
A.W.E.SOME News

The Newsletter of The Children's Ministries for The Diocese of Bethlehem

Summer Refreshment

It was hard to think about summer as I looked out my window today and watched an April storm drop 10 inches of snow on my already slow-to-bloom daffodils. My husband and I trudged out with the snow shovels - *one more time* - and cleared the sidewalks and driveway. Afterward, I decided to check out the daffodils. It took several minutes to uncover them and then remove the snow that had bound them together. Finally, I cut a few to carry into the house. They always seem like solid sunshine to me and today is no exception. The warmth of the house and the water have encouraged them to open up and my day is bright again.

I am continually reminded that my time is not necessarily God's time. Summer will be a time of refreshment, but I don't have to wait for summer. I can be refreshed any day, any time. I just need to remember that God offers refreshment and renewal all the time.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Matthew 11: 28-30 NIV

This issue of *Awesome News* offers a variety of ideas and opportunities for the summer and getting ready for the fall. Linda Moggio has created a wonderful summer curriculum that you might use with children or families. It's also found in the Faith Formation in the Home Packet (FFH) - as is a more extensive Summer Splash.

Hold May 22-24th on your calendar for a Christian Educator's Retreat. And, don't forget to gather your children for Bishop's Day on Wednesday, June 27th, at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. There will be a bus from the Scranton area. The registration deadline is May 31st. Download Bishop's Day registration and medical forms as well as FFH at www.diobethkids.org.

Summer
and Back
To School

Year C

2007



Bishop's Day
Wednesday, June 27, 2007
Cathedral Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem
10:15 AM to 3:30 PM

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Upcoming Christian Education Events

DIOCESAN EVENTS

Diocese of Bethlehem Christian Educator's Retreat - HOLD THE DATE!! May 22-4, 2007.

Narnia: The Lion, the Bishop & the Wardrobe at the Bishop's Day for Kids - Wednesday, June 27, 2007 at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem from 10:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

BEYOND THE DIOCESE

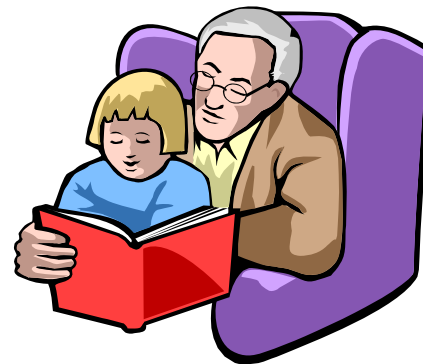
Christian Formation Conference. Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC. June 10-15, 2007. www.kanuga.org

20th Annual Festival Gathering of the Network of Biblical Storytellers: Welcome Back - Stories to Celebrate Homecoming. Atlanta, GA, August 1-4, 2007 www.nobs.org

Come to Jesus: the Create a Place Where Kids Want to Be Workshop. Children's Ministry Magazine. Philadelphia, PA. Oct. 20, 2007. www.group.com/cmml

Ladies, Lovers, and Leaders: A Closer Look at the Women of the Bible. Led by Biblical Storyteller, Tracy Radosevic. Jan 2 -

12, 2008 \$2098* from Atlanta. Alpha Christian Tours, Inc. contributes to The John A. Buckley Endowment Fund which awards annual grants to ministries around the world for education and peace building. Read more about the Endowment at www.AlphaTours.com/Endowment.



Become A Biblical Storyteller

Biblical storytellers from all over the world will meet for four days of storytelling, workshops, presentations, creative worship, and holy hilarity at the Biblical Storytelling Festival Gathering,

August 1 through 4, 2007. This 20th annual Festival Gathering, sponsored by the Network of Biblical Storytellers (NOBS), will be held at Simpsonwood Conference Center just north of Atlanta, a comfortable facility that boasts a wooded campus with trails, a swimming pool and other recreational opportunities.

The Festival Gathering has become, for many people, a life-changing event, as they have come to learn techniques for telling biblical stories and to sharpen their skills. Pastors, Christian educators, laity from all denominations, teachers,

chaplains, professional storytellers, and first-timers all meet to explore the Bible as story, and to experience it as it was originally experienced: as dramatic storytelling rather than merely words read from paper. Festival goers are encouraged to share their own stories during "Story Swap" and "Lighting the Fire." A Festival highlight is the "Epic Telling," where a group of individuals perform large passages of scripture. This year's Epic Telling is from Joshua and Luke.

