



Sample 2: A session for a group from an evangelical church just starting out with Diddy Disciples.

Jesus' Wonderful Love unit: week 1

Welcome

Welcome your group.

Let's start by going round the circle and saying our name out loud.

My name's _____.

Go round the circle so that every adult and child has the chance to say his or her name (and introduce any dolls, teddies or toys). If any of the children don't want to say their name or aren't able to, you (or a parent or carer) could say it for them and wave. It's time to sing our Welcome Song!

This Welcome and Welcome Song remain the same every week.

Welcome Song: Option 1

Song: 'The Diddy Disciples welcome song'. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby
Tune: 'Glory, glory, alleluia!' (traditional). For the music see p. 259, or for a taster see the Diddy Disciples website.

Go around the circle the same way as above. See if you can remember each other's names and insert them into the song.

- Welcome Name 1 to-o Christ Church!
- Welcome Name 2 to-o Christ Church!
- Welcome Name 3 to-o Christ Church!
- You are welcome in the name of the Lord!

Introducing the Unit: Option 1

Starting this week, we're going to tell some of the amazing stories that Jesus told. Lots of these stories are about how much Jesus loves us.

Gathering Song: Option 1

Song: 'Look how much Jesus loves me!' Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby
Tune: 'Here we go Looby Loo' (traditional). For the music, see p. 33 or Book 1.

High - er than the stars. Deep- er than the sea.

Wi- der than the sky... Look how much Je - sus loves me!

Let's show how much Jesus loves us with our bodies!

Let's stretch up as high as we can to the stars . . .

'Higher than the stars!'



Now down as low, low, low as we can . . .

'Deeper than the sea!'

And now let's stretch out as wide as we can . . .

'Wider than the sky!'

Let's make a big shape with our body!

Bigger! Even bigger!

'Look how much Jesus loves me!'

Let's sing our song about how much Jesus loves us.

Higher than the stars! *Stretch up on tiptoes and reach high with 'twinkle' hands*

Deeper than the sea! *Crouch down and reach low, rippling fingers like water*

Wider than the sky! . . . *Stand and stretch arms out*

You may find it helpful to pause at this point each time to remind the children to make a 'big shape' with their body: 'Big Shape!'

Look how much Jesus loves me! *Big shape*

Jesus doesn't just love us

when we're calm and well behaved!

Jesus loves us all the time!

Either: invite the children to choose which feelings they'd like to explore.

How are you feeling today?

Or: Let's all be cross! Can you show me cross?

Lead the children in singing along with their chosen facial expression and action.

Example:

When I'm feeling cross! *Cross action and face*

When I'm feeling cross! *Cross action and face*

When I'm feeling cross! . . . *Cross action and face*

Look how much Jesus loves me! *Big shape*

Repeat for different feelings, inviting the children to explore a range of positive and negative emotions. For instance:

When I'm feeling happy . . .

When I'm feeling sad . . .

When I'm feeling surprised . . .

When I'm feeling scared . . .

When I'm feeling excited . . .

When I'm feeling lonely . . .

When I'm feeling poorly . . .

You may like to end with:

So many different feelings!

Yawn. I'm feeling tired after all that. Are you?

Can you show me tired?

Let's all go to sleep and sing again.

This time at the end we won't make our big shape.

Let's fall fast asleep instead . . .

When I'm feeling tired,

when I'm feeling tired,

when I'm feeling tired,

look how much Jesus loves me! *Yawn*

This Gathering Song remains the same throughout the six-week unit. The group has no imaginative aids yet and so they make up body actions together for the song.

Sing more reflectively while still miming falling asleep. Slow down towards the end as if going to sleep at night.

Higher than the stars!

Deeper than the sea!

Wider than the sky!

Look how much Jesus loves me . . .

End with a moment of sleepy silence

Interactive Bible Storytelling: Jesus' Wonderful Love, week 1

Luke 15.3-7

Song: 'The lost sheep song'. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

Tune: 'Little Bo Peep' (traditional). For the music see p. 54, or for a taster see the Diddy Disciples website.



Search -ing and search - ing ev - 'ry where! Re - ady with my shep -herd's crook.



What is that mo - ving o - ver there? Let's tip - toe and ta - ke a look!

