

# Preparing to Teach

## Story 2A: The Story

3 Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what.*

### Unit Intro

*The Story of God and God's people is important because it is the story in which we find ourselves. It is the story that God continues to write today. In this unit we start all the way back at the beginning, taking a look at the Creation story. We journey together as we see God forming and calling a people to be set apart. We witness God forming something great out of nothing, forming people into God's likeness, gifting them for service, and drawing people to the Trinity. From the very beginning God has loved and remained faithful to us, even when we stray from God. We can trust God because God is the author of our lives and has demonstrated faithfulness to us throughout time. God continues to pursue us. Will we continue to pursue our God?*

### A prayer for teachers:

*God, ground us in your story. Jesus, root us in who you are and who you call us to be. Holy Spirit, move us to help others find their place as children of God, as we continue to pursue our Lord who is always pursuing us. Amen.*

### Lessons in this Unit:

Lesson 1: September 10: Creation: "In the Beginning: a Perfect Home" Genesis 1:1-19, *JSB*; [Reviewing all of Creation; Genesis 1:1-2:3]

Lesson 2: September 17: God's special creation—Adam and Eve; Genesis 2:4-3:7 [the original intent for Adam and Eve and our relationship with God]

Lesson 3: September 24: Noah builds an ark: Genesis 6:9-7:24; *JSB*, [God's response to sin; The flood and a promise; Genesis 8:15-22 and 9:8-17]

### Lesson 4: October 1: Abraham and Sarah: "The Great Family" Genesis 12-15; *Godly Play Vol 2*

Lesson 5: October 8: Joseph: Genesis 37-46, *Godly Play Vol 6*

Lesson 6: October 15: God Rescues and Protects Moses, Exodus 2:1-10

Lesson 7: October 22: The Ten Commandments: "The Ten Best Ways," Exodus 20; *Godly Play*

Lesson 8: October 29: Entering the Promised Land: "The Warrior Leader," Joshua 1, 6; *JSB*

Lesson 9: November 5: Judges Rule: Deborah, Judges 4:1-5:31

Lesson 10: November 12: David and Goliath: "*The young hero and the horrible giant*," ["The teeny, weenie...true king"], *JSB*

Lesson 11: November 19: David: Psalms 23 [and 2 Samuel 7:18-29]

**November 26th: THANKSGIVING WEEKEND. NO KID'S MINISTRY**

**Today's Lesson:** Today we hear the story of Abraham and Sarah and their son Isaac. They believed that God was everywhere. They went to an unknown place to see if this was true. God was there.

*Today's story is longer than most. Please allow yourself enough time for review.*

## Lesson Plan

### The Great Family

**Bible Story:** Abraham and Sarah • *Genesis 12-15, 24*

**Memory Verse:** God says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am the First and the Last. I am the Beginning and the End." Revelation 22:13

**Song:** *Our God*

### Welcome/Getting Ready:

**What we need:** foam wreath

*Co-Teacher at door welcoming kids, helping kids to recognize this space as sacred. Co-Teacher with hands out and let kids respond/chose greeting, high five, "knuckles" or a hug.*

*(see options at the door on the wall-CONNECT)*

*Teacher on floor in a circle on the carpet (K-2) or at the table (3-5th), getting kids ready (i.e. helping them prepare their hearts and minds for today's time together and specifically the story).*

**TEACHER:** Good morning! My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

As the kids enter, welcome them by name. Make introductions as necessary. Chat about everyone's week.

Once the majority has arrived, point out the foam wreath and allow the children to wonder about the wreath. Before the lesson begins, use the lack of beginning and end in the wreath reinforce the idea that God is the beginning and the end, but God has no beginning and no end.

### **UNITE and DISENGAGE STRESS**

Stand and do breath prayers together.

