

CRAFT

God's Children Nesting Dolls

Jesus Blesses the Little Children

Mark 10:13-16

You Need

- Craft foam sheets, assorted colors
- Craft foam stickers or extra foam sheets
- Glue sticks
- Fine-tip markers
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Stapler
- *Optional:* Wiggle eyes

Get Ready

- Cut 1.5-inch strips of foam in assorted colors to the following lengths: 9 inches, 7.5 inches, 6 inches, 4.5 inches, and 3 inches. Each child will need all five lengths of strips.
- Make a sample to show.
- *Tip:* Search "matryoshka template" online to find free templates.

Introduce the Craft

Read Mark 10:13-16

Say Jesus welcomed and blessed the little children who were brought to Him. Show sample of craft.

Russian matryoshka dolls nest one inside another, from the smallest on the inside to the largest. Today, you'll make your own set of nesting dolls.

The dolls can remind you that old or young, big or small, God loves each one of us as His own dear child. He provides us with food, drink, house, home, and everything we need to live. Most important, He provides our salvation.

Ask How does God save us? **God sent His Son, Jesus, to pay for our sins on the cross. He calls us to Himself through Baptism and His Word to give us His love and eternal gifts of life and salvation.**

Do This

- Cut foam sheets into four Russian doll figures: one large (about 4 inches), two medium (each 3 to 3.5 inches), and one small (about 2.5 inches).
- Draw or add hair, smiles, or other features to decorate each figure. Apply foam stickers, or glue snippets of cut foam scraps and wiggle eyes to the figures.
- Provide each child with the five precut 1.5-inch strips of craft foam.
- Glue the tallest figure to the longest (9-inch) foam strip. Continue, gluing the medium figures to the 7.5-inch and 6-inch strips and the smallest figure to the 4.5-inch strip.
- Staple each strip into a circle; now the figures can stand up. Additional staples may help hold the figures in place if the glue is slow to dry.
- The figures will fit one inside of another.
- Cut a foam cross to go inside the smallest doll. Glue or staple it onto the smallest 3-inch strip. Curl the foam base to fit inside the smallest doll.

SNACK

Dip into God's Love

1 John 4:8

You Need

- A plate for each child
- A small cup (a muffin wrapper or bathroom drink cup) filled with fruit dip for each child
- An 11¾-inch lollipop stick (or skewer, but watch the sharp ends) for each child
- A small metal heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Strawberries, with hulls and leaves
- ¾-inch-thick slices of watermelon
- Optional: other red fruit, such as red seedless grapes, chunks of red apple, raspberries
- Fruit Dip Recipe (makes about 2 cups): Mix together 7 oz. marshmallow crème, 8 oz. softened cream cheese, and 2 Tbsp. thawed frozen orange juice concentrate OR a dash of vanilla.

Get Ready

- Prepare fruit dip and spoon into cups. Refrigerate.
- Clean fruit.
- Cut watermelon slices ¾ inch thick.
- Each child needs two watermelon slices, two strawberries (with leaves and hulls), and other assorted red fruit, if desired.

Introduce the Snack

Read 1 John 4:8

Say In 1 John 4:8, the Bible says, "God is love." We

have a BIG God, so that's a lot of love! In Joshua, God says He is with us wherever we go. He loves us! Say it again: "That's a lot of love!" How did Jesus show His love for us? Ask children to respond. **Jesus died for us, saved us from sin, gives us eternal life, keeps His promises, listens to prayers.** After each response, have the children say: "That's a lot of love!"

Say Jesus gives us His love to share. He doesn't want us to keep all that love for ourselves. How can we share the love of Jesus with one another? With our families? Ask children to respond. Remind children that Jesus is at work through us as we help and serve others.

Do This

Say To help you remember, we are making a snack using a symbol for love—a heart. We'll make lots of hearts, because Jesus gives us lots of love. Demonstrate as you explain.

- Cut a V out of the top of a strawberry to remove the leaves and stem. Cut the strawberry in half to make two red hearts. Do the same to a second strawberry.
- Next, take two pieces of watermelon. Use the cookie cutter to cut out as many hearts as possible.
- Make a fruit kabob by pushing your stick through the fruit.

Hold up your finished example and **Say** Red fruit and hearts. This looks like a lot of love! After you make your kabob, dunk it in fruit dip and take a bite. You'll love it! Let's pray. Lead children in a prayer.

Say We dipped our fruit into this lovely dip. When we dip into God's Word, we learn how much Jesus loves us. Jesus died for us, saved us from our sins, and gives us eternal life. That's a lot of love!

ACTIVITY

Who is Important?

Jesus Blesses the Little Children

Mark 10:13-16

You Need

- Pictures of “important” people, such as the president, sports heroes, popular entertainment figures, your pastor, people who have been in recent news events, or famous people in history. You can print these from the Internet or clip them from newspapers or magazines.
- Pictures of infants & children

Get Ready

- Display the pictures in front of the children. Provide a table or shelf on which children can arrange the pictures in order of importance.
- *Options:* String a clothesline and clothespins. Have children use the clothespins to attach the pictures in order of perceived importance. Or clear floor space and have children arrange the pictures in order of importance on the floor.

Introduce the Activity

Read Mark 10:13-16

Say Look at these pictures. Who is the most important person you see?

Ask Why do you think that person is important? Allow for several answers. If you could invite one

of these people to come to your house for dinner, whom would you invite? Answers may vary.

Encourage children to explain the reasons for their choices. Then ask children to arrange the pictures in order of importance.

Say We often look at people the same way Jesus’ disciples did. But Jesus looks at importance differently. His disciples needed to be reminded that the kingdom of God belongs to those who have faith, no matter how young they are. Rather than turning away the children, Jesus welcomed them to come to Him and blessed them. He said, “Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it” (Mark 10:15).

Ask What do you think He meant? Accept answers.

Say Most of the time, children must depend on someone else to meet their daily needs. They trust parents and others to take care of them and give them a home, food, clothes, and so forth. Jesus was saying that as children trust others to provide for their daily needs, so we all should “receive the kingdom of God” with childlike trust, rather than trust our own efforts to earn it.

Ask How are we like children when it comes to faith? Can we ever please God by what we do? **No. No one—not an adult, baby, or small child—can save himself or herself.**

Say God, in His love, knows that we are like helpless children who can do nothing to save ourselves. In His love, He provides all that we need for this body and life, working salvation for us in His Son. God loves to give to the helpless.

He brought us into His family through Baptism, using our parents as His arms. God works through His Word and Holy Communion to keep us in the faith, forgiving our sins for Jesus’ sake and promising us a home in heaven with Him someday.