

God Leads His People

Bible Discovery Museum

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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor in Chief: Robin Johnston

Associate Editor, Curriculum:

Lee Ann Alexander

Children’s Editor: Chris Anderson

Toddler Editor: Joni Owens

WRITERS

Ashley Lester, Joni Owens,

Melinda Poitras, Barbara Westberg

CLASS DÉCOR DEVELOPMENT

Ashley Hibbets, Joni Owens

DESIGN

Layout: Dennis Fiorini

Artist: Ron Wheeler

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 Join us on our Facebook group. Interact with editors and Sunday school teachers. Post pictures of your class. Brag on what God is doing in your class. You teach with us; now interact with us. Check out our group, “Word Aflame Toddler Curriculum Teachers.”



Toddler Teacher’s Manual
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All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.


CLASSROOM DÉCOR

BIBLE DISCOVERY MUSEUM

Certain Bible narratives are considered “classics”—stories every child should be taught as part of their Bible-literacy foundation. To one day comprehend how the Old Testament unfolded, children need to know the life of David. The lessons this quarter will tell how God chose an obscure shepherd boy to be king. As Saul hunted after David, God developed David’s respect for his leaders. God’s grace was witnessed through David’s kindness to Mephibosheth. Ultimately, God shared His plan to have Solomon build the Temple. These lessons will reveal how God chooses, develops, and helps His leaders, some of whom are in your classroom.

Just as these are classic stories, your museum will present classic visuals (known as artifacts) to accompany these stories. Artifacts belong in museums for others to enjoy, touch, and experience. As you build your Bible Discovery Museum for toddlers, let them touch and experience tools, foods, thrones, gold, wood, clay, and other items that were part of God’s story in the lives of the leaders He chose.

One does not immediately picture a museum as a place to take toddlers. “*Shhh, be quiet. Don’t touch that! Stay behind the line.*” Your Bible Discovery Museum will not have those rules. Instead, transform your room into an interactive place with sensory items and fun objects that children are allowed to use. Everything is to be touched, moved, stood or sat upon, built, and even eaten.

Use our ideas as a starting guide. Visit Pinterest and other websites for décor ideas, searching for “kids museum” or “toddler-friendly museum” for images offering additional ideas. Make use of the reproducible décor art  when decorating. Post your pictures on our Facebook page so others can see your awesome room.

Keep your décor toddler friendly. If you don’t want it touched and destroyed, laminate it or don’t use it. Avoid using sharp objects such as pins that could be harmful in a toddler’s hands or anything small that could be a choking hazard. Mount everything at eye level. Like you, toddlers do not like looking up all the time, so let them experience the museum on their level.

BASIC MUSEUM DÉCOR

Museums are usually sedate large buildings with hallways, pedestals, glass cases, soft lighting, and untouchable items. The Bible Discovery Museum will have its share of displays, but it will not be sedate or quiet.


Display Columns


Cover small tables or cardboard boxes (standing on end) with colorful fabric. Overlap and secure the corners so the entire structure is tightly covered and will not allow children to crawl underneath or inside.

Wall Mounts

Collect containers such as plastic bowls (with straight edges, not sloping), disposable foil pans (at least three-inches deep), margarine tubs, or small baskets. Avoid flimsy items such as cardboard, paper, or Styrofoam boxes. These will hold artifacts children will be able to touch and explore. Secure them to the wall so children cannot pull them down. Keep them at toddler height.

Explaining Our Acronyms and Symbols

 = Teacher’s Resource Packet

 = Digital resource using download code on TRP instruction sheet

 = Activity Paper

 = Memory Work

 = Home Connection

Looking Ahead

Check the quarter's lesson title pages (like page 8) now to see what supplies need to be gathered. Designate what activities require multiple copies, cutouts, or unusual supplies. Recruit teenage or senior helpers for drawing, copying, or cutting.

- Always create a sample of every craft activity.
- Always practice object lessons well before class to make sure your methods provide the desired result.
- Keep your pastor's photo handy. Since this quarter is about leaders, it will be used often. Show it at any time to remind children who their pastor is and to pray for and to follow their pastor.

Before the quarter begins, tear apart the activity papers and sort the papers by lesson for easier distribution each week. Set apart the title page to send home with toddlers in week 1. This will provide families with a copy of the unit memory posters for at-home study. Order one activity paper per student with a few extras for visitors and for growth.

