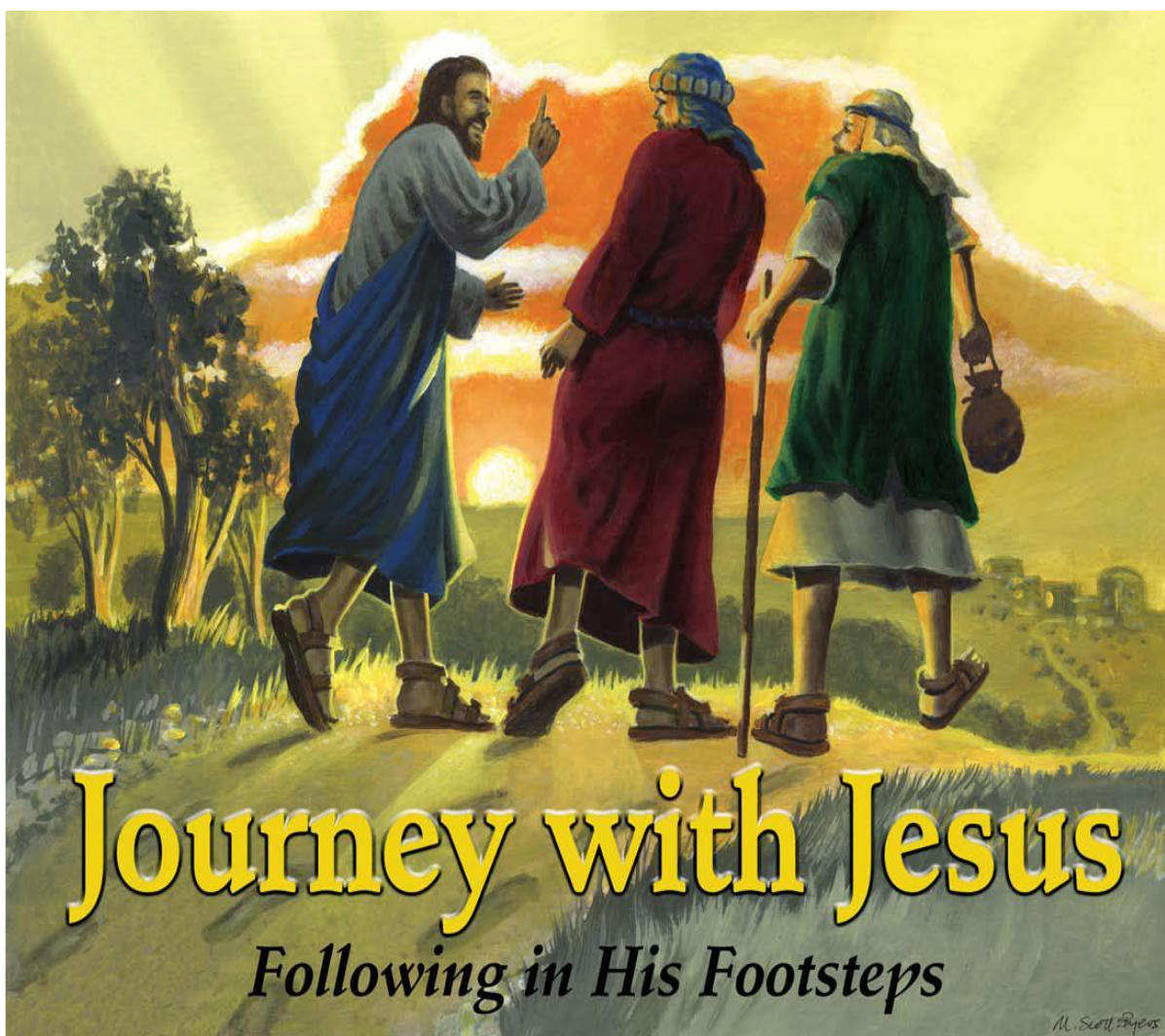


Vacation Bible School
Journey into Worship

*Journey with Jesus—
Following in His Footsteps*



Suggested Elements of Worship for Children (Entering Second through Seventh Grades)

Scripture: Each day the Scripture passage chosen for the week will be read. It is important for children to understand the Scripture and learn how to apply the Bible truths to their everyday life. Departments are encouraged to review the Scripture each day.

