



The Body

how we fit together in God's perfect plan

Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex July–August 2008
Rainbow Express Curriculum & Mission Trip Planning Packet

What is this packet?

We are so grateful that you have decided to come to Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex for your 2008 Mission Trip. This packet contains all of the information you need to plan for a successful ministry here. Please don't be intimidated by the size of this document. Most of these pages are reproducible coloring sheets, memory verse posters, team rosters, handouts, etc. Use this page as a road map to find what you are looking for. After thumbing through this material, please let us know if there are any questions we can answer. We want to be available to help you in any way that we can as you prepare.

A Note on Saving Money When Printing This Curriculum: Obviously, this is a large document. We believe it is always better to have as much information as possible to be prepared. However, printing a complete copy for every person coming on your trip can become *very* expensive, especially for large churches. Save money by printing this document two-sided and/or in black and white. You also may find it is not necessary to give every person on the trip every page of this packet. This is how we recommend preparing packets:

Section One: Trip Planning Helps for Leaders and Students

- This section contains schedule information, maps, dress codes, descriptions of the types of accommodations where you may be staying, packing lists, contact information for parents, and other general planning information. These pages have a blue border. Print one copy of this for each leader on the trip. Note—even though the information is in the leaders' section, you will probably want to include a copy of the packing list and the dress code for each student.

Section Two: Rainbow Express Training Materials

- This section contains aids for preparing your team to lead Rainbow Express, Mission Arlington's version of an outdoor Vacation Bible School. Here you will find outlines and descriptions of everybody's roles. These pages have a green border. Print one copy of this material for the leader of each Rainbow Express team. (For example, a youth group with 60 people will be four to six Rainbow Express teams.) The leader of each team can distribute the instructions for each role to the correct person.

Section Three: Rainbow Express Curriculum

- This section contains the lesson plans for each of the four days of Rainbow Express. These pages have a red border. Every person coming on the trip needs a copy of this section. Even if they are not leading a particular portion of the Rainbow Express program, they need to be familiar with the whole thing so that they can be prepared to be helpful.

Section Four: Rainbow Express Supplemental Materials

- This section contains reproducible materials and extra helps for Rainbow Express like games instructions, puppet song lyrics, craft sheets, etc. These pages have a purple border. Print one copy of this section for each Rainbow Express Team leader. Each team can be familiar with the craft sheets, song lyrics, etc. The copies for your Rainbow Express programs will be provided by Mission Arlington while you are here unless you notify us ahead of time that you would like to donate these copies.

Please let us know anything we can do to help! If you still have questions about anything at all after reading this packet, or if you just need some guidance in preparing, please do not hesitate to contact us at Mission Arlington. Our office phone number is 817-277-6620.

Section One

Trip Planning Helps for Leaders and Students

- Mission Arlington Key Terms
- Schedules
- Dress code
- Information on accommodations
- Packing lists
- Map to Mission Arlington
- “The Refrigerator Sheet”:
General Mission Arlington
information sheet for
parents
- T-shirt information and
order form for leaders

Mission Arlington Key Terms

A visitor to Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex once told us that we sometimes speak in code. We readily admit that so many different things are happening here that it can become a little confusing. This is an explanation of some terms you will run into over and over in this packet.

- **Apartment Churches:** Mission Arlington began in 1986 with a very simple philosophy: take church to people who, for whatever reason, were not coming to a church building anywhere. On the first Sunday of August of that year, a Bible Study met in the living room of a woman that lived in a local apartment community. That first morning, seventeen people found that they could meet Christ in a church that met right where they lived. Today, more than 270 congregations meet all over Arlington in apartments, mobile homes, community centers, playgrounds, laundry rooms, and wherever people will gather. Any given Sunday, more than 5,000 people attend a Mission Arlington church in their own neighborhood.
- **Rainbow Express:** Rainbow Express is the name of the Backyard Bible Clubs you will be leading while you are here. Mission Arlington has been leading outdoor Vacation Bible Schools for our many apartment churches since the beginning. When these programs first began, the volunteers that were leading them had a large portable stage built on a trailer that they pulled from site to site for puppet shows. This trailer, which was decorated with a rainbow, came to be known to the children as the Rainbow Express. Rainbow Express then became the name for all of the Vacation Bible Schools.
- **Work Projects:** Mission Arlington follows Jesus' model of ministry: meet both physical and spiritual needs to provide a tangible expression of the Father's love and people will be drawn to Him. Part of each day you are here will be spent leading Rainbow Express programs. With the remainder of each day you will participate in some of Mission Arlington's many other ministries. This might include picking up donations, delivering furniture to families, working in the clothing room or the food warehouse, passing out flyers to invite people to an event, holding field days or other fun events in one of the apartment communities, or any number of other opportunities. Any special materials or training that you may need will be provided while you are here.

Tentative Sunday Schedule

- 9:00 AM** Meet at Mission Arlington with all groups for welcome, prayer, and orientation
- 10:00 AM** Students depart with Mission Arlington missionaries to participate in Mission Arlington's apartment churches. Leader of each group joins Tillie Burgin, Executive Director of Mission Arlington, for a tour of Mission Arlington's Ministry
- 12:30 PM** Return from apartment churches, take lunch break
- 1:30 PM** Pass out flyers in apartment communities where Rainbow Express will be taking place this week.
- 3:30 PM** Return to Mission Arlington
- 4:00 PM** Join Mission Arlington missionaries for weekly prayer, worship, and preparation time
- 5:00 PM** (Very) short meeting for all group leaders with Matt Hart, Rainbow Express Coordinator
- 5:15 PM** Leave Mission Arlington, pray, and make any last minute preparations for beginning Rainbow Express tomorrow

Tentative Daily Schedule Monday–Thursday

Please be flexible with your schedule. We may make changes to this schedule to better work with our kids.

SCHEDULE FOR GROUPS COMING JULY OR AUGUST, 2008

- 8:30 Meet for morning training time
- 9:30 Training time dismisses
- 9:45 Morning Rainbow Express groups leave for their site
- 10:30 Morning Rainbow Express begins
- NOON Morning projects and Rainbow Express ends. Clean up, walk children home, etc., then return to Mission Arlington for lunch break. *Each student needs to have his/her own sack lunch. You will NOT have time to cook.*
- 1:15 Meet to worship and prepare for Rainbow Express
- 2:30 Depart for Rainbow Express
- 3:00 Rainbow Express begins
- 4:30 Rainbow Express ends. Clean up. Begin projects at Rainbow Express location or Mission Arlington.

By 6:00 PM, Regular projects end. There are options some evenings to stay and participate in extended activities.

Dress Code

Mission Arlington's dress code is very basic. We ask all participants to dress modestly, comfortably, and in something where they are ready to work. Casual dress is fine all week long, Sunday included. Here are a few specific requests we make of all groups:

- Shorts are fine all week long. Please no short shorts.
- Footwear is up to you, but because we do so much work and active play outside we recommend tennis shoes over flip-flops.

Please remember that there are certain things you might wear at home working outside in the heat but that may not be the right image for knocking on doors and asking parents to let their children go with you. Because of this, please follow these additional guidelines all week long:

- T-shirts are great to wear, but please no tank tops or any other kinds of sleeveless shirts.
- Baseball caps are fine, but please wear forward at all times. Do not wear bandanas or any other type of head gear. (Winter headgear is okay if it's cold.)

Accommodations

Some of you, we know, will be spending the nights in a hotel or other location that you have set up. This page answers common questions for the rest of you who have chosen to stay in the accommodations that we provide.

- **Where will we be staying?** Mission Arlington uses several different types of facilities to house guests. All of them boil down to the same basic concept: a safe, clean floor to sleep on, showers, and a kitchen. Smaller groups (anything up to about twenty people) generally stay in our apartment churches. Larger groups generally stay in one of our community centers or in a local traditional church that partners with Mission Arlington. Because group sizes have a tendency to fluctuate so much at the last minute, we do not make final assignments of who will stay where until the week before your arrival.
- **How much does it cost?** We do not charge anything to stay in any of our accommodations because we are committed to the belief that God wants us to provide an open door for anyone who wants to come serve here. There are costs involved for items such as utilities, rent, maintenance, etc. Voluntary donations are very welcome, but not necessary. We believe God always provides.
- **What do I need to bring?** It is a good idea to plan as if you were coming into a completely empty facility. Often our supplies get accidentally packed up by groups when they are leaving and they don't realize it is not a part of what they brought. So, to be on the safe side it is wise to bring or buy here everything you might need: toiletries, kitchen supplies, air mattresses, and more.

Here are some other tips to prepare for a successful experience in our accommodations:

- **Be flexible and unpack only what you need each day:** Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex is a very busy place. All of our facilities are constantly being used to reach people for the Lord. When you check in for your trip, you will be given a schedule of any activities that might be happening in the location where you are staying.
- **View your accommodations location as another ministry opportunity:** Every place where you will be staying, whether in an apartment or at one of our gyms, is surrounded by other apartments or neighborhoods where the people might know nothing of church except what they see in you. When you park your church van and climb out, the people around you know that you represent Mission Arlington, and much more importantly, our Savior. They may come over to ask you questions. The neighborhood children might want to play tag. Represent Christ in all that you do while you are there, from your behavior in the parking lot, to noise level inside, to how clean you keep the place. Let people see Him in you, and you will find that your "mission trip day" will not end when you return to your home away from home in the evenings.

Useful Items to Bring for Rainbow Express

Here are some items that may be useful for your group during Rainbow Express. Try to bring as many as you have and as cargo space permits. Some of these items can be borrowed from Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex if you do not have a way to bring them.

- Some of the memory verse activities require simple supplies like balloons or popsicle sticks. (Since everything at Mission Arlington is donated, some of these items may not be available at Mission Arlington, so bring what you need.)
- Tarp (at least 10' by 10'): excellent to use for the children to sit on during Rainbow Express
- Posterboard: use it for memory verse posters, puzzles, etc.
- Puppets: Mission Arlington has some to loan if you don't have access to puppets
- Battery operated CD player (with batteries): *Very important*
- Water cooler and drinking cups: *extremely* good idea. It's hot in Texas.
- Craft supplies: Mission Arlington will provide some glue, scissors, crayons, etc. You may find it helps your group run smoother if you have some extras.
- Games equipment: cones, hula hoops, etc. will be very useful during your game time. *Note: Please do NOT bring balls or frisbees unless they are of the soft, "Nerf" foam variety. This is by request from the managers of the apartment communities where we hold Rainbow Express.*

Personal Packing Lists

Here is a personal packing list for each student and sponsor.

The Basics

- Clothing: see dress code. Bring plenty of comfortable clothing and be ready for Texas Summer weather, which means temperatures ranging from 80° to 95° (or above).
- Bible: keep it with you all the time. It will be your most important lifeline for the week.
- Sleeping bag or other bedroll
- Air mattress or other cot
- Towels, washcloths, toiletries
- Your Rainbow Express material

A daily backpack

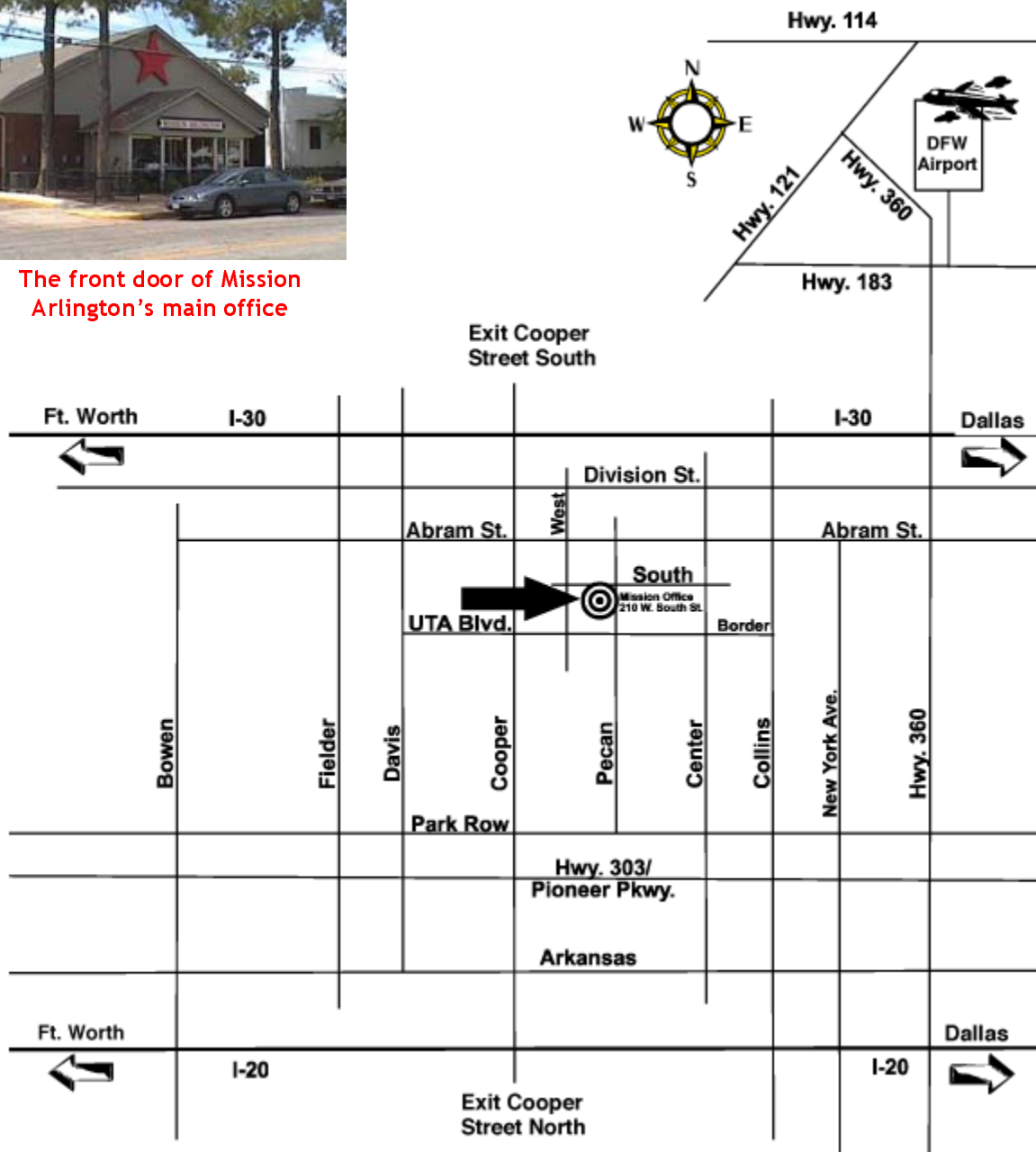
This optional suggestion is borrowed from some of our groups, and it has worked great for them. Have everybody bring a backpack with any or all of the following items:

- Extra Bibles to give away
- Small, basic first aid kit
- Trash bags for cleaning up while you are at Rainbow Express
- Water bottle (*very good idea*)
- Candy or small prizes to give away

Map to Mission Arlington



The front door of Mission Arlington's main office

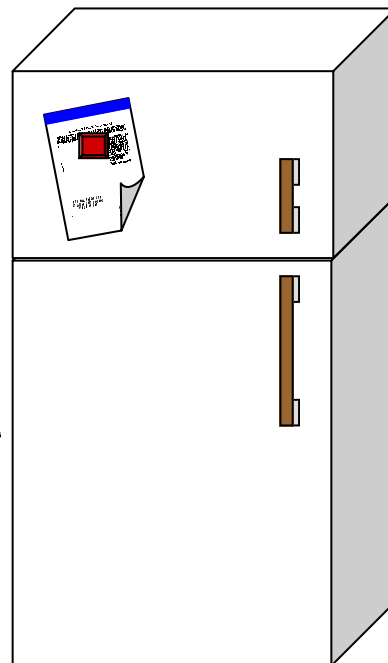


This map, which is not to scale, shows Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex in relation to all of the major highways in and around Arlington.

The Refrigerator Sheet

FOR ALL PARENTS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING SUMMER MISSION TRIP

For our Summer Mission Trip this year we will be going to Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex in Arlington, Texas. We will be serving with Mission Arlington through participating in apartment churches, leading Rainbow Express (Mission Arlington's version of a Vacation Bible School), and a variety of work projects.



