

Welcome to Church!

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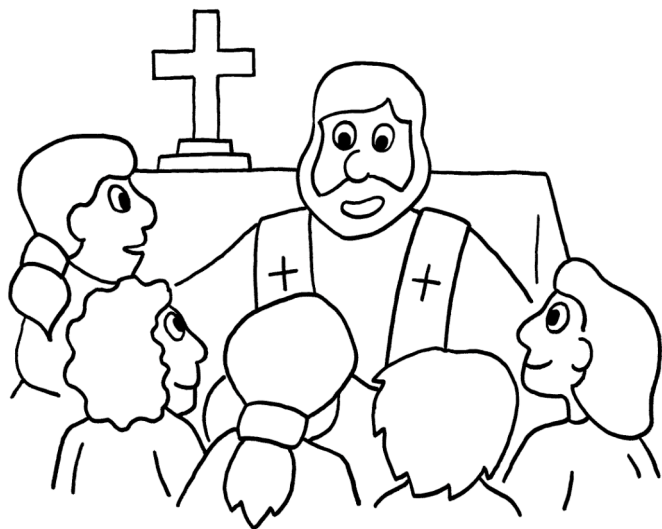
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A Five-Session Reproducible Resource

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Introduction to the PreKin Sunday School Series



Sola Publishing's PreKin Sunday School Series

Sola Publishing's *PreKin Sunday School Series* is a resource for teaching preschool and kindergarten children basic lessons about Jesus, the Bible, and the Church. Each session focuses on a specific Bible story and ties it to the child's present-day participation in church.

Teaching Preschool and Kindergarten requires a different approach than working with children of older grades. The level of the series is designed with pre-readers in mind, and features activities for the youngest Sunday School students.

The five-session format of the PreKin Sunday School Series is tailored to fit as a companion to *Luther's Small Cat Series*, a Sunday School catechism series for elementary-aged students, also available from Sola Publishing. While the older grades are learning sections of the Catechism, the PreKin series allows younger children the chance to experience what "church" is all about.

Teacher Book

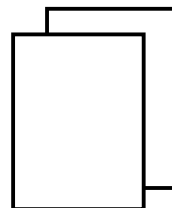
Each installment in the *PreKin Sunday School Series* features a Teacher's Book, with background information for the teacher on the session theme and Bible lesson, as well as a step-by-step class session plan. Lessons include ideas for welcome, prayers, Bible rhymes, activities and projects, as well as reproducible coloring pages and worksheets.

There are no student books necessary; all print resources needed to present a class session are included and are copy-ready. (Typically, individual handout sheets tend to work better with children of this age.)

Reproducible Materials

Purchase of this Teacher's Book includes permission to photocopy the internal pages as handouts for congregational classroom use, provided that the copyright information appears at the bottom of the page.*

It is suggested that the *Bible Story Coloring Page* and the *Classroom Thinking Page* be reproduced on a single back-to-back white sheet prior to each class session. The handout can serve as an in-class worksheet, or as a take-home sheet to help parents talk with their children about what they are learning in church. If the *Thinking Page* portion is not used during class time, it could serve as a simple "homework" exercise for children to do at home with their parents.



At the back of the booklet are additional reproducible pages for specific activities. These sheets are referenced within a particular lesson.

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Working with Preschool and Kindergarten Students

Studying God's Word and understanding how it speaks and gives meaning to our everyday lives is a life-long task. Just as any academic subject begins with the fundamentals and leads to deeper themes, the study of Scripture and theology happens the same way.

For many, the thought of teaching Sunday School is intimidating. Conveying the depth of theological doctrines — or even answering the questions of children — may seem overwhelming. Therefore, it is important for teachers to keep their task in perspective.

Sunday School teachers are not expected to be experts in theological subtleties, or to know the answer to every religious question. The primary purpose of Sunday School instruction is simply to familiarize children with stories from the Bible, introducing them to Bible characters and what those people experienced in their life with God. Along with the practical learning, Sunday School provides an opportunity for children to feel welcome at church, and for the teacher to serve as a positive role model in faith.

Keep in mind, the younger the children, the less they tend to learn from what you *say*, but more from how you as a teacher *act* and convey what you teach. Building a *teaching relationship* with preschool children is often more important than the amount of information conveyed. Remember that faith, at its root, is a relationship of trust with God. Above all else, that is the goal to which this instruction is aimed.

Lesson Review

To help students remember the lessons they have covered, teachers are encouraged to use verbal repetition. Feel free to go back to previous lessons, using the Bible Rhymes already covered, to see if the students can remember what they learned and verbally "fill-in" the rhyming words at the end of each sentence.

