and review the Bible verse together. As time allows, review the previous day's Bible verses. Play the animal charade game while waiting on parents to come.

Session 5



We Worship God

Bible Story and Scripture:

Day Seven of Creation and Paul and Silas Worship God
Genesis 2:1-3 and Acts 16:16-34

Bible Verses:

Think about the wonderful things God made (Job 37:14).
Be glad and sing songs to God (Psalm 9:2).
Give thanks to God for he is good (Psalm 107:1).

Bible Truth:

God set aside a special day for us to worship him.
We can worship him in many different ways.

Learning Aim:

The children will know that worshipping God is important and we can
worship him anytime and anywhere.

Preparing for the Session

Teacher Devotional

[The comments in this devotional provide an overview of the studies for all ages in this Vacation Bible School and will help you know what is being taught in the various age groups. Give special attention, of course, to the emphases for the age group you are teaching.]

People need a *Sabbath*, a day of rest. The idea of a *Sabbath* presents problems for twenty-first century people. The pace of life means that many of us choose to focus on things other than God, and we find it difficult truly to observe a *Sabbath*. Like Adam and Eve, we easily fall into the trap of focusing on ourselves instead of on our Creator and Savior.

Christians should reevaluate their practices and commitments to a day of worship and rest, a day of family and faith. We should ask ourselves, *What is going to last into eternity, and what will fade away?* We should order the day according to the answers.

Another risk for some Christians is that they limit their faith and faith expressions to Sunday. Their faith resides mainly in a day of the week and in a building on a street. Sunday, though, is about refueling for living faith during the rest of the week. Take a few moments and think about how you can revive your life and the life of your family on Sunday so that faith becomes the fabric of each day.

On this day in Vacation Bible School, help children understand that God gave humanity a special day to focus on his love. This Bible study encourages teachers to stress the importance of being connected with church on Sundays but also to remain connected to God throughout the week. Avoid making faith merely a Sunday practice. Focus this session on devotion, good choices, and a lifestyle of worship.

Plan with the Bible Teaching Team

- Read the teacher devotional. Then read the end of the creation story in Genesis 2:1-3 and the New Testament story in Acts 16:16-34. Thank God for your church and for the many families touched by VBS. Pray that they will come back on Sunday. Pray for those families who may not know Jesus Christ. Pray for opportunities to share your faith.
- Prepare for *Serengeti Circle* group time. There are items to gather and Bible markers to prepare.
- Read through the *Gathering at the Game Reserve*, *Sightings along the Safari*, and *Safari's End* activities to make sure you have everything you need for Day 5. **The children will add the last page to their creation book today. Before the session, assemble each child's book and stack the books with their names showing so you can find them quickly. The blank sheet of yellow cardstock will be the back of the book.**
- Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** by the door with everything the children will taste or touch.
- At the end of VBS, make sure everything is put back where it belongs. Leave the room just as you found it or cleaner!

Gather These Materials

The materials are in order as they appear in the session:

- ☐ Brown butcher paper
- ☐ Clear contact paper
- ☐ Tissue paper squares or circles (multi-colored)
- ☐ Baskets (one per group)
- ☐ **Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 8)**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (one per child)
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" yellow cardstock (for back cover of creation book-one per child)
- ☐ Church pattern
- ☐ 9" x 12" construction paper (brown)
- ☐ Crayons and markers
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Clear contact plastic
- ☐ Tissue paper squares or circles (from Welcome Activity)
- ☐ Basket
- ☐ Scissors (optional)
- ☐ Stapler
- ☐ Yellow masking tape
- ☐ Dowel rods (two 1" diameter x 3' long)
- ☐ Sentence strip
- ☐ **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign**
- ☐ Vanilla and chocolate instant pudding mix (1/4 cup of each flavor per child)
- ☐ Milk (for pudding)
- ☐ Medium sized bowls (8)
- ☐ 6 oz. or 8 oz. clear plastic cups (one per child)
- ☐ Plastic spoons
- ☐ Frosted Rice Krispies®, Oreos®, gummy fish, animal crackers, Teddy Grahams®, and star sprinkles
- ☐ Freezer zipper bag (one gallon size)
- ☐ Plastic wrap
- ☐ **Resource Item 17: Mission Story and Pictures**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper
- ☐ Gallon zipper plastic bags
- ☐ Happy face stickers
- ☐ **Resource Item 18: Blessing Bag Items for the Homeless**
- ☐ Donated items for the homeless bags
- ☐ Poster board
- ☐ Black marker
- ☐ Stained glass window shape (2 per child)
- ☐ 9" x 12" construction paper (black, 2 pieces per child)
- ☐ Clear contact plastic
- ☐ Tissue paper 1" squares or circles (multi-colored)
- ☐ Double-stick tape

