

Thanksgiving

Circle Time

During this time welcome children, open in prayer, review the Bible verses, and sing songs! This is the time of preparation for getting our hearts and minds ready to learn about and worship God 😊

Prayer

Thank You God for This Day
Helping me to Learn and Pray,
Please Be with Me All Day Long,
In Every Story, Game, and Song.
May All the Happy Things We Do,
Make You Our Father Happy Too!

Bible Verse: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever. -Psalm 136:1

Activity Time

During this time you may do as many of the activities listed below as you would like. Let the Spirit direct this special teaching time!

Story: (What do we thank God for?)

Look around your home and choose a few items that represent some of the blessings you are thankful for. Consider photos of family and pets, or items that represent a hobby, a food you love, or anything else at all! Put these items in a basket/box and cover them with a cloth.

Have a child come forward and take the cloth off the basket/box to reveal all the wonderful things inside. Next, have children take turns coming into the middle to select one item from the box, show the group, and then go sit down. Let children try and help identify what each item is and/or could represent.

Say: These are some of the blessings I am thankful for. Soon, we will discuss lots of your blessings too.

Ask: There is a holiday especially devoted to giving thanks. Can you tell me which one?

Say: God wants us to be thankful every day for our many blessings, but Thanksgiving is an extra special time for giving thanks!

Say: We are going to do an ABC Story together today, but first to help us get ready let's sing the Alphabet Song together. "Sing A-B-C-D-E-F-G-...." with the children.

Say: It's good you know your alphabet; it is going to help with our story about praises today! I am going to say something that starts with each letter and then together let's say: "Thanks God for _____"

- A- A is for animals
- B- B is for brothers
- C- C is for Christmas
- D- D is for doughnuts
- E- E is for electricity
- F- F is for family
- G- G is for games
- H- H is for homes
- I- I is for ice
- J- J is for jello
- K- K is for kindness
- L- L is for laughter

M- M is for moms
N- N is for neighbors
O- O is for ocean
P- P is for Pastor Clark
Q- Q is for quilts
R- R is for reading
S- S is for sisters
T- T is for Thanksgiving
U- U is for umbrellas
V- V is for vegetables
W- W is for water
X- X is for X rays
Y- Y is for yogurt
Z- Z is for zoos

Song and Movement: Thank You God (to the tune of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star")

Thank you for the world so sweet, (*Make big circle gesture with arms*)
Thank you for the food we eat, (*Pretend to eat food*)
Thank you for the birds that sing, (*Flap wings like a bird*)
Thank you God for everything, (*Hold arms out and spin around*)
Thanks all the way from A to Z, (*reach up to the sky and touch down to the ground*)
For the blessings you've given me. (*Give yourself a hug*)

Thanksgiving Ball

Have children sit on their special spot in a circle. Have a ball ready for this game that is easy to roll across the floor to friends in the circle. Explain that when it is their turn, they are to call out a name of someone in the circle and then roll the ball to them. That person then picks up the ball, say the name of someone or something that he or she is thankful for, and then roll the ball to another person.

To extend this game, you can play by categories such as animals, places, foods, songs, books, etc.

Tree of Thanks

You'll need:
1 dry branch (at least 2 ft. high)
1 quart size mason jar
smooth river stones
decorative moss
12-inch ribbon
metal rim marking tags
pens

Start the Tree of Thanks as a fun Thanksgiving tradition and keep it displayed year-round as a reminder of the many things for which you are thankful.

You can build your own Tree of Thanks by following these steps:

Find a branch that has fallen off a tree in your yard or church and put it in a quart size mason jar.

Then secure it by filling the jar with smooth river stones and top the stones off with decorative moss.

Tie a ribbon around the top of the jar.

Then set out a bowl of metal rim marking tags and pens.

As each family member or child in your ministry thinks of things they are thankful for, write that word on one of the tags and then tie it on to the branch as if it were a leaf.

It's exciting to see the tree branches slowly fill up with "leaves" of thanks!

Thanksgiving Devotion for Kids: Thank-full

Give each child a deflated balloon.

Say: Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate all the awesome things we're thankful for. Let's take turns calling out things we're thankful for. Each time someone names something, add a puff of air to your balloon. Ready?

Let kids name things and add puffs of air to their balloons. After everyone has had a turn, say: Wait, wait, it's my turn! Call out something unpleasant such as, "Getting sick" or "My car broke down."

Say: Hmm, I'm not sure everyone added air for that one. When good things happen we're all full of praise—like our balloons are now. But when bad things happen, it's more like this. Have kids release their balloons, letting them fly everywhere and land deflated.

Ask: Why don't we thank God when bad things happen?

Read aloud Ephesians 5:20. Then ask: Why would God want us to thank him for everything—meaning the good things and bad things? Tell about a time you experienced something good right in the middle of something bad.

Begin by sharing your own story to give kids time to think. For example, you might talk about a time you got a flat tire, but were encouraged by the kindness of someone who helped you.

Say: It's easy to thank God for good things. But we can remember to thank God for hard things because often he can use those bad things for good. Let's fill up our balloons so they're nice and full of our praises—for the good stuff and even the not-so-good stuff. Let kids inflate and tie off their balloons. Help kids tie the balloons as needed.

Lead kids in prayer, thanking God for his blessings of good times and even thanking him for the hard things we face. Then let kids bat the balloons around as a celebration and praise to God.

Coloring

Have children go to the table and sit down to color. As they color continue conversations about what it means to be thankful, what we can be thankful for, how we can praise God, etc. (this is a great time for them to ask questions or talk to each other); also feel free to turn on some music.

*Coloring page included on last page 😊

Closing Time

Prayer Time:

During this time ask the children if there is anything they would like to have prayer for (have conversations about how we can talk to God, like a friend, about anything and he hears us always).

If children need assistance thinking of things try these questions:

What can we thank God for? (family, friends, church, home, food, sunshine, etc)

Who can we pray for? (family, friends, pets, neighbors, our church family, etc)

What do we need God's help with?

*Any other prompts that come to mind

Close in prayer with the children. The volunteer could start and then at the end have everyone say "Thank You God for today; bless all that we think, do, and say. Amen."

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Thank You God
for everything -
for family,
friends
and fun -
But most of all
for Jesus, My Savior
and Your Son.