

God's Children Sing
God's Wonderful World



Lesson Guide
with Activities
For Children Ages
15 Months to 3 1/2 Years

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God's Children Sing

Materials for Children from 15 months to 3½ years:

God, My Family and Me

God's Wonderful World

Materials for Children from 3 to 5 years:

Friends in God's World

Friends of Jesus

This book is part of **Teacher Resources** for *God's Wonderful World*, consisting of:

- Lesson Guide with Activities: 48 page book including 15 lesson suggestions with complete instructions
- *Focused Listening* CD, 93 listening examples with 16 full-color illustrated cards
- *Tap, Dance, and Move* CD, 28 selections
- *Living With Music at Home*: 36-page book of activities with notes for parents on how to make music part of their home life
- *God's Wonderful World* CD, 31 songs, dances, chants, poems – musical activities from the lessons

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For children from birth to kindergarten

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Nature's Music

God's Children Sing

All Together Now! Nimble & Quick

All Together Now! Twist & Turn

For children from age 4

My Neighborhood Community

Seashore

Nature Trail

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God's Children Sing

God's Wonderful World Lesson Guide with Activities

God's Wonderful World contains 15 lesson suggestions and the accompanying materials for working with children ages 15 months to 3½ years. The activities are appropriate to be the basis of a 30 minute class with a group of 8-12 children meeting once a week. Parents should be part of this class, however the activities are not dependent on the presence of one adult for each child. The lessons focus on God's Creation: birds, oceans, night/day, animals, and weather, along with the concepts of working together and growing up. In the *God's Children Sing* publication there is a second set of lessons for this age group, *God, My Family, and Me*, focusing on God and family, moving from the child's self-awareness as a child of God outward to family, pets, grandparents, friends, and the church family.

Introduction

“Children live in a world of dreams and visions; they take chances and create. Until we teach them otherwise, they believe they can paint, dance, act, sing, and significantly, they enjoy doing so. Children openly expose their emotions and learn from experience. They find miracles believable and desirable. They can sense the presence of God, for they live in a world of gifts as well as achievements. They can imagine the Kingdom of God, for they live in seen and unseen worlds.” (John H. Westerhoff, *Bringing Up Children in the Christian Faith*, pp. 20-21)

God's Children Sing reaches out to all adults whose lives intersect the lives of young children, whether in the role of teacher, parent, or caregiver. Through this publication you are invited to re-enter the faith-filled world of childhood. What is this world; how does it exist? How does the child perceive the world? How does faith develop in the life of the child?

For the young, life is a celebration

For the young child every day is new, fresh, exciting, and filled with new people, things, and events. Events that appear prosaic and ordinary to us as adults are a never-ending source of wonder and engagement for the child. With no sense of time but the present, the child lives each moment completely. The smallest happening is a momentous event for which there is no precedent in his/her life experience.

Children's intuitive intelligence is superbly tuned to the living world around them. They possess an extraordinary capacity for assimilation and have an innate ability to observe the tiniest things which hardly even exist for the adult. These capacities of early childhood will never be repeated in life with the same clarity and ease. The child's perception of and identification with all life forms and events will never again be possible with the same spontaneous enthusiasm.

Every young child has a sense of the sacred; if it is part of a parent/family model, it has a chance to blossom. The gift of faith is given to the child as well as to the adult. The spontaneity, creativity, and openness of childhood allow the child to experience God intuitively in relationships with others and with the natural world they encounter. Through these relationships, the child grows in knowledge of God. The child's faith grows as it is experienced with significant adults in the home and in the Christian community.

Sharing our faith provides the central theme for the activities.

God's Children Sing draws its central themes from the sharing of our faith with children and aims to bring the family into the music, movement, and faith experience. John H. Westerhoff set forth the following five guidelines for sharing our faith with children in his book *Bringing Up Children in the Christian Faith*:

“We need to tell and retell the biblical story – the stories of the faith – together.
 We need to celebrate our faith and our lives.
 We need to pray together.
 We need to listen and talk to each other.
 We need to perform faithful acts of service and witness together.” (p. 36)

Through music, movement, story-telling, and prayer, the faith of both parent and child can be strengthened, enhanced, and enlivened. Opportunities for sharing the life of faith can be encouraged through songs, dances, and creative expressions, which are such a natural part of the young child's world.

Coming to know God as the Creator and Sustainer of all living things is encouraged through hands-on experiences and encounters with nature. To “know,” a child must “touch.” A child's natural sense of wonder at plants, birds, animals, and insects leads him/her to explore and discover the world in which he/she lives and the God who created it.