- ☐ Yarn
- ☐ Hole punch
- ☐ Basket
- ☐ Play money (quarters and bills)
- ☐ Sandwich size baggies
- ☐ Offering plate
- ☐ Poster board
- ☐ Pictures of things our money buys (Bible, tables, chairs, books, snack foods, musical instruments)
- ☐ Large brad
- ☐ Creation snack (from Dramatic Play activity)
- ☐ Pitcher of water
- ☐ Cups
- ☐ Plastic spoons
- ☐ Napkins
- ☐ Play microphone (for transition to group time)
- ☐ Bible (2)
- ☐ 9" x 12" construction paper (white, purple, green)
- ☐ **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers (already copied)**
- ☐ **Resource Item 19: Bible Verse Markers**
- ☐ 8 ½" x 11" cardstock (white, purple, green)
- ☐ Musical instruments, such as shakers, bells, drums, triangles, and rhythm sticks
- ☐ Basket (for instruments)
- ☐ Review Chart
- ☐ Handmade Bible markers
- ☐ Painter's tape

Guiding the Session

***Note: Post the Allergy Alert sign.**

Greeting and Welcome

The director will greet children and parents at the door and place a nametag on the child. Be sure that each child is checked in properly. Guide the child to the teacher wearing the same color of nametag to begin the welcome activity.

Gathering at the Game Reserve **(Welcome activity)**

Materials needed: Brown butcher paper; clear contact paper; tissue paper squares or circles (multi-colored); baskets (one per group)

Preparation: Cut out a large church shape from brown butcher paper (if needed, cut one church shape per group of children). Cut two window openings and cut a door that will open. Cut two

pieces of clear contact paper at least 2" bigger than the window openings on the church. Attach the contact paper to the back of the window so that the sticky side is showing through the opening of the window. Place a basket of tissue paper squares and a church shape at every table.

Guide the activity: Instruct each child to select several pieces of the tissue paper circles and press them onto the windowpanes so that they stick to the contact paper. Encourage them to cover the entire window with the tissue paper. Make sure each child has opportunity to add to the stained glass windows. Attach the church shapes to the third section of the mural.

Transition to Bible learning activities: When most of the children have completed their part of the mural, signal to the teachers to begin the Bible learning activities. The children will stay with the same teacher for the first activity. Then, the team leader will ring a bell or turn on and off the lights to signal time to cleanup and move to the next activity. The children need to move at the same time. Decide ahead of time the order in which the children will move to the next activity. Arrange the activities in the room to make it easy to move from one activity to the next.

Sightings Along the Safari **(Bible Learning Activities)**

Art Activity: Complete the creation book.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 4: Creation Book (page 8); 8 ½" x 11" blue cardstock (one per child); 8 ½" x 11" yellow cardstock (for back cover); church pattern; 9" x 12" construction paper (brown, 2 pieces per child); crayons and markers; glue sticks; clear contact plastic; tissue paper squares or circles (from welcome activity); basket; scissors (optional); stapler; yellow masking tape

Preparation: Copy page 8 of the creation book on blue cardstock (one per child). The children will complete their creation book today. Cut the church shape out of brown construction paper or draw a church shape on the brown paper for the children to cut out. Make sure there are window openings in the church. Place a piece of clear contact plastic on each window opening (sticky side towards front). Place tissue paper in a basket. Place the markers, crayons, and glue sticks on the table.

Guide the activity: The children will decorate the page for today by gluing the church onto their page and placing tissue paper on the windows to create stained glass windows. The children can draw people coming to church, trees, flowers, and sidewalks or whatever they would like to add to their final page. When they finish the last page of their creation book, assemble all the pages in order and add the blank piece of yellow cardstock to the end of the book and staple each child's book together along the left edge. Once you have done this, cover the staples with a strip of yellow masking tape.

Bible story conversation: As the children add the church to their book, remind them that God rested on the seventh day after he worked all week creating everything in the world. Discuss how we have set aside Sunday to rest and go to church to worship God. *In Psalm 107:1, the Bible tells us to give thanks to God for he is good. We can thank God for giving us our church so we can worship him.*

Bible Verse Activity: Play a Bible verse stick dance.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Dowel rods (two 1" x 3' long); sentence strip

Preparation: Write the Bible verse *Think about the wonderful things God made* (Job 37:14) on the sentence strip.

