



*Yes, Jesus
Loves Me . . .*

**Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex 2009
Spring Break Mission Trip Planning Packet
And Rainbow Express Curriculum**

What is this packet?

We are so grateful that you have decided to come to Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex for your 2009 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. The 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 WEEK OF MARCH 15th–21st, 2009

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 end. Clean up, walk children home, etc., then return to Mission Arlington for lunch break. <i>Each student needs to have his/her own sack lunch. You will NOT have time to cook.</i>
1:30	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.

SCHEDULE FOR GROUPS COMING ALL OTHER 2009 SPRING BREAK WEEKS

8:30	Meet for morning training time
9:30	Training time dismisses
9:45	Work projects groups begin assignment (work projects will last from 10:00-1:00) <i>most groups</i> -or- Morning Rainbow Express groups leave for their site
10:30	Morning Rainbow Express begins (for groups not doing AM work projects)
NOON	Morning Rainbow Express begins to wrap-up, clean up, walk children home, etc. Finish by 12:30, come back to Mission Arlington to turn in supplies.
1:00	Take a lunch break (all groups) <i>Each student needs to have his/her own sack lunch. You will not have time to cook.</i>
2:15	Meet to worship and prepare for Rainbow Express
3:15	Depart for Rainbow Express
4:00	Rainbow Express begins
5:30	Clean up at apartment community and return to Mission Arlington Help with various projects at Mission Arlington.

All weeks: At 6:00 PM, Regular projects end. Option some nights to stay and participate in extended activities (generally Tuesday and/or Wednesday)

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 Spring weather, which means temperatures ranging from 50° 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

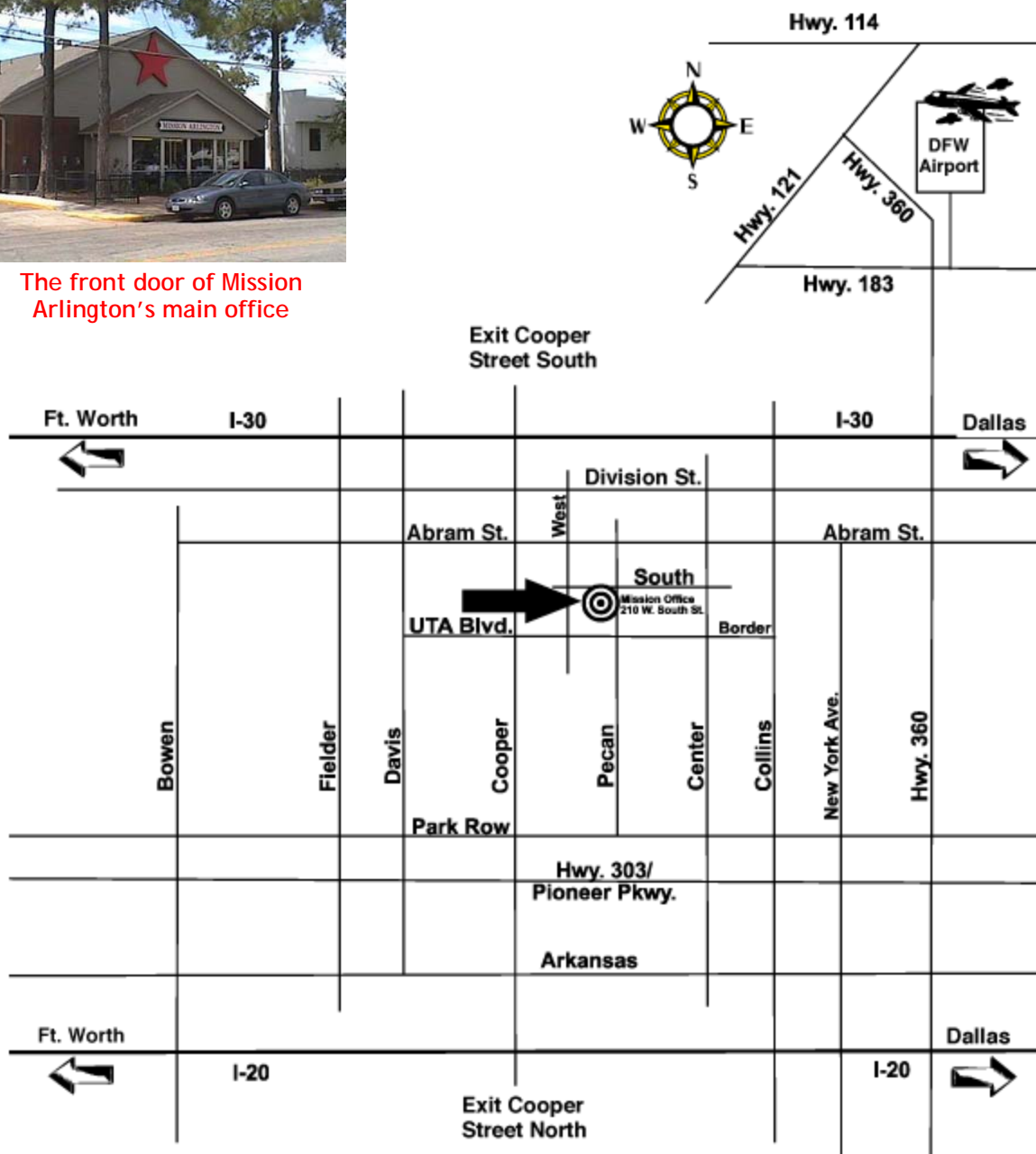
This optional suggestion is borrowed from some of our groups, and it has worked great for them. Have everybody bring a backpack with any or all of the following items:

- 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

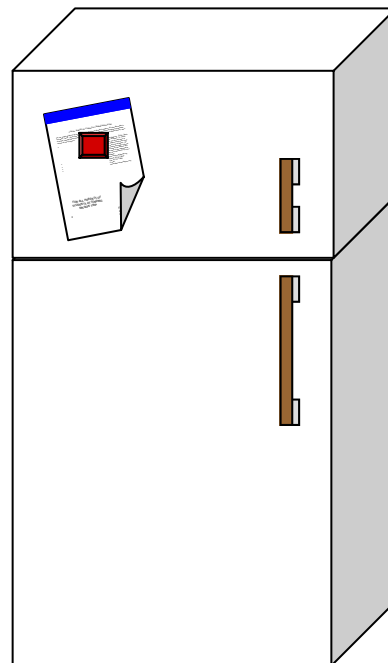


This map, which is not to scale, shows Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex in relation to all of the major highways in and around Arlington.

The Refrigerator Sheet

FOR ALL PARENTS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING SPRING BREAK MISSION TRIP

For our Spring Break 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 *This Is How We Know What Love Is*. 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 817-704-6145 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.

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- ◆ 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: How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

Spanish: ¡Fíjense qué gran amor nos ha dado el Padre, que se nos llame hijos de Dios! ¡Y lo somos! 1 Juan 3:1

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

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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.

