



What Shall I Give?

Goal: To recognize what God desires from us.

RECOGNIZING GOD’S GRACE . . .

. . . In Micah 6:6–8

Micah was a prophet from a small village in the southern kingdom of Judah during the time of kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. It was a time of increasing uncertainty and threat from the growing Assyrian empire, which took over the northern kingdom of Israel more than 700 years before Jesus was born. The purpose of a prophet in Micah’s time was to remind the people of their covenant with God and God’s faithfulness to them, and to make them aware of their present unfaithfulness and how they had strayed from the covenant.

Micah predicted disaster for the capitals of Israel and Judah because of the people’s failure to keep their covenant with God. Micah condemned their worship of idols and their oppression of the poor. In Micah 6:1–8, God’s words against Israel are described in several ways depending on the translation—as a “complaint” or an “accusation,” a “case” or a “controversy.” In a sense, the passage is set up as a trial at which Israel is being accused, and the mountains and hills are called to be witnesses. Verse 8 of this passage is often thought of as a summary of the message of the prophets, and many regard it as a basic instruction on living faithfully with God and others.

. . . In Your Children’s Experiences

Children may be familiar with the idea that someone may speak on God’s behalf; however, they may restrict this ability to people such as ministers or other religious authorities. They may be less familiar with the idea that God may choose to speak to and through them—that all of us may be called to be prophets. Affirm that God can speak to anyone, not only to a select few. Most children have an intense sense of justice, of what is and is not fair, particularly on a personal level. They may be less familiar with injustice on a national or global scale.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

The concept of walking (humbly) with God in covenant is probably most easily understood in terms of relationship. Affirm that relationship to God is possible, even though God is unseen. Share ways that you communicate with God, such as through prayer, Scripture, prophets, and other people and circumstances. Resist the temptation to turn Micah 6:8 into a set of rules, which one can use to justify one’s actions or compare one’s righteousness with that of others.

*Gracious God, may my life be a reflection of what you want from us:
to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 12, 22

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: variety of
puzzles

choice 2: variety of
items that can be sorted
and counted, such as
crayons, blocks, books,
glue sticks, and so forth

choice 3: water play
table or large tub of
water, plastic tablecloth
or drop cloth, pitchers,
cups or containers of
the same size

Exploring

choice 2: card-stock
copies of **Grace Notes**
(GN) 1

choice 3: list from
“Hearing the Story”

choice 4: copies of
GN 2

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner, and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 1 and choice 2 require more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive, and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers whom you do not know personally. Tell the parents that today’s story is about hearing what God really desires from us. Invite the children to choose a guided play activity to start:

1. **Puzzles**—Provide a variety of puzzles where the pieces to different puzzles have been mixed up. Encourage children to work together to complete the puzzles.
2. **Sorting and Counting**—Invite children to sort items by size, type, shape, or color. Ask children about how they have decided to sort the items. Suggest counting items and determining which group has more or less. Wonder together if there is a way to make the groups equal. Assist children who are having difficulty by helping them identify the different attributes of items and counting with them. Give encouragement and praise for actions of helpfulness.
3. **Measuring Water**—Provide large pitchers of water and several cups or containers that are the same size. Have children practice pouring water into cups. Start children with a fewer number of cups. Challenge them to pour an equal amount of water into each cup. Add more cups and see if they can make the amounts equal in the greater number of cups. Wonder together what they notice about the amount of water when there are more cups.

T *Transition times can be more frustrating to children if they have to wait. Be prepared to move to the next activity and alert children of upcoming changes. If children will need to wait, provide a simple task such as a threading activity or hand clapping to occupy the time and lessen the frustration.*



Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner, singing “Make a Joyful Noise.” Invite the children to join in singing with you.

We Are God’s Family

L T

Invite the children to repeat your words and actions.

You and you and you and you (*point to those in the circle*) /
are part of God’s big family. (*hug yourself*) /
I stretch my arms to hold you all, (*stretch arms around each child on each side*) /
a great big circle we will be. (*all hold hands together*) /
God’s arms reach around the world (*stretch arms out wide*) /
and hold each child in loving care. (*hug yourself*) /
For God gives us all we need each day (*pat yourself on the head*) /
and God loves it when we share. (*hug yourself and then stretch arms out wide*) /

Hands Go Up

L MS

Invite the children to repeat your words and actions.

Hands go up. (*raise hands in air*) /
Hands go down. (*move hands to sides*) /
I can turn myself around. (*turn around in a circle*) /
I can stand up on one shoe. (*stand on one foot*) /
I can listen. (*cup hand by ear*) /
So can you. (*point to another*) /
I can sit. I’ll show you how. (*sit on floor*) /
Bible time is starting now. (*point finger to wrist*) /



Today’s story can be found in *Growing in God’s Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), www.pcusastore.com.

Hearing the Story

L MS C

Open the Bible to Micah 6 so that the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about what God really wants from us.