- **Mailing Address:** 210 W. South Street, Arlington, TX, 76010. (Note—you are welcome to send students mail while they are at Mission Arlington. On the outside envelope indicate the name of the student and the name of the church or school with whom they are on Mission Trip.)
- **Website:** www.missionarlington.org
- **Phone:** 817-277-6620
- **Fax:** 817-277-3388
- **E-mail:** mission@missionarlington.org

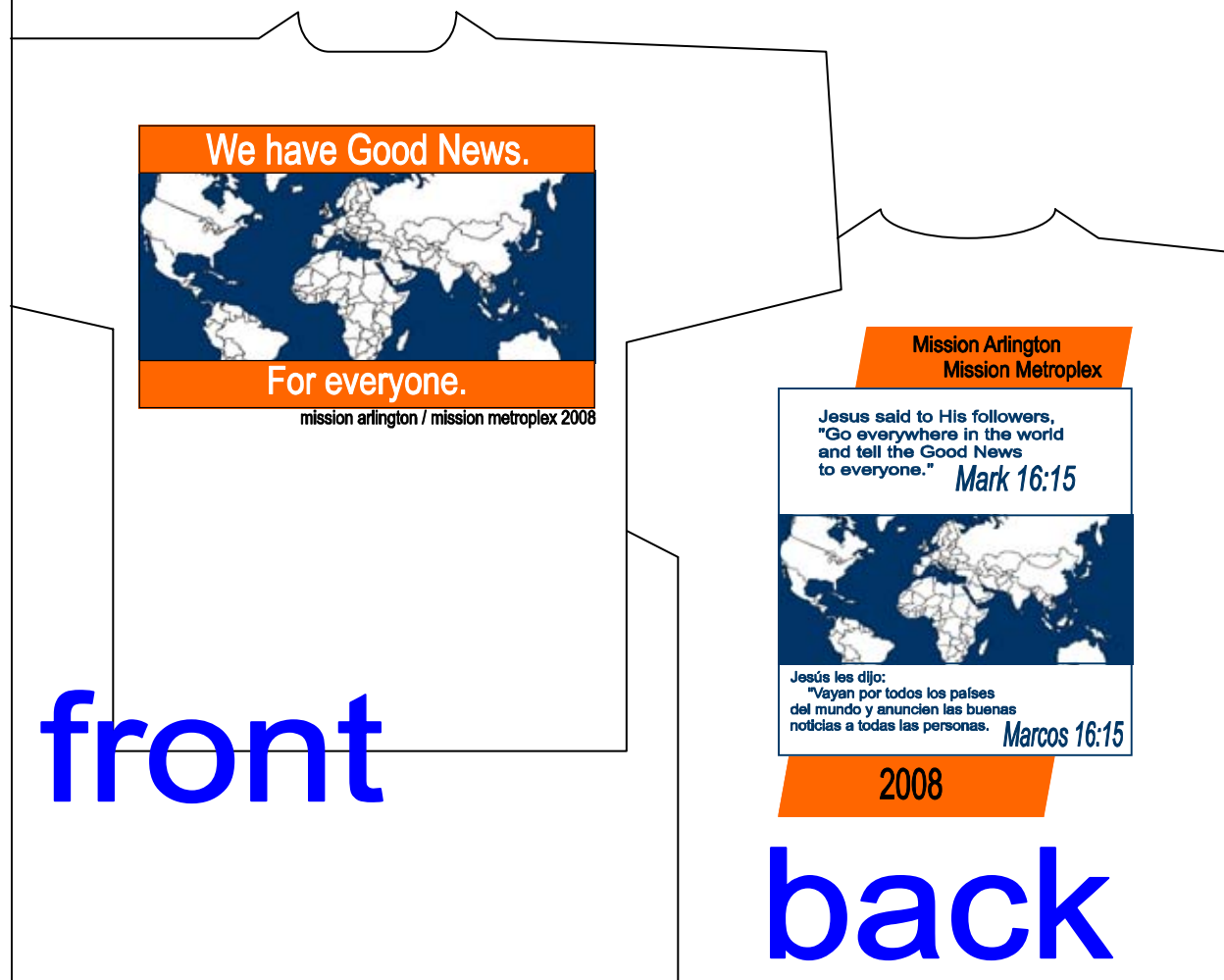
T-Shirts

Every year Mission Arlington/ Mission Metroplex makes mission trip t-shirts available for groups. Shirts are available in sizes from Adult Small to XXX-Large for \$8 each. The money goes to help fund Rainbow Express and the free summer camps we provide each year for the children and teenagers from the Mission Arlington apartment churches. The theme for this year's shirt is "We Have Good News. For Everyone." There are three ways to order shirts:

1. Buy them while you are here.
2. Pre-buy with check or credit card. We will have them here for you when you arrive.
3. Pre-buy with check or credit card. We will mail them to you. There will be an extra charge for shipping that will depend on how many shirts you purchase.

(An order form to use for pre-orders is on the next page.)

If you need more information about shirts, or to place an order, call Matt at 817-277-6620 or e-mail matt@missionarlington.org.





T-Shirt Order Form

Group: _____
Contact name and phone number: _____
Receipt needed: Yes No

Date of order: _____

Small _____
Medium _____
Large _____
X-Large _____
XX-Large _____
XXX-Large _____
Total: _____
X \$8.00= _____

Method of Payment:

- Check
- Credit Card

For those paying with Credit Card:
Card type: (please circle)



Name as it appears on card: _____

Billing address of credit card: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

3 digit security code on back: _____

Expiration date: _____

Total amount to be charged: _____

T-shirt purchases are optional. You may turn this sheet in when you are here or pre-buy by:

- Printing and faxing this form, along with credit card information, to 817-277-3388.
- Printing and mailing this form, along with a check made out to Mission Arlington, to 210 W South St, Arlington, TX, 76010.
- Calling 817-277-6620 with credit card information and sizes.

Most groups pick up their shirts when they arrive here. If you prefer, we can also mail the shirts to you, with you paying the shipping. If you would like the shirts mailed, please call and ask for Matt Hart.

Section Two

Rainbow Express Training Materials

- Descriptions of each Rainbow Express team member's role
- Team rosters
- Rainbow Express outline
- Tips for a successful Rainbow Express
- Tips for working with teenagers that attend Rainbow Express
- Tips for preparing to share your personal testimony

Prepare the Team

Rainbow Express works best with teams of about 10-15 at each location. If your group is larger, consider dividing into two or more teams, and each team will lead a Rainbow Express at a different apartment community. For junior high or high school students, each team needs at least one adult. If you have one or more teams sharing a vehicle, let the Mission Arlington staff know so they can assign sites accordingly. A brief description of each team member's responsibilities is given on the following pages.

Team Responsibilities

Each team member will be given one or more of the following responsibilities:

- Team Leader
- Small Group Teachers/Helpers
- Song Leader
- Memory Verse Teacher
- Large Group Leader
- Puppet Team Coordinator
- Game Leader
- Attendance Taker
- Youth Leader

Team Leader

- ◆ Be the prayer leader for your group. Pray for your team, the people you will encounter in Arlington, and for the Mission Arlington workers that are preparing the way and will be doing follow up.
- ◆ Be in constant communication with Mission Arlington staff as you plan. Ask questions and offer suggestions. Make sure extra activities you are planning do not conflict with your responsibilities at Mission Arlington.
- ◆ Pick a member of each team for each of the team responsibilities. Give each member of the team a copy of the Rainbow Express material.
Remember that each team member will be a small group teacher or helper. If you have a limited number of workers, one person can do more than one task.
- ◆ Give each member of your team a complete Rainbow Express curriculum packet so that they all can be familiar with every aspect of the program. Make sure they are prepared for their particular assignment.
- ◆ Oversee the preparation of all other team members. Be very familiar with the lessons and activities for each day. Ensure that any advance preparation needed for crafts, memory verse activities, or closing activities has been done.

PREPARATION TIP—There is a blank team roster in the back of this section. Make one copy for each of your teams and write in who will be fulfilling each responsibility. These sheets should be passed out to each adult sponsor in your group and to Mission Arlington coordinators while you are here. (You will not be able to fill in the Rainbow Express sites until you are at Mission Arlington.)

Small Group Leaders

- ◆ You will be telling the stories to your small group. Pray that God will prepare the hearts of the kids you will be sharing with to hear His message.
- ◆ Before you come, read all of the stories. Take the time to read them from the Bible and from the packet. Know each story well. As you tell the story have your Bible open to the story. **Never read to the kids word for word from the packet!**
- ◆ Help your children or youth to understand that the story they are learning comes from the Bible. The story you are telling is included in each day's packet as an age-appropriate retelling for children. Be very familiar with the scripture and then use the retelling as a guide to communicate the themes to the children you are working with.
- ◆ Be excited about the story you are teaching. Have fun as you share the love of Christ. The kids need to know that you believe what you are saying and really want them to understand. Make eye contact with the kids and give them 100% of your attention and energy.
- ◆ Take the time to get to know the children in your small group. They need to know you care about them.
- ◆ Watch the kids as you teach. If you are losing their attention, try to involve them more. Make sure the kids hear the message.
- ◆ Review the story at the end by asking questions.
- ◆ Always have your Bible with you while you are leading your small group. Help the children understand that the stories you are teaching this week are true stories from the Bible that help us know how to follow Jesus.

PREPARATION TIP—It is often best to work in pairs. Have two workers in each small group. While one is leading the activity (telling the story, explaining the craft, etc.) the other can help children to listen, assist with crafts, and aid in other ways.

Song Leader

- ◆ You will be leading songs with your Rainbow Express group. Pray that God will help the kids to learn the songs so they can carry the message of Christ's love with them.
- ◆ There is a list of suggested songs at the end of this packet. You are not limited to doing only the songs in the list. Feel free to do any other children's songs that your group knows.
- ◆ Have songs chosen ahead of time that you will sing each day. You can take requests, but have a list of songs ready.
- ◆ Sing "stand up" songs with lots of motions first, then sing "sit down" songs to prepare the children for the puppet show or Bible story.
- ◆ Be sure all of the team members know the songs you are going to sing. All team members should sing with enthusiasm.

Memory Verse Teacher

- ◆ Pray that they will learn the verse of the week, so they can carry a piece of the Bible with them always.
- ◆ The children will have two opportunities to hear the memory verse each day: once in the opening time in a large group and once after the story time in a small group. You will be responsible for leading the memory verse activity in the large group.

Continued on next page . . .

- ◆ Read through the suggested activities ahead of time. Some require additional planning and/or materials. Make sure you have what you need.
- ◆ Make sure everyone on your team knows the activities you plan to use. Help the other small group leaders decide which memory verse activities they will do each day.
- ◆ Do not simply lead the activities as they are described in the packet. Spend time explaining the meaning of the verse and how it applies to life. Help the children understand what the memory verse means.
- ◆ The verse of the week is:

PREPARATION TIP—Bring a poster with the memory verse to teach the kids the words. This is an extremely useful visual aid. There is a one-page poster at the end of the packet. Make sure each small group has one copy. Make a larger, posterboard size for use with the large group.

English: There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ . . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Spanish: De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

Puppet Team Coordinator

- ◆ Puppets can attract people to Rainbow Express and are a tool to share the message of Jesus. Pray that God will use your puppet shows to reach people.
- ◆ You need 3-4 people from your team to use a puppet for each show. Assign each person a “voice” (i.e. know who is singing the lead and who is doing the background).
- ◆ You will receive a CD of puppet songs to lip sync along with when you arrive at Mission Arlington. Use a few minutes each evening to practice the next day’s songs.
- ◆ The words to these songs are in the back of the packet. These songs talk about the messages of the stories. You are not limited to these songs. You can bring additional puppet songs or short skits to use.
- ◆ Bring a battery-powered boom box for each team.

PREPARATION TIP—If at all possible bring a loud, portable, battery operated CD player for each team with you when you come.

Attendance Taker

- ◆ Pray for the children that will attend your Rainbow Express and for the Bible Study leaders that will follow-up with the children.
- ◆ The multi-housing communities where you will hold Rainbow Express are places with ongoing Mission Arlington Bible Studies, After School Programs, and other activities. The information you gather will be a valuable resource for the Mission Arlington teams doing follow-up after you are gone.
- ◆ THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT JOB! We need to know about every child that comes and where they live so that we can get them involved in weekly Bible study. Also, if a child accepts

Continued on next page . . .

Christ as their Savior or needs special attention, you will mark this on the attendance sheet so that the appropriate follow-up takes place.

- ◆ As children arrive on the first day of Rainbow Express, ask for their name (first and last), age, apartment number, and building number (if applicable). *Please do not allow children to write on the attendance sheet.* Please neatly write down the information they give you.
- ◆ Be sure you have the attendance sheets before you depart for the site each day. Make sure you turn in these sheets after Rainbow Express each day. Mission Arlington will provide the blank sheets.

Large Group Leader

- ◆ Pray for the children you will be teaching. Pray that this week will change their lives.
- ◆ It is your responsibility to help the program flow from one activity into the next activity while in a large group.
- ◆ At the beginning of each day, lead a brief introduction to help transition into the small group times. During the opening time, ask the kids questions about what they learned the day before. See if any of them know the memory verse.
- ◆ Keep the kids involved and interested in everything you do.
- ◆ Always have your Bible with you while you are leading the large group. Help the children understand how much you love your Bible.
- ◆ There are short skits/object lessons at the end of each day's Rainbow Express. These will be really fun and will help drive the point home for the children and teenagers at your Rainbow Express sites. They require preparation ahead of time on your part. You will have to prepare props, learn lines, recruit a partner to act with you, etc. Take the time to do these excellently and they should be a very effective part of your Rainbow Express program.

Games Leader

- ◆ Be prepared to play some games before Rainbow Express begins as a way to gather and meet children. Play again afterwards to allow more interaction time with those that have come.
- ◆ Kids are more likely to listen to and interact with people who they know care about them. Playing games is one way to build relationships with the kids. Pray that God will use the game time to build relationships between your team members and the children.
- ◆ Find ways to incorporate the concepts of the memory verse and lessons for each day into games you are playing.
- ◆ There is a list of games at the end of this packet. You are not limited to the games on the list. Decide which games you are going to play each day. Involve everyone. Have some games prepared to play with older children and other games prepared to play with younger children.
- ◆ The apartment managers in the places you will be serving have asked Mission Arlington not to use regular balls or Frisbees or anything else that could potentially break windows in the apartment communities. If you want to use these items, bring soft, Nerf® type balls and toys that cannot cause any damage.

Youth Leader

This position was created to help your group share the gospel with the teenagers that will often gather around the periphery of your Rainbow Express. Choose two people (if possible one male and one female) to be ready to work with any youth.

- **PRAY!** Youth have always been a part of Rainbow Express, because groups like yours have always worked at making friends with the older students that hang out around your activities. However, we have really felt led to make a concentrated effort to expand the scope of Rainbow Express to include youth. Ask God to use the Rainbow Express that you lead exactly as He would desire.
- Be sensitive to the youth. Some may enjoy participating in parts of the regular Rainbow Express program, especially if they have younger siblings that are attending or if they are involved in helping in some way. Others will feel more comfortable staying completely separated from the children for the entire time.
- Be flexible. Every apartment community is different and every teenager is different. You might have no teenagers, you may have one, and there might be a dozen. Be prayerfully ready for whatever happens.
- Be sure to report any youth that attend on the Rainbow Express attendance sheet so that the Mission Arlington missionaries can effectively follow up.

There is no sure-fire method for working with youth, but here is one possible suggested schedule for a youth Rainbow Express:

While the children are:	The youth leaders are:
in opening large group: singing, puppets, memory verse, etc.	meeting any teenagers, going with them to invite their friends, etc.
in small groups: story, crafts	having the youth help to pass out craft supplies to children's small groups, then gathering in their own location. Lead a Bible Study based on the children's Bible Story for the day. Help the youth learn the memory verse.
in games time	having their own youth recreation time. See <i>Tips From A Mission Arlington Missionary</i> for ideas.

Rainbow Express Team Roster: Team _____

Contact Cell Phone Number:

AM Rainbow Express Site:
(to be filled in at Mission Arlington)

PM Rainbow Express Site:
(to be filled in at Mission Arlington)

Adult Sponsor(s):	
Team Leader:	
Large Group Leader:	
Song Leader:	
Memory Verse Teacher:	
Puppet Team Coordinator:	
Game Leader:	
Attendance Taker:	
Youth Leader:	
Small Group Teachers/ Helpers:	

Remember that one person can have more than one responsibility.

The Plan: What to do at Rainbow Express

- ◆ Begin by gathering the children. The games leader and attendance taker will wait for the children at the site. All other team members need to **knock on doors**.
- ◆ As the children arrive, begin playing games. **Write down each child's name and apartment number** on the attendance sheet.
- ◆ After finishing the games, begin singing **songs**. You may want to sing a couple of songs, then do a puppet song, then sing another song, then a puppet song. This will give the puppet team a chance to rest their arms in between songs.
- ◆ A couple of students share their **testimony**.
- ◆ Ask for prayer requests and pray.
- ◆ The Memory Verse leader will lead the children in learning the memory verse during the first **memory verse activity**. Then the large group leader gives the day's **large group introduction**.
- ◆ Divide up into **small groups**, as small as you can depending on the number of children and people in your group. During this time you will tell them the **story**, make your **craft**, and do another **memory verse activity**.
- ◆ Each small group will lead a closing activity for their small group.
- ◆ Reassemble for a large group **closing time**. The Large Group Leader will lead a short review time to help wrap up the day's activities.
- ◆ Play **games** until it is time for Rainbow Express to end.
- ◆ Pass out **snacks** to each child and **walk them home**.
- ◆ **Pick up trash** and make sure your Rainbow Express site is clean before you leave.

Tips for a Successful Rainbow Express

- ◆ PRAY! This is what will make or break your week. Everything you do must be bathed in prayer.
- ◆ When you first get out to the apartment community, most of the team needs to go door to door and round up the children. Some children will come early, so one or two people need to be ready to stay at the site to play games with the children (rather than knock on doors).
- ◆ Parents and older youth will probably stand around the perimeter. Get to know them, talk with them, and invite them to the Bible study at that particular apartment complex. You will receive the information about these Bible Studies when you are here.
- ◆ The opening and closing Large Group Times can be a difficult time to keep the children's attention. The more energy, preparation, and creativity you put in, the more interested and involved the children will become.
- ◆ Be sure you are always with the children. You can make a difference in their lives this week. They want and need your undivided attention.
- ◆ Love all the children. Try to get to know each of them.
- ◆ Remember that you have important jobs to be done. Don't forget your responsibilities.
- ◆ If you are not leading the singing or telling the story, sit among the children.
- ◆ Have fun! If you are having fun, the children will have fun. Likewise, if your attitude isn't the best, they will imitate your attitude.
- ◆ Everyone needs to make sure that every child and his/her apartment number are on the attendance list.
- ◆ Everyone work together and help each other.
- ◆ PRAY! Remember to **pray without ceasing** the whole week.

Tips About Working With Youth From A Mission Arlington Missionary

As you are gathering the younger children for Rainbow Express, inevitably you will see older youth who seemingly couldn't care less about hanging around with the little kids. Some of these youth will, however, hang out around the periphery of your Rainbow Express acting, of course, like they're not interested. But don't be fooled. If they're hanging out, they are interested.

I pray that these tips, which have been effective in reaching youth in the apartment communities where we minister, will give you some guidance on ways to engage these youth in non-threatening ways.

