

1

Sing Joy

EXODUS 15:1-21



GOAL

Children hear the joy in the song of Miriam and Moses after their rescue and explore how they each experience God in their own joy.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- C** Conversation
- D** Drama
- F** Food
- G** Game
- M** Music
- NS** Nature/Science
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Holy God, know my own joy and magnify it. Help me to sing praises to you while I serve these children entrusted to my care. Amen.

THIS SESSION

Joy and our experiences of joy are a gift from God. In this session, children will recall the times of their lives when they experience joy and consider how God is present in those times. Songs of joy are part of the way that we connect with God and tell God thank you for everything God has done for us.

THE BIBLE STORY

In Exodus 15, the Israelites secured their freedom from the oppressive pharaoh and celebrated their joy. God had sent Moses to free the Israelites; once the pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go, they fled Egypt, but the pharaoh changed his mind and his army pursued them to the Red Sea. Through Moses, God parted the waters, allowing the Israelites to reach the other side safely before the waters came crashing down on the Egyptians. Once safe, the Israelites sang a song of victory praising God.

CONNECTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Although most young children may not understand oppression, freedom, and victory, they do know joy and celebration. They see it in national celebrations, in holidays, and in the accomplishments within their own families. Many of these times are accompanied by joyful music.

SESSION PREPARATION

An internet-connected device is used throughout the session because listening to and singing songs is the key focus of the session.

- “Dance Party” (p. 8): Find upbeat music appropriate for dancing.
- Depending on the options you choose:
 - “Talk to the Musicians” (p. 9): Invite church musicians to show children and demonstrate a variety of musical instruments used in worship. If possible, meet in the sanctuary (to include the organ if your church uses one) or choir room.
 - “Drum Circle” (p. 10): Gather drums and/or objects that can be used as drums, such as wooden spoons and buckets or empty oatmeal containers. If you do not have these items, you can use body percussion, such as claps, pats, stomps, and taps.
 - “Making a Tambourine” (p. 10): Obtain small plastic plates and punch six holes around the rim in each plate. Cut 4” lengths of ribbon, six for each person. Obtain jingle bells, six for each person.



GETTING STARTED

- Music player or internet-connected device

DANCE PARTY

AM M

As children enter, play upbeat music. Welcome children and encourage them to start dancing as the music moves them. If possible, use a playlist with multiple music styles from different cultures and songs that last less than two minutes. Children will feel more encouraged to participate if they see adults dancing as well. Allow dancing to continue long enough for everyone to get to dance a song or two. Let the children know how much joy you feel when you are dancing.

- Resource Page 1
- Internet-connected device (optional)

SINGING A NEW SONG!

M T

Teach the children the words to the first verse of “Sing a New Song” (BUNESSAN) on Resource Page 1 by saying a line at a time and having them repeat after you. Explain words and phrases:

- “Liberation” means freedom.
- “God is our savior” means that God helps us and saves us.
- “To our redeemer we all belong” means that we belong to God, the one who saves us.

Practice the lines several times and then sing the song to the familiar tune “Morning Has Broken,” either a cappella or with accompaniment using music from either bit.ly/FMBunessanTune (one verse) or the YouTube video “Giovanni Marradi—Morning Has Broken” (bit.ly/FMBunessanMusic, 3:39), stopping at :50 for one verse.



Keep Resource Page 1 from session 1 for use in sessions 2–4.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

- Internet-connected device

IF YOU’RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

AM M T

Ask children to stand in a circle. Sing the first verse of “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” Many may already know the words and music. To review the melody or the words, show the YouTube video “If You’re Happy—Super Simple Songs” (bit.ly/FMHappySong, 2:03). After singing the first verse, ask children what they do when they are happy. When you hear an answer that fits into this song, say and do that action instead of “clap your hands.” Answers may include stomp your feet, spin around, or jump up and down. Try to include as many answers as possible. When you finish several versions of the song, ask the children:

- ➔ What is a time in your life when you are happy?
- ➔ What songs might you sing when you are happy?
- ➔ What songs might people sing when they are happy?



If children need an example of a song they sing when they are happy, remind them that “Happy Birthday” is a song we sing when we are happy that someone is having a birthday.