This resource book presents materials for designing experiences that promote musical development in young children within the context of nurturing their life of faith. Through joyful participation in songs, stories, music-making, movement activities, and moments of worship in each lesson, young children will become more aware of God's love for them and for all of Creation. As a result of these musical activities experienced in a Christian community and family, children will grow to give voice to their developing musical expression, faith, and praise of God.

The Lessons

The lessons are structured to be the basis of a 30 minute class meeting once a week. The activities are designed to encourage joyful participation by both the child and the accompanying parent or caregiver. The adult is a reassuring presence as the child responds, and the music-making of the adult provides a model for the child both in class and at home. The children are allowed to respond in ways that are comfortable to them and are not required to meet expectations of others.

Many activities promote interaction between the child and the adult. Bouncing activities provide not only an enjoyable rhythmic experience but facilitate eye-to-eye contact and facial communication of joy in the shared experience. Cuddling, hugs, and close contact between the child and adult are present in various rocking activities. Free dancing activities allow for paired movement expression to the music.

Other activities are designed to encourage the growing independence of the child. Whether going forth to get an instrument, coming to the listening place, repeating a rhythmic or melodic pattern individually, or taking a turn on an instrument, the child takes steps toward becoming an independent person.

Over time toddlers learn the joys of coming together for a group activity, especially when music is involved! The Listening Time, Prayer, and Singing Game encourage their incipient sense of community.

Lesson Suggestions

The Lesson Suggestions are intended as a guide for the teacher. The activities have been carefully chosen and sequenced according to the developmental needs of the children. Interspersing quiet and active times suits the children's growing capacity to really listen, to inhibit their movement, and then to relax and move about.

In the Lesson Suggestions we have attempted to:

- balance movement, vocal, listening, and playing activities;
- carefully plan the sequence according to children's movement needs;
- allow for ample repetition from one lesson to another;
- balance activities that promote independent action and those that lead to group involvement.

In constructing the lessons, the authors have specifically considered two basic formats:

- use by a music specialist meeting a group of children once a week for 30 minutes;
- use by a classroom, music or Sunday school teacher making music a part of the daily program.

Use in a once-a-week class.

Each lesson includes the following important elements:

- Greeting song in which each child is named.
- Variety of movement activities: bouncing, finger plays, body awareness, stationary movement, traveling movement, singing games.
- Unstructured dance to recorded movement.
- Several activities which involve steady beat.
- Variety of vocal activities: easy-to-sing songs, voice-building activities, songs for adults to sing for their children, call-and-respond songs.
- Rhythm and tonal echo pattern games.
- Variety of repertoire in terms of meter as well as songs in major, minor and church modes.
- Listening experiences that include sounds from the environment, human and non-human voices, folk music, and classical music.
- Playing instruments and working with accessories such as hoops and scarves.
- Ample opportunities for children to improvise through body gestures, ways of moving, adding verses to songs, exploring ways to play instruments.
- Closing song.

We encourage you to make substitutions and changes according to your needs.

Use through the week in the early childhood classroom.

Every classroom is organized to meet the specific needs of the situation. The following ideas are offered so that you can feel comfortable with adjusting the lesson plans while paying close attention to balancing the needs of the children, as suggested above:

- Divide the material suggested for each week into music-circle periods.
- Plan each music-circle time to be 20-25 minutes long and to include a variety of activities: singing, beat development, movement, listening, and a special focus.
- Plan the sequence carefully to be sure that there is enough variety, movement, and activities in which all the children can be involved.
- Repeat single activities throughout the week at times when they would fill a special need or when the children request them.

God 's Wonderful World**Lesson Suggestions****WEEK 1****Materials**

Rhythm Sticks

Jingles

FL-CD (Focused Listening)

TDM-CD (Tap, Dance, and Move)

GWW-CD (God's Wonderful World)

Title	Function	CD in class	CD as reference	Parent Book
Let's Sing Hello Together	Greeting song			
Psalm 8	Stationary movement		GWW, #2	5
The Ole Ark's a-Moverin'	Bouncing		GWW, #1	6
Major	Tonal patterns			
Jim Along Josie	Rhythm sticks			
Waltz 2	Dance	TDM, #8		
Five Little Birds	Finger play		GWW, #6	10
Sing, Little Bird	Stationary movement			
Birds: Robin, Bluejay	Listening time	FL, #28, 29		
	Prayer			
Walking in the Green Grass	Traveling movement		GWW, #8	12
Triple	Rhythm patterns			
Tap the Jingles	Jingles			
Here Comes a Bluebird	Singing game		GWW, #7	11
Let's Sing Goodbye Together	Closing song			

Let's Sing Hello Together

G Major

Traditional, from Virginia
Text adapted

Let's sing hel - lo to - geth - er, Let's sing hel - lo to - geth - er, Let's
sing hel - lo to - geth - er. It's good to be here to - geth - er.