Use the Digital Resources

If you occasionally loan out your teacher's manual or accidentally leave it at church, don't panic. Before the quarter begins, follow the process on page 2 to download the entire manual to your electronic device. You can check supplies, study, and focus your prayers with a few simple clicks on your device.

NOTE: Some smartphones will not open zip files but will open PDFs. Save the zip files to your computer and then send the PDF to your phone.

Floor Paths


Use a variety of stepping stones for children to follow as they move from one area to another. Options include carpet squares, eighteen-inch laminated colored paper circles, bubble wrap circles (this will be a favorite, so plan to replace these often), tile squares, colorful paper plates, and shapes made from painter's tape. Avoid items that might cause a child to slip and fall. Secure items to the floor so they are stable for children to walk on.

Supplies


Keep cleaning supplies handy: non-allergenic wipes, paper towels, tissues, and mops.

Provide waterproof smocks for messier activities.



Gather bags for carrying home activities.


Create calming tools, such as a water bottle filled with glitter or small objects. See [Calming Tools for Toddlers](#) .

INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS

Use the various icons provided in the décor art  to label and classify your activities, like children would find at an interactive children's museum.

Wall 1: Teaching Time

This teaching wall includes the writing board. Create a story-time area with a small table and chair for the teacher. Add the attendance charts (AP)  and memory charts (AP)  at children's height for easy access each week. Hang the unit's memory poster (TRP) on this wall. Keep this wall simple so it will hold the children's attention when you are using visuals or focusing on the charts.

Print each lesson's Bible art picture  using the download code on the teacher resource packet's cover sheet. Save the nicer enamel prints (TRP) for the lesson and review. Mount the printed versions (whether on paper or cardstock) to the wall each week as they are used.

Wall 2: Sensory Wall

This wall can be a mix of wall-mounted displays with small tables nearby. Each item should be sensory related. On small tables, place tubs filled with items such as pom-pom balls, cotton balls, sand (be prepared to clean this up often), silk leaves and flowers, or other items children cannot eat or put in their mouth. In each container, hide items such as plastic food, plastic animals, plastic letters and numbers, or large beads children can add to string as they discover each one.

The smaller wall-mounted displays can hold textured items children will enjoy feeling, such as large sea shells, rocks, pine cones, and squishy toys.

Wall 3: Activity Wall

Mount hands-on activities to the wall at children's height.

- Magnet Tray: Mount a cookie sheet with magnet letters and numbers.
- An abacus
- A mirror
- A Magna-Doodle pad
- A small dry-erase board with wet-erase markers
- Pegboard pull: Mount a 12" x 18" pegboard with yarn running through the holes and tied to various items (empty spool threads, plastic rings, and so on). When the child pulls on one item, the opposite end moves.
- Bathroom rod slider: Add several ring-type objects to a bathroom rod and mount the rod to the wall. Children will enjoy sliding the rings back and forth.
- Ball drop: Secure PVC joints and pipe to the wall so a child can drop a ball in the top opening and it comes out the bottom.

Wall 4: Art Wall

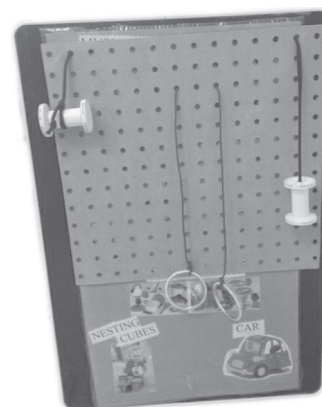
Provide stations along the wall where children can stand (or sit on the floor) and be creative.

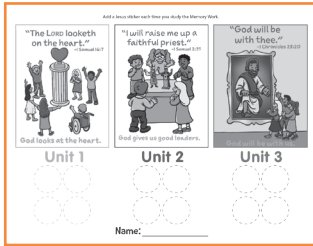
- Dry-erase board with wet-erase markers
- Butcher paper with crayons (replace each week or as it gets full)
- Finger-paint bags: Halfway fill a strong gallon zipper bag with finger paint. Then seal and cover the seal with duct tape. Secure the bag to the wall with duct tape. Children can "smear" through the bag to their heart's content.
- Sticky creations: Mount contact paper to the wall so the sticky side is out. Provide tissue paper squares, construction paper shapes, flat plastic shapes (can be removed and reused), and other items children can stick to the paper to create a work of art.
- Flannel board: Secure a large felt square to the wall. Provide smaller felt shapes for children to stick to it. Consider using old flannelgraph visuals.

