

Earth and All Stars

Our 2021 Vacation Church Camp is an intergenerational camp experience based on the hymn (412) *Earth and all Stars*. Each day, we'll engage in a Bible story, science experiment and art reflection related to a verse of the song. God has done marvelous things! We see those things all around us – not just in church but in the stars, in music, in math, in medicine and in prayer.

At the Chapel of the Cross, we give [The Children's Illustrated Bible](#) by Selina Hastings to second graders so many families have this bible at home. It has fun facts and historical notes but the daily stories can be found in any bible. If you would like to buy a copy of [The Children's Illustrated Bible](#), it's worth investing in the larger (262 mm x 205 mm) edition.

MONDAY (Astronomy, stargazing)

*Earth and all stars, Loud rushing planets
Sing to the Lord a new song!
O Victory, loud shouting army
Sing to the Lord a new song!*

*God has done marvelous things.
I too will praise him with a new song!*

For more than a year, we've stayed close to home. Trips were cancelled; travel seemed perilous. But now we're imaging far-off places and what it might be like to visit some place new. Can you imagine what it was like for Abram and Sarai when God told them to leave their home in Ur for a new land? They were accustomed to life in Ur. Now God was sending them to some place unfamiliar. Abram and Sarai looked at the night sky, at the glittering stars. The stars would still shine in the new land. Maybe that gave them the faith to move, knowing that the stars – and more importantly, God - would be with them wherever they were. They rolled their tents and packed their camels and called their relatives to join them as they set off for the unknown. But there is more to this story...

Abram and Sarai wanted a child very badly. They thought they were too old to have one of their own. But God told Abram that one day Abram would be the father of many nations. His descendants would number more than all the stars in the sky. So when Abram looked at the stars, he saw God's wonderful work but he also saw the possibility of something new. When Abram and Sarai were settled in the land of Canaan, God told Abram to change his name to Abraham. God said Sarai should change her name to Sarah. The old couple was in a new land with new names and new dreams – but they still did not have a child.

One day, three strangers appeared. Abram welcomed them and offered them water to wash and food to eat. The strangers said that Sarah would give birth to a baby. That seemed absurd! Preposterous! It seemed so silly that Sarah laughed. But God told Sarah he could do marvelous things. Just look at the stars and you'll know that to be true.

Bible Story: Abraham and Sarah

- Genesis 15:5
- “Abram’s Journey” on p. 32 in [The Children’s Illustrated Bible](#)
- You can watch the Godly Play story [The Great Family](#) on YouTube.

Science:

You make constellation covers for a flashlight using [these simple directions](#) from PBS Kids.

Art: [Create a solar system from river rocks](#)

Our solar system contains earth and other planets, stars (including the biggest one, the sun), moons, asteroids, meteors and comets. Using black rocks and paint pens, make some planets and stars.

Supplies for Monday:

Flashlight (with a 1.75 – 2 inch light opening)

Thin cardboard

Scissors, glue

Large embroidery needle or thumb tack - preferably one that is sharp enough to pierce paper but not skin!

Black river rocks (approximately 2-3 inches)

Non-toxic paint pens

TUESDAY (Music)

Trumpet and pipes! Loud clashing cymbals!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud humming cellos!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.

I too will praise him with a new song!

David was a shepherd boy who loved to sing. He probably sang to his sheep! But he also sang to God. When he was older, he wrote new songs to the Lord. (We call them psalms.) And the Lord chose him to be a leader. After the king named Saul died, the tribes of Israel named David their new king. David led the Israelites to the city of Jerusalem, which he thought should be the capital of his kingdom. When they reached the gates of the city (the whole city was surrounded by a wall), they found the gates were locked and they couldn’t get in. Have you ever wanted to do something you couldn’t do? Have you ever wanted to go some place you couldn’t go? David would not give up. He sent some of his men to climb a drainpipe and sneak over the wall. Those men unlocked the gates and the Israelites claimed the city as their own. They carried the Ark of Covenant into the City of Jerusalem and celebrated with song. They blew trumpets and beat tambourines and they danced to

the music. Even King David took off his royal robes and danced. When has music made you dance? When have you sung a song especially for God?

Bible Story: David

- 1 Samuel 16:14-23
- “God Chooses David” on p. 116 in [The Children’s Illustrated Bible](#)
- Godly Play [The Story of King David](#) can be watched on YouTube

Science: How We Make Music

There are some simple experiments that show how sounds change based on the sizes of strings, pipes or containers. You’ve probably [played music on glasses of water](#). That’s still fun to do! You can even [play “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”](#) if you measure the water carefully. This can lead to a discussion of *intervals* – the difference in pitch between sounds. We’ll be measuring things tomorrow when we talk about construction. [Measurements and math are part of music](#), too.

Art:

- You can make [coffee can drums](#) with a tin can and a balloon.
- [Popsicle stick xylophones](#) can show how [different sized keys make different sounds](#).