Vs. 2 Let's sing hello to (name), (three times)
It's good to be here together.

Vs. 3 Let's wave goodbye to (name), (three times)
We had such fun here together.

- Sing Verse 1, lightly tapping the beat on your knees.
- Insert a child's name into Verse 2 of the song. You may use one name for the entire verse or several names in a verse, depending on the size of the class.
- Change the beat motion frequently (such as rub, clap, nod, etc.) and use the word in the verse accordingly.
- Use Verse 3 as a "goodbye" song.

Psalm 8

Parent Book p. 5; GWW-CD No. 2; G Major

John Erickson

The Lord is great! Ev -'ry bo - dy sing, La, la, la, al - le - lu - ia! The
Lord made us! Ev -'ry bo - dy sing, La, la, la, al - le - lu - ia! God
made the beasts, the birds in the tree, the fish in the wa - ter and God made me! The
Lord is great! Ev -'ry bo - dy sing, La, la, la, al - le - lu - ia! The
Lord is great! Ev -'ry bo - dy sing, La, la, la, al - le - lu - ia!

- Practice the following signs with the children:
 - Place the fingertips of both hands on the chest. Rock the hands back and forth still resting on the chest. This is the sign for “animal” and represents the breathing motion of the animal.
 - Place the index finger and thumb in front of the mouth. Open and close the fingers. This is the sign for “bird,” representing both the bill and the wings.
 - Point the right open hand forward with the palm facing left and touch the left fingertips to the right arm near the elbow. Move the right hand back and forth from the wrist. This is the sign for “fish” and represents the movement of the fish’s tail in the water.
 - Point the right index finger at yourself as the sign for “me.”
- Sing the song, lightly tapping on your knees. Add the movement in the appropriate places, leaving a pause after each so that the children may respond.
- More experienced children may sing the “La, la, la, alleluia” in the microphone by themselves.

The Ole Ark’s a-Moverin’

Parent Book p. 6; GWW-CD No. 1; D Major

African American
Spiritual

Group

Oh, the ole ark's a - mov - er - in', a - mov - er - in', a - mov - er - in', The ole ark's a -

1. 2. Fine Leader

mov - er - in' and I thank God. Oh, the God. How man - y days did the

Group

wa - ter fall? For - ty days and nights in all, all. Oh, the

1. 2. D. C. al Fine

- Vs. 2 Leader: Ole ark she reel, ole ark she rock,
Group: Ole ark she landed on the mountain top.
- Vs. 3 Leader: See them children dressed in white,
Group: Must be the children of the Israelite.
- Vs. 4 Leader: See them children dressed in red,
Group: Must be the children that Moses led.

- Sing the song, keeping a light tapping beat on your knees, stopping at the fermatas. The children may sit on the adults’ outstretched legs or kneel and sit back on their own heels.
- Consider starting the activity by rocking from side to side while chanting the following:

Ole ark she rock, rock, rock.

- Sing the chorus only, bouncing the child to the beat of the music.
- Repeat the chant and chorus.

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		GWW	Other			GWW	Other
Title	Page	CD	CD	Title	Page	CD	CD
Aeolian Lullaby	28	20		Ocean Shell	18	9	
All Night, All Day	21	11	FL 34	Ocean Sounds (Listening Ex.)			FL 32
All Things Dance with Joy	18	5	TDM 15	Ole Ark's a-Moverin', The	11	1	
Baby babbling			FL 51	Owl (Bird Voice)			FL 36
Bluehill			TDM 16	Psalm 8	10	2	FL 30
Blue Jay (Bird Voice)			FL 29	Rain (Listening Example)			FL 40
Boom, Boom, Boom	40			Robin (Bird's Voice)			FL 28
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Cow (Bird Voice)			FL 37	Sanding (Listening Example)			FL 48
Dance and Sing God's Praise	41	31	TDM 5	Sawing (Listening Example)			FL 46
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Gaelic Dance		4	TDM 1	Sing, Little Bird	13		
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Good Night, Day	27			Tap the Jingles	14		
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Here Comes the Bluebird	14	7	FL 27	This Little Light of Mine	32	16	
Horse			FL 38	Thunder			FL 42
I Am the wind	35	21	FL 43	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	27	15	
I Have God's Love in Store	43	29		Walking in the Green Grass	13	8	
I See the Moon	24	10		Waltz 2			TDM 8
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Let's Sing Hello Together	10			Who made Ocean, Earth, and Sky?	40	28	FL 33
Little David, Play on Your Harp	43	26		Who Made Them?	20		
Lullaby, My Pretty One	16	3		Wind (Listening Example)			FL 41
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FL = Focused Listening CD

TDM = Tap, Dance and Move CD

GWW = God's Wonderful World CD