

# Learning Together

## God's Gift of Water



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**Leader's Guide**

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# Lesson 1: Creation

## **Bible Reading:**

Genesis 1:1–2:4a

## **Key Verse:**

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures.”

– Genesis 1:20a

## **The Point:**

God gives life.



# Activities & Supplies

## Opening

### Clearing the Chaos

Gather and sort items to make space.

**15 min.**

- Bible
- Clean, recyclable items and trash (empty cans, water bottles, scrap paper, cardboard, etc.)
- Non-recyclable items (plastic bags, toys, balls, chairs, kitchen utensils, etc.)
- Recycling bins
- Trash cans
- Paper
- Marker
- Optional: children's story Bible



# Activities & Supplies

## Stations

### Storytelling

#### Colors of Creation

Participate in the creation story.

20 min.

- Activity Sheet A
- Activity Sheet B
- Paper bags
- Marker
- Construction paper in black, white, yellow, blue, brown, and green
- Scissors
- Yellow balloon or paper circle
- White balloon or paper circle
- Small yellow or white balls or small yellow and white paper stars
- Long rope or masking tape
- Optional: pictures of sea animals, flying animals, and land animals



# Activities & Supplies

## Stations

### Craft

#### Garden Pots

Take care of plants.

20 min.

- Acrylic paint markers or permanent markers
- Clean, dry terra cotta flowerpots
- Soil
- Bin or container for soil
- Bean seeds
- Paper
- Pens or pencils
- White board or mural paper
- Marker
- Zippered bags
- Optional: paint shirts, table coverings



# Activities & Supplies

## Stations

### Science

#### Ocean in a Bottle

Make a sensory bottle.

**20 min.**

- Clear two-liter plastic bottles or water bottles with caps
- Clear vegetable oil
- Pitchers of water
- Funnel
- Blue food coloring
- Clean sand, small pebbles, seashells, glitter, small sea creature toys, etc.
- Cupcake papers
- Duct tape
- Permanent marker



## Stations

<p><b>Games</b> <b>What Am I?</b> Act out parts of creation.</p> <p><b>Over and Under Race</b> Play a relay race with water.</p> <p><b>Spray Tag</b> Play a different kind of “Tag”.</p>	<p><b>20 min.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sticky notes</li><li>• Pen or marker</li> <li>• Large sponge</li><li>• Pails</li><li>• Access to water faucet</li> <li>• Spray bottles</li><li>• Paper</li><li>• Tape</li></ul>
<p><b>Snack</b> <b>Creation Rod</b> Make a colorful snack.</p>	<p><b>20 min.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pretzel rods</li><li>• Frosting, nut or seed butter</li><li>• Sprinkles (yellow, green, stars or silver, gold, blue, and multicolor)</li><li>• Cupcake papers</li><li>• Plastic knives</li><li>• Spoons</li><li>• Plates</li><li>• Napkins</li><li>• Water and cups</li></ul>



## Closing Prayer

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**5 min.**

• For the Home



# Background for Leaders

## Creation

### The Point

God gives life.

### Did You Know?

- This and other accounts of creation in Scripture are intended to be descriptions of why the world came to be and who made it and not descriptions of how the world came to be.
- The description of the cosmos at the beginning of this creation account as watery chaos (“formless void”) reflects the ancient Near Eastern cultural view of the danger of uncontrolled water, seen often in the sea, floods, and storms.
- The focus of this creation account is that God created order out of chaos: separating waters, gathering the seas and setting their boundaries, and filling the water, land, and sky with living creatures. This theme of God being in ultimate control of the seemingly uncontrollable elements is reflected throughout Scripture.
- While Scripture describes the beginning of creation as watery chaos, the Book of Revelation describes the new heavens and earth as having no sea (Revelation 21:1). This shows that not only is God in control of the forces of chaos and evil in our world, but that these forces will ultimately be destroyed and have no place in the world to come.
- God gives humanity dominion over living creatures, but—as with all things—we are to use this responsibility to love God and love others.

### Why It Matters

- No matter how random or chaotic our world and lives may seem, God is ultimately in control.
- In and through water, God gives all creatures life.
- When we use water to help and not to harm, we are participating in God's good creation.

