



Peter Tells about Jesus

Goal: To practice telling the story of Jesus as Peter did.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Acts 2:14a, 22-42

On Pentecost, the apostle Peter preached to a large crowd. He told them that God's Spirit was with them and that Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God. "This Jesus, God raised up. We are all witnesses to that fact" (v. 32, CEB). Jesus was God's Messiah, sent to show God's love and deliver people from sin. Though he was put to death (v. 23), "God raised him up! God freed him from death's dreadful grip, since it was impossible for death to hang on to him" (v. 24, CEB).

This is the message of Easter. Jesus Christ is risen! Jesus has brought forgiveness of sin and given us new lives to live in loving and serving Christ. We can experience the power of Jesus Christ in our lives. By the Holy Spirit, Jesus is with us in all we do, leading and guiding us, loving us and helping us. Jesus is alive and can be a real person to everyone.

This is the message of God's grace: God loves us in Jesus Christ! Like Peter, we can tell the story of Jesus to others. We can be grateful witnesses in sharing the news that Christ is risen!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

The Bible contains enduring stories that we read with our children so they can know the Bible and see the ways it can be a resource for their lives. As they hear today's story, they have a chance to connect their experiences of hearing the stories of Jesus with those early Christians described in this story from the book of Acts.

Children witness many things in their lives, some difficult things, some things about which they have questions, and, thankfully, many good things. This story offers them the chance to identify ways they can be God's faithful witnesses in the world.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

If any children recall the story of Jesus from Easter Sunday, celebrate how well they are learning the important stories of the Bible. As they grow in familiarity with the account of the resurrection, they will grow in confidence in telling it to others. This builds a firm foundation for faith and witness. All of us are witnesses to the story of God's love for us in sending Jesus. There is no exception for age, status, and ability! That is good news.

A witness is someone who is able to accurately describe what he or she has seen to someone else. As a person of faith, you are one of God's witnesses. As a spiritual leader of children, you witness to the ways that God's love and grace are working in your life. Thanks be to God!

*Holy Spirit, give me Pentecost courage so I
may share your promise with my children. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 1, 15, 20

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

candle

red cloth

eleven envelopes

Grace Notes (GN) 1

Responding

Celebrating

copies of **GN 2** and
GN 3

Praying

GN 1, copies of **GN 4**
on card stock, plastic
drinking straws

Offering

GN 1, costumes, digital
camera

Extra

copies of **GN 5**

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Post **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.

“Offering God’s Grace” requires more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing **LG**

Use “God’s Promises” as background music. Set your CD player to repeat the song.

Greet the children by name and with the words, “Grace be with you.” Tell them how glad you are to see them.

Invite the children to help you decorate the room for worship. Say that the story today takes place on the same day that last week’s story happened. Wonder what day that was. Remind them that it was Pentecost, if necessary. Ask the children to recall what they know about Pentecost and to decorate the worship area for Pentecost worship. Have the children include a Bible and a red (the color for Pentecost) cloth. Place a candle on the table.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Ask for one or two volunteers to practice reading the Scripture passage.

Invite two children to prepare eleven envelopes. Cut out the strips on **GN 1**. Place each strip in a separate envelope. Use a marker to write the number of the strip on the outside of the envelope. Hide the envelopes around the room.

Singing **T**

Listen to “God’s Promises”—**SCM 15**. Invite the children to dance or move while they sing along.

Praying

Turn on the candle, reminding the children that fire is a sign of the Holy Spirit. Ask the group to join in an echo prayer:

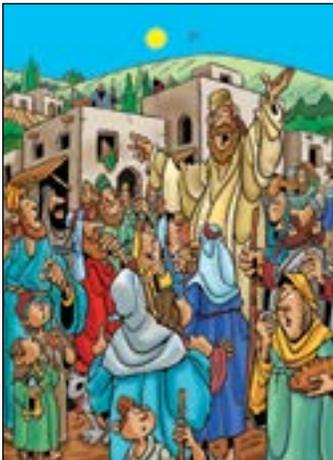
Dear God, /
Fill us with your Spirit. /
Amen. /

T *Transitioning from an activity with movement to a quiet or listening one can be difficult for some children. Alerting them of the change in advance, such as saying, “After this we will be praying,” allows children time to anticipate the change and act accordingly.*



Peter's actions:

- ▾ Peter caught fish for a living.
- ▾ Peter was a friend of Jesus.
- ▾ Peter didn't always understand what Jesus was trying to tell him.
- ▾ Peter was afraid and ran away when Jesus died.
- ▾ Peter saw Jesus after he rose from the dead.
- ▾ Peter believed in Jesus and told others about him.



Preparing to Hear the Story

Recall that Christians celebrate Pentecost to remember how God sent the Holy Spirit to Jesus' followers. The Spirit gave them the power and energy to build the church and do God's work.