BULLETIN BOARDS

If you cannot decorate entire walls, decorate a bulletin board with framed pictures of your toddlers. Label it: GOD'S TREASURES.

Another bulletin board could display the Bible art pictures (TRP) 📖 that have been framed.





ATTENDANCE AND MEMORY WORK CHARTS

The unit memory posters are printed on the back of the activity paper cover. Send this cover page home with parents the first week so families can study the unit memory posters throughout the quarter.

Attendance: Tear out the charts from the activity paper sets. Children add a footprint sticker to a museum path (TRP) 📍 each week they attend.

Memory Work: Your toddlers will be learning three unit Bible Verses or Bible Words, depending on which you choose to teach. Each week after memory work, whether you teach the Bible Words or the Bible Verse, toddlers add a Jesus memory sticker (TRP) 📍 to the appropriate memory work area.

Did You Know?

After accounting for all maintenance and supply expenses, it costs a church more to make boring grayscale copies of the activity paper than it does to buy a full-color activity paper for each student. Churches may think they are saving money by buying one activity paper and making copies, but in reality, it is costing them more.

Not to mention that copying the activity paper violates copyright laws. Permission is only granted to make copies for visitors. Avoid the need to copy. Order extras to allow for class growth and a few visitors.

Offering

Collect offering as toddlers arrive so they do not play with it or lose it. Place a church offering plate on a column near the door. Explain that this is a special offering plate for Jesus, placed on a special column just so children can give their offering to Jesus each week. Instruct children to place their offering in the plate when they arrive each week.

Allergy Alert

Hopefully you are using the Child Information Form 📄, asking all parents or guardians to fill one out before they leave a child in your care. Be especially aware of any food allergies. Be prepared to provide alternatives to those students who have allergies to ingredients such as honey, gluten, dye, and nuts.

Update Your Block Center

Go on a hunt for free tube blocks, which are actually cartridges that hold film paper used by digital printers. These durable blocks provide a new approach to block activities. Visit stores such as Walmart, Walgreens, and CVS that print digital photos. Ask them to save the cartridges that hold the film paper (usually these are thrown away). Start right away to collect these tubes.

Or check with a local carpet company for carpet tubes. They may be happy to accommodate you. Cut these carpet tubes into 12-inch lengths to make round blocks. Spray paint with primary colors.

Music

Toddlers love music. They may not know the words, but they will clap, tap, move, dance, and worship. Encourage them to sing praises to Jesus each week.

Music is also a great attention-getter when children are restless. Turn the music on, start singing and moving, and soon they will join in. Once you have their attention, finish singing and then move on with your activity.

On teachpreschool.org search “tube blocks” for a visual of these items.

● Praise and Worship Songs for Toddlers

Angels Watching over Me
Be Careful Little Eyes What You See
Climb Up Sunshine Mountain
Deep and Wide
Everybody Ought to Go to Sunday School
Father Abraham
Fishers of Men
From the Rising of the Sun
God Made Me
He's Got the Whole World
Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes
His Banner over Me Is Love
If We All Pull Together
I'm in the Lord's Army
I'm So Happy

I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy down in My Heart
If You're Happy and You Know It
Jesus Loves Me
Jesus Loves the Little Children
My God Is So Big
O How I Love Jesus
One God (tune "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean")
Rise and Shine
The B-I-B-L-E
The Birdie with a Yellow Bill
The Wise Man Built His House upon a Rock
This Little Light of Mine
Whisper a Prayer
Zacchaeus

Plan an Open House to Kick off the Quarter

As each summer ends, a familiar routine occurs across North America. Schools invite parents to their campus for an open house to meet their children's teachers; get familiar with what happens at class; and to be updated about what to expect in terms of class rules, homework, and so on. This year, why not take advantage of this trend and host a similar event at your church?

The Open House kit 📁 provides you with the tools and resources you need to host an open house so you can connect more closely to the parents of the children you minister to each week and encourage more buy-in at home. These kit materials will guide you through the process of planning, advertising, and hosting this event where parents walk through the Sunday school classes, meet the teachers, learn about the class routines, and find out how they can partner with the church to nurture their children's spiritual growth at home.

Feel free to adapt this material and use it in whatever way you choose to make this Open House a success in your unique church setting.



Unit 1

God Chooses Leaders

Unit Aim

Children will say God chooses leaders.