### Prayer of Preparation

Creator God, the stories of your creation are worthy of our praise. Help us to teach in a way that creates a sense of wonderment and awe and inspires others to care for your gift of creation and life. Amen.



# Lesson Plan

## Opening

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### Clearing the Chaos

**15 min.**

Gather and sort items to make space.

#### *Supplies:*

- Bible
- Clean, recyclable items and trash (empty cans, water bottles, scrap paper, cardboard, etc.)
- Non-recyclable items (plastic bags, toys, balls, chairs, kitchen utensils, etc.)
- Recycling bins
- Trash cans
- Paper
- Marker
- Optional: children's story Bible

#### *Preparation:*

1. Make three signs saying "Trash", "Recycling", and "Keep". Tape the signs on different walls in the room.
2. Place the recycling bins under the Recycling sign, and the trash cans under the Trash sign.
3. Scatter clean non-recyclable and recyclable items all around the area where you will meet.
4. If possible, plan to enter the room once the participants are gathered.



***Instructions:***

1. **Wow, this place is a mess! We cannot start until this chaos has been cleared away. Everyone, please help me organize and move all of this stuff to where it belongs. Trash should go over there** (point to the trash sign and cans), **anything we should keep should go over there** (point to the Keep sign), **and anything that can be recycled should go over there** (point to the recycling cans and sign).
2. Once everything is picked up and sorted say: **Thanks for all your help, I do not know what I would have done without all of you! I do not know who created that chaos or how, but it sure is good to have things sorted out and where they should be.**
3. **You know this is kind of like the beginning of today's Bible story, when God created everything out of chaos. Let's hear it!**
4. Read the story of creation out loud either from a children's story Bible or an adult Bible.
5. **How cool is it that God created everything out of chaos and gave us life! That's a great thing to remember as we travel to our activities today, let's say it together... God gives life!** Encourage participants to say it together.



# Stations

## Storytelling

20 min.

### Colors of Creation

Participate in the creation story.

#### *Supplies:*

- Activity Sheet A
- Activity Sheet B
- Paper bags
- Marker
- Construction paper in black, white, yellow, blue, brown, and green
- Scissors
- Yellow balloon or paper circle
- White balloon or paper circle
- Small yellow or white balls or small yellow and white paper stars
- Long rope or masking tape
- Optional: pictures of sea animals, flying animals, and land animals

#### *Preparation:*

1. Be aware of any latex allergies in your group and use listed alternatives as necessary.
2. Cut the construction paper into quarters.
3. Cut enough cloud shapes out of the white paper for half of the participants.
4. Optional: bring images of animals in the following categories: sea animals, flying animals, and land animals.



5. Locate an open area that will allow participants to gather and move. Choose one end to be the “sky” and the other the “ground.” Separate these two areas with a long rope or a line of masking tape.
6. Participants who wish to remain seated can participate as well. If you have seated participants, position them at the “sky” end or the “ground” end of the open area.
7. Prepare one bag for each person as described on Activity Sheet A. There should be approximately equal numbers of bags for each of the four groups. Label each bag with its group number and contents.
8. If seated participants are in the “sky” area, give them bags for Group 2. If they are in the “ground” area, give them bags for Group 3.
9. Prepare a set of materials for demonstration purposes.

***Instructions:***

1. Hand out labeled bags so that each group has approximately an equal number of participants. Groups 1 and 4 will be moving, while Groups 2 and 3 can be stationary.
2. **Welcome to the beginning! We are going to use colors today to tell the story of creation. You will find different colors in your bag. When I tell you to, you can hold up the color or even put it on your head like a hat!**
3. **Some of us are going to be moving around, but if you would like to remain seated, you can participate, too. If you want to be seated and have a bag from Group 2, you can be seated in this “sky” area. If you want to be seated and have a bag from Group 3, you can be seated in this “ground” area.**
4. From your demonstration set, hold up the different colors and other items in turn. You may ask participants to identify the color or object and guess what it might represent, or you can use the following explanation: **Black is for Darkness or Night. Yellow is for Day. Blue is for Water. White is for Clouds. Brown is for Land. Green is for Plants.** Optional: You also have a picture of an animal in your bag: a sea animal, a flying animal, or a land animal.