Music: Music is a powerful medium to use with children. The praise songs suggested were chosen because of the simplicity of the words and the message. Children are literal learners. If other songs are chosen, remember to find Scripture-based songs without symbolism, if possible. Remember to obtain permission to print the words of copyrighted songs from CCLI. Consider using a children's praise team to lead each day. The children would learn the songs prior to VBS. Each day, they would stand at the front with the children's minister, minister of music, or other leader to lead in worship. Music may also be included in each department during the large group time or as a separate rotation activity. The children could work on the same songs that will be used during the joint worship time. Sign language for key words or appropriate movement could be added to help the children remember the words to the songs.

The suggested songs are:

I'll Follow You (Theme Song)

A Brand New Me

It All Comes Down to Love

Let's Get Started

There is Someone

Without You, Jesus

Mission Stories: Missions should be an important part of VBS. A mission story is provided for each session. The mission stories highlight ministries supported by **The Cooperative Program** PowerPoint®. Each day the children will hear stories about ministries supported by the Cooperative Program. The mission story may be told as a part of the corporate worship experience each day and/or as a part of the daily mission activity. Pictures are included in the PowerPoint®.

Offering: Another element of worship is bringing an offering. Children and parents need to understand that VBS is free and these offerings are not payment for them to attend. The offering may be used for a local mission project, or it may be sent to your state convention office to be used in other mission efforts. The offering may be taken during the joint worship time by older children, or older children could stand by the exit doors with containers. As the children are dismissed by grade level, they could place their offerings in the container. Create a diagram for each class, showing them which door to use for an exit. This will speed up the exit each day.

Pledges: The pledges to the American Flag, Christian Flag, and the Bible are also important elements of VBS worship. Allow children in each grade to hold the flags and the Bible. Prepare a schedule prior to VBS indicating which departments will be responsible for leading the pledges

for each day. The children chosen from those departments will meet with the director of VBS early each day to go over instructions about the pledges.

Presenting the Plan of Salvation: On Day 4, the plan of salvation may be presented to the children. Please refer to the **Joint Worship Teaching Resource: Talking to Children about Salvation** for suggestions on presenting the plan of salvation to children. See other suggestions in the joint worship material for Day 4.

Suggested Order of Worship

Processional (music as the children come in)

Welcome and Introduction of VBS Theme

Praise Song VBS

Scripture

Praise Song

Pledges

Prayer Song

Mission Story

Prayer

Announcements

Recessional and Offering

The suggestions given are provided as a guide only. The elements of worship may be changed to fit your individual needs. A script of the suggested Joint Worship material is also provided in PowerPoint®. The words to the songs may be inserted on the appropriate screens of the PowerPoint® presentation if permission is granted to your church.

Day 1: Jesus Teaches Us to Be a Friend

Slide 1: Theme of VBS

Praise Song— Choose songs from the CD to play as the children are entering the worship center.

Welcome (Worship leader): Say, *Welcome to VBS! This week our theme is **Journey with Jesus—Following in His Footsteps**. We will follow Jesus as He journeys along the roads of Palestine! Each day, you will meet some of Jesus' friends. It's going to be an exciting journey!*

Slide 2: *Today, Jesus will teach us how to be a friend. He will introduce us to four friends and their friend who couldn't walk. It is a great Bible story! Put on your sandals and get ready to walk! We will cover many miles this week. Let's get started right now!*

Slides 3-29: Praise song

Praise Song: "Let's Get Started"¹

Slide 30: Unit Bible Verse

(Worship leader): Say, *This week all of the Bible stories will be from the New Testament. Our unit Bible verse is found in the book of Acts. Listen as I read Acts 1:8.*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus is telling us all that we have a job to do. We need to be witnesses everywhere (name your city, state, and country). Now, let's all read the Bible verse together. Are you ready to sing? Stand up, and let's join our praise team as we sing!

Slides 31-64: Theme Song

"I'll follow you"²

Pledges—Each day, the children holding the flags and the Bible will sit on the front row. During the song, ask the children to take their places on the platform with the flags and the Bible.

