He’s got the whole world in his hands

This is a complete term of playgroup storytime material. It is freely available for download from the following website:

http://www.proclaimjesus.net/playgroup

If you have received this material via email or from a friend, we would ask you to instead consider registering on the above website (for free) and checking to see whether the material has been updated. We are hoping that our material will be frequently improved and enhanced, as we receive feedback from other users, such as yourself!

Thank you, and we hope that this material is useful in furthering Christ's kingdom in our communities.
He’s got the whole world in his hands

This file contains the following:

• term outline
• weekly story plans
• craft suggestions
• song suggestion
• sample picture for wall display

Term outline
This unit teaches the children and their parents about God being in charge of our world because he made it. It addresses that God cares for our world, and has control over the future. Jesus was sent by God for the whole world, because God loves the world and has the whole world in his hands!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>God made our world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>God has the weather in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>God has all the animals in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>God has all the babies in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>God has all the Playgroup children in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>God has all the sick people in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>God has tomorrow in his hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>God sent Jesus for the whole world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Recap week (or Christmas story).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Presentation ideas

The stories for this unit are very simple. The song is a strong focus. New things can be added to a colourful wall display each week to build up a summary of the unit.

Suggested song

We sang the following version of *He's got the whole world in his hands*. Extra verses were added weekly. Colin Buchanan has a version which can be used as a backing track, or to dance to.

1. He’s got the whole world in his hands... *(make big circle with your arms)*
2. He’s got the rain and the sunshine in his hands... *(mime rain coming down, and then radiate your arms out to show the sunshine)*
3. He’s got the cows and the elephants in his hands... *(mime cow horns and then an elephant swinging its trunk)*
4. He’s got all the little babies in his hands... *(rock a pretend baby in your arms)*
5. He’s got *(insert Playgroup children’s names, if there aren’t too many)* eg Hannah and Sarah, in his hands, he’s got Daniel and Zoe, in his hands etc...
6. He’s got all the sick people in his hands... *(make sad face and rub fists in eyes)*
   ... He’s got the whole world in his hands *(move your arms in a big circle and then finish with your hands cupped together in front of you)*

We left the last two verses as it was getting too long.
Sample finished wall display

The first week just had the title, the world and the hands on it. A different picture was added each week.
Week 1: God made our world

Craft suggestion
Hand out photocopies of the globe. Kids glue on little squares or crumpled bits of green and blue tissue paper onto the sea and land.

Storytime plan
Main points to stress:

- God has the world in his hands because he made it.
- He loves the world he has made.
- When he made it he thought it was very good.
- Because God made the world he is in charge of it.

Ideas for story presentation:

- Show a globe to introduce the concept of the world. Show the children where their country is.

- A story from another country can be read, and the children can see where it's from in the world.

- Read the creation story from a picture Bible and highlight the main points

- Draw the events in the creation story using chalk and highlight the main points
Week 2: God has the weather in his hands

Craft suggestion:
Make a weather chart: Cut about ¼ wedge out of a paper plate. This goes on top. Join that to a bottom paper with a split pin. The children can draw/colour/glue on different weather pictures, eg sunny, cloudy, rainy, stormy, windy etc. They can then turn the upper plate to show that day’s weather.

Storytime

Main points to stress:

- Jesus has God’s power over the world.
- Jesus stopped the storm! That’s amazing. Jesus showed that God has the weather in his hands

Ideas for story presentation:

- Draw different types of weather and get the children to guess what it is - eg raining, sunny, snowing, hail, thunderstorm.

- Read the account of Jesus’ calming the storm from a picture Bible. Engage with the children during the story, making it interesting and interactive.

- Put pictures of rainclouds and the sun on the wall display.
Week 3: God has all the animals in his hands

Craft suggestion
Have a special playdough session and get the children to create different animals. They could then be photographed and put up on the big wall picture for the next week.

Storytime
Main points to stress:

- God loves his world. He knows all the animals.
- God gives the animals things that they need: for food and for protection

Ideas for story presentation:

- Draw different animals and get the children to guess them as you draw.

- Highlight different things that God has given animals that they need – eg a trunk for elephants to wash themselves and get a drink; long neck for giraffe; different types of camouflage. This is a good website: http://animals.howstuffworks.com/animal-facts/animal-camouflage-pictures.htm I often take my laptop in to show different visual aids.

- Talk to the children about Luke 12:6 – God even knows about all the sparrows. The Jesus Storybook Bible [see Resources page on website] has a good story based on it - “The Singer”. pages 228-235. If you use this story, only show pages 230-231, as the passage is used again in Week 7 – God has tomorrow in his hands.
Week 4: God has all the babies in his hands

Craft suggestion
The children draw faces on little peg dolls. Provide little bits of cloth as a blanket.

Storytime
Main points to stress:
- It's amazing and wonderful that God can grow tiny tiny babies into people.
- God has all the babies in his hands

Ideas for story presentation:
- Have a pregnant women come up, and talk about the baby growing inside her.
- Bring in some photos of ultrasounds and talk about how God looks after babies in their mummy’s tummies, even though we can't see them.
- Talk to the children about the following verse:
  "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
  I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful,
  I know that full well.
  My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place.
  When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body." Psalm 139
- Read the children a book that has been written based on this verse? Eg “God knows me”, by Joel Anderson (I haven't read it myself so am not sure of its suitability.)
Week 5: God has all the Playgroup children in his hands

Craft suggestion
Buy some picture frames (you can get the foam ones with decorations as kits at Spotlight). In Week 2 or 3, take a group photo of the Playgroup children and get them printed so they can go in each frame.

