

## **Beginning a Journey of Faith: Abraham and Sarah**

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA

Written and adapted by Beth Tobin, January 2007

Updated October 2018

# **Worship and Arts Workshop**

## **Overview:**

Through interactive storytelling, children will explore and experience hospitality, laughter, and covenant. They will make a promise jar to remind them that they are part of God's family and that they can reflect the light of God's love to others.

## **Location:**

This workshop will begin in the main sanctuary in front of the altar and transition to the back kitchen.

## **Supplies:**

- Plastic water bottle - one per student
- Baby Oil - enough to fill each bottle half way
- Silver Glitter
- Silver Star Confetti
- Water
- Glass Measuring Cup to mix water and food coloring in - more than one would be good so there is not a bottle neck on this step
- Spoon to stir with
- Neon Food Coloring - Blue and Purple - or let kids mix their own colors
- Sliced apples
- Hot Glue Gun and Glue sticks to seal the bottles
- Permanent Marker
- Pencils
- A smoking fire pot - (We will use our Halloween cauldron that has electric flame, and add grey and black for smoke.)
- A torch - battery operated, or a flashlight with tissue paper flames
- Construction paper representations of: cow, goat, ram, dove, and pigeon
- Legal document from current time
- Cross

### **Advance Preparation:**

- Please read the background information based on Genesis 12-25, and read the passages outlined in the Rotation Overview.
- Be familiar with and/or memorize the memory verses.
- Gather supplies and set up the room as desired.
- Watch the video Bible study found at [www.GloriaDeiKids.org](http://www.GloriaDeiKids.org)

### **Lesson:**

Welcome the children. Be sure to introduce yourself. Invite students to gather around you on the floor or on a pew and offer them a slice of apple to eat. Tell them while we're eating we're going to play a little game.

#### The Last Laugh

Topic connections: You can use this game to teach kids about self-control, joy, or Sarah's response to God's promise that she would have a child in her old age.

Game overview: Pairs will compete against other pairs to see which one can keep from laughing the longest.

Say: You know sometimes it's tough not to laugh, but we have to be able to control ourselves. Let's see what kind of laugh control we have in this room.

Have students form pairs and have each pair combine with another to make foursomes. Pairs should flip a coin to decide which pair in the four-some will first try to make the other pair laugh. Set your timer for thirty seconds and have kids begin.

Students can do anything they want except touch the pair they are trying to make laugh. When both members of a pair have been made to smile (even for a second), the first round of the game is done. Have pairs switch roles and play again.

#### Optional Discussion Questions:

*(This activity is meant to be a fun intro to the lesson for today.)*

Was this game easy or hard for you? Why?

What are some things that make you laugh?

Tell of a time when you laughed the hardest—or maybe couldn't stop laughing.

Say: There was a person in the Bible who couldn't help but laugh when God said she would have a son. Let's check it out.

Have a student read Genesis 18:9-15

Ask: Why do you think Sarah had such a hard time believing God would give her a son?

### The Covenant:

Say: Let's take a look at where this story begins. Find Genesis 12:1 in your Bibles. Read Genesis 12:1-3. Have students underline these verses if they have brought their own Bible.

Say: This is where God chooses Abram and Abram faithfully obeys the Lord. God promises Abram land, descendants (lots of kids and grandkids, and great-grandkids), and to be a blessing to others.

Now let's find Genesis 15:5-6. Read and underline these verses and explain that this is where Abram is talking to God about the fact that he has no children, and God shows him the sky, assuring Abram of God's promise.

Next, talk them through Genesis 15:7-18. Explain that God proceeds to make God's covenant with Abram right then. God tells Abram to get a three year old heifer, goat, and ram; a turtle dove and a young pigeon.

Abram splits the large animals in half with a bird on each side and a path down the middle. (Lay the construction paper representations on the floor with a path down the middle.) This is how covenants or important promises were made in that time. Both people would walk through the path as a sign of their promise. If they broke their promise, they were saying 'may I be split in two right down the middle if I break my promise.'

Show the students what a covenant looks like today. (Hold up a legal document.) Assure them that no one makes a covenant Abram's way today!

Have them find, and read Genesis 17-18. They should underline 17 because this is the actual making of the covenant. Have someone read 17 again while you move the smoking pot and flaming torch between the pieces.