God said:

(breathe in) **God was in the desert.** (breathe out)

(breathe in) **God is with us today. Right now.** (breathe out)

(breathe in) **God will go with us when we leave from here.** (breathe out)

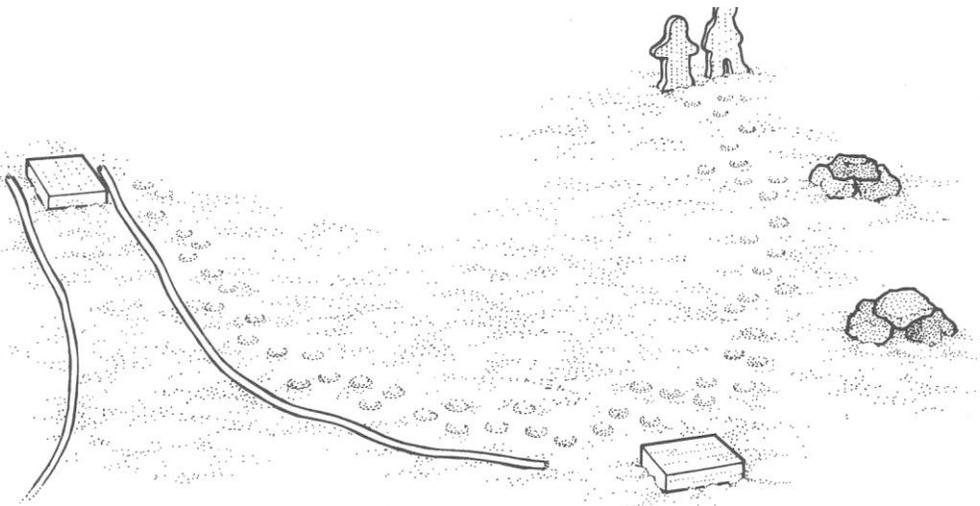
Repeat as necessary.

## **Storytelling:**

**What we need:** desert box, Abraham and Sarah and Rebekah wooden figures, people of God figures, stones, wooden blocks, blue yarn (allow the teacher to cut to fit that morning), scissors.

*I suggest that if kids try to talk to you during the story, you simply put a finger up to your ear to indicate 'listen' and wait for quiet to start again. If a child is persistent, then maybe offer a "no thank you" or remind them that they'll have a turn to talk when you finish the story.*

*The following shows how to set up the Desert Box.*



**ABRAM AND SARAI IN HEBRON (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

*With minimal eye contact, read/recite the Godly script below:*

**This is the Desert Box. So many wonderful and important things happened in the desert, we need to know what it is like.**

*Remove the lid.*

**We can't get the whole desert in our classroom, so here is just a little piece of the desert.**

*As you talk, move your hand over the desert, smoothing the sand to show the mystery of the desert and what happens there.*

**The desert is a dangerous place. It is always moving, so it is hard to know where you are. There is little water, so you get thirsty and you can die if no water is found. Almost nothing grows there, so there is almost nothing to eat. In the daytime it is hot and the sun scorches your skin. In the night it is**

**cold. When the wind blows, the sand stings when it hits you. People wear many clothes to protect them from the sun and blowing sand. The desert is a dangerous place. People do not go into the desert unless they have to.**

*Place the yarn and two blocks of wood in the sand.  
Ur is at the left farthest from you and Haran is close to you in the center. From the point of view of the children, Haran is at the top of a semicircle, called the Fertile Crescent. The blue yarn (for the river Euphrates) marks the semicircle.*

**When the flood was over, the creatures went out in all the four directions of the earth to fill it up with life again. They often gathered along the rivers. The people lived in small villages and then cities. One of the most ancient and greatest of these cities was called Ur.**

*Touch the block of wood for Ur  
at your left in the desert box.*

**In the city of Ur, the people believed that there were many gods. There was a god for every tree, every rock, every flower. There was a god of the sky, the clouds, the water and the land. The world was alive with gods.**

**But there was one family that believed that all of God was in every place. They did not yet know that, but that is what they thought.**

*Stand Abram and Sarai in the sand by Ur.*

**Abram and Sarai were part of that family.**

*When you are moving the figures take your time.  
Notice how they leave footprints in the sand.  
This shows their journey.*