This year's keynote speaker is Dr. David Rhoads, Professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The featured teller is Rev. Richard Rice and a special

group of "featured tellers" from past Festival Gatherings will perform stories daily.

The Network of Biblical Storytellers is a twenty-nine-year-old, ecumenical organization with local storytelling guilds worldwide. "Sponsorship of this Festival Gathering is one way in which we fulfill our mission 'To encourage everyone to learn and tell biblical stories,'" says Lynn White, President of NOBS.

Registration for the event includes all lodging, meals, and full program schedule. (Basic membership in NOBS is \$50.) More information and online registration can be found at the NOBS Web site, www.nobs.org. For more information call the NOBS Business Office at 1-800-355-NOBS.

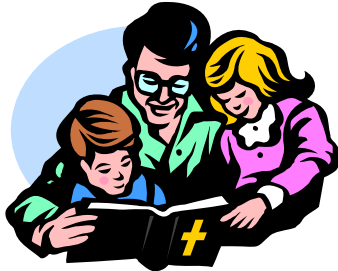
"The Festival Gathering has become, for many people, a life-changing event..."

How to Keep Kids Wanting to Worship

This article appeared in the Easton, PA newspaper: The Express - Times on Friday, March 30, 2007

Education is important. A major emphasis is placed on kids to learn the basic academic subjects such as math, history and English.

Kids also receive an education when they participate in an art or music program or are a part of a team sport.



Where does spiritual or religious education begin?

In the beginning

The Rev. Debra J. Kissinger, Missioner to Children and Child Advocate Staff Liaison for Evangelism, Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem, says first faith formation teachers are parents, by the way they live their lives.

Kissinger suggests that by their example, parents will be able to communicate their experience. "If the parents make religion a priority, the kids go with it."

To put it differently, she says we teach our kids how to manage money, how to care for their toys, and how to handle relation-



ships with family and friends. Parents should offer the same kind of guidance with regard to forming a relationship with God.

Kissinger points out that as kids get older, dropping them off at the church door won't float. "If parents are not really demonstrating to their kids that this (church) is important, then they, too, will feel as though this is not important."

Spiritual connections

The Rev. Audrey Bickford of the Unity Spiritual Center in Asbury says teaching kids spiritual principles is vital to their spiritual growth.

"At the center," explains Bickford, "the curriculum for children is very contemporary. We teach about a creator that is everywhere present. We teach spiritual principles that can be used when dealing with bullying or issues with parents."

By using these guidelines, she says, kids discover a spark of divinity within themselves and they are willing to share what they have learned through skits and plays.

Keep them interested

Whether or not kids have a religious or non-religious foundation, the big question is how to keep them interested in coming to church.

Susan Lishman, director of Christian Education at First United Church of Christ in Hellertown and commissioned minister, recently returned from a retreat with the confirmation class.

"We have to keep looking for creative ways that speak to the kids in church," Lishman says. One way is to make them part of the planning process for an upcoming event, which has worked successfully for Lishman.

She emphasizes it is important to offer kids an opportunity to be heard and to share what they have learned.

"They can deliver a lot of messages of faith to us, too. We often hear people say 'children are the future of the church.' I tell them they are the church now."

By Debra K. Hess



[Deb Hess is a staff writer and edits the *Our Town* pages. She can be reached at 610-258-7171 or by e-mail at dhess@express-times.com.]

Narnia: The Lion, the Bishop, & the Wardrobe

Bishop's Day for Kids 2007

This year's Bishop's Day for Kids will be held on Wednesday, June 27, 2007 at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem from 10:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

New this year is the NARNIA bus! If you live in northern part of the diocese, climb aboard the bus at Applebee's Restaurant, Viewmont Mall, exit 191 off I-81 in Scranton. The bus will leave promptly at 8:30 a.m. Please sign up for the bus when you send in your registration. The bus will return at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy visited the land of Narnia and met the White Witch, Mr. Tumnus, the Beavers and Aslan. Now Diocesan 1st thru 6th Graders are invited to walk through the wardrobe and visit Narnia at The Bishop's Day for Kids.

Shaped after C.S. Lewis' the Chronicles of Narnia and the Disney movie release with the same name, the Bishop's Day for Kids is a chance for children around the Diocese to gather together and learn some things about the Christian life and values.

All Sons of Adam and Daughter of Eve will be issued a Passport upon passing through the wardrobe. Throughout the day they will explore such values as: trust, loyalty, forgiveness, sacrifice, and more.