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

HEARING THE STORY WITH SOUND

C D

Place two pieces of blue cloth or construction paper together on the floor or a table. Put the two sets of items, one set representing the Israelites and the other set for the Egyptians, together on one side of the cloth. Invite children to sit in a circle around the cloth or paper and the items. Tell children that today's story is about the Israelites (*point to the Israelite items*) and the Egyptians (*point to the Egyptian items*). Explain that the blue cloth or paper is the Red Sea. Read aloud the adapted Bible story from Exodus 15:1–21 from Resource Page 2 (ignoring the underlined words on this first reading of the story). Pause when needed and move the blocks and the cloth to show the children what is happening in the story.

Invite the children to make the following sounds and actions as you read the story again:

- When you say “Israelites,” they hold their hands together in prayer and look up to God.
- When you say “Moses,” they hold one fist in the air and say, “A prophet of God.”
- When you say “Miriam,” they hug themselves and say, “Moses’ sister.”
- When you say “Red Sea,” they make noises like flowing water.
- When you say “horses,” they make the sound of a horse neighing.
- When you say “all the people,” they clap and cheer.

Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- ➔ Why do you think Moses and Miriam are so happy?
- ➔ How does God help them be happy?
- ➔ They sing a song to God when they are happy. What do they sing? (*It may be helpful to read the lines of the song one at a time and have the children repeat each line.*)
- ➔ When you are happy, what do you want to say to God?

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- Two strips of blue cloth or blue construction paper
 - Two different colored sets of items, such as blocks, crayons, or balls of play dough
 - Resource Page 2



FINDING THE PRACTICE ALL AROUND US

Choose one or both options.

TALK TO THE MUSICIANS

M X

Meet with one or more musicians in the sanctuary, choir room, or your space. Introduce them to your group and have the musician(s) introduce the musical instruments used in worship services to the children. Have the musicians show the children the instruments and demonstrate how they are used in worship, and particularly the *happy* sounds that the instruments can make. If time permits, invite the children to sing a song they know while accompanied by one or more of the musical instruments.

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- Musicians and a variety of musical instruments

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- Drums and/or common items that can be used as a drum, such as wooden spoons and buckets or oatmeal containers



This activity can be loud. Make sure children are in a space where they will not disturb others. For a quieter version, use body percussion instead of instruments, such as claps, pats, stomps, and taps.

DRUM CIRCLE



Give each child a drum or something that can be used as a drum. Have the children sit in a circle with their instrument. Tell the children that, in many parts of the world, people use drums to tell each other how they feel. Explain that they do this by copying one another's drum beat. Play a beat that feels happy. Keep the number of strikes to a minimum so that young children can imitate it and play it back. Then create a rhythm by playing that beat on your drum three to five times. After you play it for them, have them all play the rhythm together. If you would like, you can add words to your strikes, such as "I - am - hap-py."

After children understand the activity and have practiced beats and rhythms, invite a volunteer to share their happy rhythm. Listen to their strikes and then have everyone echo them. Continue until everyone who wants to lead has had a turn. Comment that one way we can express feelings is through music and that God gave us all the ability to make music. Suggest that we can praise God and celebrate our joy by making music.



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

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- Prepared small plastic plates
 - Single-hole punch
 - Six ribbons per person, cut in 4" lengths
 - Six jingle bells per person
 - Resource Page 2



Talk with a music or worship leader about having the children play their tambourines during a hymn in worship.

MAKING A TAMBOURINE



Remind children that Miriam played the tambourine in today's story while the Israelites sang, danced, and rejoiced with happiness. Tell the children that they are going to make tambourines so that they can make joyful music and play the tambourine like Miriam. Give each child a plastic plate with six holes punched around the outside, six pieces of ribbon, and six jingle bells. Show the children how to string one jingle bell on a piece of ribbon and tie that ribbon through a hole on the plastic plate. Have them repeat tying their jingle bells in the rest of the holes around their plates. Assist with stringing and tying as necessary. When the children have finished, invite them to shake or tap the plate like they were playing a tambourine. Repeat the chant at the end of the adapted Bible story on Resource Page 2 a few times while children play their tambourines. Invite them to chant with you as the words become familiar.

Wonder together what words they might say when they are happy or joyful. Invite the children to create a chant and use their tambourines with some of the suggestions. Encourage the children to use their tambourines or make music in other ways to express joy.

