

WEEK ONE

XL: Genesis 7:1-5; 11-12

FAMILY ENCOUNTER

SUPPLIES:

- Bible
- Sacred Candle & Matches/Lighter
- A Sweet Treat (marshmallow, cookie, etc. Just make sure it won't melt!)

WELCOMING GOD:

Gather together, and welcome God into this time and space through the lighting of a candle. Take this moment to pause briefly and sit quietly in this light for a few moments allowing time for everyone to relax their body, mind, and spirit for this time. In these moments, the invitation is to become aware of God's presence with and amongst you as a family.

Sharing with God and One Another:

Say: "If anything is on our minds that makes it difficult for us to focus, let's share it now and then let it go."

-Whoever leads this portion might share what is on his or her mind to model this. Give time for each person to respond. When everyone who desires to has responded, invite everyone to place their hands out and lift them up as we give these distractions to God

OR

you can invite the family to pray together as one person leads saying the following:

Dear Loving God,

The One who knows our hearts, celebrates our victories, grieves with us during our losses, and gives us the strength to overcome our challenges. Please help us to let go of the distractions we name now, so that we can openly share with our family and may encounter you in a special way today. Our distractions are: (let there be silence here, so everyone has an opportunity to name aloud what is distracting them).

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Encountering God:

Read: Read aloud Genesis 7: 1-5 & 11-12

-Take turns reading the scripture or have a different family member read the scripture each week.

Genesis 7:1-5

“Then the Lord said to Noah, ‘Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.’ And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.”

Genesis 7:11-12

“In the six-hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. The rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.”

Encountering Each Other:

Activity (pt. 1): Set out a plate of sweet treats (cookies, candies, marshmallows, your choice)

Say: Wow! It sure seems like a lot of time passed between Noah’s conversation with God about building the ark and the actual first drops of rain.

Discussion Questions:

- How do you think Noah felt while he waited?
- What was Noah doing while he waited?
- How do you feel when you have to wait?
- Is there anything you are waiting for now?

*Remember: as each family member shares, affirm what they are waiting for. If they mention the sweet treats that are set out, praise their patience thus far and continue.

Say: While he waited, Noah got to work building the ark and gathering animals. He was busy! Let’s watch a video together about others who are waiting.

Activity (pt. 2): On your computer, go to YouTube and watch The Marshmallow Test (it’s a three and half minute video put out by Igniter

Media: https://youtu.be/QX_oy9614HQ) Feel free to talk about this video as you watch. There are some funny, cute moments in it!

Say: The kids who made it to the end of this video without eating their marshmallow did something interesting. They looked away from the marshmallow or played or paid attention to something other than the marshmallow. Like Noah, they moved their focus. Noah didn't stare at the sky waiting for rain. He got busy building and gathering and preparing. And when the rain came, he was ready. His busyness was more than distraction: it was preparation.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some things we can do while we wait?
- Why do you think Noah's preparations and the kids' distractions helped them wait well?

Say: While Noah prepared, and the kids in our video looked away, twirled in chairs, or put their heads down, their focus was on something other than what they were waiting for. When we wait well, we can put our focus on something different, too. As Christians, we—like Noah—can put our focus on God. We can pray. We can serve others. We can practice waiting well. Let's revisit the answer to the question: what are we waiting for and pray for one another that we will wait well together.

Activity (pt. 3): Go around the table and each take a turn praying for one another. When you finish praying for one another, congratulate everyone on waiting so well and enjoy your sweet treats!

Encountering God Together:

Say:

May we pray together as a family...

- Let us share our prayers for the world: for our country and leaders, for other countries and their leaders...
- Let us share our prayers for the church, ministers, and spiritual leaders...
- Let us share our prayers for our teachers, first responders, friends, and others in the community...
- Let us share our prayers for our family and our own specific needs...

If you would like to record the people for whom you pray, use the next few lines to do so:

*You can also record these requests in a family prayer journal if you are using one.

Encountering Transformation Together:

Pray aloud together:

God, we welcomed you here and read Your Word,
we prayed and we spent time with you,
we rested in your love for us,
and we did this all together.
Now, we promise to love one another and others as you love us.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Blessing One Another for our Encounters with the World:

Invite family members to bless one another using any of the examples below or their own blessings.

Examples:

“I love you. God loves you. I pray God blesses you.”

“God loves you exactly like you are—and so do I.”

“I love the gifts God has given you and how you bless the world with them.”