Guide the activity: The teacher should sit down on the floor and take a dowel in each hand, gripping them at the ends. Hold the dowels out in front of you about 12 inches apart. Keep the rods low to the ground as the children jump over them. Determine a rhythmical pattern to follow with the rods. For example, tap the floor twice with the rods and then tap the rods together twice. Once you have found a pattern to follow with the rods, have children begin chanting the Bible verse *Think about the wonderful things God made* (Job 37:14). Invite the children to take turns jumping over the rods while they are chanting the verse. For review, play the Bible activity games from previous sessions.

Bible story conversation: *Paul and Silas knew God was with them everywhere, even in jail! They sang and prayed and worshiped God. It pleases God when we worship him. We don't have to wait until we go to church to worship him. We can worship God anytime and any place just like Paul and Silas. Discuss some places and ways in which we can worship God. The Bible tells us in Psalm 9:2, Be glad and sing songs to God. One way we can worship God is to sing songs to him.*

Dramatic Play Activity: Make a yummy creation snack.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign; Vanilla and chocolate instant pudding mix (1/4 cup of each flavor per child); milk (for pudding); medium sized bowls for ingredients (8); 6 oz clear plastic cups (one per child); plastic spoons; frosted Rice Krispies®, Oreos®, gummy fish, animal crackers, Teddy Grahams®, star sprinkles; freezer zipper bag (one gallon size); plastic wrap

Preparation: Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** on the door with the food items the children will taste. Before the session, make the instant pudding according to the directions on the box. Each child should have about ¼ cup of pudding. Gather medium sized bowls and fill with the following ingredients: chocolate pudding, vanilla pudding, frosted Rice Krispies®, Oreos®, star sprinkles, gummy fish, animal crackers, and Teddy Grahams®. Place a plastic serving spoon in each bowl.

Guide the activity: Give each child a clear plastic cup and plastic spoon. Write the child's name on the cup with a permanent marker if they will eat the "creation" at snack time. Discuss the items in the bowls and use this as a time to review what God created on each day. Place the Oreos® in a freezer zipper bag, seal it and encourage the children to crush them with their hands to make the "dirt." Once the Oreos® are crushed, pour them back into the serving bowl. Say a thank you prayer before the children begin creating their snack. Invite the children to scoop each item in their cup in the following order:

1. Chocolate pudding (dark/night - 1st day)
2. Vanilla pudding (light/day - 1st day)
3. Frosted Rice Krispies® (sky/clouds - 2nd day)
4. Crushed Oreos® (dirt/land - 3rd day)
5. Star sprinkles (stars - 4th day)
6. Gummy fish (fish - 5th day)
7. Animal crackers (animals - 6th day)
8. Teddy Grahams® (people - 6th day)

**NOTE: If the children will eat their snack at snack time, cover the cups with plastic wrap.*

Bible story conversation: *It pleases God when we have a grateful heart and take time to thank him for everything that he has given us. In Psalm 107:1, the Bible tells says Give thanks to God for he is good. God is very good to us. He created a wonderful world for us to live in and enjoy. Discuss other ways that God is good to us. Ask them to share something for which they are thankful.*

Mission Activity: Pack a Blessing Bag for the homeless.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 17: Mission Story and Pictures;** 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper; **Resource Item 18: Blessing Bag Items for the Homeless;** gallon zipper plastic bags (1 per child); happy face stickers; donated items for the homeless bags

Preparation: Make a copy of the **Mission Story (Resource Item 17)** to use as you tell the story. Make a copy of the items to collect for the homeless (**Resource Item 18**). Before VBS, contact local dentists in the area for donations of the toothbrushes and toothpaste. Ask local merchants to

donate the other items or ask the entire church or Sunday School classes to donate some of the items. If your church cannot collect the items, giving a bottle of water with a Bible verse sticker on the bottle would also be appropriate and helpful.

Guide the activity: Refer to **Resource Item 17** to tell the story and show the pictures. Show the pictures as you tell the story. After telling the story, place the items needed to pack a homeless bag on the table. Ask the children to decorate the plastic bag with happy face stickers. Say, *Africa isn't the only place where there are poor people, or where there are people who don't know Jesus. Let's make a blessing bag for the homeless. Keep this in your parents' car and give it to the next homeless person you see.* Talk to them about helping people who do not have a home, clothes, and food. If enough items are donated, allow each child to take home one bag.