Read **SCM 12**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Read the story again, and invite the children to follow your actions when you name the three things God wants from us.

- ✦ do justice (*hold hands out, palms up*)
- ✦ love kindness (*cross hands over heart*)
- ✦ and walk humbly with God (*walk in place*)



After the story, write the title: “What Does God Require of You?” on a large sheet of newsprint. Label three columns: Do Justice (draw a handprint), Love Kindness (draw a heart), Walk with God (draw footprints). Ask children to give you examples of ways to do each of these requirements. Remind them that doing justice means being fair and treating others right, loving kindness means being loving and kind to others, and walking with God means spending time with God. Write the children’s answers under the appropriate columns. Save the list for “Exploring God’s Grace” choice 3.

EXPLORING GOD’S GRACE



1. Walk with God



Before the session, use painter’s tape on the floor to make a path for children to follow. Allow the path to twist, turn, zig zag, and loop around the space.

Tell the children that one of the things Micah says God wants from us is to walk humbly with God—to take time to listen and be with God. Explain that *humble* means that you know you are not better than others. When we pray, we listen and talk to God. Many times when we pray, we sit still with our hands folded and head bowed. But we can also talk to God and listen to God while we are walking.

Show the children the path that you have marked. Tell them that they are going to walk and follow the path. They are not trying to do it better or faster than anyone. Encourage the children to walk slowly and carefully, and to think about what they want to tell God. Urge them to listen for God.

Allow children to follow the path one at a time. Let the first child move along the path for a few seconds before having the next child start. When all of the children have finished, invite children to share about the experience. Prompt discussion by asking questions:

- How did it feel to walk slowly?
- What did you want to tell God?
- What does God sound like to you?



2. “What Does God Require?” Poster



Before the session, make several heart-shaped stamps using toilet paper tubes. Flatten the tube so it has a crease on both sides. Push one crease inward to make the heart shape. Secure by wrapping with tape.

Tell the children they are going to make a poster to help them and their families remember what God wants us to do. Put paint smocks or old shirts on the children to keep their clothes clean from paint. Give each child a card-stock copy of **GN 1**. Point out the title, three phrases from the story, and the verse reference.



For “Do Justice”: Paint each child’s palms and have the children place them next to the words “Do Justice.”

For “Walk with God”: Have the children make their hands into fists. Paint each pinkie finger side of their fists and have them place their fists to the right and left of the words “Walk with God.” Then have them make their fists into feet by dipping their index finger in paint and adding five “toes” above each fist. Have children wash their hands.

For “Love Kindness”: Pour paint on plates. Show the children how to dip the heart stamp in the paint then on their posters by the words “Love Kindness.” Encourage the children to make several hearts.

Set aside to dry. Encourage the children to take home their posters and tell their families or caregivers what it is that God wants from us.

T *Washing hands can take time! Waiting in line for the sink may make some children anxious. Devise a routine for your group so they know what to expect. Use a song, movement poem, or physical activity to match the time required.*

3. God Says . . .

L MS LD

Invite the children to play a game of “God Says.” Tell them you will say “God says . . .” and one of the items on the list made during “Hearing the Story.” Invite the children to think of a way to act out that example together. For example, if the leader says, “God says help feed people who are hungry,” the children could pretend to scoop food from a serving dish and serve someone holding a plate. Repeat with each item on the list.

At the end of the game, have the children join in this litany, repeating your words and following your actions:

God says . . . /
do justice! / (*hold hands out, palms up*)
God says . . . /
love kindness! / (*cross hands over heart*)
God says . . . /
walk humbly with God! / (*walk in place*)

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

4. Coloring Page

C FM

Hand out copies of **GN 2** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture. Engage the children in conversation, using the following questions:

- ✦ I wonder, “How does sharing what we have help others?”
- ✦ I wonder, “How do we show kindness to others?”
- ✦ I wonder, “What can we do to spend time with God?”



LOVING AND SERVING GOD



Have the children help clean up the space.

Call the children to snack time, singing “We Are Growing”—**SCM 22**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Invite everyone to sit around a table or on the floor. Enjoy a snack together.

As the children eat, go around the circle, asking each child to name something they can do this week to:

- do justice (be fair or right with others)
- love kindness (be loving or kind to others)
- walk humbly with God (spend time listening to God, talking with God, or seeing God in the world and others)

Invite the children to follow your actions in the prayer.

Dear God, thank you for letting us know
what you want from us, that we
do justice, (*hold hands out, palms up*)
love kindness, (*cross hands over heart*)
and walk humbly with you, O God. (*walk in place*)
Amen.

Bless the group, saying, “Go, knowing what God wants you to do. The grace of God is with you.” As the children feel comfortable, invite them to share hugs, high fives, or handshakes with one another.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

What Does the Lord Require of You?

Do Justice.

Love Kindness.

Walk with God.

—Micah 6:8

What Shall I Give?



**God wants three things from you:
do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God.**