Sample Class Session

1: Welcome

The first minutes of class may be used to greet students, pass out name-tags, and record attendance on a classroom chart.

2: Opening Prayer

A suggested opening prayer is included in the Teacher's Book for each lesson.

3: Getting Started

A simple introductory activity is provided to introduce students to the theme of the lesson. Some supplies may be needed.

4: Bible Story

Each lesson includes a featured Bible story connected with the theme of the lesson. Teachers are welcome to read these stories from an illustrated Bible storybook.

5: Bible Story Coloring Page

Each lesson includes a reproducible page for children to color, illustrating the day's Bible story. From week to week, teachers may want to alternate between crayons, pens, colored pencils, water paints, etc.

6: Bible Rhyme

Each Bible story has been written as a simple rhyming poem. After reading once, repeat by leaving off the final word of each sentence; see if the children can offer the missing word.

7: Classroom Thinking Page

The simple "Thinking Page" worksheets from this book may be photocopied on the reverse side of the coloring page.

8: Classroom Activity

There is a suggested classroom activity to go along with each session. These are generally simple craft ideas, and may require set-up.

9: Closing Prayer

The teacher can close with a free prayer, picking up on the theme of the lesson.



Bible Story

The Biblical basis for the first lesson is the story of Jesus visiting the temple in Jerusalem with his parents as a boy. For your own background reference and preparation, the Scripture text is printed below.

Luke 2:41-52 (CEV)

⁴¹ Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for Passover. ⁴² And when Jesus was twelve years old, they all went there as usual for the celebration. ⁴³ After Passover his parents left, but they did not know that Jesus had stayed on in the city. ⁴⁴ They thought he was traveling with some other people, and they went a whole day before they started looking for him. ⁴⁵ When they could not find him with their relatives and friends, they went back to Jerusalem and started looking for him there.

⁴⁶ Three days later they found Jesus sitting in the temple, listening to the teachers and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was surprised at how much he knew and at the answers he gave.

⁴⁸ When his parents found him, they were amazed. His mother said, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried, and we have been searching for you!”

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, “Why did you have to look for me? Didn’t you know that I would be in my Father’s house?” ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he meant. ⁵¹ Jesus went back to Nazareth with his parents and obeyed them. His mother kept on thinking about all that had happened.

⁵² Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people.

Lesson Theme

This lesson is meant to introduce the children to the idea of “going to church” to learn about God. It uses the biblical example of the boy Jesus, going to the temple in Jerusalem with his parents and talking to the teachers there.

Strictly speaking, the word “church” refers to people who believe in Christ and gather around Word and Sacrament, and among whom the message of Christ is proclaimed. However, with kindergarten and pre-school children, the concept of an “assembly of believers” is too abstract for them to understand. It is better to talk about church as the “place” we get together with people who believe in Jesus, to hear about God.

In using the story of Jesus in the temple, it is not necessary to explain to children of this age the distinction between Jewish temple worship and that of our own Christian congregations. You can simply say that Jesus went to “church,” and focus on the imagery of adults and children gathering to learn about God.

The key point of this lesson is to show that Jesus went to church just like the children in your class, and that the main thing people did in church in Jesus’ day was to listen and talk about God. Point out that this is what you do in Sunday School class with other children, as well as in worship with people of all ages.

Materials You Will Need for Class:

- Name tags, story/worksheet handout pages
- Photocopies of ‘Welcome to Church’ picture
- Green construction paper, torn in 1” pieces
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Glue or glue sticks

Welcome

On the first day of Sunday school, or when starting a new unit, it is good to have a set of name tags ready. Simple colored cardstock with yarn necklaces works just fine.

One simple welcoming game is to go around in a circle, having each child say: “My name is ...” then go around again saying: “My favorite animal is...” and again: “My favorite animal sound is...”

Opening Prayer

Dear God, thank you for bringing us to church to learn about you. Help us to listen, so that we can hear about all the good things Jesus has done for us, and be able to tell other people about him too. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen

Getting Started

To begin class, play a game of “I see.” Have each child look around and name something they see around them. Have the other children see if they can point at what the first child named. For example: I see a cross... I see a window... I see a candle...

Doing this game in the church’s sanctuary or worship area would be best, allowing the children to draw on the most obvious “churchly” objects. Check to see if that space is open and available to take the children at the beginning of class time. If this is not possible, the game can be done within the classroom or Sunday School large-group area instead.

