GIFTED

Scripture tells us that God created and we are made in the image of God. That makes each of us creative! We are also reminded in scripture that we are stewards of those things God has made and given. Our imagination and creative spirit are God’s gift to us. How we use our imagination is our gift to God. *Gifted* is an invitation for children to explore and share their gifts through group study, snacks, games, crafts and more. *Gifted* can be used as a Vacation Bible School, Children’s Ministry Event, or other Faith Formation venue. Remember that gifts are intended for sharing so make sure you find ways to share the creative work of your children as they experience *Gifted*.

**Structure**: Gifted assumes that children will be divided into smaller groups, meeting twice a day. Age specific groups will have an easier time navigating the conversations, although multi-age groups can be used. Groups do not have to meeting at two different times, but the attention span of children should be kept in mind when building a schedule.

There are also components for Snacks, Games, and Crafts. While there is no detailed music plan, there is a theme song with music and lyrics provided. Links for iTunes are also provided to help with presenting the song.

**Curriculum**: Multi-age curriculum includes material for five days with two group gatherings each day. Each day’s material has a theme statement and a set of learning goals. There is also a different scripture each day.

**Story**: Below are recommendations for additional stories to use each day. These are not included in the curriculum, nor are they debriefed. Gifted does not include rights to reproduce these stories. They are simply recommended as additional resources.

 Day 1 *Old Turtle*, by Douglas Wood

 Day 2 *You Are Special*, by Max Lucado

 Day 3 *McElligot’s Pool*, by Dr. Seuss

 Day 4 *I Ain’t Gonna Paint No More*, by Karen Beaumont

 Day 5 *Daisy Head Mayzie*, Dr. Seuss

**Crafts**: Each day’s craft is musically themed, providing a set of rhythm instruments and a prop microphone fit for the lead singer of an air guitar band. You might consider using these instruments in worship after you *Gifted* event comes to an end. They can also be used in some group singing during your event.

**Snack**: All snacks have a crafty element to them as well as a playful side. Playing with our food is more fun and somehow makes it taste even better. Some projects require advance preparation so be sure to look through the directions.

**Games**: Games follow the daily themes and artistic focus. Be sure to leave plenty of time for play in your schedule.

GIFTED

**OVERVIEW**

Day 1 God created and is creative! Genesis 1 and 2

Day 2 God still shapes us! Jeremiah 18: 1-6

Day 3 We can be creators too! 2 Samuel 6: 1-5 / Psalm 150

Day 4 Creating tells God’s story! Exodus 35: 4-29/ 39: 42-43

Day 5 We are all gifted! Ephesians 4: 1-6, 11-13

**SHARING**

Gifts are to be shared! As you use this curriculum, take lots of pictures and share them. Use social media to tell the story of your Church and this special time. Make sure to get permission from parents to use their child’s image, and then let the smiles of the children and the joy of creating pop up everywhere!

**DAILY FOCUS**

**Day 1 God created and is creative! Genesis 1 and 2**

* What does it mean to create or be creative?
* What things do we create? How are we creative?
* All creativity is good… even stick figures!
* Creating Community in our groups

**Day 2 God still shapes us! Jeremiah 18: 1-6**

* We change as we grow
* We learn new things
* God meets us in different ways at different times
* God is present in our changes – growing, learning, moving, adolescents

**Day 3 We can be creators too! Psalm 150**

* We can make things from nothing, in our imagination
* Power of ideas and creativity
* Power of words, music and movement

**Day 4 Creating can tell God’s story! Exodus 35: 4-29/ 39: 42-43**

* People can learn God’s story through our creative art
* Our creativity can be a gift to God- creativity as an offering
* We know God’s story through the creativity of others

**Day 5 We are all gifted! 1 Corinthians 4: 1-6, 11-13**

* Claiming our personal gifts
* Naming the gifts of others
* Encouraging the sharing of gifts through worship and fellowship

**GIFTED -- DAY 1**

**Theme**: God created and is creative!

**Scripture**: Genesis 1 and 2

**Ideas to Explore**:

* What does it mean to create or be creative?
* What things do we create? How are we creative?
* All creativity is good… even stick figures!
* Creating Community in our groups

**Supplies**: Paper plates, large roll of paper or poster board, various colors of paint (some extra green), markers (at least 1 brown), pencil

**1st GATHERING**

**Opening Prayer**

Start each time with a prayer. This will mark your time together. Make sure to begin (and end) each gathering time with prayer. Here are some words if you need them:

*Creator God, thank you for making us and everything we see. Be with us as we learn about your creation. Amen*.

**Growing a Group**

Place a selection of paints in front of you with a paper plate next to them. Ask each person in the group to share their name and choose which paint color is their favorite. As they choose, invite them to squeeze some paint on to the plate (may need to do this for smaller children). Once everyone is introduced, swirl the colors together until well blended. This will make a brownish color (depending on the colors chosen) by the group.

Roll out a long piece of paper or poster board and estimate 1/3 of the space and draw a soft line across. Invite group members to place their hand in the mixed paint, then place their hand on an empty plate to get extra off. Finally, have them make a hand-print along your line with their fingers facing down like tree roots. Make sure to have a wash pan available to clean hands, or an easily accessible sink.

**The Creative Word**

Read Genesis 1 together. For younger groups, you may want to use a Children’s Bible. Pause after each day and ask the group to identify what things were created. You can re-read those verses if needed. On the same paper as the hand prints, write a list of the things God created. Use a large brown marker and center the list in the middle third of the paper. Work upwards from your soft line, stacking words on top of each other.

