

Step up, stand out



Bible verses:

Luke 2:22-40

Jesus is presented in the Temple



Aim:

To understand that God keeps his promises and is faithful



Today's fruit:

Faithfulness

COVENANT SUNDAY



Today's story is packed full of promises.

We meet two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, who obeyed God throughout their lives. God promised them that they would meet the coming Messiah – and he kept that promise. We also see Mary and Joseph obediently taking Jesus to the Temple just as God commanded. As we celebrate Covenant Sunday the children will have an opportunity to think about how they can 'step up, stand out' for Jesus.

Simeon and Anna faithfully served God throughout their lives, and God showed his faithfulness when he kept his promise that they would meet the coming Messiah, who was Jesus.

Each child will need:

- A4 paper/card, pens/pencils and glue
- Paint and clean-up wipes / towels (optional) – see Action it
- **All-age accessible Covenant Sunday card**
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- Today's fruit sign: *Faithfulness*
- *Bible promises* handout, a few copies cut up so children can choose their favourite verse



Start it

Today's session is all about stepping up and standing out. Ask the children to guess the Disney/

Pixar character from a picture of their feet. This clip is 8 minutes 45 seconds long so it can be used in different ways.

- Play the clip as the children arrive, and hopefully by the end they will all have settled down and joined in the quiz.
- Use the first 1-20 questions and complete the quiz together.

The answers are provided below so that you can help the children with clues if needed. Not all of them may be familiar!

Video

Can you guess the Disney character by the feet? by Disney Quizzy (8:45)

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Cinderella | 11. Flynn Rider | 21. Vanellope |
| 2. Stitch | 12. Princess Jasmine | 22. Sully |
| 3. Buzz Lightyear | 13. Goofy | 23. Mr Incredible |
| 4. Gaston | 14. Captain Hook | 24. Hercules |
| 5. Minnie Mouse | 15. Woody | 25. Mushu |
| 6. Tarzan | 16. Ember | 26. Donald Duck |
| 7. Cruella de Vil | 17. Moana | 27. Kristoff |
| 8. Jiminy Cricket | 18. Quasimodo | 28. Winnie the Pooh |
| 9. Peter Pan | 19. Russell | 29. Pocahontas |
| 10. Mirabel | 20. Judy Hopps | 30. Li Shang |

Sing it

Say:

In our story today we see lots of examples of people trusting in God and his faithfulness. Our memory verse for this month reminds us of what it means to have faith in God. Let's share it together.

Memory verse

'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.'

(Hebrews 11:1 NIV)

Say:

Our song for today will help us to remember our memory verse.

Song

'Hebrews 11:1' (a discovery kids worship cover, lyrics & motions) by SBC Discovery Kids (2:33)

Tell it

Ask the children to recap the story we looked at last week.

Ask:

- What happened when the wise men went to visit Herod?
- What did they do next?
- How did they escape King Herod after they visited Jesus?
- Where did Mary, Joseph and Jesus go to find safety?

Say:

In this week's story we join Mary, Joseph and Jesus after they had escaped from King Herod.

Read:

'The time came for Mary and Joseph to do what the law of Moses taught about being made pure. They took Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. It is written in the law of the Lord: "Give every first-born male to the Lord." Mary and Joseph also went to offer a sacrifice, as the law of the Lord says: "You must sacrifice two doves or two young pigeons."'

(Luke 2:22-24 ICB)

Say:

Right back in the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament, God instructed his people to give their gifts and offerings in the Temple. Mary and Joseph did not have much money, but they obeyed God and gave an offering of two birds.

Ask:

Why do you think it was important for Mary and Joseph to do what God had asked them and give their offering to him at the Temple?

Say:

Even though they didn't have much, Mary and Joseph wanted to be faithful to what God had asked them to do. There are others in our story today who also listened carefully to what God asked them to do and followed his instructions.

Video

God's Story: Anna and Simeon by Crossroads Kids' Club (3:56)

Watch: 0:00-2:13 'Now that the Rescuer was here, he was ready to die in peace.'

Ask:

- What promise had the people been waiting for God to fulfil all these years?
- How would you describe Simeon?
- What was special about Simeon being able to talk to the Holy Spirit? Who can talk to the Holy Spirit now?
- What did the Holy Spirit tell Simeon? What did Simeon do in response?
- How did Simeon react when he saw Jesus?

Say:

Here is what Simeon said in the Temple when he met Jesus.

Read:

'Now, Lord, you can let me, your servant, die in peace as you said.

I have seen your Salvation with my own eyes.

You prepared him before all people.

He is a light for the non-Jewish people to see.

He will bring honour to your people, the Israelites.

'Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what Simeon had said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, "Many in Israel will fall and many will rise because of this child. He will be a sign from God that many people will not accept. The things they think in secret will be made known. And the things that will happen will make your heart sad, too."

(Luke 2:29-35 ICB)

Ask:

Why do you think Simeon said that he was now willing to die in peace?

Say:

It might seem like a strange thing for Simeon to say, but he had waited to meet Jesus his entire life. God had kept his promise to Simeon and to all those who waited for the arrival of the Messiah.