Unit Bible Verse

“The LORD looketh on the heart”
(1 Samuel 16:7).

Unit Bible Words

God looks at the heart.

Scripture Text

1 Samuel 3:19–21; 7

Bible Point

God chooses His leaders.

Life Application

I will follow my leader.

GOD CHOSE SAMUEL

EXCITE AND ENGAGE

Welcome: Offering container, attendance charts (AP) ⚡, attendance footprint stickers (TRP) ⚡

Activity Paper: Activity papers (page 1), crayons

Worship: “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands,” “Jesus Loves Me”

Prayer: Picture of your pastor

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Memory Work: Prepare a variety of small objects for children to look at through a magnifying glass (e.g., button, bead, toy, small print words, and so on). Be sure to supervise small objects so no children put them in their mouths.

Bible, unit 1 MW poster (TRP), memory charts (AP) ⚡, Jesus memory stickers (TRP) ⚡, magnifying glasses

Bible Lesson: Bible art: God Chose Samuel (TRP), Bible, robe for Samuel, soldier costume

APPLY AND ACT

Activity Paper: Activity papers (page 2), crayons

Snack Break: Samuel’s robe from Bible Lesson, cheese crackers, drinks

Role-Play: Samuel’s robe and soldier costume from Bible Lesson

Book and Games: Book (see page 12)

Blocks/Sensory: For each child, prepare a sensory bag using heavy-duty gallon freezer bags with tight seals. Put different textured items in each bag, such as hair gel, shaving cream, dry cereal, and ice cubes. Reinforce each seal with duct tape.

Art/Writing: Index cards (2 per child), pencil, crayons, scissors, glue, craft sticks (2 per child)

Music/Movement: No supplies needed

Home Connection: Unit 1 HC calendar (TRP) ⚡ (1 per child), lesson 1 HC devotion (1 per child) ⚡, AP cover (1 per child), child information form ⚡

Teacher Devotional

Read I Samuel 3:19–21 and chapter 7. Prayerfully consider what this passage says:

About God

God alone knows the true condition and contents of a leader’s heart. God responds to our dedication to Him by promoting the most dedicated to positions of responsibility in His kingdom. God is not impressed and gives no extra consideration to someone simply based on their name or family history. God chooses leaders who choose Him first.

To You as a Teacher

Have you ever had a boss who caused you to wonder how they achieved their appointed position? These leaders can be difficult to follow because they do not inspire you to do any more than the minimum to get by. As a part of God’s kingdom it is the opposite. Our pastors and ministers are anointed and prayerful leaders. They look out for us and inspire us to be more than we thought we could be. We can follow them with confidence because we know they are following God.

To Your Students

As Samuel grew, the Lord was with him, making sure “none of his words [fell] to the ground” (I Samuel 3:19). Every word God spoke through Samuel was well received; none were spoken in vain. Toddlers depend on leaders to give instructions, unconsciously accepting what leaders say and (generally) following those instructions. After class, parents often hear, “Teacher said so.” To your students, your words are equal to the gospel, so speak plainly and speak right. Your little ones depend on you.

EXCITE AND ENGAGE

Welcome

After greeting each child, show the offering container. Accept offerings as children enter so the money is not lost. Thank each child for giving to Jesus.

On the attendance charts (AP) (1), help children write their names and add a footprint sticker (TRP) (2) to the first circle. Then let your staff lead children to the various activities as they explore the Bible Discovery Museum. Encourage children to have fun.

Gather children to do their activity papers by having them march behind you to the tables. **God chooses leaders to lead us. I will follow my leader. Can you follow me?**

Activity Paper

The activity on the front page is located at the beginning of the lesson as a way to greet students and get them focused on the lesson objective.

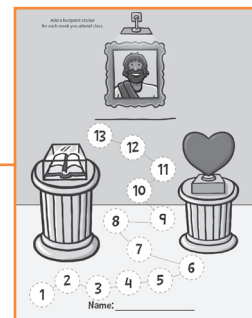
Distribute activity papers and point to the pastor. **What do our leaders teach us?**

Let children identify each item. **Our leaders teach us to pray. Can you color the child who is praying?**

Our leaders teach us about the Bible. Can you color the Bible?

Our leaders teach us at church. Can you color the church?

Ask children to draw themselves listening to the pastor.



Throughout this quarter about leaders and beyond, keep the picture of your pastor handy for reference. Pray for your pastor often, showing the picture and talking about what your pastor does. Help your toddlers recognize their pastor.