Give some time to talk about specific parts of creation using the following questions:

* What is your favorite source of light (might need to brainstorm some – stars, flashlight, camp-fire, etc.)?
* What is your favorite use for water (drink, swimming pool, ocean, shower, etc)?
* What is your favorite animal?
* What is your favorite type of plant?

**Playing In Creation**

Place a bottle of green paint and a plate in front of you. Invite each person to come up and share their favorite outdoor activity, then squeeze some green paint into the plate. Once everyone has shared, invite group to make green hand prints all over the top third of your paper to form “leaves.” Remember to have extra plates to wipe off extra paint before placing hands onto the paper. The green hand-prints should help define the first set of hand-prints as “roots” and your list as a “tree trunk.” Make sure to repeat your hand-washing process. Invite all members of the group to write their name around the outside of the tree in different colors of markers. Once the paint dries, you can hang it in your gathering space.

**Playing Creator**

Give each member of the group a piece of paper and invite them to imagine they are helping God create a new animal. Ask them to draw their animal on the paper. Once everyone is done drawing, ask them to introduce their animal to the group and share what sound it makes. You can also ask them to share where such an animal might live, eat, and how it might sleep. Once everyone has shared, ask the group, “How do you think God came up with all the plants and animals we have today?”

Keep these drawings or post them around the room. They will be used on Day 2.

**Closing Prayer**

Remember to close every gathering time with prayer. Here are some words if you need them:

*Lord, you designed, build and decorated the world. We give thanks that we were a part of that awesome project! Amen.*

**2nd GATHERING**

**Opening Prayer**

Remember to open every gathering with prayer. Here are some words if you need them:

*Amazing God, open our eyes to see all the things you have made. Open our imagination to see all the things you call us to make. Amen.*

**Creative about Creativity**

Write “CREATIVE” on a marker board or large sheet of paper with the letters stacked down the left side with C at the top and E at the bottom. Ask the group to come up with a word for each letter that helps explain what the word “creative” means. If they can’t think of a work, the can make up a word! Now, that is creative! You can also have more than one word per letter if needed.

Next to this work, make a list of ways that people share their creativity. You can start by putting “painting” on the list because they have already done that together. Encourage them to think of different art forms such as sculpture, dance, storytelling, photography, poetry, drawing, etc. Don’t exclude “creative” answers. We want to affirm creativity in all places. A child that plays basketball may be creative with their moves. A child that swims is creating a wake behind them. Ask the group which of these they are good at or enjoy doing.

**Story Time**

Point to Storytelling on your list and ask the group what makes a really good story. Ask them what kind of stories they like to hear and if the person telling it makes a difference. Affirm that telling a story is a real gift. Explain that the Bible was started by storytellers who shared the stories with children, year after year until paper was invented.

Read Genesis 2: 4- 25 together. For younger children you may want to use a children’s Bible. Ask the group what they like best about this story, and how it might be different from the version we read earlier in the day.

Invite the group to take turns reading verses 15-17 using different “moods” or “styles” when the read the words God’s lines about what to eat. You can let them be creative but be prepared to suggest some ideas in case they need some prompting. Some fun options might be: angry, overly happy, British accent, Southern accent, or well-known characters (Elmo, Sponge Bob, Darth Vader). Finally, ask them how they would read it if they were sharing this scripture in a time of worship.

**Story Brainstorm**

Ask the kids to share their favorite Bible stories. Make a list where everyone can see it. Don’t stop to go tell the stories. Just get enough words on the page to know which story you are talking about. For example, “Moses” is vague but “Moses and burning bush” gives us the specific story. Some stories are much longer than others. Joseph is many books long whereas Elisha and the two bears (this is a real story. Look it up if you don’t know it!) is very short. Don’t worry about making too long of a list. The kids will be working off of this list all week long. Keep this list somewhere safe, or copy the list onto a piece of paper you can keep for later.

**Story Alive**

Invite the kids to pick one of the characters from the stories listed and come up with a motion to show what that character might do. David could be swinging a sling, or playing a harp. Disciples could be fishing. Miriam could be dancing. Invite everyone to share their character and motion with the group, then invite them to take turns copying each other’s motions. Finally, call out the names of each child and see if the group can remember and repeat their character motion.

**Story Creation**

Gather everyone together for a story, and hold a blank booklet make of 5 pieces of paper folded in half. If you can, put a staple in the middle. Ask the group to answer the following questions to make the story. As they answer the questions, write their answers on the appropriate page. Close the book and say, “The End” after the last question. When you are done, remove the staple and divide up the pages. Challenge them to draw pictures to illustrate the story they just created.

***Questions:***

This story is about two children. What are their names? (write on p. 1)

Each is afraid of something different. What are they each afraid of? (write on p.2)

One day the visited \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for a sleep-over. Where did they go? (write on p. 3)

That night, they were in each other’s dreams! What were they wearing? (write on p. 4)

Each saw the other facing their fear! How scared were they? (write on p. 5)

The first child made the other feel better by doing what? (write on p. 6)

The second child made the other feel better by doing what? (write on p. 7)

When they woke up, they looked at each other. What did they say? (write on p. 8)

After that night, how did their fears change? (write on p. 9)

Say, “The end” and close the booklet.

Encourage them to think about how they might illustrate the stories they listed from the Bible and let them know there will be chances to do just that over the next few days.

**Closing Prayer**

Remember to close every gathering time with prayer. Here are some words if you need them:

*Creator God, you have made such awesome things, including us and our creativity! Help us use our creativity to keep imagining, creating and doing new things. Amen.*