Nature Activity: Make a stained glass window.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Stained glass window shapes (2 shapes per child); 9" x 12" construction paper (black, 2 pieces per child); clear contact plastic; tissue paper 1" squares or circles (multi-colored); yarn; hole punch; basket; double-stick tape

Preparation: Before the session, cut stained glass windows (two per child) on black construction paper. Cut out the inside of the window. Cut the clear contact plastic about 2" bigger on all sides. Remove the paper from the sticky side of the contact paper. Place the contact paper sticky-side-up on a table. Lay the window pattern on top of the contact paper. Press the window to adhere the plastic to the paper. Trim the excess contact plastic from the sides of the window. Place the removed paper from the contact plastic on top of the sticky side so the windows may be stacked one on top of the other. Place the pieces of tissue paper in a basket on the table.

Guide the activity: Give each child a window shape. Show them how to peel away the paper, leaving the sticky side of the contact paper face up. Instruct them to place the squares or circles of tissue paper on the sticky side of the contact paper. Make sure they completely cover the contact plastic with the tissue paper. When completed, place double-stick tape to edges of the other church shape and press the two together. Punch a hole in the top of the window frame and tie a piece of yarn so that it can be hung in their window at home. Hold one of the windows up in front of the light so they can see how the light comes through the tissue paper.

Bible story conversation: *When you see this window hanging in your window, remember that we can worship God anytime and any place. Paul and Silas worshiped God in jail. They sang songs and prayed. We can do this, too! The Bible says to think about the wonderful things God made (Job 37:14) and worship him.*

Puzzle Activity: Play an offering plate game.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: Play money (quarters and one dollar bills); sandwich size baggies; offering plate; poster board; pictures of things our money helps buy (Bibles, tables, chairs, books, snack foods, musical instruments); large brad

Preparation: To make the game board, draw a large circle on the poster board. Divide the circle into six equal sections. Place pictures of things our money buys. Some examples are: Bibles, tables, chairs, books, snack foods, and musical instruments. Place a dollar amount on each item. Use simple amounts so the children can "pay" for the items when they land on a particular one. Divide out quarters and one-dollar bills in each child's bag. Draw a spinner arrow on poster board, cut it out and attach it to the middle of the game board with a large brad.

Guide the activity: Give each child a baggie of money to use during the game. Invite children to take turns spinning the spinner on the game board and then putting the appropriate amount of their money into the offering plate. As they place their money in the offering plate, invite them to say aloud, *I can worship God by giving money to _____* (fill in the blank with what the spinner landed on).

Bible story conversation: *One way we worship God is to give our money to our church. Our church uses money for all kinds of important things. Our church uses our money to give to missionaries who tell people about Jesus, to buy Bibles, supplies for our rooms, musical instruments and books. In Psalm 107:1, the Bible tells us to Give thanks to God for he is good. One way we can thank God is to give our money to the church.*

Snack: Eat yummy creation snack.

Team member responsible: _____

Materials needed: **Resource Item 20: Allergy Alert Sign;** Creation snack (made in Dramatic Play); pitcher of water; cups; plastic spoons; napkins

Preparation: Post the **Allergy Alert Sign (Resource Item 20)** outside your door for parents to see. Pour water into cups for the children. Place the snack and a napkin on the table for each child.

Guide the activity: As the children enjoy their snack, review the creation story (see Dramatic Play instructions)

Bible story conversation: Say a thank-you prayer for the food before eating the snack.

Clean-up time: To signal cleanup time, flash the light on and off or sing a cleanup song. Guide the children as they are cleaning up the Bible learning activity.

Transition to group time: When you are ready for group time to begin, signal the activity transition by holding a play microphone and inviting the children to sit down and say into the microphone what they like to do at church.

Serengeti Circle **(Bible Story Group Time)**

Materials needed: Bible (2); 9" x 12" construction paper (white, purple, green); **Resource Item 8: Bible Markers; Resource Item 19: Bible Verse Markers;** 8 ½" x 11" cardstock or copy paper (white, purple, green); musical instruments, such as shakers, bells, drums, triangles, and rhythm sticks; basket (for instruments)

Preparation: Cut a church shape from white construction paper. Write, *Be glad and sing songs to God* (Psalm 9:2) on the church and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Cut a praying hands shape from purple paper. Write, *Give thanks to God for he is good* (Psalm 107:1) on the praying hands and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Write, *Think about the wonderful things God made* (Job 37:14) on a 2" x 8 ½" green strip of construction paper and place it in the appropriate reference in your Bible. Place the **Bible Markers (Resource Item 8)** in the Old and New Testament references for the Bible stories.

