



Listen to Him

Goal: To listen to Jesus and to shine with his light.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Luke 9:28-36

There are many layers—and questions—about the story of the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain. The church has seen the story in various lights, focusing often on it as an indication of Jesus' divinity and his status as the second person of the Trinity.

The transfiguration story is a manifestation of Jesus as a surprising Messiah. First-century Jews expected a royal warrior-king Messiah, represented in the Old Testament by David and Solomon. Instead, Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah, representing the Old Testament Law and Prophets. Jesus is transformed, "the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Luke 9:29). A voice reminiscent of the voice at Jesus' baptism proclaims, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (9:35; see 3:22).

The divine sanction is of Jesus as a teacher to whom the disciples should listen and obey (see Deuteronomy 18:15). Jesus proclaims the will of God for him and his followers. By God's grace, we can hear Jesus' words to instruct and guide us. No other source or words can do the same.

The disciples reacted in fear but were reassured by Jesus. Surely they became gripped with gratitude. Through Jesus' words, they—and we—can know God: gratitude, indeed!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

"Listen to me!" "Are you listening?" "Did you hear what I said?" These are familiar questions or directions children hear a lot as they grow up. Parents and teachers want children to grow up knowing how to make good and wise decisions. This is the same desire that God has for all God's children. In this story, we hear God reminding Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus. We all are helped by being reminded to remember the things we have learned from the stories of Jesus.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Can't you just imagine what Peter, James, and John must have been thinking about when they heard God remind them to listen to Jesus? This would be a great way to enter the story with the children. If you had been there and if you heard God remind you to listen to Jesus, what stories would you remember? What do you think is most important to remember about what Jesus did and what he taught? Some children will need help remembering; some will readily recall stories they have heard at church and at home in their Bible storybooks.

*You are the light of the world, O Christ.
Shine in me and through me. Amen.*

Supplies

Music & Melodies
(MM) 2018-2019

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) i-iv, 1, 18, 20

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

e-book or story audio
(see p. vii)

white cloth

white candle

lemon juice, cotton
swab, lamp

Internet-connected
device

YouTube videos of
“Moses” and “Elijah”

Responding

Celebrating

clear plastic cups, ice
cream scoop, vanilla
ice cream, root beer

Praying

meditative music,
SCM 1a

Offering

copies of **Grace Notes**
(GN) 1, baby oil, cotton
balls

Extra Activity

copies of **GN2** and **GN3**

Note: bit.ly web addresses
are case sensitive.

Some SCMs are
used throughout the
quarter. It is a good
idea to keep them in
an envelope or folder
for further use.

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the children arrive, post **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker on a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

For “Preparing to Hear the Story,” use a cotton swab and lemon juice to write “This is my child. Listen to him.” on a sheet of white paper. Set aside to dry.

“Celebrating God’s Grace” and “Offering God’s Grace” require more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing

A B M L

Play “Come Into God’s Presence”—**MM 16**—as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (*name*).” Prompt the response, “And also with you.”

Introduce any newcomers. Be sure that any visitors are paired with buddies who will help them feel a part of your community.

Invite the children to help set the scene. On a table, place a white cloth, a Bible, and a white candle.

Turn on the lamp and let the light bulb heat up for “Preparing to Hear the Story.”

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing.

Show the YouTube videos “Moses” (bit.ly/2IvIVs9) and “Elijah” (bit.ly/2KqGj3G) to introduce or remind children who these important people were. Tell the children that they will hear about Moses and Elijah in today’s story.

Singing

Sing “Come Into God’s Presence”—**MM 16; SCM 18**. Encourage the children to come up with simple movements for the song.

Praying

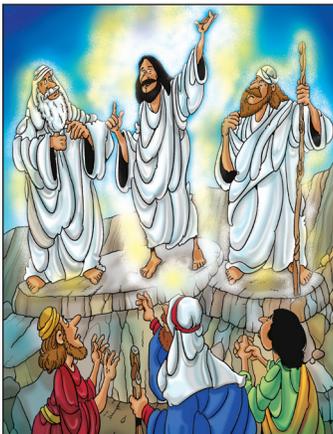
Invite the children to share how their week went and what they are looking forward to in the week ahead. Turn on the candle to signify the light of Christ, shining bright on the day of transfiguration.

Sit in silence for a few moments and then invite the children to repeat the prayer after you, saying the words and doing the motions:

Jesus said, ‘Let anyone who has ears, (*touch both ears*) /
let them hear.’ (*cup hands behind ears*) /
God, help us to listen to your word. Amen. /



The word *transfiguration* describes the moment that Jesus appeared in shining glory before his disciples. It witnesses to Jesus' identity as the Son of God.



- T** Consider how much time your planned activities will take and adjust transition times according to remaining time available.

