



God Rescues

Esther

God Statement: God is With Us

**“You will pass through deep waters. But I will be with you.
You will pass through the rivers. But their waters will not sweep over you.
You will walk through fire. But you will not be burned.
The flames will not harm you.”
Isaiah 43:2**

CHECK-IN

(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)

Purpose: To build relationships with families and help parents feel comfortable leaving their child.

As parents check-in their child at your classroom, try to welcome them by name to help them feel secure in leaving their child in your care. Once you’ve completed each of the check-in procedures, welcome the child into your classroom and encourage him/her to play with the classroom toys and activities. If you have LITs in your classroom, this is a great time for them to help engage with the kids while you continue checking in the kids.

If a child brings money for offering, allow them to put the money in the class offering bank. Thank them for sharing with others.

If a child is upset or reluctant to enter the room, encourage him or her by offering toys, books or other fun items. If a child is still upset, let the parents know that we will text them if their child continues to be upset. Then, offer to carry the child into the classroom and try to calm the child with toys or other activities.

Use the “Connect” reminder (listed below) to help kids feel comfortable and safe in your class!

CONNECT WITH KIDS

Purpose: Building relationships & prioritizing safety for our youngest children.

Our goal, first and foremost, when serving babies and young toddlers is to prioritize building trusting relationships and the feeling of safety. We build trust with our littlest kids by meeting needs and helping them learn that church is a secure place where they are loved, known and safe.

The 4 Ss are a simple way to keep our hearts and minds focused on this:

When a child feels...*(most of the time)*

SAFE: physically and emotionally

SEEN: known and understood

SOOTHED: calmed and supported

They can become **SECURE**.

EXPLORE ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.

DISCUSS:

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how God Rescues. Who needs to be rescued?

SAY: Can you name some rescuers? Who rescues us from fires? Who rescues us when we're sick? **Let children respond.** Good. We are going to hear about a woman named Esther who God used to rescue God's people. Esther was a queen. Let's make a crown to remind us about Esther and that God used her to rescue His people.

MAKE: Crown

Supplies: crown, crown strip, and stickers

Directions:

- Invite the kids to sit at the table.
- Give them each a paper crown.
- Write the child's name on their crown.
- Give them several stickers and invite them to decorate their crown.
- Staple or tape the crown to the long strip on both sides to fit the child's head.

SAY: We will hear a true Bible story about a queen today. Queens usually wear crowns. God used Queen Esther to save His people.

CLEAN UP

(5 minutes)

Have the children begin cleaning up as you transition into Large Group time. All the toys should be put away by the end of clean up time.

Try singing: “Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere.”

LARGE GROUP

(15 minutes)

After clean up, have your class gather around the story time rug/blanket/squares and Hamilton’s house for Large Group time.

WELCOME & PRAYER

Tell the kids you are so excited to have them joining you this morning and give them a brief explanation of Large Group and the expectations of them during this time. After going over the expectations, pray to open large group time.

Offering – ask: Did anyone bring money for an offering today? This money is used to help other people. You may put your money in the class offering bank.

WORSHIP

Purpose: Engage our youngest children through the power of music!

Use the Little Kids music videos on Plex to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, go to **Plex > Videos > EC > 2s/3s folder**. Choose some songs to sing.

- God is With Us
- My God is so Big

READ THE BIBLE STORY

Purpose: Engage our youngest children in a meaningful way by teaching God’s word!

This week, read about a Bible story from Esther 1-10.

Read the Bible story below. Try to engage the child(ren) as you share the story by showing pictures and repeating key words and phrases. It’s ok if you don’t read every word of the story! Kids have very short attention spans (1 minute for each year of age) so try to keep your interactions short and don’t get discouraged if a child loses focus!

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: The Story of Esther

(Summarized from Esther 1-10 and True Way Kids)

BIBLE STORY:

Bring Hamilton (the hedgehog puppet) out and allow the kids to interact with him before you begin the story (they can feel his soft fur, give him high fives, give him a hug, etc.). Use Hamilton to help keep the kids engaged while you share the story (he can do the hand motions, ask the kids questions, etc.).

Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. Hamilton is holding a crown.

