**Week 1 – The Lost Sheep – We are precious to God**

***Materials:*** *Snacks, story of the Lost Sheep, piece of green material or towel, cotton wool ball for each child, small basket, print out of shepherd picture below. Example from your own life of when God was able to show you love and comfort in a time when you felt lost or sad. 6 Bowls, rice, loom bands or safety pins, 6 blind folds or tea towels.*

**Welcome & Intro**

Wherever Jesus travelled he liked to sit down with people, old and young and tell them stories. In this season we are going to be exploring some of these stories.

**Story and Snack**

Read Arch Book or Luke 15:3-7 and Matthew 18:10-14.

**Discussion Questions:**

What would you look for if it was lost?

Have you ever felt God’s love for you when you felt lost or sad?

(Leader share an example of this in their own life and the way God was able to show you love and comfort)

**Prayer Activity**

*Place green material in middle of the kids. Place basket on the green material. Place print out of verse and picture of shepherd from India (below) in or next to the basket. If you have room, hide cotton wools around the room or under the fabric for each kid.*

God is often described as a shepherd in the bible. In Isaiah it says: (Read slowly)

*Like a shepherd, he will care for his flock,  
    gathering the lambs in his arms,  
Hugging them as he carries them,  
    leading the mother sheep and their lambs to good pasture.*

*Isaiah 40:11*

I wonder how that verse made you feel? Or think about?

Take / find a cotton wool ball and hold it in your hands.

God loves you just like a shepherd loves and watches and cares for his sheep.

Spend a moment in quiet. Take some deep breaths. We invite the Holy Spirit to talk to us about God our shepherd in our hearts. Let’s Listen to any feelings in our bodies or memories, words or pictures that come to us. (Allow a minute or two of quiet.)

**Closing Prayer**

Thank you God that you love us like a brave shepherd who cares so much for his sheep. Thank you that you care for those who feel lost and unloved. Amen.

Let’s place our cotton wool balls in the basket which is like a safe pen for the sheep and reminds us that God is looking after us.

(If you wish you can ask the Kids about what God shared with them in this time.)

**Game - Search for the Loom bands in trays of rice!**

*Materials: Bowls, rice, loom bands or safety pins, blind folds.*

We are going to play a searching and finding game now!

Hide loom bands or safety pins in bowls of rice. Blindfold kids and sit them infront of bowls of rice. Kids compete to find as many loom bands or safety pins as they can using only their hands in 1 minute or a given time.



Like a shepherd, he will care for his flock,  
    gathering the lambs in his arms,  
Hugging them as he carries them,  
    leading the mother sheep and their lambs to good pasture. Isaiah 40:11

**Week 2 – The Rich Farmer – We are to be generous**

***Materials****: Snacks, story of the Rich Farmer. Large bowl or tray of water.*

*Templates of this flower for each kid (below) and crayons or pencils.*

*Template:* [*http://wikieducator.org/File:Lilly.png*](http://wikieducator.org/File:Lilly.png)

*Basket or bag filled with lollies or stickers or whatever treats you like. Instructions cut up and placed inside. (Instructions at end of this doc.) Music.*

**Welcome and Intro**

Wherever Jesus travelled he liked to sit down with people, old and young and tell them stories. In this season we are going to be exploring some of these stories.

**Story and Snack**

Read Arch Book or Luke 12:16-21

**Discussion Questions:**

When are you most happy?

Have you ever felt God’s love for you when you shared something or someone shared with you?

(Leader share an example of giving or receiving in their own life and the way God was able to show his joy/love/approval.)

**Prayer Activity**

In this time the kids will make an opening flower representing the happiness that grows from generosity. For how it works watch this clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGHeDnqbol4>

Set up large bowl or tray of water in the centre of the kids. Place pencils/crayons and templates beside it.

There are lots of writings about being generous in the bible. In Proverbs it says: (Read slowly)

*Proverbs 11:24-25 The Message (MSG)*

*24The world of the generous gets larger and larger;  
    the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller.*

*25The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed;  
    those who help others are helped.*

I wonder how that verse made you feel? Or think about?

Take a paper flower in your hands.