Preparing to Hear the Story

Explain to the children that today is called Transfiguration Sunday, the last Sunday before the church begins the season of Lent. Wonder what the word *transfiguration* means. Explain that it means a change has taken place: something that changes its appearance but not what it really is. Suggest that the “Transformer” toys are kind of like a transfiguration. Their shape changes, and they may look different, but they are still made of all the same parts.

Show the paper that you prepared with the lemon juice to the children. Explain that it looks like an ordinary piece of paper, but it has an important message. Hold the paper close to a light bulb in a lamp. The heat from the light will transform the invisible message into a message that the children will hear today. Encourage the children to listen for a dramatic change in the Bible story.

Hearing the Story

L

Invite a child to find Luke 9 in the Bible. Place the open Bible on the worship table.

Read **SCM 1**. Use your voice, expressions, feelings, and body to make the story more lively. Vary the tone, speed, and pitch of your voice to indicate changes in mood. Conclude the reading by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt the children to say, “Thanks be to God.”

Distribute paper and crayons or markers and ask the children to illustrate the story as you read it again or use the story audio.

- C** Give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

Reflecting on God's Grace

C

Encourage volunteers to show and discuss their drawings. Discuss:

- ▼ Why do you think Moses and Elijah were with Jesus on the mountain?
- ▼ Why did God tell Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus?
- ▼ How do you think you would have reacted if you had seen what happened to Jesus on the mountain?
- ▼ What can we learn by listening to Jesus' words in the Bible?

Singing

Sing “You Are My Own Dear Son”—**MM 22; SCM 20**—a song that reflects God's words about Jesus. Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.



Celebrating God's Grace

LD FA

Ask the children to remember what transfiguration means. Tell the children that they are going to make a treat that will remind them of something changing its form or appearance while a cloud forms to remember the transfiguration story.

- ▼ Read Luke 9:28–30.
- ▼ Hand out cups, spoons, and straws; then place three small scoops of ice cream in each cup. Ask the children what the three scoops can remind them of (*Jesus, Moses, and Elijah*).
- ▼ Read Luke 9:34.
- ▼ Pour the root beer over the ice cream to make a “cloud” in one cup. Invite the child whose cup it is to say the words spoken from the cloud, “This is my Son, my Chosen. Listen to him!”
- ▼ As you move to each cup to pour the root beer, invite the children to say, “And a cloud came over them . . .” and invite the child whose cup it is to say the words spoken from the cloud.

Enjoy the cloud-like, root beer floats!

Praying God's Grace

M L

Introduce the children to a listening prayer called a guided meditation.

Have the children spread out in the area so they are free of distractions. Set meditative music you have selected to repeat play. After the children have quieted, read the script for the meditation on **SCM 1a**.

After the meditation, talk together about how they can create a space to be with Jesus at home where they can listen for Jesus' words.



Offering God's Grace

TD L

Before the session, make picture frames with 7" x 10" openings from black construction paper.

Tell the children that they will create special art to remember God's words to listen to Jesus. Hand out copies of **GN 1**. Invite the children to read the verse. Use the following directions to make the stained-glass-looking cloud:

- ▼ Color the shapes with colored pencils.
- ▼ Make a flat pile of three or four stacked paper towels.



- ▼ Place the paper on the stack of towels with the back side facing up.
- ▼ Lightly dip a cotton ball in the baby oil and rub over the entire paper, being careful to not use too much oil.
- ▼ Hold the paper next to a window or over a light to see how the paper has changed.
- ▼ Glue or tape cloud picture to black frame.

Invite the children to turn their frames over and hold them up to a window or a light to see God's words shining through. Encourage the children to take their pictures home and hang them in a window where the light can make God's words shine for their family as a reminder to listen to Jesus' words.

L *Children who struggle with attention may have difficulty with quiet listening activities. To help them focus, suggest listening prompts or provide them with a soothing object to hold.*

Extra Activity

Hand out copies of **GN 2** and ask the children to identify each of the people in the picture. (*Jesus is in the center. Elijah is next to Jesus, and Moses is behind Elijah, holding the Ten Commandments. Peter, James, and John are the three disciples shown in the lower right corner.*) Invite the children to color the picture.

While the children color, cut copies of **GN 3** in half and provide one cloud to each child. Have the children trace the letters on the cloud. Read the words aloud, "Listen to him!" After the children have traced their letters, have them cut out the cloud shape with the tab.

Show them how to fold the cloud along the dashed line and glue the tab to the back of the coloring page so that the cloud folds over the picture and appears to the disciples. Encourage the children to take their pictures home and tell the story to others, making the cloud appear on the mountaintop.



LOVING AND SERVING GOD

MS

Invite the children to gather and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Turn on the white Christ candle. Ask the children what were the words that they heard Jesus say today and how those words might help them be followers of Jesus.