Bible Story Rhyme

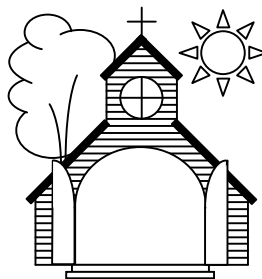
When telling the Bible story for the session, use the following rhyme:

When Jesus was a little lad,
he went to Church with Mom and Dad.
But when it came the time to go,
he stayed behind; they didn’t know.

Back to Church his parents walked.
With the teachers Jesus talked.
All the people were amazed
to hear the answers Jesus gave.

When his parents found him there,
he was fine – without a care.
Jesus asked, “Did you not know,
my Father’s house is where I’d go?”

Classroom Activity



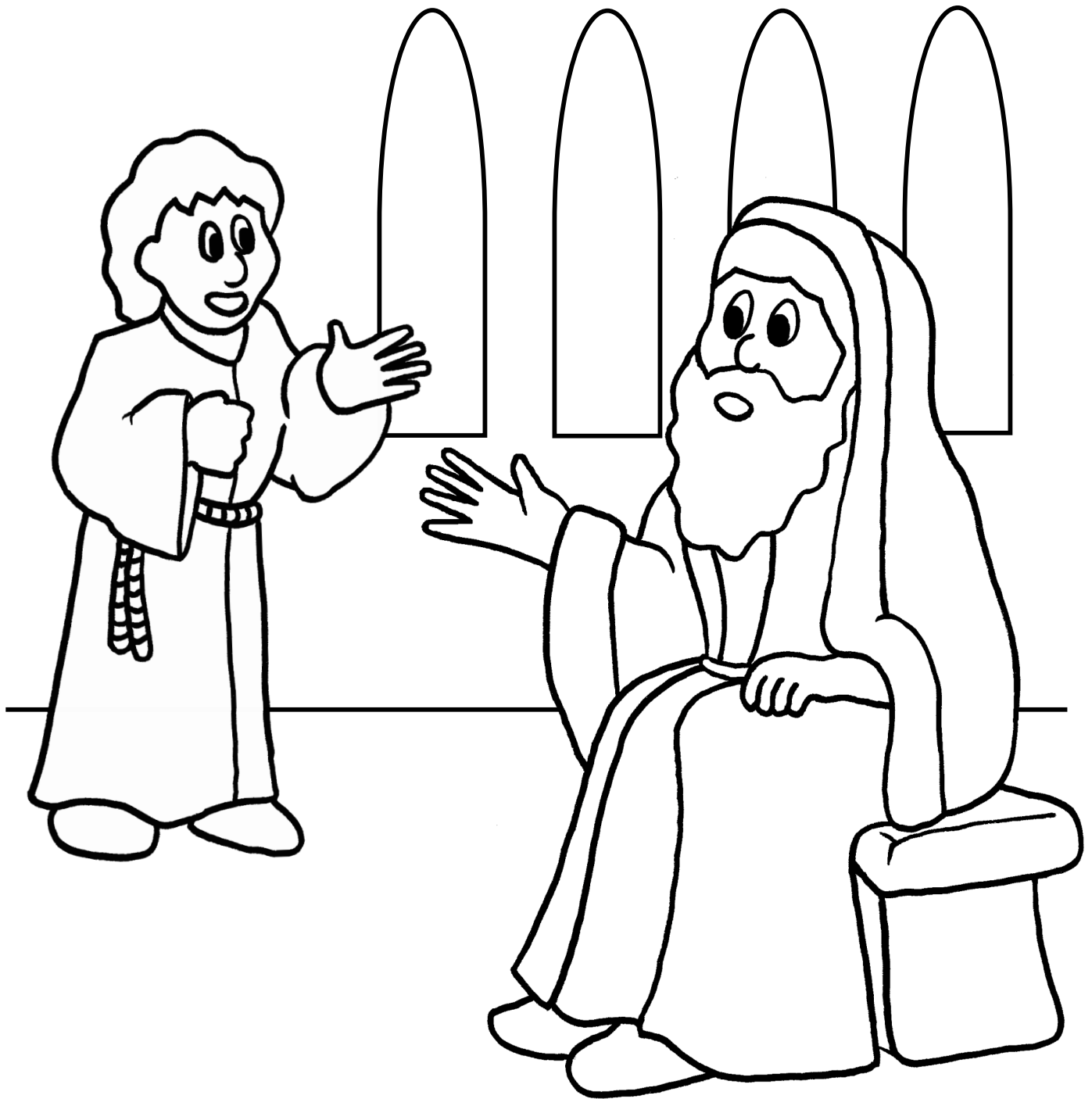
To reinforce the lesson of the day, have the children make their own “Going to Church” poster.