If you're using the What's in the Box? option (p. 221): invite one of the children to open the box.

Inside could be a toy sheep, or a picture of a sheep.

What's in the box? Ask the child to respond.

All groups:

Today's story is all about a sheep and a shepherd.

What's a shepherd?

Invite one of the children to explain.

A shepherd is someone who looks after sheep.

To be a shepherd we need a crook! *Hold up imaginary crook*

A crook is like a big stick that shepherds use.

Can you pick your crook up and hold it?

Lead the children in picking up crook.

It's got a curly end *Indicate curly end*

to hook around the sheep's neck

and pull them away from danger.

Let's hook our sheep with our crook.

Lead the children in pretending to hook a sheep and pull it.

To tell our story we need to learn a song.

It goes like this.

Can you say these words after me?

'My turn' *point to self*, 'your turn' *leader's hands out to group*

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking.*

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking.*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep.*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep.*

This storytelling is the only part of the session that changes every week.



Let's try those two lines with the tune . . .

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking.*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep.*

Then 'my turn' *point to self*, 'your turn' *leader's hands out to group* again:

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Then we all tiptoe on the spot.

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

Let's try that all together.

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

We're ready to tell Jesus' story:

There was a shepherd . . .

We're the shepherd and we have a hundred sheep!

We've counted all our sheep in groups of ten.

Now we need to count our last group of ten on our fingers.

Let's count together.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 . . . *Count on fingers.*

Gasp. Where's the last sheep? It's gone!

Let's try counting the last ten again . . .

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 . . . *Count on fingers.*

Gasp. Oh no! The last sheep is gone!

The last sheep is a Lost Sheep!

What do we need to do?

We need to find the Lost Sheep!

Let's get up.

Let's pick up our shepherd's crook and let's go!

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise to a place in the circle*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

Do you think the sheep might be in this log pile?

Point to an imaginary log pile.

Let's have a look . . .

Lead the children in peering inside the imaginary log pile in front of them.

I can see . . .

a SNAKE!

Tssss!! *Lead the children in making the action and sound of a snake.*

That's not my sheep! *Shake head and look surprised*

We need to keep on looking . . .



Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise to another part of the circle*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

Something's moving in that river! *Point to an imaginary river*

I hope the Lost Sheep hasn't fallen in!

Let's go and see.

Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . *On the spot.*

Lead the children in peering into an imaginary river in front of them.

I can see . . .

If the children interrupt you with their own idea of an animal, you could always use what they 'see' instead, here and elsewhere in the story.

a CROCODILE!

Snap! Snap! Snap!

Lead the children in making the action and sound of a crocodile.

That's not my sheep! *Shake head and look a bit scared.*

We need to keep on looking . . .

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise to another part of the circle*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

Look! There's something moving in that tree over there.

Can sheep climb trees? *Look confused*

At least it won't be a crocodile.

Crocodiles can't climb trees!

Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . *On the spot*

Let's climb the tree . . . up and up and up . . .

Lead the children in climbing up into an imaginary tree then peering through the branches.

What do you think it is? . . .

I can see . . .

AN OWL! *Or one of the children's choice of animals.*

Lead the children in making the action and sound of an owl, or the child's choice of other animal.

Twit twoo! Twit twoo! Twit twoo!

That's not my sheep! *Shake head*

We need to keep on looking . . .

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*

Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*

What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise to another part of the circle*

Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*

Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot

There's something moving in that tall grass.

Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . *On the spot*

I can see . . .

A LION! *Or a child's choice of animal*

Roar! Roar! Roar!



That's not my sheep! *Shake head*
We need to keep on looking . . .
This is getting a bit scary!

Searching and searching everywhere. *Hand sheltering eyes, looking*
Ready with my shepherd's crook. *Get ready to hook a sheep*
What is that moving over there? *Point in surprise to another part of the circle*
Let's tiptoe and take a look! *Tiptoe on the spot*
Spoken in rhythm: tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . . Tiptoe on the spot.

Can you see that dark cave over there? *Point*
Shall we go and have a look in there?
It's a bit scary! *Look scared*

Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe . . .

I can see . . .

Sound as if it's hard to make out what it is.

Two black, blinking eyes . . .

A little white, waggly tail . . .