**When it came time to move to a new place, they were not sure that God would be there. So they wondered what the new place would be like.**

*Move the figures along the river,  
marked by the blue yarn, moving from your left to right,  
to the city of Haran. From the children's  
point of view, you move the figures toward the top  
of the arc.*

**They walked toward Haran with their sheep and their donkeys. Even the old people and all the children went, too. They slept in their tents at night, and during the day they walked along the great river called the Euphrates. It showed them the way and gave them and all their animals water to drink.**

**It took a long, long time. Finally, they met people coming out from Haran. They knew the journey was almost over. Then they were there.**

*Move Abraham out of away from Haran  
(toward the children) as you tell about  
Abram's encounter with the presence of the mystery of God.*

**Sometimes Abram would go out to the edge of the desert and look out across the sand and into the sky. Then God came so close to Abram, and Abram came so close to God, that he knew what God wanted him to do. God wanted Abram and Sarai to move on again to another new place.**

*Move Abram and Sarai on to your right into Canaan.  
As the path starts down, you will stop at two places and build altars.  
Then you will go down to the bottom (the farthest away from you)  
of the box to Hebron the final home of Abram and Sarai.*

**Abram and Sarai did what God said. They went into the desert to the west of Haran and walked toward Canaan. They went with all their sheep, their tents and many helpers. Abram's brother's son, Lot, also went with them. This time there was no river to show the way or to give them water to drink.**

*Use several small stones to build an altar.*

**They finally came to a place called Shechem. Abraham climbed up a hill and prayed to God, and God was there, so Abram built an altar to mark the place. Then they went on.**

*Use several small stones to build another altar.*

**Next they came to a place near Bethel. Abram prayed again and God was there, also. Abram built an altar to mark this place, too. God was not just here or there. All of God was everywhere.**

*Leave Abram and Sarai together at your far right.*

**Then they went on to Hebron to make their home, near the oaks of Mamre.**

*Move Abram a short distance away from Hebron.*

**One night God brought Abram outside. He looked up into the sky. God came so close to Abram, and Abram came so close to God, that Abram knew what God was saying. 'You will become the father of a great family, and Sarai will be the mother. The members of the great family will be as many as there are stars in the sky and grains of sand in the desert.**

**Abram laughed. He and Sarai were very old. God's promise sounded impossible, but God said to change their names anyway. Abram was to be Abraham and Sarai was to be called Sarah.**

*You don't need to put any figures down for the strangers. Leave them Mysterious.*

**One day three strangers came out of the desert.**

**Abraham was sitting by his tent. He invited them in and Sarah mixed three measures of flour, which is a lot. She gave them bread and meat to eat, and milk and water to drink, as was the custom. They told Abraham and the and Sarah would have a son, and Abraham laughed. Sarah was standing by the tent and heard them. She laughed, too. They were too old.**

**The three strangers went on their way. Do you know what happened? Abraham and Sarah had a son. They laughed again, so they named the baby "Laughter." In their language the word for "laughter" is "Isaac."**

*Pick up Sarah and reverently hold her in your open hand.  
Turn your hand over and hide her as you touch the place where she was  
buried, not far from Hebron. Keep her concealed as the story continues.*

**When the boy was grown, Sarah died. She was buried in a cave near the oaks of Mamre.**

**Abraham was lonely. He missed Sarah very much, but he had one more thing he had to do.**

*Move your finger in the air, just above the sand, back  
toward Haran as you retrace the original journey.*

**He sent his most trusted helper back to the land of his people to find a wife for Isaac.**

*Place the Rebeckah figure in the sand, and a little to your right of Haran.  
We won't name the place but it is Nahor in Mesopotamia (Genesis 24:10).*

**Abraham's helper stopped by a well in the evening. Rebekah offered to give him some water to drink. She then helped him give water to his animals. She was as full of courage as she was kind. Rebekah then invited him home. He told her family about Abraham and Sarah and the Great Family. Rebekah decided she would like to be a part of that Great Family, so they went across the desert and then past Shechem and Bethel toward Hebron.**

*Move the Rebekah figure back to where Abraham and Isaac are waiting.  
Move Isaac figure to meet her, then move the two figures to where  
Abraham is waiting. Don't hurry; this is a powerful movement.*

**Isaac saw them coming and came out to meet them. Then Isaac and Rebekah were married.**

*"Bury" Abraham near Sarah by holding him in your open  
hand and turning it over to hide him as you touch the place where*

*he is buried.*

Old Abraham was now very old and full of years. He died and was buried with Sarah in a cave by the trees.