5. In giving directions, you may direct participants by group number (for example, Group 4 move to the “sky” area) or you may direct participants by the items they have in their bags (for example, if you have a cloud-shape, move to the “sky” area). Choose the method that is clearest for your class.
6. Read from Activity Sheet A and direct participants’ actions.
7. **Thank you for helping tell the story of creation! If you have heard the story of creation before, what are some things you noticed this time that you may not have noticed before?** Accept all answers.
8. **There was something God said after each step of creation. What was it?** [*That each step was good.*]
9. **That is right. Everything that God created is good, and God loves all creation. This is true even though bad things come into the world like sin, death, and suffering. Those bad things do not stop God from loving everything, including you!**
10. **In the first three steps, or days, of creation, you did a lot of moving around. What was God doing then?** [*Separating things: light and dark, night and day, water and clouds, water and land.*]
11. **What were the first living things that God created?** [*Plants.*]
12. **Where did God create the first animals?** [*In the waters (and the skies).*]
13. **Do you know the one thing that every single living thing needs to survive?** [*Water.*]
14. **Yes, water! Water is critical to life. We will talk more about water today and through the rest of this unit.**



# Craft

xx min.

## Garden Pots

Take care of plants.

### *Supplies:*

- Acrylic paint markers or permanent markers
- Clean, dry terracotta flowerpots
- Soil
- Bin or container for soil
- Bean seeds
- Paper
- Pens or pencils
- White board or mural paper
- Marker
- Zippered bags
- Optional: paint shirts, table coverings

### *Preparation:*

1. Cover tables if you wish.
2. Place pots, one per participant, paint markers, and paint shirts (if using) on each table along with paper and pencils or pens.
3. Fill receptacle with soil.

### *Instructions:*

1. **God created the world and everything in it! In your small groups, list ten things that God made.** Give time for groups to write ten things down.
2. **We are going to go around and share what we listed. As you share, I will write down what you list so we have a complete list at the end.**



3. As each small group shares, write the new things on the master list and put a check by repeat items.
4. **We are going to decorate these pots, (show pot) fill them with dirt and add seeds. Decorate your pots showing things that God created.** Review master list, then allow time for decorating.
5. **When you are finished decorating, bring your pot to our soil container, and fill it with soil.**
6. **Go back to your tables and I will bring you seeds and a bag to bring your pots home.**
7. **What does your plant need to grow?** [*Water, sun.*]
8. **What will happen to your plant without water?** [*It will wilt, turn brown, die.*]
9. **When you get home, who will take care of your plant?** Allow responses.
10. **Water is a very important part of God's creation. Plants need water, animals need water, and we need water to live.**
11. **Your garden pots are beautiful! As you take care of your plant, remember that you are part of God's creation. Every time you water your plant, thank God for water!**



# Science

20 min.

## Ocean in a Bottle

Make a sensory bottle.

### *Supplies:*

- Clear two-liter plastic bottles or water bottles with caps
- Clear vegetable oil
- Pitchers of water
- Funnel
- Blue food coloring
- Clean sand, small pebbles, seashells, glitter, small sea creature toys, etc.
- Cupcake papers
- Duct tape
- Permanent marker

### *Preparation:*

1. Make sure the pebbles, seashells, and sea creature toys can fit into the end of a bottle.
2. On each small group table, place:
  - a variety of ocean items in cupcake papers
  - oil (you will need enough to fill each participant's bottle half full)
  - food coloring
  - pitcher of water
  - funnel
  - permanent marker
  - a bottle for each participant.