Participants will visit the Witch's Castle, the Ford of Beruna, and the Stone Table! Along the way they will play games, get their passports stamped, and learn more about the power of the Deep Magic and Aslan.

A Character Lunch will take place in the Beaver's Den and will feature some of the most popu-

lar characters from the story. Meet Mr. Tumnus and learn the Beaver's call. Will the White Witch hand out Turkish Delight? Just be careful she doesn't turn you into a stone statue!

Family and friends are invited to stay for Morning Prayer after registration and to return for the closing Eucharist with Bishop Paul in the Great Hall of Cair Paravel at the end of the day.

Advance Registration is required. The deadline is May 31, 2007. Registration and Medical forms are available on line at www.diobethkids.org or from your Rector or Church Office. No Costumes and No Walk-In Registrations. Each child who registers by May 31, 2007 will receive a T-shirt!

For more information, please call The Rev. Debra Kissinger, Missioner to Children at (610) 691-5655, ext. 237.



Safeguarding God's Children Training Dates Changes

Correct Dates can be found below and at www.diobethkids.org

SAFEGUARDING GOD'S CHILDREN

An Educational Program For Preventing Child Abuse

Spring 2007 Training Dates
(9:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.)

April, 28, 2007

*St. Stephen's, Whitehall
(Registration Deadline: 4-20-07)*

May 5, 2006

*St. Luke's Scranton
(Registration Deadline: 4-27-06)
June 2, 2007*

*Christ Church, Reading
(Registration Deadline: 5-25-07)*

TO REGISTER:

Call or email Rosemary Kleintop
(800-358-5655 or 610-691-5655, ext. 224, rklein-top@diobeth.org)

Name, position/role at church/organization, and church/organization name.

\$20.00 check (*registration for full day training and lunch*)

\$15.00 check (*registration for full day training with your own packed lunch*)

Payable to the Diocese of Bethlehem. Send to Diocese of Bethlehem, Attn: Rosemary Kleintop, 333 Wyandotte Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015

The Diocese of Bethlehem is working to reduce the possibility of child abuse occurring in our congregations.

All clergy, vestry, paid church personnel and volunteers who regularly work with or around children may need to take or update their training.



Walk-A-Mile Parishes and Team Leaders

Christ Church, Reading
Walk Team Leader: Jill Braun

St. Mark's, Jim Thorpe
Walk Team Leader: Joan DeAcetis

St. Peter's, Tunkhannock
Walk Team Leader:
Kristina Bennett

Good Shepherd, Scranton
Walk Team Leader: Rebecca Lance

Grace, Honesdale
Walk Team Leader: Jeanne Roskoski

St. Anne's, Trexlertown
Walk Team Leader: Judith Snyder

St. Margaret's, Emmaus
Walk Team Leader: Christina Nord

St. George's Nanticoke
Walk Team Leader: Denise Turley

Trinity, Bethlehem
Walk Team Leader: Suzanne Boundy

St. Brigid's, Nazareth
Walk Team Leaders:
Lori Bernardo & Jan Tintle

St. Andrew's, Allentown
Walk Team Leader: Brenda Stein

St. Peter's, Hazleton
Walk Team Leader: Kim Sullivan

Prince of Peace, Dallas
Walk Team Leader: Jennifer Martin

Epiphany, Clarks Summit
Walk Team Leader: Amy Fleming

St. Paul's, Troy
Walk Team Leader: Mary Kisner

St. Mary's, Reading
Walk Team Leaders:
Scott Chambers & Nancy Packard

Trinity, Pottsville
Walk Team Leaders:
Dawn Burns & Erin Rasor

North Parish, Schuylkill County
Walk Team Leader: Bonnie Baker

Church of the Mediator, Allentown
Walk Team Leader: Martha Fox

St. John's, Hamlin
Walk Team Leaders:
Catherine & Terry Lynn Dowdell

Cathedral Church of the Nativity
Walk Team Leader: Carol Yale

Grace, Allentown
Walk Team Leaders:
The Rev. Patrick Malloy & Libby House



Vacation Bible School Ideas

Check out a variety of resources available from Children's Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center. www.episcopalchurch.org Below are some suggestions for Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School Planning (from the General Board of Global Mission of the United Methodist church). A starting point for organizing all the details for a successful VBS program. www.gb-gm-umc.org/marshltn/vbsmain.html

Treasure Magazine VBS - This is available free from Episcopal Books and Resources. www.episcopalchurch.org/48931_58907_ENG_HTML.htm

Aslan is on the Move (Narnia) Five-session or weekend pro-

gram. www.leaderresources.org/aslanisonthemove.

