

**GOOD
NEWS
FARM**

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
NOT FOR USE
PLEASE PURCHASE

.. **SUMMER IN THE
HEARTLAND**



GOOD NEWS FARM

SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND

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**WELCOME
TO THE
COW-Moo-NITY!**

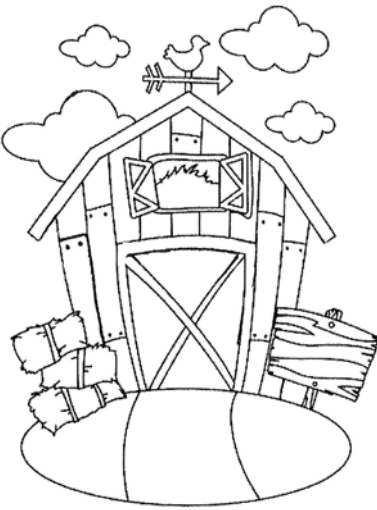


**Return to simple days when summer
was long and lazy and the farm
showed off God's great gifts.**

**Present the GOOD NEWS of Jesus
While having as much fun
as a kid should have in the country!**

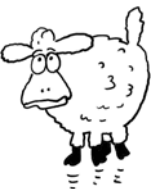


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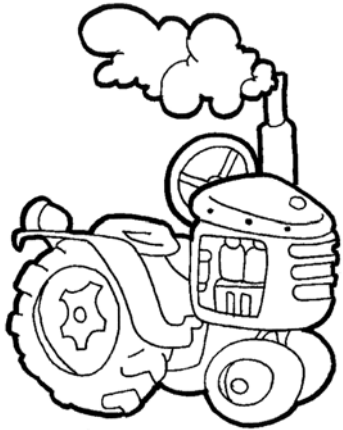
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EVERYTHING I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED ON A FARM

(Adapted from PROGRESSIVE FARMER MAGAZINE, Jack Odle.)



HONESTY. I learned it is better to point out the lame heifer to a buyer rather than wait for the buyer to find her in the herd, or worse, not find her.

CHARITY. I learned the importance of giving to those in their hour of need. It could be taking a casserole to someone's home after a funeral or combing the wheat field of a farmer who has been injured.

LIFE AND DEATH. I've seen calves, lambs, pigs, puppies and kittens born, often right before my eyes. I also witnessed death and the harshness of nature before I was three years old.

COMPASSION. I've seen my Dad get off his tractor to move a bird's nest out of the way so he could cultivate the field.

FAITH. I've watched the planting of tiny seed and had God's assurance that they would sprout and make a good crop. I've watched a newborn calf struggle to its feet and understood that fragile animal would grow into a productive cow.

WORK ETHIC. I remember looking out at a field full of hay bales and wondering if we would ever get them unloaded and hauled into the barn. I came to realize that if you work steadily and stick to it, those bales will slowly disappear from the field.

PATIENCE. I know everything happens according to God's schedule within nature. We can't speed it up or slow it down; we can only work within its constraints.

**Yes, just about everything I know worth knowing
I learned and continue to learn
from farm families and farm life.**



GOOD NEWS FARM

...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND

Welcome To The COW-Moo-NITY!



*“I had rather be on my farm
than be emperor of the world.”*

~ George Washington

GOOD NEWS FARM has everything a seeker of faith needs. Students enjoy farm life, play in the pasture, build fences, plant gardens and experience life in the country. Add a barnful of animals, a friendly farmer, delicious farm food and most of all...Jesus...

For a great Vacation Bible School experience.

GOOD NEWS FARM is a delightful five day Vacation Bible School for churches desiring an *Eggs-traordinary* summer event celebrating farm life. The *Down On the Farm* theme captures everyone's imagination and *warms the cackles* of your staff's hearts.

GOOD NEWS FARM students (*Preschool - Grade 6*) visit five Farm Bible Stations on separate days. Farmer teachers treat guests to an assortment of unique rural experiences. Guests learn about growing their faith in Jesus using farm activities, Bible stories and crafts.



GOOD NEWS FARM features fifteen minute daily activities where students explore delightful nooks and crannies at the farm. Gather at **The Front Porch**. Eat at **Udder Delight Dairy Bar** and send the kids "out to pasture" for games at **The Funny Farm**. Hear the Chip and Clare Conley five day adventure story at **Cackle Berry Corner**. Sing a collection of fun music at **Sunflower Songs**. Enjoy daily visits to the **Picket Fence**.

GOOD NEWS FARM presents curriculum ideas for preschoolers named the **Tater Tots**. Students (*ages 4-5*) participate the same activities as older students or travel to all activities with a special team of teachers.

*Suggestions are included for nursery child care called **The Honey Bees** to arrange a safe, cheerful spot for babies and toddlers of teachers and helpers ages Birth-Age 3.*

GOOD NEWS FARM is Christ centered and fun. The farm theme is a hook upon which to hang a memory and helps students understand the importance of growing in the Lord.



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GENERAL PREPARATION

*From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets,
the name of the Lord is to be praised.*

Psalm 113:3

SUGGESTIONS IN THIS WORKBOOK ARE A GUIDELINE.

*Create a wonderful week
based on these farm activities.
Add your own ideas too!*

GOOD NEWS FARM IS AN ACTIVITY CENTER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FOR PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE SIX STUDENTS.

Involve Grade 7-12 youth and college students as helpers, team leaders and teachers.

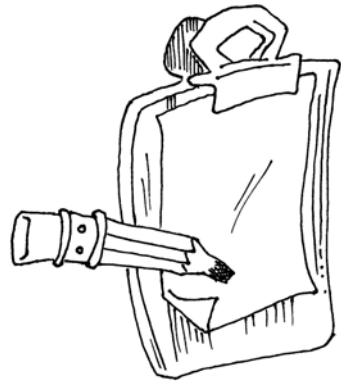
COLOR CODE STUDENT GROUPS. Students become visitors to GOOD NEWS FARM. Individual groups display color coded name tags. Students stay in the same group all week.

BIBLE STATION TEACHERS DECORATE AND PREPARE THE ACTIVITIES IN THEIR AREA. The station is repeated daily to a new group of students. Adjust teaching activities. Accompany the daily group wherever they go. Students must have an adult with them.

FIFTEEN MINUTE ACTIVITY TEACHERS SEE ALL STUDENTS EACH DAY. Student groups travel for music, snack or activity. Activity teachers must prepare before Vacation Bible School week begins.

PURCHASE SUPPLIES AS NEEDED. Give supply bills to the director. Look for sales, catalog purchases and backyard scrap materials. Use the church tax exemption number.

CREATE EXCITEMENT! Have fun and students catch your enthusiasm. Greet everyone with a cheerful hello while moving from place to place.



**WHO'S THE FARMER IN THE DELL?
OH...IT'S YOU!
HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM?**



*“The farmer has to be an optimist
or he wouldn't still be a farmer.”*

~ Will Rogers

*And let us not lose heart in doing good,
for in due time we shall reap
if we do not grow weary. Galatians 6:9*

The country is a wonderful place to visit on a warm summer day when life in the city and suburbs is hot and rushed! Our good old fashioned farm is filled with captivating themes enthralling city and country kids as well as adults.

This Vacation Bible School is an event that your COW-Moo-NITY will remember for years. Take students to five Bible Farm Stations and a variety of farm activity centers where they discover the importance of growing in Jesus.

Divided into reasonable tasks, this five day school is easily completed by a dedicated teaching team under the direction of *Farmer Dell* or *Fannie Farmer* (that's you!). The church building will sparkle with the excitement of an unusual working farm set in the heartland.

FARMER DELL/FANNIE FARMER. Have fun dressing in costume. Wear denim bib overalls, hiking boots, plaid shirt, kerchief and farmer hat. Become a friendly farmer desiring to teach common sense lessons about Jesus by using farming topics as examples of faith.



DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY. Trust the staff to carry out their tasks. Check in with them occasionally as their supportive leader.

PRACTICE A POSITIVE APPROACH. Statements like “*We can’t do it*”, “*We never did it this way*”, “*There’s no money*”, or “*No one will teach*” have no place in this program. If the Farmer’s attitude is right, even the grouchiest saint responds cheerfully.

PRAY! Pray for the staff, the students and the set up. Take each detail before the Lord and then–RELAX!

PLAN! Note areas requiring your personal attention. Meet with staff six weeks before the event. Place printed materials in attractive folders containing specific information for each teacher.

ADAPT! Complete program adaptations during preliminary planning to avoid staff confusion.

SET UP. Decorate during the week prior to Vacation Bible School making sure that everything is in place for the first day.

STAFF PRAYER. Plan a five minute session one half hour before the day begins. Those who attend appreciate the “upward boost”.

TATER TOT PRESCHOOL. Preschoolers may attend the activities older students love. Eliminate complicated or frightening activities. Choose age appropriate craft projects from S&S arts and crafts catalog or create your own farm projects.

STAFF APPRECIATION. Purchase or make thank you gifts for staff members. There is nothing like appreciation to keep teachers coming back for more next year. Thank them privately and publicly.

CLEAN UP. When OPEN HOUSE is over, clean up begins. The event is not complete until the church is in perfect order. Encourage staff to remove their props immediately. Stay to help!



DECORATING THE FARM ...SHOWING OFF THE HARVEST

*“It is only the farmer
who faithfully plants seeds in the Spring
who reaps a harvest in the Autumn.”*

~ BC Forbes

When students attend **GOOD NEWS FARM...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND**, they should enter a rural atmosphere filled with animals, flowers, hay, fences and equipment. Design a simple, colorful ‘farm’.

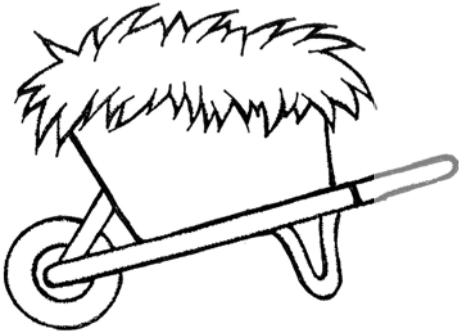
Discuss decoration at the beginning of the planning process. Follow our suggestions or invent your own upbeat, country style.

Teachers in individual activity areas decorate their rooms. Special decorating attention is given to **THE FRONT PORCH** Opening area.

STEP ONE: Ask families who live in the country or on farms to lend authentic farm items. Many old barns and sheds are filled with items that make perfect decorations in every area.



SIGNS: Print memory verses on appropriate, theme related signs for the area. Scatter farm signs throughout the church. Consider the following messages:



**THIS WAY TO THE MILKING PARLOR
WOOD SHED—BRING YOUR OWN SWITCH!
TO THE FISHIN' HOLE
MORNING GLORY MEADOW**

**CHURCH IN THE WILDWOOD
APPLE ORCHARD—FREE WINDFALLS**

**BARN RAISING NEXT SATURDAY—BRING YOUR LADDER
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW...SO..SOW WISELY!**

**I (HEART) COWS
I (HEART) PIGS
I (HEART) CHICKENS
I (HEART) FARMERS
I (HEART) TRACTORS**

CARDBOARD FIGURES: Make a variety of life sized cardboard farm animals, flowers, fences and tractors. Lean them against walls. Use the patterns included with the curriculum or draw your own.

Make your own transparencies with the church copier and place them on an overhead projector. Project the image onto large pieces of cardboard or posterboard. Trace and color with tempera paint and/or markers. Cut out the figures with a utility knife. Find patterns in children's coloring books or online.



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PROPS: Find a marvelous array of farm items to create a farm atmosphere. Here are a few suggestions. Keep your eyes open for other items available in your local community.

BALES OF HAY

COUNTRY PICNIC BASKETS

CORN STALKS WILD FLOWERS
WATER BUCKETS TREES
OLD TOOLS (PITCH FORKS, RAKES, ETC.)

ANTIQUE TRACTOR
(PLACE AT THE FRONT DOOR OF THE CHURCH)

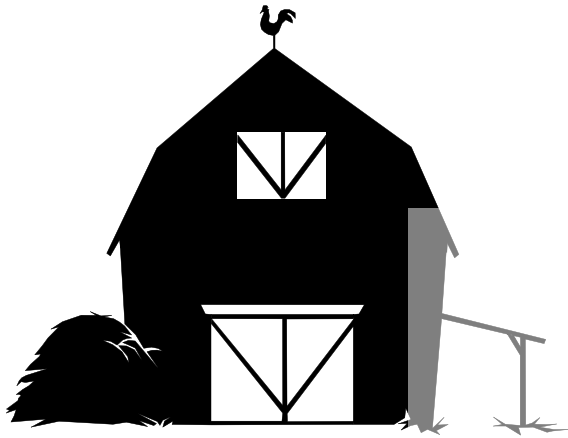
WAGON WHEELS ROCK GARDEN
WHITE PICKET FENCE ROCKING CHAIRS
RAG RUGS MILK CANS SPRINKLING CANS
WHEEL BARROWS GREEN /FLOWERING PLANTS

RED CHECKERED MATERIAL ROCKS
WOOD STACKS TREE STUMPS
HAY WAGON STUFFED FARM ANIMALS/DOGS
LARGE SCARECROW FRESH FRUIT IN BASKETS

BACKDROPS: Freestanding backdrops can be made by cutting apart an appliance box, painting large red barns, trees, flowers, animals and other farm items and zigzagging the box so that it stands alone. Place real items in front of the backdrop for a touch of reality.

BACKGROUND MUSIC: Play CD's or tapes of Christian music. Look for CD's of simple country music with plenty of guitar and banjos for the country flavor as visitors enter the building.





S&S arts and crafts catalog offers decorative items at excellent prices. For a free copy of their current catalog, call 1-800-243-9232. Here are a few suggestions (Prices may change):

TISSUE FLOWER JUMBO GROUP PACK. Decorate in colorful style. Giant flowers are terrific fun. Plant your own farm flower garden. Includes assorted colors of precut tissue paper, stem wire and instructions. 8 1/2" diameter. GP56 \$60.99

JOINTED AUTUMN TREE. Printed both sides. Wow! 4 feet tall! Make your own fall orchard. This one is truly beautiful. PY866. \$8.29 each

JOINTED SCARECROW. Fully jointed, comes assembled. 5' high. SL5822 \$8.49 each

JOINTED CORNSTALK. Printed both sides. Wow! 5 feet tall! Buy several for the *Countrified Corn Field Bible Station*. PY854 \$8.29 each

PUMPKIN CUT OUTS. Four per pack Printed 2 sides. Size: 16". PY377 \$5.99 pack of 4

AUTUMN LEAF CUTOUTS. Printed 2 sides. Size: 6". 18 per package. PY1351 \$5.99 per pack.

GIANT TULIPS. Imagine these 64" tall tulips decorating your farm flower garden. Set of 2 tulips, 1 red and 1 yellow, with adjustable stems. PY765 \$23.99 per set of 2.

PICKET FENCE. Printed both sides. Size: (3 pieces) 12" x 24 3/4". Can interlock to form one 6' fence. PY776 \$5.49 per pack.

FLOWER GARDEN FAVORITE CUTOUTS. Printed both sides. Four per pack. PY343 \$7.29 per pack.



BARN SHUTTER ADD ONS. Two 22 ½" x 33 ½" Barn shutters can be used in any barn setting. Each piece easily attaches to walls with tape or pins. SL8315 \$3.29 per pack

***Oriental Trading Company* catalog offers a wide variety of appropriate decorations and gift items.**

If you do not have their delightful free catalog, call toll free 1-800-228-2269. Enjoy browsing the catalog or website for children's gifts, decorations and small craft projects. Lots of items are available using the farm theme.

Check out their easy to use website: www.orientaltrading.com
Order directly through the company.

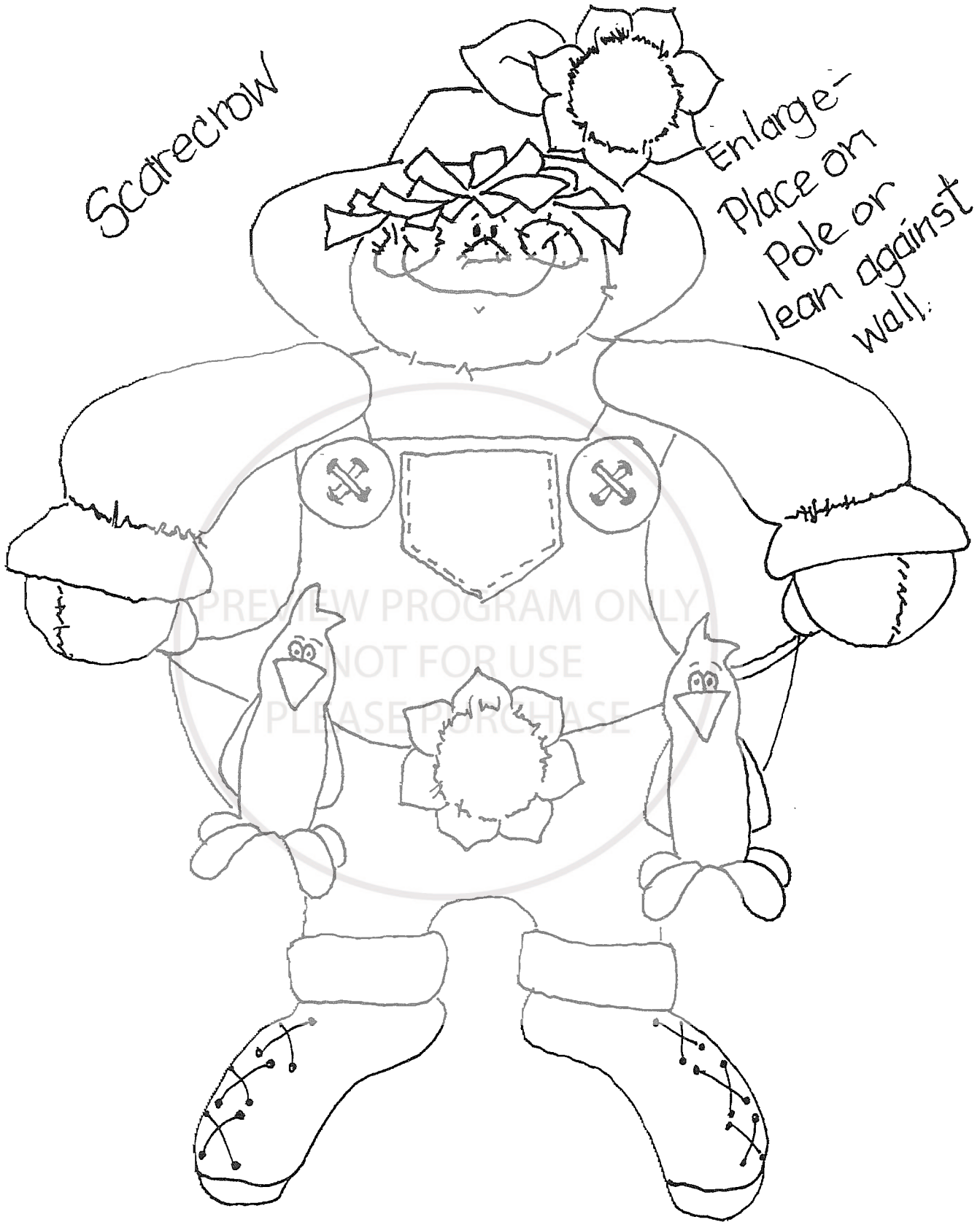
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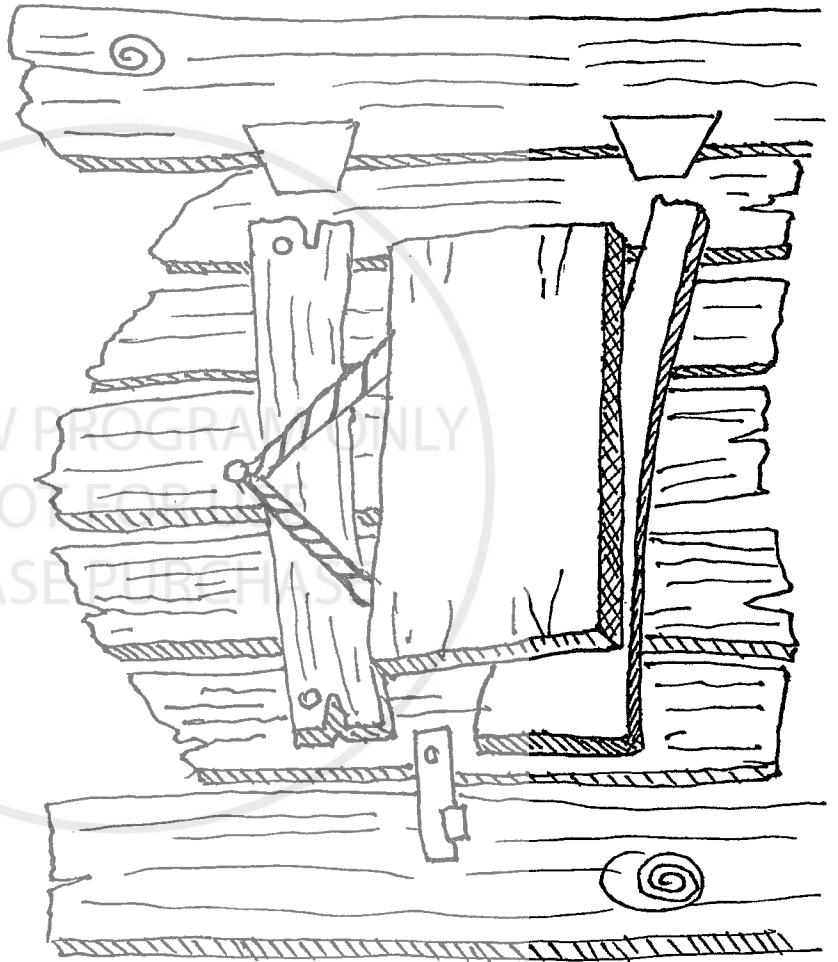
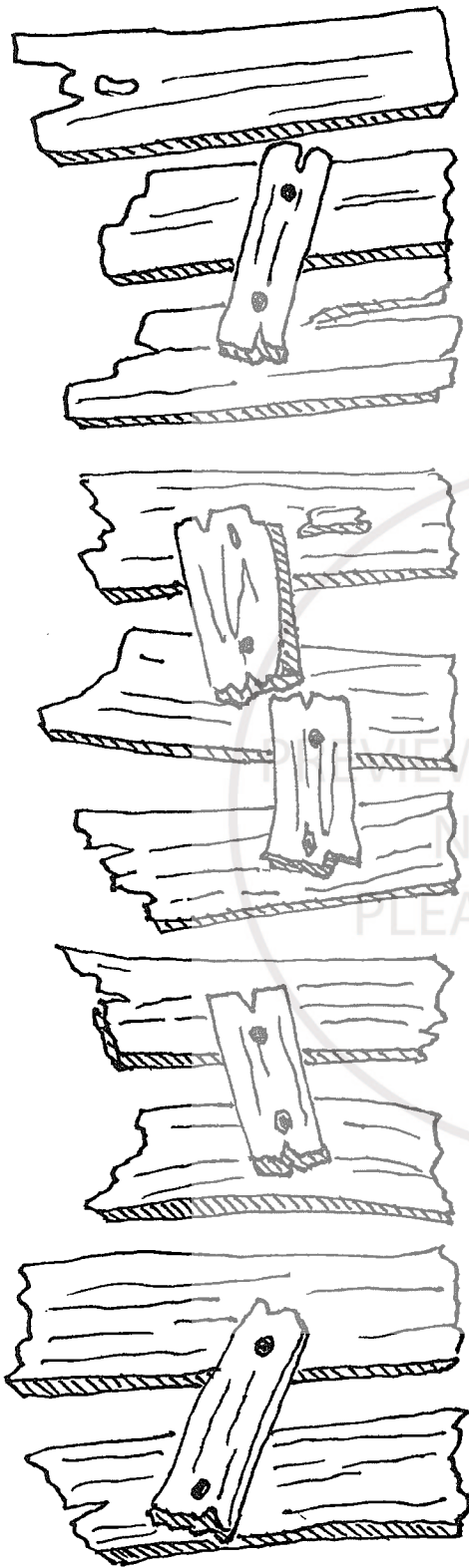


Scarecrow

Enlarge -
Place on
Pole or
lean against
wall.



Just for fun Farm Fences



Copy onto
transparency
to enlarge



PLAYING ON THE GOOD NEWS FARM TEAM

*“Train your child in the way
you know you should have gone yourself.”*
~ C. H. Spurgeon

*Staff choice will make or break
GOOD NEWS FARM.*

*Do NOT be satisfied with “any warm body”.
Aim for the best people to fill each teaching spot.*

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY **RECRUIT**

Approach people personally with a specific task.
Explain the job fully. No ‘sugar coating’ allowed!!!

PLEASE PURCHASE

ADVERTISE

Include a worship folder recruitment insert for two or three Sundays.
Give people with specific requests their place immediately. Explain
the insert during worship announcement time dressed in costume.
Give this introductory effort the personal touch.

See Bulletin Insert sample.

PICK AND CHOOSE

Call people you know will do a good job. The Lord honors your
attempt to have the best staff. Pray about staff choices. If someone
says “no” assume there is another person waiting to fill that place. Use
teens, men, women and senior citizens as staff members.



STAFF MEETING

PLAN ONE STAFF MEETING TO EXPLAIN EXACTLY WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED.

Stress 100% attendance so no other meeting will be necessary.

SEAT STAFF ACCORDING TO WORK AREAS.

Distribute lesson plans to each group.
Build in "chatter" time to create excitement as teachers and helpers plan the week.

PREVIEW THE ENTIRE PROGRAM.

The staff needs an overview of all events taking place throughout the church.



BE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, ASSIGN CLASSROOMS, GIVE INSPIRATION.

Be the person in charge—Farmer Dell!

AFTER THE MEETING, THE DIRECTOR'S ATTENTION TURNS TO OTHER AREAS.

Trust the staff to carry out their responsibilities.

THE TELEPHONE IS THE STAFF LIFELINE.

Call the leader of each work area to verify progress.
Ask questions and check on how things are going.



GOOD NEWS FARM ...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND 'Welcome To The Cow-Moo-Nity!'



Join the Farm Team!

God plants His Word in our heart and grows the fruit of His Spirit.

