



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, 12a, 12b, 12c, 18, 21

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

candle

green cloth

Responding

Offering

card-stock copies of
Grace Notes (GN) 1,
clear contact paper, key
ring (optional)

Extra

copies of **GN 2**

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 **C**

Welcome each child with, “Grace and peace be with you, (Name).” Prompt children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite children to prepare the worship space with a Bible, a candle, and a green cloth. Provide drawing paper and markers, and invite children to draw pictures of cows, sheep, birds, grains, oil, and fruit, each on different pieces of paper. Have them add their pictures to the worship table.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities.

As children prepare the space, wonder together about what they imagine God requires of or wants from them. Simply let them talk; don’t worry about correcting or adding to their ideas.

Singing

MS

Play, listen to, clap, and dance to “Make a Joyful Noise”—**SCM 18**.

Praying

MS **T**

Turn on the candle as a reminder of God’s light in the world through Jesus. Gather in a circle, inviting children to stand. Lead them in this body prayer, inviting them to repeat your words and motions.

God of grace, (*raise hands to the sky*) /
Lead us to be people (*move right hand, palm up, from the center to the side*) /
who do justice, (*palms up, right and left hands bouncing up and down as though a scale, coming to rest level with one another*) /
love kindness, (*place hands over heart*) /
and walk humbly with you. (*walk in place*) /
Amen. /

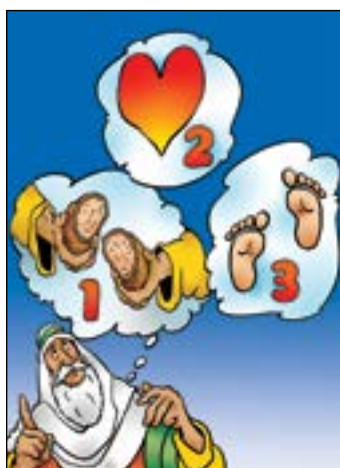
T Use transition cues to give plenty of warning that a change is coming. Clear, tangible signals help alleviate tensions. Consider using count-down numbers on a whiteboard before moving to the next activity.



Preparing to Hear the Story

C

Invite discussion about the role of a prophet, asking children to share ideas they have about what prophets do. If they need guidance, offer that a prophet shares a message from God with the people. (They do not predict the future.) Wonder if prophets have an easy or a hard time sharing God's message with others. Consider what could be easy and what could be hard about their job. Wonder together how people may sometimes respond to prophets.



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

VI LG L MS

Invite a child to find Micah 6 in the Bible so that the children know the story is from the Bible. Read **SCM 12** or listen to the story audio. Place the open Bible on the worship table. Conclude the reading by saying, "Word of wisdom, word of grace," and prompt children to say, "Thanks be to God."

Hand out **SCM 12a**, **12b**, and **12c** to three volunteers. When they hear it mentioned in the story, invite them to hold up the appropriate sign. Review the actions from the prayer and invite children not holding posters to do these motions when you read each of the three things the Lord requires.

- ▼ Do justice. (*palms up, right and left hand bouncing up and down as though a scale, coming to rest level with one another*)
- ▼ Love kindness. (*place hands over heart*)
- ▼ And walk humbly with God. (*walk in place*)

Read the story again. Pause when appropriate to give children a moment to hold their signs up and do the motions.

Reflecting on God's Grace

C

Look at your worship table and ask what is wrong with it. Suggest that it shows what the people first thought was important to give to God. Ask the children what they could replace those pictures with. Suggest that they use the three SCM pictures.

Use these questions to guide discussion:

- ▼ What does it mean to "do justice"? How are people treated fairly (justice) or unfairly (injustice)?
- ▼ What are ways we "love kindness"? Who do you see showing kindness to others?
- ▼ How do we "walk humbly with God," or spend time with God?
- ▼ Why do you think these three things are more important to God than the "stuff" people want to offer?



Singing

L T

Play and sing “We Are Growing”—**SCM 21**. Take time to learn the words to this new song. Turn off the candle.

RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

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

Claiming God’s Grace

TD B MS T

Provide each child with a large sheet of construction paper and whatever medium (paint or markers) you choose for this project. Invite them to recall the motions they used for the three things the Lord requires during “Praying” and “Hearing the Story.” Suggest that using the body motions is a helpful way to remember the three things God wants from us. Tell them they will create a piece of artwork as a visual reminder as well.

Invite children to trace and paint or color their handprint, draw a heart, and trace and paint or color their footprint on the poster. Write the following phrases on a sheet of newsprint so that the children may copy them: “Do justice,” “Love kindness,” and “Walk humbly with God.” Tell them to use markers to write “Do justice.” next to their hand; “Love kindness.” next to the heart; and “Walk humbly with God.” next to their foot. As they work, discuss ways they see the church living each of these things and helping others to live them as well.