Supplies for Tuesday:

Jars, water glasses or glass Snapple bottles

Metal spoon

Water and optional food coloring

Coffee or soup can

Balloon that - when cut in half - will fit tightly over can opening

Jumbo popsicle sticks

Two thin dowels or sticks

Mini pony beads

Scissors and glue

WEDNESDAY (Building Things)

Engines and steel! Loud pounding hammers

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Limestone and beams, Loud building workers

Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.

I too will praise him with a new song!

The Israelites wanted to build something to honor God. They wanted to build a temple to hold the Ark of the Covenant. (The Ark of the Covenant held the Ten Commandments.) King David was a strong leader but he was not the right person to build the temple. His son Solomon was the person to build the temple but he could not build it alone. It would take many loud building workers to construct a temple in Jerusalem. They built a foundation out of stone. They used cedar from Lebanon which smelled beautiful and was very strong to build the walls. They carved cherubim and palm trees and flowers on the inside and painted the carvings gold. It took many years to hoist the beams and lay the stones and carve the wood. When the temple was finally finished, a cloud filled the space inside and the priests and people knew that God was there.

Bible Story: Building the Temple

- 1 Kings 5-8
- “Solomon’s Temple” in [The Children’s Illustrated Bible](#)
- You can watch [The Ark and the Temple](#) on YouTube.

Science: Measuring things

How big do you think the cedars of Lebanon were? You can [measure a tree](#) using these instructions from the New York Times.

Art: Make temple birdhouses (cedar bluebird houses) or sugar cube temples

The inside walls of the temple were made of cedar with cherubim and palm trees and flowers carved into them. Gold covered the carvings. It was an extraordinary building. You can build your own temple at home by decorating a cedar bluebird house or by building a temple with sugar cubes and tinned icing. If you’re building with sugar cubes, you’ll probably need one box for each temple and a piece of cardboard to serve as a base.

Supplies for Wednesday:

Cloth tape measure

Calculator

Cedar bluebird house, paint, blocks, glue, stamps with angel and palm tree shapes

Sugar cubes

icing

THURSDAY (Faith and medicine)

Classrooms and labs, Loud boiling test tubes

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Athlete and band, Loud cheering people

Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.

I too will praise him with a new song!

The story of Naaman is a story of faith and science. It is also a story of caring for strangers - even strangers who are our political enemies. Naaman was from the land of Aram. He was a general who led Aramean soldiers into Israel to steal treasure and capture Israelites and make them slaves. The King of Aram considered Naaman one of the best generals he had. Naaman helped make the king very rich. But one day Naaman's skin was covered with sores. He had a skin affliction that may have been leprosy or may have been psoriasis but it made Naaman very uncomfortable and afraid. Have you ever had itchy bug bites or poison ivy? Do you remember how frustrated you felt when scratching didn't make them feel better? Naaman felt that way, too. He wondered how he would fight battles if his skin itched and burned. A young servant to Naaman's wife - an Israelite who had been captured and enslaved in Aram - took pity on Naaman and told Naaman's wife that there was a great prophet in Israel named Elisha. Elisha would know what to do. So Naaman took gifts of gold and silver and fancy cloth to the King of Israel, in the hopes that that king would order the prophet to cure him. The king did not know how to cure leprosy and thought Naaman was trying to stir up trouble between the kingdoms of Aram and Israel. But the king received a message from Elisha: send Naaman to me. When Naaman went to Elisha, the prophet sent a servant out to give Naaman a prescription for his sores: wash seven times in the Jordan River. How could it be this easy? Naaman was furious and refused to believe in the prophet's medicine. But a servant asked, "If Elisha had told you to do something hard, you would have done it. Why not do this simple thing?" And so Naaman bathed in the River Jordan. He washed his sores seven times and he was healed. But it was not just his skin that was saved. His faith in God was too. Why would God help him, an enemy of the Israelites? Why would Elisha give him a prescription to ease his pain? Why would the servants encourage him to seek medical help when he was not their friend?

Bible Story: Naaman

- II Kings 5.
- "Elisha and Naaman" in [The Children's Illustrated Bible](#)
- There is no Godly Play story for this Scripture passage. [What materials might you use to tell the story?](#) What parts of the story might you leave out and still have all the story you need?

Science: We wash with water and soap to stay healthy and to stop the spread of germs. This visual shows how soap causes dirt and germs to "run" away. Pour about ½ cup of water into a pie plate or shallow bowl. Sprinkle a large amount of black pepper on the water. Dilute some liquid soap with water - about 1:1. Use an eye dropper to drop a few drops of soap into the pepper and watch the pepper retreat.

You can do a similar [experiment with milk, food coloring and dish soap](#). No sneezing from the pepper with this one!