- **Introduce yourself:** Don't wait for the youth to walk up to you—it won't happen. You (2 or 3 of you) should walk up to them, stick out your hand to shake theirs & introduce yourself. If you're meeting guys, invite them to throw the football, play soccer, or even wall-ball (at an appropriate place). Try to do this event somewhat removed from the younger kids because they may get distracted. If you're meeting girls who aren't interested in football, soccer, or wall-ball, just be prepared to sit with them and get to know them.
- **Engage them:** Maybe they can help you unload, carry boxes, pick up trash, help translate (lots of Spanish speaking kids will be attending Rainbow Express), play with the younger kids after Rainbow Express is over, etc. During this time, you will continue to get to know them.
- **Develop a Relationship:** Remember that in Jesus' ministry, he met physical & emotional needs a lot of time before he addressed a person's spiritual needs. Don't be judgmental even if their looks, language, or conversation startles you. Hopefully you will have four days with them, so get to know them and when the Spirit leads you, begin the conversation about a relationship with Christ. Don't make assumptions about whether or not they are believers. You'll come across both.
- **Make Them Feel Special:** You want them to know that you have planned this time for them. Come prepared with football, soccer ball, basketball, etc. Maybe bring an additional snack for them. Sit around with the youth & munch on chips or cookies while you get to know them. Bring a few Bibles (pick an easy to read translation like NIV) so as one reads they can all follow along. Keep the actual lesson time short—most of the time should be spent getting to know them & discussing the lesson.

NOTE—these tips were written by members of Mission Arlington's East Arlington Team. The youth groups from their apartment churches actively participate in helping in other Bible Studies, leading Rainbow Express, and other mission work.

Tips on Preparing Your Testimony

- **Be Brief**—Remember the age of the children you are working with. They have short attention spans. You want them to understand and remember your point. The longer you talk, the less they may walk away with. Your goal should be not more than five minutes each for two testimonies, six to seven minutes for one, tops.
- **Be Simple**—Your children will not understand the phrase “I used to really struggle with trying to keep the reprobate, carnal impulses of my fleshly nature under control until I accepted the sanctifying work of the Lamb on the cross”. They will understand “When I pray and ask Jesus for help, He helps me do what God wants me to do”. Avoid the temptation to speak *churchese* while you share. Talk like you really talk.
- **Be Animated**—Let your love for Jesus show in your words, face, gestures, and tone of voice. If you share your testimony like you would share a school report on 18th century garbanzo bean farming techniques, the children will not care. If you are excited about what Christ has done in your life, the children will be too.
- **Be Excited**—Sometimes there is a temptation to think that your personal testimony may not be as interesting as somebody else's. Remember that we never need to compare our relationship with Christ to another. It took just as much of Jesus' sacrifice to save us as it did any other human being on the planet. Be excited and grateful for what God did in your life, whether it happened as an adult in prison or a five-year-old in Sunday School.
- **Be Prayerful**—Like everything else you do this week, sharing your testimony must be bathed in prayer. Ask God to give you the right words and demeanor. Ask Him to prepare the hearts of the people that will be hearing.
- **Give God the Glory**—This may sound obvious: but remember to make your testimony about God. Your testimony is not about the bad things you used to do. It's not about the good things you do now. It is about the change that Jesus brought in your life. It is about His sacrifice and His forgiveness. Make sure people walk away from your testimony impressed by Jesus, not by you.

Section Three

Rainbow Express Curriculum

Stories, crafts, memory verse activities, and opening/closing activities for all four days of Rainbow Express

Day One

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Fast and Slow
- **Small Group**
 - Story: Ruth
 - Scripture for today's story: Ruth
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Skit, story review questions

S
U
M
M
A
R
Y

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children's attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoying the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

Testimony

The theme for this whole week of Rainbow Express is *The Body: how we fit together in God's perfect plan*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that God has a perfect plan for our lives which involves being united in following Him. They will learn that Jesus came to save us from sin and restore us to a new life with God. Obviously, the decision to follow Christ is an incredibly personal decision. It is important that the children and youth who attend your Rainbow Express understand that a personal relationship with Christ is a very important reality for the members of your group. Every day during the opening time one or two members of your group can share a short version of their testimony in front of the large group. The goal is to let the children see how listening and obeying as God has spoken in your life has made a practical and meaningful difference. *(For help on sharing in a way that will be age-appropriate and meaningful with children, each person who plans to give their testimony should read the sheet Tips on Preparing Your Testimony in the training materials section of this packet.)*

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory

TIP—The Large Group Leader should serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day's Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

Day One

verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day one is “Fast and Slow”. Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Practice saying the memory verse faster and faster. Try saying it slower and slower. Say it in “slow motion”, using exaggerated hand motions and deep slow motion voices.

Introduction of Today’s Story--Building the Foundation

When the memory verse teacher is finished, the Large Group Leader will return to the front to provide a brief introduction to the day’s theme and story. Each day you will re-introduce the concept that the Bible tells us that truth about God’s love and the Savior He sent for us. Take time to sum up the previous day’s stories and themes. Be sure each day to introduce the theme for the day’s story. The stories for the whole week are intended to show that we can be confident in Jesus as our Savior. Help the children understand that God wants desperately for all people to know Him and accept Christ as their Savior. When you have finished this introduction, divide the children into small groups to hear the Bible story.

Below is a suggested narrative to help with the day’s introduction.

(A Special Note—This curriculum references the previous Rainbow Express Curriculum, titled My New Life. This is designed to provide a sense of narrative continuity for children here at Mission Arlington who attend Rainbow Express. For those of you using this curriculum in another location, however, this The Body curriculum will work fine as a stand alone.)

Did you know that God has a special plan just for your life? It’s true! God loves you. He made you just the way that you are. You are an important part of God’s plan. If you came to Rainbow Express last month you learned a lot about that, didn’t you? You learned that God designed each of us exactly the way that He wants us to be. You learned that He has a special plan for our lives, a plan to give us hope and a future.

This week we’re going to be learning more about God’s plan for us. We’re going to learn something really important: that God’s plan for us doesn’t actually involve just us following Him. God’s plan is about our following Him *together*. God loves every single one of us equally. You are very special to Him. He wants you to know Him and follow Him and love Him. One of the greatest things about God is that He loves *all* of us that way. He has enough love for every single person on the planet. God loves us all, and He wants all of us to love each other, too.

The Bible teaches us that God designed each of us to be different for a reason. By being different, we are better able to learn to love each other. We have to learn to work together. Think about it this way: what would life be like if every single person were good at the same things and bad at the same things? If we were all good painters and bad singers, we would have lots of beautiful pictures to look at, but no good music to listen to. Instead of making us all the same, God made us so that we’re all good at different things. When we all work together, we’ll find that we’re the happiest.

The Bible compares us to a body. I’m going to read to you from a book in the Bible called 1st Corinthians. This is from chapter 12, verses 14-15. It says “Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot say, ‘I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,’ that does not make it any less a part of the body.” What do you think that means?

God is telling us in these verses that He designed us to all need each other, no matter how different we are. In that sense, we’re just like a body. Your foot will never decide not be a part of your body just because it’s different than your hand. In the same way, people can never decide that they’re not a part of God’s plan just because they feel different than other people. God loves us too much for that. He promises that we all fit into His perfect plan, just like all the parts of your body work together to make you *you*.

We’re going to divide into our small groups now. We’re going to learn a true story from the Bible about two women that might not have felt like they fit into God’s plan because they were different. You will see that God had a perfect place for them in His perfect plan.

Day One

Small Group Story Time

When the Large Group Time is over, divide the children into small groups for story time. The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to relate the story to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today's Story:

The Bible tells the true story of a woman named Naomi, a very happy woman who lived a long time ago in a place called Judah. Naomi's life was good: she had a husband she loved very much and two adult sons that made her very happy. In fact, the name *Naomi* means *happy*.

One year the land of Judah went through a very hard time. There was hardly any rain for a very long time. No rain means no plants can grow, so it became very hard to find enough food to eat. Naomi, her husband, and her two sons decided to leave Judah. They travelled to a nearby land called Moab to find food. This was a tough decision. It is always a little scary to leave someplace you know to move to a place you do not know. Moab turned out to be a good place to live. Naomi's two sons even married two Moabite women, and Naomi was still happy. Then everything changed. Naomi's husband died. Then her two sons died too. Naomi lost the people she loved. She became so sad that she did not even want to be called Naomi any more. She asked her friends to call her *Mara*, which means *bitter*.

Naomi decided to go back to Judah. There, maybe she could find somebody who would help her. Naomi called in the two women that had married her sons. "Go back home now to your parents' homes," Naomi told them. "May God be kind to you, just like you have been kind to me." One of the two women hugged Naomi and kissed her goodbye. The other young woman, Ruth, did not leave.

"Don't send me away from you," Ruth said to Naomi. "I will go to Judah with you. Where you live, I will live. Your God will be my God. Your people will be my people." Ruth was very brave. She was going to leave her home, her parents, even her country, to stay with her friend Naomi. Ruth was even leaving behind her parents' religion to believe in the one real God, the God of the Bible. Ruth loved Naomi and wanted to take care of her. She knew that they needed each other, just like different parts of the body need each other.

Together, Naomi and Ruth travelled to Judah. Life would not be easy for them there. In those days there were not many jobs that women could do. It was hard for them to find food. They did not even have enough money to keep their own farm land. Ruth and Naomi returned to Judah just as it was time for the farmers to begin picking the food they were growing.

Ruth decided to help. She went to the field of a man named Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband who had died. Boaz's workers were in the fields, using long knives called sickles to cut down the grain plants that grew on Boaz's farm. Every time they cut some of the plants, a few would get missed. As the workers passed through the fields a few plants would always be left over. Ruth followed behind the workers, picking up the left-over plants so that she and Naomi could eat them.

It was hard work. The fields were hot and Ruth had no water to drink. She had nothing to eat for lunch. Ruth and Naomi might have felt like nobody cared for them except each other. We know the truth though: God loved Ruth and Naomi very, very much. He had a plan to send somebody to help them. Remember what we're learning this week: God always loves us, no matter what. He has a plan to help us and for us to help others.

One day Boaz came to the fields to say hello and eat lunch with his workers. He saw Ruth there, hard at work to care for Naomi and herself. Boaz could see how hard she worked and how much she cared for Naomi. He went to speak to her. "Don't go to any other fields to work," Boaz told her. "Stay here and you will be safe. I have ordered my workers to be kind to you. You may drink from the water I send for them. You may eat from the lunch I send for them."

"What have I done that you would be so nice to me, a person from a different country?" Ruth asked Boaz.

Day One

“I have heard all about how you help Naomi,” Boaz said. “You left your own home and land to take care of her. Now God will help take care of you. He will care for you just like a bird cares for the baby birds under its wings.”

Ruth went home to Naomi and told her all that had happened. They expected to find barely enough food to survive. Instead, Boaz, following God’s instructions to love all people, had given them more than they could ever have imagined. Every day Ruth went back to Boaz’s field to work. Boaz always made sure she was taken care of. He even secretly told his workers to leave extra food on purpose for Ruth to pick up.

God cared for Ruth and Naomi, even when they thought nobody did. They felt alone and unloved, but God loved them very much. God used Boaz to take care of everything they needed. God has the same plan for us. He wants all of us to take care of each other. We’re supposed to work together to share God’s love, just like the different parts of a body work together. Ruth and Boaz were two very different people: Ruth was a poor young woman from a far-off country. Boaz was a rich man from Judah. God used them both to care for other people and help them know about His love.

Over time, Ruth and Boaz came to know each other very well. One day, they were married. Naomi’s heart was happy again. God had cared for her. Naomi learned that we are all a part of God’s perfect plan, no matter how different we may all be.

God still has a perfect plan for us. It still involves *all* of us. God wants all people to know Him and know how much He loves them. God shows His love for us in many ways, but there is one that is more amazing than all the others. God sent His son Jesus to help us.

We need help, because none of us has completely followed God’s perfect plan. We make mistakes; we disobey what God asks us to do. The Bible uses the word *sin* for all the things we think, do, or say that are not what God would want. God loves us very much, but sin keeps us away from Him. Jesus came to take away sin. He died on the cross, even though He never did anything wrong. He died because of *our* sin. Then, on the third day, Jesus came back to life. Now, anybody that wants to can accept Jesus’ free forgiveness. He wants to take away our sin and help us follow God’s perfect plan for all of us. We can believe in Jesus. We can know for sure that He really does love us and wants to save us. God has shown us that over and over again. He cared for Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. He had a perfect place for all of them in His plan. He has a plan for us too. If you would like to know how Jesus can take away your sin and help you follow God’s plan, please ask us. We would love to help you know how.

Each day you will close the story time with an invitation to accept Jesus. Say something like this: God wants everybody to follow Him. The problem is that sometimes we do bad things that the Bible calls sin. A sin is anything that we do that God does not want us to do. God still loves us, even though we sin. That’s why Jesus came. Jesus died on the cross to be punished for our sins. Then on the third day He came back to life. Now, for anybody who asks, Jesus will take away our sins and become a part of our lives. He will help us to follow Him. The Bible says that if we believe Jesus in our hearts and follow Him, He will save us from our sin and help us to follow God. Then one day we will be with Him in heaven. Anybody that wants to choose to follow Jesus can do that today. We would love to help you know how.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft or filling out the activities packet for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their

Day One

families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives. For today's craft time you will give each child an activity packet with pictures to color and various puzzles to solve.

Supplies needed: crayons, 1 activities packet for each child

Note—an activities packet for days 1, 2, & 4 is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this curriculum. These pages are copyright free and available for reproduction. You may also find additional resources such as more coloring pages by searching on-line or using Bible coloring books. We will have some copies of these types of additional materials available for you here during your trip. Day 3 you will be making a bead necklace to share the plan of salvation instead of packets.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse for older and younger children in English and in Spanish in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Having a copy of the one page memory verse poster with you can help you teach the verse.

English: There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ . . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Spanish: De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

Wrap Up

Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a second large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

In this large group session you will have a short skit/object lesson to help emphasize the theme of the day's activities. A script is provided below. When you finish the skit, ask the children review questions to help them re-cement in their own minds the day's Bible Story. Review the memory verse together one last time, then pray before dismissing to games time and snacks.

Object Lesson:

Each day you will provide a visual object lesson during your large group closing time that is designed to help drive home the day's theme.

Set-Up:

Actor 1: Needs a Bible

Actor 2: Covered in shoes. Use tape, string, elastic, Velcro, or anything else to put as many pairs of shoes on the actor as possible: feet, hands, knees, elbows, ears, shins, torso, etc. The more shoes and the more comical the appearance, the better.

Actor 1 is sitting in front of the group reading the Bible. Actor 2 walks up, clearly encumbered by all

Day One

the shoes. Actor 2 moves very stiffly, often tripping and falling. Actor 1 looks up, surprised.

Actor 2: I'm sorry I'm late to see you. It has taken me a really, really long time to get here. (Trips and falls again.)

Actor 1: (*laughing and rising to help Actor 2 up*) Are you okay? No wonder you're late. How can you even move with all those shoes on you? How many pairs of shoes do you have on?

Actor 2: I don't actually know. A lot. I stopped counting after a while.

Actor 1: Why in the world do you have so many shoes on?

Actor 2: Well . . . I told you I was trying out for the soccer team, right?

Actor 1: Yes, that was today, wasn't it? How did it go?

Actor 2: Not well. At all. See, I had a really great idea to help me be the best soccer player out there.

Actor 1: (*Amused*) It didn't involve lots and lots of shoes, did it?

Actor 2: Actually, it did. (*Confusedly*) How did you know? (*Actor 1 points to all the shoes.*) Oh . . . riiiiight. Well, anyway: here was my idea. Feet are the most important body part of a soccer team of course. You use your feet to run, and you use your feet to kick the ball. They're the most important. I figured that if I put on lots and lots of shoes . . .

Actor 1: (*completing the thought*) It would be like being "all feet" and would make you better at soccer.

Actor 2: Well . . . Yes.

Actor 1: (*kindly*) I don't even understand how you tied these on your hands. (*Begins to help Actor 2 remove all the shoes.*) I'm glad you're trying really hard, but I think there are some mistakes in your thinking.

Actor 2: How so?

Actor 1: Well, your whole idea was based on one thing: that feet are the most important body part during soccer.

Actor 2: That's true, isn't it?

Actor 1: Not at all.

Actor 2: But they seem like the most important. They run and kick.

Actor 1: That's true, they do. But who tells your feet where to go?

Actor 2: My brain?

Actor 1: Exactly. How does your brain see where the ball is?

Actor 2: My eyes.

Actor 1: Right. And your ears listen for the referee's whistle. Your mouth tells the other players

Day One

when you're open for a pass. Your legs help move your feet around. Your arms throw the ball in from out of bounds.

Actor 2: I guess I need more parts of my body than I really thought about.

Actor 1: And which is the most important?

Actor 2: *(slowly getting the point)* Well . . . really I guess none is the most important. I wouldn't be able to play the same if I were missing any one part. It takes all of my parts to make me *me*.

Actor 1: That's 100% right. We can never say that any one body part is more important than another. It's no different than how we can't say that one person is more important than another. God's plan takes all of us working together. It's just like what we learned about today during Rainbow Express.

Actor 2: Unfortunately, I didn't get to hear it. I was a little late . . .

Actor 1: What we learned is that God made each of us different and special, just like the parts of a body are different and special. He has a special plan for us to work together to love Him and tell other people about Him. In fact, the Bible says we're kind of like the body of Jesus.

Actor 2: What does that mean?

Actor 1: It means that we are what God uses for His plans for us. When God wants to tell somebody that He loves them, He uses us to tell them. That's kind of like being His mouth. When God wants somebody to have food to eat, He might send us to take it to them. That's like being His hands and His feet.

Actor 2: That's really cool. I'm sorry I missed it.

Actor 1: Don't worry. These boys and girls can help tell you the story.

Use this time as a natural transition into story review. Ask the children questions about what they have learned today until they can reconstruct the story for Actor 2.

Game Time/Snacks

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.