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.
- ◆ 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—Keith & Julie, who wrote these tips, lead a team that has church in more than a dozen apartment communities in East Arlington and Grand Prairie. The teenagers from their apartment churches help to teach Bible Studies, train other teenagers, and lead Rainbow Express mission trips in several languages.

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: God's Love is for Everyone!

- Large Group
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Fast and Slow
- Small Group
 - Story: The Story of Nineveh
 - Theme: God's Love is for Everyone.
 - Scripture for today's story: Jonah 1 and 3
 - Memory Verse Review
- Large Group
 - Story review questions

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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 *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that we can be sure that Jesus Christ is our only Savior. 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 verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day one is "Fast and Slow". Have your poster of the memory verse

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: God's Love is for Everyone!

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.

Thank you so much for coming to Rainbow Express this week. We're going to do a lot of fun things to help us learn about God and His love. We're going to see that God's love for us is the most important thing we can ever have. It's the most important message God has ever given us.

People say lots of different things about God. Some people have said He's far away. Others said He does not know us or does not care about us. None of those things are true. God loves us very much. He wants us to know that He loves us. God gave us the Bible to help us know that He loves us. The Bible is like a letter or a text message from God to us.

The Bible tells us lots of songs, poems, prayers, true stories, and more. Together, they all paint a picture of God's perfect love for us. One part of the Bible that tells us about God's love is from a letter in the Bible called 1st John. 1st John 3:1 says “How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are!” That means God loves us so much He calls us His own children. The Bible is full of reminders of this perfect love God has for us. It tells us over and over that He wants us to be in His family.

It's sad, but sometimes we don't live like God loves us. We ignore or disobey God. We go against God's perfect plan for us. The Bible calls the bad things we do *sins*. A sin is anything we do, think, or say that is not what God wants. Our sins create a problem. They separate us from God. God doesn't stop loving us. God never will stop loving us. However, because He is perfect, He cannot be around our sin. God loves us so much that He did not give up on us. He did not just forget about us because of our sin. Instead, God made a way for us to be free from sin and know Him and His love.

Today we're going to learn the true story of a group of people whose whole city was full of sin. They were mean, dishonest, and violent. The whole world hated them. But God loved them. We're going to see what God did to show them His love.

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, the city of Nineveh was the scariest place in the whole world. The people that lived there were hated by everybody else. They were known for being bullies. They fought, they stole, they lied. The Ninevites were bad, *bad news*. *Everybody* hated the Ninevites.

Not far from Nineveh was Israel. Most of the people of Israel knew the one true God. They

Day One: God's Love is for Everyone!

knew that God loved them. They prayed to God. They read God's word. They loved God. They did not, however, love the Ninevites. They did not like the Ninevites. They were scared of the Ninevites, just like everybody else. Remember, *nobody* loved the Ninevites.

Nobody, that is, except God. God loves everybody. All of us. No matter who, no matter where, no matter what. He loves us. He hates our sin, because it pushes us away from Him, but He loves us. God felt the same way about the Ninevites. He hated the way they acted, but He loved them very, very much. God decided to send the Ninevites a message.

God spoke to one of the Israelites, a man named Jonah who sometimes delivered messages for Him. "Go to Nineveh," God told Jonah. He gave Jonah a message for the people there. Jonah was shocked. He could not believe God wanted him to go to Nineveh. The Ninevites were the enemies. They were bullies. They were scary and mean. Why would God want to talk to them? Jonah could not understand God caring about the Ninevites.

Jonah decided to disobey God's instructions. He bought a ticket on a ship heading in the opposite direction, as far away from Nineveh as he could get. God knows us very well. He always knows what we are doing and thinking. He saw Jonah try to run away. He knew Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh, but God had not given up on the Ninevites. He still loved them and still wanted them to hear His message.

God sent a huge storm that stopped Jonah's ship. The wind and waves beat against the sides of the boat until Jonah was thrown overboard. Jonah was terrified. He thought he was going to drown. Jonah thought he was going to die for disobeying God's instructions, but God had another plan. God wanted to give Jonah another opportunity to obey, just like He wanted to do for the Ninevites, just like He does for us. God sent a *huge* fish that swallowed Jonah whole.

Jonah spent three days inside the fish, praying and thanking God for saving Him. The fish swam Jonah back to the land and spit him up on the beach. This time, Jonah obeyed and headed for Nineveh.

Jonah arrived at the huge, scary city. He walked in and shouted in front of all the people "In forty days God is going to destroy this city because of all the bad things you have done!" Then Jonah turned and walked away. He thought the Ninevites would never listen to him. He thought they would just keep on sinning. He was sure God would destroy them. Jonah sat outside the city to see his enemies punished by God.

But something amazing happened. The Ninevites that heard Jonah's message began to cry. They started to think about all the awful things they had done. They felt very sad because of all their sins. They were sorry for what they had done. The Ninevites who heard Jonah began telling their friends and neighbors what had happened. Their friends told others. Who told others. Who told others. Soon God's message spread throughout the city. It even reached the king.

When the king heard the message, he became incredibly upset. He ordered all the people of the city to show their sadness for what they had done. People stopped eating and drinking. They put on uncomfortable clothing. They cried and cried. The king wanted everybody to tell God how sorry they were. "Who knows?" the king said. "God may still love us and feel sorry for us. Maybe we won't be destroyed."

Outside the city, Jonah was watching and waiting. He wanted to see Nineveh be destroyed. He thought God was going to wipe Nineveh off the face of the Earth. Do you think that is what God wanted to do? Of course not! Remember that God loves us, *all of us*, more than we can imagine. He wants to forgive us and show us His love. He doesn't want us to be apart from Him. God forgave the Ninevites. The Bible tells us that He loves to forgive everybody who asks Him to. Jonah's story in the Bible says that God is gracious, tender, and kind, slow to get angry, and full of love.

Aren't we glad that God loves us so much? He sees our sin problem. He knows we mess up. He knows all the bad things we've ever done and are ever going to do. He knows us even better than we know ourselves . . . and He loves us anyway! God does not abandon us because of our sin problem. He sent a way fix our sin problem. Jesus came to save us from sin so that we can be God's children. Jesus lived a perfect life and then allowed Himself to be killed on a cross. He took the punishment you and I deserve for the wrong things we have done. The third day after Jesus died, He returned to life. He offers all of us a chance to have our sins taken away so that we can be the children of God.

Day One: God's Love is for Everyone!

The Bible is right: God's love for us really is amazing. He proved His love by saving people like the Ninevites. Their city was full of sin, but God loved them anyway and gave them the opportunity to be His children. God proved his love for us too. By dying on the cross, God showed us the most perfect love there has ever been. Sometimes we probably feel like we're pretty bad, just like the Ninevites. We need to remember that God loves us, like He loved the Ninevites. He wants to forgive us and save us from our sin.

If you want to know more about how to accept God's love and forgiveness, 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

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:

English: How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

Spanish: ¡Fíjense qué gran amor nos ha dado el Padre, que se nos llame hijos de Dios! ¡Y lo somos! 1 Juan 3:1

Day One: God's Love is for Everyone!

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.

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse 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.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have the large group leader give a brief re-telling of the day's story. As you tell the story, frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time. After reviewing the memory verse, pray before dismissing to game time and snacks.