Prior to class, photocopy the reproducible page 26 in the back of this book.

Have each student draw a picture of their family inside the open doors of the church. Then have them color the church building, the sky, the sun, and the tree.

Tear green construction paper in small pieces (about 1” by 1”) and have the children glue them to the canopy of the tree as “leaves.”

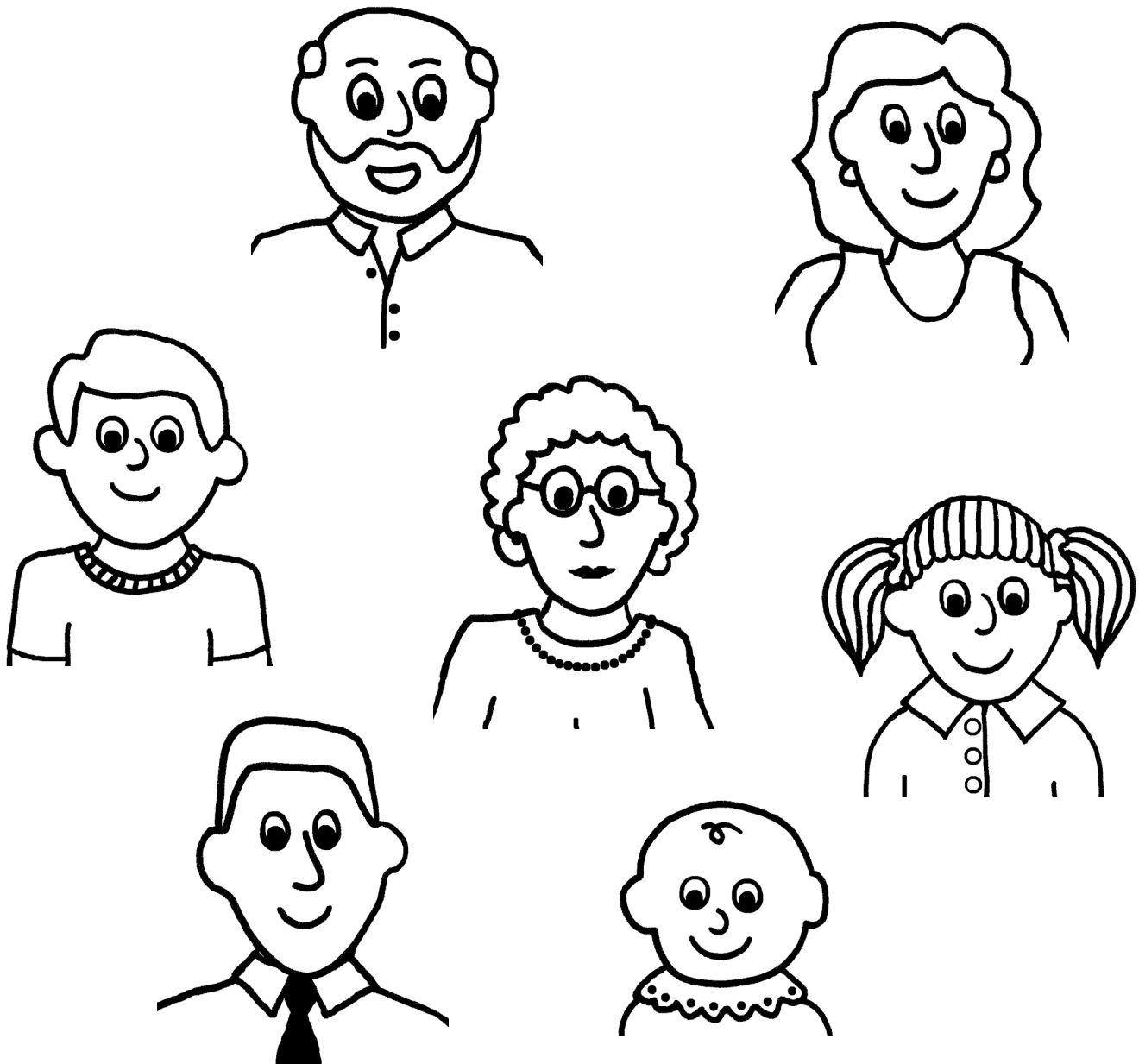
Add the child’s name at bottom of the poster, and encourage them to decorate the posters as they desire.



Jesus talked to the teachers about God.

(Luke 2:41-52)

**Jesus loves children and grown-ups.
People of all ages come to Church!**



Circle all faces above that are children.