Copy the **Bible Verse Markers (Resource Item 19)** onto white, purple, and green cardstock or copy paper. Make one verse per child. Place these markers in another Bible. Gather musical instruments such as jingle bells, shakers, triangles, rhythm sticks, and drums. Place them in a basket or other container

Getting started: Give a musical instrument to three children. Tell them that after the story everyone will get a chance to play an instrument. Lead the children in singing *Jesus Loves Me* or another familiar song while the children play their instruments. *Does anyone know what God did on the last day of creation? God rested and he made this special day for us to rest and worship him. Singing is one way we worship God. Today you will hear the story about the seventh day of creation. God did not create anything! He rested! You will also hear a Bible story about two men who worshipped God.* (Gather the instruments before beginning the Bible story.)

Sing: "The Bible is God's Special Book" (tune—"Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")
"The Bible is God's special book, special book, a special book.
The Bible is God's special book that says God loves us."

Tell the Bible story: Open your Bible to Genesis 2:1-3. Try to be familiar enough with the story that you are telling it and not just reading it.

Day Seven of Creation and Paul and Silas Worship God

On the first day, God made light, day, and night. On the second day, God made the sky. On the third day, God made water, land, and plants. On the fourth day, God made the sun, moon, and stars. On the fifth day, God made fish for the water and birds for the air. On the sixth day, God looked at the land, plants, and trees. He began to make animals to live on the land—cows, horses, antelopes, and elephants. God saw that this was very good but he was not finished yet. He saved the best part for last. God made people. God also gave people the greatest gift of Jesus.

After all God made, he had finished his work. God made the seventh day as a special time for people to rest and worship him. God wanted people to plan ways to spend time praying, singing, and reading the Bible. He gave people a special day to worship him.

Sometimes worshipping God is hard. *Open your Bible to Acts 16:16-34. Acts is in the New Testament.* Our New Testament story is about two people named Paul and Silas.

Paul and Silas were going to a place to worship God. On the way, they saw a young woman who was very sick. People liked it when the girl was sick because she did things that made them laugh. Paul and Silas wanted to help the girl so they made her well. When the people in the town saw that Paul and Silas had made her well, they were angry and put them in jail. They treated Paul and Silas very unkindly. Paul and Silas were put in a jail underground with chains on their legs. At midnight, Paul and Silas were singing songs to God and praying. They worshiped God in jail with chains on their legs. The ground began to shake and the chains fell off and the doors came open.

The man in charge of the jail was very upset. Paul and Silas told him not to worry. They told him that all the prisoners were still there. Paul and Silas told the man about Jesus. The man and his family wanted to learn how to love Jesus.

Read Bible verses: Invite a child to select a marker from the Bible. Whisper the Bible phrase to him and prompt him to tell it to the group. Then, have the child find a matching color Bible marker in the other Bible. Ask the group to repeat the Bible phrase. Repeat until all verses have been read.

Bible verse activity: Invite several children to select an instrument from the basket. Repeat the Bible verse, *Be glad and sing songs to God.* Then, while the children play the instruments, invite them to say the words to today's Bible verse. Encourage the children to take turns and pass their instruments to a friend so everyone can have a turn with the instruments.

Sing: "God Rested" (tune—"The Farmer in the Dell")

"God saw the good things that he had done.
God said, "Rest now, eve-ry-one."

Make life application: *After God created the world, he set aside a special day to rest. After we have a busy week, we set aside Sunday as a special day to rest and go to church to worship God. We can also worship God in many other places and ways other than just at church on Sundays. Can you think of some other places or ways we can worship God?*

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for our church where we can come and worship you. Thank you for our friends and teachers who help us learn about you. Amen.*

Safari's End **(Closing Activities)**

(Use this activity while waiting on parents to arrive. Keep the children playing the game while the other teachers are greeting the parents and quietly getting the children from group time.)

Materials needed: Review chart; handmade Bible verses; painter's tape

Preparation: Place the review chart, church, praying hands, and green strip in the group time area. Have the painter's tape available to attach the Bible markers to the chart.

Guide the activity: Begin by asking the children what God did on the seventh day. Tape the praying hands and church die cuts on the chart and read the Bible verse on each one. Then, read the Bible verse on the green strips. Say, God wants us to think about the wonderful things he made. Review the entire chart as time allows.