***Instructions:***

1. **God made huge oceans with waves. What is a wave?** Allow answers. **Have you seen waves in the ocean? Waves in a lake? In a bathtub?** Allow all responses.
2. **A wave starts way out in the ocean, and it can travel for thousands of miles before it reaches shore. The wind can determine the number of waves formed, and the size of each wave. As it nears the shore, the wave increases in height, and the upper part of the wave, the part we can see, starts moving faster than the bottom part. The wave starts to tip forward. When it leans over enough, the wave will curl over and crash, forming what is called a “breaker.”**
3. **We are going to make an “Ocean in a Bottle” experiment. Everyone, take a bottle and help each other. You will need one person holds the bottle, one person holds the funnel, and another person to pour the water into your bottle until it is half full. One person can pour the water while the other person holds the bottle steady.**
4. **Add a couple drops of blue food coloring and carefully swirl your bottle to mix it up.**
5. **Now you can add small pebbles, sand, sea shells, glitter, toys, etc. Allow time for participants to select their items to add and place them in the bottle.**
6. **Using a funnel, we will fill the bottle all the way to the top with oil.**
7. **Help each other again, please. One person holds the bottle, one person holds the funnel, and another person pours the oil.**
8. **Carefully tighten the cap as tight as you can. We are going to take a piece of duct tape and wind it around the cap sealing it to the bottle. Write your name on the tape.**
9. **You now have an “ocean in a bottle!”**
10. **Turn the bottle on its side and gently rock to create a “wave” inside your ocean habitat!**



## Games

10 min.

### What Am I?

Act out parts of creation.

#### *Supplies:*

- Sticky notes
- Pen or marker

#### *Preparation:*

1. On each sticky note, write the name of an animal, plant, or heavenly body. (Elephant, tree, stars, sun, moon, planet, cloud, ant, rain, dog, tomato, pig, mountain, etc.) Write as many different items as possible.

#### *Instructions:*

1. **God has created many different and wonderful things, and we are going to play a guessing game to name some of them! We need each small group to form a circle.**
2. **I am going to put a sticky note on the back of each of you. There is a word of something that God created on your sticky note. Do not tell each other what their word says, we are going to try to figure out what the word on our back is!**
3. **Select a volunteer in each group. Okay, turn around and show your back to the group. Everyone should read quietly what the word is on the sticky note. Pause.**
4. **Now, turn around and face the circle. Your group will act out your word without talking until you guess what your word is.**
5. **Go around your circle until everyone has a turn.** You may wish to set a time limit for each person, like one minute, to keep the game moving.
6. After everyone has had to chance to guess their word, close by having participants naming what word they were given.
7. **Wow, God created so many different things... and God created each of us, too. Let's thank God in a cheer. One the count of three let's yell "Yay, God!" One, two, three... Yay, God!**



## Games

10 min.

### Over and Under Race

Play a relay race with water.

#### *Supplies:*

- Large sponge
- Pails
- Access to water faucet

#### *Preparation:*

1. Fill one pail with water for each small group.
2. Place the large sponge in the water.
3. Place an empty pail ten long paces away from each filled water pail.
4. This is a great game to play on a grassy surface!

#### *Instructions:*

1. **Water is important for all of life. People, animals, and plants need water to live and to thrive. Water is also fun to play with! Let us play with water and remember that God created water for life and fun.**
2. **Small groups line up facing the pail with water in it.**
3. **Which group can get the most water in your empty pail?**
4. **This is how you will fill your empty pail.**
  - a. **When I say go, the person closest to the pail with the sponge will squeeze as much water as they can into the sponge and hand the sponge to the next person over their head.**
  - b. **The second person in line will pass the sponge on by passing it under their legs (or on their side if in a wheelchair). Over and under all the way to end of your line.**



- c. The last person in line will squeeze as much water out of the sponge as possible into the empty bucket, then run to the front of the line and be the new head of the line.
  - d. You will fill the sponge with water and begin passing it back again, over heads and between legs.
  - e. After everyone has a turn to start the sponge, we will compare water levels in the pails. Compare water levels and declare first, second, and third places.
5. Go around the space and give everyone a high five.



## Games

10 min.

### Spray Tag

Play a different kind of tag.

#### *Supplies:*

- Spray bottles
- Paper
- Tape

#### *Preparation:*

1. Fill spray bottles with water, one for each small group.
2. Give each participant a piece of paper.
3. Mark game boundaries.

#### *Instructions:*

1. **Water is important for all of life. People, animals, and plants need water to live and to thrive. Water is also fun to play with! Let's play with water and remember that God created water for life and fun.**
2. **This game is a kind of tag where the people with water want to get your paper wet and you want to keep your paper as dry as possible.**
3. **You can move your body and your paper up, down, or sideways but you must not let go of your paper.**
4. Spread out inside the boundaries. Explain the boundaries for your area.
5. **Ready, sprayers? You have one minute to get papers wet!**
6. Signal one minute time. Compare wetness of papers. Hand out new papers and give others a turn with the sprayers.
7. **Well, that was a bit chaotic, but sure was fun! I wonder if God had fun creating the world out of chaos.**



# Snack

10 min.