Ask the students, “From the reading, who went through the pieces? Did Abram go through? (No) Just God.” God is taking all the risk. God is promising to keep God’s promises forever, and because we are Abraham’s descendants that promise still holds true for us.

**Optional Connection to Make before you transition:**

Through out Abraham and Sarah’s life they encountered God and believed in God and God’s promises. In other workshops you will hear more about times when Abraham would build an altar to the Lord and worship God. We have an altar too! Who knows where it is? Yes. And we gather around it in worship each week and take communion and remember God’s promises and Jesus’ promise to always be with us, to love us, and to forgive us. It’s a very special place and one we need to treat with respect. Everyone is welcome to gather around the altar.

**Activity: Transition to Back Kitchen**

*(Please tidy up the worship space as you go so it’s ready for worship.)*

Explain that Abraham didn’t have to obey God, but he chose to, just like we choose to follow God today and have received so many blessings.

Say: We are each going to make a “Promise Jar.” Everyone’s will look just a bit different - just like we are all unique. God promises to be our God — your God — and that promise goes all the way back to Abraham.

Promise Jar Directions:

1. Remove the label from the water bottle. Goo Gone will help get rid of any residue that’s left.
2. Fill the bottle half full with baby oil.
3. Add silver glitter on top of the baby oil (About ½ teaspoon of glitter)
4. Add enough water to a measuring cup to fill the rest of the bottle, then add approximately 8 drops of purple food coloring and 5 drops of blue food coloring. The more food coloring you add, the more opaque your galaxy will be.

5. Mix the water and pour it into the bottle, leaving about  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of air space in the mouth section of the bottle.
6. Screw the lid back onto the bottle. You can seal it closed with tape or glue if you like.
7. Shake the bottle vigorously and watch the glitter move up as it settles!

**Discussion while working:**

*(Some of this gets deep. Please adapt as you see fit.)*

Through Baptism we become children of God and are able to claim God's promise to always love us; through Christ Jesus, to forgive us when we have sinned, and to someday have eternal life with God in heaven.

God made a covenant with Abraham that will last forever and God sent Jesus to be the New Covenant — to assure us of God's love and forgiveness, and of eternal life.

When you look at your jar, remember you are a child of God, one of the descendants of Abraham and Sarah. That means you are loved. You are blessed to be a blessing. That means God will never leave you — ever. No matter what. You are not alone. God always keeps God's promises.

Sometimes we get anxious or scared or worried about things. *(If there is time and students are comfortable they can share some things they worry about.)* When you start to worry, you could hold your jar and watch it swirl and settle and remember that God will go with you through what ever it is you are dealing with or worried about.

You could talk with God or think about God while you are watching the swirls.

As children of God we can reflect God's light on others. Watch the glitter swirl and reflect light. What are some ways that we can reflect God's light of love on others? How do you reflect God's light?

"How have you been blessed?"

"How are you a blessing to others?"

"In what way do you need God's help today?"

**Reflection/Closure:**

Say: There is nothing that's too hard for God. God gave Sarah a baby in her old age. God can help us meet every challenge in our lives and satisfy any need we have.

If time allows, help students work through their Faith Journal page. If there is no extra time, please hand out the Faith Journal page and encourage students to work on them at home.

Help students recall the two memory verses:

### **Memory Verses:**

#### **Genesis 17:7**

*"I will always keep the promise I have made to you and your descendants, because I am your God and their God."*

#### **Genesis 22:17a**

*"I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore."*

**Close with a word of prayer...** Dear God, you have blessed us all so richly. We thank you for being a constant guide in our lives, and for always keeping your promises. Help us to follow you and continue to grow closer in love to you and to one another. In Jesus name we pray, AMEN!!

#### **Resources:**

Posted October 24, 2001 02:56 AM

**Abraham & Sarah**

Augustana Lutheran Church

Last edited by: [CreativeCarol](#), August 27, 2004

#### ***Additional Notes to Help Students Make Connections:***

*The land that God promises Abram is the same land that the Israelites are lead to after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. The land of Canaan.*

*The furnace or fire pot and smoke in the covenant are symbolic of the Israelites being lead by God in a pillar of smoke during the day and fire by night as they traveled in the wilderness.*