FARM TEAM

-REGISTRATION. Help Students Sign In (LEAD/HELP)
-SUNFLOWER SONGS Music (LEAD/PLAY PIANO)
-PHOTOGRAPHER VIDEO/DIGITAL
-UDDER DELIGHT DAIRY BAR Snacks (LEAD/HELP)
-THE FUNNY FARM Games (LEAD/HELP)
-CACKLE BERRY CORNER Story Time STORY TELLER
-PICKET FENCE Salvation Corner (LEAD/HELP)
-ART CREW. 'Artsy Craftsy' Crew! DECORATE
-TATER TOTS Preschool (Ages 4-5) (LEAD/HELP)
-HONEY BEE NURSERY Child Care (Birth-3) (LEAD/HELP)

BIBLE STATION STAFF

-BIBLE STATION #1: HOG HEAVEN...Meet Jesus (LEAD/HELP)
-BIBLE STATION #2: WILDFLOWER PASTURE...Know Jesus (LEAD/HELP)
-BIBLE STATION #3: MOOTOWN MOTEL...Grow With Jesus (LEAD/HELP)
-BIBLE STATION #4: COOL HIVE...Serve Jesus (LEAD/HELP)
-BIBLE STATION #5: RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY...Tell! (LEAD/HELP)
-I HAVE FARM PROPS I WILL LEND THEM!
-I WILL DONATE SNACKS TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED!
-I WILL GIVE A FINANCIAL DONATION IT WILL BE WORTH IT!
-I WILL PRAY FOR THE GOOD NEWS FARM TEAM I CAN DO IT!

NAME.....TELEPHONE.....

VBS DATES: TIME:

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT FARMER DELL:

*What's The Story, Morning Glory? You can do it!
I'm no spring chicken myself!*



GROUPING STUDENTS

GOOD NEWS FARM is broadly graded.
Divide students into five groups.

HONEY BEE NURSERY (BIRTH-AGE 3)

Will we open this for the community?
Will we provide child care
for our teaching staff?

TATER TOTS PRESCHOOL (AGES 4-5)

Give young students free time, short lessons based on older student lesson plans or involvement in daily activities as one of the five basic groups.



COLOR CODE STUDENT GROUPS FOR EASY VISUAL IDENTIFICATION.

HONEY BEE NURSERY (BIRTH-3): YELLOW

1. TATER TOTS (AGES 4-5)
2. LEAP FROGS (KINDERGARTEN)
3. RED ROOSTERS (GRADE 1-2)
4. SACRED COWS (GRADES 3-4)
5. OLD FARM DOGS (GRADES 5-6)

- ORANGE**
- GREEN**
- RED**
- BLACK/ WHITE**
- PURPLE**

Overlap ages in any group. If twenty students are in one group and five in another, switch some students regardless of grade. Neighborhood friends and visiting cousins appreciate joining familiar faces in an otherwise unfamiliar situation no matter what age.

OPTION: SMALL CHURCH GROUPING

With twenty or less students and a few teachers, conduct one daily workshop in a common area. Set up crafts in a separate area. Small groups have the luxury of treating students to projects carried over day to day. Students travel to activities together in one group.

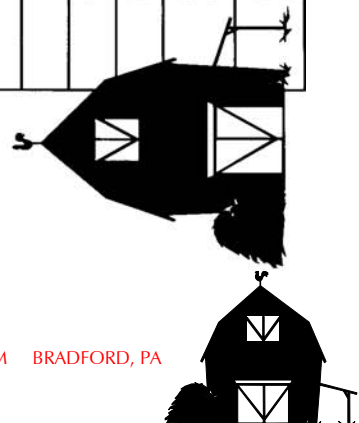


GOOD NEWS FARM...Summer in the Heartland

STUDENT GROUPS	9:00-9:15	9:15-9:30	9:30-9:45	9:45-10:00	10:00-10:15	10:15-10:30	10:30-10:45	10:45-11:00	11:00-11:15	11:15-11:30
WHITE-TATER TOTS ages 4-5	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	HOME BASE ACTIVITIES	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FUNNY FARM GAMES	HOME BASE ACTIVITIES	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	PICKET FENCE THEME ROOM	SUNFLOWER SONGS	HOME BASE ACTIVITIES	CLOSING
GREEN-LEAP FROGS Kindergarten	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	W O R K S H O P	K S H O P	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FUNNY FARM GAMES	SUNFLOWER SONGS	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	PICKET FENCE THEME RM.	CLOSING
RED-RED ROOSTERS Grade 1	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	SUNFLOWER SONGS	PICKET FENCE THEME ROOM	W O R K S H O P	K S H O P	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FUNNY FARM GAMES	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	CLOSING
ORANGE-SASSY CATS Grade 2	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	PICKET FENCE THEME RM.	SUN FLOWER SONGS	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	W O R K S H O P	K S H O P	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FUNNY FARM GAMES	CLOSING
BLACK/SPOT SACRED COWS Grade 3-4	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	W O R K S	R K S	H O P	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	FUNNY FARM GAMES	PICKET FENCE THEME ROOM	SUNFLOWER SONGS	CLOSING
PURPLE-OLD FARM DOGS Grade 5-6	MOO-TIFUL BARNYD OPENING	FUNNY FARM GAMES	CHICKEN COOP STORY TELLER	FARM FRESH SNACK BAR	PICKET FENCE THEME ROOM	SUNFLOWER SONGS	W O R K S H O P	PICKET FENCE THEME ROOM	SUNFLOWER SONGS	CLOSING

GOOD NEWS FARM GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

BIBLE STATIONS	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
HOG HEAVEN	LEAP FROGS	RED ROOSTERS	SACRED COWS	OLD FARM DOGS	SASSY CATS
WILDFLOWER PASTURE	RED ROOSTERS	LEAP FROGS	OLD FARM DOGS	SASSY CATS	SACRED COWS
MOOTOWN MOTEL	SASSY CATS	OLD FARM DOGS	LEAP FROGS	SACRED COWS	RED ROOSTERS
COUNTRIFIED CORNFIELD	SACRED COWS	SASSY CATS	RED ROOSTERS	LEAP FROGS	OLD FARM DOGS
RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY	OLD FARM DOGS	SACRED COWS	SASSY CATS	RED ROOSTERS	LEAP FROGS



REGISTRATION TEAM

“Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens.

*They are the most vigorous,
the most independent, the most virtuous
and they are tied to their country
and wedded to its liberty and interests
by the most lasting bands.”*

~ Thomas Jefferson

Make name tags and organize registration. This job is too big for one person. If there is a tangle at registration, the first day could be delayed as much as 30 minutes.

**Identify individual tables with colors,
names and grades of student groups.
Students line up to receive a name tag and/or hat**

PRE REGISTRATION

Registration cards simplify the first day by having name tags prepared. Utilize the church newsletter, bulletin and take home forms. Telephone neighborhood families. Visit nearby neighborhoods.

NAME TAGS

Print name tags with group colors for quick identification. Tags are pinned to shirts or made into necklaces. Since the tags are collected each day and made available for the next day, consider purchasing clear plastic covers. Slide name into the plastic sleeve.



Collect tags at day's end and give them to the next Bible Station teacher. Students pick up tags each day at the Moo-Tiful Barnyard Opening and meet their new teacher at the same time.

OPTION: Cut small pieces of wood and drill a hole near the top. String with twine and print names in permanent black marker on the wood. The wood can be cut from small saplings so they are round and rustic.

HATS

Oriental Trading Company offers child's western hats that double wonderfully as farmer hats. Each hat comes with a shoelace band.

IN-15/820 \$17.99 per dozen (price may change).

Adult western hats are also available for staff. Check out Oriental Trading's website: www.orientaltrading.com To see if there is a style your gang will enjoy.

IN-15/8218 \$17.99 per dozen (price may change).

IN-15/369 \$7.99 per hat (woven natural color western hat)

Notes:



**Good News Farm!
Summer In The Heartland
“Welcome To The Cow-Moo-Nity”!**



NAME _____ GRADE/AGE _____

ADDRESS _____

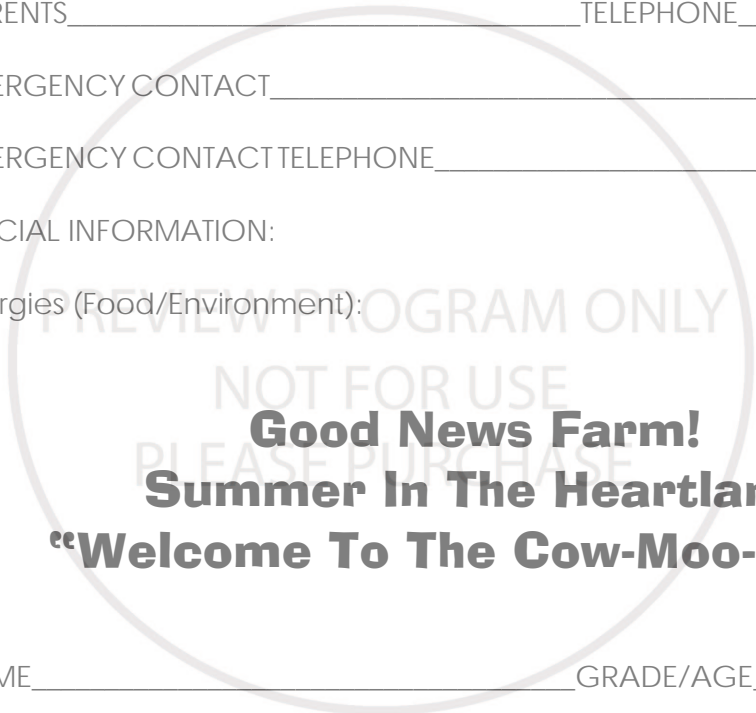
PARENTS _____ TELEPHONE _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE _____

SPECIAL INFORMATION:

Allergies (Food/Environment):



**Good News Farm!
Summer In The Heartland
“Welcome To The Cow-Moo-Nity”!**



NAME _____ GRADE/AGE _____

ADDRESS _____

PARENTS _____ TELEPHONE _____

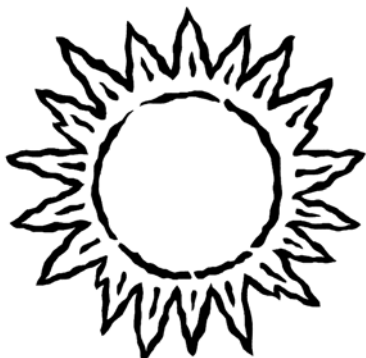
EMERGENCY CONTACT _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE _____

SPECIAL INFORMATION:

Allergies (Food/Environment):





PUBLICITY 'GOOD NEWS' GAZETTE

"Make hay while the sun shines".

*Publicity is vital to Vacation Bible School.
Be clear and concise.*

CHURCH BULLETIN. Begin advertising for team members. Include reminders in the weekly bulletin until GOOD NEWS FARM begins. Include registration forms.

CHURCH NEWSLETTER. Print quick, catchy announcements and include registration forms in the newsletter. For example:

HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM? FIND OUT AT GOOD NEWS FARM....SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

WE'RE BUILDING A NEST EGG OF COUNTRY MEMORIES. SEND YOUR MINI FARMERS TO GOOD NEWS FARM...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

KEEP PECKING AND SCRATCHING UNTIL YOU COME UP WITH A CARLOAD OF KIDS WHO WANT TO VISIT GOOD NEWS FARM...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

WE'VE GOT AN "EGGSTRA" SPECIAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. GET ON THE HAY WAGON AND HEAD FOR GOOD NEWS FARM..SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND? WELCOME TO THE COW-MOO-NITY!

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT "BIRDS OF A FEATHER"--THEY STICK TOGETHER AT GOOD NEWS FARM...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!



WORSHIP SERVICE GREETERS. Greet people coming into church for worship. Dress in costume. Place one or more students near the door. Distribute registration forms and basic information. This is a great visual reminder that GOOD NEWS FARM is about to happen.

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS. Take photos of people in costume. Send an article several weeks before GOOD NEWS FARM to insure publication. Invite a local new reporter and photographer to visit for a feature story while Vacation Bible School is happening!

COLORING CONTEST. Sponsor a Sunday School coloring contest. Choose one picture. Display completed pictures. Award prizes to create excitement.

VISIT THE PULPIT. Wear a farmer outfit and visit the pastor during announcement time. Give this your best effort so the congregation becomes excited about the event.

LOCAL TELEVISION. Ask the local television station to film a feature story. This is great publicity and encouragement. Do not assume a crew will NOT come. Call and ask. Use the local television cable advertising station to print a few lines about your event. This is free or inexpensive.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES. Does your denomination have a communication network? Send pictures and a written article. You may be surprised to find your church featured in the next edition.

SIGNS AND POSTERS. These are the most common forms of publicity. Although considered the least effective, placing signs and posters in stores, offices and other well traveled spots brings attention to your program. Attach tear off sheets stating basic information.



CHURCH SIGN: Place a large sign at the church announcing dates and times:

**GOT KIDS?
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING!**

**GOOD NEWS FARM
...SUMMER IN THE HEARTLAND
'Welcome To The Cow-Moo-Nity'!**

DATE:

TIME:

Place the large sign on the seat of an old tractor in the front lawn of the church. If a tractor is not available, consider using a wheelbarrow, wooden wagon or picnic table.

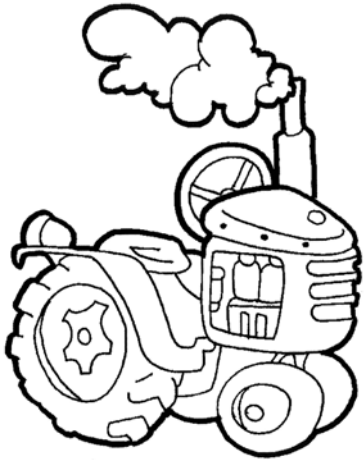


*“For ground that drinks the rain
which often falls on it
and brings forth vegetation useful to those
for whose sake it is also tilled,
receives a blessing from God.”*

~ Hebrews 6:7



PHOTOGRAPHY



“Farmers are always going to be rich next year.”

~ Philemon

Pictures are a unique way to remember the work and the rewards of a bright, visual week of GOOD NEWS FARM. Ask the church photographer to wear distinct farm attire....a white dress shirt and bow tie with bib overalls. Add a fedora hat with a PRESS tag tucked into the hatband.

ENCOURAGE VISITORS TO BRING CAMERAS.

Amateur photographers usually stand at one side taking pictures and should not disrupt events. This is a good way to involve people who take the opportunity to visit each decorated area.

ASSIGN A PHOTOGRAPHER to take pictures for the church. Cover the cost from Vacation Bible School resources.

35 MM COLOR PRINTS. Take staff and student pictures early in the week. Facial close ups are the most popular shots. Develop film at a fast developing center. Display pictures at the OPEN HOUSE.

VIDEO. Delegate one person the task of filming the events. Some things can be staged but it is more fun to record as events are taking place.

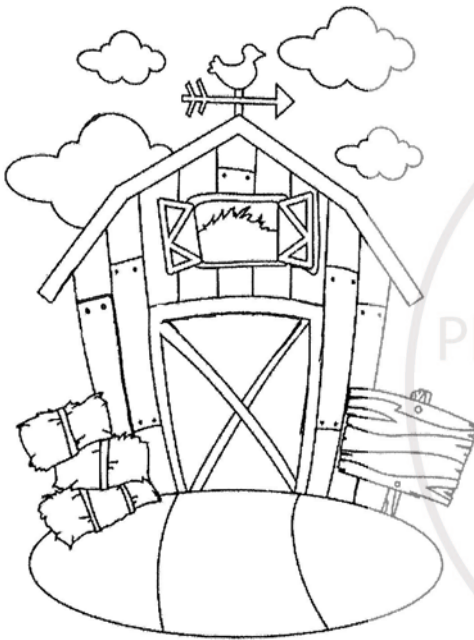
SELLING PICTURES. Be prepared to quote prices. Do you want to cover the cost help defray Vacation Bible School costs? Prepare a sign up sheet including the cost. Display prints. Provide sign up sheets along with the cost and print size.



THE OPENING THE FRONT PORCH!

*“Some people tell us that there ain’t no Hell,
but they never farmed, so how can they tell?”*

~ Anonymous



THE FRONT PORCH is a daily fifteen minute opening designed to introduce events, pray, make announcements, collect offering, spark enthusiasm and sing. Use the daily skits to establish farm characters and prepare the students for each day’s events.

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DIRECTOR

The Director is the resident ‘Farmer In The Dell’. Become a farmer or, if desired, the farmer’s wife. Name yourself *Farmer Dell*, *Farmer Della* or *Fannie Farmer*. Dress in checkered shirt, denim bib overalls or jeans, hiking boots, red bandana and straw hat. Carry a pitchfork, hay rake or milking bucket.

DECORATE

Concentrate decorating efforts in the Opening area. Reproduce our ideas or use your imagination and props at hand to create *The Front Porch*.

Accessories: Props borrowed from church families add to the authenticity. Items need not be shiny and new. They can be worn and well used. Check out garages and barns for items with that rustic look.



Feature a 'countryfied' Front Porch set up in the Opening

Students are cheerfully welcomed as they gather each day to begin their farm visit. Use items easily found locally.

Rocking Chairs Old Kitchen Chairs Worn wooden tables
Lanterns Broom Rag Rugs
Colorful Afghans and Pillows
Old Dishes/Pots and Pans Checkered Tablecloth
Old Lamps Old Framed Pictures
Green Potted Plants
Old Telephone Window Curtains Wicker Baskets
Old Radio/TV Screen Door
Laundry Baskets Stacked Wood Pottery
Stuffed Dog/Cat
Attic Finds of any kind Live animals (dog, cat, bird in cage)

Design the space simply but effectively using light and shadow with small floor lamps. Don't over decorate. Simplicity is part of farm life.

OR

Create The MOO-TIFUL BARNYARD as the Opening area's gathering spot.

Fill the stage with items found in a typical barnyard. Create a fun "outdoor" spot where students gather daily to begin their farm journey.

Choose farm items from our suggested list or find your own interesting, rustic farm props to bring a yard to life that inspires the students to have a lot of fun at GOOD NEWS FARM!



PLANTS

Plant rows of small green plants (real or artificial) and place large seed signs at the end of each row. Print the Fruit of the Spirit on separate signs:

LOVE SEEDS	JOY SEEDS
PEACE SEEDS	PATIENCE SEEDS
KINDNESS SEEDS	GOODNESS SEEDS
FAITHFULNESS SEEDS	GENTLENESS SEEDS
SELF CONTROL SEEDS	

Hand print the signs and tape to dowel rods which are placed into small pots and anchored with Plaster of Paris, rocks or dirt. Be sure the printed signs are big enough to be read easily.



Scarecrow

Fashion a large scarecrow by stuffing old clothing, placing garden gloves, old boots and straw hat on it. Place the scarecrow in the middle of the garden. *(Be careful! Make a cheerful scarecrow—don't frighten the children!)*

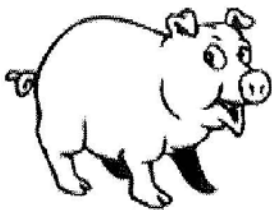
Stuffed Farm Animals

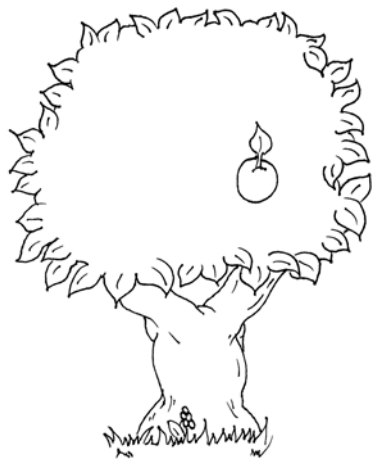
Make, borrow or purchase a few stuffed animals to scatter through the barnyard. Toy stores, discount stores and general merchandise stores have inexpensive animals that make your stage look terrific. A big, old farm dog should be a priority. The kids will love it and the stuffed animal may become the unofficial mascot of the week.

Browse these web sites for more ideas: www.douglascuddletoy.com and www.folkmanis.com

Live Animals

Now, don't close the book! Keep reading! You can do this. Consider **borrowing a few live animals**. Station the owners nearby. Never leave live animals alone, uncaged or with inexperienced handlers. Use only tame, gentle animals. Borrow rabbits, chicks, kittens, puppies, caged birds, gerbils, hamsters, hens/roosters, piglets, lambs. Calves and baby goats may be rambunctious but could be displayed outdoors.





Apple Tree: Make a large tree from plywood or cardboard. Paint with bright colors. Achieve a 3-D effect by making the tree in two parts with the cut going vertically down the center. Attach with tape or screws and let it stand alone. Paint large red apples on the tree. Fill a basket below the tree with real apples. OR, display a huge branch from a real tree.

Miscellaneous: Picket fencing, bales of hay, chicken wire, old boards, lanterns, wagons, rocks and farm tools.

BACKGROUND MUSIC

Play **Christian music** as students enter. Country, Fiddle or Bluegrass music is also appropriate to give the feel of farm life or a square dance. Browse www.amazon.com for 'square dance music' and 'farm music' choices you feel are appropriate for your group.

MICROPHONE STAND: Decorate the microphone stand with vining green plants and sunflowers. Wrap the vine around the stand and attach firmly.

COSTUMES

Check out the local costume shop. There are dairy cow costumes, horse costumes and other farm outfits to rent. Ask the costumed person to greet the students outside the church each day, waving at cars passing by and shaking hands with people entering the building. Take lots of pictures.

DAILY OFFERING

Collect the offering in old milk can lids, metal pie pans, small baskets or straw hats. Ask two students or teen leaders to hold the lids as students arrive. Students place their offering in the containers before they find their seat. Decide where to donate the offering. If a special cause is designated, let families know. There may be some worthy farm ministries the church would like to support. If a contest between groups or boys vs. girls is desired, communicate this to the students.



GIVE THE WORLD A PRESENT

Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.

Deuteronomy 15:11

Feed my sheep. John 21:17b

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.

John 13:34a



Our offering recommendation for **GOOD NEWS FARM** is an international program that has stood the test of time. Churches across the nation participate in **HEIFER PROJECT INTERNATIONAL** in an attempt to end hunger in lands traditionally lacking resources to feed their people.

A *Living Gift Market* "sells" food and income producing animals like goats, bees, chicks and heifers. The animals go to hungry, rural families working to improve their lives. HPI also provides technical training in care of the animals and in enhancing the environment. The receiving family shares its' knowledge and the animal's first offspring with another family. And that family shares. And the next.

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Testimonials

Our children get excited every year when it comes time to prepare for the Living Gift Market. They are very proud of the fact that they can do something to make a difference in the world.

-Julie Collins, Parkway Heights United Methodist Church, Hattiesburg, MS

I've seen little ones say 'I want to buy a dollar's worth of chickens'.

-Joanne Wall, Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, Los Alamitos, California

I learned about Heifer Project from a card someone sent me years ago. It talked about passing on the gift. That just gave it wings to me. It absolutely captured my heart.

-Lynne Atherton, The Church of the Holy Spirit, Lake Forest, Illinois

HEIFER PROJECT INTERNATIONAL

1 WORLD AVENUE

LITTLE ROCK, AR 72202

800-422-0474

www.heifer.org



CHAIRS OR NO CHAIRS

If meeting in a gymnasium or fellowship hall, consider allowing groups of students to sit on the floor. Mark the seating area with separate picnic baskets and balloons in group colors. Students will enjoy the different look and position. Colorful picnic blankets may be spread under each basket.

SYNCHRONIZE YOUR WATCHES

Begin on time even if students and staff are still gathering. Plan to welcome the group, sing a few songs, make announcements, perform one short skit and dismiss. End on time to guarantee groups move to their first activity on time.

Notes:

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*“God in His wisdom made the fly
And then forgot to tell us why.”
~ Ogden Nash*





THE LAST STRAW!

Moo-Tiful Skits!

Memorization is not necessary.
Speak clearly. Dress in costume.
Ham it up! Have fun!

MONDAY MORNING

*Ask someone to imitate a rooster
with a loud COCKA-DOODLE-DOO!*

FARMER: *(Stretching, yawning, carrying a rake)* Another day on Good News Farm. Looks like it's gonna be a scorcher! I better get this work done before the sun heats my poor head. Seems like all I do anymore is work, work, work. I sure could use some good help.

HIRAM (OR HATTIE) THE HIRED HAND: *(Inexperienced, lazy and flippant... enters dressed in neatly pressed non farm clothing with a soft drink can)* Yessiree, it's the farmer's life for me.

Smell that fresh *(cough, cough)* air....hey, who didn't clean up after the cows last night? Feel that strong breeze...hmm, I don't feel a breeze. Don't they air condition these barnyards anymore? I love a cold drink in the morning. Mmm, at least that tastes good.

FARMER: *(Pointing to imaginary chickens)* Did you feed those chickens, Hiram? They're scratchin' at the dirt like they're pretty hungry.

HIRAM: Oh, was I supposed to do that? Nah, they ate yesterday. I threw enough chicken feed to keep them going for another day.

FARMER: Get the bucket, kid. Feed those chickens. You don't get paid to stand around drinking from a soda can. There's work to be done. You're getting the paycheck, so get to work!



HIRAM: Okay, okay. Don't get your shorts in a knot. I can work as good as the next hired hand. I think you baby these animals too much. They get along just fine by living off the land.

FARMER: That reminds me....Did you finish milking the cows this morning? They were mooing at the back barn gate when I got out here.

HIRAM: Milk the cows? I didn't know you wanted ME to do that. I don't exactly like touching cows. I did say good morning to them when I was eating my breakfast. You sure have good breakfast food here. Mmm, bacon, eggs, french toast with maple syrup....

FARMER: Let's sit down and have a talk. *(Both actors sit on edge of stage.)* Now answer me this, how much time have you actually spent on a farm?

HIRAM: Well, do you include yesterday when I got here?

FARMER: Yep. Count yesterday when you got here.

HIRAM: Okay, let me think. Hmmm, I've got it....One day. Just yesterday. That's the only time I ever spent on a farm.

FARMER: *(Shocked....)* Who hired you, Hiram? They must have had hay in their brains. You don't know nothing about working this land and taking care of these animals. You have a lot of growing up to do.

(Thinking....) Well, we grow hay for the cows. We grow corn for the pigs. We grow apples for us. I guess we can grow a good hired hand.