Slide 65: Pledge to the American Flag

Pledge to the American Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now stand and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. **ATTENTION** (child stands straight beside the flag), **SALUTE** (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), **PLEDGE** (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). **I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with***

¹ "Let's Get Started" words by Martha Bolton, music by Bob Singleton. © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI/Sky Taylor Music ASCAP. CCLI# 5543557

² "I'll follow You" music and new lyrics by Bob Singleton (lyrics adapted and based on "Now I Resolve with All My Heart" by Anne Steele, from *Poems on Subjects Chiefly Devotional*, published in 1760. © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI. CCLI# 5543784

liberty and justice for all. When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all the pledges have been given.

Slide 66: Pledge to the Christian Flag

Pledge to the Christian Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Christian Flag. ATTENTION (child stands straight beside the flag), SALUTE (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), PLEDGE (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all pledges have been given.

Slide 67: Pledge to the Bible

Pledge to the Bible— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Bible, God's holy word. ATTENTION (child stands with the Bible in one hand down to the side of his or her body), SALUTE (child lifts the Bible to waist position and holds the Bible with two hands), PLEDGE (child straightens arms so Bible is visible).* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the Bible and return to sit on the front row for the remainder of the service.

Slides 68-101: Worship Song

"There is Someone"³

Slides 102-103: Mission story and Picture

Each day at this time, we will hear a mission story about **The Cooperative Program**. Different ministries around Texas are supported by the Cooperative Program. Show the pictures on the PowerPoint® while telling the story.

The Parable of the Three Farmers

Three farmers in Texas went out to farm. All three farmers made the most of their field and their fields produced a great harvest. But the first farmer was a bit short-sighted. He kept all his harvest, plus the seeds for the coming year at home. So, while he kept the farm going, the impact he had was limited—very limited.

The second farmer took care of his own farm, but he also helped three other farms. He sent some of his seeds and a percentage of his crops to Africa. He also sent a percentage to a new farm in Texas and a struggling farm in Canada. He was glad he could help, but he still wished he could do so much more, but how?

And then there was the third farmer. He had an amazing vision. He partnered with other farmers. Together, they even sent farmers around the world to teach others how to farm. It changed the world. And all because the farmers in the co-op took a percentage of their resources to share with those who had never even seen a tomato, a soybean, or a squash.

³ "There is someone", by Martha Bolton & Bob Singleton. © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI/Sky Taylor Music, ASCAP. CCLI #5625396

If you haven't figured it out, the farmers are the churches. The harvest and the seeds are the tithes and offerings we give back to God. We live in a world of spiritually hungry people, lost with no hope in God. Some keep their harvest at home. They do their best to make a difference, but their reach extends only to the acres on which they live. Others give to a few specific places. They see an extended harvest, but it gets exciting when we know the power of the co-op. We call it the Cooperative Program. We are a network of disciples, farmers if you will, working together to do the things we could never do alone. Go and do likewise.

Worship Leader: (At this time, the children chosen to receive the offering should take their baskets and stand by the exit doors) *Today as you leave, there will be children at the door with baskets for your offerings. This week the money that you bring each day will be given to _____ (Explain this ministry to the children so they will understand what their money will help buy).*

Prayer Time—*Thank you, God, for this first day of VBS. Thank you for all the children who came today. We pray that new friends will come tomorrow. Thank you for caring for us. Amen.*

Slide 104: VBS Theme

Recessional and Offering: "I'll follow you"

Play this song as the children. Dismiss the children by grade level and remind them to use the doors assigned to them to exit.

Day 2: Jesus Teaches Us about Caring for Others

Slide 1: Theme of VBS

Praise Song— Choose songs from the CD to play as the children are entering the worship center.

Welcome: (Worship leader): Say, *Welcome to VBS! Did you have a fun time yesterday? If this is your first day of VBS, raise your hand. Wow! Thank you, children, for inviting your friends. Keep up the good work! Our theme this week is "Journey with Jesus—Following in His Footsteps."*

Slide 2: Session Title: *Today, Jesus will teach us how to care for others. You will hear the Bible story about "The Good Samaritan". Jesus told this story to us so we will know how to be a good neighbor. Tighten your sandals! We have a long walk ahead of us! Are you ready to sing? Let's get started!*

Slides 3-29: Praise Song

Praise Song: "Let's get started"

Slide 30: Unit Bible Verse

(Worship leader): Say, *This week all of the Bible stories will be from the New Testament. Our unit Bible verse is found in the book of Acts. Listen as I read Acts 1:8.*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus is telling us all that we have a job to do. We need to be witnesses everywhere (name your city, state, and country). Now, let's all read the Bible verse together. Are you ready to sing? Stand up, and let's join our praise team as we sing!