Day Two

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Loud and Soft
- **Small Group**
 - Story: Gideon
 - Scripture for today's story: Judges 6-7
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Skit, story review questions

S
U
M
M
A
R
Y

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children's attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoying the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

Testimony

The theme for this whole week of Rainbow Express is *The Body: how we fit together in God's perfect plan*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that God has a perfect plan for our lives which involves being united in following Him. They will learn that Jesus came to save us from sin and restore us to a new life with God. Obviously, the decision to follow Christ is an incredibly personal decision. It is important that the children and youth who attend your Rainbow Express understand that a personal relationship with Christ is a very important reality for the members of your group. Every day during the opening time one or two members of your group can share a short version of their testimony in front of the large group. The goal is to let the children see how listening and obeying as God has spoken in your life has made a practical and meaningful difference. *(For help on sharing in a way that will be age-appropriate and meaningful with children, each person who plans to give their testimony should read the sheet Tips on Preparing Your Testimony in the training materials section of this packet.)*

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory

TIP—The Large Group Leader should serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day's Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

Day Two

verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day two is “Loud and Soft”. Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Practice saying the memory verse together. Slowly begin to increase the volume. Divide the children into two or more teams. Have them try saying the verse together as a team. See who can say it loud and who can say it soft. Try playing Telephone by having all the children sit in a circle. Have the verse travel around the circle by having each child whisper the next word in the verse to their neighbor.

Introduction of Today’s Story--Building the Foundation

When the memory verse teacher is finished, the Large Group Leader will return to the front to provide a brief introduction to the day’s theme and story. Each day you will re-introduce the concept that the Bible tells us that truth about God’s love and the Savior He sent for us. Take time to sum up the previous day’s stories and themes. Be sure each day to introduce the theme for the day’s story. The stories for the whole week are intended to show that we can be confident in Jesus as our Savior. Help the children understand that God wants desperately for all people to know Him and accept Christ as their Savior. When you have finished this introduction, divide the children into small groups to hear the Bible story.

Below is a suggested narrative to help with the day’s introduction.

(A Special Note—This curriculum references the previous Rainbow Express Curriculum, titled My New Life. This is designed to provide a sense of narrative continuity for children here at Mission Arlington who attend Rainbow Express. For those of you using this curriculum in another location, however, this The Body curriculum will work fine as a stand alone.)

This week we are learning about God’s special plan for all people to know how much He loves them. Yesterday we said that God involves all of us in His plan, no matter how different or “left out” we might feel sometimes. God has a place and a plan for each of us. We don’t get left out because we’re different. In fact, the Bible tells us that God made us different on purpose. Our differences help us fit into the plan. God designed us so that, when we let Him help us, we can work together perfectly.

How does being different help us to work together? Think about a soccer team. Every member of the team is working on the same thing: winning the soccer game. Since everybody’s working on the same thing, you might think it would make sense for all of them to be good at the same things, but that’s not true. Imagine a team where every player was good at the same things. If they were all good goalies, they would never be able to win a game. They would be able to stop the other team from making points, but they would never be able to make any points themselves. They couldn’t win! What if they were all good at making goals? They might get a lot of points . . . but the other team would get even more. Why? Because our team wouldn’t have anybody good at protecting the goal. If we want to win, we need some people that know how to make goals, and other people that know how to protect the goal. A team where everybody is the same would not be a good team at all.

God knows this. That’s why He made each of us ready to do exactly what we need to do in His plan. I don’t have the exact same skills, likes, and dislikes that you do. And you don’t have the same ones as the person sitting next to you. That’s because my part of God’s plan isn’t going to be exactly the same as your part of God’s plan. Both are special. Both are important. Both of us are designed to help the other. That’s why God made us the way He did.

Remember that yesterday we read out of the Bible in 1st Corinthians. We read that God made us different, but all part of one plan, just the parts of a body. I’m going to read a little bit more to you from 1st Corinthians. This is from Chapter 12, verses 17 through 21. The Bible says “If the whole body were an eye, how could you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where He wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need

Day Two

you!” That sounds like what we said about the soccer team, doesn’t it? We have many different parts that do many different jobs, but they all make up one body.

God made us different, with different skills and different jobs. But we’re all a part of God’s great plan for the whole world. God can use each and every one of us to help people know Him and His love. Look at your hands. They look very different than your feet, don’t they? That’s because God made each of us to be ready for the special job we have in His body. Isn’t it great to know God has you ready for a very special part of His plan, a part made just for you?

We’re going to divide into our small groups now to learn a true story from the Bible. It’s the story of a man that God had a special job for, even though the man didn’t think he could do anything special. We’re going to see that God made us just right. He knows us even better than we know ourselves.

Small Group Story Time

When the Large Group Time is over, divide the children into small groups for story time. The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to relate the story to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today’s Story:

Long ago, a man named Gideon lived in a place called Israel. He was a farmer, just like his whole family and practically everybody else that lived in Israel. They planted seeds and grew crops to make their living. Israel’s next door neighbors were a group of people called the Midianites. The Midianites were not farmers. They didn’t plant anything. Instead, they would ride into Israel and steal whatever they wanted. They lived in tents that they set up wherever they felt like, even in the Israelites’ own yards. They killed the Israelites’ animals to eat. They took the plants that the Israelites grew. They made life almost impossible for the Israelites. Finally, the people of Israel asked God to save them from the awful Midianites.

One day Gideon was working on his farm, doing his best to hide from the Midianites. Gideon wanted to stay as far away from them as he possibly could. He thought there was no way he could ever fight against them. Gideon was the youngest member of the weakest family in the whole area. He just wanted to grow his food and be left alone by the bullies around him. While Gideon was working, he received a very unexpected visitor.

God had a special plan for Gideon. He was going to use Gideon to save the Israelite people from the Midianite attackers. God came to see Gideon. While Gideon was working with his crops, God came and sat down under a tree nearby. Gideon did not recognize that it was God.

“Greetings, mighty warrior,” God said to him. “The Lord is with you.”

Gideon was probably surprised. *Nobody* ever called him “mighty warrior”. Remember that Gideon thought of himself as the youngest of the weakest of the least. “If the Lord is with us,” Gideon asked, “why have all these terrible things happened to us? Why hasn’t He saved us from the Midianites?”

God’s response was probably the last thing Gideon expected to hear. “Go and save Israel from the Midianites,” God said. “You will have the strength to do it, because I am the one sending you.”

Gideon finally realized who was talking to him. “But God,” he said. “My family is the weakest around, and I am the least important person in my family.” Gideon did not feel like he could do it. Remember, though, that God designs us to perfectly fit in with the plan He has for us. Gideon thought he was weak, but God knew He had made him to defeat a mighty army.

God’s answer to Gideon was simple. “I will be with you,” God said. “And you will strike down the Midianites.”

Gideon was still not sure he could believe what he was hearing. Three times God showed him amazing things, things that only God could do. He did this to prove to Gideon that God really is

Day Two

strong enough to make us and help us to do whatever He asks us to do.

Finally, Gideon was ready for the Mission God had given him. With only 300 fighters, Gideon prepared to battle the mighty Midianite army. How could 300 people fight against a whole army? Gideon gave each soldier some unusual equipment for a battle: a torch, a clay jar, and a trumpet. In the middle of the night Gideon and his soldiers spread in a huge circle around the Midianite camp. All at once, they smashed their clay jars and waved their fiery lights in the air. They blew their trumpets and shouted as loud as they could.

The sleepy Midianites were confused. They thought a great army had surrounded them. They did not know there were only 300 soldiers. In the darkness the Midianites began to fight against what they thought were their enemies. In all the confusion, the Midianites were actually fighting against each other. They battled as hard as they could, but they were only hurting themselves while the Israelites watched from the darkness around the camp. Soon the Israelites chased the few Midianites left all the way out of Israel. At last, the Israelites were free from their enemies.

At first, Gideon didn't feel like God could use him. He didn't feel special enough or good enough to be a part of God's plan. Sometimes we might feel the same way. There are days when we might not feel good enough to be used by God. It's true that we have all made mistakes. We have all done, said, and thought things that God does not like. The Bible calls those things *sins*. Sometimes we can feel like our sins might keep God from loving us. There is good news! God *always* loves us. He can take away our sins. He can love us and know us and use us, even when we don't feel "special" enough for Him.

God loves us just like He loved Gideon. He can use us in His plan, just like He used Gideon. God helped Gideon take care of Israel's big problem: the Midianites. God can help us with an even bigger problem: our sin problem. Jesus came to save us from sin. He gave His own life on the cross to take away our sin. Then He came back to life to offer all of us an opportunity to know God and follow His perfect plan for our lives.

If you ever feel like you're alone or that God's not with you, remember that Gideon used to feel that way too. Then God showed him that He really does love us and wants us to know Him. If you want to know more about how you can know God personally and follow Him, just ask us. We would love to help you know how.

Each day you will close the story time with an invitation to accept Jesus. Say something like this: God wants everybody to follow Him. The problem is that sometimes we do bad things that the Bible calls sin. A sin is anything that we do that God does not want us to do. God still loves us, even though we sin. That's why Jesus came. Jesus died on the cross to be punished for our sins. Then on the third day He came back to life. Now, for anybody who asks, Jesus will take away our sins and become a part of our lives. He will help us to follow Him. The Bible says that if we believe Jesus in our hearts and follow Him, He will save us from our sin and help us to follow God. Then one day we will be with Him in heaven. Anybody that wants to choose to follow Jesus can do that today. We would love to help you know how.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft or filling out the activities packet for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives. For today's craft time you will give each child an activity packet with pictures to color and various puzzles to solve.

Day Two

Supplies needed: crayons, 1 activities packet for each child

Note—an activities packet for days 1,2, & 4 is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this curriculum. These pages are copyright free and available for reproduction. You may also find additional resources such as more coloring pages by searching on-line or using Bible coloring books. We will have some copies of these types of additional materials available for you here during your trip. Day 3 you will be making a bead necklace to share the plan of salvation instead of packets.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God’s word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse for older and younger children in English and in Spanish in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Having a copy of the one page memory verse poster with you can help you teach the verse.

English: There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ . . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Spanish: De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

Wrap Up

Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a second large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

In this large group session you will have a short skit/object lesson to help emphasize the theme of the day’s activities. A script is provided below. When you finish the skit, ask the children review questions to help them re-cement in their own minds the day’s Bible Story. Review the memory verse together one last time, then pray before dismissing to games time and snacks.

Object Lesson:

Each day you will provide a visual object lesson during your large group closing time that is designed to help drive home the day’s theme.

Set-Up:

Actor 1: Needs a Bible

Actor 2: Tape plastic drinking cups over both hands

Actor 1 is sitting in front of the group reading the Bible. Actor 2 walks up, both hands behind the back, turned to keep hands out of audience’s view. Actor 2 is clearly a little sheepish. Actor 1 looks up and sees Actor 2 approaching.

Actor 1: Hey! How are you doing today?

Day Two

Actor 2: (*Tentatively*) Well, I'm mostly okay. I guess.

Actor 1: (*Suspiciously*) Are you sure? You seem a little . . . not okay. What's wrong?

Actor 2: (*Breaks down in despair*) I admit it! I've done something foolish!

Actor 1: What happened? It can't be that bad. I can probably help.

Actor 2: (*brightening*) I knew you'd help. You see . . . I can no longer use my hands.

Actor 1: (*surprised*) You can no longer use your hands? What does that mean?

Actor 2: (*shows the hands, each of which has a plastic drinking cup taped over.*) I taped cups over my hands to punish them. Now I can't get them off.

Actor 1: (*incredulous*) You . . . taped cups over your hands . . . to *punish* them?

Actor 2: Yes. You remember that yesterday my soccer tryout did not go too well.

Actor 1: I remember. There were some extra shoes involved, as I recall.

Actor 2: Right. Since that didn't pan out, I tried out for the basketball team today.

Actor 1: That's great. Basketball is really fun.

Actor 2: Yes, it really is. Sadly, however, I missed all my shots. So, I got mad at my hands. So, I grounded them . . . by taping cups over them. The second one was really hard to do, by the way.

Actor 1: Why in the world would you get mad at your hands?

Actor 2: They're the ones who missed the shots aren't they?

Actor 1: No, they're not.

Actor 2: They're not? I was pretty sure they were.

Actor 1: No, remember what we talked about yesterday with the feet?

Actor 2: Yes. We said it takes every part of the body to play soccer. The feet weren't the only important part.

Actor 1: That's right. And the reverse is true too. When something doesn't go right, we can't blame just one part of the body. It takes the whole body to play basketball. Legs to run. Eyes to see the ball.

Actor 2: Just like with the soccer.

Actor 1: Just like it. When you tried to add feet, it didn't work, did it?

Actor 2: Not at all. And you're saying it doesn't work to take away hands either.

Actor 1: Right. God made our bodies perfectly balanced to do what they need to do. He made each part exactly right, and He put it right where it needs to be.

Actor 2: I should have figured that out by now.

Day Two

Actor 1: God made people that way too. There is not single person in the whole world that is not important to Him. He wants us all to matter to each other, because we all matter to Him.

Actor 2: I like that. I'm glad we're all important to God.

Actor 1: Sure. Think about the story of Gideon we learned today. Other people who looked at Gideon might not have thought he seemed that important. But God knew the truth: He had created Gideon to rescue Israel from the Midianites.

Actor 2: That sounds like a really cool story. I have to admit: I kind of missed it. I was a little distracted trying to tape plastic cups on my hands.

Actor 1: Here's what we'll do: I'll help you untape your hands, and these boys and girls can help tell you the story.

Use this time as a natural transition into story review. Ask the children questions about what they have learned today until they can reconstruct the story for Actor 2.

Game Time/Snacks

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.

Day Three

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Teams
- **Small Group**
 - Story: The Crucifixion and Resurrection
 - Scripture for today's story: Luke 22:47-24:53
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Skit, story review questions

S
U
M
M
A
R
Y

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children's attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoying the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

Testimony

The theme for this whole week of Rainbow Express is *The Body: how we fit together in God's perfect plan*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that God has a perfect plan for our lives which involves being united in following Him. They will learn that Jesus came to save us from sin and restore us to a new life with God. Obviously, the decision to follow Christ is an incredibly personal decision. It is important that the children and youth who attend your Rainbow Express understand that a personal relationship with Christ is a very important reality for the members of your group. Every day during the opening time one or two members of your group can share a short version of their testimony in front of the large group. The goal is to let the children see how listening and obeying as God has spoken in your life has made a practical and meaningful difference. *(For help on sharing in a way that will be age-appropriate and meaningful with children, each person who plans to give their testimony should read the sheet Tips on Preparing Your Testimony in the training materials section of this packet.)*

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory

TIP—The Large Group Leader should serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day's Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

Day Three

verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day three is “Teams”. Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Divide your children into teams. Have the teams compete saying the memory verse many different ways: loudest, softest, fastest, slowest, telephone style, English, Spanish, with hand motions, etc.

Introduction of Today’s Story--Building the Foundation

When the memory verse teacher is finished, the Large Group Leader will return to the front to provide a brief introduction to the day’s theme and story. Each day you will re-introduce the concept that the Bible tells us that truth about God’s love and the Savior He sent for us. Take time to sum up the previous day’s stories and themes. Be sure each day to introduce the theme for the day’s story. The stories for the whole week are intended to show that we can be confident in Jesus as our Savior. Help the children understand that God wants desperately for all people to know Him and accept Christ as their Savior. When you have finished this introduction, divide the children into small groups to hear the Bible story.

Below is a suggested narrative to help with the day’s introduction.

(A Special Note—This curriculum references the previous Rainbow Express Curriculum, titled My New Life. This is designed to provide a sense of narrative continuity for children here at Mission Arlington who attend Rainbow Express. For those of you using this curriculum in another location, however, this The Body curriculum will work fine as a stand alone.)

This week we have been talking about God’s plan for us. We have learned that God made us each special to have a relationship with us. We have also learned that God wants all of us to know Him and follow Him as part of one big family of people that love Him. We have also said God designed us all to work together, just like the parts of a body work together. God has a special place for each of us in His perfect plan.

Sometimes it might seem like things aren’t going according to God’s plan. We all have problems in our lives. There are sad things happening all around us that don’t match up with God’s perfect plan. The Bible tells us how this happened. Something called sin messes up God’s perfect plan for our lives. Sin is all the things we think, do, or say that go against what God wants. The Bible says that all people sin. We all make mistakes. None of us has been perfect at following God’s plan.

Sin is a huge problem in our lives. It pushes us out of God’s plan and away from Him. God still loves us very much, but our sin keeps us from getting close to Him. God is so perfect that no sin can be around Him. That means that as long as we have sin in our lives, we can never be best friends with God like he wants. God loves us so much that He wants to save us by taking away our sin. Today we’re going to learn about how He made a way to take away the sin of this world.

We have been reading from I Corinthians chapter 12 this week. This chapter of the Bible talks about how God designed us to work together as a body. So far, we have seen that all people are a part of the body and that all people are different so that the body will work well. Today we are going to read verse 26. It says, “If one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honored, the whole body will be happy.” What do you think that means?

We all know that hurting even a little part of your body can cause great big pain. Think about what it feels like when you stub your toe on a chair in the dark. Your toe is very small, but it makes your whole body hurt. The same is true if you have a toothache. That tiny tooth can make you feel miserable all over. The different parts of a body are all connected to each other. When one has a problem, all the other parts share the problem. God says that, as people, we’re like that too. He designed us to be together, like a body. If one of us is sad, the others are sad too, so we try to help. If one of us has really good news, we want to share that happiness with others too. That kind of connection can only come from love. That’s why we care about each other: because God helps us to love each other.

Day Three

God loves us, too. That's why it made Him so sad when we were far away from Him because of our sin. He did not want to leave us away from Him. God knew that sin causes suffering. Sin causes us to be away from Him. That's why He did something amazing to save us from sin. He did that by dying on a cross to save us. Jesus was punished, even though he never did anything wrong. He took sin's suffering for us. Now we have an open door to follow Him and live in God's perfect plan.

Today in our small groups we're going to learn more about how Jesus came to save the world.

Small Group Story Time

When the Large Group Time is over, divide the children into small groups for story time. The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to relate the story to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today's Story:

This week we have talked a lot about God's perfect plan for all people to love Him and love each other. We said that God created each of us exactly how He wants us. He wants us to have a close relationship with Him and for all of us to have strong relationships with the people around us too. The Bible tells us over and over again that God created us to have a joyful life with Him. Do you remember our memory verse from Rainbow Express in June? Jeremiah 29:11 says, "I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future."