Wizards and Wonders (Harry Potter) This five session program can bring your whole church family together. www.leaderresources.org/wizardsandwonders.

Pilgrimage: Seeking the Kingdom of God - Take a pilgrimage to five Medieval destinations. www.leaderresources.org/pilgrimages.

Lift Off: Soaring to New Heights with God (Presbyterian) Your Sky Scouts will discover five Flight Plans that will help them soar to new heights with God. www.cokesburyvbs.com/home.htm.

Word Up! Speaking and Living for Jesus (Presbyterian, African-American) A five-session resource inspired by traditions from James Weldon Johnson's *God's Trombones*. www.africanamericansbvs.cokesbury.com/

Great Bible Reef (Lutheran) Combines music, art, science, games, worship, and drama in an underwater adventure. www.augsburgfortress.org/store/itemseries.jsp?clsid=183271&productgroupid=O&categoryid=3105

Waterworks Park This program uses water-based Bible stories www.cookministries.com/nexgen/vbs/

Quick Tips for Successful Craft Time

Paraphrased from *Church Educator* May 2004 (p6) by Michelle Pincket.

Let them stand. Elementary children are more comfortable standing. They can reach supplies, have more "elbow room" and it eliminates not enough room around the table.

Use a Lazy Susan for supplies. It eliminates passing problems.

Have a drying line. Create a clothes line against one wall at the children's height. Use a couple of nails or pushpins in the wall with heavy duty string and

plenty of clothes pins so work can be hung to dry and leave table space free.

Fix it or toss it out. Have no mercy with faulty supplies. Buy glue in the gallon jug and top off the glue bottles regularly. Wash glue tops regularly. Check markers and be sure permanent and washable are not mixed in your containers. Buy good crayons, not generic.

Keep a supply of jar lids and milk jug lids. These are great for holding small amounts of glitter, wiggly eyes, or other small objects. Lids are great for

individual amounts of glue. Give each child a lid with a tablespoon of glue and a q-tip.

Keep Styrofoam trays. These are good for projects that are not paper and cannot be hung to dry. Assemble the object de art on the tray and place a post-it with the child's name on it. They are also good to have to contain glitter. Put the object needing glitter on the tray, sprinkle, excess will fall on tray not floor or table.



Nursery Children Characteristics

Because 3-year-olds:

Physical:

1. Are developing their large muscles and have not developed fine motor control.
2. Are active: walk, run, jump, gallop.
3. Use the floor (not tables) for playing



Mental:

1. Have short attention spans.
2. Develop language rapidly; are curious, ask many questions.
3. Are ready to respond when you talk with them; "learn to listen" and "listen to learn."

Social:

1. Are self-centered, but begin to take turns and share.
2. Play with a few children for a short time, then return to play by themselves.
3. Like companionship and making friends; may have a "best friend."
4. Are developing independence; like to try new things.



Emotional:

1. Are fearful of new experiences and the unfamiliar.
2. Feel important when they help you.
3. Like to laugh, but also cry and hit to stand for their rights.

Spiritual:

1. Recognize the Bible is different from other books.
2. Are beginning to understand that Jesus loves them.
3. Can experience awe and wonder.

We, as Teachers:

Physical:

1. Provide sufficient space and equipment for use.
2. Allow freedom of movement and choice of activity.
3. Provide clean, warm space with rugs and pillows, have limited use of tables.

Mental:

1. Use a variety of appropriate stories and activities.
2. Answer questions simply and clearly; provide opportunities to investigate and explore.
3. Provide opportunities to learn by conversation, simple books, and all types of activities.

Social:

1. Provide opportunities for and encourage taking turns and sharing.
2. Provide opportunities for individual and group play; do not force group participation.
3. Allow friends to play together.
4. Give them opportunities to do things for themselves whenever possible.

Emotional:

1. Provide gradual separation from parents and introduction to the group.
2. Give all children a chance to help.
3. Laugh with our children; encourage them; offer help when needed; are consistent.

Spiritual:

1. Place a Bible in the worship center; show the Bible to the children and talk about it.
2. Use simple stories and songs about Jesus.
3. Are alert for spontaneous times of wonder.

