

Family Connections

September 12-October 17



Move-Up Day
Samuel and Saul
St. Francis
Ruth

Family Connections

Unit 1: September 12 – October 17, 2021

Our first unit of the year focuses on the books of 1 Samuel (“first Samuel”) and Ruth in preparation for our next unit on King David. However, we will set one week aside (Oct. 7) to learn more about the lives and lessons of Saints Francis and Clare.

Bible Background

The book of 1 Samuel was written in the time of Israel’s history when judges and priests ruled the nation. Samuel’s mother, Hannah, had been barren for many years. She prayed that, if the Lord would give her a child, she would dedicate the child to the Lord’s service. So, as a young child, Samuel was taken to live in the temple with the priest, Eli. It was here, when Samuel was very young, that the Lord first spoke to him. Eventually, the Israelites clamored for a king. A much older Samuel told the people that the Lord was not pleased that they wanted to be like other nations, but he anointed the Lord’s chosen person Saul to become the first king of Israel. Meanwhile, the book of Ruth tells us about the ancestors of David, the man who would eventually replace King Saul. We hear of Naomi, an Israelite who traveled to Moab with her husband and two sons. Her sons married Moabite women (Ruth and Orpah). In time, her husband and sons died, and Naomi decided to return to her own people in Bethlehem. She urged her daughters-in-law to stay with their families and start new lives for themselves, but Ruth insisted on going with her. Ruth was dedicated to Naomi, and her kindness was rewarded. She married Boaz (a “kinsman redeemer” for her husband’s family) and had a child named Obed. Obed would be the father of Jesse, and Jesse would be the father of David. (Remember the name “Jesse” when we do the Jesse tree in Advent!)

September 12: Jesus Loves Me – This I Know!

- On “Move Up Day” the children will hear the story of Jesus greeting and talking with children.
- Why did the disciples try to stop the children from coming to Jesus?
- Jesus was teaching a group of adults before the children came. How do you think he felt about stopping for the children? (He welcomed them and loved them)
- The adults who were listening to Jesus may have watched while Jesus talked to the children. How do you think it made them feel to see Jesus sitting with all of those children?
- **Do you know that it makes people feel really happy to see children at church?** When the kids go back into church to join their families, people watch and smile. It makes them feel really good to see all the children come in.
- Jesus said, “Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter into it.” What can children teach adults about receiving the kingdom of God?
 - *Children know they need help.*
 - *Children know they do not know everything yet.*
 - *Children are mostly very trusting.*

Sept 19-26: Samuel - “Speak Lord, I’m Listening”

- When Samuel was born his mom and dad loved him very much. But his mother did not forget the promise she had made to God: “If you will give me a baby, I will let him work for you all his life.” When Samuel was still quite young, she took him to the priest to live at the church.
- Do you think this would be scary for Samuel? Do you think his parents would be sad to leave him?

- Samuel and his parents may have been sad, but they knew God had a plan for Samuel's life. Every year Samuel's mom would come and bring him a new robe, maybe on his birthday. They loved seeing each other and were happy they could see each other even once a year.
- The coats show us that Samuel was growing bigger on the outside, but he was also growing inside.
- We grow on the inside as we learn more and more about God. How do you learn about God? (**Talking with your parents, coming to Sunday school, hearing Bible stories, etc.**)
- We grow on the inside when we learn how to **share** and treat others the way we would like to be treated, **obey** God and our parents who love us, **pray** and **listen to God**.
- God calls people of all ages. How do we hear God's voice today? (through prayer, Bible, clergy, teachers, parents, friends)
- How do we know what God wants us to do? (When we open our hearts to God and say, "I'm listening." God's Holy Spirit will guide us and use us to serve him, just like Samuel.

October 3: St. Francis

- This week, we will have a special lesson learning about St. Francis!

Sept 10 and Oct. 7: Ruth - "Where you go I will go"

- Ruth wanted to stay with Naomi, not only because she wanted to take care of her but because she wanted to be like her. Naomi had set a good example! How do you choose the people who you will follow?
- Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz all show us examples of kindness. How can we show kindness and God's love to others?

- Do you think you know when someone is a leader you should trust and follow, and when someone is leading you to do something wrong and setting a bad example?

Additional Objectives

For our third graders and older, the students will be using Bibles. This is their textbook! In the coming weeks, as we split into groups by grade, they will be given their own Bible. They should bring their Bibles to Church School with them each week once they receive them. The following information and skills will be integrated into their lessons:

- The Bible is really a collection of books – like a library. At the back of the children’s Bibles, there is a section called “Special Reader’s Helps.” It contains a diagram that shows the books of the Bible arranged like books on a shelf and grouped into categories. There is also a section called “What’s in the Bible” that provides a brief summary of every book.
- The “Old Testament” or “First Testament” is the first part of the Christian Bible, corresponding to the Hebrew Bible. It recounts the creation of the world and the history of ancient Israel and contains the Psalms and the prophetic books. The “New Testament” begins with the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). These books tell us about Jesus’ life and teachings. The book of Acts tells of the movement of the early church. The New Testament also includes many letters (or *Epistles*) written to guide and encourage the church. The children should be able to confidently distinguish between Old and New Testament texts.
- This fall, the children will be learning a song that will help them to recall the names of the books of the Old Testament.

- The children will also be taught how to locate texts in the Bible. Once they locate a book by name (using the Table of Contents), they will be taught to look for the larger numbers to find the chapters, and the smaller numbers to find the verse. They will learn, for example, that “Ruth 1:16” means “the book of Ruth, chapter one, verse 16”.