We have also learned that our sin is what separates us from God's perfect plans for us. The Bible tells us that ever since the first people sinned for the first time God has been working to help us be free from sin. He does this so that we can be free to follow Him. That's why God sent Jesus. Jesus came so that we could have the wonderful lives of friendship with God that he wants to give us. Jesus said that while He was here with us. He said that the Devil, who tries to get us to sin, only wants to "steal, kill, and destroy." Then Jesus said, "I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."

While Jesus was here on Earth He taught us about the kind of lives God wants us to have. He taught us that God wants our lives to be full of love, love for Him and love for other people. In fact, Jesus said the two most important rules in the whole world are to love God with our whole lives and to love other people as much as we love ourselves. Jesus didn't just teach about love. He showed us God's love by the way that he cared for the people around Him. Jesus used God's power to give blind people their sight. He cured sick people. He helped people walk who had never walked before. He fed huge crowds of people and stopped storms just by speaking to them. Jesus' whole life was spent helping us to know God and His love.

Jesus did not just come to show us how to live, however. He also came to die for us. Every single one of us has sinned. We've learned this week that our sin keeps us away from God. Sin is awful, awful stuff. There is no way that we can get rid of it by ourselves. No matter how much we try, you and I are not able to get the sin out of our lives. Sin causes us lots of suffering and sadness in our lives.

Remember the verse we read in a large group from I Corinthians. The Bible says that when one part of the body suffers, all the parts suffer. God designed us to fit together and with Him, just like a body. That means our sin made Him very sad. He wants to take away our sin, so He took the suffering for us instead of making us go through it by ourselves. This is how it happened:

Not everybody liked the Good News message that Jesus was spreading. There was a group of religious leaders that did not agree with what Jesus said. These men did not want Jesus to teach about God's love, so they looked for ways to stop Him. They finally decided that they wanted to kill Jesus.

Day Three

Of course, Jesus had the power to stop them at any time. Remember, Jesus could do amazing things. He knew exactly what these evil people wanted to do to Him. He could have made them stop or He could have just gone back to Heaven and left us alone with our sin problem. Instead, Jesus chose to let His enemies come and arrest Him. He did this because He wanted to die so that He could take the punishment for sin instead of us.

All of us here are sinners. That's why we can't take away our own sin or each other's sin. That would be like one hurt part of the body trying to help another part. If you're carrying a heavy box with both hands, I can't help you lift it if I have my own heavy box in both of my hands. In the same way, sinners can't fix sin. Jesus never sinned. He never said, did, or thought anything that God did not want Him to. That's why He can help us with our sin, because He doesn't have any of His own. He took away our sin and put it on Himself. That's why He let his enemies come and arrest Him.

Jesus' enemies spent that whole night being cruel to Him. They hit Him and spit on Him and made up lies about Him. The next morning they made Jesus carry a heavy wooden cross up to a place outside the city called Skull Hill. They hammered large nails into Jesus' wrists and feet to hold Him on the cross. Then they stood the cross up and waited for Jesus to die.

They made fun of Jesus while He hung on the cross. "If you are really the Son of God," they shouted, "prove it by coming down off the cross. You said you could save other people, but you can't even save yourself." Jesus' enemies were very confused. Jesus *was* saving other people by staying on the cross. He was accepting the suffering and punishment that we all deserve.

After six hours Jesus died. Some of His friends took His body from the cross and laid it in a cave. They rolled a great stone across the front. They thought they were closing up Jesus' body forever. They did not understand what had really happened: Jesus had made a way to take away sin forever.

On the third day, something wonderful happened. Jesus came back to life! In His love for us Jesus had chosen to die so that we could live with God. He took the punishment that we deserved for our sin. Now He returned to life. God raised Him from the dead so that we could follow Him. He will help us have the wonderful life together that God created for us.

Jesus spent forty days visiting His friends and showing them that He had returned to life. He told them to spend the rest of their lives loving Him and helping others know how to love Him too. Jesus told His followers to make sure the whole world knows that they can fit together in God's wonderful plans for us.

Jesus wants you to know how to love and follow Him too. If you would like to know how you can be in this friendship with Jesus, please ask us. We want to help you know how.

Each day you will close the story time with an invitation to accept Jesus. Say something like this: God wants everybody to follow Him. The problem is that sometimes we do bad things that the Bible calls sin. A sin is anything that we do that God does not want us to do. God still loves us, even though we sin. That's why Jesus came. Jesus died on the cross to be punished for our sins. Then on the third day He came back to life. Now, for anybody who asks, Jesus will take away our sins and become a part of our lives. He will help us to follow Him. The Bible says that if we believe Jesus in our hearts and follow Him, He will save us from our sin and help us to follow God. Then one day we will be with Him in heaven. Anybody that wants to choose to follow Jesus can do that today. We would love to help you know how.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft or filling out the activities packet for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their

Day Three

families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives. For today's craft time you will give each child an activity packet with pictures to color and various puzzles to solve.

Salvation Bracelets

Supplies: For each child—one string or cord for bracelet, and five beads, one each of red, black, white, green, yellow

For instructions on how to make today's craft, see the following pages. Step by step instructions on which order to put the beads on the bracelet and bilingual explanations of the colors' meanings are included. You will also find optional hand out pages to give the children to help them remember the meaning of the bracelet. During this craft you will be explaining God's plan for salvation. It is very important that you approach it with sensitivity to children that may be ready to make decisions to accept God. Please spend time in practice and prayer so that you will be ready when the time comes to clearly explain what salvation means.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

English: There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ . . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Spanish: De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse for older and younger children in English and in Spanish in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Having a copy of the one page memory verse poster with you can help you teach the verse.

Wrap Up

Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a second large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

In this large group session you will have a short skit/object lesson to help emphasize the theme of the day's activities. A script is provided below. When you finish the skit, ask the children review questions to help them re-cement in their own minds the day's Bible Story. Review the memory verse together one last time, then pray before dismissing to games time and snacks.

Object Lesson:

Each day you will provide a visual object lesson during your large group closing time that is designed to help drive home the day's theme.

Set-Up:

Actor 1: Needs a Bible.

Actor 2: Soaking wet and disheveled. Just before beginning, douse Actor 2 completely. Make

Day Three

the appearance as “distressed” as possible: one shoe off, hat askew, sunglasses dangling, etc.

Actor 1 is sitting in front of the group reading the Bible. Actor 2 walks up, dripping and dejected.

Actor 1: Oh my goodness! What happened? Are you okay?

Actor 2: (*Downcast*) Yes, I’m fine. I just had a bit of a problem today at the swimming pool.

Actor 1: I’m so sorry. What happened?

Actor 2: Well, do you know my friend Pat?

Actor 1: Yes. Pat’s nice.

Actor 2: Pat is nice. Pat also can’t swim. Pat and I were playing Frisbee at the park today.

Actor 1: That’s always fun.

Actor 2: Yes. I threw the Frisbee too far and it landed close to the pool. Pat was running fast to get it and couldn’t stop in time and. . . .

Actor 1: Pat fell in the pool?

Actor 2: Pat fell in the pool. Since Pat can’t swim, I jumped in to help.

Actor 1: But I thought. . .do you know how to swim?

Actor 2: Obviously not.

Actor 1: Right. Sorry.

Actor 2: So no. . .I don’t know how to swim.

Actor 1: Then why did you jump in?

Actor 2: Pat needed help.

Actor 1: Was there not a lifeguard there?

Actor 2: There was. We just didn’t want to bother him. I was pretty sure I could do it.

Actor 1: I see. So what happened next?

Actor 2: Well, I tried to rescue Pat for a while, which didn’t work. So I finally called the lifeguard for help even though I was really embarrassed. He helped us get out of the pool. Who knew the shallow end could be so rough?

Actor 1: Right. Listen, what you did was really dangerous. Somebody could have gotten hurt.

Actor 2: I know. I should have just asked the lifeguard for help

Actor 1: It’s important to ask for help when we need it. Especially when we’re talking about Jesus. Jesus always wants to help us, and He can help us with our biggest problem of all.

Actor 2: Our biggest problem?

Day Three

Actor 1: That's right. Our sin problem. Jesus came to take away sin so that we can be with God. Sin keeps us away from God. Only Jesus can take it away. We can't take away our own sin any better than a person who can't swim would be able to save themselves from drowning. Jesus died and came back to life to solve that problem for us. He gave His life to save us from sin. Now, we have the opportunity to follow God's plan for our lives and to fit in with God's body like we've been talking about.

Actor 2: We really should ask Jesus for help, shouldn't we?

Actor1: Yes, we should. There is nothing more important than that. In fact, if you'll listen, I think these boys and girls can tell you what we learned about Jesus today.

Use this time as a natural transition into story review. Ask the children questions about what they have learned today until they can reconstruct the story for Actor 2.

Game Time/Snacks

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.

Day Three Craft

Note-When explaining the meanings of the colors refer to the bead and the sin it represents as dark rather than black.

DARK- This reminds us of sin. Sin is anything we do that is not what God wants us to do. The Bible says that everyone has sinned.

OSCURO- *Este representa el pecado. El pecado es cualquier cosa que hacemos que no complace a Dios. La Biblia nos dice que todos hemos pecado.*

RED- This reminds us of Jesus' blood. Jesus was God's Son and He died on the cross to pay the punishment for our sins.

TIP—This page is given for small group leaders to use as a guide to help them when explaining the meanings of the colors. The next two pages are intended as optional extras you can send home with your Rainbow Express students to help them remember the meaning of the bracelet.

ROJO- *Este representa la sangre de Jesús. Jesús es el Hijo de Dios y El murió en la cruz para pagar por las consecuencias de nuestros pecados.*

WHITE- This reminds us of our new lives. The Bible says that after we have accepted Jesus, we are brand new. He cleans out the sin that was in us. Jesus is in our lives! He will never leave!

BLANCO- *Este representa nueva vida. La Biblia dice que una vez que aceptamos a Jesús como nuestro Salvador, somos hechos nuevos. El limpia el pecado que estaba dentro de nosotros. !Esto es porque Jesús esta en nuestras vidas!*

GREEN- This reminds us that we are to grow as a Christian. In order to grow in our relationship with God, we need to pray, read the Bible, and hang out with other Christians by coming to Bible Study.

VERDE- *Este representa crecimiento como Cristianos. Para crecer necesitamos tener una relación con Dios. Esto es posible orando, leyendo la Biblia, y teniendo convivió con otros Cristianos por venir al Estudio Bíblico.*

YELLOW- This reminds us of Heaven! The Bible says that every person who has trusted Jesus to be his or her Savior will spend forever in Heaven with Him.

AMARILLO- *!Este representa el cielo! La Biblia nos dice que cada persona que ha puesto su fe en Jesús como Salvador estará por toda la eternidad en el cielo a lado de El.*



dark

Sometimes I do bad things that make God sad.
A veces hago cosas malas que no le gustan a Dios.

red

Jesus loves me, so He died on the cross to help me.
Jesús se murió en la cruz por mí porque me ama.

white

Jesus can take away all the bad things I do.
Jesús puede quitar todas las cosas malas que hice.

green

I can follow Jesus and learn to be more like Him.
Yo puedo seguir a Jesús y aprender ser mas como El.

yellow

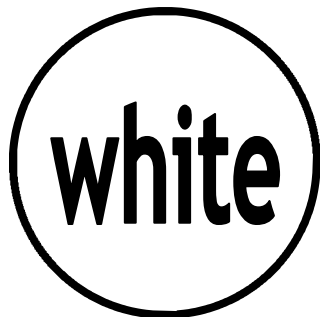
One day I will be with Jesus in Heaven.
Un día estaré en El Cielo con Jesús.



Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory.
Romans 3:23



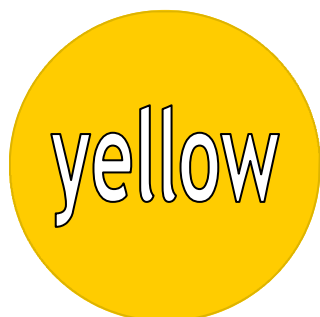
But here is how God has shown his love for us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8



Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17



You are the children that God dearly loves. So be just like Him. Ephesians 5:1



[Jesus said] "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." John 14:2-3

Day Four

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Next Word Relay
- **Small Group**
 - Story: Esther
Scripture for today's story: Esther
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Object Lesson, story review questions

S
U
M
M
A
R
Y

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children's attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoying the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

Testimony

The theme for this whole week of Rainbow Express is *The Body: how we fit together in God's perfect plan*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that God has a perfect plan for our lives which involves being united in following Him. They will learn that Jesus came to save us from sin and restore us to a new life with God. Obviously, the decision to follow Christ is an incredibly personal decision. It is important that the children and youth who attend your Rainbow Express understand that a personal relationship with Christ is a very important reality for the members of your group. Every day during the opening time one or two members of your group can share a short version of their testimony in front of the large group. The goal is to let the children see how listening and obeying as God has spoken in your life has made a practical and meaningful difference. *(For help on sharing in a way that will be age-appropriate and meaningful with children, each person who plans to give their testimony should read the sheet Tips on Preparing Your Testimony in the training materials section of this packet.)*

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory

TIP—The Large Group Leader should serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day's Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

Day Four

verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day four is “Next Word Relay”. Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Divide the children into two or more teams. Then, split each team in half. Have the two halves face each other in a single file line, about ten feet apart. Have the first person on the team say the first word of the verse. That player then runs across and tags the first player in the line facing them. The first player then runs to the back of that line. The second player then says the next word in the verse, then runs across to tag the player on the opposite line. Keep going until each team has said the whole verse. You may want to bring a stopwatch to time the children and see which team can do it the fastest.

Introduction of Today’s Story--Building the Foundation

When the memory verse teacher is finished, the Large Group Leader will return to the front to provide a brief introduction to the day’s theme and story. Each day you will re-introduce the concept that the Bible tells us that truth about God’s love and the Savior He sent for us. Take time to sum up the previous day’s stories and themes. Be sure each day to introduce the theme for the day’s story. The stories for the whole week are intended to show that we can be confident in Jesus as our Savior. Help the children understand that God wants desperately for all people to know Him and accept Christ as their Savior. When you have finished this introduction, divide the children into small groups to hear the Bible story.

Below is a suggested narrative to help with the day’s introduction.

(A Special Note—This curriculum references the previous Rainbow Express Curriculum, titled My New Life. This is designed to provide a sense of narrative continuity for children here at Mission Arlington who attend Rainbow Express. For those of you using this curriculum in another location, however, this The Body curriculum will work fine as a stand alone.)

This week we have been learning that God has a perfect plan for all people. He loves us very much. He wants us to love him back. He wants us to love each other too. We have learned that God designed us to care about each other and help each other. He did this so that we can help each other learn how much He loves us.

Each of us has a special place in God’s plan. He wants to use us to help other people know about his love for us. He wants us to help share His Good News with all the people around us. That’s why God put each of us where we are in our lives. He gave us our talents and abilities. He put people around us to help us know Him. Now we can help other people to do the same.

All the stories we have learned about this week remind us of that. First we learned about Ruth. Ruth didn’t feel like she fit in with the people around her. She was all alone and from a different country. God loved Ruth very much though. He had a plan to take care of her and Naomi. She fit into God’s body, even though she didn’t know it. Next we learned about Gideon. Gideon didn’t feel very strong or brave, but God wanted to use him to save a whole country. Gideon learned that God helps us to be part of His plan, even when we might not be able to by ourselves. Yesterday we talked about Jesus. Jesus loves us very much. He died so that we can be a part of God’s body. He came to take away our sins so that nothing could keep us away from God.

Today we’re going to learn a story about a very scary time for a group of God’s people. An enemy was trying to destroy them all. They prayed that God would help them, and He did. We’re going to see how He used two surprising people to rescue his followers.

We have been reading this week from the Bible in I Corinthians, the twelfth, chapter. It tells us that in God’s eyes we should all work together just like the parts of a body work together. I Corinthians 12:27 says “You are the body of [Jesus]. Each one of you is a part of it.” That is the summary of what we have been learning this week. God has a plan for each of us to work together to do the things that He wants us to do. He wants to use us to show the world how much he loves us. God says that makes us like His body. We’re like the hands He uses to touch people and the mouth He uses to tell people He loves them. That’s a great gift to be a part of God’s plan.

Day Four

Aren't you glad that God loves us so much? We're glad He cares for us. We're glad He helps us care for each other. Today we're going to see how God helps us follow Him, even when we don't feel like we can.

Small Group Story Time

When the Large Group Time is over, divide the children into small groups for story time. The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to relate the story to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today's Story:

This week we're learning how we all fit together in God's plan. God made each of us exactly like He wants us to be. He also put us right where we need to be in our lives. Sometimes that can be a hard thing to believe. There are definitely things in our lives we wish were different. Sometimes things at home can be tough. Sometimes school doesn't go like we want it to. Sometimes things happen that make us sad. God doesn't like it when we have to feel that way. He loves us very much and wants us to be okay. Because he loves us, God many times takes the sad things in our lives and turns them into good things.

That's very true in the lives of the people in our story today. Mordecai was a Jewish man who lived a very long time ago. He lived in a city call Susa, but that was not his home. Susa was the capital of a might empire called Persia. Persia had conquered Mordecai's home. They had destroyed buildings, stolen things, and hurt many people. They had kidnapped many of the people that lived there and carried them back to work in Susa. Mordecai worked in Susa and took care of his niece Hadassah, whose parents had been killed. He tried hard to live the way God wanted Him to live, even though he was very far from his home. It was not an easy life.

Soon, several things happened that made life even tougher. First, the king of Persia decided he needed a new queen. King Xerxes ordered his servants to search the Persian Empire for the most beautiful women. He would have a beauty contest and choose his favorite to be the new queen. Mordecai's niece Hadassah was very beautiful. Xerxes' servant took her from Mordecai and carried her away to the palace for the contest. Hadassah won the contest and became the new queen of Persia. They changed her name to Queen Esther.