HIRAM: That's a mighty nice speech but I'm only here for the summer. I have to earn some quick cash for a nice, fast car.

My clothes need some updating and I think I'd like to buy myself a nice computer complete with internet access. I need a new cell phone while I'm at it. That's how we live in the city.



FARMER: You're not in the city anymore, kid. As long as you're in the country and as long as you're at MY farm you better get in a working mood. The lives of every one of our animals depends upon you.

HIRAM: Are you some kind of preacher? I thought you were a farmer. I don't have to take anything from you. I'll do as I please...and I please to do nothing! So take that to the chicken coop and build a nest! *(Stomps out angrily.)*

FARMER: *(Shakes head slowly..takes off hat and faces upward to heaven....)* Dear Lord, You've been good to me over the years. This here farm has prospered and our animals are happy and healthy.

You've given me a challenge this summer by sending this city slicker hired hand to torment me. He needs to grow up, Father. If You promise to help me, I promise to work with him.

(Pause as if listening....) Yep, I hear Ya. I know it won't be easy. You said in the Good Book, "And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary." *(Galatians 6:9)*

He's not a nice person but You love him so the least I can do is help him along a bit. All I ask is that he doesn't kill any of the animals...or himself...while he's learning to grow up. Amen.

*Walk off stage with rake over shoulder.
Whistle as you exit the area.*





TUESDAY MORNING

HIRAM: (*Enters with a bad attitude and a milk bucket...Speaking to audience*) I HATE this place. Every place I step has water or mud or cow poop! It's hot and dirty. The work is disgusting and the farmers are so friendly all the time. They're unreal! Nobody can be that cheerful every day.

(*Show the bucket...*) Now they're making me milk cows. Have you ever done that? I can tell you it's not as easy as it looks. Pulling the milk out of a cow hurts my hands. One big cow had the nerve to kick me this morning! Well, I just kicked him right back.Then the farmer was upset with ME! Can you imagine that? He said the cow was important but I could be replaced.

I admit I need the money from this job but I'm not going to work any harder than I have to. I'm going to let you in on a little secret....I found a hiding place in Secret Meadow. I heard the folks talking about it. Hardly anyone goes there. One muddy logging road is the only way a person would know a meadow is hidden behind all those trees.

There's a litter of kittens up there and the mother cat lets me sleep there if I bring a bowl of milk. The farm is so big that no one really knows where I am. They think I'm in the low pasture or feeding the chickens or milking cows or weeding the garden. Tomorrow I'm going to bring a stash of magazines and candy bars. I can tuck them inside one of the trees and fool them all. Ha! This just might be the easiest summer money I've ever earned.

Sshhhh! Here comes the farmer. Don't you dare tell him my plans. Don't worry, I'll do just enough work to keep him off my back...and no animals will be harmed in the making of my summer! You be quiet. I'll do the talking....and I'll be real nice too.

FARMER: Good day, Hiram. How are your chores coming along?

HIRAM: (*Sweetly...*) Good day, Farmer Dell. And a beautiful day it is. Might I add that you are looking splendid in that fine straw hat and sharp denim outfit.



FARMER: Are you feeling okay? Have you been in the sun too long?

HIRAM: Oh, no. I am enjoying my "farm" experience very much. In fact, I think I'm going to enjoy my summer here at GOOD NEWS FARM more than I originally thought. Everyone here is so kind and cheerful. I must have misjudged farm life that first day.

FARMER: You're sure you're not sick?

HIRAM: *(Fake laugh out loud....)* Ha, ha! That's funny. You have a wonderful sense of humor too. Oh, I think we are going to be the best of friends. Well, I have a LOT of work to do *(Wink, wink...to the audience)*. I don't want to disappoint any of my animal friends. I'll see you at lunch. *(Exits the stage.)*

FARMER: Do any of you know why Hiram has changed? Did he say anything suspicious while I was in the barn?

(If the audience tries to tattletale about Hiram's dishonesty, don't believe them. Ad lib lines like...Oh, I'm sure you misunderstood him. Look at how friendly he has become. I think you should be happy that he is my friend now.)

FARMER: Well now, isn't that a refreshing change in my hired hand. I've had the Lord answer prayers before but never quite this quickly. That fella is going to work out great on this special farm.

(Take off hat, look upward....) Thanks Lord! You've done great things overnight. I sure appreciate Your help. I guess You don't need me to do anything more. That's a relief because I have a lot of work to do. Amen.

I better get on my tractor and head for the field. There's a lot of hay to get in before it rains. I'm so relieved that my hired hand is going to work out. By the way, there's a lot of work for you to do too. I don't want to see you sitting around here when I get back. Get to work!

EXIT



WEDNESDAY MORNING



FARMER: (*Alone...visibly upset*) I can't believe it! I walked into the chicken coop this morning and discovered there was not one egg laid since yesterday. That has never happened on GOOD NEWS FARM.

The only thing that could have happened is that our big rooster ran away or the feed was not distributed properly or maybe....a thief has been in our coop! Oooo, if I find anyone has been stealing our eggs, I will hit....no, can't do that. I will scream...no, can't do that. I will...I will...Well, I don't know what I'll do but I'll sure be mad!

HIRAM: (*Walking to the beat of a new CD with earplugs...make the equipment obvious*) Singing.... "Hey, there, Georgie Girl, walkin' down the street so fancy free..." Oh, hi Farmer Dell. What a wonderful day on the farm! You're looking fine as frog's hair today, my friend. What's wrong?

FARMER: (*Exasperated....shaking head*) No rooster, no eggs, no money today.

HIRAM: (*Hiding CD player....*) Oh, that's too bad. Well, the chickens all looked happy and healthy when I left them last night.

FARMER: (*In a panic...*) You were the last to see them? Was there anyone nearby? Were they fed normally?

HIRAM: (*Looking guilty....*) Why, no, I didn't see anyone. The feed was out of the bucket. I guess they were okay. What's the big deal? One day's worth of eggs won't hurt anybody.

FARMER: Hiram, I know you're a greenhorn, but even you must understand that the money we get from our laying hens helps run the farm. Without that money, I cannot pay for feed. I can't repair the tractors. I can't pay the farm hands.

HIRAM: Cheer up! They'll lay eggs tomorrow morning. I'm sure everything will be back to normal by then.



FARMER: Once the chickens are frightened, it may take weeks before they lay their eggs again. It could be we'll have to cut back on a few things around here.

HIRAM: (*Sadly...*) Oh, I didn't know. Let's hope for the best. Maybe they will forget what happened last night.

FARMER: What happened last night!

HIRAM: Oh nothing! I was just saying.....maybe things will get better.

FARMER: (*Exits stage muttering....*) No eggs, scared chickens, no money, no farm.....

HIRAM: (*To audience...*) Oh man, I didn't know chickens were so important. I wanted this CD Player so bad that I figured a few missing eggs wouldn't make any difference.

I found a guy in town that said he would buy my eggs on the QT for a lot of money. It sure is easier than working for the same money. How did I know the rooster would jump me and then run away in the middle of the night. They have a lot of chickens here and that means a lot of eggs.

I must admit, I feel a little guilty. Oh well, I'm not going to worry about it. I found a few cows in a lower pasture that nobody knows are there. I gotta see a guy about some cows. If he can get a truck here about midnight, I think he can load them up and get them out of here before anyone notices.

The money I could get from six mangy, old cows could buy me a new car! Yeah, that's it. Cows for a car. The farmer won't even notice 'cause he's so worried about those chickens.

Exit



THURSDAY MORNING



HIRAM: Boy, that worked slick. I found a guy in town that paid me a ton of money for six, mangy old cows. They were down in the Low Pasture and I don't think anybody will notice for a long time, if ever, that they are missing. And you should see the money I got for those COWS.

FARMER: (*Entering and shaking head...*) I can't believe it. My favorite cows are missing. I raised them beauties since they were babies in MooTown Motel. They were my pets...Bull Dozer, Steam Roller, Sunshine and the Spook Sisters.

Oh my cows, my special cows. I gave them extra grass by putting them in the Low Pasture. I searched everywhere. No sign of them. The gate was open and there were tire tracks on the Old Road. Oh my friend, you'll never know my grief at losing those cows. They were like family to me.

HIRAM: Um, um, um. I'm sorry you lost your cows. But, wouldn't you say they were kind of old and scraggly anyway? They probably wouldn't have lasted much longer.

FARMER: (*Moaning...*) You don't understand! Only a true farmer could understand the loss of a special cow. They followed me like puppies. I stayed up night after night helping them during calving. I mended their cuts and milked them carefully every morning for years.

HIRAM: Get a grip! They're cows! Nobody could feel that strongly about a COW! They give milk. They go to the market and we eat them! We use their hide for wallets.

FARMER: Stop it, Hiram. Cows are God's creatures. He created them for our use, of course. God also implanted in my heart a love for his creation. I am the caretaker. I stand in the gap as God's presence providing food and drink and clothing for my fellow man. The benefit to me is my daily friendship with the animals.



HIRAM: (*Sadly....*) Oh. What do you think happened?

FARMER: They were stolen! The tire tracks are a dead giveaway. Cow tracks lead to the truck and then disappear. Someone loaded them onto a truck and drove away. They are probably at market many miles from here by now.

HIRAM: Yes, they are.

FARMER: (*Suspiciously....*) How do you know? Did you see anything last night?

HIRAM: Here, I have something to give you. (*Hand the farmer money.*) I can't keep this money. I told a guy in town that your cows were in the Low Pasture. He offered me a lot of money and I figured they were old and mangy and not worth keeping. I wanted a new car.

FARMER: (*Shocked....*) I trusted you! You were my friend! How could you have done this terrible thing? And for a new car?

HIRAM: No! Not a NEW car. Actually it was a used car. I hate this farm. I don't want to be here. I don't like the mud, the work and the animals.

I just want to get away from here. But, you have been so friendly to me. Why did you treat me so nice when I was lazy and I was bad at my job?

FARMER: (*Taking the money....*) I was kind to you because the Lord was kind to me. When I was a city slicker, the farmer on GOOD NEWS FARM taught me how to be a good farmer. I thought I could help you too. How wrong I was.

HIRAM: I don't deserve to be your friend. You won't see me again. I'm leaving for good. No one will see me again. (*Run off stage.*)



FARMER: (*Shouting...*) Hiram, Hiram, come back. You could get hurt back in those woods. I'll try to forgive you. Come back!

(*To audience...*) I should have believed you people when you told me Hiram was pretending to be my friend and pretending to like the farm. Now I have a real problem.

I have to find Hiram and find him fast. City Slickers can get caught in the quick sand or trapped in a cave or....I don't want to think about the mountain lions I saw in there last week.

Let's pray: "Dear Lord, Hiram needs your help and I need your help too. Don't let him get hurt on the farm. Help him to learn a lesson from his dishonesty. Help me find him. Amen." I'll let you know what happens tomorrow. (*Run out of room.*)

Exit

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FRIDAY MORNING

HIRAM: (*Crouching down on stage...*) Sshhh, don't tell the farmer where I am. I am so ashamed of how I acted. I didn't need that CD Player and I didn't need a new car. I thought nobody cared about a few little eggs and six mangy old cows.

If I could change it, I would. The eggs are gone and the cows are gone and now I must pay the price. You know, I think I heard that in the old days they looked down on cattle rustlers. Didn't they used to shoot 'em?

FARMER: (*Calling from back of room...*) Hiram, Hiram! Where are you? I've got to talk to you. Come on Hiram. Come on out!

HIRAM: (*Calling from hiding place...*) He's not He-re! He ran a-way! Go back to the ba-arn! You have lots of work to do! He won't bother you anymore. He's long gone.

FARMER: Get out here Hiram. I'm losing my patience with you.

HIRAM: (*Calling from hiding place...*) Are you still mad? Are you going to shoot me for cattle rustling? Am I fired?

FARMER: Hiram, I'm going to count to three. By then, you better be standing in front of me! ONE....

HIRAM: Yeah, ONE day I'll laugh about this.

FARMER: TWO...

HIRAM: Yeah, TWO reasons for me to hide. I'm stupid and I'm stupid.

FARMER: HIRAM, I'M COUNTING.....THREE!!!

HIRAM: Okay, okay. Here I am. But only because I really LIKE you.



FARMER: Where have I heard that before? It's time for you to grow up. You need to hear a few things so open your ears. I hope you cleaned them out. Why do you think we call this place GOOD NEWS FARM?

HIRAM: Oh, I don't know. Is it because the newspaper comes on time every day?

FARMER: This is a Christian farm. In the four days you have worked here, have you heard one person say anything bad to you?

HIRAM: Well, now that I think of it, no. Not even when I spilled the milk bucket. Not when I ate the last piece of chocolate cake at supper. Not when I didn't do my job. Somebody else always did the work and when I got back from hiding in Secret Meadow nobody even yelled.

FARMER: Did you think that was strange? You were lazy, incompetent and had a bad attitude and yet we took you in as one of our own.

I thought you could benefit by being with Christians who could help you grow into a relationship with Jesus and with us. I wanted you to grow like a seed planted in the ground and grow to a beautiful, rich harvest.

HIRAM: I want to change. I'm tired of being out of touch with spiritual things. I thought I would be happy if I had nice clothes, money, cell phones and new cars. Those things just made me more miserable. The nicer you were and the more I lied to you, the worse I felt.

FARMER: Jesus can change you, Hiram. He can forgive your sin and make you clean inside.

HIRAM: I'm not good enough to be a Christian. It's too late for me. Just turn me over to the sheriff. Only...don't shoot me. I can get you new cows...someday.

FARMER: I'm not going to shoot you, Hiram. Jesus doesn't ask that you be "good enough" to come to Him. The only need is that you believe that He is God's Son sent to save you.



He died on a cross and then rose from the grave three days later. ...for you...do you get that? For you..even when you are lazy and dishonest. You must be willing to change your life and follow Him as your Lord and Savior.

HIRAM: I'll do it. I never knew how much God loves me. I'm so glad I came to the farm this summer. And this time I really mean it. And this time I really mean it when I say, "You are my friend, Farmer Dell."

FARMER: *(Take off hat and look upward....)* Dear Lord, I'm bringing Hiram to You. He wants to become one of Your children. Accept Him just as he is...

HIRAM: Yes, Lord. I want to be saved from my sin.

FARMER: Forgive his sin. Make him one of your own children. And help me forgive him for stealing the eggs, scaring the chickens, hiding on me in Secret Meadow and taking my favorite cows. Thanks Lord for Your promises. Thanks for GOOD NEWS FARM. Thanks for my friend, Hiram. Amen.

Okay, son of God, let's go get some chocolate cake, a big frosty glass of milk and talk about what you're going to do in the barn today.

HIRAM: Oh no, not another animal to milk or feed or clean! I'll never be a farmer you know.

FARMER: We'll work on you, kid. Between me and God, you ain't got a chance!

EXIT ARM IN ARM



OPEN HOUSE

...FAREWELL TO FARMS!

“Farmers are best in their field.”

Students and Stations, sing crafts. Families FARM, sample farm farewell.



teachers show off Bible songs and display tour GOOD NEWS snacks and enjoy the

All costumed teachers are responsible to be in their work area during OPEN HOUSE.

Choose the OPEN HOUSE time so a high percentage of parents and friends can attend. If the week ends on Friday, plan a Friday evening program. Some churches present OPEN HOUSE on Sunday morning. Eliminate OPEN HOUSE if no common time can be found.

“FAREWELL TO THE FARM” SCHEDULE

- 7:00 P.M. –Welcome and Opening Prayer**
- 7:02 P.M. –Director Introduces Farm theme**
- 7:07 P.M. –Students Sing**
- 7:10 P.M. –Recite Scripture Verses**
- 7:11 P.M. –Students Sing**

- 7:20 P.M. –Offering**

- 7:25 P.M. –Teacher Appreciation**
- 7:35 P.M. –Students sing, Close in prayer**
- 7:40 P.M. –Dismiss group to tour all areas**
- 8:30 P.M. –Staff begins clean up.**



THE STORY TELLER

CAKLE BERRY CORNER

....CHICKEN COOP

*“Faith is putting all your eggs
in God’s basket,
then counting your blessings
before they hatch.”*

*This OPTIONAL fifteen minute segment
provides rest
and a delightful story adventure.*



WHAT IS CACKLE BERRY CORNER?

The cheerful Story Teller greets small groups and tells a continuing story with enthusiasm. Choose a quiet room. Students hide away and hear a five day story in fifteen minute segments.

HOW SHOULD I DECORATE?

Make the story area look like a chicken coop. String chicken wire. Stack wooden boxes (*open end facing front*) along one wall. Place hay and eggs in each box. Scatter hay in the corners. Place old boards against one wall. Scatter a few feathers. Place several large baskets in one corner. Place eggs in one basket. (*Hard boil eggs to avoid an accidental mess.*)

Print a sign for one wall ~CACKLE BERRY CORNER ~. Place each letter on a separate egg shape drawn on posterboard. Place stuffed hens, roosters, chicks around the room. Ceramic poultry can be found. Draw poultry figures for the walls.



WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

Be comfortable dressed as a farmer. Wear bib overalls or blue jeans, a straw hat, bandana and work boots.

WHO HEARS THE STORY?

All student groups visit daily. Preschool TATER TOTS are scheduled to visit but if the continuing story does not interest them, other stories may be substituted.

It may be more desirable to choose five separate stories from the local Christian Book Store, short videos or from online web sites. Preschool teachers may choose another type of activity for their group during this time.

Discuss choices with the preschool team before Vacation Bible School begins.

WHAT STORY SHOULD I TELL?

Our suggested story is THE BOX MAKER, a five part Conley Twin adventure with complete five chapter 'tell aloud' story script and flip chart line drawings.

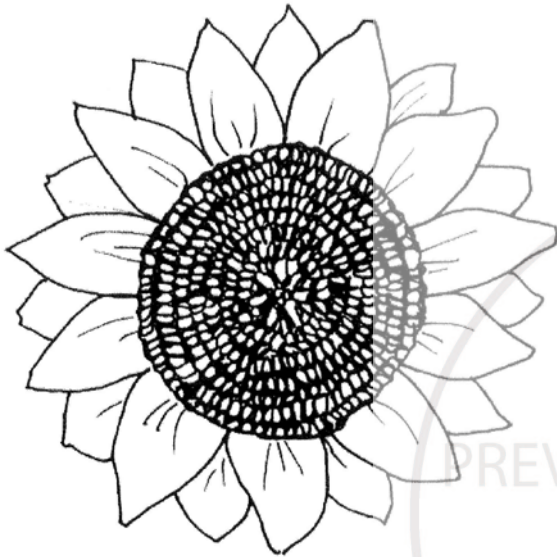
As in other Conley twin stories, our Christian kids face excitement and mystery. Everyone, even the leaders, enjoy coming back the next day to hear the next installment of the story.

Purchase THE BOX MAKER separately from CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MINISTRIES 1-888-CEM-LIFE. It may be ordered online at: www.cemlife.com



MUSIC

...SUNFLOWER SONGS



*“Let me tell you about the farm,
All my friends are in the barn.
Sunny days, bale and hay,
Go to church and learn to pray.
Cornbread, feather bed, buttermilk,
Scratch my head.
Brown cow, cat’s meow,
Come on mule pull my plow.”*

~ Hank William Jr.

SUNFLOWER SONGS is a fifteen minute daily music session for small groups. Students sing choruses of your choice. Choose upbeat, easy to sing songs from your music library or songs we suggest. Plan more music than needed in the time limit in case songs are learned quickly.

DECORATION

Meet at THE FRONT PORCH Opening area. No additional decoration is needed. If a small music room is used, decorate using a few of these ideas:

Fill the room with flowers. Use real wild flowers and silk flowers in every corner, on the piano and on the floors. Purchase flower swags to hang around door.



Make large sunflowers or use real sunflowers if the season is right. Just for fun, make the sunflowers huge. Place the blooms almost at ceiling level. Make long, narrow green stems and green leaves along the walls. Print messages of hope on these flowers and the leaves.

**GOD MAKES THINGS GROW
HE OWNS THE CATTLE ON A THOUSAND HILLS
THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE**

**THE SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW
FAITH AS SMALL AS A MUSTARD SEED
PUT YOUR HOPE IN JESUS**

**KNOW JESUS MEET JESUS GROW IN JESUS
SERVE JESUS TELL ABOUT JESUS**

PRAISE AND WORSHIP TEAM

Choose a few teens who stand in front with microphones. They become assistant leaders. This appealing style is contemporary and will be enjoyed by the children and youth.

MUSIC

Use our music suggestions or create your own **SUNFLOWER SONGS** music. Prepare the small groups to sing together for **OPEN HOUSE...FAREWELL TO THE FARM.**

Find the chorus "He Owns The Cattle On a Thousand Hills" in an old chorus book.



ADAPT A FEW DISNEY MELODIES

Music stores, online web sites or public library should have collections of Disney songs available. We provide these printed lyrics for your consideration (no CD).

The Lord Is Good To Me from Disney's movie *Johnny Appleseed*

*The Lord is good to me and so I thank the Lord
for giving' me the things I need
the sun and rain and an apple seed, yes He's been good to me.*

*I owe the Lord so much for everything I see.
I'm certain if it warn't for Him
there'd be no apples on this limb, yes He's been good to me.*

*Oh here am I 'neath a blue, blue sky a doin' as I please,
singin' with my feathered friends, hummin' with the bees.
I wake up every day as happy as can be
because I know that with His care
my apple trees they will still be there,
Oh the Lord's been good to me.*

Change the words to Disney's *Lavender Blue (Dilly, Dilly)* from the movie, *'So Dear To My Heart'*.

*Jesus loves me, dilly, dilly, Jesus loves me.
If He loves me, dilly, dilly, He must love you.
Who told me so, dilly, dilly, who told me so
The Bible told me so, dilly, dilly, God's Word told me so.*

*If your dilly, dilly heart feels a dilly, dilly way 'n if you'll answer yes.
In a pretty little church on a dilly, dilly day
You'll hear from Him in a dilly, dilly way and-*

*Jesus loves me, dilly, dilly. Jesus loves me
If you love Him, dilly, dilly, Then He'll be your King!*



MUSIC FROM 'THE DONUT MAN'

www.donutman.com

THE DONUT MAN, Rob Evans, offers a series of songs from Integrity Music that is a perfect fit to our GOOD NEWS FARM theme. **Sing A Long Songbook 3** contains all songs from several CD's including the twelve songs on the CD entitled **The Farmer**.

"The Farmer" Song Titles: God Makes Things Grow, From the Rising of the Sun, Rain Falls Down, The Mustard Seed, Jesus The Seed, God's Not Dead, Celebrate Jesus, Let Everybody Praise the Lord, The Sower, The Fruit of the Spirit, Scripture Memory Verse (Hebrews 13:15), The Fruit of Our Lips, A-Ha Lelujah.

Companion DVD available: 'Barnyard Fun And On The Air'. *While visiting a farm, The Donut Repair club has to take over when the real farmer, Uncle Jim, hurts his leg. When he comes back, will the farm be fruitful? This scenario serves to teach children about looking forward to Christ's return and the importance of being ready to present Him with the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.*

Purchase the three music options, **Sing-A-Long Songbook 3**, **The Farmer CD** and **Barnyard Fun And On The Air** separately from The Donut Man's web site: www.donutman.com Check it out for easy ordering and current prices.

CAMP SONGS

Consider choosing a few fun camp songs to give the groups delightful laughter along with their farm experience. We provide the printed lyrics (no CD) of one favorite oldie but there are many more to consider. Visit www.freesongsforkids.com to listen.



AIN'T NO BUGS ON ME

OH, there ain't no bugs on me, on me.
There ain't no bugs on me.
There may be bugs on some of you mugs
But there ain't no bugs on me.

Oh there ain't no flies on me, on me.
There ain't no flies on me.
The may be flies on some of you guys
But there ain't no flies on me.

Well, a bull frog sittin' on a lily pad
Looking up at the sky
The lily pad broke and the frog fell in
He got water all in his eye.

A peanut sittin' on a railroad track
His heart was all a flutter
Along come a choo-choo on the track
Toot! Toot! Peanut Butter!

A cow walked on the railroad track
The train was coming fast.
The train got off the railroad track
To let the cow go past!

It ain't gonna rain no more, no more
It ain't gonna rain no more.
How in the heck can I wash my neck
When it ain't gonna rain no more?

We had a cat down on our farm
It had a ball of yarn
When those little cats were born
They all had sweaters on.

We had a goat down on our farm
It ate up old tin cans
When those little goats were born
The came in Ford sedans.

A farmer slipped on the old barn roof
When rotten boards gave way.
And as he fell, he shrugged and said,
'It's time to hit the hay.'



THE FUNNY FARM RECREATION! SEND THE KIDS "OUT TO PASTURE"

*"There are only three seasons for farmers:
Before Harvest, Harvest and After Harvest!"*

THE FUNNY FARM is a 15 minute daily recreation activity. Decide what games your team feels most comfortable doing. Use active, fast paced games that encourage running, jumping, laughing and comradeship.

DECORATION

Choose an indoor or outdoor area large enough for running, jumping, ball playing and circle games. If outdoors, select a grassy spot away from traffic.

EQUIPMENT

Collect items needed for individual games before Vacation Bible School. Practice the games and adjust event rules for your group.

REWARDS

Award stickers to winning students and winning teams. At the end of each session, award stickers to everyone, including losing teams.

Pieces of candy are popular prizes. Gather a variety of soft candies like Hershey kisses, Twizzlers, candy corn or other small treats that will not become lodged in small children's throats. *(Be careful when choosing peanut based candies. Some children are allergic to them.)* One popular candy that fits the theme is *Cow Tails*. Another is P.B. COWS, peanut butter filled dairy butter toffee.



Good Shepherd Jesus, Where'd you find that lamb?
"Way over in the va-al-ley."

The bees and the butterflies were buzzing 'round his eyes
And the poor little thing's cryin' Ma-am-my.

Good Shepherd told me before He went away
Take good care of my ba-a-by.