TD *For children with tactile sensitivities, stimulants that most people do not particularly mind, or even find fun, can cause extreme reactions that may be interpreted as bad behaviors. Avoid activities involving tactile materials such as fingerpaint, handling gooey or slimy items, and paint on skin. If children in your group experience these issues, finding an alternative to use for all children will help these children not feel singled out.*

Praying God’s Grace

B MS L

Invite children to join you in “walking humbly” as you walk and pray. Encourage them to keep their hands to themselves and to refrain from talking to others as they pray silently. Lead them around the church, not entering spaces if it will be disruptive, but standing outside of them. Guide them using the following prompts:

- ✦ Start in your space—pray for one another.
- ✦ Visit the kitchen—pray for those in your community and around the world who are hungry or don’t get enough to eat.
- ✦ Visit the nursery—pray for women in other countries who don’t have access to good medical care while they are pregnant.
- ✦ Visit the youth room—pray for teenagers who feel lonely.



- ✎ Visit the parking lot—pray for people who may live in their cars, without a structure to call home.
- ✎ Visit the front doors of your church—pray for people who don't feel welcome anywhere.
- ✎ End back in your space, asking God to lead you to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.



Offering God's Grace

LG A

Tell the children they will make a gift to give a friend, family member, or a person in their congregation as a reminder of what God wants from us. Cut card-stock copies of **GN 1** in half and give one to each child. Ask what each of the symbols might represent (*hand—do justice, heart—love kindness, foot—walk humbly with God*). Invite the children to decorate each set of three discs. When they are finished decorating, have the children cover the front and back of the sheet with clear contact paper. Invite the children to cut out each circle. Show the children how to punch a hole in the discs. Invite the children to place one of each disc—hand, heart, and foot—on a length of yarn or a key ring. Encourage the children to give the necklace or key ring to someone and tell them the story of what God desires from us. Suggest that the children can keep the other key ring or necklace for themselves or to give to another person.

Extra Activity

LD

Ask the children, “What does God ask of us?” Hand out copies of **GN 2** and pencils, and allow time for children to follow the paths to connect the words with the pictures. They may color the page as well.

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LD

Lead children in cleaning up the worship space.

End with the following litany. Distribute **SCM 12a, 12b, 12c** again and ask children to hold up their posters when you point to them. Invite a volunteer to lead the litany with the question, “What does the Lord require of you?”

Leader: “What does the Lord require of you?”

SCM 12a is held up while children read it aloud.

Leader: “What does the Lord require of you?”

SCM 12b is held up while children read it aloud.

Leader: “What does the Lord require of you?”

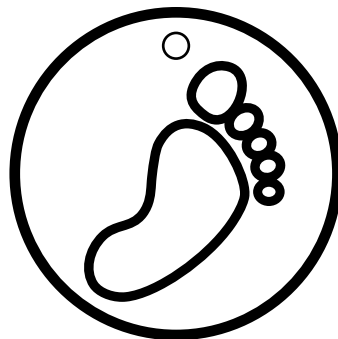
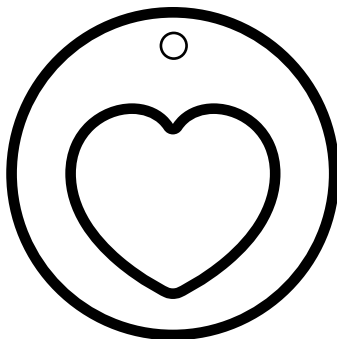
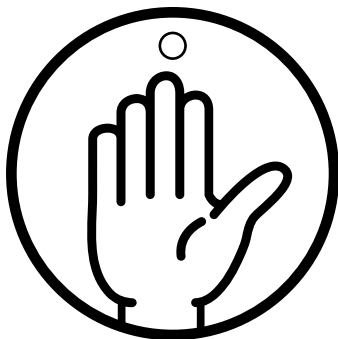
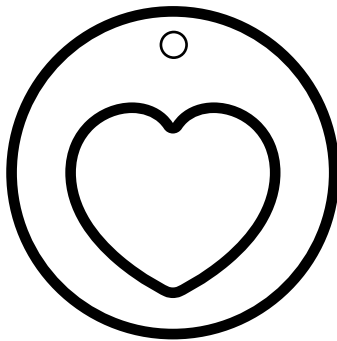
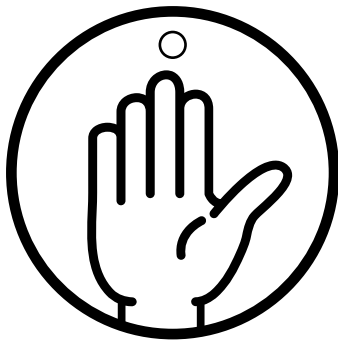
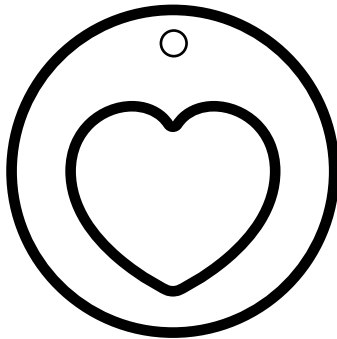
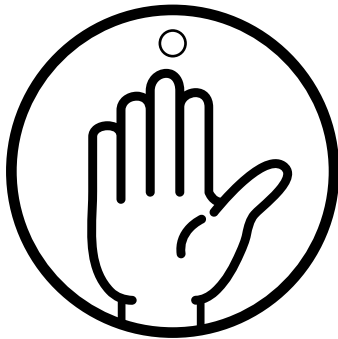
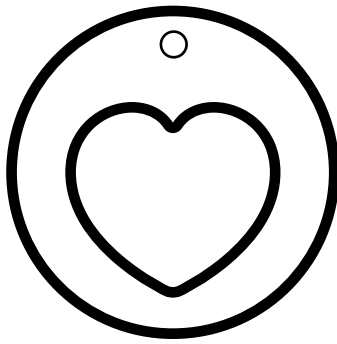
SCM 12c is held up while children read it aloud.