Introduce Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, who speaks to the assembled crowd. Peter was one of the first disciples called by Jesus. He was originally called Simon in Hebrew; later Jesus renamed him Peter. *Peter*, which means "rock," may have indicated his strength and commitment as a disciple.

Play a game to find out more about Peter. Ask one person to volunteer. Out of earshot of the rest, give the volunteer one of Peter's actions (see sidebar) and ask him or her to mime it for the group. Others watch the mime and try to guess Peter's actions. Continue with different actions and new volunteers. Talk about what you discover about Peter.

Hearing the Story

Invite a child to open the Bible to Acts 2. Have one or two volunteers read Acts 2:14a, 22-42. Conclude the reading by saying, "Word of wisdom, Word of grace," and prompt the children to say, "Thanks be to God." Place the Bible on the worship table.

Before you read **SCM 1**, give the children the following instructions:

- ▾ When they hear the name Jesus, they should say, "Yeah, Jesus!"
- ▾ When they hear the name Peter, they should stand up and put their hands by their mouths as if they are shouting.
- ▾ When they hear Holy Spirit, they should make a sound like the blowing wind.

Read the story, pausing for the actions.

Reflecting on God's Grace

Encourage children to tell the story of Jesus in their own words.

Help children put the story of Jesus together. Explain that you have placed messages in eleven envelopes for them to find.

When all the envelopes have been found, have the child with envelope number eleven open it and read the story strip. Continue with all the envelopes, counting down in numerical order. Assist with reading as needed. Wonder what other stories about Jesus we could include. Ask the children who they will tell the story of Jesus to.

Singing

Sing "Jesus Taught Us How to Love"—**SCM 20**—to celebrate all of the things that Jesus came to do. Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

Ideas for messages:

- God loves you.
- Care for one another.
- Take care of the world.
- Be kind.
- God will always be with you.

Claiming God's Grace

MS B C

Wonder together what important messages God has for us. Wonder what God wants us to tell others about Jesus. Practice telling the good news of Jesus in a game.

Sit in a circle. The leader stands outside the circle. The leader says, "I have a message for someone . . ." and names a category that at least one person in the group will fit (*for example, someone with white shoes, someone who has a baby sister, someone with a blue hair fastener*). The children who fit the category stand up, run once around the circle, go to the leader, and get the message. They then run back to the circle and whisper that message to as many people as they can before the leader calls "Time!"

Repeat with a different category and different message until everyone has had a chance to hear and pass on a message. Invite the group to make up its own messages from God, once they get the idea. At the end of the game, recall the different messages together.

Celebrating God's Grace

V D L

Before the session, cut out the squares from GN 3 and place them in a paper bag.

Play a game of Jesus Bingo to celebrate the stories of Jesus! Give each child a copy of GN 2 and GN 3. Have them color and cut out the squares from GN 3 and glue them in the spaces on their Jesus Bingo cards. There will be four extra pictures, so children may decide which sixteen pictures they want on their Jesus Bingo cards. There will be no "Free" space.

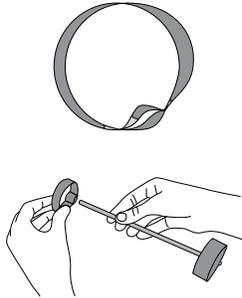
Give the children small markers or objects to mark their spaces. Tell the children you will pull pictures from the bag and call out the picture. Children may form a Jesus Bingo by marking four pictures in a row, column, diagonal, or four corners. Suggest that the children call out, "Jesus!" when they get a Jesus Bingo.

A *Adapt any activity to suit your children's needs. Ask yourself, "How can I change this activity so this child can do it?"*

Praying God's Grace

Invite children to make prayer gliders that remind them to thank God for the gift of Jesus.

Together make a list of five to ten things that the children in your group know about Jesus. If it is helpful for them, select from the eleven statements on GN 1.



Give each child a drinking straw, one blank strip, and one “Thank you” strip from **GN 4**. Invite the children to write or draw one thing they like about Jesus on the blank strip. Invite them to color the message on the “Thank you” strip. The children can decorate the strips and then cut them out.

Use the following directions to make the glider:

- ▼ Form a circle with the longer strip, overlapping the ends by ½".
- ▼ Tape the outside and inside of the circle but not the edge.
- ▼ When the little pocket is pinched, it will form a loop (see diagram). Do the same with the shorter strip.
- ▼ Slip each end of a straw through the pocket in each circle (see diagram). Tape the loops securely to the straw.

Show the children how to fly the glider by holding the straw with the loops pointing up and forcing it forward while letting go. Together, say, “Thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus” while letting go.



Offering God’s Grace

A LG

Help the children create a slide show to share the story of Jesus. Provide costumes, such as headdresses from towels or lengths of fabric tied with yarn or cord for the boys and shawls for girls to drape over their heads.