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: God's Love is Free

- Large Group
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Loud and Soft
- Small Group
 - Story: Naaman and Elisha
 - Theme: God's love is free. It doesn't cost anything.
 - Scripture for today's story: 2 Kings 5
 - Memory Verse Review
- Large Group
 - Story review questions

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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 *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that we can be sure that Jesus Christ is our only Savior. 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 verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day two is "Loud and Soft". Have your poster of the memory verse

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: God's Love is Free

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.

Thank you so much for coming to Rainbow Express today. We're going to keep learning about the amazing, unending love of God. Yesterday, we learned the story of the Ninevites. We learned that God proved to us that He loves all of us, no matter who we are or what we have done. Can you tell me what you remember about the story we learned yesterday? (*Go through a brief review of day one's story and theme.*)

Today we're going to learn more about God and how He loves us. We will see that not only is God's love for everybody, it's also *a gift*. When you receive a gift, you don't do anything to earn it. Somebody just gives it to you because they want to. If you had to do something to receive it, it wouldn't be a gift. God wants us to know that His love is a gift.

That means God loves you. He wants you to know it. You don't have to do anything to make God love you. In fact, you *can't* do anything to make God love you. God just loves you. He always has. He always will. That's the good news.

The bad news is sin. We talked about sin yesterday. Do you remember what sin is? It's anything we think, say, or do that goes against God's instructions and perfect plan for us. Sin is a huge problem in our lives because it pushes us away from God. God is perfect. He does not sin. You can't mix God's perfection and our sin, just like you can't mix light and dark or water and fire. Our sin keeps us from God.

Thankfully, God's love is much, much more powerful than our sin. Instead of just giving up on us because of our sin, God made a way to take away our sin and let us be with Him. Jesus died on the cross and returned to life to take away sin. He offers His forgiveness to us as a free gift. We don't buy it. We don't deserve it. We don't earn it. He just gives it to anybody that will accept it.

Today we're going to learn the true story of a man named Naaman who didn't understand that God's love is free. He tried to buy God's help. We'll see how God taught Naaman what His love is really like.

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 whole week we're talking about God's love. Yesterday we talked about the Ninevites: a

Day Two: God's Love is Free

group of people so evil the whole world hated them. We learned that God loved them, just like He loves each and every one of us. Today we're going to learn about a man named Naaman. Naaman was a little confused about God's love too. Naaman thought he would have to *earn* God's love by saying or doing certain things. We're going to see that Naaman was wrong about trying to work for the love of God. God's love is a free gift available to anybody who wants it.

The Bible tells us the true story of Naaman's life. Naaman lived a very long time ago in a country called Syria. Naaman was very famous in Syria because he was a leader in the army. Everyone there, including the king, thought Naaman was one of the strongest and bravest men in the land. Naaman was rich, powerful, and popular, but he had one terrible problem: Naaman was very, very sick with a disease called leprosy.

Leprosy used to be one of the worst diseases in the world. There was no hope for people that had it. They often had to leave their families and their homes so that other people would not get sick. Leprosy made their skin turn white and get hard and rough. Eventually, people with leprosy died because of their disease.

There was a servant girl who worked in Naaman's house who had been taken from the country of Israel. In Israel she had learned about God and His love and power. The girl told Naaman that he should travel to Israel. "There is a man named Elisha there," she told Naaman. "Elisha is a servant of the one true God. If you go to Elisha, God might cure your leprosy."

Naaman decided to travel to Israel. He took with him a team of servants and bags of gold, silver, and fancy new clothing. Why do you think he took so much money with him? Naaman had a plan. He was going to try to buy a cure for leprosy from Elisha. Naaman was so rich and so famous that he thought his money would make God want to cure him.

Elisha heard that Naaman was coming to see him. He knew that Naaman wanted to try to buy God's help. Elisha decided to teach Naaman what God's love was really like: a free gift, not something you can work for. When Naaman arrived at his house, Elisha did not go out to meet him. Instead, Elisha sent his servant to give Naaman this instruction: "Go to the Jordan River and wash your skin seven times there. If you do this, you will be cured of leprosy."

Naaman was shocked. He was angry. He came ready to buy a cure, and instead God wanted him to go wash in a dirty river! Naaman turned around to return home to Syria. He wanted to buy God's healing, not follow God's instructions. Naaman's servants tried to calm Naaman down. "You would have given God all your money and new clothing," they reminded Naaman. "If he had told you to do some great, brave, heroic thing you would have done it. Why not just accept the gift He offers you?"

Naaman listened to his servants. Together, they went down to the Jordan River. Naaman washed his hard, white, leprous skin seven times in the river. As he came out of the water the seventh time, something amazing happened! Naaman's skin was as soft and smooth as a newborn baby's. Naaman was so grateful and excited. He began to pray and thank God for curing him.

Naaman hurried back to Elisha's house. This time, Elisha did come out to talk to him. "Thank you so much," Naaman said. "I see now that the God you serve really is the one true God." Naaman was so grateful that he offered all of the gold, silver, and clothing he had brought to Elisha as a thank you gift. Elisha did not accept Naaman's gift. He wanted Naaman to understand that God's gifts are free to us. All we have to do is follow His instructions about receiving them. Naaman returned to his own country, thanking God all the way for healing his leprosy.

We can learn from Naaman's story that we don't *work* to receive God's free gift of love. We just have to accept His free gift. We do that by believing what He tells us and following His instructions to receive them. The Bible calls that strong trust we have in God *faith*. Having faith in God's love lets us accept that He wants to forgive us and save us.

We all need God's help just as much as Naaman did. We have a problem even greater than leprosy, however. We learned yesterday that all of us have sometimes disobeyed God. These bad things that we think, do, and say are called *sin* in the Bible. Sin is a big problem because it separates us from God. God still loves us very much, even though we sin. Our sins, though, keep us away from Him because He is perfect. We need to be forgiven of our sin just like Naaman needed to be healed of his leprosy.

Jesus came and took the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross. He came back to life on the third day. He offers all of us the free gift of forgiveness and a new friendship with God. If you

Day Two: God's Love is Free

want to know more about how to accept this free gift, 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 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 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: How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

Spanish: Fíjense qué gran amor nos ha dado el Padre, que se nos llame hijos de Dios! ¡Y lo somos! 1 Juan 3:1

Day Two: God's Love is Free

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.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have the large group leader give a brief re-telling of the day's story. As you tell the story, frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time. After reviewing the memory verse, pray before dismissing to game time and snacks.

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: For God so Loved the World . . .

- Large Group
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Teams
- Small Group
 - Story: Jesus's Death and Resurrection
 - Theme: For God so Loved the World . . .
 - Scripture for today's story: Luke 22:7-53,66-71; 23:1-55; 24:1-11; John 12:12-16; 18:28-40; 19:1-37; Acts 1:3-8; Matthew 28:18-20
 - Memory Verse Review
- Large Group
 - Story review questions

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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 *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that we can be sure that Jesus Christ is our only Savior. 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.)*

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.