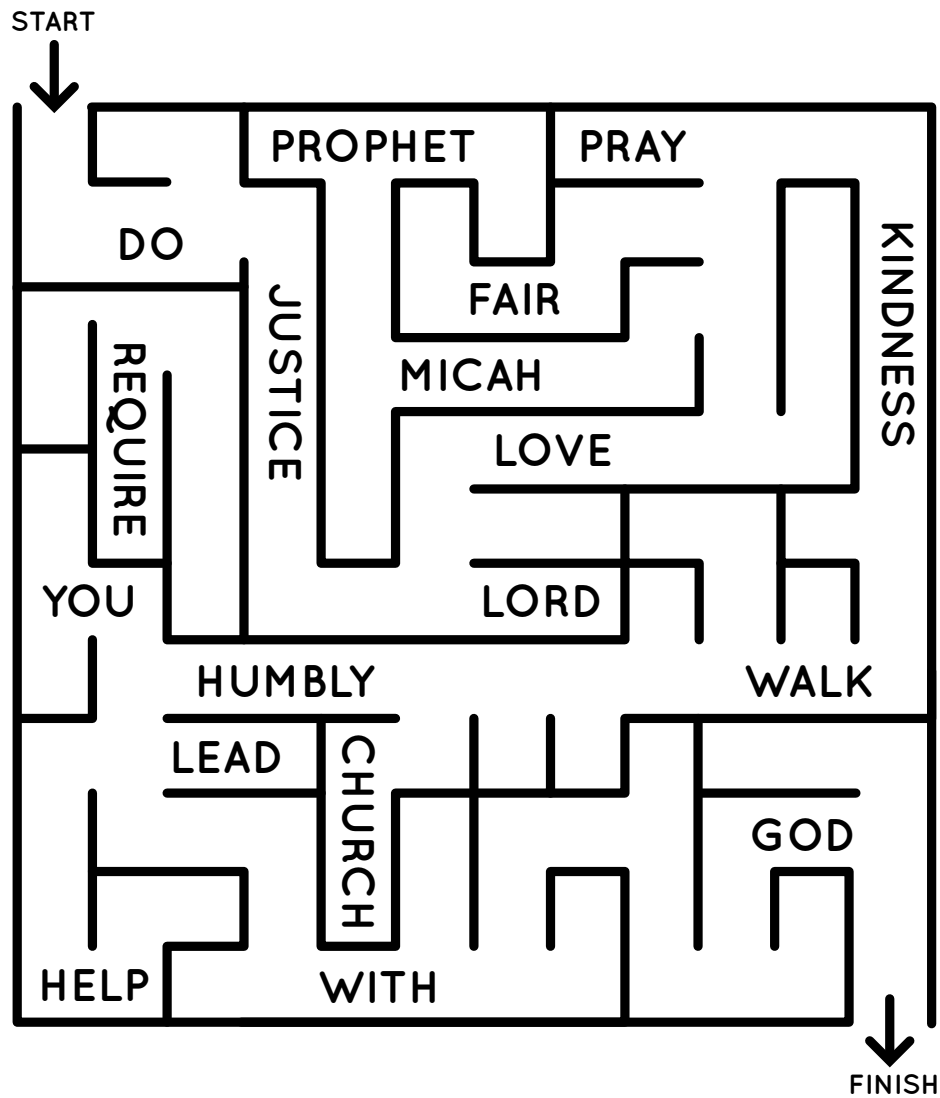
Bless each child, saying, “(Name), go in grace and seek to follow what the Lord requires of you.”

Invite children to join you next week.



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).





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