

MARCH 26, 2023



Children's Message

GRIEF • LENT 5 • YEAR A

TODAY'S READINGS

Ezekiel 37:1-14 • Psalm 130 • Romans 8:6-11 • John 11:1-45

Select one of these options to create a children's message to fit kids' interests and gifts and your congregation's size and sanctuary features. You can finish your time together with the prayer.

READ THE STORY

Place a bookmark on page 366 in the Whirl Story Bible. Hand each kid a tissue before you read the story and ask kids to wave their tissue whenever someone in the story cries. Ask kids what they considered to be the saddest parts of the story, and tell them that one word we use to describe feeling sad is *grief*. Stack all the tissues on page 366 of the Whirl Story Bible, then close it. The Bible is a good place to go to find comfort for our grief.

SEE THE STORY

Our story is about the grief experienced by Mary, Martha, and Jesus when Lazarus died. Churches are often places people go for help and comfort when they are grieving the death of someone they love. Invite your pastor to talk with the kids about what happens at a funeral. What songs are sung, Bible verses read, and promises spoken? Do grieving people feel okay about being sad and crying? Most importantly, ask your pastor what it's like to be with people in times of grief.

SING THE STORY

The story of Jesus and Lazarus is read on the last Sunday of Lent. Holy Week is just ahead, and we will experience more grief-filled stories. This is a good time to sing solemn hymns at church. Teach kids the hymn "Take, O Take Me, as I Am." The simple words and lyrical melody will appeal to children. Older kids will understand the sentiment of bringing our most vulnerable selves to God, as Mary, Martha, and Jesus did in their grief.

SHARE THE STORY

Prepare two glasses of water—one with fresh water and one with enough added salt to make it taste salty. Ask for a volunteer to dip their fingers in each glass to taste the water. Ask which water tastes more like salty tears. Go to the baptismal font with kids and tell them that through this fresh water and God's word, Jesus takes our tears and transforms them into new beginnings.

WONDER ABOUT THE SEASON

Briefly page ahead in the Whirl Story Bible, showing kids the pictures from pages 390–408. I wonder what other sad stories are coming up for Jesus and his followers. I wonder how Jesus feels when we feel sad, like Mary and Martha. I wonder if you were surprised when Jesus cried in the story. I wonder if you usually cry by yourself or with other people. I wonder who comforts you when you feel sad.

SEE THE SEASON

Each week during Lent, you can “walk the road to the cross” with the kids. Place a large roll of brown felt or burlap at your starting point far away from the cross. Unroll it a short distance the first week, and gather at that point with kids to hear the story. The next week, unroll the road a little further. Point out the cross in your worship space, and remind kids that each week during Lent, we get closer to the cross and closer to Easter. Tell kids this week that we are almost at the cross.

PRAYER

Pray for people in the church who are grieving the death of loved ones.



Tear Here