Storytime
Main points to stress:

– God cares about little children and loves them very much.

Ideas for story presentation:

• Read the story about Jesus letting the children come to him (Matthew 19:13-15) – an excellent version can be found in Read-aloud Bible stories Vol. 1 (p. 65). It creates a full story out of those few verses, with great pictures.

• Discuss with the children that Jesus loves them.

• Have all the children’s names printed out. They can come up and stick their name on the wall display. This can take a long time! Ask one or two other people to help.
Week 6: God has all the sick people in his hands

Craft suggestion
The children create a picture of a hand made out of band-aids, or fill in a photocopied outline of a hand with band-aids. The children can use long ones for fingers and the large square ones for the palm. A verse such as Matthew 14:14 [“When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw the large crowd. He felt sorry for them and healed everyone who was sick”] or Matthew 8:16-18 [“So God’s promise came true, just as the prophet Isaiah had said, "He healed our diseases and made us well"] could also be glued onto the paper.

Storytime
Main points to stress:

– Jesus came to do God’s work.
– Sick people trusted that Jesus could make them better.
– Jesus did make sick people better!
– We can trust God when we are sick.

Ideas for story presentation:

• Draw pictures of different sicknesses that Jesus heals (Matthew 15:29-31)
  – blind person [draw a face with no eyes] – then able to see [add the eyes in]
  – lame person [draw a person with no legs] – then able to walk [add the legs in]
  – leprosy [draw a person with sores on their skin] – then clean again [re-draw them with clean skin]

• Or, read the story of Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus – Read-aloud Bible stories Vol. 1 p35.
Week 7: God has tomorrow in his hands

Craft suggestion
Get the children to draw a picture of something they might do tomorrow.

Storytime

Concepts taken from the following verses: Romans 8:37-39, Jeremiah 29:10-14, Matthew 6:25-34.

Main points to stress:

– God knows what we need.
– He wants us to follow him.
– God knows what is going to happen tomorrow, and he loves us, so we don't need to worry about tomorrow.

Ideas for story presentation:

• Show the children a calendar. Find some children's birthdays. Find the current day on the calendar. Show the children tomorrow's date on the calendar. Talk about what is happening tomorrow.

• Have a letter ready, hidden inside a Bible. Inside the letter are pictures that you randomly hand out – a heart, a calendar, footprints, a thumbs up, birds, birdseed.
  “The Bible is how we can listen to God [show the Bible]. Oooh! Something is inside the Bible! What is it? [Pull out the letter] This letter tells us some of what the Bible says" (It is based on Matthew 6).

Read out the letter, which could be written as follows. At several points, pause and ask who's holding the picture for that bit? Take each picture and pin it up somewhere so that you remind everyone what you learned at the end.

“Dear Playgroup,
God loves you very much [heart]. Do you remember when I told everyone that God loves the animals [bird]? And that God gives them food to eat [birdseed]? Well, you are all more important than birds! And more important than animals!
God doesn't want you to worry about tomorrow [calendar]. God loves to look after you and he knows what you need. God wants you to follow him [footprints]. It's great and fantastic and wonderful that you can trust God [thumbs up]. Love from Jesus.

- Another recommended illustration for this story is from “The Little Children's Bible storybook”, ISBN 87-7247-132-6, Scandinavia Publishing House.

- Recap by going through the pictures which have been pinned up.
Week 8: God sent Jesus for the whole world

Craft suggestion
Please suggest!

Storytime
Main points to stress, no matter what story/ies you decide to present:

– The main way that we know God has the whole world in his hands is by sending Jesus.
– God is in charge of the world. He doesn’t want us to do wrong things. We all do wrong things, and we need rescuing.
– God sent Jesus for the whole world, so we can be friends with him again.

Ideas for story presentation:

• If you have an older age range of children, you could break up the story into two halves: pre-Jesus, then the Christmas story the next week. One playgroup did the following: A quick flip through ‘The Big Picture Story Bible’ highlighting how God promised a Saviour right from the beginning and how he kept promising. Touched on the fall p37-49, the promise to Abraham, p70-80; the promise of the forever king to David, p17;1 and then the years and years that passed p230 before Jesus came…. But we’ll find out about that next week – tell the Christmas story next week and explain why he came.

• Draw or use visual aids to go through “Who will be King?” This website can help: http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/2wtl/whowillbeaking/

• If you are using this as a Christmas unit, read a nativity story and focus on God being in charge of the world and sending Jesus to rescue us and be our King.
Week 9: Recap week

Craft suggestion

Storytime
Main points to stress:

– Recap the ways that God has the whole world in his hands.
– Sing the song one last time!

Ideas for story presentation:

• If you decided to go through the Old Testament to set-up for Jesus' arrival, remind the children that the world was waiting for the Saviour who was promised. Read the Christmas story. Or, another Playgroup did the following: “We were lucky enough to have the school’s costumes for the nativity play, so I told it, with a strong emphasis on ‘You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins’ In the angel’s message to Mary, to Joseph, to the shepherds and in the wise men following a star to the new king.”

• Another idea if you need an additional week: God has all the kings and countries in his hands
  One playgroup did the following: “I downloaded a rather good image of the hands of God from the internet. It’s all blue and light. I also downloaded a picture of a crown. I told the story of Solomon asking God for wisdom to rule his people from 2 Chronicles Chapter 1 using the pictures from the Candle Bible for Toddlers, ISBN-13: 978-1-85985-602-4; ISBN-10: 1-85985-602-0 (I’ve no idea why there are two ISBN numbers on this book)”. 