Slides 31-64: Theme Song

"I'll follow you"

Pledges—Each day, the children holding the flags and the Bible will sit on the front row. During the song, ask the children to take their places on the platform with the flags and the Bible.

Slide 65: Pledge to the American Flag

Pledge to the American Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now stand and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. **ATTENTION** (child stands straight beside the flag), **SALUTE** (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), **PLEDGE** (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). **I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.** When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all the pledges have been given.*

Slide 66: Pledge to the Christian Flag

Pledge to the Christian Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Christian Flag. ATTENTION (child stands straight beside the flag), SALUTE (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), PLEDGE (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all pledges have been given.

Slide 67: Pledge to the Bible

Pledge to the Bible— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Bible, God's holy word. ATTENTION (child stands with the Bible in one hand down to the side of his or her body), SALUTE (child lifts the Bible to waist position and holds the Bible with two hands), PLEDGE (child straightens arms so Bible is visible).* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the Bible and return to sit on the front row for the remainder of the service.

Slides 68-104: Worship Song

Praise Song: "Without You, Jesus"⁴

Slides 105-106: Mission story and Picture

Today we will hear how our gifts to the Cooperative Program provide for new churches. Show the picture on the PowerPoint® while telling the story.

Church Starting: Tradewind Community Church | Amarillo, TX

When Brad and Sarah Newman felt a call to church planting, they thought they would have to move far away from their home city, Amarillo. Then, with the help of their own church, South Georgia Baptist Church, they realized there was an opportunity right down the street.

“The idea of this Tradewind community kind of looked us in the face... here’s a place with tremendous growth and no church,” Brad Newman said.

An elementary school in the area offered to host the new church, and Tradewind Community Church was born. They immediately began planning events to draw people in.

The Easter festival was the church’s first community outreach event. Hundreds of people attended, and it provided a great opportunity to minister to Tradewind Community Church’s new neighbors. For the new church, funds from the Cooperative Program were essential in offsetting the costs of Easter eggs, food, and games for all those who attended.

The following day, Easter Sunday, Tradewind hosted their first service. Many of the people who attended came because they had heard about the church the day before at the Easter festival.

⁴ "Without you, Jesus", words by Martha Bolton, music by Bob Singleton. © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI/Sky Taylor Music, ASCAP. CCLI # 5536375

Our church's gifts through the Cooperative Program provide for new churches like this one, that share the love of Christ with communities around our state. Join me in praying today for Tradewind Community Church as it continues to grow and minister to the community.

Worship leader: (At this time, the children chosen to receive the offering should take their baskets and stand by the exit doors) *Today as you leave, there will be children at the door with baskets for your offerings. This week the money that you bring each day will be given to _____ (Explain this ministry to the children so they will understand what their money will help buy).*

Prayer Time: *Thank you, God, for VBS. Thank you, God, for the children that came today. We pray that new friends will come tomorrow. We love you, Amen.*

Slide 107: VBS Theme Picture

Recessional and Offering: "I'll follow you"

Play this song as the children exit. Dismiss the children by grade level and remind them to use the doors assigned to them to exit.

Day 3: Jesus Teaches Us About Loving Others

Slide 1: Theme of VBS

Praise Song— Choose songs from the CD to play as the children are entering the worship center.

Welcome (Worship leader): Say, *Welcome to the third day of VBS! Have you had fun this week? If this is your first day of VBS, raise your hand. Wow! Thank you, children, for inviting your friends. Keep up the good work!*

Slide 2: Session Title: *Today, Jesus will teach us how to love others. You will hear the Bible story about "Zacchaeus". Zacchaeus did not have many friends. Jesus showed Zacchaeus that He loved him very much. I can't wait for you to hear the story! Are you ready to sing? Let's get started!*

Slides 3-29: Worship Song

Praise Song: "Let's get started"

Slide 30: Unit Bible Verse

(Worship leader): Say, *This week all of the Bible stories will be from the New Testament. Our unit Bible verse is found in the book of Acts. Listen as I read Acts 1:8.*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus is telling us all that we have a job to do. We need to be witnesses everywhere (name your city, state, and country). Now, let's all read the Bible verse together. Are you ready to sing? Stand up, and let's join our praise team as we sing!