Life as a Persian queen was not as fun as you might think. True, Esther got to live in a palace, but in Persia the queen was basically a servant of the king. She did not get to leave the palace unless Xerxes let her. She could not go visit her family. She could not even go see the king, who lived in a separate palace, without his permission.

The second terrible thing that happened in Susa was because of an evil man named Haman. Haman was a powerful ruler who was promoted to being second in command of the whole Persian Empire. Haman could tell anybody what to do, and they were supposed to obey him. The only person who could tell Haman what to do was the king himself. Haman was an awful person. He ordered all the people in Susa to bow down in front of him wherever he walked. He wanted them to treat him like he was god.

Mordecai would not bow in front of Haman. He served the one true God and would not bow down in front of a person. This made Haman furious. Haman decided to punish Mordecai. He found out that Mordecai was Jewish. He decided to kill every Jewish person that lived in the entire Persian Empire. He made a law that on a certain day any Persian who wanted to could attack the Jews and take their things.

It was a very sad time for the Jewish people that lived in Persia. They knew that soon their lives would be in danger. Mordecai sent a message to Esther. He told her everything that Haman was going to do. He asked her to help save the Jewish people, her own people, from evil Haman.

Esther was worried. She wanted to help, but she was scared. King Xerxes was a cruel man. She knew that she could get in trouble if she went to see him without being invited. She might even

Day Four

be killed. She was worried about what might happen. She sent a letter back to Mordecai saying she was not sure if she could help.

Mordecai sent Esther back a message. “How do you know you did not become queen for exactly this moment?” he asked. Mordecai understood something very important. He knew that God puts us in places in our lives where He can use us to help others. God has a plan for us that is perfect, even when we don’t understand it. Esther and Mordecai might not have understood why they were taken from their homeland. They might not have known why Esther had to leave Mordecai to live in the palace. What Mordecai did understand is that God is always working to help people. Mordecai knew that God wanted to use Esther to save the Jewish people.

Mordecai and all the Jews prayed for Esther for three days. Then, Esther went to see the king, even though he might order to have her killed. God had a plan to protect Esther, just like He had a plan to protect the Jewish people. Instead of being angry, Xerxes was happy to see Esther. He listened to her as she explained what was happening. He became very angry at Haman when he heard that his plan would even hurt the queen. Xerxes got rid of Haman. He made Mordecai a ruler instead. Together, they changed the law to protect the Jewish people.

It’s amazing to see how God worked to protect the people that asked Him for help. When Hadassah was first taken from Mordecai’s home and made Queen Esther, she never could have known what would happen next. She did not know that God would use her to save a whole group of people. Even today, thousands of years later, Jewish people still celebrate a holiday called Purim to thank God for saving them from Haman. Esther was a part of that plan even though she never thought she could be.

God has a plan for you, just like He had for Esther. He wants to use you to help people, just like Mordecai. He wants you to be a part of spreading the Good News about Jesus to everyone around you. The first step in God’s plan for us is that we accept Jesus’ offer to save us. We can’t tell other people about the Good News if we don’t already know it ourselves. Jesus loves you more than you can imagine. He even died and came back to life so that you can be with Him. If you want to know more about how you can be a part of Jesus’ plan for you, just ask us. We would love to help you know how.

Each day you will close the story time with an invitation to accept Jesus. Say something like this: God wants everybody to follow Him. The problem is that sometimes we do bad things that the Bible calls sin. A sin is anything that we do that God does not want us to do. God still loves us, even though we sin. That’s why Jesus came. Jesus died on the cross to be punished for our sins. Then on the third day He came back to life. Now, for anybody who asks, Jesus will take away our sins and become a part of our lives. He will help us to follow Him. The Bible says that if we believe Jesus in our hearts and follow Him, He will save us from our sin and help us to follow God. Then one day we will be with Him in heaven. Anybody that wants to choose to follow Jesus can do that today. We would love to help you know how.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft or filling out the activities packet for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives. For today’s craft time you will give each child an activity packet with pictures to color and various puzzles to solve.

Supplies needed: crayons, 1 activities packet for each child

Day Four

Note—an activities packet for days 1,2, & 4 is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this curriculum. These pages are copyright free and available for reproduction. You may also find additional resources such as more coloring pages by searching on-line or using Bible coloring books. We will have some copies of these types of additional materials available for you here during your trip. Day 3 you will be making a bead necklace to share the plan of salvation instead of packets.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse for older and younger children in English and in Spanish in the Supplements and Handouts portion of this packet. Having a copy of the one page memory verse poster with you can help you teach the verse.

English: There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ . . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Spanish: De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

Wrap Up

Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a second large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

In this large group session you will have a short skit/object lesson to help emphasize the theme of the day's activities. A script is provided below. When you finish the skit, ask the children review questions to help them re-cement in their own minds the day's Bible Story. Review the memory verse together one last time, then pray before dismissing to games time and snacks.

Object Lesson:

Each day you will provide a visual object lesson during your large group closing time that is designed to help drive home the day's theme.

Set-Up:

Actor 1: Needs a Bible

Actor 2: Dressed in running clothes. Needs to be very, very sweaty as if he has been running for a long time. Bible in one hand, phone book and world map or globe in the other.

Actor 1 is sitting in front of the group reading the Bible. Actor 2 comes running up at full speed. Actor 1 stand up to greet Actor 2.

Actor 1: Hello. Where are you going so fast. . . .(trails off as Actor 2, not paying attention, runs right into Actor 1. Both fall down in a pile. Actor 2 drops phone book and map. Both sit up, rubbing themselves like they're sore and clutching their Bibles.)

Actor 2: I'm so sorry. I didn't even notice you there because I was running so fast.

Day Four

Actor 1: That's okay. It was just an accident. But why are you in such a hurry? *(As Actor 1 speaks Actor 2 has already jumped up, dusted self off, collected items, and is stretching as if about to run again.)*

Actor 2: No time to explain. But Jesus loves you. Very much. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go tell that to seven billion more people.

Actor 1: *(good natured laughing)* Thank you for telling me Jesus loves me. That's always good to hear. But did you say you have to tell seven *billion* more people?

Actor 2: That's right. That's about how many people live in Earth, right?

Actor 1: I think that's right, yes.

Actor 2: And Jesus wants us to tell all of them that He loves them, right?

Actor 1: That's definitely true.

Actor 2: Well, that's a lot to do. In fact, I did a little math about it.

Actor 1: I'm very impressed.

Actor 2: Well, it was a lot of big numbers, but here's what I came up with: If I want to tell seven billion people something in my lifetime, I need to tell almost 27,000 people each hour.

Actor 1: That is a *lot* of people each hour.

Actor 2: I'll say. That's why I'm in such a hurry. I've been working on this for an hour, and so far I'm 26,999 people behind schedule. I've got my phone book to call people as I go. And I've got a map so I can see where to go next.

Actor 1: It's obvious you've put a lot of work into this.

Actor 2: It's important.

Actor 1: It's very important. You're exactly right that Jesus wants us to tell everybody about Him. And you're right that it is a HUGE job to do. And you're right that we need to get to work on it without wasting time. You're only wrong about one thing: *you* don't have to tell 27,000 people an hour.

Actor 2: I don't? *(scratching head)* I must have done some math wrong. Maybe I forgot to carry one. Or a billion.

Actor 1: No, it's not that. I'm sure you did your math right. But *you* still don't have to tell 27,000 people an hour.

Actor 2: Why not?

Actor 1: Because you don't have to do it alone.

Actor 2: Really?

Actor 1: Really. What have we been learning about this whole week?

Actor 2: About being the body of Jesus.

Day Four

Actor 1: That's right. And what does that mean?

Actor 2: It means that we all have to work together like the parts of a body do. It also means that God wants to use us to do good things, just like our bodies do things.

Actor 1: That's very good. That means the job of telling the whole world about Jesus belongs to all of us. (*Wave hand at everybody attending Rainbow Express today.*) We're all a part of God's plan. So we all have a part in this job of telling people that God loves them.

Actor 2: That's good news. I think it would have been impossible to do it by myself.

Actor 1: It *definitely* would have been impossible. Just about anything worth doing is impossible to do alone. But we're *never* alone. God is always with us. He is the one who makes His plans possible, not us. Our job is just to do what He asks us to do, which includes working together like a body. He's the one who makes it possible.

Actor 2: That makes sense to me. But we need to talk about how this works.

Actor 1: What do you mean?

Actor 2: Well, we came here to Mission Arlington all the way from (*insert your hometown*) to help tell these guys about Jesus.

Actor 1: That's right.

Actor 2: And today is our last day here. We're going to go back home. We have to keep telling people where we live about Jesus.

Actor 1: Right. There are lots of people there that need to hear about Him.

Actor 2: But when we're gone, who is going to keep telling these boys and girls about Jesus?

Actor 1: Mission Arlington will still be here to help with that. But I think I know what you mean. There are a lot more people than the Mission Arlington missionaries can tell all by themselves. These boys and girls have brothers, sisters, neighbors, moms, dads, teachers, coaches, friends at school, friends at the park, friends on sports teams, and more. . . .

Actor 2: Right. Exactly. Who is going to help the Mission Arlington missionaries tell all those people about Jesus?

Actor 1: These boys and girls are.

Actor 2: That's great!

Actor 1: These boys and girls are just as much a part of God's plan as you and I are, right?

Actor 2: Right.

Actor 1: When these boys and girls accept Jesus, they become a part of the body of Jesus, just like we do, right?

Actor 2: Right.

Actor 1: That means the mission to tell people about Him belongs to them, just like it belongs to us, right?

Day Four

Actor 2: Right.

Actor 1: We're going to make a promise with these boys and girls. We're going to go home after today. We're going to promise in front of God that we are going to tell the people where we live about Jesus. We are going to be the body of Jesus where we live. We're going to pray and ask these boys and girls to promise to keep being the body of Jesus right here. They can keep learning about Jesus from the Mission Arlington missionaries. They can help tell everybody around them about Jesus too.

Gather everybody at Rainbow Express together. Have one person from your group pray for all the boys and girls that came to Rainbow Express this week. Thank God that they came. Ask Him to help them know how much he loves them. Ask God to help them tell everybody around them about Jesus' love, too. When you finish, go into your games and snack times like normal.

Game Time/Snacks

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.

Section Four

Supplements and Handouts

Reproducible
crafts, song
lyrics, games,
memory verse
activities,
and more

SONGS: Use these suggested songs during your opening song time. Feel free to add any fun Christian children's songs that you know too.

1. Bubbling

It's bubbling, it's bubbling,
it's bubbling in my soul
There's singing and laughter
since Jesus made me whole
Folks don't understand it,
I cannot keep it quiet!!
It's bubbling, bubbling, bubbling,
bubbling, bubbling day and night

2. Come and Go with Me

Come and go with me to my Father's house
Come and go with me to my Father's house
It's a big, big house with lots and lots of room
A big, big table with lots and lots of food
A big, big yard where we can play football
A big, big house, it's my Father's house

3. Deep and Wide

Deep and wide, deep and wide
There's a fountain flowin' deep and wide
Deep and wide, deep and wide
There's a fountain flowin' deep and wide

4. Do You Love my Jesus

Deep, deep Ohhh deep down down
Deep down in my heart, I love you Jesus
Deep, deep Ohhh deep down down
Deep down in my heart
Do you love my Jesus deep down in your heart?
Yes I love my Jesus deep down in my heart!

5. Father Abraham

Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them, and so are you
So let's just praise the Lord - Right Arm!

...Left arm, right foot, left foot, nod your head,
turn around, sit down!

6. God Is So Good

God is so good, God is so good,
God is so good, He's so good to me

He answers prayer...
I love Him so....

7. Give Me Oil in my Lamp

Give me oil in my lamp,
Keep me burning, burning, burning
Give me oil in my lamp, I pray
Give me oil in my lamp,
Keep me burning, burning, burning
Keep me burning til the break of day

Sing Hosanna, sing Hosanna,
Sing Hosanna to the King of Kings
Sing Hosanna, sing Hosanna,
Sing Hosanna to the King

Give me gas in my Ford,
Keep me truckin' for the Lord...
Give me wax on my board,
Keep me surfin' for the Lord...
Give me umption in my gumption,
Make me function, function, function...

8. The B-I-B-L-E

The B-I-B-L-E, yes that's the book for me
I stand alone on the Word of God
The B-I-B-L-E

9. He's a Peach of a Savior

He's a peach of a Savior
He's the apple of my eye
He prunes away the branches
when my branches get too high
He stomps my grapes of wrath
when my life gets too tough
That's why I'm bananas for the Lord
He's the vine and we're the branches
He's the vine and we're the branches
He's the vine and we're the branches
That's why I'm bananas for the Lord

10. I'm All Wrapped Up

I'm all wrapped up, I'm all tied up,
I'm all tangled up in Jesus
I'm all wrapped up, I'm all tied up,
I'm all tangled up in God
I'm all wrapped up, I'm all tied up,
I'm all tangled up in Jesus
I'm all wrapped up, tied up, tangled up in God

11. I'm Gonna Sing, Sing, Sing

I'm gonna sing, sing, sing
I'm gonna shout, shout, shout
I'm gonna sing, I'm gonna shout, Praise the Lord
When those gates are opened wide
I'm gonna sit by Jesus' side
I'm gonna sing, I'm gonna shout, Praise the Lord

12. I'm in the Lord's Army

I may never march in the infantry,
ride in the cavalry, shoot the artillery
I may never fly o'er the enemy
But I'm in the Lord's army, Yes sir!
I'm in the Lord's army, Yes sir!
I'm in the Lord's army, Yes sir!
I may never march in the infantry,

SONGS: Use these suggested songs during your opening song time. Feel free to add any fun Christian children's songs that you know too.

ride in the cavalry, shoot the artillery
I may never fly o'er the enemy
But I'm in the Lord's army

13. I've Got a River of Life

I've got a river of life flowing out of me
Makes the lame to walk and the blind to see
Opens prisoners' doors, sets the captives free
I've got a river of life flowing out of me
Spring up oh well (gush gush gush gush)
within my soul
Spring up oh well (splish splash) and make me
whole
Spring up oh well (whoosh) and give to me
That life abundantly

14. I've Got Joy Down in my Heart

I've got joy down in my heart
Deep deep down in my heart
Spell it J-O-Y Down in my heart
Deep deep down in my heart
Who put it there? Jesus put it there
And nothing can destroy it,
destroy it, destroy it – UGH!
I've got joy down in my heart
Deep deep down in my heart

15. I've Got Peace Like a River

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a
river
I've got peace like a river in my soul
I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a
river
I've got peace like a river in my soul
I've got love like a mountain.....
I've got joy like a fountain.....
I've got peace, love, and joy
like a river mountain fountain.....

16. I Have So Much

I have so much, so much, so much, so much, so
much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so
much,
so much, so much, so much (clap) to be thankful
for. (REPEAT)
I have Jesus to be thankful for.....
I have the Bible to be thankful for.....
I have you to be thankful for.....

17. Little Square Box

If I had a little square box to put my Jesus in,
I'd take Him out and hug His neck
and share Him with a friend
But if I had a little square box
to put the devil in,

I'd take him out and STOMP HIS FACE
and put him back again.

18. I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart
Where? Down in my heart
Where? Down in my heart
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart
Down in my heart to stay
And I'm so happy, so very happy
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart
Down in my heart
And I'm so happy, so very happy
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart

And if the devil doesn't like it
he can sit on a tack! Ouch!....
And if the devil doesn't like it
he can swallow a bomb! Boom!.....
And if the devil doesn't like it
he can fall off a cliff! Ahhh!.....
I've got the wonderful love of my blessed
redeemer way down in the depths of my heart....

19. If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands
If you're happy and you know it
then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands
If you're happy and you know it
stomp your feet...
If you're happy and you know it say Amen...
If you're happy and you know it Praise the Lord...
If you're happy and you know it say Yee-Haw...

20. Jesus in the Morning

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus in the morning
Jesus at the noon time
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus when the sun goes down

Love Him...
Serve Him...
Praise Him...
Share Him...
Thank Him...

21. Jesus Is my Rock

Jesus is my Rock, and He rolls my blues away
Bop shoe Bop Shoe Bop Woo!! (Repeat 2x)

22. Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me this I know,
for the Bible tells me so
Little ones to Him belong

SONGS: Use these suggested songs during your opening song time. Feel free to add any fun Christian children's songs that you know too.

They are weak but He is strong
Chorus:
Singing na na na na na na na na- Heh!
Na na na na na na na na- Huh!
Yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes, Jesus loves me, The Bible tells me so

Jesus loves me when I'm good
When I do the things I should
Jesus loves me when I'm bad
Though it makes Him very sad
(Chorus)

23. My God Is So Big

My God is so big, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do
My God is so big, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do
The mountains are His, the rivers are His
The stars are His handiwork too
My God is so big, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do, for you

24. No One That I Know

No one that I know walks like you,
Talks like you, or looks like you
No one that I know is like you
No one else does what you do

25. Sheep Song

I wanna be a sheep baa baa,
I wanna be a sheep baa baa
Cuz Jesus loves sheep
I wanna be a sheep baa baa
I don't wanna be a goat nope nope
I don't wanna be a goat nope nope
Cuz there ain't no hope for goats
I don't wanna be a goat nope nope

26. Satan Didn't Like It

Satan didn't like it when we
Came outta the wilderness
Came outta the wilderness
Came outta the wilderness
Satan didn't like it when we
Came outta the wilderness
Walkin' with the Lord, Walkin' with the Lord
Walkin' with the Lord
Satan didn't like it when we
Came outta the wilderness
Walkin' with the Lord

Swimmin' with the Lord...
Dancin' with the Lord...

27. Shake a Friend's Hand

Shake a friend's hand,
Shake the hand next to you
Shake a friend's hand and sing along
Shake a friend's hand,
Shake the hand next to you
Shake a friend's hand and sing,
Sing a ha-la-la-la-la-la-leluah,
Ha-la-la-la-la-leluah (repeat)

Scratch a friend's back, ...
Hug a friend's neck...

28. Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Swing low, sweet chariot
Comin' fo' to carry me home
Swing low, sweet chariot
Comin' fo' to carry me home

29. On a Day Like This

On a day like this (clap, clap)
On a day like this (clap, clap)
On a day like this (clap) Ohhhhhhhh
I need the Lord to help me
On a day like this (stomp, stomp, clap, clap)
On a day like this (stomp, stomp, clap, clap)
On a day like this (stomp, clap) Ohhhhhhhh
I need the Lord to help me

On a day like this (toot, toot, stomp, stomp, clap, clap)...
On a day like this (pat, pat, toot, toot, stomp, stomp, clap, clap)...
On a day like this (bounce, bounce, pat, pat, toot, toot, stomp, stomp, clap, clap)

30. The Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit's not a banana
The fruit of the Spirit's not a banana
If you wanna be a banana
You might as well hear it
You can't be a fruit of the Spirit
Cuz the fruit is love, joy, peace and patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and
self control
The fruit of the Spirit's not a coconut...
The fruit of the Spirit's not a lemon...

31. This is the Day

This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made
I will rejoice, I will rejoice
And be glad in it, And be glad in it

SONGS: Use these suggested songs during your opening song time. Feel free to add any fun Christian children's songs that you know too.

This is the day that the Lord has made
I will rejoice and be glad in it
This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made

32. This Little Light of Mine

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine
Hide it under a bush, oh no!
I'm gonna let it shine
Hide it under a bush, oh no!
I'm gonna let it shine
Hide it under a bush, oh no!
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Won't let satan blow it out,
I'm gonna let it shine

33. Walk, Walk, Walk, Walk in the Light

It's a great day to praise the Lord.
It's a great day to praise the Lord.
It's a great day to praise the Lord.
Walking in the Light of Love.
Walk, walk, walk, walk in the light (Hey!)
Walk, walk, walk, walk in the light (Hey!)
Walk, walk, walk, walk in the light (Hey!)
Walking in the Light of Love.

It's a great day to hug a neck...
It's a great day to say "Amen!"...

34. What a Mighty God We Serve

What a mighty God we serve
What a mighty God we serve
Angels bow before Him
Heaven and earth adore Him.
What a mighty God we serve.

35. Who's the King of the Jungle?

Who's the king of the jungle? ooo ooo
Who's the king of the sea?
wiggie wiggie wiggie
Who's the king of the universe,
and who's the king of me?
I tell you J-E-S-U-S! Yes!
He's the King of me
He's the king of the universe,
the jungle, ooo ooo
and the sea. wiggie wiggie wiggie

36. With Jesus in your Boat

With Jesus in your boat,
you can smile through the storm
Smile through the storm,
smile through the storm
With Jesus in your boat,
you can smile through the storm
When you're sailing home
Sailing, sailing home, sailing, sailing home
With Jesus in your boat, you can smile through
the storm when you're sailing home

GAMES: These games are just suggestions to help you get started. Feel free to incorporate other children's games you think will work well.

Big, Bad Wolf: Have the children stand in a line at one end of the game area. One leader or child is the “Big, Bad Wolf” and will stand at the other end of the area with her back to the children. In unison, the children shout, “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” The wolf answers with an hour, “4 o’clock”, for example. The children take that number of steps forward. If the wolf said “4 o’clock,” the children would take 4 steps toward the wolf. When the wolf thinks the children are close enough to her, she answers their question with, “It’s eating time!” Then she chases them back to their starting line. Anyone she tags joins her as a wolf. The game ends when all but one participant has been tagged.

Knots: Direct children to stand in a circle, then tell them to join right hands with someone across from them. While maintaining that grip, each person should grab a different person’s left hand. No one should join hands with a person immediately beside him or her. The objective of the game simply is to untangle masses of arms, legs, and bodies without releasing hand grips. Twisting or adjusting a grip is permissible and needed to prevent impossible movements of joints! Untangling the knot may take time, but usually a single large circle or two small ones (interconnected) are formed. If, after a reasonable amount of time, the group is still helplessly tangled, direct two participants to drop each other’s hands. Doing so will permit a quick solution.

Overall Understanding: Players are divided into two teams. Teams line up in parallel rows with players standing behind one another. The first player on each team is given a beach ball, or balloon. When the leader says, “Go,” the first player on each line passes the ball backward over her head to the second player. The second player passes the ball under his legs to the next person in line, and so forth. The ball continues to be passed backward down the line, alternately over and under, until it reaches the last player. The last player, receiving the ball, runs to the front of his or her line and begins to pass the ball back again. This continues until every player on the line has a chance to be at the beginning. The team whose first player gets to the front of the line again is the winner.

PREPARATION TIP—Once children get “wound up”, it can be tough to get them “wound down” again. Games time is an important bonding opportunity between you and the children. Don’t use games that are too rough or that could become a distraction: Red Rover, roughhousing, etc.

Parachute: You will have a tarp with you to use for the children to sit on each day. The tarp can double as a “parachute”. Have the kids stand on all sides of the tarp and hold it at waist level. Each side of the tarp is a team, making four teams. Put a beach ball on the tarp. Have the kids shake the tarp. They should try to shake the tarp so that the beach ball falls off another team’s side. Whenever the beach ball falls off the tarp, the team on that side gets a point. The team that has the fewest points at the end of the game wins.

People to People: Tell everyone to find a partner and choose one person to lead the game. The leader yells a body part, and the players will touch each other using that part. For example, the leader might say, “knee to knee,” and the partners will touch knees. After several rounds, the leader will yell, “people to people,” and everyone has to find a new partner. The leader also runs into the crowd and finds a partner. Whoever is left without a partner is the new leader.

Sharks and Minnows: You will need a good size running area for this game. Have the children line up along one side of the area. They are the “minnows”. Have the leader stand in the middle of the area. The leader is the shark. When the shark yells “Go!”, the minnows run to the other end of the area. The shark runs around and tags as many minnows as possible before they reach the other end of the field. When a minnow is tagged, he or she must freeze wherever tagged. When all of the untagged minnows reach the end of the area, the shark yells, “Go!” again. This time the shark and the frozen minnows may tag the runners. The game continues until there is only one minnow left. That minnow is the winner and begins the next game as the shark.

Everybody’s It Tag: There are two rules: (1) everybody is It, and (2) when a player is tagged, he or she is frozen. Have everyone stand in a circle. Then the leader shouts “Everybody’s it!” and the game starts (and quickly ends).

GAMES: These games are just suggestions to help you get started. Feel free to incorporate other children's games you think will work well.

Hospital Tag: The first time a player is tagged, she puts her hand on the part of herself that was tagged. The second time she is tagged, she must put her other hand on that area. The third time, because she is out of hands, she must sit down.

Freezer/Defroster Tag: A tagged player must freeze with his hands and feet on the ground and his back to the sky. He can move again when another player crawls between his hands and feet.

Trust Walk: Chose a landmark in your area to be the "goal" of this game. A mailbox or tree will probably be readily available for this purpose. Blindfold one player and choose another player to be the "guide." Have the rest of the children scatter themselves between the blindfolded person and the goal. The guide leads the blindfolded person through all the people to the goal while the children in the way will call out other directions. The blindfolded player must listen carefully to the guides instructions. Let the children take turns being blindfolded and being the guide.

Circle Spot Rush: All players stand in a circle, arms' length apart, facing inward. In the center of the circle are small markers (paper plates, pieces of construction paper, etc.). The number of markers is always one less than the number of players. The leader of the game stands just outside the circle and calls out various types of movement: run, skip, hop, etc. The players move clockwise around the circle in the way directed by the leader. The game leader can also call out *stop* (all players freeze wherever they are) or *about face* (players continue to move in the same manner but reverse directions). When the game leader yells *rush* all players run to the center of the circle and try to stand on one of the markers. Whichever player does not stand on a marker is eliminated. One marker is removed and play continues. The object of the game is to be the last player remaining.

Animal Relay: Each small group will be a team. Teams stand in single file lines, facing a finish line about fifty feet away. The first player runs across the finish line, runs back, tags the next player, and goes to the end of the line. The relay continues until each player has run twice. While they run the game leader calls out various animals. All players must run like that animal until the next one is called. The first team to have all their players finish twice wins.

Sit Down Volleyball- materials needed: beach ball: Divide all players into two equal teams. Have the two teams sit down indian-style facing each other in two to four rows. The object of the game is to get the ball behind the other team. One person throws the ball up in the air and the two teams hit the ball back and forth until one team hits it over the heads of the other team and it lands behind them. Score just like regular volleyball. The catch is that both teams have to stay seated throughout the entire game. You can add variety to the game by having each team use only one hand or sitting with teams backs toward each other instead of facing each other.

Elbow Tag: Assign all players a partner. Spread pairs out evenly across the playing area. Have the pairs link arms. Choose one pair to start out as the chaser "It", and the chasee. Just like regular tag, It tries to tag the chasee. If the chasee is tagged, he or she in turn becomes it and the chase reverses. The chasee's goal is to link with another player. When the chasee links arms with one side of a pair, the other player must unlink, becoming the chasee.

PUPPETS

Remember that you can borrow puppets from Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex if you do not have any.

More than two decades ago, we learned that puppets have a power to draw people. Obviously a simple puppet show holds the most charm for young children. You will be amazed, however, how many parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles will come to watch puppets just because they are curious. This gives you a great opportunity to connect with them and potentially share the gospel. So don't be afraid to try using them, even if you never have before. Here are some tips on how easily incorporate puppets into your Rainbow Express program:

SONG TIME—Have the puppets sing along with the songs. This is fun for young children.

MEMORY VERSE—Have the puppets help teach the memory verse. We have found it to be especially helpful to have the children teach the memory verse to the puppets. Let the puppets “play dumb” so that it takes them several tries to learn it.

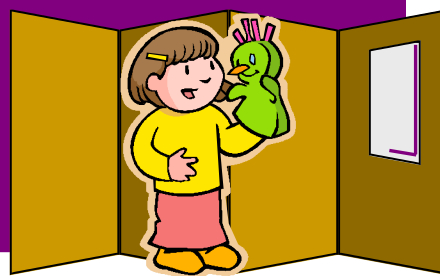
GATHERING—Have the puppets going while you are out knocking on doors and taking attendance. You will find the puppet show attracts plenty of curiosity.

CLOSING TIME—Have the puppets ask the review questions in the final large group time. Alternatively, you could have the puppets give funny answers to the review questions asked and let the children help correct them.

PUPPET CONCERTS—One of the simplest and surprisingly effective ways to use puppets is to let them give a one or two song “concert” each day during your Rainbow Express program. You will be given a CD of four songs while you are at Mission Arlington, each of which will incorporate thematically with one of the days of Rainbow Express. Use these as the final song from each day's puppet concert and as a segue to introduce the days' topic. You can add your own songs too. We have had great response with upbeat Christian music, especially if there is an easy chorus the kids can catch on to and sing along with. Songs like “Get Down” or “Big House” by Audio Adrenaline, “Dive” by Steven Curtis Chapman, “Shine” or “He Reigns” by the Newsboys, and a huge number of others by artists like David Crowder, The Supertones, and more are fun songs to do with puppets.

A NOTE ON PUPPET MUSIC—It is very important to remember that some songs that might be youth group favorites may be more likely to drive away than attract some parents. Keep in mind that the goal is to find opportunities to interact with all age groups, not just children and teenagers. We recommend not using some of the “rockier” Christian music out there, such as Thousand Foot Krutch or some Tobymac. Don't forget that the music is for the residents of the apartments, not for our personal listening pleasure. If you would like to purchase more puppet music, the CDs we will loan you while you are here are from a series called RPM-Righteous Pop Music. You can order from them online from the company that produces them at onewaystreet.com.

PREPARATION TIP: Print the lyrics to each of the four puppet songs. Taping these sheets to the inside of your puppet stage will help you as you perform. If you do not have a puppet stage you can easily make one out of a large cardboard box (at Mission Arlington we use refrigerator boxes or washer/dryer boxes). Just cut and unfold the box and then decorate the front with butcher paper, spray paint, or any other way that you would like. If you are not able to make one, you may borrow one from Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex while you are here.



PUPPETS DAY ONE—

God Loves Everyday People

God's always right, and He's never wrong
 He came to give us all a song
 The girls and the boys and the women and men
 Makes no difference what group we're in

God loves everyday people, yeah yeah

God loves the tall ones and God loves the short ones
 And He can use a blonde one
 To witness to a freckled one
 In His name, we're all the same
 And so on and so on and scooby dooby doo-bee

(Oo sha sha, Oo sha sha)
 We got to serve together

I am no better, and neither are you
 He loves us the same, whatever we do
 He loved us, He saved us, He calls us again
 Makes no difference what church we're in

God loves everyday people, yeah yeah

There is a long hair who's serving with a short hair
 And God is calling rich ones to give
 And help the poor ones
 In His name, we're all the same
 And so on and so on and scooby dooby doo-bee

(Oo sha sha, Oo sha sha)
 We got to serve together

God made yellow ones
 God made the black ones
 And God made the brown ones and God made the white ones
 In His name, we're all the same
 And so on and so on and scooby dooby doo-bee

Oo sha sha
 God loves everyday people

PUPPETS DAY TWO—

I'm a Believer

I thought God was nothing but a fairy tale
 Good for someone else but not for me
 Sin was out to get me, that's the way it seemed
 Disappointment shattered all my dreams

Chorus: Then I found His grace
 Now I'm a believer
 Not a trace of doubt in my mind
 I've been saved
 I'm a believer, Jesus is walking by my side

I thought love was mine just for the taking
 But it seemed the more I took, the less I got
 Now a slave to sin now, Jesus broke the chains
 Now the more I give, the more I gain

Chorus

Now a slave to sin now, Jesus broke the chains
 Now the more I give, the more I gain

And you can find His grace
 Come be a believer
 Not a trace of doubt in my mind
 You can change
 Be a believer, Jesus will walk right by your side

Soon I'll see His face
 'Cause I'm a believer
 Not a trace of doubt in my mind
 I'm a believer
 Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
 I'm a believer

Repeat and fade

PUPPETS DAY THREE—

Washin' My Sins Away

Verse 1: Let me tell you how my Lord
 Gave me joy and peace and more
 Like I've never known before
 Washin' my sins away
 Now I'm having lots of fun
 Got the devil on the run
 Man, I'm glad I met God's son
 Washin' my sins away

Chorus : He's blessing, healing, He's so good and He's so great
 Yeah, loving, forgiving, yeah, washing my sins away

Verse 2: Here's a babe in swaddling clothes
 Came to life on earth below
 Just because He loves me so
 Washin' my sins away
 Gave His life on Calvary
 Rose again to set us free
 Did it all for you and me
 Washin' my sins away

Chorus

Let's praise a while!
 He's good! He's great!
 He's Lord! He's God!
 He's strong! He's big! He's mine!
 Yeah! Washin' my sins away

Let me tell you what this means
 Jesus the Nazarene
 Will cleanse your heart and make you clean
 Washin' your sins away
 So ask Him in your heart today
 Humble yourself and pray
 He'll come in to your heart to stay
 Washin' your sins away

Chorus x3

PUPPETS DAY FOUR—

God Moves in Mysterious Ways

Ever day we walk on these feet of clay
 And we can't escape the hard times that come our way
 We've been trusting in the Lord but cannot see His plan
 There are so many things in life that we don't understand,
 look

God loves you, stop looking down
 He'll be there, He won't let you drown

Chorus: It's alright . . . It's alright . . . It's alright
 God moves in mysterious ways
 (Repeat)

God will never change, He's always the same
 So just trust Him with the things you can't explain
 Remember what's real, He knows how you fell
 If you want to rise above better learn to knell (on your
 knees boy!)