Then Isaac and Rebekah had children, and their children had children, and those children had children. This went on for thousands and thousands of years until your grandmothers and grandfathers had children. Then your mothers and fathers had children.

*Scoop up a handful of sand and let it slowly trickle out.*

Now you are a part of that great family which has become as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand in the desert.

## **WONDERING:**

*While you may choose to use all of the questions, **be sensitive to the Spirit's leading** as you move into this phase. You may find that one or more of the questions seems particularly important to spend time with. Also, it is okay if the children speculate inaccurately. They are processing the story.*

*Teachers can share their wondering as well since building relationship with the children is one of the goals. It may be best for teachers to share after the kids so kids aren't tempted to mimic the teacher.*

## **TEACHER:**

- I wonder what your favorite part of the story is?
- I wonder how Abram and Sarai felt about the desert?
- I wonder why God used the desert to teach people about who he is?
- I wonder why Sarai was so welcoming to the strangers?
- I wonder how you would have responded if you were Sarai?
- I wonder how you get faith to believe such unbelievable things?
- I wonder what we should learn from this story?
- I wonder who you are most like in this story?
- I wonder who you would like to be like in this story?
- I wonder what part of this story is most important?

**TEACHER:** "Will you pray with me? \_\_\_\_\_ Amen."

*Tell them that over the next few minutes they get to work on something of their choosing as a response to today's story. Describe what materials or activities are available to them and encourage them to think of how they will respond before they leave the circle. Let each child think about it for a second and then share what they have chosen to do (with the group) before releasing them. Remind the kids that they will have plenty of time to do their work (if they don't finish something, they can take it home and finish it later or come back to it next week here). Also remind them that they'll be coming back together for FEAST at the end.*

*At this time, remind children of our commitments. These are our behavioral expectations, which they may be reminded of throughout the morning as needed.*

**Our Commitments:** (see posters on the wall)

*Teacher, remind kids of the following (and unpack any of these as needed):*

It is "my job to keep you safe, and your job to keep it that way....so we commit to the following...."

<b>PreK-2nd Grade</b>	<b>3rd-5th Grade</b>
Helping Hands	Acts of Service
Listening Ears	Reflective Listening
Quiet Voices	Respectful Speech
Walking Feet	Considerate Movement
Right to Pass	Personal Choice

After reviewing the expectations, please dismiss the children to their chosen response.

## **RESPONSE:**

\*During response time you may play the cd with *Our God* in the background.

*Co-Teacher should be responsible for oversight, set up, clean up (i.e. helping kids clean up and get things back where they belong--give kids responsibility) of the response time. When it is about 11:10 you should enter Feast.*

**TEACHER/Co-TEACHER:** During Response, we believe God is present and is accomplishing good work in the hearts of teachers and kids alike. **Wait and watch for the Spirit as you interact with the kids.** Have faith

that parts of the story, if not all of it, did catch in their minds and hearts. Have faith the story will stick with them even after they leave this morning.

For the times when their Response work may not seem to connect with the story, first ask probing questions or remark on what you notice about their work. Perhaps they are connecting in a way we would never anticipate! If it appears this is not the case, then please help the kids focus on responding to the story **by asking them how their work helps them remember and/or understand today's story. Alternatively, ask the Spirit to inspire you with thoughts and questions that will connect with the kids and help them along with their response.** (We include a few thoughts to get your started after each Response Activity, but by no means are these exhaustive or meant to be a strict guide.)