From: *Church Educator* July 2004 (p. 7) by Anne Gilbert - author of Age Group Characteristics, Educ. Ministries.

Learning Some of the Stories of the Bible

A Summer Series of Favorite Stories and People of the Bible
(Created by Linda Moggio, Director of Children & Family Ministries Christ Church, Reading)

Use this unique approach to learning about the stories of the Bible. Consider this for an inter-generational summer learning experience or Sunday School at church. Or, send it home with families to use.

Week of June 17

Abraham and Sarah Begin a Journey
(Genesis 12, 13:14-18)

1. Use a Paper Bag Bible Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
2. Make some food that would be used when camping.
3. Use a map to follow Abraham and Sarah's trip.

Week of June 24

David Takes a Brave Stand
(1 Samuel 17 & portions in Ch. 16, 17, & 19)

1. Use your Paper Bag Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
2. Make "giant" cookies using our favorite recipe.
3. Find pictures of sheep, modern day shepherd, and a sheepfold. Discuss how shepherds take care of their sheep.

Week of July 1

Esther Saves Her People
(Begins at Esther 2)

1. Use your Paper Bag Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
2. Draw the story in comic strip style.
3. Learn about the Jewish holiday, Purim.

Week of July 8

Martha Struggles and Learns
(Luke 10:38-42)

1. Use modeling clay or play-doh (recipe below) to make all 3 characters in story.
2. Bake muffins to feed a hungry traveler like Jesus.
3. Write a journal entry, pretending you are Martha.

Week of July 15

The Boy who Shared His Meal
(Matthew 14:13-21)

1. Find this story in the other 3 Gospels. Are they all the same?
2. Use the Paper Bag Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
3. Have a fish cracker snack or eat fish for dinner.

Week of July 22

Hannah Has a Baby in Her Old Age
(1 Samuel Chapters 1 & 2)

1. Use socks as hand puppets and retell the story.
2. Look at your family's baby pictures and retell stories about yourselves as a baby.
3. Learn about the tabernacle from a Bible Atlas or online.

Week of July 29

Elizabeth and Mary Become Mothers
(Luke 1:5-25, 39-80)

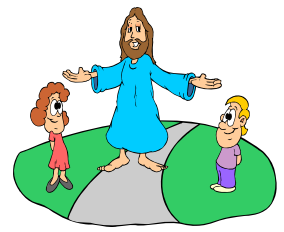
1. Celebrate Christmas in July and draw pictures of the nativity.
2. Christmas shop for baby items and bring them to a shelter for women and children or bring newborn diapers to the hospital nursery.
3. Sing your favorite Christmas carols.

Week of August 5

Jesus Meets a Child
(Matthew

18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48)

1. Read all 3 accounts and talk about what is the same or different.
2. Use crayons or watercolor paints to draw Jesus and the child surrounded by the disciples.
3. Serve a food that children can prepare.



Week of August 12

Zacchaeus Climbs a Tree
(Luke 19:1-9)

1. Act out the story. Use a chair to make a "tree."
2. Use a map to find where Zacchaeus lived, and where Jesus was going to. Figure out how far they had to walk.
3. What would you talk about if you were Zacchaeus and Jesus told you he was going to your home for dinner.

Week of August 19

Special Food on a Journey
(Exodus 16-17:7)

1. Use your Paper Bag Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
2. Use modeling clay or Play-doh (recipe on p. 9) and make baskets filled with manna.
3. Have a snack or dessert of crackers and honey.



Stories from the Bible continued

Week of August 26

Dorcas and Anna
(Acts 9:36-42)

1. Use your Paper Bag Story Kit (see p. 9) to retell the story.
2. Make a nutritious pizza using meat, cheese, vegetables, and sauce.
3. Write a journal entry pretending you are Anna who has met Dorcas.

Week of September 2

David and Goliath (1 Samuel in Chapters. 16, 18, & 19)

1. Make a comic strip and draw the story. Use word balloons to show how Goliath "bullied" David.
2. Pack a lunch or snack like David would have taken to his brothers.
3. Talk about the problem of being bullied and how to handle it.



Week of September 9

Saul Learns About Jesus
(Acts 9:1-19, 22:3-16, 26:4-18)

1. Write a "letter" home from Saul/Paul telling them what happened.
2. What do you think Ananias gave Paul to eat? Prepare an "Ananias feast."
3. Talk about incidents that have changed your behavior or attitude. How will you face the new school year?