## Creation Rod

Make a colorful snack.

*Before serving any food check with participants or caregivers for potential allergies, provide an alternative if necessary.*

### *Supplies:*

- Pretzel rods
- Frosting, nut or seed butter
- Sprinkles (yellow, green, stars or silver, gold, blue, and multicolor)
- Cupcake papers
- Plastic knives
- Spoons
- Plates
- Napkins
- Water and cups

### *Preparation:*

1. Place separate sprinkles in cupcake papers on each small group table.
2. Give each participant a plate, napkin, knife, and a pretzel rod.

### *Instructions:*

1. **We are going to make creation pretzel rods today.**
2. **First, holding your pretzel rod straight up, take your knife and smear the top half of your pretzel rod with frosting (or nut butter). Do not cover the bottom of the pretzel, so that you have a place to hold it.**
3. **Remember! Do not eat your treat until after we pray.** Allow time for spreading.



4. We are going to review our Bible story for today and add colored sprinkles to remind us of each of God's creation. Remember to hold your pretzel over your plate as you sprinkle.
5. What did God create first? [*Light, day and night*]. Using your spoon, sprinkle a little bit of gold on your pretzel.
6. What did God create next? [*Sky*]. Sprinkle some blue on your pretzel.
7. What did God create next? [*Land, water, plants*]. Sprinkle green on your pretzel.
8. And what came next? [*Sun, moon, stars*]. Sprinkle some silver/stars on your pretzel.
9. What did God create next? [*Fish, birds*]. Sprinkle some yellow on your pretzel reminding us of goldfish and goldfinches.
10. And last God created what? [*Animals, people*]. There are many kinds of animals and all sorts of people! Sprinkle the multi-colored sprinkles on any empty part of your pretzel.
11. God's creation is so colorful and beautiful! And delicious!
12. Let us pray. Repeat after me.

Dear God, (echo)

Thank you for Jesus. (echo)

Thank you for creating the world. (echo)

Help us to take care of our world, (echo)

And to take care of each other. (echo)

Amen. (echo)



## Closing Prayer

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We are going to pray a “chaos” prayer to end our time together today. I am going to start and end the prayer, and in the middle, when I shout “CHAOS.” I want you to shout out one thing you want to thank God for creating. I will give you a minute to think before I start. After a few moments start praying:

**Creator God, you have made a beautiful world for us to live in. We are especially thankful for CHAOS! After the chaos of the group shouting calms down continue, Help us to care for all of you creation, including ourselves. Amen.**

Remember to send “For the Home” take-home sheet with participants before dismissing them.



## Colors of Creation

*Participate in the creation story.*

**Group 1:**

1. Darkness (Black)
2. Days (Yellow)
3. Waters (Blue)
4. Plants (Green)
5. Optional: images of sea animals

**Group 2:**

1. Darkness (Black)
2. Days (Yellow)
3. Clouds
4. Stars (Balls)
5. Optional: images of flying animals

**Group 3:**

1. Darkness (Black)
2. Waters (Blue)
3. Lands (Brown)
4. Plants (Green)
5. Optional: images of land animals

**Group 4:**

1. Darkness (Black)
2. Clouds
3. Stars (Balls)
4. Optional: images of flying animals



## Colors of Creation

*Participate in the creation story.*

Script	Colors to Hold Up	Movement
At the very, very beginning, there was nothing but God and darkness.	Black (Darkness)	Everyone holds up the black paper.
But God did not want there to be only darkness. So, God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light! God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day and the darkness Night. God said, "This is good." That was the first step of creation!	Yellow (Days) Black (Nights)	Groups 1 and 2 move to the "sky" area. Groups 3 and 4 gather in the "ground" area.
Then God separated the water. Some God gathered below. Some of the water became clouds in the sky so that it could rain. God said, "This is good." That was the second step of creation!	Blue (Waters) Clouds (Clouds)	Group 1 moves to the "ground," and Group 4 moves to the "sky." Groups 2 and 3 remain where they are.
But water was everywhere! So, God put the water in the seas and oceans and lakes, and there was land! But it was still kind of boring, right? Only brown land and blue water. Then God created plants, both plants on land and plants in the water! That was much better. God said, "This is good." That was the third step of creation!	Blue (Waters) Brown (Lands) Green (Plants) Clouds (Clouds)	Group 3 gathers together, and Group 1 gathers together. Groups 2 and 4 remain where they are. At the mention of plants, Groups 1 and 3 hold up their green paper.