Art: Chemistry with pennies <https://www.thoughtco.com/chemistry-fun-with-pennies-602055>

Science sometimes feels like magic! This experiment shines pennies but you could also purchase a rock tumbler and polish rocks. Kids really enjoy washing the leaves of house plants, too. Provide a plant with sturdy leaves (like a [Peace Plant](#)), a spray bottle or mister and a soft cloth or sponge.

Supplies for Thursday:

Pie pan, measuring cups and spoons

Eye dropper

Pepper

Dull pennies

White vinegar

Salt

Two clean steel screws or nails (if you want to “copper plate” them with a verdigris technique)

Water

bowl

Sponges

Tempura or water-based paint

Paintbrush or Q-Tip

FRIDAY (Praying)

Knowledge and truth, Loud sounding wisdom

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Daughter and son, Loud praying members

Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.

I too will praise him with a new song!

Daniel was a prophet. He could understand God’s messages in other people’s dreams. He could see God’s word in the mysterious writing on the King of Babylon’s wall. He had such an important gift of understanding that the Median king named Darius made Daniel a high official. The other, lesser officials were jealous. They wanted to get Daniel out of their way. So they asked King Darius to make a law forbidding people from praying to anyone but the King. Anyone who disobeyed would be thrown to the lions. But Daniel loved God and prayed despite the law. He prayer in front of an open window where anyone could see him. Darius liked Daniel. He did not want to throw him to the lions. But Darius had been tricked into issuing a law that he must follow. He hoped that Daniel’s God would save him but he did not have much hope. He spent the night sick with worry. In the

morning, the lion's den was opened and Daniel was there, untouched by the fierce beasts. Daniel said an angel had protected him during the night. God had never left him alone.

Bible Story: Daniel in the Lion's Den

- Daniel 6
- "Daniel in the Lion's Den" on p. 166 of [The Children's Illustrated Bible](#)
- You can watch [Daniel and the Lion Den](#) on YouTube.

Science: Make [Invisible Ink](#) and imagine the words that mysteriously appeared on the walls of the Babylonian palace.

This is a prelude to the story of the lion's den. Daniel's story is long; it fills a whole book in the Bible! So let's back up to the beginning of the book. The first king of Babylon to ask for Daniel's help was named Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was a Judean who had been captured by the Babylonians. This was a warring time - a time when kingdoms would invade each other, steal land and treasure and capture each other's people. Daniel might have been put to death but he had a remarkable gift. He was able to explain people's dreams, including the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar. Another king, Belshazzar, asked for Daniel's help, too. Belshazzar was having a party. He had the royal table set with gold and silver cups that had been stolen from the temple in Jerusalem. Remember that Daniel was from Judea. To see the temple cups used for raucous toasts would have been horrifying. But Belshazzar and his friends poured wine into the cups and laughed and joked. As the party grew louder and more boisterous, a ghostly hand appeared and began writing on the wall. The king was afraid. He did not understand the words. No one understood them. The queen said to fetch the prophet Daniel. He would know what the words meant. He did. He told the king that his days were numbered. The king would die and his kingdom would be divided between the Medes and the Persians. That is what happened. Belshazzar died and Darius, the king of the Medes, took his part of the kingdom.

How do you think Daniel was able to see things so clearly? How was he able to center himself and focus? Daniel was able to understand the meaning of people's dreams. He was able to read the writing on the wall. He was able stay calm during a night spent with lions! Many people find peace in prayer. There are lots of ways to pray! Some people pray quietly. Some pray while dancing or moving through body prayers. Some people pray while singing!

If you want to try praying quietly, you can try some breath prayers. You might choose one of the rocks you painted on Monday to hold as you pray. Remember that God created the earth and all stars. He created you! You are part of Creation! Thich Nhat Hanh recommends breath prayers for kids in his book [A Handful of Quiet](#). Try breathing in with the word "earth." "I am grounded on the earth." Breath out with the word "stars." "I am as bright as the stars." God has done marvelous things!

If you want to try praying while you move, you could try saying the [Lord's Prayer](#) with movements. Or you could try some simple [yoga](#) poses.

If you want to pray while you sing, sing *Earth and All Stars* – Hymn 412 in the 1982 Hymnal. Sing loudly! Sing jubilantly! Sometimes, wisdom is quiet. Sometimes, wisdom is **loud**. Sometimes prayer is loud, too! You can learn more about sound amplification [here](#). Here's something to think about, though: silence is part of sound. Or as someone (the quote has been attributed to Dizzy Gillespie and Claude Debussy) said, Music is the space between the notes. We need silence and sound, music and prayer.

Art: If you like the breath meditations, you can [make a small bag](#) to hold your solar system rocks. Then when you want a rock to hold while you practice breath prayers, you'll know where the rocks are! If you enjoy yoga, you could [paint a yoga mat](#) with the earth and all stars. And if you want to sing, you can [make a megaphone](#)

Supplies for Friday:

Paper

Lemon juice

Paint brush or Q-Tip

Hot iron or lightbulb

Megaphones

Stickers