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the

Day Three: For God so Loved the World . . .

Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory 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.

This week we are learning about God’s love. We have learned that God loves us so much that He wants us to be His family. Do you remember the Bible Verse we have been learning? (*Allow the children to say the verse to you.*) That’s right. 1 John 3:1 says “How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that’s what we really are!” Aren’t we grateful that God wants us in His family?

Two days ago we learned that God’s love is for everybody. Yesterday, we learned that we don’t have to earn God’s love; we just have to receive it. Today we’re going to learn the most important lesson of all: how God takes away our sin so we can receive His love.

You will never learn anything more important in your whole life than understanding that God loves you. He cares for you. He wants to be with you. He wants you in His family. All you have to do is accept God’s love. God, however, had to do something very, very hard to give His love to you. God knows that our sin pushes us away from Him. He knows that, as long as we have sin, we can never really be part of His family. That’s why He made a way to take away sin. Today we’re going to see what that way is.

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:

Jesus lived His life on earth differently than anybody else before or since: He never sinned. Not once did Jesus ever do or say anything that went against what God wanted. Instead, Jesus lived His life teaching people that God loved them.

Jesus gathered a group of people that traveled with Him everywhere He went. Jesus walked from town to town, telling people about God’s love. He reminded people that more than anything God wants to save us from our sins so that we can love Him and love each other.

As Jesus traveled around, He did amazing things to show people that He truly was God’s Son. He made blind people able to see and deaf people able to hear. He turned five small loaves of bread and two fish into enough food for thousands of people. He spoke to the wind and the rain and they obeyed what He said. Jesus walked on water, cured diseases, and even raised dead people back to

Day Three: For God so Loved the World . . .

life.

Everywhere He went, people began to become excited about Jesus and His message. Some people were very happy. They were glad to hear that God loved them, even though they had sinned. They were happy to know that God wanted to take away their sins. They believed that Jesus was the Savior that God had been promising for so long.

Other people were not happy. They did not like Jesus' message. They did not believe that Jesus was God's Son. They were very angry about everything that Jesus did and taught.

Do you know why these people were so angry? They were people that for a long time had followed God's instructions. They made obeying the rules the most important thing in their lives. In fact, they worked so hard at following the rules that they forgot the reason for the rules in the first place.

Remember that God gave His instructions in the first place to help people know how to love Him and to sin less. Sadly, many people began to treat the rules as more important than God Himself. Part of Jesus' message was that more than anything else God is a God of love. He loves people and cares for people. This message angered the people who had begun to love God's rules more than they loved God.

As Jesus continued to teach, more and more people came to listen to His message. Everywhere Jesus went huge crowds followed Him. The more popular Jesus' teaching became, the angrier His enemies were.

One Sunday, after about three years, Jesus was traveling into Jerusalem, the capital of the country. The crowds were excited to see Him coming. Thousands of people crowded into the streets to watch Jesus ride into the city on a donkey. They waved palm branches in the air and shouted and sang. Some people took off their jackets and laid them in the streets so that Jesus would have a soft path. Many people wanted to make Jesus the king of the whole country.

As all the people cheered for Jesus, it seemed that everything was going well for Jesus, but He knew the truth. Jesus knew that He did not leave Heaven to become a king on Earth. Jesus came to die. He came to be punished for sins that were not His. Jesus came to die for what we have done.

Jesus' enemies were furious. They could not believe that so many people came to see Jesus. They were angry that so many people loved the man that they hated.

Thursday of that week was a special holiday. Jesus celebrated that evening with twelve of His closest friends and followers. Most of them did not realize that anything bad was happening, but Jesus knew. He knew that one of His own friends had made a deal with His enemies. That night, one of Jesus' followers was planning to give Him to His enemies.

After dinner Jesus took His friends to a park. He spent most of the night talking to His Father, God. Jesus knew that soldiers were coming to take Him. He told His Father that He would do whatever God wanted Him to do.

During the night the soldiers came to arrest Jesus. They took Him back to the home of His enemies. All night long His enemies beat Him, made fun of Him, and told lies about Him to find reasons to kill Him. The next morning, they took Jesus to the governor.

The governor could not find anything wrong that Jesus had done. He wanted to let Jesus go. Jesus' enemies brought a huge crowd to the governor's court. They screamed that they wanted Jesus to die. Finally the governor was so afraid of the crowd that he gave Jesus to them.

Jesus was hurt badly. They beat His back with long pieces of leather that had sharp rocks or metal in them. They pushed a crown made of twisted thorn branches down on to His head. They hit Jesus with sticks and their fists. Finally they put a huge wooden log across His shoulders. They forced Him to carry it all the way out of the city and up a hill that the people called Skull Hill.

The soldiers killed Jesus in a terrible way called crucifixion. They laid the great log that Jesus carried across another one in the shape of a T to make something called a cross. They pushed Jesus down on the cross and spread His arms out. They hammered huge nails into His wrists and feet to hold Him to the cross. Last, they stood the cross up so that Jesus was hanging on it in front of all the people.

Being crucified was a terrible way to die. The nails tore into Jesus' hands and feet. The wood of the cross hurt His back. The thorns cut His head. It was very hard to breathe. For six hours Jesus hung on that cross, feeling so much pain so that He could take the punishment for all the bad things that we have done. At the end of six hours, Jesus called out, "It is finished." As His friend and

Day Three: For God so Loved the World . . .

enemies looked on, Jesus died.

God saw everything that was happening to Jesus. God, who had created everything that is with only His words, could have stopped Jesus' enemies at any time. He could have saved His son from so much pain and suffering. Why do you think Jesus chose to let Himself be crucified? Why do you think His Father did not stop Him?

God wants to take away our sins. God knew that it would cost Jesus' own death on the cross, but He loved us so much that He sent Him anyway. The Bible says that God loved the world so much that He sent His only son to the world so that anybody who believes in Him will be saved.

Some of Jesus' followers took His body down from the cross and cleaned it up. They wrapped His body in cloth and laid Him in a cave that was used as a tomb. Jesus' enemies rolled a giant round stone across the door of the cave so that nobody could come in. His enemies thought they would never see Jesus again.

The Sunday morning after Jesus died some women who believed He was God's Son came to visit His body. When they got to the cave they found a huge surprise. The giant stone was rolled away. The soldiers that Jesus' enemies had put there to guard His body were unconscious. And the cave was empty!

The women were amazed and confused. They did not understand what had happened. They thought that maybe somebody had stolen Jesus' body. As the women stood there, two shining and mighty angels appeared. "Why are you looking for Jesus here with the dead?" The angels asked happily. "Jesus is not dead. He has returned to life, just like He said that He would. Quickly, go tell all of His followers that Jesus is alive!" The women ran off to tell Jesus' other followers.

Over the next forty days Jesus Himself visited many of His friends. He showed them that He really was alive. They saw the holes in His wrists and feet where the nails had been. Jesus' followers were more excited than we can imagine. Jesus truly was the Son of God. He had died to take away our sins and then come back to life.