Invite the children to follow your actions as you send them with the following prayer:

As we step out into the world, *(move one step forward)*
moving through fear, *(make a pushing movement to the left*
with one hand)

moving through doubt, *(make a pushing movement to the*
right with the other hand)

facing the challenges that come our way, *(take a step*
backward)

we know Jesus is there to lift us up. *(raise both hands up)*

We know that God is always with us. *(take two steps forward)*

Let us listen to Jesus and shine with his light! *(cup hand*
around ear)

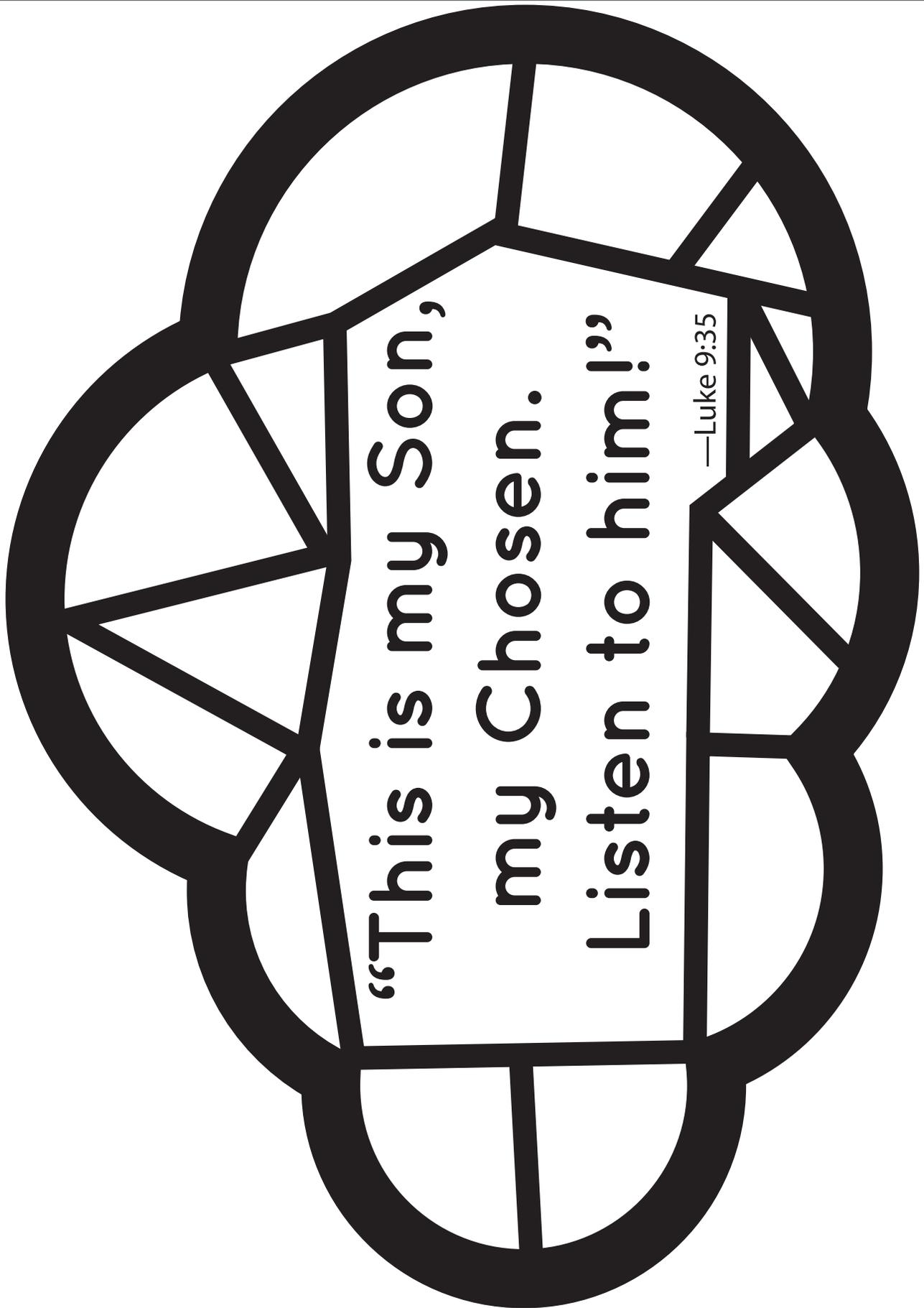
Amen.

Turn off the candle.

Remind the children about the free e-book and challenge them to read the story during the week.



Ask parents and caregivers for their e-mail addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit gracesightings.org. Remind the parents and caregivers about the e-book and story audio (see p. vii).



“This is my Son,
my Chosen.
Listen to him!”

—Luke 9:35