Worship

Sing “He’s Got the Whole Worlds in His Hands.” **God has you and mommies and daddies and pastors and leaders in His hands. Let’s sing again.** Sing the verses “He’s got the mommies and the daddies” and “He’s got the pastors and the leaders.”

Sing “Jesus Loves Me.” **I’m glad Jesus loves me. Do you love Jesus? Let’s praise Jesus.**

Prayer

God gave us a pastor. Our pastor is such a good leader. Do you know our pastor’s name? Show your pastor’s picture and encourage each child to say your pastor’s name. **Pastor (name) prays for us and teaches us what God says. God chose Pastor (name) to be our leader. God chooses leaders and God will speak to us through His leaders. Let’s pray for our pastor that God will help our pastor to be a good leader.** Lead in an echo prayer for your pastor.

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Memory Work

Bible Words: God looks at the heart.

Gather at the unit 1 MW poster (TRP). Point to each Bible Word as you read and let children echo you.

Show a magnifying glass. **This is a magnifying glass. It helps us see things that are small.** Let children take turns looking through the magnifying glass at the small objects.

The magnifying glass helps us see these tiny things, but it does not help us see everything. There are some things we cannot see that only God can see.

Hold the magnifying glass over your heart. **Can you see my heart?** Hold it over a child’s heart. **Can you see (name’s) heart? We cannot see our hearts, even with this special glass, but I know someone who can see your heart. Do you know who that is?**

God can see your heart. When God looks at your heart, He knows if you love Him and if you want to do good. Let children take turns holding the glass over their heart as they say the Bible Words.

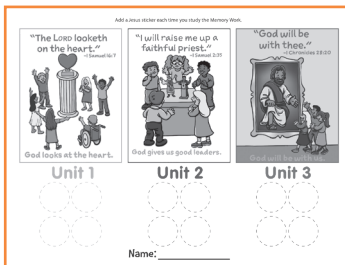
Help children write their names on the memory charts (AP) and place a Jesus sticker (TRP) in the appropriate place on their memory charts (AP).

Bible Verse: “The LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

Gather at the unit 1 MW poster (TRP). Point to each word of the Bible Verse as you read and let children echo you.

Show a magnifying glass. **This is a magnifying glass. It helps us see things that are small.** Let children take turns looking through the magnifying glass at the small objects. **The magnifying glass helps us see these tiny things, but it does not help us see everything. There are some things we cannot see that only God can see.**

We cannot see our hearts, but God can. Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 16:7 and show it through the magnifying glass. **The Bible says, “The LORD looketh on the heart.”** Let children take turns holding the glass over their heart as they say the Bible Verse.



Hold the magnifying glass over your heart. **Can you see my heart?** Hold it over a child's heart. **Can you see (name's) heart? We cannot see our hearts, even with this special glass, but I know someone who can see your heart. Do you know who that is? God can see your heart. When God looks at your heart, He knows if you love Him and if you want to do good.** Let children take turns holding the glass over their heart as they say the Bible Verse.

Help children write their names on the memory charts (AP) ⬇️ and place a Jesus sticker (TRP) ⬇️ in the appropriate place on their memory charts (AP) ⬇️.

Bible Lesson: God Chose Samuel (1 Samuel 3:19–21; 7)

Show 1 Samuel in your Bible. **The Bible tells us about a man named Samuel. Let's all say "Samuel." When Samuel was a little boy, God talked to him. God chose Samuel to be a leader, just like I am your leader in our class. God wanted Samuel to teach the people, just like I teach you. God wanted Samuel to pray for the people, just like I pray for you.**

Samuel grew up and learned how to be a good leader, just like God wanted him to be. Place the robe on a child and have the child stand near you. **Samuel prayed and God talked to him.** Tell the child to pray. **God was always with Samuel. Is God always with you too? Yes, He is.**

The people knew Samuel was their leader. They knew God had chosen Samuel. When Samuel listened to God, he told the people what God said, and the people listened to Samuel. Everyone say, "Samuel was a good leader." The people followed their leader.