Slides 31-64: Worship Song

Praise Song: "I'll follow You"

Pledges—Each day, the children holding the flags and the Bible will sit on the front row. During the song, ask the children to take their places on the platform with the flags and the Bible.

Slide 65: Pledge to the American Flag

Pledge to the American Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now stand and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. **ATTENTION** (child stands straight beside the flag), **SALUTE** (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), **PLEDGE** (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). **I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.** When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all the pledges have been given.*

Slide 66: Pledge to the Christian Flag

Pledge to the Christian Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Christian Flag. ATTENTION (child stands straight beside the flag), SALUTE (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), PLEDGE (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all pledges have been given.

Slide 67: Pledge to the Bible

Pledge to the Bible— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Bible, God's holy word. ATTENTION (child stands with the Bible in one hand down to the side of his or her body), SALUTE (child lifts the Bible to waist position and holds the Bible with two hands), PLEDGE (child straightens arms so Bible is visible).* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the Bible and return to sit on the front row for the remainder of the service.

Slides 68-109: Worship Song

"It all comes down to love"⁵

Slides 110-111: Mission story and Picture

Today our mission story tells us how our gifts to the Cooperative Program help people find the help they need and find hope.

STCH Ministries | Corpus Christi, TX

Tabitha was stricken with guilt, grief, and hopelessness. She had traveled a long, hard road, suffering tremendous emotional and physical abuse throughout her life and also in her first marriage. She felt unworthy, unloved, and unfit to be a mother to her three children.

These overwhelming feelings led her to make a decision that haunted her for years to come. Tabitha decided to leave her family, believing she wasn't enough for them, for God, for anyone.

But God had a plan of redemption for Tabitha. He led her to STCH Ministries Family Counseling Corpus Christi, where she met with a STCH Ministries counselor, who listened, cared, and believed that she was a worthy person. The counselor became a representation of God's grace for Tabitha. Through the course of counseling, the counselor helped Tabitha learn about her true identity in Christ.

As she healed, Tabitha reconnected with her grown children and now enjoys the blessing of being a part of her grandchildren's lives.

⁵ "It All Comes Down to Love," by Bob Singleton & Martha Bolton © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI/Sky Taylor Music, ASCAP. CCLI# 5543832

Tabitha recently wrote a sweet note to the counselor celebrating the freedom and blessings she now has. Tabitha shares in her message “I love my life...and I know that God and you did an amazing thing for me; you taught me to smile again.”

When our church gives through the Cooperative Program, we are supporting STCH Ministries as they share God’s love with broken, hopeless people. Let’s pray for counselors like this one as they come alongside these people, restoring life and hope.

Worship Leader: (At this time, the children chosen to receive the offering should take their baskets and stand by the exit doors) *Today as you leave, there will be children at the door with baskets for your offerings. This week the money that you bring each day will be given to _____ (Explain this ministry to the children so they will understand what their money will help buy).*

Prayer Time: *Thank you, God, for VBS. Thank you, God, for the children who came today. Thank you for loving us. We love you. Amen.*

Slide 112: VBS Theme Picture

Recessional and Offering: "I'll follow you"

Play this song as the children exit. Dismiss the children by grade level and remind them to use the doors assigned to them to exit

Day 4: Jesus Loves Us

Slide 1: Theme of VBS

Praise Song— Choose songs from the CD to play as the children are entering the worship center.

Welcome (Worship leader): Say, *Welcome to the fourth day of VBS! Have you had a good time? Do we have new children today?*

Slide 2: Session Title

Today we will learn that Jesus loves us. John 3:16 tells us that God loved us so much that He gave His only Son so that we may have never-ending or eternal life! We will talk more about this eternal life a little later. Are you ready to sing? Let's get started!

Slides 3-29: Worship Song

Praise Song: "Let's get started"

Slide 30: Unit Bible Verse

(Worship leader): Say, *This week all of the Bible stories will be from the New Testament. Our unit Bible verse is found in the book of Acts. Listen as I read Acts 1:8.*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus is telling us all that we have a job to do. We need to be witnesses everywhere (name your city, state, and country). Now, let's all read the Bible verse together. Are you ready to sing? Stand up, and let's join our praise team as we sing!