After visiting His friends for forty days, Jesus met many of them on top of a mountain. He gave them one new instruction. "Go to the whole world," Jesus said "and tell them about Me and everything I have taught you. And don't be afraid, because I will be with you wherever you go, even until the end of the world."

The love of God is greater and more powerful than all the sin in the world. The memory verse we've been learning this week reminds us that God's love is so great that He wants us to be His family. Jesus paid the price with His own death to take away sin so that we can be in God's family. If you would like to know how to receive this free gift, 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.

TIP—There are one page posters with the memory verse 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.

Day Three: For God so Loved the World . . .

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft 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.

Salvation Necklaces

Supplies: For each child—one string or cord for necklace, and five beads, one each of red, black, white, green, yellow, plus one additional bead of any color.

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 Christ. 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: How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

Spanish: Fijense qué gran amor nos ha dado el Padre, que se nos llame hijos de Dios! ¡Y lo somos! 1 Juan 3:1

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.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have the large group leader give a brief re-telling of the day's story. As you tell the story, frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time. After reviewing the memory verse, pray before dismissing to game time and snacks.

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.

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 necklace.

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.

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 al aceptar a Jesús como nuestro Salvador, somos hechos nuevos. El limpia el pecado que estaba dentro de nosotros. ¡Esto es porque Jesús está en nuestras vidas!

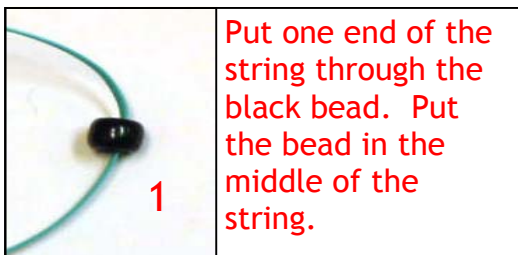
GREEN- This reminds us that we are to grow as a Christian. In order to grow in our relationship with God, we need to pray, read the Bible, and hang out with other Christians by coming to Bible Study.

VERDE- Este representa crecimiento como Cristiano. 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.

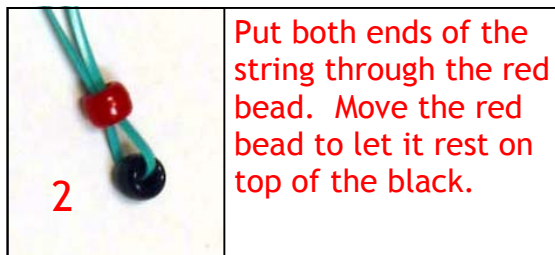
YELLOW- This reminds us of Heaven! The Bible says that every person who has trusted Jesus to be his or her Savior will spend forever in Heaven with Him.

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.

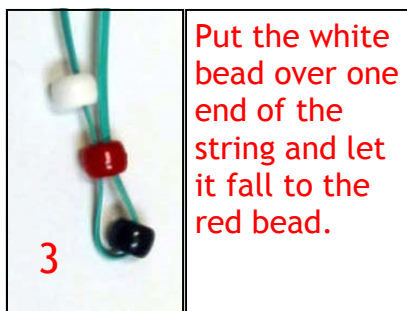
Day Three: Salvation Cross Necklace Step-By-Step Instructions



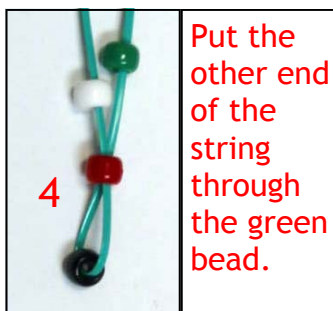
Put one end of the string through the black bead. Put the bead in the middle of the string.



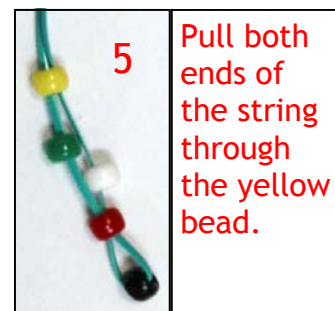
Put both ends of the string through the red bead. Move the red bead to let it rest on top of the black.



Put the white bead over one end of the string and let it fall to the red bead.



Put the other end of the string through the green bead.



Pull both ends of the string through the yellow bead.



Line up the green and white beads next to each other on top of the red bead. Move the yellow bead down to just above them. Put the filler bead (usually clear, but can be any extra bead that you want to use) in between the green and white beads. *The open ends of the filler bead need to be against the sides of the other two.* (In other words, the filler bead has to be perpendicular to the green and white.) Push the yellow bead down so that it tightens the string through the green and white beads. The green and white beads should squeeze tight enough to keep the filler bead in place. If you have gel glue, a little bit will help keep the beads secure. Tie a knot just above the yellow bead. Make sure you tie it tightly enough to keep the yellow bead secure against the others or the filler bead might fall out. (Tying more than one knot can help keep the yellow bead from being able to slide up the string.) Tie the two ends of the string together, and your cross necklace is complete.



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 hago.

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.

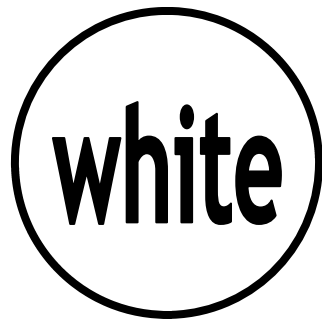
Un día estaré en El Cielo con Jesús.



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



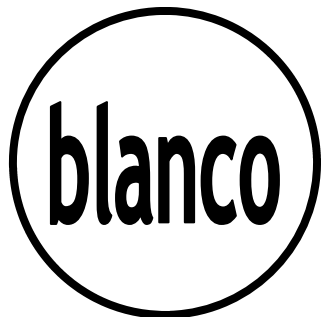
[Jesus said] "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." John 14:2-3



Pues todos han pecado y están privados de la gloria de Dios.
Romanos 3:23



Pero Dios demuestra su amor por nosotros en esto: en que cuando todavía éramos pecadores, Cristo murió por nosotros.
Romanos 5:8



Por lo tanto, si alguno está en Cristo, es una nueva creación. ¡Lo viejo ha pasado, ha llegado ya lo nuevo!
2 Corintios 5:17



Por tanto, imiten a Dios, como hijos muy amados. Efesios 5:1



En el hogar de mi Padre hay muchas viviendas; si no fuera así, ya se lo habría dicho a ustedes. Voy a prepararles un lugar. Y si me voy y se lo preparo, vendré para llevármelos conmigo. Así ustedes estarán donde yo esté. Juan 14:2-3

Day Four: God's Love Transforms Us

- Large Group
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Testimony
 - Memory Verse: Next Word Relay
- Small Group
 - Story: Saul Becomes Paul
 - Theme: God's Love Transforms Us
 - Scripture for today's story: Acts 9
 - Memory Verse Review
- Large Group
 - Story review questions

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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 *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*. Each day you will be sharing stories, songs, crafts, and other activities that help the children understand that we can be sure that Jesus Christ is our only Savior. 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 verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day four is "Next Word Relay". Have your poster of the memory verse

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: God's Love Transforms Us

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.