Paper Bag Bible Story Kit

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| paper bag | 2 clothespins |
| 3 crayons | 3x5 card |
| 1 safety pin | 3 buttons |
| 2 rubber bands | 2 cotton balls |
| string | piece of fabric |
| "s" straws | paper plate |
| 1 paper clamp | |



Use the materials in the bag to create characters, locations, and situations appropriate to the stories on pages 8 and 9.

Homemade Play-Doh Recipe

This recipe is shared by Heather Boggs from Christ Episcopal Church, Reading)

Ingredients:

4 c. flour
4 c. water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cream of tartar
1 c. salt
4 Tbs. oil
food coloring (opt.)

Procedure:

1. Mix all ingredients in a large stock pot. Place on stove on med/high heat.
2. Stir continuously until a dough is formed and a ball of dough pulls away from the side of the pot.
3. Let cool down and knead until smooth.

This play-doh is softer and easier to play with than commer-

cially produced play-doh. It will keep months in an airtight container.

*The "doh" can be scented using extracts or 1 packet of unsweetened Kool-Aid.



Summer Splash

School will soon be out, and children will be searching for things to do. How can you possibly find enough fun-filled activities to whet their appetites for the things of God?

Chill out! What follows are some sure fire ideas to keep your kids shrieking in delight with wild, wet fun all summer long. Make your own Summer Splash and have weekly Wet and Wild Wednesday in July or Saturday Summer Splashes in August.

Spend time with your kids or share God's love with all the kids in your neighborhood. Most of these activities are affordable and easy enough to do with big crowds!

BEACHY CRAFTS

Giant Aquarium

Wash an old sheet in the washer. A Blue sheet is best! Store it damp in a plastic bag until you're ready to use it. Hang the sheet in an area where it won't catch too much wind. Keep it moist by occasionally spritzing it with plain water.

Fill spray bottles each with one part tempera paint and two parts water. Have the kids create an aquarium scene by spray painting fish and sea plants on the sheet. The imperfect form of the sea life makes it look as though you're really looking through water!

Water Shadow Art

After a dip in the pool, have kids lie down on a warm sidewalk and quickly get up. Before the water shadows dry, have the kids out-

line their bodies with sidewalk chalk and fill in their features.

YUMMERIFIC SNACKS

Big Fish Snacks

You'll need vanilla wafers, vanilla pudding, blue food coloring, whipped topping, chocolate wafer cookies, clear plastic cups, and plastic spoons.

Crush vanilla wafers to form a layer of "sand" in the bottom of each cup. Spoon in vanilla pudding mixed with a few drops of blue food coloring. Top with whipped topping "sea foam." Create a big fish floating in the "water" by pushing a chocolate wafer cookie halfway into the pudding sea.

Mondo Floats

For every six kids, you'll need a new, clean sand bucket with a clean shovel, a quart of vanilla ice cream, a 2-liter bottle of root beer, straws, and spoons, (Individual cups are optional.)

Have kids use their shovels to scoop ice cream into their sand buckets, then pour root beer over the top. Add straws and enjoy!

OCEAN OF DEVOTION

Split Sea Soup

Put two bed sheets in the bottom of a small inflatable pool, bunching up on edge of each sheet along the center so you can grasp and separate the two. Fill the pool with water balloons. Have one child walk across the water balloons, lifting each foot high above the balloons between steps.

Then read the story of God separating the Red Sea in Exodus 14:21-31. Say, "When the Israelites looked over the water, all they saw was how it would crash over them, like the water from the water balloons crashed over our friend's feet. But God had a different plan."

Pull back the bed sheets to separate the water balloons, leaving the path through the pool. Have the kids walk across the path. Say, "God did a miracle to keep God's people safe. We remember this story because it helps us know just how powerful our God really is."

Use the sheets to remove the water balloons. Then form two teams for kids to use up the water balloons on each other!

Nowhere to Hide

Choose a child to be "It." Arm this child with a water-filled squeeze bottle. Have children hide while It closes his eyes and counts to 40. It will hunt for the hidens and squirt them when found.

Afterward, gather the children and read aloud Jonah 1: 1-17. Ask, "Who can hide from God?"

Say, "God was counting on Jonah to carry his message. God counts on us to carry God's message today, too. There's no way to hide from God, even if you're just a little squirt!"

Squirt the rest of the bottle into the air, letting the water fall on the children.

Shared by The Rev. Debra Kissinger, Missioner for Children and Child Advocate, Diocese of Bethlehem.