Some bad soldiers (Philistines) decided to fight Samuel and the people. Place the soldier costume on a child and have the child stand on the other side of you. **The Israelites got scared. Can you look very scared? They were afraid of the bad people.**

Show the Bible art picture God Chose Samuel (TRP). **The people asked Samuel to pray.** Have children repeat after you, **"Pray, Samuel, pray."** Have Samuel kneel with folded hands. **The people knew God would tell Samuel what to do. They followed their leader.**

Samuel asked God to save them from the bad soldiers. Have the soldier take one step toward the sitting children. **Every time the bad soldiers got close to the Israelites, they asked Samuel to keep praying for them.** Lead seated children in saying, **"Pray, Samuel, pray."** Samuel keeps praying. **Boom! God scared all the bad soldiers away with a great, big boom of thunder.** Have the soldier run away from the group.

The people praised and thanked God for saving them. They were happy God had given them a great leader, Samuel, who could pray for them and tell them how to follow God.

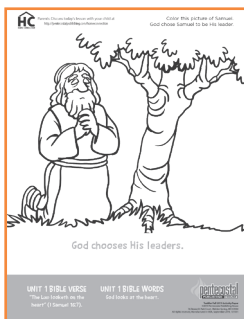
Who is our leader who prays and tells us what God says? Show the picture of your pastor. **God chose Pastor (name) to be our leader. We will follow our leader.**

Discussion Questions

- **Who did God choose to be Israel's leader?** Samuel
- **Who came to fight the people?** Bad soldiers (Philistines)
- **What did the people tell Samuel to do?** "Pray, Samuel, pray."



APPLY AND ACT



This life-application section offers a collection of lesson-related activity options. Select the ones that best fit with your group and setting to drive home the lesson objectives. Using these methods, students will think they are playing while they are really learning.

Activity Paper

As children color, discuss the picture of Samuel praying. **The people followed their leader, Samuel. Who is our leader that we will follow?**

Snack Break

Distribute snacks (cheese crackers and drinks). **When the people needed God's blessing, they asked Samuel to pray. Who wants to be like Samuel and lead the prayer for our snack?** Put the robe on a child and let the child lead in prayer for the food.

Role-Play

Let children take turns dressing up as the soldier and Samuel. When the soldier comes toward the children, they shout, "Pray, Samuel, pray!" Samuel will pray for them. When Samuel prays, the soldier runs away. **Samuel was a leader because he prayed for God's people.**

Seat students in a circle. Select one child to wear Samuel's robe. Ask "Samuel" to walk around the outside of the circle and pray for the other children. **When Samuel prayed for the people, God answered his prayers.** Let "Samuel" select the next child to wear the robe, walk around the circle, and pray. Continue until all children have had a turn being Samuel.

Books and Games

From an age-appropriate children's Bible, read the story of the people telling Samuel to pray.

- *The Lord Calls Samuel* by Susan Hammond

After reading, play follow-the-leader. Perform toddler-friendly actions like a jump, clap, or spin. **God chooses our leaders. I will choose the leader for this game. I choose (child's name).** Choose a child to take over as the leader and encourage children to follow their leader. Switch often so each child can be the leader.

Blocks/Sensory

Distribute the sensory bags and let children squish and feel each one. Talk about how different each bag feels. **Just like these bags are different, you are different too. God chooses different people to be His leaders. If you pray and listen to God, He will tell you where He wants you to lead as you grow up.**

Art/Writing

Ask children to show you praying hands. Samuel was a good leader because he prayed for the people. He listened to God and told the people what God said. Trace each child's hands onto index cards (one hand per card). After children color the hands, secure each card to a craft stick. Show children how to put the cards together to form praying hands. Write names on the cards.






Option: if you have staff and time, quickly cut out each hand.


Music/Movement

Play a toddler-friendly game of red light, green light. Have children line up against one wall and explain that you are the leader. **You need to follow what I say, just like we follow God's leaders. You should walk when I say walk, run when I say run, and stop when I say stop. Can you follow what your leader says?** Play the game.

When God chooses our leaders, we should listen to what they say. God uses His leaders to speak His words and tell us what God says. I will follow my leader.

Home Connection

- During pick up, hand out the unit 1  calendar  and encourage parents to post it in a common area (like on the fridge) at home for easy reference.
- Walk parents through the lesson 1  devotion  so they can see what a valuable tool this is for family discipleship. Point out the URL on the back of the activity paper in case parents want to download it themselves.
- Send home the cover of the activity paper, showing parents it contains the memory-work posters for the entire quarter. Again, encourage them to post this paper in a common area (like on the fridge) for easy reference.
- Use the child information form  to get contact information for parents. Use this to establish a home connection throughout the quarter.

The child information form  has been revised from previous quarters. We suggest updating this form for all students.