God knows what will really make us happy. Being thankful, sharing, generous and caring is the way God wants us to live, it is the way we will be most happy. It is the way people will be looked after, and the way for us to have the best friendships.

Spend a moment in quiet. Take some deep breaths. We invite the Holy Spirit to talk to us about being sharing, generous people in our hearts. Let’s Listen to any feelings in our bodies or memories, words or pictures that come to us. (Allow a minute or two of quiet.)

**Closing Prayer**

Thank you God that you love us and have the best way for us and all people. Thankyou for teaching us about generosity today. Thankyou for all that you give us. We pray that you will show us when we can be generous and caring this week. Amen.

Let’s write on these flowers anything that God has shared with us this morning about being generous.

Once the kids have finished. Invite them to fold up the flower and place it in the bowl of water. Watch what happens! This is to remind us that when we share, happiness grows.

**Game – Pass the Parcel with a twist!**

Kids sit in a circle and pass the bag or basket of treats around the circle until the music stops. When it stops the child who is holding the bag pulls out a treat and an instruction.

Instructions: (There are 14 here. You may like to come up with more if there may be more kids)

Do your funniest face and give the treat to someone who makes you laugh.

Do your highest karate kick and give the treat to someone who likes soccer.

Tell everyone your full name and give the treat to someone who’s name starts with the same letter as yours.

See how many push ups you can do and give the treat to someone who was encouraging!

Stand in the centre of the circle, close your eyes and point your finger and spin around until the leaders says stop. Give the treat to whoever you are pointing at.

Spell out the word ‘wow’ with your bottom and give a treat to someone with a big smile.

Tell everyone something funny that has happened to you and give a treat to someone who hasn’t had one yet.

Do your biggest growl noise and give the treat to someone with the longest hair.

See if you can stand up from sitting cross legged without uncrossing your legs or using your hands and give the treat to someone who is younger than you.

Tell everyone something that you are good at and give the treat to someone who is generous.

Do a crazy dance and give the treat to someone who is older than you.

Make your eyes cross-eyed and give the treat to someone with brown eyes who hasn’t had a treat.

Throw the treat up in the air and catch it again and throw the treat to someone.

See if you can touch your nose with your tongue and give the treat to someone else who can!

**Week 3 – The Pearl of Great Price – God’s way is like treasure.**

*Materials: Snacks, story of the Pearl, snack, bowl of rice or sand or flour with wrapped lolly for each kid buried inside. Small piece of paper and pencil/marker for each kid, biscuits, icing or cream, ‘pearl’ lollies, printouts of maze for each kid.*

**Welcome and Intro**

Wherever Jesus travelled he liked to sit down with people, old and young and tell them stories. In this season we are going to be exploring some of these stories.

**Story and Snack**

Read Arch Book or Matthew 13:45-46 or play the two stories from this website without the final explanation. <https://vimeo.com/26939325>.

**Discussion Questions:**

What is something you treasure a lot?

Have you ever found it a challenge to be a Christian - to love God or love others? Just like it was hard for the man to get hold of the pearl?

(Leader share an example of sacrifices they have made for their faith/mission of love in their own life. (Or use the example of someone else the children might know.)

**Prayer Activity**

*In this time the kids will find and bury ‘treasure’, to show that even though God’s way can be tricky sometimes, it is worth it for the great love in our lives that spreads out to others.*

*Have a small piece of paper and pencil for each kid next to a bowl of sand/flour/rice with wrapped lollies hidden in it.*

There are lots of writings about loving God like precious treasure and sticking with Him even when it’s hard work. In the books of Mark and James in the bible it says: (Read slowly)

*Love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.*

# *Mark 12:30-31 (The Message)*

# *God will bless you, if you don’t give up when your faith is being tested. He will reward you with a glorious life,[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201:12#fen-CEV-28166a)*] just as he rewards everyone who loves him.*

# *James 1:12 (CEV)*

I wonder how these verse made you feel? Or think about?

Take it turns to take a piece of paper and pencil and find one delicious treasure in the bowl. Hold on to the treasure for a moment.