Use the sentences from **GN 1** as the basis for the scenes. Remind the children that they will portray the scenes with their bodies and facial expressions but no words. Have the children pose. Take digital photos of each one. Show the pictures to the children. During the week, create a file with captions to send to the children and their families, to present to the congregation at a gathering, or to post on your church’s web site if you have permission to post.

Extra Activity

*Before the session, cut out the finger holes from **GN 5** for younger children.*

Tell the children that they are going to be like Peter and share a story about Jesus.

Have the children find a partner. Tell the pairs to decide on a story about Jesus that they will share with the group. Give the children a few minutes to talk about the story and decide what characters they will need.

Hand out copies of **GN 5** and crayons or markers. Have the children draw and color the figures to go with Jesus in their story. Tell the children that their fingers will be the character’s legs. Show the children how to poke a hole and carefully cut out each finger hole. Have them cut out each figure.



Give the pairs a few minutes to practice their stories. Ask for volunteers to tell a story about Jesus. If more than one pair chooses to tell the same story, encourage the second group to either add different details or guess what may have happened next.

Encourage the children to tell their stories to family members at home.

LG *Focus on the strengths of the children, and learn to see them as gifted members of your community.*



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).

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Lead the children in cleaning up the worship space.

Ask the children to stand in a circle. Have a volunteer stand in the center of the circle. Tell the person in the center to be Peter and shout out, "God's grace is for everyone." Have the children in the circle turn and face out. On each count of three, have the children take a step out and shout the phrase. Close with a prayer:

Holy God, thank you for all the people who tell the stories of Jesus. Help us to share Jesus' story with the whole world. Bless us as we share our faith with others. Amen.

Thank the children for coming, and encourage them to return next week. To each child, say: "(Name), God's gift of grace is for you."

11. God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. (Luke 1:26–56)
10. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Angels announced to shepherds that the Messiah had been born. God sent Jesus to show us how much God loves us. (Luke 2:1–20)
9. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. A voice from heaven pronounced Jesus as God’s beloved Son. (Luke 3:21–22)
8. In a synagogue, Jesus announced the meaning of his ministry as preaching good news to the poor. (Luke 4:16–30)
7. Jesus called men and women to follow him and learn from him. He prepared them to tell others about himself and welcome them into the church. (Luke 5:1–11, 27–28; 8:1–3)
6. Jesus told stories to teach people how everyone is important to God. One story was about a shepherd who left ninety-nine sheep to look for one lost sheep. (Luke 15:1–7)
5. Jesus healed ten men who were sick. One man came back to Jesus and praised God for his healing. (Luke 17:11–19)
4. When Jesus came to his town, Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see him. Jesus welcomed Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus became one of Jesus’ followers. (Luke 19:1–10)
3. People waved leafy branches when Jesus entered Jerusalem before his trial and death. (Luke 19:28–40)
2. Jesus died and his friends put his body in a tomb. (Luke 23:32–47)
1. Three days after Jesus died, two women went to the tomb. They discovered God had raised Jesus from death. They ran to tell the other disciples. (Luke 24:1–12)

JESUS BINGO



Jesus is born.



Jesus at the temple.



Jesus is baptized.



Jesus reads from the scroll.



Jesus calls disciples.



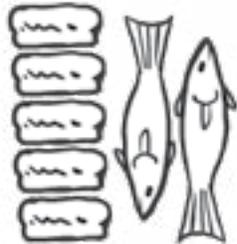
Jesus turns water to wine.



Jesus and the woman at the well.



Jesus teaches about prayer.



Jesus feeds 5,000.



Jesus welcomes children.



Jesus heals a blind man.



Jesus tells a story of a lost sheep.



Jesus tells a story of a father and son.



Jesus tells a story of a mustard seed.



Jesus calms the storm.



Jesus enters Jerusalem.



Jesus eats with his friends.



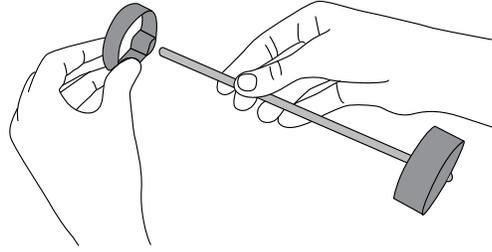
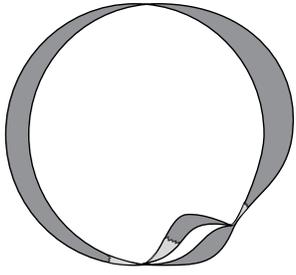
Jesus washes feet.



Jesus dies on a cross.



Jesus is risen.



A large rectangular area with a dashed border, divided into five horizontal sections by dashed lines, intended for writing.

Thank you, God.