Slides 31-64: Worship Song

"I'll follow you"

Pledges—Each day, the children holding the flags and the Bible will sit on the front row. During the song, ask the children to take their places on the platform with the flags and the Bible.

Slide 65: Pledge to the American Flag

Pledge to the American Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now stand and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. **ATTENTION** (child stands straight beside the flag), **SALUTE** (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), **PLEDGE** (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). **I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.** When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all the pledges have been given.*

Slide 66: Pledge to the Christian Flag

Pledge to the Christian Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Christian Flag. ATTENTION (child stands straight beside the flag), SALUTE (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), PLEDGE (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all pledges have been given.

Slide 67: Pledge to the Bible

Pledge to the Bible— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Bible, God's holy word. ATTENTION (child stands with the Bible in one hand down to the side of his or her body), SALUTE (child lifts the Bible to waist position and holds the Bible with two hands), PLEDGE (child straightens arms so Bible is visible).* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the Bible and return to sit on the front row for the remainder of the service.

Slides 68-110: Worship Song

"A brand new me"⁶

Slides 111-112: Mission story and Picture

Today our mission story is about how our gifts to the Cooperative Program help children find a loving home. Show the picture as you tell the story.

Children at Heart Ministries | Round Rock, TX

From the time Scott and Kelsi Knife were married, God grew a dream in their hearts of fostering and adopting. When faced with unexpected infertility for two years, Scott and Kelsi reached out to STARRY, a faith-based Christian foster care and adoption agency based in Round Rock, about the steps necessary to become licensed foster parents. STARRY is a partner ministry of Children at Heart Ministries, a Texas Baptists affiliated institution.

After three months of training, the couple was licensed. Within a week they received a call about nine-day-old Colton, whom they joyfully welcomed into their home.

“As long as I live, I will never forget that day,” Scott recalls. “It was amazing that we were entrusted with something so precious.”

Just three days after bringing Colton home, Scott and Kelsi received another surprise blessing — Kelsi was pregnant.

⁶ "A brand new me," by Bob Singleton & Martha Bolton © 2009 Agnes Day Music, BMI & Sky Taylor Música ASCAP. Scripture quoted by permission from the NET Bible® (New English Translation) copyright ©1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. www.bible.org All rights reserved. CCLI# 5536296

Knowing the value of biological family and in support of eventual reunification, Scott and Kelsi strove to maintain a relationship with Colton's biological mother. Realizing Scott and Kelsi could provide a safe and loving home, Colton's mother asked if they would be willing to adopt Colton.

In December 2016 they found out they were approved to move forward with the adoption. In July 2017, Colton officially became part of their family.

When our church gives through the Cooperative Program, we are supporting the great work that Children at Heart Ministries does through foster care and adoption. Let's pray that more hearts will be open to foster and adopt children desperately in need of a loving home.

***Option:** At this time, you may decide to share the plan of salvation with the children. Decide which children should remain in the worship center. You may decide that sending children entering second and third grades back to their classes may be best for your situation. A minister or director of that department could share with those children in their classroom. As the younger children leave, lead the other children in singing "I'll Follow You." They will give their offerings as they leave. Please refer to **Talking to Children about Salvation** (pages 16-18 or on the VBS website) for guidance in sharing the plan of salvation with children.

After sharing the plan of salvation with the children, ask the children who would like to know more about becoming a Christian to come to the front. It's better not to offer an invitation because some children will walk down because their friends are coming. Dismiss the classes as you have done each day. The children taking the offering should be at the door. Communicate with the teachers that someone will bring the children who have made decisions back to their room. Make sure to have enough adults to talk to the children at this time and record the decisions so a follow-up visit can take place.

Today as you leave, there will be children at the door with baskets for your offerings. This week the money that you bring each day will be given to _____ (Explain this ministry to the children so they will understand what their money will help buy).

Prayer Time: *Thank you, God, for VBS. Thank you, God, for all the children who came today. Thank you for giving us never-ending life. Help us to know You better. We love You. Amen.*

Slide 113: VBS Theme Picture

Recessional and Offering: "I'll follow you"

Play this song as the children exit. Dismiss the children by grade level and remind them to use the doors assigned to them to exit.