## Colors of Creation

*Participate in the creation story.*

Script	Colors to Hold Up	Movement
<p>Now the land and seas looked better, but the sky was still plain. So, God created the sun for the daytime and the moon and stars for the nighttime. It was beautiful! God said, “This is good.” That was the fourth step of creation!</p>	<p>Yellow balloon (Sun) White balloon (Moon) Ping-pong balls (Stars)</p>	<p>Groups 2 and 4 hold up small balls. Hand one participant from these groups <i>the sun and another the moon.</i></p>
<p>Hmmm... there is still something missing. Animals! So, God created animals to swim in the waters. And God created animals to fly through the skies. God said, “This is good.” That was the fifth step of creation!</p>	<p>Optional: images of sea animals and flying animals</p>	<p>Group 1 acts out their favorite sea animals. Groups 2 and 4 act out their favorite flying animals. Optional: participants hold up the appropriate animal images.</p>
<p>Now there were animals in the water and animals in the air, but there were no animals roaming around on land! So, God created all sorts of land animals. God said, “This is good.”</p>	<p>Optional: images of land animals</p>	<p>Group 3 acts out their favorite land animals. Optional: participants hold up the appropriate animal images.</p>



## Colors of Creation

*Participate in the creation story.*

Script	Colors to Hold Up	Movement
<p><b>One more thing was missing. People! God wanted people to love and to return God’s love. So, God created people. These were special. They were made in the image of God! And God said, “This is very good!” That was the sixth step of creation.</b></p>		<p>Everyone stands or sits with their hands on their hips, smiling and proud.</p>
<p><b>There was just one more thing. God knew that the people would work hard. But they needed time to rest and spend time with each other and with God. So, as an example for us, God rested.</b></p>		<p>Everyone pretends to rest or sleep.</p>



## Creation

### The Point

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God gives life.

### Key Verse

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And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures.”

– Genesis 1:20a

### Did You Know?

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- This and other accounts of creation in Scripture are intended to be descriptions of why the world came to be and who made it and not descriptions of how the world came to be.
- The description of the cosmos at the beginning of this creation account as watery chaos (“formless void”) reflects the ancient Near Eastern cultural view of the danger of uncontrolled water, seen often in the sea, floods, and storms.
- The focus of this creation account is that God created order out of chaos: separating waters, gathering the seas and setting their boundaries, and filling the water, land, and sky with living creatures. This theme of God being in ultimate control of the seemingly uncontrollable elements is reflected throughout Scripture.
- While Scripture describes the beginning of creation as watery chaos, the Book of Revelation describes the new heavens and earth as having no sea (Revelation 21:1). This shows that not only is God in control of the forces of chaos and evil in our world, but that these forces will ultimately be destroyed and have no place in the world to come.
- God gives humanity dominion over living creatures, but—as with all things—we are to use this responsibility to love God and love others.

### Why It Matters

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- No matter how random or chaotic our world and lives may seem, God is ultimately in control.
- In and through water, God gives all creatures life.
- When we use water to help and not to harm, we are participating in God's good creation.

## Prayer of the Week

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God, empower us to care for your creation. Amen.

## Discussion Starters

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Talk a walk, see how many different things God created you can count. You might need to make it a short walk or bring a calculator!

Clear chaos and care for people God created in your home by cleaning your room or doing the dishes without being asked.

Make a list of everything you had to drink today. How was water used to help produce each different liquid? Even milk needs water to get to your table! (Cows need milk to drink to produce milk.)

Talk about ways each person in your home can play with water, make a plan to do something fun with water together.

What do you think is the most interesting thing God created? Why is that thing the most interesting to you?



## Blessing for the Week

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Share this blessing while tracing a cross on each person's forehead or hand with their permission: **You are a special creation of God.**