SAY: Hi Hamilton, what do you have there? **Hamilton shows us.** A crown! There is a special queen who wears a crown in our true Bible story today! God uses her to do amazing things! Let's listen. **Hamilton nods.**

Share the story of Esther using the story cards in your folder.

SAY:

- Esther was a beautiful, kind girl.
- She lived with her uncle.
 - Do you have an uncle? That's your mom or dad's brother! What is his name?
- The king married Esther and she became the queen.
 - Put on your pretend crown and pretend to be the king or queen.
- A mean man worked for the king.
- His name was Haman.
- He wanted everyone to bow down to him!
 - Say, "Oh no!" Bowing down is worshipping something, and people should only worship God!
- Esther's uncle would not bow down to Haman.
- He only bowed down to God.
- Haman was very angry.
- He went to the king and asked him to hurt Esther's uncle and all of God's special family, the Israelites.
- The king agreed.
- Esther heard about Haman's plan and was afraid!
 - Can you show me what you look like when you're afraid?
- Esther was afraid because she was a part of God's special family.
- That means that Haman was planning to hurt Esther, too!
- The king didn't know that Esther was part of God's special family.
- Esther decided she would tell the king, but she was still so afraid!
 - We can pray and ask God for help when we're afraid! Let's do that now. "God, please help me to be brave today! Amen."
- Esther went to the king and told him about Haman's plan to hurt her family.
- The king was very angry.
- The king gave Haman's job to Esther's uncle and God's special family was saved!
- God used Esther to help his special family!

- Esther helped save, or rescue, God’s special family.
- God Rescues!

SAY IT OUT LOUD! (30 seconds)

This is the opportunity to remind the children of the God Statement for the day. Even if they struggle to pay attention during the lesson, this part is important to do every week.

SAY: Today our God statement is God Rescues. We are going to say our God statement in fun ways to help us remember it.

- Have the kids say it in a fun voice.
- Have them say it in a whisper.
- Have them say it in a loud voice.

WORSHIP RESPONSE (2 minutes)

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently. Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

SAY: In our Bible story today, we learned that Esther asked God for help and He rescued her family from a mean man.

- What do you need help with? (**wait for responses**) Yes, maybe cleaning up your toys or getting dressed.
- What can God help you with? (**wait for responses**) Yes, God can help you be brave when you’re scared!

God is very good at helping us.

BLESSING (1 minute)

Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.

SAY: Friends, may you always remember that God Rescues. He saves us from our sins and He is a good helper.

RESPOND ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

If you have extra time at the end of your lesson and small group time, the kids can participate in this activity.

PLAY: Who is a Rescuer?

Supplies: none

Directions:

- Have the kids sit on the floor or at the table.
- See if they can guess the rescuer when you give them clues.

SAY:

This is a special helper who helps in an emergency.

I drive a big truck with a ladder.

The truck has a siren.

I put out fires.

Who am I? (**a fire fighter**)

This is a special helper who works at a school.

I like to read books to kids.

I take them outside to play.

I help them learn.

Who am I? (**a teacher**)

This is an animal who rescues.

I love the snow.

I love to dig.

I stay very warm even when it is cold and snowy outside.

Who am I? (**I am a rescue dog.**)

I help when there is trouble.

I wear a badge on my shirt.

I direct traffic.

I help people in emergencies.

I drive a car or motorcycle with a siren.

Who am I? (**I am the police.**)

PLAY!

Purpose: Engage our youngest children by playing games and having fun!

While your class can participate in free play for most of the remaining classroom time, please try to lead at least one structured activity with your class. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to classroom games and encourage interaction and participation with others.

Suggestions of activities:

- Hide an object and let kids find it
- Name and count parts of the body
- Discuss colors & numbers
- Turn on music and play freeze dance
- Have kids follow simple instructions (hop, sit down, clap, etc.)
- Read a board book
- Build a tower and let kids knock it down
- Play with a ball

CHECK-OUT

(end of service)

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in free play. Follow the check-out procedures for your classroom, making sure to send all of the child's belongings (diaper bag, bottle/sippy cup, pacifier, blanket, etc.) with the parent.

Give the parent encouragement about how the child did in your class and say "Bye (child's name)!"