Talking to Children about Salvation

Written by: **Dr. Tommy Sanders, Vice President for Academic and Graduate Programs
at East Texas Baptist University
Marshall, Texas**

Guiding children to take those first steps toward faith can be the most rewarding opportunity for life for both parents and teachers. The journey toward faith is filled with teachable moments. Influential adults and peers can answer questions, teach biblical truths, model Christian values, and share personal testimonies that further the child's understanding. The following information will prepare teachers for opportunities to talk with children about salvation.

Ask Follow-Up Questions

When a child asks a question, often the child does not know exactly what to ask. Get clarification before deciding how to answer the question. For example, you might say, *Tell me more about what you are thinking.* You may ask questions such as, *What made you ask that question? where did you hear about this?* Many times, the question a child asks may not be the actual question for which the child needs an answer. Avoid asking questions that can be answered with *yes* or *no*.

Avoid Giving More Information Than Needed

Adults are often tempted to tell all they know on a subject. When a child asks a question, answer only what the child is asking. Listen carefully to the child. If the child asks for more information, be more specific with your answers.

Don't Jump to Conclusions

A child may ask, *Why did Andy get baptized?* This question may be only a request for information, not a request for the gospel presentation.

Speak in Clear and Simple Terms

Avoid symbolic analogies and "church language" that may distract from discussion and understanding. Common "church language" includes words and phrases children hear only at church, such as "come forward," "saved," "everlasting life," "baptism," "prayer," "Holy Spirit," and "have Jesus come into your heart." Rather than using the phrase "accepting Jesus into your heart," say the words "becoming a Christian."

Baptism

Baptism is the immersion of a believed in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a picture of what Jesus did to save us—death, burial, and resurrection. Always make a distinction between baptism and becoming a Christian. Point out that becoming a Christian comes first. Someone is baptized as an outward sign that he or she has already asked Jesus to come into his or her life as Savior and Lord. The person is already a Christian.

What a Child Needs to Know about Salvation

1. God loves you and has a great plan for your life (Psalm 139:13-16).

Talk about these truths: God made the world; God made people; God made you; God wants to have a relationship with you. Say, *Tell me one way you know God loves you.*

2. We have all sinned (Romans 3:23).

Everyone must understand that he or she is separated from God because of his or her sin. Sin is best understood as choosing to do things our way instead of God's way. (Give examples of sin, such as disobedience, ungratefulness, and lying.) Ask the child, *Have you ever sinned? What does God think about sin?* Point out that everyone has sinned.

3. Even though we choose to sin, God still loves us and offers to forgive us (Romans 5:8).

Ask, *How do you think it makes God feel when you sin?* Focus on the fact that God loves us even when we sin. Say, *God promised that a Savior would come who would die for all people. Do you know who that Savior is? Did you know that He died for you?*

4. Jesus died for us (John 3:16).

Talk about John 3:16. Explain that because sin separates people from God, everyone needs a Savior. Say, *Do you know why Jesus died?* Say, *Jesus loves you so much. He willingly died for you so you could be with God forever.* To become a Christian, you must do these three things: admit you have sinned; believe that Jesus is God's Son; confess that Jesus is your Savior and Lord.

Review and Follow up

Encourage a child to tell you in his or her own words what he or she understands and believes. Either ask the child to repeat a prayer after you or help the child know what to say in his or her own prayer. After the prayer, read Romans 10:13 and remind the child that this verse is a promise. Jesus will be our Savior forever.

The *ABCs* of Becoming a Christian

A—Admit to God you are a sinner. When you choose to do things your way instead of God's way, it is sin. Sin separates you from God. All people need to admit to God they have sinned and ask for God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

B—Believe that Jesus is God's Son and accept God's gift of forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. God loves you so much that God sent His only Son to die for the world and for you (John 3:16).

C—Confess Jesus as your Savior and Lord. When you become a Christian, you are saying that you want God to forgive you and that you want Jesus to be your boss (Romans 10:9-10).

Prayer

Say, If you want to talk to God about accepting Jesus as your Savior, no words are better than your own words. If you need a little help, you can pray like this:

God, I know that You love me and have a great plan for my life. I admit I have sinned and chosen to do things my way instead of Your way. I believe that Jesus is Your Son and that Jesus died for me. Please forgive me of my sin. As of today, Jesus is my Lord and Savior. Amen.

Encourage the child to tell his or her parents and Sunday school teacher about asking Jesus to come into his or her life.

Day 5: Jesus Teaches Us to Witness

Slide 1: Theme of VBS

Praise Song— Choose songs from the CD to play as the children are entering the worship center.