All this week we have been learning about the love of God. We have learned that God's love is for everybody in the whole world. We have seen that we don't do anything to earn the free gift of God's love. Yesterday, we learned about Jesus' death on the cross and return to life. We learned that Jesus made the way to take away our sins so that we can be in God's family.

We have already seen this week that God offers His love to people who don't deserve it. Remember what we learned in the story of the Ninevites: God even loves people others might consider the very worst. What happens after those people accept God's love?

God's love changes us. We really become a part of God's family. God begins to change us. He becomes a part of our lives forever. He helps us know what we should do. He teaches us to teach other people about Him. God gives us a brand new life.

Today we're going to learn the true story of a man who was completely transformed by God's love. We're going to see how God changes our lives and then helps us to change others.

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:

Every day this week we have learned about God's love. We have seen that it is powerful and free to anybody who believes God and accepts His gift. Today we're going to learn the story of a man who had a hard time accepting God's love. We're going to see how God changed Him when he finally listened to God. This man's name was Saul.

Yesterday we learned about Jesus' life, death, and return to life. We learned that Jesus gave a job to those of us who love Him and believe in Him. Jesus told us to share the Good News of His forgiveness with everybody in the whole world. After Jesus returned to Heaven, His followers began to do just that. The Good News about Jesus began to spread through the world. People were happy to learn that God loves us so much.

Yesterday we learned that some people were enemies of God's message while Jesus was here on Earth. Many of these people still hated Jesus' message after He went back to Heaven. One of these enemies was Saul. Saul hated Jesus. He hated Jesus' message. He hated Jesus' followers.

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Saul was a powerful man where He lived. He had people that believed in Jesus arrested. Saul threw them in prison just for loving Jesus. Saul even watched while some other leaders killed a man for teaching about Jesus. Saul was a very, very bad man. Jesus' followers were afraid of Saul. They were worried that He would come to arrest them next.

One day, Saul was traveling with a group of soldiers to another city. They were going there to arrest more of Jesus' followers. While they were going, an incredibly bright light came from the sky and shone on Saul. It was so bright that Saul fell down and covered his eyes. A voice spoke from Heaven. "Saul, Saul," the voice said, "why are you against me?"

Saul was confused and afraid. "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus," he replied. "I am the one you are opposing."

Saul was terrified. He had been arresting and punishing people just for believing in Jesus. Now He saw that Jesus truly was God. Do you think Saul thought he was about to be in a lot of trouble? Remember the story we learned about the Ninevites. We learned that God loves all of us, no matter what bad things we may have done. It was hard for Saul to imagine, but Jesus loved Him. Jesus loved Saul just as much as He loves us.

Saul did not know what was going to happen to him next. "Get up," Jesus told him. "Go into the city and you will be told what to do."

When Saul stood up he was blind. The men with him had to hold his hands like a small child and lead him. Saul spent three days blind in the city afraid, not eating, not drinking, just waiting.

The third day a man named Ananias came to the house where Saul was staying. God had sent Ananias to explain to Saul the truth about Jesus and His love. Saul believed what he heard. He accepted God's love and forgiveness. God forgave Saul's sin and gave him back his ability to see.

Saul was so different, it was like he was a brand new person. He began to tell everybody around him the Good News about Jesus and His love. People were amazed. They knew that Saul had been an enemy of Jesus. Now they could see that Saul loved Jesus. God's love had transformed Saul. He was so different that his name even changed. People started calling him Paul instead of Saul. Paul traveled throughout the world, telling people everywhere about Jesus and His love.

God changed one man from Saul, a cruel and hate-filled enemy, to Paul, a kind friend who spent the rest of his life telling people that God loves us. Paul celebrated this change in his life every day. Paul wrote in a letter to his friends that anybody who follows Jesus is "a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come!"

God's love is just as powerful today as it was when it changed Saul to Paul. It can change our lives too. We may feel like we are too sinful for God to love. Paul reminds us that God loves us, changes us, and helps us tell other people about Him too! God has a special plan for *your* life, just like He had for Paul's. If you want to know more about God's love for you and how He wants to give you a new life, just ask us. We would love to help you know.

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.

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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

*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 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: How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

Spanish: Fíjense qué gran amor nos ha dado el Padre, que se nos llame hijos de Dios! ¡Y lo somos! 1 Juan 3:1

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.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have the large group leader give a brief re-telling of the day's story. As you tell the story, frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time. After reviewing the memory verse, pray before dismissing to game time and snacks.

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 surfen' 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
They are weak but He is strong

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

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.

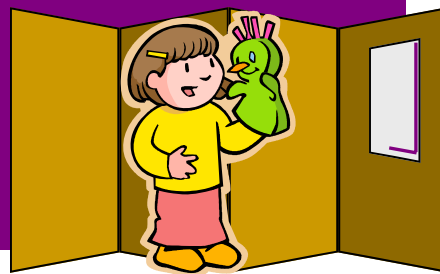
GATHERING—Have the puppets going while you are out knocking on doors and taking attendance. You will find the puppet show attracts plenty of curiosity.

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— He Loves You

He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

You may think you're not loved and think God's far way
 But it's you He's thinking of and His Word has this to say
 It says

Chorus: He loves you
 though He knows that you've been bad
 He loves you and you know you should be glad

God sent His own son just so you could be saved
 He died for everyone and He rose up from the grave
 because

Chorus

He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 With a God like that you know you should be glad

You know it's up to you to make the choice that's smart
 So say you love Him too
 Ask Jesus in your heart because

Chorus

He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 He loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah
 With a God like that you know you should be glad (repeat)

PUPPETS DAY TWO— 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

Verse 3: 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 THREE— The Saviour's Love

I'll be just what god wants me to be
 He saved me, and now He's the only one for me
 So please tell me why
 Don't you call Him Saviour and your Lord
 'Cause right now He's knocking
 Like He's done before, on your heart's door

Chorus: It just takes a little bit of faith
 A little bit of prayer
 Just call upon the Lord, and He'll be right there
 The hope you're looking for
 The peace you need and more
 I'll telling you, my friend
 It's all in the Saviour's love...

...Is what drove him to save you and me
 God's love, sent Him to die on Calvary
 So please tell me why
 Would you turn away from what you were made for
 'Cause right now He's knocking
 Likes He's done before, on your heart's door

Chorus

Believe Him, receive Him,
 And love Him, please trust Him,
 He'll guide you, live inside you
 With His love...

So please tell me why
 Don't you call Him Saviour and your Lord
 'Cause right now He's knocking
 Like He's done before, on your heart's door

Chorus x 2

PUPPETS DAY FOUR— I Can See Clearly Now

I can see clearly now, my sin is gone
 I can see God's hand on me all the way
 Gone are the devil's lies that had me blind
 It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
 Son-Shiny day
 It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
 Son-Shiny day

I know I can make it now, my guilt is gone
 All of the bad feelings have disappeared
 Here is the freedom I've been prayin' for
 It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
 Son-Shiny day

Look all around, His blessings are all mine
 I'll look straight ahead,
 and I'll keep His hand in mine

I can see clearly now, my sin is gone
 I can see God's hand on me all the way
 Gone are the devil's lives that had me blind
 It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright),
 Son-Shiny day

It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
 Son-Shiny day
 It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
 Son-Shiny day

Yes, Jesus Loves Me.