Being a Christian means loving God and loving each other even when it is tricky. God knows that it can be hard to be a Christian sometimes but God also promises it is the best way to live.

Spend a moment in quiet and while we enjoy our lolly we invite the Holy Spirit to talk to us about treasuring God’s way in our hearts. Let’s Listen to any feelings in our bodies or memories, words or pictures that come to us. (Allow a minute or two of quiet.)

**Closing Prayer**

Thank you God that you love us and have the best way for us and all people. Thankyou for teaching us about treasuring you and your life of love today. Thankyou for your love. We pray that you will help us to treasure you and love others even when it is tricky this week. Amen.

Let’s write or draw on the paper anything that God has shared with us this morning about loving Him.

*Once the kids have finished. Invite them to roll up their paper like secret treasure scrolls and bury them in the bowl..*

This is to remind us that even though God’s way can be tricky like finding treasure sometimes, it is worth it for the great love in our lives that spreads out to others.

**Extra Activity – Easy Oyster Biscuits**

Details of how to make biscuits here – you can adapt it to any biscuits and round lolly and spoon on cream instead of icing if easier: <http://www.livingwellspendingless.com/2013/06/19/oyster-pearl-cookies/>

**Extra Activity – Treasure Maze page**

[**http://www.timvandevall.com/printables/mazes/printable-treasure-hunt-maze/**](http://www.timvandevall.com/printables/mazes/printable-treasure-hunt-maze/)

**Week 4 – The Parable of the Yeast – God grows us.**

*Materials: Snacks, cup for each kid, vinegar, bi-carb soda, spoons, bowl of flower, plate of yeast, sliced loaf of bread, picture of woman baking (below), food dye, milk, bowls, cotton buds as brushes. Toaster and butter.*

**Welcome and Intro**

Wherever Jesus travelled he liked to sit down with people, old and young and tell them stories. In this season we are going to be exploring some of these stories.

**Story and Snack**

Have a bowl of flour, plate of yeast, loaf of bread and picture below in centre of group.

Jesus told a story about a woman cooking bread. Has anyone seen bread being baked?

Have you seen yeast before? Come and feel the yeast. Do you know what it does?

(Yeast makes the dough rise and become fluffy. Bread made without yeast is flat bread.)

*(Luke 13:20-21)*

*One day Jesus said “How can I picture God’s kingdom? What is it like?*

*It’s like yeast that a woman used to make bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in a lot of flour, it works through every part of the dough. She waits, and finally the dough rises making a delicious loaf of bread!*

*Optional clip of dough rising to show kids what yeast does -* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GPTTGBfz64*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GPTTGBfz64)

**Discussion Questions:**

Can you think of something else that may start small but makes a big difference?

Have you ever felt or seen God change or grow something?

(Leader share an example of change that God has brought to their life. (Or use the example of someone else the children might know.)

Like the yeast slowly grows the bread, God grows love in people and places, changing them and making good things happen. In history we can see God changing peoples hearts and through them changing so many things. God has inspired Christians to start hospitals for the sick, school for children, make homes for the homeless, give food to hungry people, save people from being slaves so many good things. Person by person, little bit by little bit.

**Prayer Activity**

In this time the kids will make a bubbling mixture as they pray for God’s love to grow.

*Have a glass or cup for each kid with a 1-2cm of vinegar inside. A bowl of bi-carb soda with some teaspoons beside it in the centre of the group.*

There are some wonderful verses about the power of God’s love in the bible. Let’s listen to this verse: (read slowly twice)

*May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow.*

*1 Thessalonians 3:12*

I wonder how this verse made you feel? Or think about?

Think for a moment about where you would like to see God’s love grow. Maybe you would like more love in you? Maybe there is a friendship that you would like God to grow, or a person who needs God’s care, or a place on the earth that you are worried about? Ask God to grow his love as you place a spoonful of bi-carb in your cup. What happens next will remind you that God hears you and has the power to grow love.

**Closing Prayer**

Thank you God that you love us and have the best way for us and all people. Thankyou for teaching us that you change situations for good and have the power to grow love. Thankyou for your love. We pray that you will grow your love in us. Amen.