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- Copies of Resource Page 3
 - Craft sticks
 - Crayons or color pencils
 - Scissors
 - Tape
 - Music player or internet-connected device

CRAFT-STICK DANCERS



Provide copies of Resource Page 3. Invite the children to color one of the figures as them and the other one as a friend or family member with whom they might share happy times. When they are finished coloring, have them cut out the figures. Assist with cutting as needed. Provide craft sticks and have the children tape their figures to a craft stick like a puppet, leaving about half of the craft stick below the figure as a handle.

Invite the children to share a happy time that they have had or might have with the second figure they colored. Encourage the children to bounce the figures around so that they are dancing. After everyone has had a chance

to share and dance, play upbeat music and have a joyful dance party. Tell the children that singing and dancing are always a good idea when we are feeling joy. Comment that, when we sing and dance, God knows that we are happy.



FOLLOWING JESUS

GOD IS OUR SONG



Have children stand in a circle. Tell the children that you are going to do an eyes-open prayer that has motions. Invite them to repeat your words and motions as you pray:

Dear God, / (*fold hands*)

We sing to you when we are glad, / (*make the thumbs-up sign*)

and we sing to you when we are sad. / (*make the thumbs-down sign*)

As we grow, / (*squat down into a ball and then grow, standing up*)

we can always sing / (*cup hands around mouth and move them outward*)

a song about God's new thing, / (*stretch arms out and spin in a circle*)

God is with me, / (*point to self*)

and God is with you. / (*point to others*)

God is with us in all that we do. / (*reach high standing on tiptoes*)

God is always a part of our song, / (*draw a circle in the air with both arms from top to bottom*)

because with God, we always belong. / (*hug arms across chest*).

Amen. / (*fold hands*)

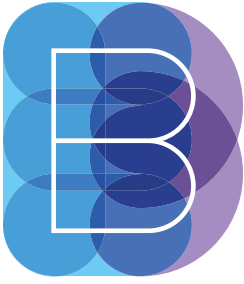
Sing a New Song

Tune: BUNESSAN (“Morning Has Broken”)

Lyrics: © 2022 David Gambrell

1. Sing liberation! God is our savior.
To our redeemer we all belong.
Blessing and honor, glory and power.
God is our savior! Sing a new song.
2. Sing tribulation! God will deliver.
Cry out in sorrow; name what is wrong.
Blessing and honor, glory and power.
God will deliver! Sing a new song.
3. Sing transformation! God does a new thing.
Lift up the lowly, humble the strong.
Blessing and honor, glory and power.
God does a new thing! Sing a new song.
4. Sing new creation! God reigns forever.
We have been hoping, praying so long.
Blessing and honor, glory and power.
God reigns forever! Sing a new song.





BIBLE STORY

BASED ON EXODUS 15:1–21

Long, long ago, God's people were called the Israelites. They worshiped and loved God. They were living in Egypt, but the Egyptians and their king (who was called a pharaoh) treated the Israelites very badly. The Egyptians made the Israelites work hard. The Israelites prayed to God, and God heard their cries.

God sent Moses to help the Israelites get out of Egypt and go to a new land. Moses and his sister Miriam went to Egypt and gathered all of the Israelites together. They packed up and got ready to leave. It wasn't easy. The pharaoh kept changing his mind, but finally he let them leave. They began walking. As they were walking, the Egyptians got on their horses and rode fast behind the Israelites.

The Israelites came to the Red Sea. The Egyptians were getting closer on their horses. The Israelites were stuck between the Egyptians on their horses coming toward them and the Red Sea in front of them. But God had another idea. God told Moses to lift up his staff over the Red Sea. When Moses lifted his staff, the Red Sea separated, and the Israelites walked across on the dry land that was under the Red Sea. God, however, did not want the Egyptians to follow the Israelites across the Red Sea, so the waters crashed down and the Israelites were safe on the other side.

When the Israelites were on the other side of the Red Sea, Moses, Miriam, and all the people were happy! They felt joy! Because they were so happy, they sang a song of praise to God. Miriam played her tambourine while everyone sang.

God is mighty and strong,
God is with us all day long.
God led us through the sea
to get away from our enemy.
To God we will sing our praise
for God loves us in many ways.

