



David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem

Goal: To celebrate God's presence with worship.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In 2 Samuel 6:12b-15, 17-19

The Ark of the Covenant represented the presence of God with the people of Israel. It was an important sacred object because it was a visible sign, or symbol, that the God who had delivered the people from Egypt was continually present now in the community of faith.

King David brought the Ark to Jerusalem, David's city. This led to great rejoicing for the people and the king. David sacrificed an ox and a choice cow. David was "dancing for the LORD with all his might, but he wore only a linen cloth. He and everyone else were celebrating by shouting and blowing horns while the chest was being carried along" (based on vv. 13-15, CEB).

The whole community was celebrating the coming of the Ark and what it meant to the people of faith. Exuberant joy led to festive celebrations. Their faith was their source of joy. King David offered a sacrifice and then "he blessed the people in the name of the LORD All-Powerful. He gave all the men and women in the crowd a small loaf of bread, some meat, and a handful of raisins, and everyone went home" (based on vv. 18-19, CEB). God's grace brought forth the people's gratitude!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

The visible symbol of the Ark of the Covenant helped David and the Israelites remember God's presence with them. Receiving the Ark in Jerusalem was a time of great joy and celebration. Invite the children to name the ways they know God is present with them. Sometimes it happens in worship, or maybe when they see a baptism or participate in communion. Or they might recognize that God is present when they help someone else, extending God's love and care. As children name the places and times when they know God is present, they could offer a response such as, "Thank you, God!"

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

This is a story full of drama, excitement, joy, and even dancing. Children know what it's like to wait for something and then to experience the event, like a birthday party, sharing joy, fun, and food. As children share their stories, they could also share some of the foods involved, like David did with raisins and bread. Consider extending this celebration to the larger church with the children offering food and blessings to church members on their way to worship.

Dear God, inspire me through today's story to experience the joy and wonder of your presence. Amen.



Supplies

Music & Melodies
(MM) 2022–2023

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) i–iv, 9, 16, 20

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

e-book or story audio
(see p. vii)

candle

green cloth

Ark of the Covenant
with the Ten
Commandments tablets
from October 16

paper towel tubes,
aluminum foil

pea gravel

small dowel rods or
unsharpened pencils

streamers and/or
curling ribbon

Responding

Claiming

balloon(s), beach ball
(optional)

Celebrating

snack food, music for
dancing, **SCM 9**

Extra

copies of **Grace Notes**
(GN) 1

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.

“Claiming God’s Grace” and “Celebrating God’s Grace” require more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing

LG **A** **B** **M** **MS**

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

Invite children to help prepare the worship space. Provide a candle, a green cloth, a Bible, and the Ark of the Covenant.

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 today’s Scripture reading.

Invite the children to make rainstick shakers. Give each child a paper towel tube. Have them trace two circles using the end of the tube on a sheet of card stock. Show them how to tape the circle over one end of the tube using masking or duct tape. Tell the children to take about 18" of aluminum foil and scrunch it together into a loose snake shape. Have them loosely coil the foil and place it inside their paper towel tubes. The foil provides some resistance for the pea gravel as it tumbles from end to end. Add pea gravel in the tubes and secure the other card-stock circle to close the open end. Encourage the children to decorate their rainstick shakers.

Provide each child a small dowel rod or unsharpened pencil, streamers and/or curling ribbon, and tape. Encourage them to cut lengths of streamer and/or curling ribbon and secure them to the dowels in order to create streamers they can wave.

Singing

Gather the group together in the worship space. Play “Make a Joyful Noise”—**MM 16; SCM 20**—and sing along. Encourage the children to use the rainstick shakers and streamers as they sing the song.

Praying

T

Turn on the candle as a reminder of God’s light in the world through Jesus.

Allow for a couple of moments of silence. Invite children to consider and name ways they know God is with them. As children take turns naming God’s presence, lead the rest of the group in

shaking their rainstick shakers and saying, “Thank you, God!” in response to each offering.

Conclude by praying:

God of grace, we thank you for your presence. 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 hear a story,” allows children time to anticipate the change and act accordingly.*

Preparing to Hear the Story L

Collect the Ark of the Covenant from the worship space. Remind the children that the Ark of the Covenant was a box that was very important to the Israelites. Inside the Ark were the Ten Commandments carved on stone tablets. Show the tablets from the box. For the Israelites, this box was the most holy object they had. It served as a reminder that they were God’s people and that God was present with them. They had carried it—and cared for it—for years until the Philistines stole it. Now they had it back, and David wanted to move it to Jerusalem, their holy city, and celebrate. Imagine together what it would have been like to carry the Ark wherever they traveled, holding it only by the handles.