Welcome (Worship leader): Say, *Welcome to the last day of VBS! Have you had a good time this week? Let's show your teachers how much we appreciate all they have done to help you have a fun week* (Clap).

Slide 2: Session Title

Today in our Bible story, we will hear the story when Jesus leaves His friends on Earth and goes to Heaven! I can't wait for you to hear this story! He will tell His followers that they should continue telling others about Him. We also have the job of continuing to tell others about Jesus. Well, are you ready to sing? Let's get started!

Slides 3-29: Worship Song

Praise Song: "Let's get started"

Slide 30: Unit Bible Verse

(Worship leader): Say, *This week all of the Bible stories will be from the New Testament. Our unit Bible verse is found in the book of Acts. Listen as I read Acts 1:8.*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus is telling us all that we have a job to do. We need to be witnesses everywhere (name your city, state, and country). Now, let's all read the Bible verse together. Are you ready to sing? Stand up, and let's join our praise team as we sing!

Slides 31-64: Worship Song

"I'll follow you"

Pledges—Each day, the children holding the flags and the Bible will sit on the front row. During the song, ask the children to take their places on the platform with the flags and the Bible.

Slide 65: Pledge to the American Flag

Pledge to the American Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now stand and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. **ATTENTION** (child stands straight beside the flag), **SALUTE** (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), **PLEDGE** (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). **I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.** When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all the pledges have been given.*

Slide 66: Pledge to the Christian Flag

Pledge to the Christian Flag— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Christian Flag. ATTENTION (child stands straight beside the flag), SALUTE (child picks up the flag and places the end of the pole in the center of his or her stomach, holding the flag with two hands), PLEDGE (child lowers the flag so it is visible while all say the pledge). I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the flag and place it in the stand. The child remains standing by the flag until all pledges have been given.

Slide 67: Pledge to the Bible

Pledge to the Bible— (Worship leader) Say, *Let us now say the pledge to the Bible, God's holy word. ATTENTION (child stands with the Bible in one hand down to the side of his or her body), SALUTE (child lifts the Bible to waist position and holds the Bible with two hands), PLEDGE (child straightens arms so Bible is visible).* When the pledge is complete, the child will lower the Bible and return to sit on the front row for the remainder of the service.

Slides 68-104: Worship Song

"Without you, Jesus"⁷

Slides 105-106: Mission story and Picture

Today our mission story tells us how our gifts to the Cooperative Program help care for vulnerable people in all stages of life.

Buckner International

Buckner International is a ministry dedicated to the transformation and restoration of the lives they serve. It is a Christ-centered organization that delivers redemptive ministry to the most vulnerable from the beginning to the ending of life. To help achieve this mission, Buckner has joined Faith Fosters Texas, a Texas Baptists initiative aimed at addressing the foster-care crisis in Texas.

David Ummel is leading this new initiative. He is Buckner's head of church and network relations for Faith Fosters Texas as they recruit, equip, and provide support to churches ministering to vulnerable children and their families. The new initiative will either provide direct services or collaborate with appropriate bridge ministries in order to maximize resources and impact.

"What happens to children when they are suffering abuse and neglect grieves the heart of God," Ummel explained. "As the Church, we need to respond to the biblical mandate to care for the fatherless and orphaned."

⁷ "Without you, Jesus," words by Martha Bolton, music by Bob Singleton. Copyright © 2009 Martha Bolton and Bob Singleton. CCLI #5536375

When we give through the Cooperative Program, we support ministries like Buckner International as they care for vulnerable people in all stages of life. Let's pray for David Ummel and Faith Fosters Texas as they help churches care for foster-care and adoptive families

Worship Leader: (At this time, the children chosen to receive the offering should take their baskets and stand by the exit doors) *Today as you leave, there will be children at the door with baskets for your offerings. This week the money that you bring each day will be given to _____* (Explain this ministry to the children so they will understand what their money will help buy).

Prayer Time: *Thank you, God, for VBS. Thank you, God, for all the children who came today. Thank you for sending Jesus. Help us to know You better and tell other people about You. We love you, Amen.*

Slide 107: VBS Theme Picture

Recessional and Offering: "I'll follow you"

Play this song as the children exit. Dismiss the children by grade level and remind them to use the doors assigned to them to exit.