



preparing

Water is restorative, isn't it? It quenches our thirst. It brings life to growing things. It washes things clean. I wonder, as you gulp or sprinkle or scrub how you see the ways in which water brings new life to places – even in you.

settling and listening

You might want to have this conversation while at home or in the car or any time that you hear that still small voice cheering you on.

If at home and if you make it a practice at home to set aside a special time and place, consider laying out a cloth and lighting a candle as you say

LEADER: Come, let us draw near to God.

PEOPLE: And God will draw near to us.

Prayer leader can pray. ***"Come, Holy Spirit. As we make space for you, open our ears to hear. Open our mind to understand. Stir our heart. Help us to know and love you more. Amen."***

[pause]

If the nudge to speak comes at a time when you are out and about, just go for it!

“I wonder what you know about water?” Wait to listen and gather their thoughts. ***I wonder if you remember our conversation about mud? Where we talked about how water is the best way to wash off mud?”*** Proceed to recap the conversation: ***“Do you remember how we read about the way Jesus healed a blind man by putting mud on his eyes, telling the man to wash it off, and then the man could see!”***

“We know, too, that we have hearts that are blind. Hearts that cannot see the right choice to make. Hearts that do things or say things or think things that separate us from God. But just as Jesus came to heal the blind man, he came to heal our muddied, sinful hearts. As we trust in Jesus and believe in him, we are forgiven. Our faith in Jesus and his death and resurrection make our hearts clean.”

“Today we are going to read a story that is about water – a lot of water! It’s a really big and long story about God’s heart for his people and about His faithfulness. I bet it’s a story you know, but I wonder what you’ll hear about water in this story that reminds you of all that we have been talking about?”

“As we read from the book of Genesis today, I invite you to draw in your journal what you are hearing and what God is stirring in you.”

Invite kids or grownups to read the story from Genesis as it is printed in the journal. Consider breaking it into the three parts below:

A reading from portions of Genesis 6-9.

part 1

1 There began to be many human beings on the earth.

5 The Lord saw how bad the sins of everyone on earth had become. They only thought about evil things. 6 The Lord was very sad that he had made human beings on the earth. His heart was filled with pain.

8 But the Lord was very pleased with Noah.

9 Noah was a godly man. He was without blame among the people of his time. He walked faithfully with God.

11 The earth was very sinful in God’s eyes. It was full of people who did mean and harmful things. 12 God saw how sinful the earth had become. All its people were living very sinful lives. 13 So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to everyone. They have filled the earth with their harmful acts. I am certainly going to destroy them and the earth. 14 So make yourself an ark out of cypress wood.

17 I am going to bring a flood on the earth. It will destroy all life under the sky. It will destroy every living creature that breathes. Everything on earth will die. 18 But I will make my covenant with you. You will go into the ark. Your sons and your wife and your sons' wives will enter it with you. 19 Bring a male and a female of every living thing into the ark. They will be kept alive with you.
22 Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

part 2

11 Noah was 600 years old. It was the 17th day of the second month of the year. On that day all of the springs at the bottom of the oceans burst open. God opened the windows of the sky. 12 Rain fell on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights.

17 For 40 days the flood kept coming on the earth.

1 But God showed concern for Noah. He also showed concern for all the wild animals and livestock that were with Noah in the ark. So God sent a wind to sweep over the earth. And the waters began to go down.

15 Then God said to Noah, 16 "Come out of the ark. Bring your wife and your sons and their wives with you. 17 Bring out every kind of living thing that is with you. Bring the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground. Then they can multiply on the earth. They can have little ones and the number of them can increase."

18 So Noah came out of the ark. His sons and his wife and his sons' wives were with him.

19 All the animals came out of the ark. The creatures that move along the ground also came out. So did all the birds. Everything that moves on land came out of the ark, one kind after another.

20 Then Noah built an altar to honor the Lord. . . . [The Lord] said to himself, "I will never put a curse on the ground again because of human beings. I will not do it even though their hearts are always directed toward evil. Their thoughts are evil from the time they are young. I will never destroy all living things again, as I have just done."

part 3

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons who were with him. He said, 9 "I am now making my covenant with you and with all your children who will be born after you. 10 I am making it also with every living creature that was with you in the ark. I am making my covenant with the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals. I am making it with all the creatures that came out of the ark with you. In fact, I am making it with every living thing on earth. 11 Here is my covenant I am making with you. The waters of a flood will never again destroy all life. A flood will never again destroy the earth."

12 God continued, "My covenant is between me and you and every living creature with you. It is a covenant for all time to come. Here is the sign of the covenant I am making. 13 I have put my rainbow in the clouds. It will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Sometimes when I bring clouds over the earth, a rainbow will appear in them. 15 Then I will remember my covenant between me and you and every kind of living creature. The waters will never again become a flood to destroy all life. 16 When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it. I will remember that my covenant will last forever. It is a covenant between me and every kind of living creature on earth."

17 So God said to Noah, "The rainbow is the sign of my covenant. I have made my covenant between me and all life on earth."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

I wonder what you wonder about because of what you've read or heard?

I wonder what you notice about God in this story?

I wonder what you notice about people?

I wonder what you notice about the water in this story?

I wonder what you notice about God's promises in this story?

Pause to share responses.

Now, as we make connections between and among stories in the Bible, I wonder how you'll see from these verses in 1 Corinthians and Hebrews:

Invite someone to read 1 Corinthians 6:11 and Hebrews 10:21-23.

A reading from 1 Corinthians 6:11.

11 Some of you used to do those things. But your sins were washed away. You were made holy. You were made right with God. All of this was done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was also done by the Spirit of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from Hebrews 10:21-23.

21 We also have a great priest over the house of God. 22 So let us come near to God with a sincere heart. Let us come near boldly because of our faith. Our hearts have been sprinkled. Our minds have been cleansed from a sense of guilt. Our bodies have been washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The God who promised is faithful.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

As you end the reading with “The God who promised is faithful.” talk about how the rainbow from the Noah story in Genesis is a reminder of God’s promise – his promise to rescue us and forgive us. Talk about baptisms. ***How are baptisms a way to show on the outside what God has done to people’s hearts on the inside?*** invite kids to listen for the “water stories” in the baptism liturgy.

praying

Seal your time and conversation by giving thanks to God by saying together the Lord’s Prayer or singing the Doxology.

water poems

THE MAKER'S TUNE

Let us learn how the rivers dance:

Let us watch how they trickle and surge,
how they fall and curl,
how they swirl and eddy.

Let us see how they dance according to
the rules God gave them; how they are
more obedient to their Maker than any of
humankind.

Let us learn from the rivers how to dance
to the Maker's tune.

MAKE FOR ME AN ARK

O God,
make for me an ark to float upon the water
and carry me through the swirling flood.

O God,
make for me a road through the wilderness
and lead me to a place of safety

O God,
send me a light in the darkness
and bring me to the beginning of a new day.