Watch: 2:14-3:14 'All because they had faith that God keeps his promises.'

Ask:

- What had Anna spent her life doing in the Temple?
- How were Anna and Simeon similar? Who could they both talk to?
- What did Anna do when she met Jesus?

Watch: 3:14-end.

Say:

Simeon and Anna served God throughout their lives. They made promises to obey God's commands and listened carefully to what the Holy Spirit had to say.

Ask:

What can Simeon and Anna teach us about how to follow Jesus in our everyday lives?

Say:

Anna and Simeon weren't the only ones in this story to faithfully do what God had asked them to do.

Read:

'Joseph and Mary finished doing everything that the law of the Lord commanded. Then they went home to Nazareth, their own town in Galilee. The little child began to grow up. He became stronger and wiser, and God's blessings were with him.'

(Luke 2:39-40 ICB)

Display the *Faithfulness* sign.

Discuss

Discuss examples in today's story where God and the main characters were faithful to their promises.

Say:

Anna and Simeon both listened carefully to the Holy Spirit and faithfully followed what they were asked to do. The Holy Spirit can grow that same fruit of faithfulness in our hearts when we listen and obey God's instructions.

Action it

Say:

Covenant Sunday is a special day in The Salvation Army when we remember the promises God has made to us and the promises we have made to him. Today we are going to focus on the amazing promises God has made to us as his followers.

Say:

God does not expect us to be faithful to him on our own. He walks with us every step of the way and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. Also, the amazing thing is that even when we do make a mistake, God is always ready to forgive us and let us start again. So don't worry if you feel like you've not lived up to what God wants. He knows that you're trying, and he loves you no matter what you do or don't do.

Discuss

Part of Covenant Sunday is thinking of what it means to 'step up, stand out' for Jesus. Discuss with the children what that they think it means.

Footprint

Ask the children to create their own footprint/print and each receive a promise from God. Depending on what you would prefer, they can either create a paint footprint (the messy option) or draw around their foot (the less messy option!). If they draw around their foot, then they can decorate the inside with colourful patterns using felt-tips.

Once the children have completed their footprint/print, ask them to choose a Bible promise from the Bible promises handout to add to their sheet. After they have completed their picture, perhaps each child could read out their promise from God.

Pray it

Say:

We have spent time looking at the many promises God has made to us in his word. Now, as part of Covenant Sunday we will think of the promises we have made to God.

Spend time reading through the **All-age accessible Covenant Sunday card** together, ensuring that the children understand what each part of it means. Give the children time to reflect on the contents of the card and, if they feel comfortable doing so, they can sign it as part of their covenant promise to God.

There is space on the card for the children to write two ways that they will be faithful to God this year: one by getting to know God better and one by showing his love to others. The children could fill these in now, with their own ideas, or they could do it with a trusted adult like a prayer partner, family member or children's leader who knows them well.

You may wish to use the song below as part of this reflection time.

Listen

'Faith' by Lifetree Kids (stop at 3:13)

When the song has finished, pray with the children, asking God to give them the courage to 'step up, stand out' for him.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



Step up, stand out

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:
Luke 2:22-40



Aim:
To understand that God keeps his promises and is faithful



Today's fruit:
Faithfulness



Reflect

This week you created your own footprint. Which of God's promises did you choose for your footprint?
Read the promise each day and think about what it means for you as you follow Jesus.



Create

Ask the people at home to help you make a pair of these amazing walking feet. As you make the feet together, tell your helper everything you have learned about stepping up and standing out for Jesus.

HPL craft: walking feet by Houston Public Library



Song for the week

'Hebrews 11:1' (a discovery kids worship cover, lyrics & motions) by SBC Discovery Kids



Memory verse

'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.'

(Hebrews 11:1 NIV)

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Today's fruit:
Faithfulness



Memory verse

'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.'

(Hebrews 11:1 *NIV*)



Start it

In our story today we meet Simeon and Anna who had waited their whole lives to meet Jesus. Their story teaches us that God keeps his promises and is faithful.



Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Luke 2:22-40 or watch the following clip.

Simeon and Anna (Bible story for kids) by Trueway Kids (1:07)

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- Why did Mary and Joseph travel to the Temple?
- Have you ever made a promise? Did you manage to keep it?
- What promise had God made to Simeon?
- How did Simeon react when God kept his promise?

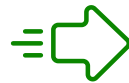
- Who did Simeon and Anna believe Jesus was?



Sing It

'The wise man built his house upon the rock' by Tiny Tree Tunes uploaded by Lithos Kids. Just the first two verses (1:35)

'All through history' Nicky & Becky Drake by Worship For Everyone (3:36)



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Think of a moment when you were excited, like Simeon and Anna. Act it out for the rest of the group to see if they can guess why you were so excited.
- Imagine you are Simeon and Anna and you have just met Jesus. What would you say to him?
- Do a dance of celebration that God keeps his promises.
- Draw a picture of Anna and Simeon when they met Jesus.