Activity Packets

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



Jonah preached
God's message
to the people
of Nineveh.

How great is

the love

the Father

has given

us so freely!

Now we can

be called children

of God.

And that's what

we really are!



1 John 3:1

Memory Verse Word Search

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

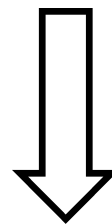
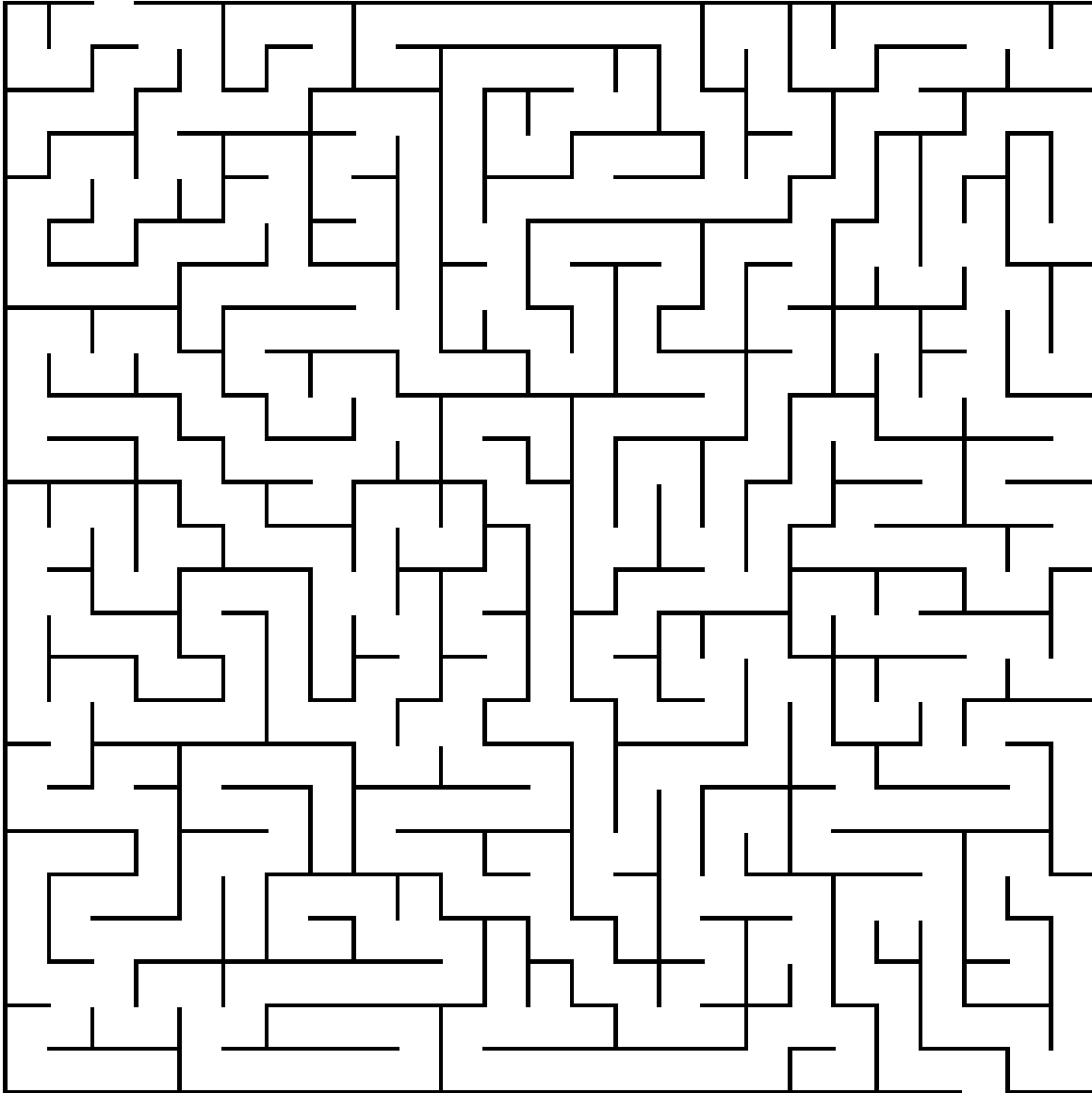
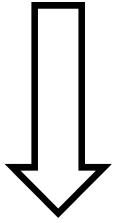
**How great is the love the Father has given us
so freely! Now we can be called children of
God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1**

Can you find all the underlined words from the memory verse
in the above word search?



God healed Naaman's leprosy.

Help Naaman find
his way to Elisha.



God's Free Gift

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

Naaman
Leprosy
Elisha
Healed

Wash
Jordan
Prophet
Free

Cleaned
Gift
God's love

How Great is God's Love!

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute each correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words. Then fill in the words to the memory verse at the bottom of the page.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	D	W	L	R	Z	M	A	E	S	Y	N	U	H	O	B	X	G	T	C	P	I	V	J	Q	F

