



Helping our youngest children
be rooted and established in God's love



“ For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:14-19

The prayer of Little Oaks Curriculum is to see our youngest children rooted and established in the love of God, that they will grow knowing how loved they are by God and that this would form the foundation of their lives.



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session overview

For those of you who haven't read the teaching notes here is a brief overview of how to use this curriculum. Little Oaks is a play based Bible curriculum for under 5's. My desire is for this curriculum to link the research there is in how children learn with teaching them about God. For this reason most of the session for Rooted (3-5's) should be free play with the suggested activities set up as an option for the children during the free play time; for Acorns (under 3's) all the activities are options during the free play time.

There are five sessions per month with separate activities for Acorns and Rooted. If you have a different age split to this take ideas from both age sessions and use what works best for you. It is designed so that if you print it out double sided you will have Acorns on one side and Rooted on the other to make it easier for those with different age groups. There is an example run through of sessions for various ages in the teaching notes.

There are 11 months included in this curriculum, although November has six sessions. Often churches don't have a lot of children's work in December, instead they have family services more frequently and therefore there isn't much need for a full December session plan. The longer November plan should cover you for December as well. Another key feature of this curriculum is repetition, the idea is that for Acorns you choose your favourite six months and repeat them every six months and Rooted repeat the sessions every 12 months. Young children won't remember exactly what they've been taught until they are four or five and therefore repeating the key truths we are trying to teach them is helpful in building a solid foundation of who God is.

There are four sections to the curriculum: Play, Discuss, Praise, and Make. For all ages the Play section is meant to be used throughout the free play time. It's a list of questions and talking points to use to start conversations with them throughout the session, as well as an activity to set up amongst the toys with which the children can choose to engage. Discuss is about reading the Bible story along with a suggested activity or conversation points. For Rooted I would read the story to the children as a group whereas for Acorns I would read the story to them in ones and twos throughout the session, rather than trying to sit them all down together. Praise involves singing with the children and prayer time. Part of the prayer time is chat and catch. If you're new to this you will find more information on it in the Teaching Notes section. Make is a craft suggestion for the session which you can either do altogether or you can set it up as an option during the play time. There is no craft activity for Acorns as generally they can't do the craft independently. If you would like to do a craft with that age group you can use the craft for Rooted.

If you need any further information on any of the different sections you will find a detailed explanation in the Teaching Notes. Please bear in mind when reading this curriculum that it is meant to be flexible and serve you well. If any activities aren't going to work or you have a better idea, do that instead. You know your setting and your children and this is meant to be a template to help you plan your sessions rather than an exhaustive session planner, though it can be used as the latter if needed. Remember as well that what matters most during these sessions is loving the children in your care. If you feel like you have taught them nothing in a session but you have cared for them and loved them you have done the most valuable thing. We need to love these children first and anything we teach them is a bonus!

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Please note there are no session plans for December, instead there are 6 session plans for November to take into consideration carol services etc.



God is always with me

January
Week 1

Bible Passage: Moses in the bulrushes, Exodus 2:1-10

Supplies

- Dolls
- A Moses basket
- Blue material for the river

Discuss

Bible Story

Read the children the story of Moses in the Bulrushes and talk to them about how God was with Moses and his mum even when it didn't feel like it. God looked after them in a really scary situation.

Play

Talking Points

- God is always with us
- Places you have been this week and that God was there
- Different things you do, like have a bath, go to sleep, eat your breakfast etc. and that God is with you
- When you feel sad or happy or scared and how God is with you

Play Activity

Set up a play area with babies and a Moses basket and sensory materials for the river. Explore the story with the children talking about how the people felt at various points in the story and that God was with the characters no matter what they were feeling.

Praise

Interactive Prayer

When the children play with the activity pray over them that they would know God with them always, even when they don't know how things will work out. Pray that the children will see God's presence in all they do.



God is always with me

January
Week 1

Bible Passage: Moses in the bulrushes, Exodus 2:1-10

Supplies

- Moses basket
- Baby
- Blue material for the river
- Small peg dolls
- Cardboard or paper
- Moses basket
- Fabric for blankets for the craft

Play

Talking Points

Talk to the children about:

- God is always with us
- Places you have been this week and that God was there
- Different things you do, like have a bath, go to sleep, eat your breakfast etc and that God is with you when you do that
- Times you have been sad, happy or scared and how God was with you at these times.

Ask the children:

- Where was God when they went to school or nursery?
- Where is God when they are sad?
- Where is God when they are happy?
- If they moved house would God still be with them?

Play Activity

Set up an area with dolls, a Moses basket and a river made with different types of blue fabric. When the children come over to play with it talk to them about Moses' mum putting him in the bulrushes. Ask how they would feel and what they would have done. Ask what they think God will do, what do they think the end of the story will be.

Discuss

Bible Story

Using the play area that you have set up earlier to act out the story with the children. Tell the whole story this time and ask the children to follow you as you walk through the story. Talk about how everyone would feel at different points in the story and have the children predict what they think will happen. Talk about how God was always with them, ask the children at various points, where was God when this happened. Remind them at the end that God was always with the children and is always with them too.

Chat and Catch

Start with general chat and catch questions. Tell God your favourite TV programme that you watched this week. Ask God where He was when you watched it. Tell God your favourite meal this week. Ask God where He was when you ate it.

Interactive Prayer

When the children play with the activity pray over them that they would know God with them always, even when they don't know how things will work out. Pray that the children will see God's presence in all they do.

Make

Craft

Use a small peg doll to be Moses and make a paper Moses basket. The children can decorate this and use a piece of fabric to wrap around the peg doll. Glue the blanket on so it doesn't come off and talk about how this is to remind them God is always with them.