Hearing the Story L F B

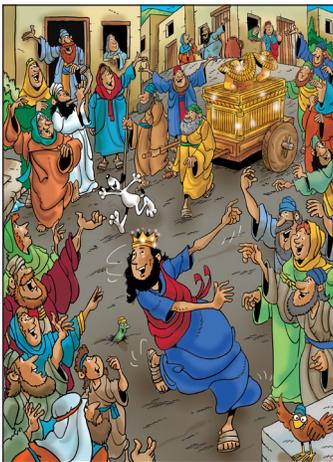
Invite a child to find 2 Samuel in the Bible. Have volunteers read 2 Samuel 6:12b–19. Conclude by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt children to say, “Thanks be to God.” Place the open Bible on the worship table.

Encourage children to mimic the actions in the story: to form a procession (and wave their streamers), to rejoice and sing, to play their instruments, to leap, jump, twirl, and dance as you read the story from **SCM 9** or use the story audio.

Reflecting on God’s Grace C

Wonder together:

- I wonder, “What did the scene look like, sound like, even smell like, as David and the Israelites celebrated the return of the covenant box?”
- I wonder, “Did everyone think it was a good idea for the king to dance and sing in front of his people?”
- I wonder, “What does this story tell us about David?”
- How do we celebrate God’s goodness here in our community of faith?



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), pcusastore.com.



Singing

Give God an offering of music. Play and sing together “Bim Bam”—**MM 3**; **SCM 16**.

Turn off the candle.

RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

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



If you have a child with a latex allergy, consider using an inflated beach ball.

Claiming God’s Grace

FA B MS

Provide a balloon (or more than one if your group is large or you want to increase the challenge). Have children spread around the room and challenge them to bounce the balloon into the air without letting it hit the ground. Play music as they play. Allow for several minutes of fun and gather children to sit. Explain that the Ark was always carried and was never to touch the ground. Wonder together why the Israelites wouldn’t want the Ark to touch the ground.

Offer that the community honored the Ark, cared for the Ark, and celebrated its return together. Ask the children about times your church community has celebrated together.

- ▼ What celebrations at church have you enjoyed?
- ▼ What made them special?
- ▼ What happened at these celebrations?

Comment how special it is to celebrate God together in our church community. Explain that one way we celebrate our church family is when we worship together. Invite the children to name times of special celebrations in the church and what worship is like at those times.

FA *Many children have food and other allergies such as peanut, milk, egg, wheat, latex, grass, mold, and others. Be aware of all allergy issues the children may have. Avoidance is the best practice. Provide alternate activities or use options to keep children safe.*



Celebrating God’s Grace

MS C FA

Read the last two paragraphs on **SCM 9** again. Offer that David led his people in celebrating God with a huge party that included dancing and food.

Play “Freeze Dance.” Instruct children to dance freestyle to the music, such as “Make a Joyful Noise”—**MM 16**—but that when you pause the music they are to freeze in whatever pose they are striking at the time. Allow for several minutes of play, then invite the group to share a snack together. Offer thanks to God for the snack and the

friends to share it with. As children eat, let them talk and enjoy being together.

Wonder together:

- ▼ I wonder, “How long did David’s party last?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What do you think God thought of the party?”
- ▼ I wonder, “Is dancing and sharing food to celebrate God’s grace worship? Why or why not?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What are different ways we celebrate God in our church?”

Praying God’s Grace L MS

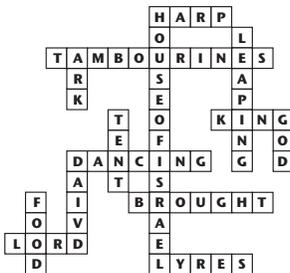
Lead the group in prayer. Read the following prayer and, at the designated times (*), prompt the children to mimic the motion you have just read. Offer that, in this way, you are praying with words and with bodies.

Dear God, help us to be people
 who celebrate your goodness;
 who raise our hands*
 in praise to you;
 who leap*
 in excitement over your grace;
 who spin in circles*
 when we feel full of your love;
 and who are not afraid to clap our hands loud*
 when we witness your presence.

Thank you especially for our community of faith for whom
 we jump for joy.*
 Amen.

Imagine together ways that you can use your body to pray at home too.

GN 1 Solution:



Extra Activity LD

Distribute Bibles and have the children locate 2 Samuel 6. Invite children to take turns reading aloud verses 5, 12-19 one at a time. Hand out copies of **GN 1**. Have children work individually or in small groups to complete the puzzle. Use this as an opportunity to recall and retell the story of David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant. Wonder together why this was such a special occasion for David, and how it felt for him to be in the presence of God.



LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG

Invite the children to gather and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Ask children to take turns naming something they enjoyed doing together today. When everyone has had a turn (including yourself), pray:

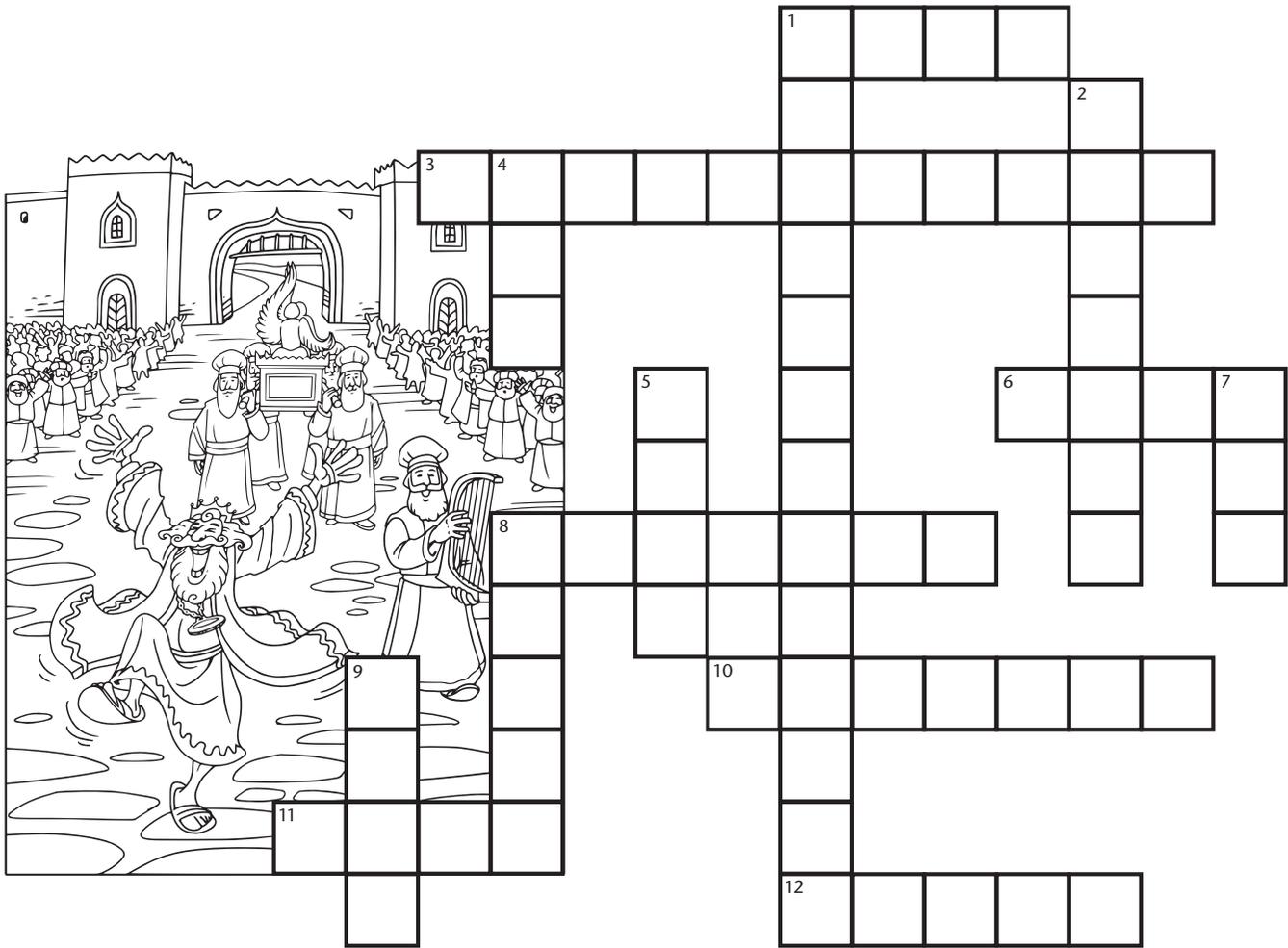
Thank you, God, for the grace you share through your people and for all the wonderful times we have to celebrate you.
Amen.

Have the children stand in a circle. Look to the child on your right and say, "God is with you." Prompt the child to respond with a high five or fist bump, and the words: "And also with you." The child to your right then exchanges the message of God's presence with the child who is on his or her right side. The message exchange moves around the circle, passing from child to child and ending with you. Invite all of the children to join with you in saying, "Praise God! Amen."

Encourage the children to look for times that they feel God's presence this week.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit gracesightings.org. Remind the parents and caregivers about the e-book and story audio (see p. vii).



Across

1. One instrument mentioned in 2 Samuel 6:5.
3. Instruments mentioned in 2 Samuel 6:5.
6. David was a _____.
8. All the house of Israel were _____ before the Lord.
10. David _____ the Ark to the city of David.
11. The Ark of _____ was welcomed with trumpets. (2 Samuel 6:15)
12. Instruments mentioned in 2 Samuel 6:5.

Down

1. David and the _____ _____ _____ danced before the Lord.
2. David was dancing and _____ before the Lord.
4. The _____ was placed in (5 Down).
5. David had pitched a _____.
7. David brought the Ark of _____ to the city of David. (2 Samuel 6:12)
8. King _____.
9. David distributed _____ among the people.