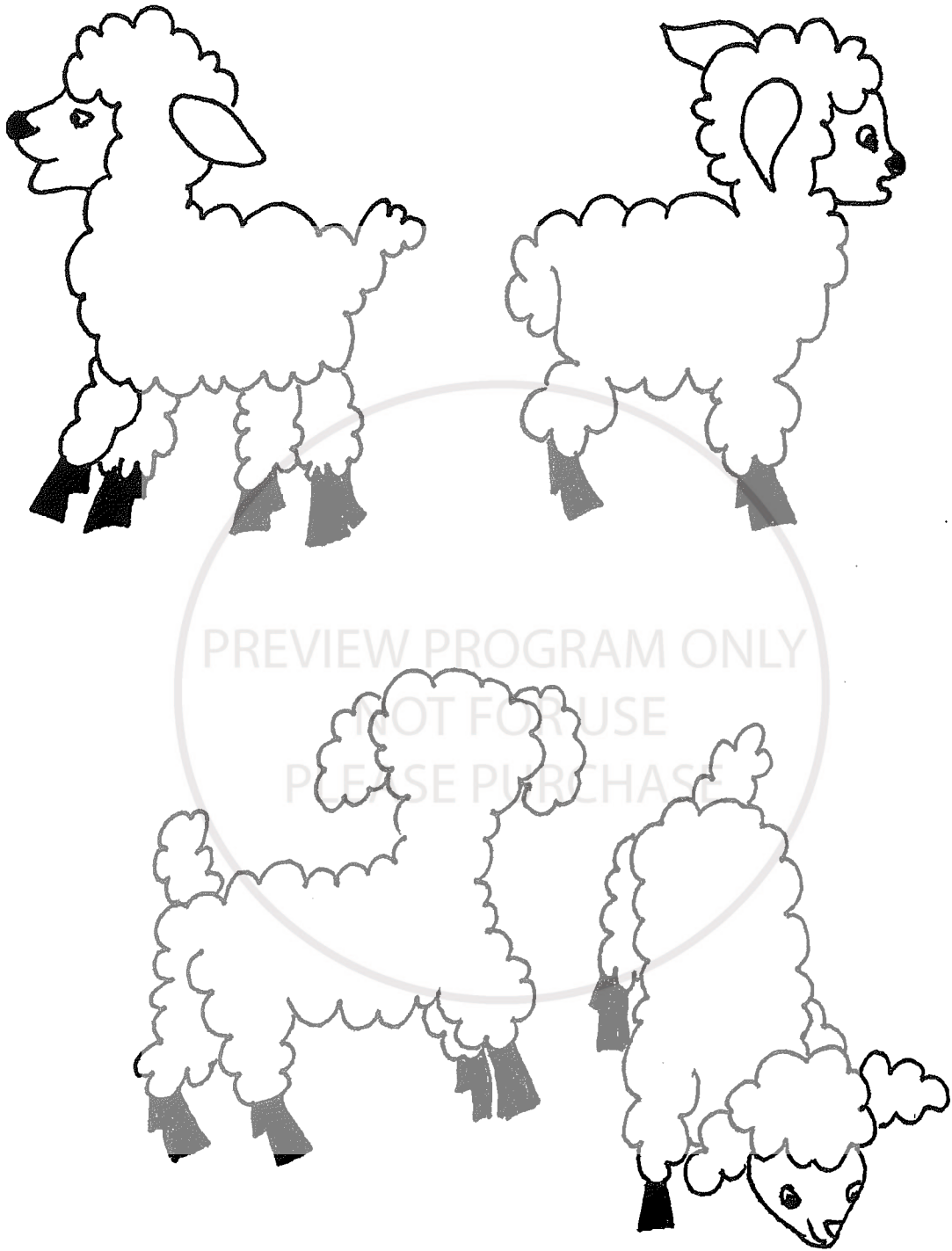
And He came back to search and the baby came to Him
And the poor little thing was so ha-a-ppy

Good Shepherd Jesus, Where'd you find that lamb?
"Way over in the va-al-ley."

Black Sheep, Black Sheep

Transcribed by:
David Saphra

Black sheep, black sheep, Where'd you leave your lamb? Way o- ver in the
va- al- ley. The bees and the but- ter flies are buz- zing 'round his eyes And the
poor lit- tle thing's cry- in' Ma- am- my My mo- ther told me, Be-
fore she went a- way: "Take good care of my ba- a- a- by." Bu- ut
I went to play And the ba- by ran a- way And the poor lit- tle thing's Cry- in'
Ma- a- my. Black sheep, black sheep Where'd you leave your lamb?
Way o- ver in the va- al- ley!



GAMES FOR THE FUNNY FARM

Play a variety of traditional games that are favorites of your group. If you need help, use some of these old favorites.

DOUBLE BALL TOSS: *Equipment—Two small balls per group of three students, whistle.* Divide the students into groups of three. The groups stand several feet apart from one another. Tell each group to stand in a triangle with several feet between each player.

When the whistle blows, each group begins tossing its two balls clockwise around the triangle. No one may have two balls at the same time. When the whistle blows again, reverse the direction. Each student counts the number of times they catch a ball without dropping it. Tell each group to complete a specific amount of catches within a short period of time.

COW'S TAIL: Divide the students into groups of five or six. Tell the students to line up in their groups. Each student places his/her hands on the shoulders of the student in front of him/her. Tell the students that each group is going to be a cow and that cows love to chase their tails.

The first student is the cow's head. That student is in charge of "mooring" for the group. The remaining students are the cow's body. The head must lead the rest of the body around toward the tail until the head can tag the tail. Players must keep their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them at all times. After 1-2 minutes, have the students switch positions and begin again. Repeat until everyone has had the opportunity to be the head and the tail of a very active, mooing cow!

LEAP FROG RELAY: Groups of 5-10 line up in single file at the starting line. First player squats and places both hands on his/her knees. Second player places both hands on the squatter's back and leaps over the squatter. Third player leaps over the first two players. Continue in this way until the teams reach a predetermined finish line. First complete team to leap over the line is the winning team.



MILK CARTON SOCCER: *Equipment—several soccer balls, ten empty milk cartons per game, lines to designate the field of play.* Designate a playing area with cones or baskets or lines. Have the teams line up at opposite ends of the playing area. Place the milk cartons in a line midway between the two teams.

Players on each team take turns kicking the ball toward the milk cartons. The kicker must stand behind the boundary line. The object is to knock down the milk cartons. When all of the cartons have been knocked down, a designated player places them upright before beginning the next round.

MILK CARTON BOWLING: Set up 10 milk carton bowling “pins” at a distance from the bowlers. Students line up to roll a basketball/volleyball/soccer ball. Assign one student to be the pin setter.

STEAL THE BACON: *Equipment—one bean bag, tied rag or soft stuffed pig.* Divide students into two equal teams. The students stand side by side at opposite ends of the playing field. Assign each student on one team a number. Repeat number assignments for the other team using the same numbers. Place the beanbag halfway between the two teams. Tell the students that the beanbag represents the bacon.

To begin the game, call out one of the numbers. The students whose number is called run toward the bacon. The student who reached the bacon first grabs it and runs behind his team line to be safe. If the student reaches his team line before being tagged wins a point. If not, the other team earns a point. Play until each number has been called at least once.

WATER BUCKET RELAY: A hot summer day, kids and cool water are a great combination. Choose a fun water relay that insures students getting wet (a little bit). Place buckets of water at the starting line. Two teams must compete to see how much water they can place into containers at the other end of the course. Decide what carriers will be used and what containers will hold the water.



Suggestions: tablespoons, plastic cups, sandwich bags, hands, holey plastic cups. The best place to play a water relay is in an open area near a water source for easy refills. Time each relay heat. Vary the containers for fun!

DODGE BALL: Play your favorite version of this popular game. Use large basketballs/volleyballs/beach balls as the dodge balls.

BLANKET BALL: *Equipment—one full sized blanket per group. Several balls of varying sizes per group. Give each group a blanket. Have the students spread out around the edges and hold onto their edge. Place one ball on the blanket and tell the students to shake the blanket so the ball goes into the air. Assign one student to be the ball retriever.*

Keep adding balls and see how many the groups can successfully toss. Then, divide the group into two teams. Each team has a blanket. Toss a ball from one blanket to the other. Award points to the catching team. A great spin to the game is tossing water balloons from one blanket to the next. It adds a little excitement (and a lot of screaming!) to the game.

OBSTACLE COURSE: Designate a clearly marked starting line and finish line. The course should include many different balance, coordination, movement and aerobic skills.

Ideas: Hop through hoops, run around large objects a certain number of times, crawl under objects, walk on a straight rope line or low balance beam, dribble a ball from one spot to another, jump rope a given number of times, slide down a slide, throw a frisbee at an object, bounce a tennis ball on a racket, dribble a soccer ball around cones.

Students line up at the starting line. The first student begins moving through the course. After he/she has completed the first or second activity, allow the next student to begin the course. Continue until all students have completed the course. Have the students who have completed their course sit in an area near the finish line until the rest of the students cross the finish line. Or, allow one student at a time to work through the course with the rest of the group acting as audience and cheerleaders. Time each student.



Recreation time is a great opportunity to invite special guests. If your church is near a rural area where there are farms, consider this special treat. There may be other options available locally.

SQUARE DANCING

Ask a local Square Dance group to send a few representatives one day to demonstrate their skills. If there is time, teach the groups how to square dance.

TRACTOR CLUB

Some communities have farmers who collect old tractors. If time and space allow, ask them to bring a few tractors to the church so students can sit in the seat, take a ride, hear about their importance on the farm.

HORSEBACK RIDES

If gentle horses and gracious owners are available, let students get to ride the horses and learn how to take care of them.

PETTING ZOO

Ask a variety of people to bring gentle animals one day for a petting zoo. Owners must remain with their animals. Dogs, cats, baby goats, ducks, lambs/sheep, llamas, calves/cows, etc. will thrill the children and the adults. It's a lot of fun if your church has outdoor space.

SPINNING WOOL AND CHURNING BUTTER

Ask a group of spinners to demonstrate yarn making. The same day can feature a person churning butter from cream.

COUNTRY MUSIC

Ask a small group of country singers to bring their guitars, dulcimers, banjos, etc. to sing and play in an outdoor setting.



UDDER DELIGHT DAIRY BAR! SNACK TIME



“Have a Creamy Day!”

*Every student at the GOOD NEWS FARM can hardly wait to eat at **UDDER DELIGHT!** Create a fifteen minute picnic. Serve farm fresh foods and enjoy the company of every small group each day.*

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
NOT FOR USE
PLEASE PURCHASE

DECORATION

Cover tables in red and white checkered table cloths. Terra cotta pots of live flowers can be used as centerpieces along with farm related paraphernalia. Obtain GOT MILK posters and bumper stickers. Place at odd angles on the walls. Fly black and white balloons.

HERE'S AN IDEA!

Contact your local DAIRY BOARD through the local Agricultural Department. These friendly professionals encourage farm life and fresh American foods. Every county has a farm organization and a Farm Princess!

Ask what “freebies” your Farm Bureau offers for children. They may have GOT MILK stickers, key chains, pencils, posters, hats, shirts or other items. Ask the current Farm Princess to visit and serve snacks one day. (Be sure to serve dairy snacks that day!) She will motivate students to enjoy milk and cheeses readily available in your area. The DAIRY BOARD may even send a person dressed as a cow for photo opportunities.



COSTUMES AND SERVING

Each server wears a GOT MILK t-shirt. If these are not available through your DAIRY BOARD, make your own. Print GOT MILK in large black block letters on white t shirts. Print white baseball caps to finish the simple outfit.

MOO-SIC!

Light , happy country tunes should be played as background to conversation. Look for country music that is appropriate for children.

PLACE MAT ART

Each student receives a plain white place mat each day. Place glass canning jars of crayons on the tables. As students wait to be served, allow them to draw farm pictures on their mats.

TABLEWARE

Use white paper plates, napkins and plastic ware. Spice up the fun by using small canning jars as drink containers. Macaroni straws may be used. Purchase long pieces of hollow macaroni. Students may sip from the jars and even eat the straw.

MENU

Name each snack. Use the recipes suggested or search your own cook book for appropriate dishes. It is not necessary to serve an entire lunch. Sample portions of each food provide a light snack.

GENTLE SUGGESTION TO THE UDDER DELIGHT TEAM

Do not provide alternative snacks for students who refuse to try unique menu items. Most students are willing to try a "No thank you" helping. Refill when students want more. Do not be held hostage to bad attitudes. Complainers become enthusiastic telling everyone they tried something new.

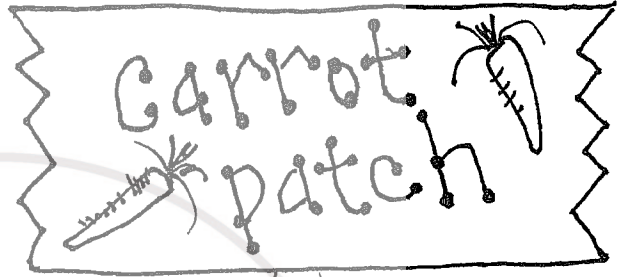
If they refuse to eat the snack, cheerfully remove it and let them know their lunch will be waiting at home! The only exception should be for students with specific health concerns. Parents make their desires known when the student arrives so students cannot trick you into a different choice on their own whim day to day.



Have a
Creamy



Day



PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
NOT FOR USE
PLEASE PURCHASE

UDDER DELIGHT DAIRY BAR RECIPES

HOMEMADE BREAD/BISCUITS WITH FLAVORED BUTTERS AND JAMS



Bake bread at the church and fill the air with the delicious aroma. If desired, use frozen bread dough to save time. Be generous with the servings and be sure the bread is warm when placed on the plate. A delicious alternative is homemade buttermilk biscuits served with flavored butters and jams. Provide plain butter too!

Strawberry Butter: ½ cup fresh strawberries, washed and hulled, ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter (not margarine) at room temperature, 1 teaspoon confectioners sugar, 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice. Puree the strawberries in blender. In medium bowl beat the butter until creamy with electric mixer on high. Add sugar, lime juice and strawberry puree and continue beating until the mixture is no longer separated and is well blended.

Honey 'n' Spice Butter: ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter (not margarine), at room temperature, 3 Tablespoons honey, 1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind, 1/4 teaspoon each ground cinnamon and ginger, 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, 1/8 teaspoon salt. Beat butter until creamy in medium bowl with electric mixer on high. Add the honey, lemon rind, cinnamon, ginger and allspice and beat until well combined. Add lemon juice and salt and beat 1 minute until well blended.

GINGERBREAD AND WHIPPED CREAM

Make your favorite gingerbread recipe or use boxed mixes. Serve warm with whipped cream on top. A special treat is heavy whipping cream beaten and kept cold in the refrigerator.

PEACH COBLER

Makes 9 x 13 pan. 1 can crushed pineapple, 1 can peaches and juice, dry yellow cake mix, more peaches, more pineapple, 1/4 cup melted oleo, chopped pecans. Bake 350 degrees, 30-40 minutes until golden. Serve with vanilla ice cream.



BACON AND EGG CASSEROLE

Makes 9 x 13 pan. 6 slices bread (trim crusts), 1 pkg (8 oz) shredded cheese, 1 lb. Bacon, ½ t. dry mustard, 6 eggs, 2 cups milk, ½ teaspoon salt. Layer bread, cheese and bacon in 9 x 13 dish. Mix eggs, milk, salt, mustard in bowl. Pour over layers. Chill overnight (important!). Bake 325 degrees for 45 minutes. Add other ingredients as desired. (Onion, ham, sausage, peppers).

FUNNEL CAKES

Mix together: 2 cups plain flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 eggs and 1 ½ cups milk. Heat cooking oil in a deep fryer or skillet until very hot. Put batter into a funnel. Be sure to cover the spout with one finger while filling the funnel. (Or pour from spouted pitcher.)

Hold the funnel over the hot oil and release some of the batter in circular motions, then crisscross motions to form one funnel cake. The batter will rise and expand, so be really careful about how much batter you use. You will soon get a feel for how much it takes. Cook until the cakes are light brown on both sides, then remove from oil and place on paper towels to drain. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve while they are still warm. These are yummy!

FARM MUD

Chocolate pudding topped with crushed cookies and Cool Whip topping.

COW PIES

Make your favorite chocolate cookie recipe or gob (Whoopie Pie) recipe.

MOO SHAKES

Make homemade vanilla, chocolate and strawberry shakes mixing milk, 1 scoop flavored ice cream, fresh fruit in a blender.



FOO FOO DUST AND ICE CREAM

(This special dust is sprinkled on the hay when it is harvested to help it ferment into the perfect feed.) Create edible FOO FOO DUST by crushing sugar cookies and sprinkling it on vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce on top.

PIGS IN A BLANKET

1-8 oz. package refrigerated crescent dinner roll dough, 2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard with seeds, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, 8 hot dogs cut into thirds. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

On lightly floured surface, spread out the dough and separate into 8 triangles. In a small cup, combine the mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Using a small spoon, spread 1 teaspoon of the sauce mixture over each triangle. Starting at the point, cut each of the 8 triangles with scissors into three smaller triangles, making 24.

Place one hot dog piece on the wide end of each dough triangle. Roll up each triangle, starting from the wide end. Place the triangles, point side down, on the baking sheet and press down lightly to seal. Bake for 10 minutes or until puffy and golden brown. Serve immediately. Makes 24 appetizers.

HAY STACKS

Mix together pretzels, rice and wheat chex cereal, peanuts or mixed nuts covered in chocolate.

DEVEILED EGGS

EGG SALAD SANDWICHES/OMELETS

Make a simple deviled egg and place on brightly colored plates. Serve egg salad sandwiches on fresh bread. Make simple egg omelets with a variety of basic ingredients—cheese, tomato.

ALFALFA-BIT SOUP

Make your favorite homemade vegetable soup. Add alphabet pasta. Serve hot with warm homemade rolls.



FARM PIES

Make a variety of favorite homemade pies. Serve small slices of apple, cherry, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, pumpkin pie with ice cream on the side. This will be a popular country snack with everyone young and old!

HOMEMADE ICE CREAM

How lucky is the group who has someone willing to make homemade ice cream! Ask several people to bring their ice cream makers and mix the treat at church. Serve with vanilla wafers and toppings.

CORN BREAD

Make your favorite cornbread recipe. Serve warm with butter.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Make or purchase your favorite shortcake or angel food cake. Top with fresh or frozen strawberries and whipped cream.

FARM FRUIT BUFFET

Place a variety of cut fruits in chilled bowls. Allow students to choose their fruits from a buffet line. Use apple slices, banana slices, peaches, pears, grapes, orange slices, pineapple, strawberries and blueberries. If desired, add a fruit dip. Serve with nuts and crackers.

FARM VEGGIE BUFFET

Place a variety of cut veggies in chilled bowls. Allow students to choose their veggies from a buffet line. Use carrots, celery, cauliflower, tomatoes, and broccoli. Serve with ranch dip, cheese chunks and potato chips.

TASTING TEST

Try different kinds of milk: Cow milk, goat milk, chocolate milk and buttermilk. Do the same taste test with cheeses: cheddar cheese, cottage cheese, Colby cheese and whatever others are available.



PIG SLOP

Explain how farmers feed pigs a mixture of leftover foods. They call it "Slop". Let students mix a variety of items into chocolate pudding. Choose from chopped nuts, raisins, cereal, chopped bananas, apples, candy sprinkles, M&M's.

CHICKEN FEED

Set out bowls of cereal, sunflower seeds, popcorn, raisins and M&M's. The students take a little of whatever they like and mix it together in their bowl for a 'chicken feed' snack!

PUPPY CHOW

This absolutely delicious snack mix is a favorite of everyone. People gobble it up - well, like puppies gobble puppy chow!

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

COOK TIME: 3 Minutes

YIELD: 24 servings

Ingredients: 12 oz box Crispix cereal, ½ Cup Butter, 1 Cup crunchy peanut butter, 12 oz. Pkg. Semisweet chocolate chips, 2-3 cups powdered sugar.

Preparation: In medium microwave safe bowl, combine butter, peanut butter and chocolate chips. Microwave on high for 2-3 minutes, stirring once during cooking until mixture is melted and smooth. Place the cereal in another large bowl and pour the melted mixture over the cereal. Stir until the cereal is thoroughly coated.

Pour the powdered sugar into a large plastic food bag. Pour the coated cereal into the powdered sugar and shake until it is well covered with the sugar. Pour the cereal onto wax paper to cool and dry. Store in tightly covered containers at room temperature. Mmm!

APPLE DUMPLINGS

Make your favorite Apple Dumpling or Apple Betty recipe. Serve hot with vanilla ice cream. If an easier apple snack is desired, bake an apple cake and frost with white frosting.



PEACH COBBLER

Make your favorite Peach Cobbler recipe. Serve hot with vanilla ice cream.

BEVERAGES

Beverages should be cold and delicious.

Change the beverage each day.

Lemonade Orange juice Kool Aid

Milk/Chocolate Milk

Apple Cider/Apple Juice

Strawberry Punch (strawberry kool aid, ginger ale,
one strawberry slice on cup lip)

Iced Tea

Brown Cow: 3 Tablespoons chocolate syrup, 2 small scoops vanilla ice cream, 3/4 cup chilled root beer, whipped topping (optional). In a tall glass, stir chocolate syrup with 1 scoop ice cream until smooth. Gradually pour in about 1/2 of the root beer until the glass is half full. Add the remaining scoop of ice cream and fill to the top with root beer. Add whipped topping and serve immediately. Makes one 12 oz. serving.

Incorporate your own favorite down home snacks to make UDDER DELIGHT DAIRY BAR memorable.

Outline the menu and ask church folks for ingredient donations.

**Construct a sign up sheet.
Include telephone numbers to remind people of when to bring their food.**



THE PICKET FENCE GARDEN SALVATION STATION

This fifteen minute daily activity center is a gathering inside a picket fence garden. Students learn the timeless story of salvation through Jesus Christ. Make the experience as much like visiting a farm garden as possible. Teach personal salvation while students decorate an individual posterboard picket that will be added to a group fence.



COSTUME

Dress in denim overalls, gardening gloves, garden boots and straw hat. Carry a gardening hoe or rake.

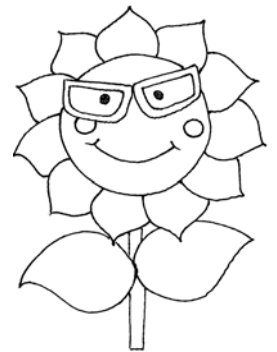
DECORATE

Transform an empty room into a farm garden surrounded by a white picket fence. Cut individual pickets from cardboard using a utility knife. Spray paint each picket white. **OR**, make pickets from white poster board. Surround the room with 2'-3' pickets at even intervals. *(These pickets are separate from the student pickets.)* Place live flowers, silk flowers and greenery in front of the pickets. Position a scarecrow in one corner. Put honey bees on the walls. Fill wicker baskets filled with potatoes, beans, apples. Students sit on the floor.

GARDEN SIGNS

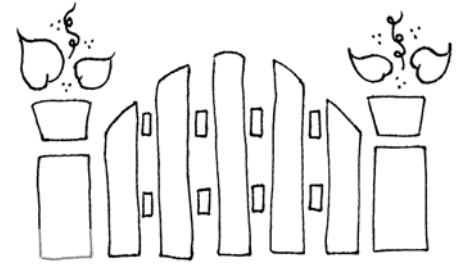
Place cheerful, flowery signs on the walls above the fence. Some signs can be looped with twine and placed on pickets.

**PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DAISIES
WATERMELON 4 SALE
WORMS HAVE RIGHT OF WAY
LIFE BEGAN IN A GARDEN**



*“I think that if ever a mortal
heard the voice of God it would be
in a garden at the cool of the day.”*

~ J. Frankfort Moore



PICKET FENCE PROJECT

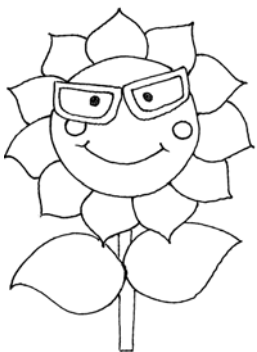
Students learn how to accept Christ while they decorate one white picket. Each day students add to the artwork on their personal picket. Provide pencils, markers and crayons.

Cut the pickets. Prepare the plain white pickets before Vacation Bible School begins. Basic pickets should look exactly alike. Each picket should be 2-3' tall but this can vary according to taste and materials available. Make pickets from white poster board.

Follow the daily directions to add symbols to each picket. Allow the students to construct their picket using their personal artistic style. The end results will be fun and interesting.

DISPLAYING THE PICKET FENCE: Choose a large area to display all pickets. If Open House is scheduled to meet in the sanctuary or fellowship hall, place the fence pickets around the appropriate area.

DAILY THEMES: Print the daily theme titles on a large poster board sunflower. Cut a sunflower center and add one yellow petal each day. There will be five petals by the end of the week. This should be the centerpiece of the wall decor.



PICKET FENCE ACTIVITIES

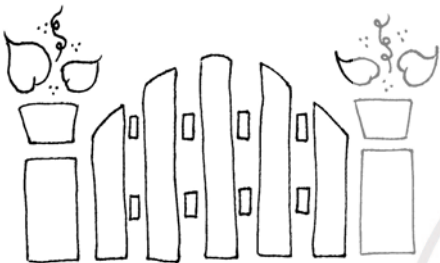
All students visit the PICKET FENCE for a daily 15 minute salvation lesson. The gospel is presented in a nonthreatening atmosphere. Students are given a gentle opportunity to accept Christ. They learn a verse from God's Word and work on their picket project.



MONDAY
PEACE AND LOVE IN THE GARDEN

“Bloom Where God Plants You.”

TODAY’S VERSE
We have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ.
~ Romans 5:1



MATERIALS

One plain white posterboard picket fence post for each student. Colorful markers and pencils. Optional: Large red heart stickers.

PEACE AND LOVE IN THE GARDEN

Life began in a garden! Let’s read *Genesis 2:8-10*. The Lord created Adam in The Garden of Eden. The earth was beautiful. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden and it grew to become four rivers. The trees and shrubs were lush and lovely. God created animals of every size and type to live in the garden. Once it was perfect, He created Eve to be a companion to Adam.

Peace and love reigned in Eden. The garden was a wonderful place to live. Even today, people who long for peace and love say they enjoy working in a garden. In fact, living on a farm is a lot like living in a garden!

Peace and love didn’t last long. I’m sure you have heard the story of the ‘sneaky snake’ who tempted Eve to eat fruit from the forbidden tree. God told them they could enjoy the fruit of every other tree. The *tree of knowledge of good and evil* was the only tree not meant for them. Instead of concentrating on all the things they *could* have, Adam and Eve focused on the one little fruit God told them to avoid. He actually said they would die if they ate it.