**Ultimately, the kids have the right to pass when it comes to responding to the story. They are still required to be respectful of others who are working, but we cannot force a response from them. Faith journeys--for adults and children alike--are rarely efficient and often circuitous.**

All of what is outlined above is meant to keep *relationship* (with God and others) as an important and sacred part of the morning. **Pray and believe God will honor this and is honoring this desire--even when faced with apparent mess and disarray.**

### **1. Touch the Story**

**What we need:** storytelling items, adult

Allow the children, two or three at a time, to stay with the dessert box and respond to the story. Teacher should try to stay with the box to help ask and answer questions as the children retell and respond to the story.

### **2. Prayer: Rock Altar**

**What we need:** medium smooth craft rocks, dark non-toxic markers (like sharpie)

Allow children to write/draw their prayers on small rocks. Remind the children that praise/thankfulness is a prayer too. Invite the children to help build an "altar" by placing their rock with the other prayer rocks. Encourage the children to take their piece of the altar home with them at the end of class.

**3-5th option:** Have the kids write prayers regarding God's faithfulness toward those who gather at Trinity Church and God's faithfulness to us as we engage in our common mission (we are a community, following Jesus on a common mission to love God, one another and a broken world in Jesus' name). If it's warm enough, take the kids to the courtyard (out front on Central Ave.) and have them put their rocks in a pile by the walkway (one of the flower beds). Give thanks to God, pray over the church and all who gather here.

### **3. Recreate: Sand Art**

**What we need:** sand, ½ sheets of cardstock, large shoe box with lid (paper should be able to fit inside), small cup for sand, Tacky glue, bowls and paint brushes for the glue

Have each child write their name on their paper. Then, show or explain how to paint a design using glue and

paint brushes on their paper. Put the glue-painted paper in a large shoe box. Allow the child to pour a little sand on top of the paper. Then close the lid of the shoe box and have the child gently shake it back and forth. Open the lid and show the child their completed sand art.

Remember to discuss the story. Ask them about the desert.

#### **4. Art/Movement/Explore**

**What we need:** white/light brown playdough, playdough tools

Using playdough, encourage the kids to respond to the story. Discuss the story. For example, kneading playdough is a lot like kneading bread...

**“It is time to prepare for the feast! Please put your work in a safe place and clean up your work space.”**

### **FEAST:**

**\*\*\*Please use “Feast” language (not “snack time”) during this section of the lesson and remind children why we feast together (you may even ask them why we have feast and what our feast together helps us remember). Feast is a time to engage in relationship building and fellowship around something to eat--in “communion” with one another. It should bring us back to the day’s story and God, but also into deeper community with one another.\*\*\***

*Water and cups are available in the rooms each Sunday morning.*

**What you need:** Udi’s gluten-free (nut, lactose free, etc) bread or rolls (enough for kids to take a piece off or split them up and have a decent-sized piece).

*Have kids circle up again on the carpet with Teacher and Co-Teacher.*

*Pass around hand sanitizer, napkins, then the bowl with Udi’s bread.*

*Welcome them to the Feast.*

*Engage in discussion with the kids. This is a time for relationship building.*

*Go around the circle and let kids all have a chance to respond.*

Possible wondering questions:

[Name of child], I noticed you made \_\_\_\_\_. What did that mean? Why, etc.?

Who else would like to share their work with us?

(Teacher can share his/her response as well.)

-What are you looking forward to this week?

*Give each child an opportunity to share their work during the Feast and ask them how their work connects them to the story. Feel free to use any unused wondering questions (from the above “wondering” section if you’re looking for more conversation starters.)*

**BLESSING:**

**What You Need:** Parent Cue sheets at the door, anything children worked on that they want to take home

**Co-Teacher, help dismiss kids from the circle. Teacher, keep kids in FEAST mode until their parents arrive. Bless them as they leave saying:**

*(Child's Name) God was with Abram and Sarai in the desert. God is with us here. God is with you as you go.*