What do you think it is?

Accept the children's responses, but this time you will be finding the Lost Sheep, so continue with the following words:

Let's see . . . it's the Lost Sheep!

We've found the Lost Sheep!

The shepherd picks up the Lost Sheep.

Let's pick it up ever so carefully.

The shepherd puts it gently on his shoulders.

Let's put the sheep on our shoulders, very, very gently.

Now let's carry it back safely to its flock and family.

Lead the children in tiptoeing on the spot, still carrying the sheep.

Back past the lion!

Roar! Roar! Roar!

Back past the owl!

Twit twoo! Twit twoo! Twit twoo!

Back past the crocodile!

Snap! Snap! Snap! I don't like crocodiles!

Back past the snake!

Tssss! Tssss! Tssss!

At last, we're back home.

The Lost Sheep is a Found Sheep!

How do you think the little Lost Sheep feels?

Can you show me?

Shall we try counting the last ten sheep again on our fingers?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10!

Ten sheep! How do you think the shepherd feels?

Can you show me?

Jesus said, That's how God feels when God finds you!

Joyful and happy!

Let's sit down for a moment and close our eyes.

I wonder whether you ever feel like the Lost Sheep?

Jesus said, even when you feel lost,

even when you feel like you're in a dark place,



Jesus will come searching for you.
Jesus will find you and carry you gently home.

Let's imagine Jesus coming to us now.
Let's imagine Jesus picking us up gently and carrying us home.

Invite the children to open their eyes again.
Can you show me again your face when you found the Lost Sheep?
That's how God feels when God finds you!

Thank You, God: Option 1

Song: 'My hands were made for love'. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby
Tune: 'Hickory, dickory, dock' (traditional). For the music, see p. 262, or for a taster see the Diddy Disciples website.

Invite the children to sit in a circle for a moment of quiet.
It's time to remember all the things we've done this week.

It's time to say 'thank you' to God
for when we've been part of showing God's love.

Let's wiggle our fingers!
I wonder when you've shown love
with your hands this week?

Wiggle fingers as you sing.
My hands were made for love!
My hands were made for love!
Thank you for the love they've shown.
My hands were made for love!

Let's wiggle our feet!
I wonder when you've shown love
with your feet this week?

Wiggle feet as you sing.
My feet were made for love!
My feet were made for love!
Thank you for the love they've shown.
My feet were made for love!

Let's put our hands gently on our neck.
Let's sing 'Ahhh!' **Ahhhhh!**
Can you feel your throat vibrating and dancing?
I wonder when you've shown love
with your voice this week?

Hold your neck and feel your voice 'dancing' as you sing.
My voice was made for love!
My voice was made for love!
Thank you for the love it's shown.
My voice was made for love!

For the first few weeks, the group don't use the 'Thank You, God' Building Block. But once the children and leaders are feeling confident, they plan to introduce it.

This time of prayer remains the same for at least six weeks and can be used for any unit. There are different Prayer Building Blocks available.

Creative Response

Print & Go: Invite the children to make their own sheep: as a puppet, part of a picture or collage, a necklace, a card, or anything they like. *Provide sheep template (p. 265 or website), pencils/crayons, etc. If you have cotton wool, lollipop sticks/straws/pipe cleaners, glue, and any other collage materials (p. 255), make these available too.*

As this group are used to using print-and-go style material with their young children, they choose this option to begin with, as well as providing paper and pencils that the children can use however they wish and a table for playdough.

For the sensory explorers, the group provides some plastic sheep from a farm set, along with building bricks. In time, they plan to add to their resources for sensory explorers.

Diddy Disciples books provide a wide range of starter ideas for each week & unit, including print-and-go material.

Sharing God's Peace: Option 1

Song: 'I've got peace like a river' (traditional). Isaiah 66.12, niv

Tune: Traditional. For a taster, see the Diddy Disciples website. For tips on teaching songs for the first time, see p. 215.

Hold one end of the peace cloth (see Guide, p. 231) and ask one of the older children or an adult to hold the other end. Start singing the Peace Song. As the children begin to gather, invite them to join in holding a small section of the cloth, raising and lowering it so it 'flows' like a river as you sing together.

I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

This closing song remains the same for every session. Different Peace songs are available for different