Once they ate the forbidden fruit, life in the Garden of Eden ended. Sin entered the world. God's plan for peace and abundant life was ruined.

God had to make a NEW plan! THAT'S the plan we are going to talk about at the PICKET FENCE GARDEN. God's new plan was to send His Son, Jesus to become our Savior. Jesus, God's Only Son, was the Gardener Who pulled out the weeds of sin in the world. Jesus is the answer to the sin that ruined all people in that garden. This verse reminds us:

**We have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1**

John 3:16 is called "the Gospel in a nutshell". If all of God's Word disappeared and only this verse remained, we could still get to heaven. John 3:16 tells us all we need to know about becoming a believer in Jesus.

**For God so loved the world
He gave His only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in Him
shall not perish
but have everlasting life.
John 3:16**

Remember God's perfect plan has always included **peace, love and life**. To help us remember this, let's start a project that we will display at the end of the week.

PICKET FENCE PROJECT

Give each student one white picket fence post. This will be their continuing art project. Work may be done as students sit on the floor in the middle of the garden. Store each group's pickets together so they can be easily found each day.



Today, print each student's first name vertically down the length of the picket. Young students will need help printing their names. Try to have the name fill the space on the picket.

Students use pencils to print their names, markers to color in each letter and then outline each letter with black marker. As they color the letters, they may add designs, dots, circles, flowers, etc. to make their name look special. If they do not finish within the allotted time, they may work on it tomorrow.

Draw a heart anyplace on the picket. This will remind them that God's plan for us is peace and love! If desired, purchase large red heart stickers for each picket.

CONCLUSION

Why do you think we printed your name on your picket? YOU are important to God. He knows you by name and carefully watches over you.

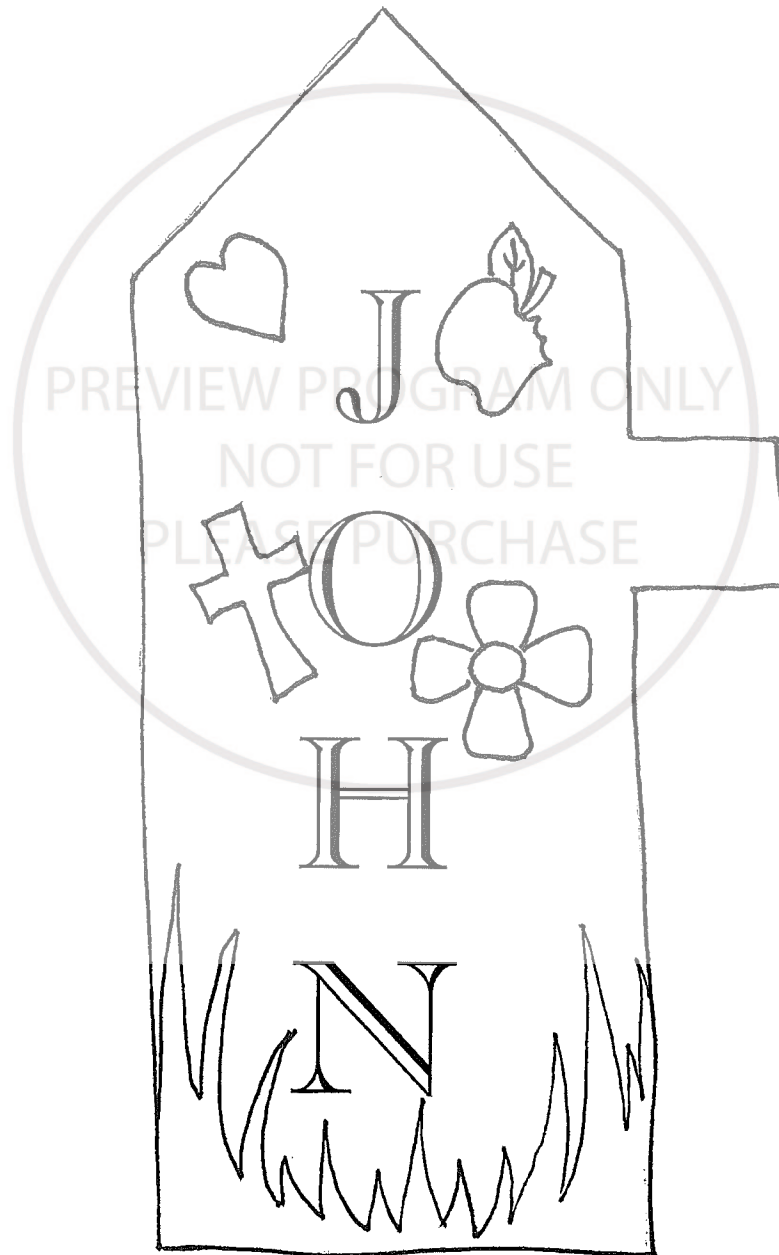
Sometimes we feel quite ordinary—like a common picket fence post. Not very important all by ourselves, sometimes standing straight and sometimes crooked and imperfect. But never forget God knows YOUR name! We are important to our Creator. He loved us before we were born and knew our names when He created Adam and Eve in that beautiful garden.

This week could be the week that changes your life forever. Don't miss one day of our time together in The Picket Fence Garden!

CLOSE IN PRAYER



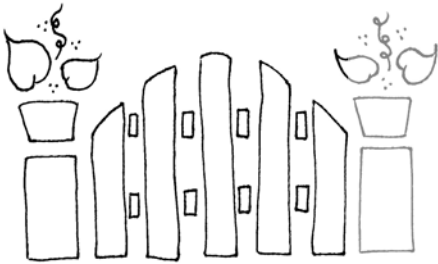
Make one large picket pattern. Using a utility knife, cut out one cardboard or poster board picket for each student before Vacation Bible School begins. The students will decorate their picket with items as instructed each day. At the end of the week, display all pickets together as a complete fence.





TUESDAY DISOBEYING GOD IN THE GARDEN

*“God made rainy days so gardeners
could get the housework done.”*



TODAY'S VERSE
For all have sinned
and fall short of the glory of God.
~ Romans 3:23

SUPPLIES

Hand out each student's picket. They may finish their names and add today's fruit symbol anyplace on the picket.

DISOBEYING GOD IN THE GARDEN

The first time a human being disobeyed God was in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve experienced a glorious life and enjoyed the beauty of the earth and the company of animals.

A snake in the grass, was more than an innocent creature. This serpent was Satan in disguise. He slithered into Eve's life, telling her that God had no right to forbid fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. After all, he hinted, maybe God didn't want Adam and Eve to discover the wonders that God Himself possessed. Maybe God was keeping something good from them.

You know what happened, don't you? Eve looked at that fruit and thought, *“Yeah, I should have the chance to become like God. And look at how that fruit shines in the sun. Mmmm, one bite couldn't hurt...”* And the rest is history! Sin entered the world.

All sin is disobedience to God. Think: “If I think or do this, will God be pleased?” If the answer is *yes*, then do it or think it. If the answer is *no*, run away from it.



God's Word Says:

**For all have sinned
and fall short of the glory of God.
~ Romans 3:23**

**For the wages of sin is death,
but the gift of God is eternal life
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
~ Romans 6:23**

Most people deny they have sinful thoughts. People make up reasons for the way they act. *"I didn't sin. No one heard the word I said". "Me, sin? I've never done anything bad in my life"! "Sin? If you think I sin, you should see what my brother did last week! Believe me, I'm an angel compared to him!"* The entire time we are denying our sinful natures, we are not experiencing God's perfect plan for us—peace and love and life.

*Learn Romans 3:23
while working on the
PICKET FENCE PROJECT.*

PICKET FENCE PROJECT

Since time began, sin in the Garden of Eden has been associated with fruit. Most people presume the fruit looked like an apple but the Bible doesn't say what it resembled.

Design a piece of fruit for your picket that looks like the most delicious, tempting fruit in the world. Make it luscious and beautiful. Be creative and when you finish, explain your fruit to us.

*The original fruit may be made separately
and glued into place on the picket.*

Use colorful art supplies.

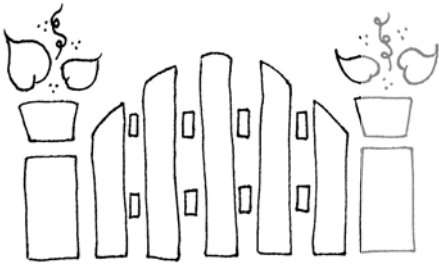
Provide scissors, glue, tape and other items.

(Construction paper, markers, glitter, glitter glue, stickers)



WEDNESDAY FRIEND IN THE GARDEN

*"You can bury a lot of troubles
digging in the dirt."*



TODAY'S VERSE

**I have come that they may have life
and that they may have it more abundantly.**

~ John 10:10b

SUPPLIES

Hand out the student pickets. Students may finish their names and add today's symbol using markers and crayons.

FRIEND IN THE GARDEN

Welcome to the Picket Fence Garden! It's time to remember what we have learned from God's Word so far this week:

**We have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

~ Romans 5:1

**For all have sinned
and fall short of the glory of God.**

~ Romans 3:23

Adam and Eve got themselves into big trouble in the Garden of Eden. After Eve ate the delicious, forbidden fruit, she convinced Adam to try it. He looked at her, decided *she* didn't die, and took a big bite.

Immediately they knew they had disobeyed God. They felt different. They noticed they were naked. Oops! It was time to hide behind trees and find a few leaves to cover themselves. It had never bothered them before.



How could they have been so bad? They hid from God but He found them. They forgot God was their best friend in the garden. He protected them from harm. Even when they disobeyed, He helped clothe them.

They were removed from their beautiful garden home. God told Adam he would dig for food from the earth. Adam was going to be a farmer but he wouldn't be a good farmer. Food was going to be hard to find. Eve was told she would feel pain in childbirth. This was God's punishment for the sin of Adam and Eve.

God made a new plan for the people of earth. He still loved Adam and Eve and all the people yet to be born. This is wonderful news for us. God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Believing in Jesus is the only way to Heaven. God's Word says it. Jesus said it often. We must believe it.

People try many ways to get to heaven:

1. Folks help poor families or give money to worthy causes.
2. People go to church every week—some go to church every day!
3. Smart people study books to get closer to God.
4. Some people live good, honest lives.

These things are terrific but they do not lead anyone to Heaven and they won't get you to Heaven either.

God's Word says:

**There is a way that seems right to man
but in the end it leads to death.
Proverbs 14:12**

**But your sins have separated you from God;
and your sins have hidden His face from you,
that He will not hear.
Isaiah 59:2**



Never forget what I am about to tell you! It is the most important message you will ever hear with your ears. The only way to God is through Jesus Christ. He died on the Cross and rose from the grave, paying the price for our sin. You cannot go to Heaven because your grandma is a believer...or your mom...or your aunt...or your best friend. YOU must personally believe God's plan for Heaven is Jesus.

God's Word says:

**But God shows His own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8**

God provided Jesus as the only way to Heaven. He gives us the choice to believe in Christ or not believe in Christ. Let's think about this while we work on our Picket Project.

PICKET PROJECT: Hand out student pickets. They may catch up if they have not completed their name decorations or any of the symbols.

Today's symbol is the old rugged cross. Ask students to draw their own version of the cross to place on their picket. It may be placed anywhere on the picket and should remind them of today's verse. The cross may be made separately using simple art supplies or may be drawn directly onto the picket.

*As the students work,
teach today's scripture verse
until they can say it from memory.*

CONCLUSION

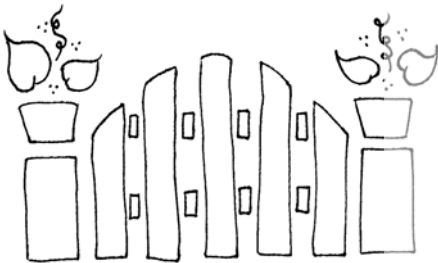
Let me ask you a question? What is the most important message I will ever tell you? Accepting Jesus as your Savior is the ONLY way to Heaven.



**THURSDAY
COME TO JESUS IN THE GARDEN**

“My garden is my favorite teacher.”

TODAY’S VERSE
Jesus said, “Come to Me.”
~ Matthew 11:28



SUPPLIES

Individual student pickets. Today’s symbol drawn directly onto the pickets or made with art supplies and glued into place.

COME TO JESUS

Welcome to the Picket Fence Garden! Let’s review what we have learned about God’s Good News about salvation:

**We have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
Romans 5:1

**For all have sinned
and come short of the glory of God.**
Romans 3:23

**I have come that they may have life
and that they may have it more abundantly.**
John 10:10b

This is very good news to learn on GOOD NEWS FARM! God is in control of the universe and everything in it—including each one of us! I believe it because God’s Word, the Bible, says it is true and I see answers to prayer. We must trust Jesus and receive Him by personal invitation into our lives.



God's Word says:

**If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus
and believe in your heart
that God has raised Him from the dead,
you will be saved.
~ Romans 10:9**

Here is a simple plan for receiving Christ: *(Print each sentence on a construction paper sunflower petal. Attach each one to the wall as you explain it.)*

ADMIT YOUR NEED!

Each of us must admit our sin by saying to God, "I am a sinner."

BE WILLING TO TURN FROM YOUR SIN!

"Repent" is a word which means saying "I'm sorry" to God.

**BELIEVE JESUS DIED
AND ROSE FROM THE GRAVE!**

God's Word tells us about Jesus and His great sacrifice for us. Now we must believe the message.

**THROUGH PRAYER,
INVITE JESUS TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE!**

It is easy to become a believer in Jesus. We become Christians by simply asking Jesus to forgive us and by asking Him to enter our lives as Savior and Lord.

Let's Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died for my sins. I want to turn from my sins. I now invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust You and follow You as Lord and Savior. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



If you want this prayer to be the answer of your heart for God, join the large crowd of people who have come before you. Stand up and be counted for God. Tell someone that you have become a real Christian today!

*Learn today's scripture verse
as the students complete today's picket symbol.*

PICKET PROJECT

Ask students to draw flowers on their picket. Each flower should have four petals to remind them of each sentence in God's Salvation Plan.

OPTION: Make a colorful flower using art supplies and glue it into place on the picket. Older students may print the sentences on their picket.

CONCLUSION

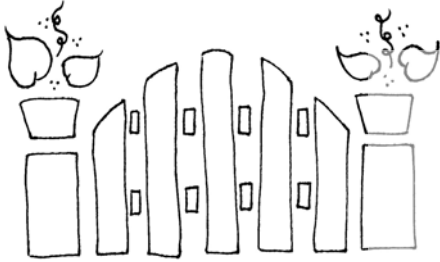
Of all the places you will go in your life and of all the stories you will ever hear, the story you have heard this week and the decisions you make in this little Picket Fence Garden is the most important.

CLOSE IN PRAYER



FRIDAY
GROWING FAITH IN THE GARDEN

*“The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God’s heart in a garden
than anywhere else on earth.”
~ Dorothy Frances Gurney*



TODAY’S VERSE
For whoever calls
upon the name of the Lord will be saved.
Romans 10:13

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
SUPPLIES
NOT FOR USE
PLEASE PURCHASE

Student pickets and green construction paper. Scissors will be needed to cut blades of grass. Glue the grass to the bottom of the picket.

GROWING IN FAITH

Welcome to the Picket Fence Garden! This is our final visit to the PICKET FENCE GARDEN. There is real joy here today. It is wonderful to know we are headed for heaven. Adam and Eve destroyed God’s first plan for peace and a wonderful life. Isn’t it great to know that God didn’t give up and turn away from his human creation?

When we accept Christ as our Savior and Lord, we are on a journey that leads to eternal life in heaven. The best part is that we do not have to earn salvation. Jesus gave it because He loves us. Remember God’s perfect plan for us? He wants us to have peace, love and life. Now, we have God’s perfect gift.

**For it is by grace you have been saved,
through faith—and this is not from yourselves,
it is the gift of God—not by works,**



so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8,9

Are you feeling a little catch in your throat? Is humble gratitude filling your soul? That's the work of God through Ephesians 2:8,9! Let's review all the scripture verses we have learned this week:

**We have peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1**

**For all have sinned
and fall short of the glory of God.
Romans 3:23**

**I have come that they may have life
and that they may have it more abundantly.
John 10:10b**

**Jesus said, "Come unto Me".
Matthew 11:28**

Once we accept Jesus, there are five things we do to grow in faith and learn more about Him. *(Print each sentence on green construction paper leaves that surround the petals of yesterday's sunflower.)*

READ YOUR BIBLE EVERY DAY!

When we grow a garden, we must take care of it every day. We cannot know and understand God unless we read His message to us.

TALK TO GOD IN PRAYER EVERY DAY!

God waits every day for us to speak to Him. Prayer is better than a telephone. The moment you pray, He hears you!

TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS!

When we love the Lord, our first response should be to tell someone else the good news. It is like spreading seed for a garden to grow.



GO TO CHURCH AND LEARN ABOUT JESUS.

It is hard to grow in faith all by yourself. You need the help of good friends who also love the Lord. Find these people at a church near your house.

LOVE OTHER PEOPLE.

We must genuinely care for people. Our love for them will make them want to know the Lord too!

*Learn today's scripture verse
while completing the final picket project.*

PICKET PROJECT

Cut five blades of green grass from construction paper. Glue them at the bottom of the picket. This will remind us of growing in faith. Each blade represents one point that we discussed today. **OPTION:** older students may print the phrases on each blade of grass.

CONCLUSION

I will miss your presence in my PICKET FENCE GARDEN. I hope you have had a wonderful time making your very own picket. Now, the magic happens. Did you guess that we are going to make a large fence using every single picket you have made this week.

What a wonderful sight! We will put our fence along walls that people of our church will see. They will know your name and they will see how much you have learned about loving Jesus!

CLOSE IN PRAYER



BIBLE STATION TIPS GOOD NEWS FARM TEACHERS

Each Bible Station represents a location on GOOD NEWS FARM. These Bible activities teach students how to follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The good news of salvation is joyously proclaimed.

Students enjoy a farm activity, memorize a scripture verse, hear a Bible story and complete a craft. Each day student groups visit a different station. Bible Station teachers and helpers accompany their group of the day to all activities.



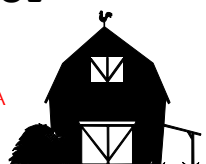
BIBLE STATION #1: HOG HEAVEN WHERE PIGS LEARN TO FLY

Meet Jesus

Memory Verse: *He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.* Philippians 1:6

Bible Story: There's A Boy In the Pig Pen!

Craft:



**BIBLE STATION #2: WILDFLOWER SHEEP PASTURE
SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP**

Know Jesus

Memory Verse: *I am the Good Shepherd;*

I know my sheep and my sheep know me.” John 10:14

Bible Story: The Good Shepherd Knows Me, The Lost Sheep

Craft:

**BIBLE STATION #3: MOOTOWN MOTEL
BOTTLE FEEDING TO HAYFIELD**

Grow With Jesus

Memory Verse: *As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word,
that ye may grow by it. 1 Peter 2:2*

Bible Story: Jesus Grew In Wisdom

Craft:

**BIBLE STATION #4: COOL HIVE
TO BEE OR NOT TO BEE!**

Serve Jesus

Memory Verse: *Serve the Lord with gladness;*

Come before him with joyful singing. Psalm 100:2

Bible Story: The Servant Farmer

Craft:

**BIBLE STATION #5: RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY
IN THE HUTCHES**

Talk About Jesus

Memory Verse: *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,
and you shall be saved....Acts 16:31*

Bible Story: Jail House Rock

Craft:



DECORATE

Borrow farm items from friends and relatives. Search your attic, garage and backyard for perfect props to give the room a country farm feel. Make simple items from construction paper, poster board and cardboard. Create dramatic lighting with floor lights and darkness. Find fun, inexpensive accessories at second hand shops.

COSTUME AND CHARACTER

Borrow, rent or make simple costumes. Become the farmer suggested within your lesson plan.

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Teach a scripture verse. If you prefer another version of scripture, use it! Shorten the verse to match the age group. Have fun with your group.

BIBLE STORY

The Bible Station stories involve stories about following Jesus. Tell the Bible story seriously. The students must be seated and quiet. Ask questions to encourage active involvement. Adapt material as needed. Older students participate in discussion.

CRAFT PROJECTS

Reserve one corner to complete a craft keepsake. Divide craft parts into kits. Place everything they need in front of them. Helpers assist young students. We give suggestions but change the project if you find something appropriate. Keep projects until Open House. Students not attending Open House may take their completed project home any time.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Small groups complete their Bible Station activities in one session. If suggested activities cannot be completed within the allotted time, choose the most important details and eliminate the rest.



CRAFT SUGGESTIONS

Each GOOD NEWS FARM Bible Station includes time for a craft activity. Choose one craft from the following list to complete with each group at the individual stations. If another project appeals to any teacher, develop that project. Homemade projects are fun and inexpensive so ask crafty folks in your group to create five separate projects and gather materials for the Bible Station teachers.



Suggestions from two excellent companies can be purchased through their catalogs or at their online sites. Prices may change.

S&S Arts And Crafts

1-800-243-9232

www.ssw.com

Guildcraft Arts and Crafts

1-800-345-5563

www.Guildcraftinc.com

S&S Arts And Crafts Suggestions

NEON PAPER LANTERNS. Create a festive mood by displaying a garland of neon colored lanterns! Includes 50% recycled neon paper, sequins, gold trim, non toxic glue, design ideas and free instructions. 8" x 8". GP851 (Pack of 40) \$23.99 per pack

NAIL CROSS NECKLACES. Create a permanent symbol of faith with this contemporary cross kit using specially crafted flat sided and flat bottom nails and copper wire. Decorate with assorted metallic paints. Compete with nails, wire, non toxic acrylic paint, black cord, brushes and instructions. 2" x 2 ½". RE291 \$29.99 per pack of 36.



CROSS SUN CATCHERS. Make a joyful, inspirational design—raised lines make it easy! 4 each of 3 assorted styles. 3 1/4" x 2 1/2". Includes sun catchers, paint, brushes and instructions. CE4426 (pack of 12) \$11.49

WOODEN BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES PLANT POKES. Identify your favorite plants and special garden areas with decorative, durable, long lasting plant pokes. Preassembled and unfinished. Completed plant pokes measure 2 1/2" x 10 1/8" (pack of 12) WD3362 \$4.99 per pack

WOODEN BIRDHOUSES. Includes 8 each of 3 different designs. Sandpaper, non toxic watercolor paint. Acrylic paint, brushes and instructions. 3" x 3" x 5". GP1593 (pack of 24) \$47.99 per pack

GARDEN SAND ART. It's easy for artists of any age to get great looking results with our latest sand art board designs created to appeal to adults and kids alike. Six each of 2 designs on self adhesive boards. Use with fine terrarium sand sold separately. 5" x 7" SP3959 \$12.99 per pack of 12

RAFFIA BASKET GROUP PACK. Materials and instructions included to make 24 attractive oval baskets. 4 1/2" long. WE612X \$24.99 per pack of 24

BUTTON BOX: Make an old fashioned button box to hold all those pesky individual buttons laying around the house. Use the following supplies (folding box/craft buttons) to make this colorful, easy project.

FOLDING BOX. Foldable box with lid arrives flat, ready for trims. Folds up to hold treasures or gifts 3 1/4" w x 3 1/4"L x 2 1/4" H. Decorate with paint, markers and more (sold separately). CO129 \$9.99 per pack of 24.

CRAFT BUTTONS. New, improved quality! Assorted colors and shapes in a mixed button selection. Size varies. Approximately 400. BE9800 \$5.79 per lb.



RUBBER DUCKS. Pack of twelve 2" yellow rubber duckies to decorate. Includes paint, brushes, instructions. GREAT FOR PRESCHOOL!
GP1765 (pack of 12) \$15.99 per pack

AUTHENTIC FLOWER GARDENS. Everything included! Pots, non toxic paint, seeds, soil, brushes, instructions. 50 marigold projects.
GP128 (pack of 50) \$27.99 per pack

PIGGY BANKS. Fun you can bank on! Includes non toxic 3/4 oz bottles of paint, brushes, top coin slot and rubber stopper. 4"
GP1778 (pack of 12) \$24.99 per pack

COLOR ME COW BANK. Paint your own cool design on pre glazed ceramic cow bank. Decorate with acrylic paint or permanent markers sold separately. 4 1/2" long
PL796 \$17.99 per pack of 12

GUILDCRAFT CRAFT PROJECT SUGGESTIONS

CROSS COASTERS. A craft project kids will love making and will keep for years to come. Includes wood coasters, tiles and glue. 3 1/4"
501-062 14 projects \$23.45

BELIEVE FULLY BRACELETS. Includes beads and precut heavy elastic cord. Not for under 3 yrs.
401-129 30 projects \$14.75

GRACE BRACELETS. Wear as a reminder to be graceful to others just as God gives us His love even when we don't deserve it. Includes beads and precut heavy elastic. Not for under 3 yrs.
401-017 30 projects \$22.15

BAA BAA HAND SHEEP. Kids trace their hand then turn it upside down to make the legs, head and body. Includes white cardboard, construction paper, stuffing, wiggle eyes, magnetic tape and glue.
217-102 24 projects \$16.65

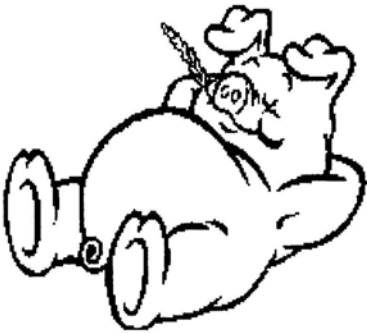
SUNFLOWER WIND SOCKS. Preprinted, precut shapes are easy to decorate with markers or paint (sold separately). Includes white cardboard shapes, streamers, ribbon and glue. Finished projects are 9" with 20" tails.
216-975 24 projects \$37.99



BIBLE STATION #1:

**HOG HEAVEN
...WHERE PIGS LEARN TO FLY**

*“Never try to teach a pig to sing;
It wastes your time and it annoys the pig.”*



SPIRITUAL THEME: MEET JESUS

Meeting Jesus is the first step toward heaven. Employing the fun theme of pigs learning to fly (an impossibility), students discover the *real* possibility of going to heaven because a loving Heavenly Father is waiting for them to come to Him.

