



## God Grows Us

John 15:1-17

### God Statement: God is Provider

KEY VERSE:

**“My God will meet all of your needs. These riches come to you because you belong to Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19, NIRV)**

## 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 Grows Us.

**Say:** Do you remember when you were a baby? How big were you? What could you do? You are much bigger now. You have grown. God helps us grow! He grows our bodies and also our hearts and brains. We're going to learn more about how God grows us today.

### MAKE: Plant a seed

**Supplies:** small cup for each kid, 1/3 cup potting soil, seeds, ziplock bag, plastic tablecloth

**Directions:** You might want to do this with just a few children at a time.

Spread the tablecloth over the table. Write names on bags.

Have kids help. Fill about ½ of the cup with soil.

Place the seed on top and push it down under the soil about ½ inch.

Put in ziplock bag to take home.

**Say:** You can watch this seed grow and remember how God helps you grow.

## 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.

- The Wisdom Song
- God can Do Anything
- Be Careful Little Eyes
- I've got the Joy Joy Joy

## READ A BIBLE STORY

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

This week, read about a Bible story from John 15:1-17.

**BIG IDEA: God grows us! Our bodies grow, our brains and our hearts.**

As you read, try to engage the child(ren) even more by pointing to the pictures as you read, allowing the kids to turn the page or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word on the page! 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!

**BIBLE STORY (5-7 minutes)**

***THIS WEEK'S LESSON: God grows us!***

*Using the props and Hamilton puppet, tell the story for the day. Make sure to keep it brief and engaging by asking the kids questions throughout and using Hamilton to keep their attention.*

***Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. He has a flower in his paws.***

**Say:** Hi Hamilton, what do you have there? ***Hamilton shows us.*** That's beautiful! Do you know that God grows flowers? And, God grows us? Do you want to listen to our story today? It's from the Bible. ***Hamilton nods.***

**Read the Bible Lesson below.**

- When we believe in Jesus, we are God's Child!
- When we are children of God, He helps us grow to be more like Jesus.
  - Can you slowly reach your hands up like you're growing?
- God helps us to grow, just like fruit on a vine. The fruit cannot grow without the vine.
- Just like the fruit, we cannot grow closer to God without seeking Him and living our lives for Him.
  - Hamilton, do you love Jesus? ***Nod Hamilton's head yes.*** Do you want to grow closer to Him? ***Nod Hamilton's head yes.***
- God loves us and wants us to follow Him and allow Him to care for us.
- Friends, God LOVES you so much!
- We can be happy and feel calm because...
- God is Provider!

**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.*

We are learning that God is Provider (Have the kids shout it out together multiple times).

**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.

***Encourage class to sit quietly.***

**Say:** What are some ways that you can grow? How can we stay close to God so we can grow? We can come to church. We can pray to Him. We can sing songs about Him. We can read our Bible. What is your favorite way to stay close to God?

*Let kids answer.*

## **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 to keep running to Jesus. Keep praying to Him and listening to Him. Then God will grow you to be more like Him.

## **CLOSING ACTIVITIES**

**(Until parents pickup)**

### **PLAY: How we Grow**

***Supplies: flashlight, water sprayer, Bible***

#### **Directions:**

- Today we are going to pretend to be little seeds that will grow!
- In our story we learned that when we are children of God, God will help us grow to be more like Jesus!
- Now we are all going to lay on the ground curled up like a little seed. When I say something that will help us grow we will pretend to grow.
- We need light to grow **(shine the flashlight near them)**.
- Encourage kids to “grow” a little by moving up a little bit.
- We need water to grow **(spray water near them)**.
- Encourage kids to “grow” a little by moving up a little bit.
- We want to read our Bible to grow **(hold up the Bible)**.
- Encourage kids to “grow” a little by moving up a little bit.
- We need to love others to grow, can you give your neighbor a high five?
- Encourage kids to “grow” a little by moving up a little bit more.
- We need to pray and talk to God to help us grow.

- Encourage kids to “grow” a little by moving up a little bit. They should be standing tall by now. They can wiggle their fingers and stretch up to the sky.
- Remember that God helps us grow when we do what He asks.

## 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)!”