**Extra Activity – Painting and toasting bread!**

**Instructions here:**

[**http://www.woojr.com/toddler-craft-project-painting-bread-for-snack-time/**](http://www.woojr.com/toddler-craft-project-painting-bread-for-snack-time/)



<http://www.gettyimages.com.au/detail/video/young-woman-kneading-dough-in-the-kitchen-china-stock-video-footage/143467703>

**Stories Jesus told Week 5**

October Birthdays – Sing happy birthday and get treats from birthday box.

***Materials:*** *Egg and nut–free Snacks, water, balloons or party decorations, textas, stickers (optional) paper, pens, biscuits for game, vaseline, cotton wool, paper plates for game.*

**Welcome & Intro**

Wherever Jesus travelled he liked to sit down with people, old and young and tell them stories. Today we have a story Jesus told about a party. So we are having a party today!

**Story and Snack**

Set up the table or eating area with a few balloons and plates of snack like a party.

Hand out a copy of the play for different characters to read out below.

**Discussion Questions:**

What’s your favourite part about a party?

Why do you think Jesus talks about parties when he is talking about friendship with God and what God’s family is like?

Have you ever felt God’s love when you were having fun with your friends or family?

(Leader share an example of when they have felt welcomed and had fun in their own life and the way God has shown his love through this.)

**Prayer Activity**

*Place envelopes, paper, stickers, textas in centre of kids. Revelation verse on display. (Optional)*

Jesus wants everybody to be his friends. It doesn’t matter who we are or what we’ve done. All we need to do is say “yes.” When we do, Jesus’ spirit comes to be with us and is a friend to us, helping us and filling us with his love.

# In the bible, Jesus says,

# I am waiting at your door and knock. If you hear me and open the door, I’ll come right in and sit down with you.

# Revelation 3:20.

I wonder how this verse made you feel? Or think about?

Take some paper and you can write or draw about it with Jesus and put it in the envelope.

We invite the Holy Spirit to talk to us about friendship with God in our hearts.

**Closing Prayer**

Thank you God that you love us and invite everyone to your family which is like a party, where we are loved and enjoy each other.

Thankyou that you want to be our friends, we love you. Amen.

*The leader might like to suggest that if the kids have decided to be friends with Jesus that is a wonderful decision and one to tell their family about.*

**Games**

**Cookie Monster**

Give everyone a biscuit (egg, nut free) to place on their forehead. They have to race to try and get the biscuit from their forehead to their mouth without using their hands.

**Cotton Ball Nose**

Give everyone two plates, some Vaseline on their nose and cotton balls on one of their plates. They have to race to try and get the cotton balls from one plate to another using only their nose.

**Story**

**THE HUGE PARTY Story from Luke 14**

**Characters: Narrator, host, servant, person 1,2,3,4.**

**Narrator:** Jesus was at a dinner with an important leader in the community when one of the people at the party said,

**Person 1**: This is a great party but the greatest blessing of all is to be at God’s party table!

**Everyone:** cheer!

**Narrator:** A man once gave a great big dinner party and invited lots of guests. When everything was ready he sent a servant to tell the guests to come along..

**Servant:** Hey everyone, the party is ready now. Please come!

**Narrator:** One guest after another started making excuses why they couldn’t come to the party.

**Everyone:** Boo!

**Person 2:** Sorry I have just bought some land and I’ve got to look over it. Please excuse me!

**Person 3:** Sorry I have a new car (well five new teams of oxen seeing as we are in the old days) and I need to try them out. Please excuse me!

**Person 4:** Sorry I have just got married so I can’t be there.

**Narrator:** The servant told the party host what happened. That everyone was making excuses and the man became very angry and said to the servant..

**Host:** Ok fine then! Go as fast as you can to every street and alley in town! Bring in everyone who is poor or disabled or blind or lonely, people who probably never get to go to parties.

**Narrator:** So the servant did just that.

**Servant:** Master, I have done what you told me and there is still plenty of room for more people.

**Host:** Well go further out along the back roads and tracks where the homeless people live and make people come in so that my house will be full. They will all have a wonderful time and not one of the guests I first invited will even get a bite of my food!