DECORATION

Create a pig pen. Fill the area with pigs of all shapes and sizes. Copy patterns onto transparencies and enlarge them onto separate pieces of cardboard, poster board or newsprint. Not all pigs have to be pink. Make oversized fantasy pigs in purple, green, pink, yellow and red. Add curly cues and stripes for a funny twist to plain pigs. Place stuffed pigs on top of buckets and hay bales.

Pig Pen Objects: Buckets, shovels, rakes, hoes, hay, old boards, fencing, feeding trough, stacked wooden boxes.

Signs: Here are a few suggested messages to print on the sides of flying pigs and placed on the walls of the room. Print the words of today's verse on a separate sign.

**HOG HEAVEN...WHERE PIGS LEARN TO FLY
DON'T BE A SELFISH PIG
PIG OUT ON GOD'S WORD
PIGGLY WIGGLY CHRISTIANS FLY TO HEAVEN!**



**THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT TO HEAVEN.
THIS LITTLE PIGGY STAYED HERE.
THIS LITTLE PIGGY HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS GOING ON,
SO THIS LITTLE PIGGY MISSED THE LORD.
AND THIS LITTLE PIGGY SANG "I BELIEVE IN JESUS"
ALL THE WAY HOME.**

**NEVER TRY TO TEACH A PIG TO SING,
IT SOUNDS AWFUL AND IT ANNOYS THE PIG**

**HOG HEAVEN: HOME OF MISS PIGGY, PORKY PIG,
WILBUR, PIGPEN AND BABE**

COSTUME AND CHARACTER

Dress as a pig farmer. Wear bib overalls, red neckerchief, straw hat and work boots. Become the friendly farmer who is madly in love with pigs! Tell students everything there is to know about pigs, hogs and especially about meeting Jesus.

Flying pig hats are available online. Google it and see if there is a touch of humor you would enjoy adding!

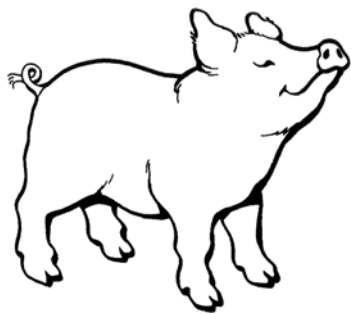
WELCOME

(Exhibit a live piglet if available. Keep the piglet safe in a small cage with food, water and a little hay. The owner should be present at all times.)

Welcome to my pig pen! What a treat to have you visit this special spot at GOOD NEWS FARM! Let's talk about pigs, wonderful pigs. In fact, they are so special that I think I'm in "Hog Heaven"!

Pigs are practical! They eat things that people won't eat and they provide a lot of meat. A mother pig usually produces two litters each year with eight or more piglets each time.

Piglets weigh three pounds at birth and grow to weigh 200 pounds in the first six months. Pigs love to be scratched! Not all people eat pork. Pigs are among the world's most popular animals.



**Let's see how much you know about pigs.
Take my *little piggy* quiz:**

**1.Pigs wallow in mud to:
a. Make a mess; b. cool off; c. find food.**

2.What kind of hogs do you see on the highway?

**3.Baby pigs can gain over 100 pounds in three months:
True or False?**

4.A group of pigs born one at a time is called a.....

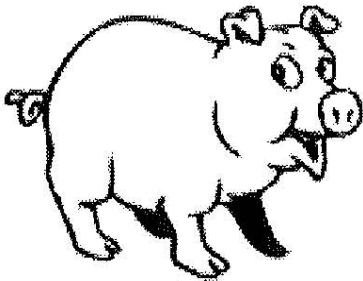
(Answers: 1.Cool off 2. Road hogs 3. True 4. Litter)

Have fun with this quiz by asking those who got the fewest answers right to Kiss A Pig. This could be the live piglet or stuffed animal or a pig drawn on the wall.

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Print today's verse on the side of a large paper pig. With a pointer, point to each word in the verse. Students repeat the verse until they can say it as a group. Reward students with a gum drop. Tell them that farm pigs love treats. One of their favorite treats is a sweet gum drop.



**He who has begun a good work in you
will complete it
until the day of Jesus Christ.
Philippians 1:6**

This is an important message from God's Word. Each of us must have a moment in our lives when we personally meet Jesus in order to go to heaven. Once we accept Him as our Savior, He begins to work in us until we begin to become more and more like Him. He promises that He will never stop working in our lives. Even if we run away from Him, He will search for us and bring us home to Him.



BIBLE STORY: THERE'S A BOY IN THE PIG PEN!

From Luke 15:11-32: Jesus loved to tell stories. People understood His messages about heaven. This farm story has been called the greatest short story in the world.

A rich farmer had two sons. The younger son came to his dad and said, *"Father, give me my share of the money I'm supposed to get when you die."* The father was a little surprised but he agreed. The younger son packed his things and moved to the city. He wasted his money having a good time with friends who wanted to enjoy the money with him. When the money was gone, the friends disappeared.

There was a famine in the land. The young man was very hungry so he got a job taking care of pigs. He did not have enough to eat. He wished someone would give him some of the food that was thrown to the hogs. Maybe he nibbled on a corn cob or drank from a bucket of swill. He was a miserable pig farmer!

After many hard working, hungry days in the pig pen, the young man was desperate. He thought, "My father has many servants who have plenty to eat and I am starving. I'm going home to my father at the farm. I will tell him I have sinned. I'm not worthy to be his son and I would like to be one of his servants." The young man packed his belongings, planned his speech and headed home to the farm.



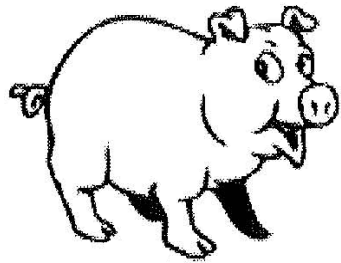
Meanwhile, back at the farm, the farmer missed his son. He worried about his boy. Every day he longed for his son to come home. Every chance he got, he stared down the road in hopes of seeing his loved one walking down the dirt path. Every day he was disappointed until one special day when he looked into the distance and saw a man coming. The father could see that he was ragged. The father recognized the young man as his son. Running to meet him, the father threw his arms around the boy.



With his speech well planned, the son began, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be your son..." Before he could finish, the father hushed him. He ordered the servants to put the best robe on him. "Place a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Prepare a feast. Let us eat and rejoice, for the son who I thought was dead is alive. He was lost, but now he is found."

All the household rejoiced except for the older brother. This selfish brother was angry and said to his father, "I have served you faithfully all these years, but you do not rejoice over me! Now when this wasteful son comes home after spending all his money on wild living, you celebrate. It's not fair!"

The loving father responded wisely. He said, "Son, you have always been here with me. Everything I have is yours. I thought your brother was dead but he is alive. It is right to rejoice because he has come home. He was lost and now he is found!"



HOG HEAVEN LESSONS: We can learn the same lessons Jesus wanted the people listening to His story to learn. *(Print each lesson phrase on pig faces and attach to the wall as you present each thought.)*

1. **RECOGNIZE SIN.** Isn't it wonderful that when the son decided to come home, he recognized his sin and asked only to be a humble servant at his father's farm? Our first step in meeting Jesus is to realize that we have sinned. God's Word says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

2. **ACCEPT GOD'S FORGIVENESS.** When the young man got to the farm, his father never gave him the chance to ask to be a servant. He called for a **robe** (symbol of honor), a **ring** (symbol of authority) and **shoes** (symbol of freedom). The son accepted his father's gifts and became a full member of the family once again. That's what happens to us when we accept Jesus as our Savior. We become forgiven children of God!



Abraham Lincoln was once asked how he was going to treat the southern rebels when they had been defeated during the Civil War and had returned to the Union of the United States. The questioner expected that Lincoln would take a terrible vengeance but the great president answered, "I will treat them as if they had never been away."

3. CELEBRATE GOD'S LOVE. The father called for his household to stop work and celebrate with a feast. God rejoices when each person accepts His forgiveness and comes home to Him.

This story is often called *The Parable of the Prodigal Son* but it should be called *The Parable of the Loving Father* because it tells us more about a father's love than a son's sin. God's Word says, *"There is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."* Luke 15:10.

God is always waiting for us to return to Him. It is easy. He says the only qualification is to believe that Jesus is God's Son, our Savior and believe that He died on the cross and rose from the grave. We talk to God about our decision in prayer and the deal is sealed. You can do this any time, any where.

CLOSE IN PRAYER. Dear Lord, Please forgive my sin. I believe You lived and died for me. I want to come home to You. Thank you for being my loving and forgiving Heavenly Father. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

CRAFT: PIGGY BANK

Supplies: One small glass jar with lid, pink acrylic paint, brush, pig pattern transferred to stiff paper or backed with heavy paper, small pipe cleaner for tail. Baby food jars or small condiment jars work well for this project because students can open and close the lid safely.



Students paint their piggy bank jars with a thin coat of pink acrylic paint. If desired, spray the jars with acrylic sealer before (to rough up the surface) and after (to seal the project). These products dry almost immediately if the applied coats are thin. While the paint is drying, have the students color their pig. Glue one pig body (with face) to the jar lid and the body (with curly tail) to the bottom of the jar.

Options: Attach pig to a small box with slit or a tin can with slit. Spray paint the banks with pink acrylic spray paint before Vacation Bible School begins. This saves time and eliminates paint fumes and spray sealer fumes. As the students work on their craft projects, ask the following questions:

WHAT DO YOU CALL A DULL, TIRESOME PIG?
...A BOAR

WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU TEACH A PIG KARATE?
...KARATE CHOPS

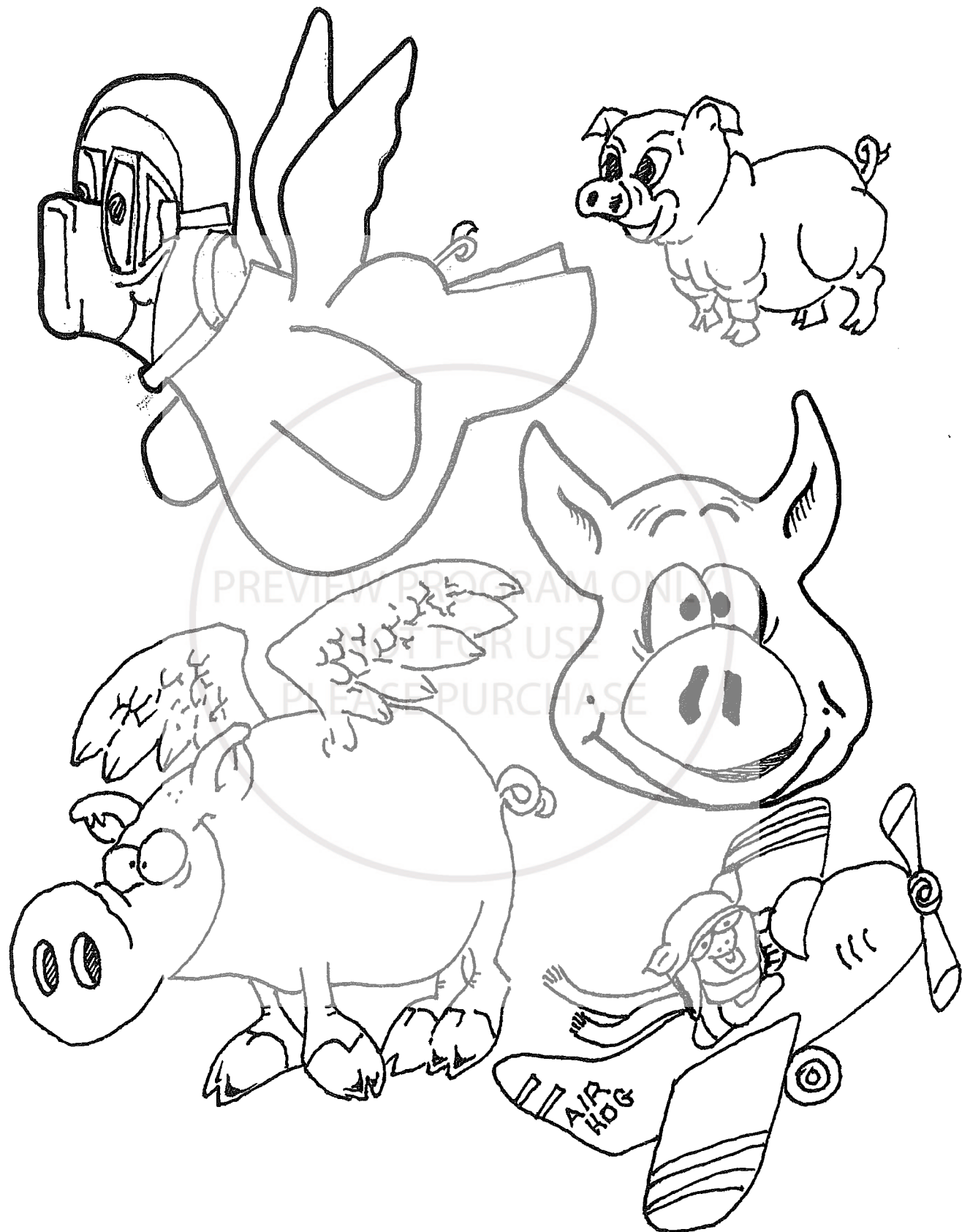
WHAT DO YOU CALL PIGS THAT TELL TALES?
...SQUEALERS

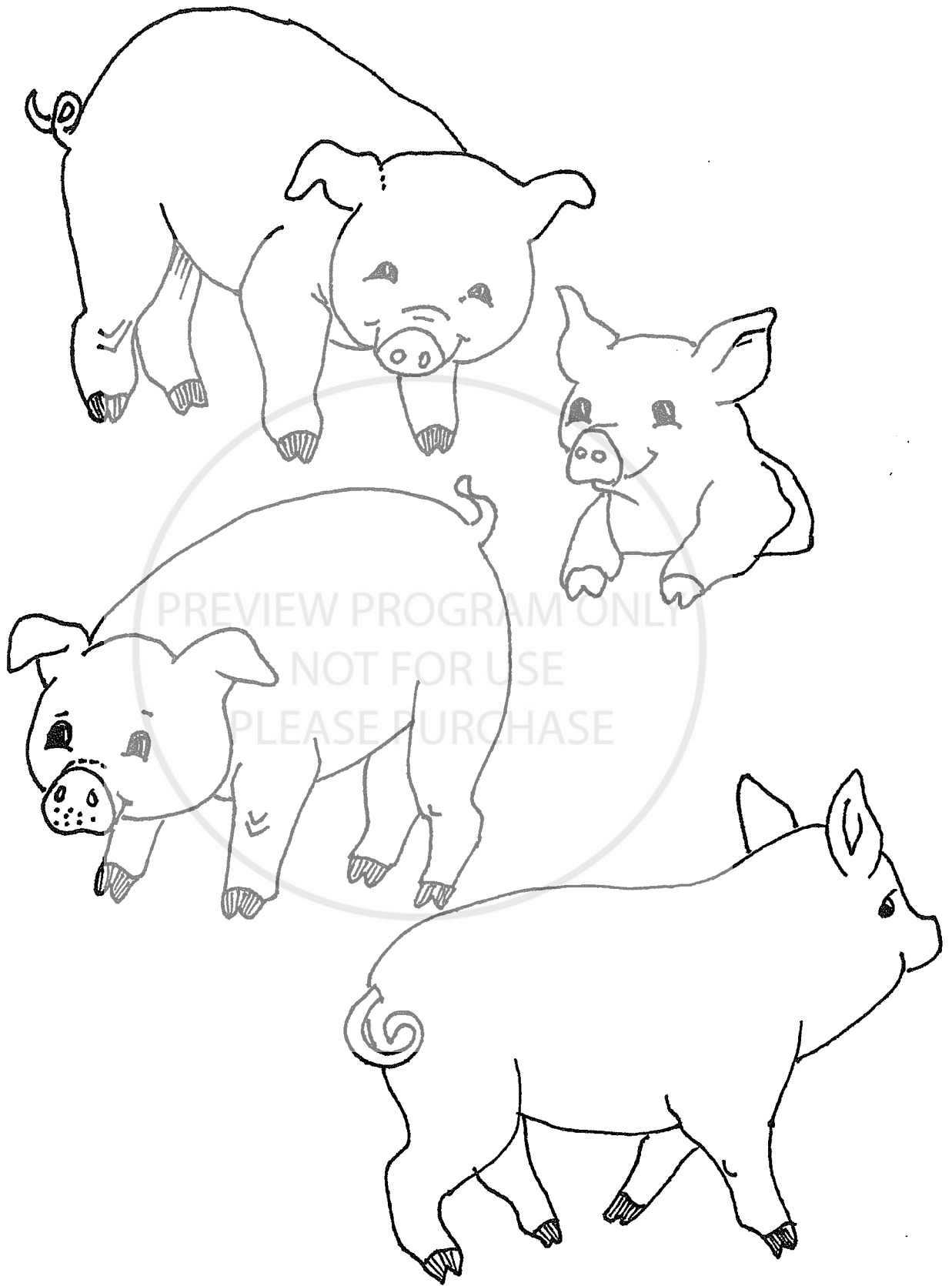
WHAT DO YOU CALL IT WHEN HOGS DO THEIR LAUNDRY?
...HOGWASH

WHAT DO YOU CALL A PIG IN A PINE TREE?
...PORCUPINE

There are more wonderful craft projects
in the S&S arts and crafts catalog.

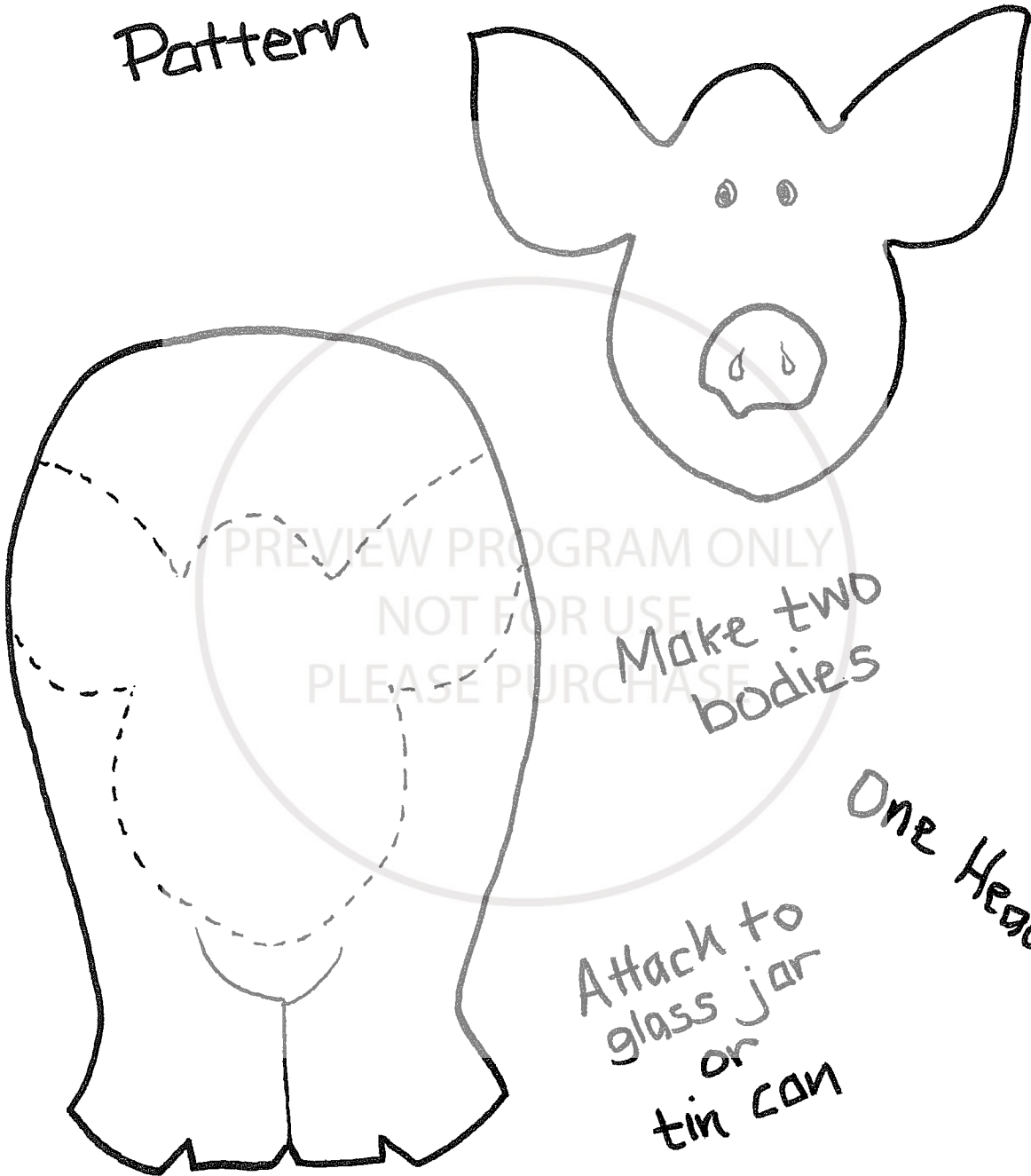








Piggy Bank Pattern



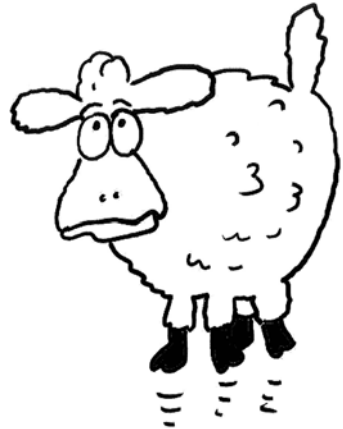
Make two
bodies

One Head

Attach to
glass jar
or
tin can

BIBLE STATION #2:

**WILDFLOWER SHEEP PASTURE
...SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP**



*“I am the good shepherd.
The good shepherd
lays down his life for the sheep.”
~ Jesus John 10:11*

SPIRITUAL THEME

Focus on knowing Jesus the Good Shepherd. Use the fun theme of life in a sheep pasture to discover the remarkable shepherd qualities that make Jesus our gentle guide.

DECORATION

This space should resemble an outdoor pasture with sheep. If your church has an outdoor area and if the weather cooperates, consider an outdoor experience. If not, decorate a Sunday School room.

Sheep: Fill the area with sheep of all shapes and sizes. Copy patterns onto transparencies and enlarge on cardboard, poster board or newsprint. If folks have yard sheep or patterns, make a few. Cover them with cotton batting or faux wooly fur. Wrap their necks in brightly colored ribbon, bows and bells. Place stuffed lambs on hay bales and overturned buckets.

Fence and Rocks: Place a fence along one wall (see pattern or use real fencing). Stack large and small rocks in corners. with wild flowers sticking out from the rocks.



Flowers and Greenery: Bring live and silk flowers to decorate the area. Use large jugs, glass jars, buckets and other farm containers to arrange bouquets. Live green plants placed along the fence look great.

Lighting: Light the pasture with small lamps on the floor behind rocks and plants and sheep. Create a twilight mood in Wildflower Pasture.

Signs: Here are a few suggested messages to print on flowers or sheep. Print the words of today's verse on a separate sign.

**WILDFLOWER PASTURE...SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP
STOP TO SMELL THE FLOWERS
DON'T STEP ON THE LADY BUGS
HOW ARE EWE?**

**CAN'T SLEEP?
DON'T COUNT SHEEP, TALK TO THE SHEPHERD**

**BLACK SHEEP ACCEPTED HERE
STRAY SHEEP CHECK IN WITH THE SHEPHERD
BAA-CK TO THE BASICS**

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT
HE IS OUR GOD AND WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF HIS PASTURE
HE WILL FEED HIS FLOCK LIKE A SHEPHERD
HE IS THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP**

COSTUME AND CHARACTER

There are two choices for this teaching team. Dress as a sheep farmer in denim bib overalls, checkered shirt, neckerchief, straw hat and work boots or have a bit of fun and dress as Shepherdess Bo Peep. Bo Peep wears a frilly dress with large skirt, big hat and carries a shepherd's crook complete with a bow tied to the staff. If available, carry a stuffed lamb under one arm.





WELCOME TO WILDFLOWER SHEEP PASTURE!

Nursery rhymes and songs have been written about sheep. The cuddly little creatures inspire just about everyone. Remember “Little Bo Peep, she lost her sheep and didn’t know where to find them. Leave them alone and they’ll come home wagging their tails behind them.” Or, “Mary had a little lamb who’s fleece was white as snow.” Or, “Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool? ‘Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full.’”

Sheep are super! They grow wool for warm clothes, provide food and valuable fertilizer. Sheep’s wool is valued because the clothing it makes is warm in cold weather, cool in warm weather and water resistant. Lambs are often born as twins. One sheep can supply up to 18 pounds of wool per year.

Shear Delight!

Supplies: Aluminum pie tins, blind folds, gloves/mittens, several bags of white cotton balls. Give each student a blindfold, glove and pie tin. Scatter the cotton balls on the floor of the Bible Station. Once blindfolds and gloves are in place, ask the students to pick up as many cotton balls as possible one at a time and place them in their pie tin. This is very difficult and they may not know when they have succeeded. Help them verbally when they have placed a few cotton balls in their container. Once all cotton balls have been picked up, let students take off blindfolds and count their cotton. Supply a special treat for all participating students. (Cotton Candy might be appropriate!) Option: Eliminate gloves for younger students.

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY



Print the verse on the side of a large, handmade poster board sheep. Before class, cut the sheep into puzzle parts. Tape the scrambled puzzle pieces on the wall. Students put the sheep puzzle together to reveal the verse. Repeat the words until everyone can say today’s memory verse.

**“I am the Good Shepherd;
I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”
John 10:14**



This is an important message from God's Word. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He knows each one of us personally. He will never allow us to get lost. He will search for us like a shepherd searches for a runaway lamb. He knows us by name!

**BIBLE STORY: THE GOOD SHEPHERD KNOWS ME!
THE LOST SHEEP!**



From John 10:1-6: Jesus was teaching His followers something about His relationship to those who believed in Him. They did not always understand His words but they knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that He loved them and knew their hearts.