Look up! Here comes your help
 Depend on Him, not on yourself

Chorus, then: Strength by day, comfort by night, oh
 One day you'll look back and you'll see where you were
 held by Jesus' love
 Cling to his hope though we don't know 'bout tomorrow
 He holds tomorrow

Chorus, then: Strength by day, comfort by night, oh

My New Life

Activity Packets

Handouts with coloring pages and other activities for days 1, 2, and 4 (day 3 you will be making a necklace instead)

God's Plan for Ruth

L H S L I M Y R Z T N S Q H P
K I N D N E S S W O R K T E A
M Z W S Q N N I A R G U T L Y
W C O B A Z M W Q G R S M P B
J N J O O Q N M K M G S X F Y
S K M Z H A D C L M C E R U W
B I K Y A L Z C J Q T I W L S
K G X H D O N I J C A R G Z V
X Z W I U V J H T D W S E D N
H D E Y J E N Y U H Y U W A S
E X M L T Z V Q U S J L A E P
S V M H E P F H B M B C F T I
J G A H A K C B B T Y A B L M
J G U E U O O T V X F P N T V
U G A P L V F C V G D D T D S

BOAZ

HUSBAND

LEAVE

RUTH

GRAIN

JUDAH

LOVE

SONS

HELPFUL

KINDNESS

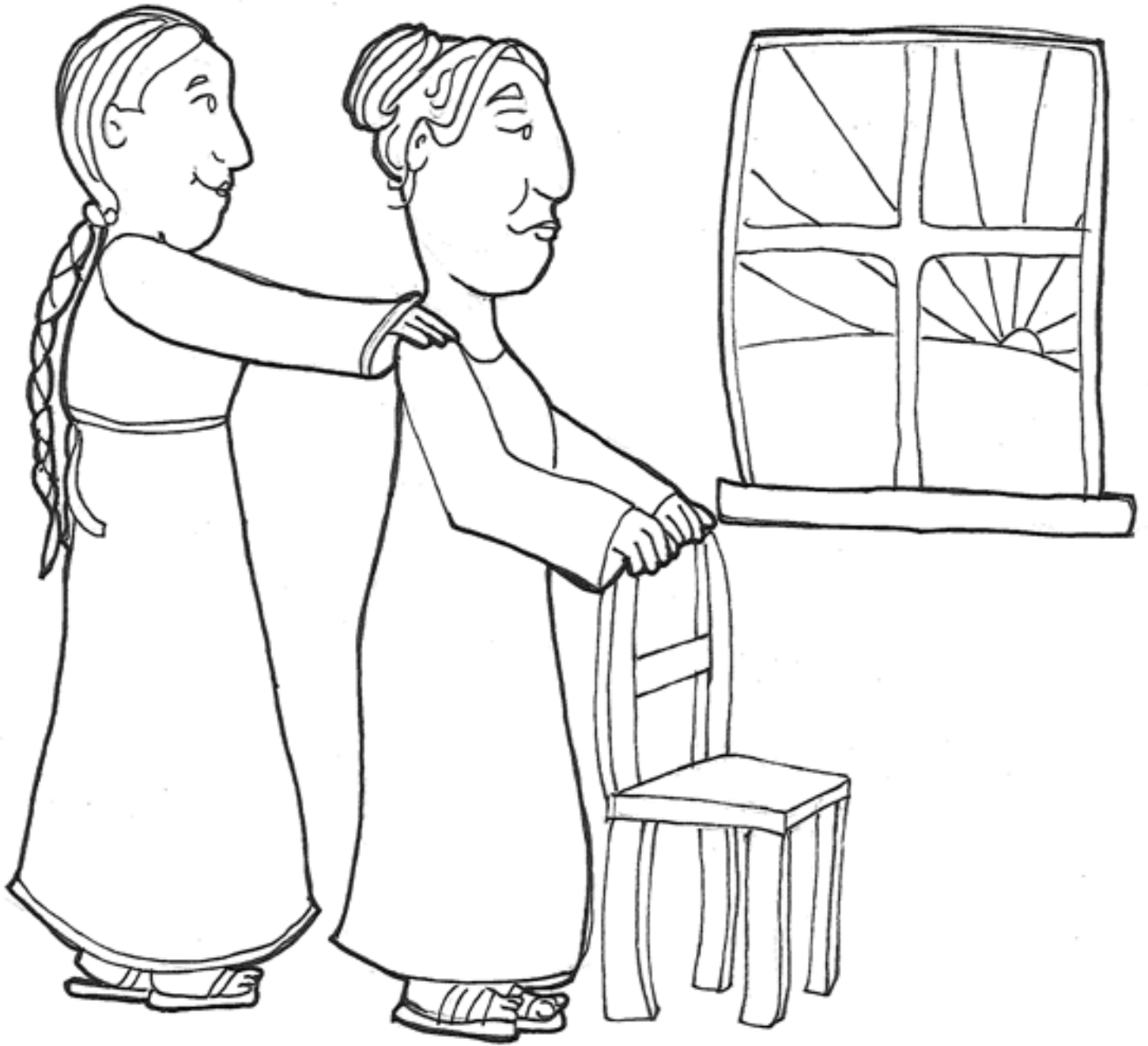
NAOMI

WORK

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
				12							24		13				2	18	21						

T 21 23 12 2 12 **E** 16 18 **S** 25 13 12 **N** 17 25 20 15 **E** 17 19 21 **T** 16 21 **T** 23 7 18
N 14 7 13 15 **R** 22 7 2 21 18 **T** 12 6 12 13 **E** 21 23 25 19 **E** 5 23 **T** 16 21
S 23 7 18 **N** 14 7 13 15 **R** 22 7 2 21 18 **T** 21 23 12 15 **E** 14 7 11 12
N 19 22 **E** 25 13 12 **T** 17 25 20 15 **S** 16 21 **T** 16 18 **E** 21 23 12 **S** 18 7 14 12
T 3 16 21 23 **R** 9 23 2 16 18 21 **S** 15 25 19 **T** 7 2 12 **R** 21 23 12 **E** 17 25 20 15
R 25 26 **S** 9 23 2 16 18 21 **T** 12 7 9 23 **N** 25 13 12 **E** 25 26 **T** 15 25 19
S 16 18 **R** 7 **T** 22 7 2 21 **T** 25 26 **T** 16 21

Can you solve the code to find this week's memory verse?



Ruth was a good friend
to Naomi, even when
Naomi was sad.



**Ruth met Boaz while she was
working hard to take care of Naomi.**

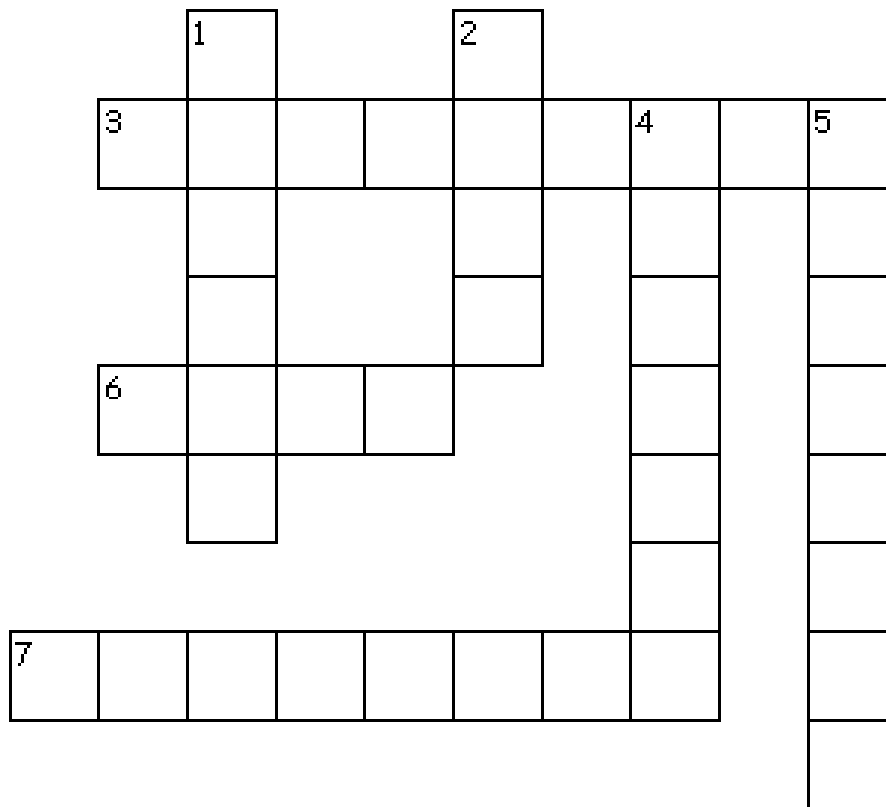
God Uses Gideon to win the Battle

D Q S A M A R A J P L S F Q O
N E R G I K A E O T H W F Z J
L M F C D Q U H T I V D L U H
Y O C E I T S E G N U O Y R L
J E H Z A Q U R E H T I F O I
Y E I Q N T T V E E F I N T G
C Y U S I C M X P I C L C I H
F P P W T H T M O O D A A S T
D T T E E V U T N W S L T I P
W M M G S R K F S M I C O V Y
F G J D T U U G I D E O N S J
T C W N G S B T U C S M Q R F
T X S O I M R V I A S C O K R
D U Y O J E P E E P B T W R U
W P N J C W G U E A V H A O I

ARMY
GIDEON
MIDIANITES
VISITOR

CONFUSION
JAR
SOLDIERS
YOUNGEST

DEFEAT
LIGHT
TRUMPET



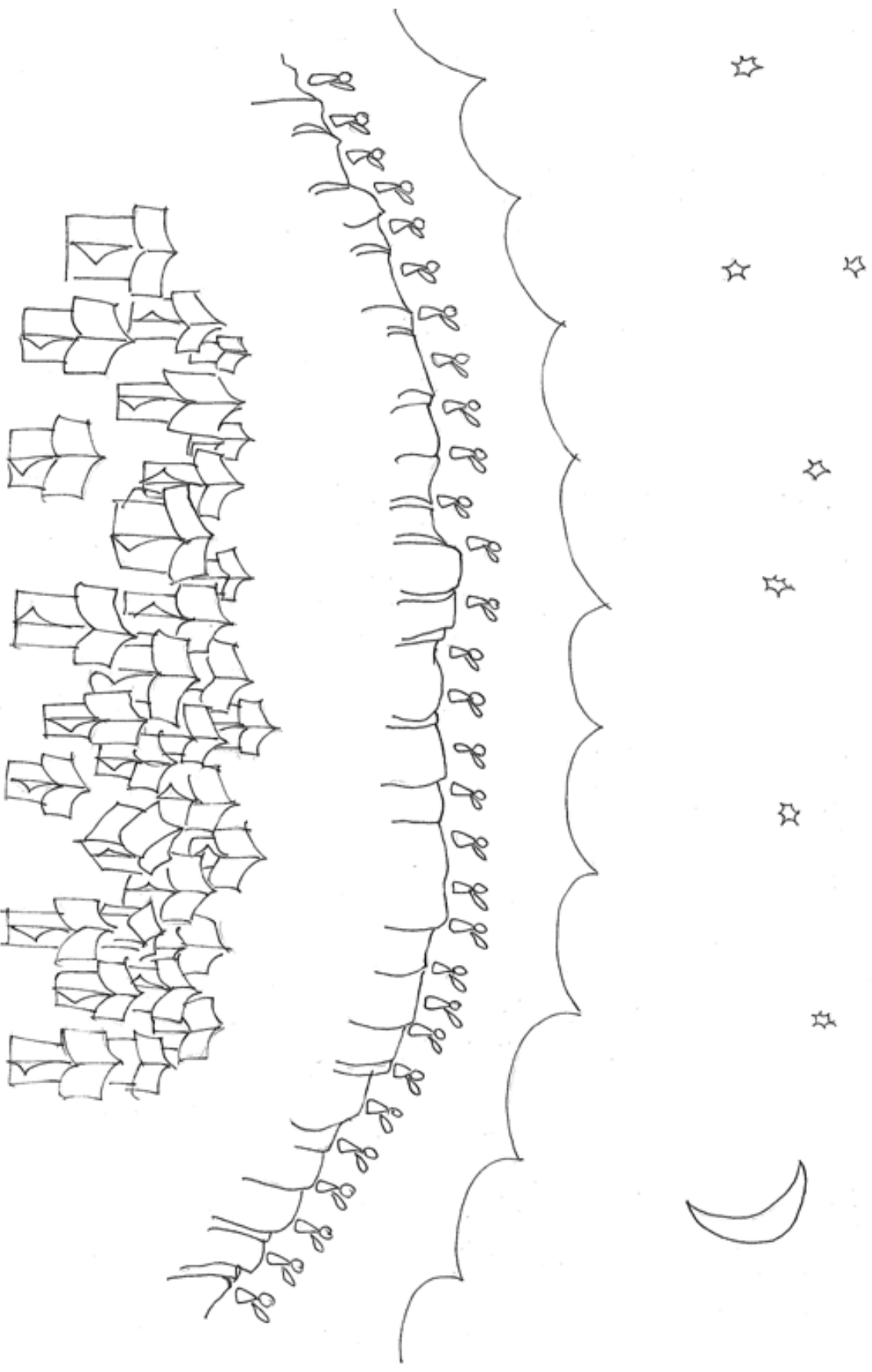
Across

- 3. The enemies of the Israelites
- 6. God says we should work together like this
- 7. The soldiers blew these to make noise

Down

- 1. God told him to free the Israelites
- 2. The soldiers smashed these on the ground
- 4. The soldiers waved these in the air
- 5. Gideon had 300 of them to help him

Use the clues to solve this criss-cross puzzle about today's Bible Story.



Gideon's army made a huge circle around the sleeping Midianites.



At the right moment Gideon's soldiers waved their torches in the air and blew their trumpets.

Mordecai & Esther

K X N O U O M D H Q S B Q H X
I S F O N N M A E U U W G E V
N W A L A Q S O S Y B E R C A
G B W M Q S C A T W A X E B D
H M A O A Y M R H G E R Y N Y
I H T D B P Y P E S F H P J F
E K A M P A I S R E P S D W I
D H E P U R I M Z O W I V V T
D R N F I R O Y X U W W Y S I
Y A T R Q Y G T P V V E K W F
M O R D E C A I E L N J S C Q
Q N M E B P M R K C L T Y T A
I N F L X I L Z X U T T Z G C

BOW

ESTHER

HADASSAH

HAMAN

JEWISH

KING

LAW

MORDECAI

PERSIA

PRAYED

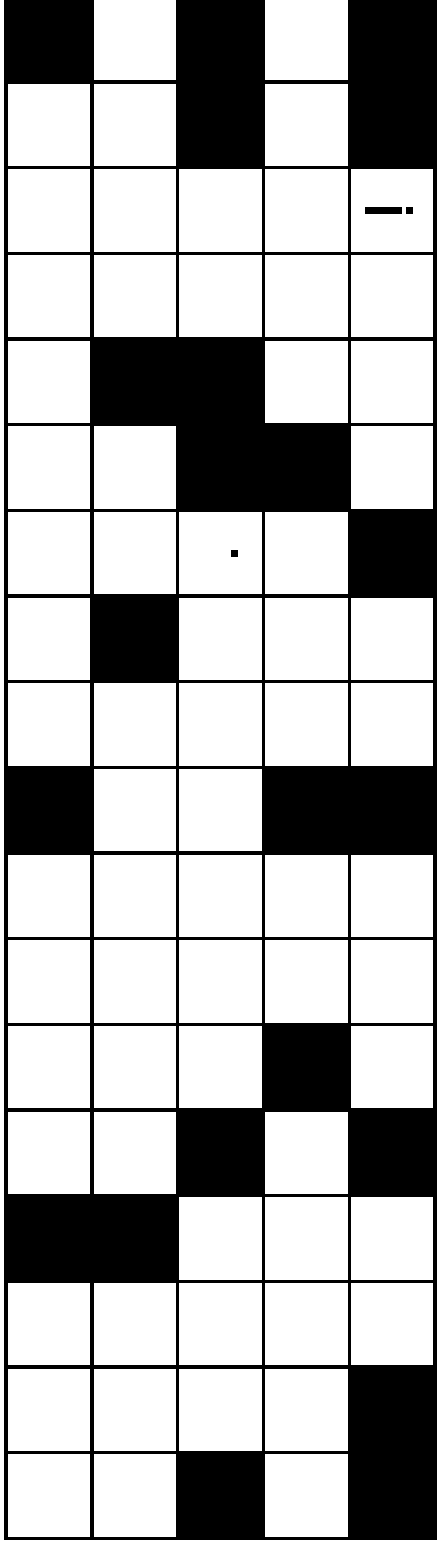
PROTECT

PURIM

QUEEN

SUSA

XERXES



H T E R A A
 T T U E H A E H A
 L N D E U P S D L S D D O S E T
 G O D E S S E O E M N R T E O N I E
 A O V O E S U S P U O T O W C A V S

Can you help fix this sign? It tells about what we learned in today's Bible Story. The letters fell off the sign. They did not fall in order, but they did fall straight down. Can you put them back up to help us remember the Bible Story?



Esther went to visit the king, even though it was very dangerous. She trusted God to take care of her.



**Mordecai and Esther
celebrated the good news
that God had saved their
people.**

MEMORY VERSE: these are suggested activities to help you review the memory verse during your small group times. Feel free to add other ideas as well.

Teams

Divide the kids into two teams. Let one side say the first part of the verse and let the others complete it. See how loud and soft and fast and slow each side can be. (Remember you can be creative in your team divisions: Boys v. Girls, Sandals v. Tennis Shoes, Eye or Hair Colors, kids wearing shorts v. kids wearing jeans...etc.) Compliment both teams on a job well done.

Memory Verse Challenge

Make signs using construction paper with one or two words of the verse on each. Have several workers or children stand at the front and hold the signs so that everyone can see the words. Lead the children in saying the verse together a few times. Then, one at a time, have the sign holders hide their sign, and say the verse together again. Repeat this until all the signs are hidden and say the verse one more time.

PREPARATION TIP: Some of these ideas require extra supplies and/or preparation ahead of time. You need to decide which activities you want to use ahead of time so that you can be sure to pack the supplies you will need.

Hand Signs

Assign a hand motion for each word of the verse. Teach the children the hand signs and the words at the same time. Then say the words while the children only do the hand motions. And then do the hand motions while the children say the words.

Volley Verse

Sit or stand in a circle. Take a soft ball or balloon and pass it around in a circle, each person saying one word of the verse as they hold the ball and pass it on. Go fast and slow, repeating the whole verse each time. When the kids feel comfortable saying the verse, volley the ball from person to person across the circle, letting each person say one word as they pass the ball.

Verse Pop

Gather several small strips of paper and write one or two words of the verse on each strip. Put each paper inside a balloon and inflate the balloon. Let the children who are sitting the most quietly pop the balloon handed to them, and say the word they find inside. Have all the children repeat the word and continue until all the balloons are popped. Have a copy of the entire verse ready so that, in the end, the children can see the whole verse on one page. Repeat the verse several times with all the children. (It is a good idea to write numbers on the balloons so you can hand them to the children in the correct order. Also, be aware of smaller children who might be afraid of the popping noise.)

Verse Puzzle

Write the verse on a piece of paper and cut the paper into 6-10 pieces. Let the children put the puzzle together as a team. Make sure everyone gets a chance to help. When it is finished, say the verse altogether. Put the puzzle together again. See how fast the children can finish the puzzle and say the verse.

Verse Sticks

Write phrases of the verse on several craft sticks. Work together to put the sticks in the correct order.

Verse Chain

Gather several small strips of paper and write one or two words of the verse on each strip. Working together in your small group, tape the links together in circles to make a paper chain. When you finish, say the verse all together.

There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ. You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it.
1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

De hecho, aunque el cuerpo es uno solo, tiene muchos miembros, y todos los miembros, no obstante ser muchos, forman un solo cuerpo. Así sucede con Cristo. Ahora bien, ustedes son el cuerpo de Cristo, y cada uno es miembro de ese cuerpo. 1 Corintios 12:12, 27

A final word . . .

Whether you are coming here to Mission Arlington or using this material for another mission outreach, we are grateful for the opportunity to partner in ministry with you. Please contact us with any questions or to let us know how we can pray for you. Daily updates and prayer requests at Mission Arlington, as well as a variety of additional curriculum resources, are available at our web site.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole 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 saints, 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.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21

Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex
210 W. South Street
Arlington, TX, 76010
Phone: 817-277-6620
E-mail: mission@missionarlington.org
Web: www.missionarlington.org