1. 20-14-22-4-2-5-9-12 _____

2. 18-5-9-8-19 _____

3. 4-15-23-9 _____

4. 26-8-19-14-9-5 _____

5. 18-22-23-9-12 _____

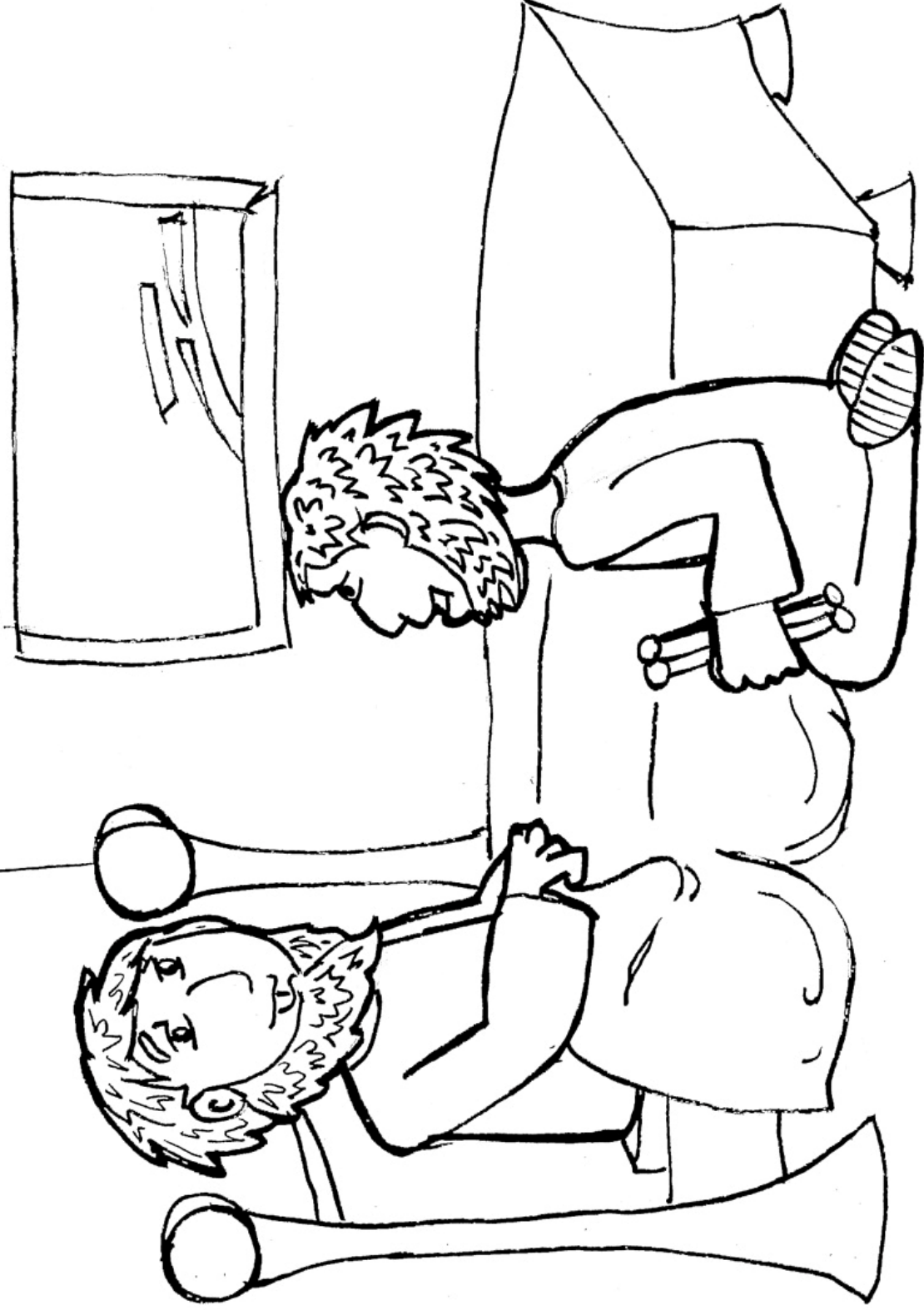
6. 26-5-9-9-4-11 _____

7. 20-8-4-4-9-2 _____

**How _____ is the _____ the _____
has _____ us so _____! Now we can be
called _____ of _____. And that's
what we are! 1 John 3:1**

God sent
Ananias
to teach
Saul the
Good
News
about
Jesus'
love.

God's love
gave Saul
a brand
new life.
Saul
changed
his name
to Paul.



How great is the love the Father
has given us so freely!

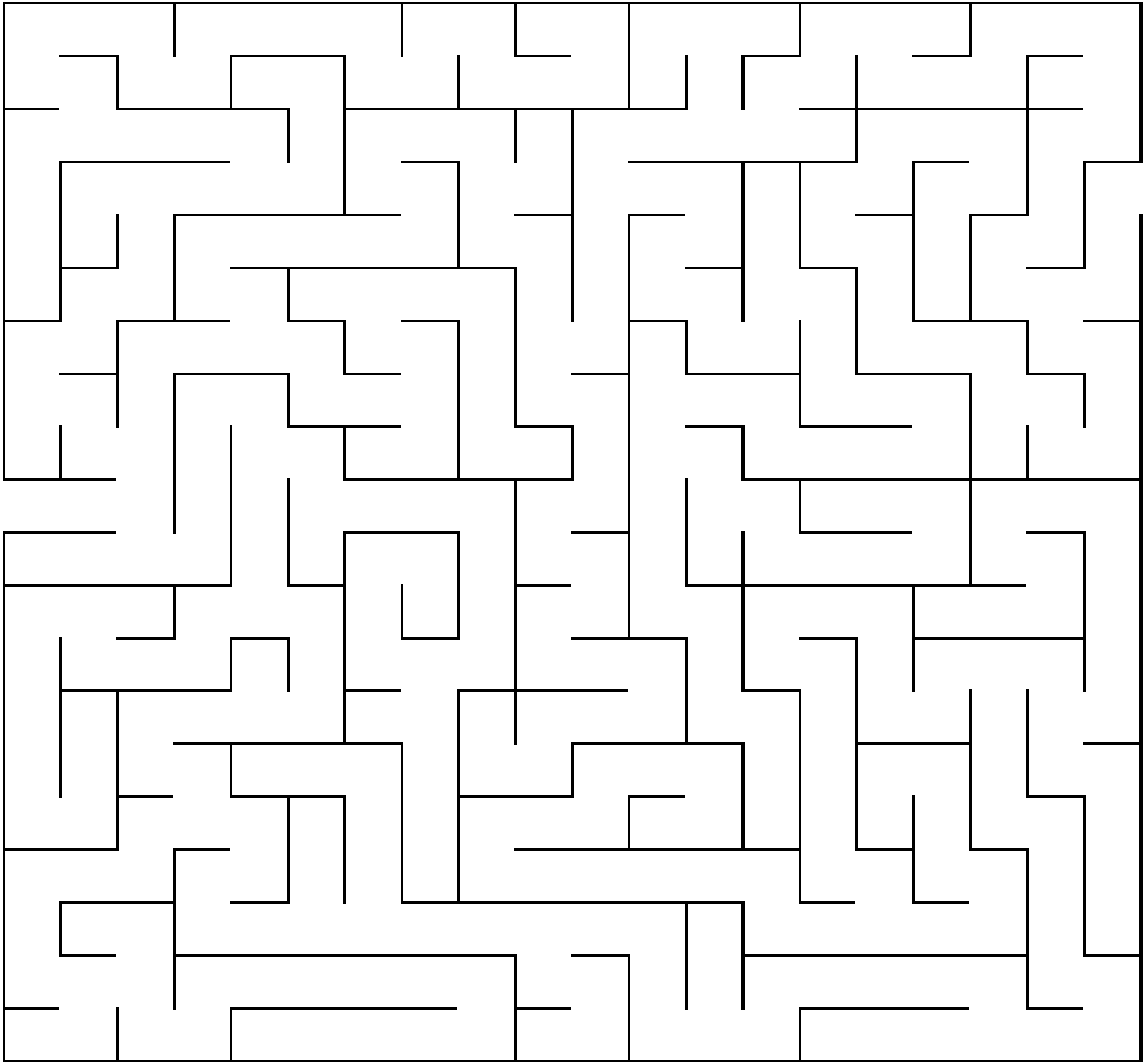
Now we can be called children of God.

And that's what we really are!

1 John 3:1



Memory Verse Maze



How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! 1 John 3:1

God's Love Transforms Us!

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

Saul
Damascus
Light
Heaven

Persecute
Blind
Changed
Paul

Sinners
Useful
God
Love

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.

**How great is the love the Father
has given us so freely!
Now we can be called children of God.
And that's what we really are!
1 John 3:1**

**Fíjense qué gran amor
nos ha dado el Padre,
que se nos llame hijos de Dios!
¡Y lo somos!
1 Juan 3:1**

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

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