TELL ME ABOUT BIBLE SHEPHERDS

There is no better loved picture of Jesus than the Good Shepherd. Judea was rough and stony. It made better pasture land than farming land. That is why the shepherd was so well known during Bible times.

Jesus often compared Himself to a shepherd: *He is the shepherd who will risk his life to save the one straying sheep (Matthew 18:12; Luke 15:4).*

He has pity on the people because they are like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34).

His disciples are his little flock (Luke 12:32). When he is stricken the sheep are scattered (Mark 14:27).

He is the shepherd of the souls of men (1 Peter 2:25), and the great shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20).

The shepherd was never off duty. The flocks needed constant care. There was so little grass that the sheep wandered and were herded together for safety. Sheep are not the smartest animals in God's creation and they always strayed away and got lost. They fell down steep banks and put their shepherd in danger.

Dangers included wild animals, especially wolves, and robbers ready to steal the sheep. Constant alertness, fearless courage and patient love for his flock were necessary qualities of the shepherd.



Israel's shepherd did things differently than shepherds in other countries. His equipment was simple. He had a **bag** in which he carried his food. He carried just bread, dried fruit, some olives and cheese.

He had a **sling**. All shepherds were very good with slings. One interesting use of it was important because there were no sheep dogs in Palestine. When he wished to call back a straying sheep, he put a stone into his sling and landed it just in front of the sheep's nose as a warning to turn back.

He had a **staff**, a short wooden club with a lump of wood at the end studded with nails. It had a leather thong so the shepherd could hang the staff from his belt. He defended himself and his flock.

A shepherd also had a **rod** which was like a crook. He could catch and pull back any sheep moving into trouble. At the end of the day the shepherd held his rod across the sheep fold entrance so every sheep passed under it and was examined to see if it had received injury during the day.

The shepherd had a close relationship with his sheep in Palestine. Other countries raised their sheep for meat but these shepherds raised sheep for their wool. Often the sheep were with the shepherd for years and they even had names like "brown leg" or "black ear". The shepherd went in front and his sheep followed. If the path was safe, the sheep could continue their journey.

One time some sheep were unwilling to cross a stream. The shepherd solved the problem by carrying one of the lambs across. When its mother saw her lamb on the other side she crossed too and soon the rest of the flock followed her.

The sheep know their shepherd's voice. They never answer to the voice of a stranger. He talks to them in a loud sing song voice using a weird language unlike any human language. The words are animal sounds that only those sheep understand. If a stranger tries to lead them away, he doesn't know the special shepherd language. The sheep hear the stranger call them, know it is not their shepherd and run away.



Every detail of the shepherd's life lights up the picture of the Good Shepherd (Jesus) whose sheep (people) hear his voice and whose constant care is for his flock (us).

From Matthew 18:12-14: Now we know why the story Jesus told about the lost sheep is so important. Let's tell it today to remind us of how Jesus knows us and keeps looking for us when we are lost.

Jesus wanted His disciples to know how important each person is. He said, *"If a shepherd has one hundred sheep and one goes astray, doesn't he leave the ninety nine safe sheep and go to search for the one that is lost? When he finds the lost sheep, he is happier over it than over the ninety nine who are safe in the sheepfold. In the same way your heavenly Father does not want to lose a single person from His kingdom."*

Jesus knows us so well that He knows we can foolishly wander away from His love and protection. Remember the story of the lost sheep and don't lose your way from Jesus who knows you and loves you very much.

CLOSE IN PRAYER. Dear Lord, thank You for knowing everything about me. Help me to understand Your words. Help me follow You as my Good Shepherd through every pasture of life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

CRAFT PROJECT

EASY LAMB CRAFT: www.dltk-kids.com/animals/melamb.html
Check out this web site for an easy to do cute little lamb project. Used with the youngest students, it becomes a wonderful keepsake completed by each child.

Supplies: Paper plate, glue, scissors, google eyes or make paper eyes with template, markers, ribbon (Pre made into large bows)



Spread glue all over the plate and cover it completely with cotton balls. The more cotton the fluffier the lamb face. Draw eyes or glue google eyes into place. Draw white paper ears and cut.

Glue bow at top of head. Let dry before taking home.

S&S ARTS AND CRAFTS AND GUILDCRAFT INC. ALSO HAVE WONDERFUL CRAFT KITS AVAILABLE. CHOOSE ONE PROJECT FROM OUR CURRICULUM LIST OR CHECK OUT THEIR LATEST CATALOG.

OR, CHOOSE ANOTHER CRAFT PROJECT THAT FITS THE SHEEP/PASTURE THEME FROM SUPPLIES ON HAND OR AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL CRAFT STORE.



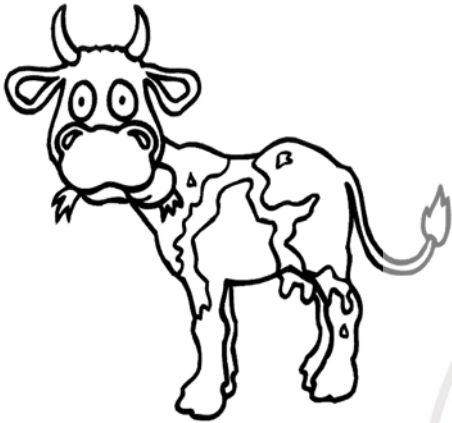
Meet Me In The Meadow!

100



BIBLE STATION #3:

MOOTOWN MOTEL
BOTTLE FEEDERS TO HAYFIELDS



*“I never saw a Purple Cow;
I never hope to see one;
But I can tell you, anyhow,
I’d rather see than be one!”
~ Frank Gelett Burgess*

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
NOT FOR USE
PLEASE PURCHASE

SPIRITUAL THEME

Grow in Jesus. Just as our bodies grow when we drink milk, our faith grows as we do things we know are necessary to stay close to Jesus. Reading the Bible, praying and going to church are crucial to our steady Christian growth. The Bible story reminds students of how Jesus grew into a fine young man.

DECORATION

MOOTOWN MOTEL is a place where calves grow into strong cattle. The Bible Station should resemble the inside of a barn where cattle stalls are lined up and cows relax and eat.

Barn Objects: Hay, buckets, wheel barrows, wood planking, lanterns, feeding trough, stacked wooden boxes, milk cans.

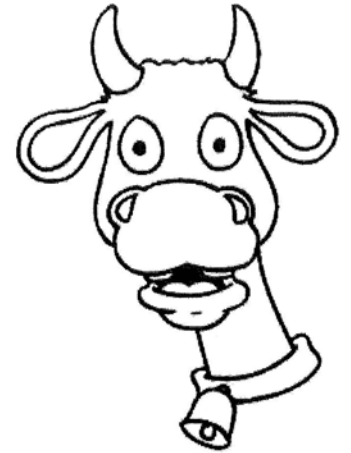
Signs: Here are a few suggested messages to print on the walls of the room. Print the words of today’s verse on a separate sign.

MOOTOWN MOTEL
GOT MILK?
HAVE YOU “HERD” THE GOOD NEWS?



HE OWNS THE CATTLE ON A THOUSAND HILLS ...I KNOW THAT HE WILL CARE FOR ME!

Cows: Enlarge the cow pictures included on these pages to make life sized cows from cardboard or posterboard. Place the completed cows along the walls of the Bible Station. Place a few cows in the hallway leading to the room.



COSTUME AND CHARACTER

Wear bib overalls, red neckerchief, straw hat and work boots. OR, get GOT MILK t shirts from your local dairy council. Become the friendly farmer telling students everything there is to know about calves and cows and especially about growing in Jesus.



WELCOME TO MOOTOWN MOTEL!

Consider exhibiting a calf or cow if one is available. Because of the large size, conduct WELCOME time outdoors where the farmer can easily display the animal with hay and milk. Only very calm, tame animals should be used and the owner must always be present.

Welcome to Mootown Motel! I know this is a strange name for my barn but it is a place of wonder and excitement as my animals come and go every day, mooing and giving milk, calmly plodding back into their private space.

We use the Mootown Motel on days when it is too cold for the cows to be in the pasture. They are more comfortable here at night knowing their food is provided and the farmer is nearby. The veterinarian comes to give medical attention when the cows are sick or need vaccinations. Calves are born here and begin their life in the comfort of their stall. Outside Mootown Motel is the big, wide world. The cows stroll to the pasture and to the milking parlor. To call the herd of cows to the barn, the farmer and helpers shout, "Come Boss! Come Bossy, Bossy!"



Calves are given special care. The calf receives nourishment twice a day. Milk is the only thing the baby has to grow on for the first two weeks. Each calf is kept in its own pen for ten weeks. Then it is placed in a penned in area with other calves to learn how to interact.

Dairy cows can give as much as five gallons of milk a day! That milk can be used to make cheese, butter or yogurt. Cows also provide manure that enriches the soil. Feeding milking cows is an art the farmer perfects. The cow must receive the perfect mix of feed to help them produce a lot of milk. If the mix is wrong, they do not produce milk. Cows are 98% water and need water to produce milk. Beef lovers know how good a hamburger or roast beef dinner tastes.

A heifer is a young female cow and the male cow is a bull. Heifers are lively and quick. Be careful...a heifer can get away from a farmer very quickly. Herd Bulls protect the herd from harm. Never get too close to a bull! They are aggressive and can attack trespassers.

Cows eat grasses, leaves and crop waste. They are sometimes kept in roomy pens where their farm families make sure they have plenty of food and water. This is known as **zero-grazing** and keeps cows from wandering into trouble or eating precious food crops. Much of the time cows graze in large pastures during good weather. Cows swallow and chew their food twice. They also have four stomachs.

Holstein cows, which are black and white, are the most common cows in America; hump backed Brahman cows, are usually gray, better suited for hot climates. There are many other types of cows: Guernsey-blackish brown, Hereford-reddish brown and white, Short Horn, Durbon, Sharloy, Jersey-brown, Ashshire-brown and white, Black Angus-black, Longhorn. In some countries, cattle are used to pull plows or heavy loads. A cow can have one calf each year. That can add up to a lot of cows!

In other countries cows are a sign of wealth. Moving cows to seasonal pasture and water has been a way of life for nomads since early times. Farmers in those lands can sell extra milk, butter, cheese or yogurt to provide a steady income. They sell calves to earn money too. Farmers plant special grasses and trees with leaves cows like to eat.



Let's see how much you know about cows. Take my cow quiz:

1. A group of cows is called a.....
2. Cows, bulls, steers, heifers, calves and oxen are all.....
3. Cows swallow and chew their food.....times.
4. Methane gas for cooking and lighting comes from cow.....
5. Why did the cow jump over the moon?

(Answers: 1. Herd 2.cattle 3.Two (they are ruminants who chew cud)
4. Manure 5. Who knows? I don't think cows really jump over the moon but it makes a great nursery rhyme!)

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Print today's verse on the sides of four plastic milk jugs. With a pointer, point to each word in the verse. Students repeat the verse until they can say it as a group. Reward the students with a small piece of chocolate or a brand of candy called "Cow Tails".

**As newborn babes,
desire the pure milk of the word,
that ye may grow by it.
I Peter 2:2**

This is an important message from God's Word. When we ask Jesus into our lives, we are like little babies drinking bottles of milk to grow. We must read God's Word, the Bible, in order to learn how to live for Jesus. Learn easy things first and as you grow, you will be ready to learn harder things.

BIBLE STORY: JESUS GREW IN WISDOM

From Luke 2:40-52: Not much is known about the boyhood of Jesus. We know that He grew up in a loving family in Nazareth. He learned the carpenter business from Joseph and He went to synagogue school at the age of twelve. There is only one story in the Bible about Jesus, the boy. It is about growing in knowledge and learning about God's Word.



In the synagogue school, Jesus learned how to read and write. He studied the Psalms and writings of Moses and the prophets. Like other Jewish boys, Jesus learned scripture verses by memory because no one had a Bible of his own. Girls were not allowed to go to school. They stayed home with their mothers to learn how to take care of a house and children.

One spring morning a group of Jewish families left Nazareth to travel seventy miles to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. Joseph and Mary went every year. This was the first year they took Jesus. As they traveled, people from other cities and villages joined them. At Jerusalem they met people from every part of the land. Jesus must have been excited to meet such exciting strangers and to see the marvelous sights of the Holy City.

Jesus understood that God was his Father and that he must work with God. Each day at the temple he listened to the chief priests and scribes and asked them questions. With every answered question, Jesus learned a little more about God's kingdom.. He was not afraid of these important teachers even though he was a young boy.

When the feast was over, the people from Nazareth started home. Mary didn't see Jesus but she thought he was walking with his cousins and friends. Joseph didn't see Jesus but he thought the boy was with Mary. Evening came and Mary and Joseph began to look for him. No one in the traveling group had seen him that day. Now his parents were worried. Where could he be? They returned to Jerusalem to look for him. On the third day they found him. He was not playing in the streets with young boys or learning to swim. Jesus was at the temple with the wise teachers, listening to them and asking questions.

Mary was angry as only a mother can be. Can you hear her tone of voice as she asks Jesus, "Son, why did you stay here when we were starting for home? Your father and I have been so worried! We have looked everywhere for you." Oh, oh, any kid who hears that knows he's in BIG trouble.



Jesus calmly answered, "Why did you look for me? Didn't you know that I would be at my Father's house?" Mary did not understand. What did Jesus mean? Jesus surprised the teachers at the temple. He asked questions they could not answer.

The Bible says that Jesus grew to be a wonderful young man. He could explain the scriptures and prayed with his Heavenly Father. By helping Joseph, Jesus learned to be a carpenter. This was good because when Joseph died, Jesus took care of Mary and his younger brothers and sisters. His kind, thoughtful ways won him many friends. Jesus lived in Nazareth until he was about thirty years old.

MOOTOWN MOTEL LESSONS

We don't grow exactly like cows but let's take a look at a cow's life to see how it matures. Then, let's see how a Christian's life matures and compares to it.

MOOTOWN MOTEL CALVES: Babies live in separate areas and are bottle fed milk. When we become Christians, we learn the basics of our faith. We hear Bible stories again and again until they become part of us.

GATHERING PENS: When calves are introduced to each other, they live side by side in a small pen. This helps them learn how to get along with each other. Christians meet in Sunday School and keep growing in God's Word.

PASTURES: Soon it is time for the cows to be turned loose to grow and mature. Pastures are filled with green grass, cool water and shady trees. Dangers also lurk around pasture corners. Christians begin to take leadership roles in church. Small jobs come at first and then more responsibility to the group. Dangers lurk in the church too. Not every Christian is loving and kind as they grow in their faith. This means we must learn to be patient and kind when it is hard to do so.



DRY COW LOTS: This is a comfortable area where cows go to relax before they freshen (give birth). It is at this time that cows begin to give milk. It is refreshing for Christians to have a place where they can pray and read God's Word. Find a place like that in your home. Growing in the Lord means taking time to relax with Him.

MAIN MILKING HERD: Soon the cows join the main milk producers on the farm. They are now ready to produce their own milk to feed the others. There comes a time in a Christian's life when it is time to tell others what they have learned. Teach others, give time and money, study, pray, be faithful, serve others. It is prime time faith.

CULL YARD: When a cow is nearing the end of life, she is tired and is not producing. The farmer culls (removes) her from the main milking herd. Soon she is put down as a non producer. Sad, yes, but every life has an ending. Christians grow tired too. God never lets us go. When older Christians become sick, they still have work to do. As long as breath remains, Christians can pray. No one is too old to learn from God's Word. Until the day a Christian dies, he keeps growing in the Lord.

CLOSE IN PRAYER. Dear Lord, Help me grow in You. Wherever I am, whatever I do, never let me forget how much You want me to be part of Your church. Thank you for being my caring Heavenly Father. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

MOOTOWN MOTEL HOMEMADE CRAFT IDEAS:

COW EGGS/COW SEEDS

These are silly crafts that country crafters have made for years. Cows don't come from eggs or seeds but....what if..... You may desire to print the scripture verse and place it with the completed projects.

Supplies for Cow Eggs: One blown egg for each student (or more—depending upon time and how many you want students to make), acrylic paint (white, black), acrylic spray sealer, paint brush, water in small cup, straw in small paper cup.



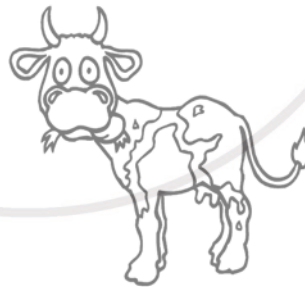
Students base paint their egg white. Thin coats dry quickly. When dry, paint black cow markings all over the eggs. Place the egg in a small bed of straw or purchased Easter grass.

Supplies for Cow Seeds: Handful of dry lima beans for each student, acrylic paint (white, black), acrylic spray sealer, paint brush, water in small cup, plastic sandwich bag.

Students base paint their seeds white. Thin coats dry quickly. When dry, paint black cow markings all over the seeds. Place finished/dry seeds in a plastic sandwich bag.

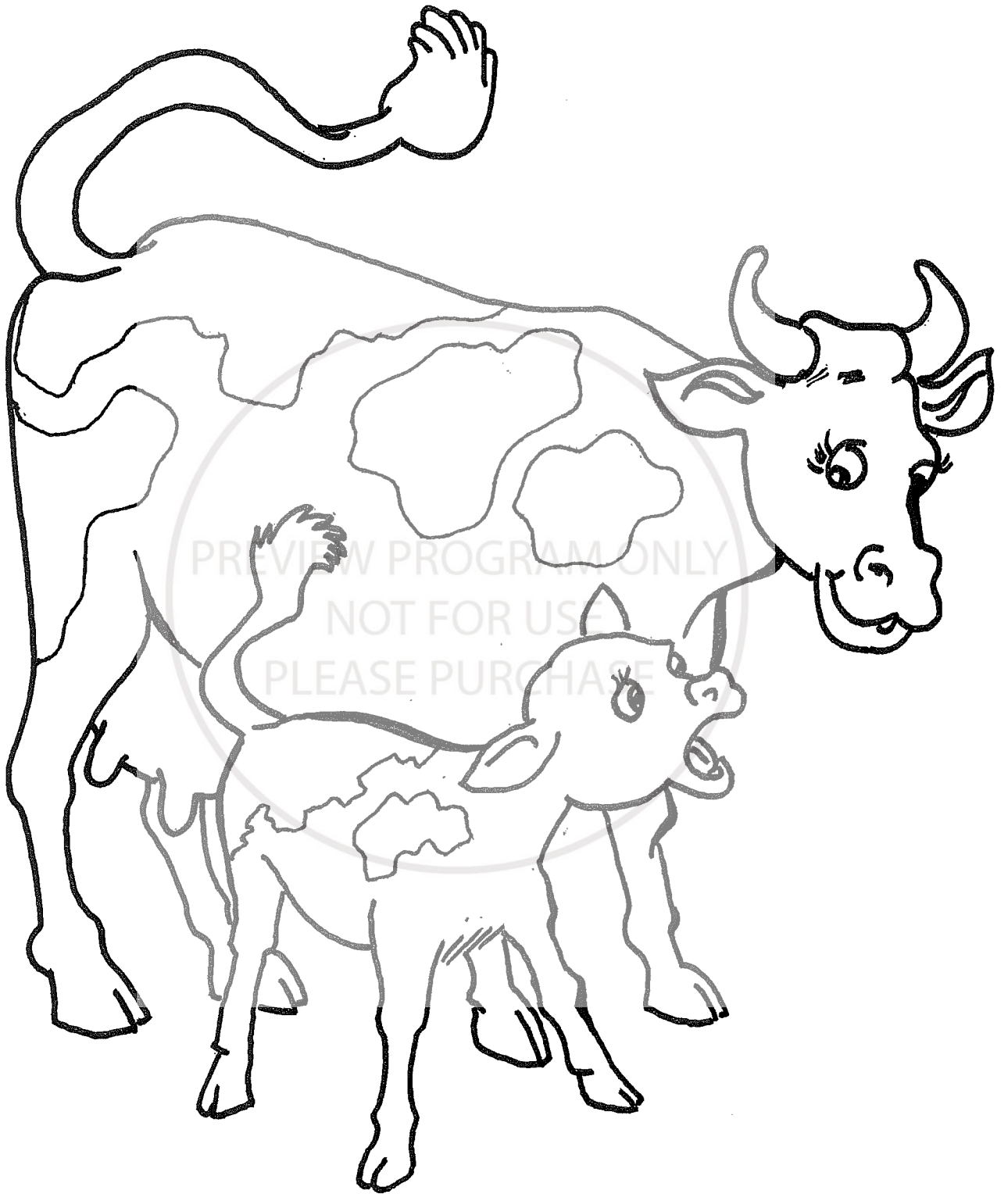
THERE ARE CRAFT PROJECTS AVAILABLE THROUGH S&S ARTS AND CRAFTS CATALOG. CHOOSE ONE PROJECT THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR ALL STUDENTS.

*“All the really good ideas
I ever had came to me while
I was milking a cow.”*
~ Grant Wood

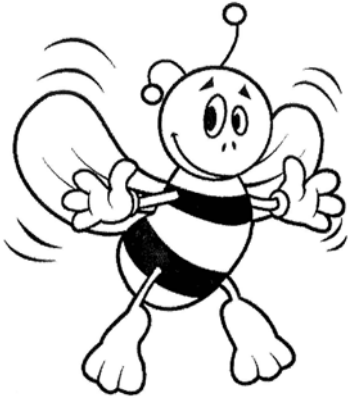


*“When a cow laughs,
does milk come out her nose?”*
~ Some Kid With Nothing Better To Do





BIBLE STATION #4:



COOL HIVE To Bee Or Not To Bee!

"If you let the bee be, the bee will let you be."

SPIRITUAL THEME

Serve Jesus! Using the Cool Hive honeybee theme, talk about how the beekeeper serves the Lord by providing bees with all they need to produce sweet honey. Use the Bible story of the Sower to explain how we spread the Good News about Jesus to everyone we meet!

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY

DECORATION: ACRES OF MILK AND HONEY

Fill the room with plants and flowers along the walls. Some wild flowers can be real, picked from nearby fields. Some can be silk flowers and some can be oversized construction paper flowers attached to the wall with long blades of paper grass and paper leaves.

Use our patterns (or design your own) to make as many paper bees as possible to attach to walls. Bees should cover all walls. In between the bees, attach small paper signs with fun bee phrases: BUSY AS A BEE, YOU'RE THE BEES KNEES, IS THERE A BEE IN YOUR BONNET?, MAKE A BEELINE, BEEHIVE OF ACTIVITY, LIKE HONEY TO A BEE, NONE OF YOUR BEESWAX!, STING LIKE A BEE, DON'T WORRY~BEE HAPPY, TO BEE OR NOT TO BEE, BEE HAPPY, WHAT'S ALL THE BUZZ?, BEE OF GOOD CHEER, BEE MY HONEY, BEE MINE, BEE-LIEVE, GOT BEES?

Some paper bees can appear 3D by curling half a chenille rod (pipe cleaner) around a pencil (remove pencil). Attach to a 3 x 5 card which will be taped to wall and the other end to the bee which makes it pop off the wall and bounce in the breeze.



Make a beehive using a simple wooden box painted white, sitting on another box. It looks impressive as the only standing prop in the middle of the room.

You are indeed fortunate if you have one or more beekeepers in your area willing to lend specific equipment like a smoker, beekeeper's outfit or other items. Ask! You never know.

They may 'lend' themselves to talk to each small group!

COSTUME AND CHARACTER: BEE WHISPERER

Who wouldn't love to become the friendly beekeeper who understands the life of a bee? Wear an all white outfit to resemble a beekeepers outfit. Wear a large hat covering face with white netting. Wear white work gloves.

WELCOME TO THE COOL HIVE!

Welcome to Cool Bee Hive! I guess you could say I'm **BUSY AS A BEE!** Today the hive is buzzing with lots of things to do and learn. Our little bees have been busy learning how God wants them to serve Him and I'm so glad you decided to visit. So buzz on down and see what's going on in the Cool Hive!



Know Your Beeswax!

I bet you don't know that a colony of honeybees live together as a family inside the hive. There are three kinds of family members. The most important bee is the mother who is called the **QUEEN BEE!** She doesn't wear a crown but she lays about 1500 eggs per day if there are enough workers to help take care of the baby bees. Without the Queen Bee, the hive would soon die.

WORKER BEES are all girl bees. They take care of the baby bees. They clean and guard the hive, build honeycomb, care for the Queen and gather nectar and pollen from the flowers. Worker bees can be seen traveling back and forth from the hive all day.



DRONES are boy bees who gather in special areas looking for young queens. They don't live long, get kicked out of the hive (*evidently the young queens are NOT impressed with them*) and cannot sting so they get attacked by birds, toads or skunks which love to eat bees. That's kind of sad but that's the system God created for them as they serve their hive.

BEE FACTS FOR KIDS: Here are a few interesting facts kids might enjoy learning if time allows.

1. The queen bee can live up to five years.
2. The bee's wings stroke really fast—about 200 beats per second and the buzz you hear is the sound of their fast wings.
3. It is the only insect that makes food eaten by people.
4. Honey is the only food containing everything a person needs to live—vitamins, minerals and water AND an antioxidant connected with improved brain power!
5. The worker bee makes about 1/12th teaspoon of honey in her lifetime. Not much!
6. A bee visits 50 to 100 flowers during a nectar/pollen collection trip.

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SERVE A PLATE OF SMALL SQUARES OF BREAD TOPPED WITH HONEY.

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Print the memory verse on separate paper leaves. Place the leaves on the wall and ask student to repeat the words until they can say it as a group. Reward the students with a small prize (sticker, candy).

**Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before Him with joyful singing.
Psalm 100:2**

www.zazzle.com offers a large selection of bee stickers. Purchase stickers so students can win one to wear for the day when they can say their memory verse. Stick it to their shirt!



Today's verse is an important message. Some things in God's Word we don't understand but this is not one of them. Serve the Lord gladly! Does it say anything about how others look at us or respond to the Lord? No. Our job is to serve gladly and come before Him with joyful singing. Being a servant is a happy job when we are serving God!

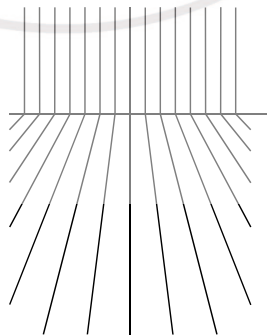
BIBLE STORY: THE SERVANT FARMER

Bees serve each other gladly. Every bee has a specific job in the hive. Some keep it cool, others babysit, some gather food and together they make a life that benefits them and people too. Farmers are like that. A good farmer plants seed every spring. Because the seed grows in the ground, a harvest appears in the fall and everyone gets to enjoy what the servant farmer has done.

From Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20: Huge crowds followed Jesus and His friends along the beach thinking He was leaving their city. They crowded so close, Jesus had to get into a small boat to teach them. Jesus loved to tell 'earthly stories with a heavenly meaning'. (Parable)

JUST FOR FUN! *Seat the group single file in even rows on the floor. Tell them you are going to plant seeds in their field. They are not to touch anything, even if it falls in their lap or is close until you give permission. Plant Hershey Kisses or other small candy by tossing handfuls into the group. Be sure some candy falls into the laps of students, some lands beside them and other candy lands out of reach. This activity serves as a powerful visual as you tell the story of the Servant Farmer sowing seeds.*

Jesus said, "One day a farmer and went to his field. He across the field seed. **(Scatter candy as group. Nobody moves!)** breeze scattered it. road. When the birds down and ate them. places and began to shallow and the plants withered and died. Some seeds fell in thorny places. The thorns grew fast and choked out the good seed.



farmer took a bag of grain walked back and forth scattering handfuls of **you walk through the** As the grain fell, the Some seeds blew onto the saw the seeds, they flew Other seeds fell on stony grow but the soil was shallow and the plants withered and died. Some seeds fell in thorny places. The thorns grew fast and choked out the good seed.



Not all the seeds were wasted. Many seeds fell on good ground. They sprouted and sent their roots into the rich soil. Soon they grew into stalks of grain. The stalks produced many more seeds than were first scattered on the ground. Some fields produced thirty times more, others sixty times and some even one hundred times more."

Jesus' disciples were puzzled. They wondered why Jesus was telling simple stories when He should be preaching serious sermons. When they got into the boat, they asked, "Why are you teaching the people with parables—simple stories?"

Jesus said, "I know you will try to figure out what the story means. Others will not try to figure out the meaning because their hearts are not open to God's message." Jesus must have smiled as He explained the farmer's story to friends who were eager to hear and understand!

**Point to the candy around the students
as you explain the Heavenly meaning of Jesus' story.**

Jesus said the farmer is the person who talks about God. He's a servant, gladly working for the Lord, spreading good news to everyone he meets. The different kinds of dirt represent the way people act when they hear God's message.

ROAD SIDE: People who hear about Jesus but do not try to understand it are like the roadside where the seeds fell. Just as the birds flew down and ate the seeds, Satan grabs the good news and carries it away. People forget the message they have heard.

STONY GROUND: People who listen and get excited about God but do not obey God are like the stony places. The seeds fell but did not grow because they could not put their roots in the stony soil.

THORNY GROUND: Some people believe God's Word in their hearts but when trouble, money or pleasure come along, God's message is crowded out like the dirt where the thorns choked out the good seeds.



GOOD GROUND: Those who hear and obey God’s Word are like the good ground. The seeds fell, sprouted, grew into stalks and produced much grain.

(Allow the group to choose several pieces of candy to eat as they remain seated in their fields. If the candy is too far away, they are not allowed to reach or cheat to get the candy. Only candy that is close to them may be eaten.)

COOL HIVE LESSONS: HOW TO SERVE JESUS

There is a company Hinckley’s Nine Be’s where Bee items are available using these themes. Check out their website: www.cafepress.com You’ll be glad you did!

Print the theme phrases on paper bees.

Point to them as you discuss ways to ‘bee’ a servant of Jesus today.

Just like honey bees in their cool hive, we can become people who serve Jesus. It is fun and easy to be a servant. Let’s pick a few ways:

BEE GRATEFUL: What does ‘grateful’ mean? Thankful. Instead of being grumpy about what you don’t have, practice being grateful for what God has given you.

BEE SMART: Too many kids follow bad advice given by other kids who want to get them in trouble. It’s time to be smart. Study hard in school, know right from wrong. Always choose to do the right thing.

BEE INVOLVED: Anyone can be a ‘lazy bugger’. It takes a special person to serve Jesus by being involved in lots of good things around town. Find activities that help people young and old. Clean up wherever you walk, join good groups like Boy/Girl Scouts, Sunday School, school bands, clubs. Be involved. Don’t be someone who sits at home watching TV all day!

BEE CLEAN: Do I need to remind you to be a clean, scrubbed person? No one wants to be around someone who forgets to brush their teeth or wash their hair! It’s time to serve the Lord by being a clean person folks enjoy.



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BEE TRUE: Have you ever known a person who is a liar? No fun, huh? You never know if you can trust that person. You be a person of truth. Let your true word speak for you at all times.

BEE POSITIVE: “Boo Hoo, I’ve had such a terrible day.” All of us have bad days and sad times. Whenever possible, be an upbeat, happy servant of Jesus. People will enjoy being around you.

BEE HUMBLE: Don’t brag on yourself. If someone gives you a compliment, a simple ‘thank you’ is good enough. Braggers get boring after while because they are only interested in themselves. A servant of Jesus is interested in other people.

BEE STILL: ‘Talk, talk, talk. Yak, yak, yak.’ It’s fun to talk but there are times when God can only speak to you, His servant, when you are quiet. The Bible says, “Be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10

BEE PRAYERFUL: Did I mention that servants of Jesus take time to talk to Him? He set up a great system of communication—better than a computer or cell phone! It’s called prayer. 24/7 we can connect to our Heavenly Father. Do it! Be a servant who prays.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Dear Lord, Make us servants who plant seeds of Your love wherever we are. Help us know and understand that our job as Your servant is to spread the good news about Jesus and let the people we serve choose how they will respond. Let us learn from the honey bees who live in Cool Hives that when we live as a family, we will gather more and more people to love you using words as sweet as honey. Amen.



COOL HIVE CRAFT PROJECT



CRAFT PROJECTS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH S&S ARTS AND CRAFTS. CHECK OUT THEIR WEB SITE! www.sswv.com CHOOSE ONE PROJECT STUDENTS OF ALL AGES CAN COMPLETE. *(Prices may change.)*

Bumblebee Kit (Makes 12): They'll all be buzzing about this project! Includes card stock bee bodies, chenille stems, black velvet paper strips, white velum wings, instructions. GP1800 \$16.99 per pack

Foam Bee Thermometer Craft Kit (Makes 12): You Better Bee-lieve it really tells the temperature! Includes assorted foam pieces, small thermometer, instructions. 7" x 7". CE4501 \$9.49 per pack

Velvet Bee Mobile (Makes 12): This fun to feel busy bee is ready to assemble, hang and enjoy! 17" x 5 1/4". Includes velvet chipboard pieces and string. PS1344 \$19.29 per pack

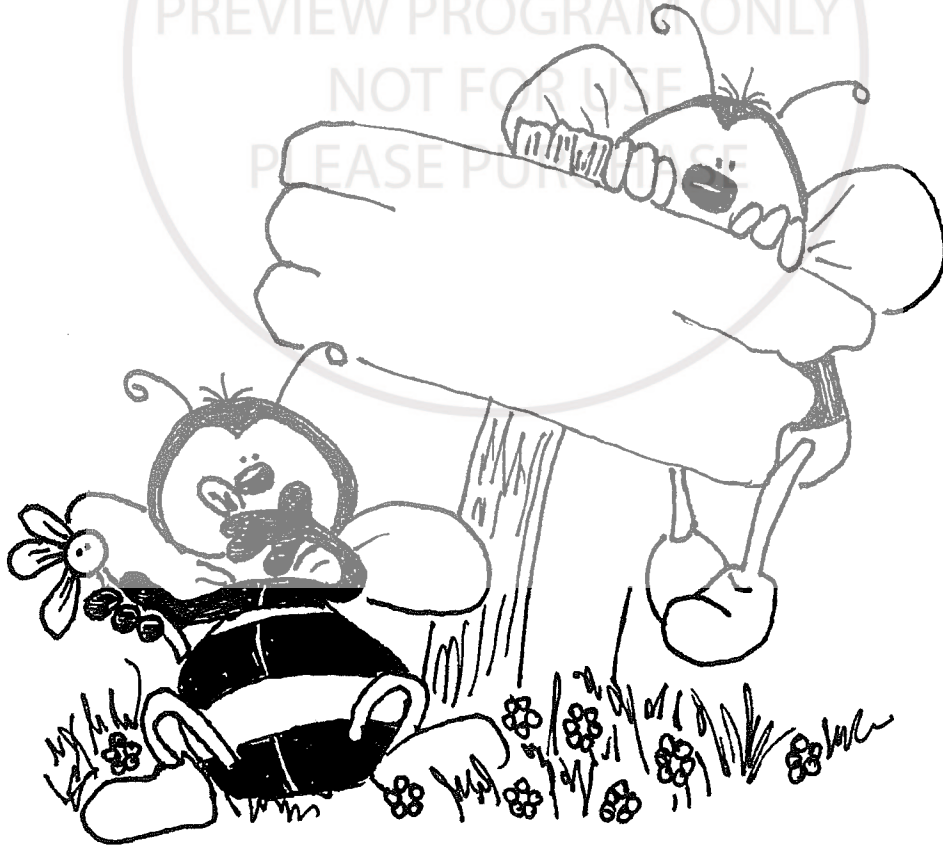
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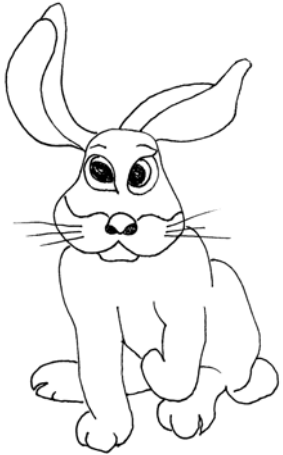


BIBLE STATION #5:

**RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY
IN THE HUTCHES!**

“Oh my ears and whiskers!”

~ White Rabbit from ‘Alice In Wonderland’



SPIRITUAL THEME

A believer's joyful job is to tell others about Jesus. Use the fun rabbit hutch theme to help students discover how easy it is to share their faith with friends and family.

DECORATION: IN THE HUTCHES!

Fill the area with rabbits. Copy patterns onto transparencies and enlarge them separately onto cardboard, posterboard or newsprint. Paint with bright colors. Not all rabbits have to be white. Consider designing oversized fantasy rabbits in purple, green, pink, yellow and red. Add big, puffy cotton tails. Place stuffed bunnies all over the room. If featuring live bunnies, owners must be present.

Hutches: Stack cages one on top of another along one wall. The hutches can be made from cardboard boxes stacked with the openings facing forward. To make the cardboard hutches a little more realistic, attach chicken wire to the openings. Fill each hutch with a layer of straw and a small bowl for rabbit food.

Rabbits: Gather as many toy rabbits as possible to place in the cardboard box hutches. If none can be borrowed, make stuffed bunnies from fabric store patterns. Copy the curriculum patterns to make paper wall rabbits.

Carrots: Decorate with real bunches of carrots and oversized drawings of carrots.

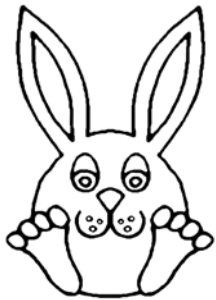


Signs: Print these messages on the sides of carrot drawings and place on the walls of the room. Print the words of today's verse on a separate sign.

**RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY
EVERY BUNNY LOVES JESUS
JESUS LOVES EVERY BUNNY
EAT CHICKEN!
RABBIT HOLE
LIFE IN THE HUTCHES**

COSTUME AND CHARACTER

Dress as a farmer. Wear bib overalls, red neckerchief, straw hat and work boots. Become the friendly farmer telling students how to share their faith. Just for fun, make or rent a bunny costume. Ask a teen helper to become the Bible Workshop's mascot. The bunny accompanies student groups to their various activities and assists with the craft project.



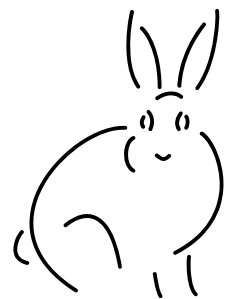
WELCOME !

Consider exhibiting a live bunny—or bunnies. Keep the bunnies safe in a real cage with food, water and a little hay. The owner must be present.

**OFFER CARROT STICK SNACKS AS STUDENTS
FIND THEIR SEATS ON THE FLOOR.**

Welcome to Rabbitat for Haremanity! Of course you have heard of the famous house building volunteer group who call themselves Habitat for Humanity. They make homes for people.

I make homes for rabbits. My rabbits are the best rabbits in the world. They make great pets because most of them are gentle and can be house broken like a cat. They are beautiful. Rabbits also taste good in a stew called 'Hassenpfeffer' but we won't dwell on that!



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I can expect four litters of baby rabbits each year. A litter can include eight to ten babies. That means I can expect as many as 30 babies each year. Rabbits are raised in spacious, shady cages called hutches and the doe (mother rabbit) makes her nest in straw or in a box.

Rabbits must nibble their food to keep their two front teeth short since those teeth never stop growing! Rabbits don't require a lot of space to grow like the larger animals on GOOD NEWS FARM. I can raise them next to the house or even on the back porch! Rabbits eat vegetable waste but their favorite treats are carrots—lots of carrots. I have to be careful not to let them escape from their hutches. They head for the vegetable garden every time. I guess their mothers have impressed upon them the importance of eating their veggies.

Let's see how much you know about rabbits. Take my bunny quiz:

1. A male rabbit is a buck, a female is a doe and a baby rabbit is a....
2. Rabbits are ready for market at.....months.
3. The longer the ears, the better the rabbit: True or False?
4. Rabbits front teeth never stop growing: True or False?
5. Which rabbit kept sneaking into Mr. McGregor's Garden?

(Answers: 1. Kit 2. Six 3. True, because they help keep the rabbit cool 4. True 5. Peter Rabbit)

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Print today's verse on the sides of several large paper bunnies. With a pointer, point to each word in the verse. Students repeat the verse until they can say it as a group. Reward the students with a carrot stick.



**Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,
and you shall be saved....
Acts 16:31**



This is the MOST important message from God's Word. Believers tell the good news of Jesus to everyone we meet. What is the good news? Check out today's verse and you will know exactly what to tell everyone you meet.

Lots of times when you tell people 'you shall be saved' they say 'Saved from what'? That is a very good question. Jesus knows that when sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden, people became separated from God. God cannot stand being in the presence of sin. If someone asks what they will be saved from, tell them God wants them in His forever family and they will be saved from separation from Him forever. Isn't that a great answer?

BIBLE STORY:

JAIL HOUSE ROCK

From Acts 16:23-24: The best thing rabbits do is multiply! Before I know it, my hutches are filled with nose twitching, long eared baby bunnies who grow up to have baby bunnies of their own.

Telling the good news of Jesus is a lot like multiplying bunnies. When we tell others, they tell others and soon there are lots of Christians where only one stood a short time ago.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news." Isaiah 52:7

Paul and Silas were mighty missionaries. They told everyone they met about Jesus which got them into trouble. One day they angered people in the city of Philippi who dragged them off to prison. Their crime was helping an unhappy slave girl and causing a loss of money to her masters.

Paul and Silas sat in a dark, inner prison with their feet in stocks. They had been hit hard. Their backs hurt and they didn't know what would happen to them. Did they complain? No! Instead they talked to each other about God and His great love. At midnight they prayed and sang praises to God. The other prisoners heard the prayers and the songs. They didn't understand how these two men could be happy after a beating and imprisonment.



Suddenly a great earthquake shook the prison. The locked doors swung open. Even the stocks on Paul and Silas' feet came apart. The jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open. He knew the leaders would kill him if even one man escaped. He thought all the prisoners were gone so he drew his sword to kill himself.

Paul shouted, "Do not hurt yourself! We are all here." The jailer rushed into the prison and saw all the prisoners, including Paul and Silas. The jailer knew Paul and Silas were not dangerous men. They had to be men of God as he had heard. He fell at their feet, crying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." (Hey! That's our memory verse today!) Everyone in the prison heard about Jesus Christ, the Savior of men.

The jailer believed and his heart was so full of joy that he took Paul and Silas to his house, washed their wounds and bandaged their backs. He brought food for them and treated them like guests. By morning, Paul and Silas baptized the jailer and his household. Together they rejoiced in the Lord. In the morning, the officials sent word to the jailer, "Let those men go!"

And the rest of the story....Years later Paul wrote a letter to the believers in Philippi. That letter is in your Bible. It is called Philippians. Because of the faithfulness of Paul and Silas, many people in that town became believers in Jesus.

RABBITAT FOR HAREMANITY LESSONS

This exciting story about two men who were willing to tell everyone about Jesus is a good lesson for us. Let's take a look at brave Paul.

1. PAUL REJOICED! Paul could sing hymns when he was locked in the inner prison at midnight. The one thing you can never take away from a Christian is God and the presence of Jesus Christ. With God there is freedom even in a prison and even at midnight there is light.



2. PAUL WITNESSED! Paul was willing to tell the jailer about salvation even when the jailer had shut the door of the prison on him. There was never a grudge in Paul's nature. He could preach to the very man who had locked him in jail.

3. PAUL WAS BRAVE! Paul stood bravely for Jesus Christ. Paul was a Roman citizen and he could have gotten the rulers in trouble because they whipped a Roman citizen. He did not stand brave for his own sake but for the sake of the Christians he was leaving behind in Philippi. He wanted them to live safely and spread the gospel to all their neighbors and friends.

Paul was quite a guy! He multiplied Christians wherever he went. We can learn a lot about being good "Jesus Tellers" today by hearing the stories of Paul, the first missionary.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Dear Lord, help us to be believers who tell the good news about Jesus wherever we go. Give us the courage of Paul and Silas. Help us understand the message of salvation so that others can "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

HOMEMADE CRAFT IDEA:

BUNNY COOKIES

Supplies: One or two bunny shaped sugar cookies per student. A variety of colored frostings, gumdrops, sprinkles, string licorice and other edible decorating items, plastic knives, sandwich bags, paper towels.

Use cookie cutters to make bunny shaped sugar cookies before Vacation Bible School begins. Make enough so that each student can decorate one or two cookies. This will not be a permanent craft to take home but it will be enjoyable for the moment. If the cookies are to be packaged, slide them into plastic sandwich bags and attach the student names to their bag. Hand out the finished cookie at the closing for take home.



THERE ARE MANY CRAFT PROJECT IDEAS IN S&S ARTS AND CRAFTS CATALOG. USE THE CURRICULUM IDEAS OR FIND A PROJECT THAT CAN BE COMPLETED IN 15-20 MINUTES. (Prices may change.)

FLOWER POT BUNNY CRAFT KIT (Makes 24): This finished project can be used to hold candy, eggs or other goodies. Includes plastic flower pots, pompons, wiggly eyes, chenille stems, non toxic glue, crepe paper, instructions ('grass' not included) 2 ½" diameter pot.

SH191 \$22.99 per pack

NOTES:

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HONEY BEE NURSERY



WHO SHOULD COME TO THE HONEY BEE NURSERY?

Invite youngsters Birth through Age Three who are children of teachers. Decide whether to open the nursery to the public or keep it private. GOOD NEWS FARM is not designed for students under four years old. These little ones do not respond well to high activity so loved by older students.

HOW MANY HELPERS SHOULD WE ASK TO HELP IN THE NURSERY?

Ideally, one helper per baby in charge of all care for that infant from bottles to changing diapers. If that is not possible, ask one adult and a variety of assistants to watch the children. This staff may change from day to day.

SHOULD WE PLAN ACTIVITIES ?

The nursery is a babysitting service but tell a few stories, sing some songs, play tapes and videos, give wagon rides and take walks. Decide how much to do by the ages of the children.

SHOULD WE FEED CHILDREN IN THE NURSERY?

Ask the parents. They may want to provide snacks from home. If you do feed toddlers, be sure the food is safe and healthful. (WARNING: NO POPCORN, HOT DOGS, LOLLIPOPS OR HARD CANDY WHICH COULD GET CAUGHT IN A TINY THROAT.)

HOW SHOULD WE DRESS?

Wear washable clothing and shows that are low and comfortable. The key to being happy in the nursery is to be comfortable. Theme costuming is not necessary.

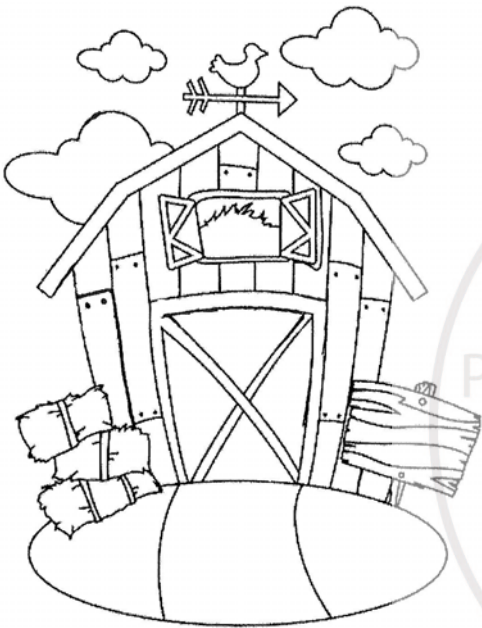
WHAT SHOULD WE BRING?

Bring Christian tapes. Play music at a low, non threatening volume. Bring a small fan if days are hot and humid. Place the fan away from children—preferably on a shelf or high table.



PRESCHOOL TATER TOTS ROCK!

I Love Tater Tots!



Include five year old pre-K students or allow them to become part of the kindergarten group.

OPTION: If your preschool students are fun loving, active and mature, include them as one of the major groups and eliminate the preschool grouping.

It has been a pleasure to discover preschool children adapt to normal activities with very little adjustment.

Essential modification involves simplifying Bible Stations. Adapt early in the planning phase. Save staffing for other areas while enjoying a fun day with the preschool gang.

THEME

TATER TOTS study the same spiritual themes as older students. Each day's activities emphasize what older students are learning but with a preschool teaching team.

Use the curriculum as a guide but provide plenty of time for rest, play and simple crafting. At no time feel pressured to move students to activities if they are crying or upset. Cancel your appearance in favor of free play time if the group needs to rest or calm down.



TEACHERS

Staff one helper for every two-three TATER TOTS. Parental help is welcomed. Wear comfortable clothing. Make each day fun and relaxing. Students should be able to chatter and sing without being reprimanded. However, run away children or rudeness must not be tolerated. Gentle, cheerful 're-direction' usually works quickly.

HOME BASE

Prepare one room where optional preschool stories, crafts, play and rest take place. Offer this separate space for criers and other young students who need privacy during the day.

CRIERS

Preschool children are unpredictable. If a few children continually cry, keep them busy separately with play and coloring in the home base area. Movement around the building may be threatening for some young students.

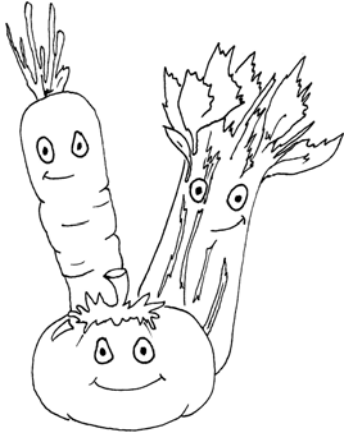
If one or two children never calm down, it may be necessary to ask a parent to stay with their child or take them home and try again next year.

While we want to accommodate as many young students as possible, crying and temper tantrums discourage teachers, helpers and students. It could be the child is just too young and will do better at a later time.

Notes:



PLANNING A TATER TOTS DAY



Two hours + is a long time for preschool students. Plan the day around lots of play time. Bring balls, balloons, bubbles and other toys to play indoors or outdoors.

Purchase small story books from the local Christian book store. Use these books as fill in teaching times.

Travel with the students to all areas of GOOD NEWS FARM. If your students tire easily, omit some activities. They do not have to participate in everything.

NATURE WALK

This may be the highlight of each day and should be inserted when a 15 minute activity is not appropriate for the preschool student. When taking a walk, go with a nature bracelet. Put a band of duct tape (sticky side out) around each child's wrist. As children walk, let them pick up leaves, sticks and flowers and stick them to their bracelet. Upon return, discuss the treasures they found. Talk about how our loving God made everything for our enjoyment.

THE FRONT PORCH OPENING

TATER TOTS participate in the opening if they can sit still, sing and respond. This is an opportunity to organize name tags and gather the group before the day begins. If there are criers, ask a helper to take them to home base to color. This avoids chaos and distraction for the older students.

SUNFLOWER SONGS

Encourage preschoolers to participate in music time. Take the students to the music area and stay with them fifteen minutes each day.



PICKET FENCE GARDEN

This is a special theme activity where the students decorate one picket to be added to a picket fence created by the entire student body. It is a special spot where the students hear about salvation.

UDDER DELIGHT DAIRY BAR

Take students to the daily fifteen minute snack bar. Sit with them. Use this time as a bathroom and hand washing break.

CAKLEBERRY CORNER STORY TELLER

This is a continuing story time. If you think your students can sit quietly for fifteen minutes, take them. The suggested story is a Chip and Clare Conley farm adventure called "The Box Maker". It is NOT written for their age. An option may be to purchase five short (2-3 minute) stories to tell your group at home base or show short videos. You decide!

BIBLE STATIONS

Rather than trying to duplicate Bible Station decorations, take your students to one station each day for Bible time. Tell the Bible Station teacher you will use their room for fifteen minutes when their class is not in session. Use the props available in each area to tell the Bible story. Use copies of each Bible Station lesson plan as designed for older students. Activity suggestions may be used or not used at the discretion of your staff. Simplify each Bible story as needed.

THE FUNNY FARM

Take students to daily recreation. There are many games these young children will be able to play. If you feel more comfortable, plan separate recreation for your small ones and create your own games.

REST TIME

Allow time for unstructured play and rest. Darken the room, play a tape of Christian music or listen to a taped story while encouraging quiet activity.



CRAFTS

The perfect preschool craft is one which can be completed by the student with a minimum of teacher help. Provide coloring pictures and crayons for slow times. Modeling clay or Play Doh should be available. Stringing large beads is a favorite activity.

Purchase one craft project for each day. Keep the process simple and everyone will enjoy the experience. S&S arts and crafts catalog offers many projects for the preschool student. (S&S prices could change.) Local craft stores may have ideas for projects.

Notes:

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