

The Flood and the Ark

Background

Focus: God's promise through Noah (Genesis 6:5-9:17)

We now move with the people of God from the creation to the re-creation and God's promise to Noah, to God's family, and to us.

Material

The basket for The Flood and the Ark is on one of the Old Testament shelves.

It contains:

- a tan felt underlay
- the ark
- Noah and his wife
- ten animals
- small box containing the dove
- small box containing three stones

Movements

Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.

Pick up the basket containing the material and return to the circle.

Place the basket beside you and get settled. Spread out the tan underlay. Sit a moment as the story forms in you.

As you say "created everything," sweep your hand across the underlay in front of you. When you say, "It is very good," place your hand on the underlay as if it were one of the creation cards that was "blessed" in the Creation lesson.

Words

Watch. Watch where I go.

When God created everything, God said, "It is very good."

Move your hand to show the water flowing across the underlay.

Put Noah down in the middle of the underlay, two-thirds of the way toward the children. Leave room for the ark, which you will place after, so that the family remains between the ark and the children. Put "Mrs. Noah" beside Noah.

Touch Noah as he walks with God.

Place the ark in the middle of the underlay.

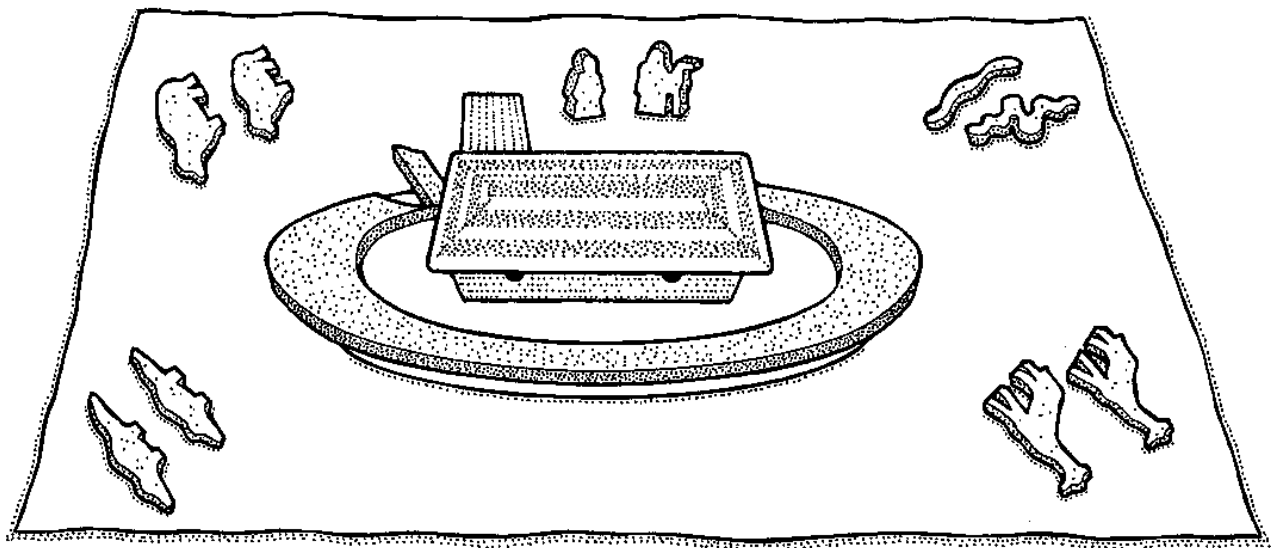
Place a pair of animals at each corner of the underlay.

But people began to do bad things. God decided to send a great flood of water to wash everything clean and make it new again.

Then God saw a good family. The father was Noah. This is his wife, Namah. In her aprons, she gathered the seeds that would sow new plants for the world. Noah and his wife had three sons, and they had wives.

Noah walked with God. He came so close to God, and God came so close to Noah, that Noah knew what God wanted him to do. God wanted Noah to build a big boat called an ark.

Noah and all his family began to build the ark.



THE ARK WITH ANIMALS IN THE CORNERS (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

Move the animals, two by two, onto the ark. Lay them flat so they won't fall over and distract the children.

As they were building the ark, animals began to come from all the four corners of the earth. They came two by two to fill the ark.

As you speak of the rain and the puddles, show the rain coming down with your hands, moving your fingers as rain.

Move your hands on the underlay to show the puddles.

As the rain continues, put a hand at each end of the ark and slowly begin to lift it upward, rocking it a bit to show the motion of the water.

As you raise the ark higher, say

Finally, raise the ark overhead. Hold the ark there for a time to emphasize the experience of submersion. Everyone who was not safe in the ark was under the water.

Begin to lower the ark slowly as you talk. When it is about a foot from the table, set it down without comment. Turn your attention to the dove.

Remove the top from the small dove box and have the lid ready to place at the far edge of the underlay to your right. It will become the nest the dove makes. Hold out your hand to receive the dove and to let it fly. Fly the dove back and forth as it searches for land.

Fly the dove again.

Point to the dove's beak and let the children imagine the olive leaf.

Hold out your hand and let the dove fly forth again. Fly the dove around and finally allow it to settle in its nest.

When the ark was finished and all of the animals were on the ark, it began to rain. Water came down from the heavens and up from the earth. It rained and rained.

At first it was like any rain, but the rain kept on coming. The puddles ran together...

...and soon the water covered everything.

When the creatures on the ark looked out into the rain, all they could see was water.

It rained and rained. It rained for forty days and forty nights.

But God did not forget the creatures on the ark. After forty days and forty nights, the rain stopped.

Then God sent a great wind to dry up the water, and the water began to go down.

Noah took the dove. He held it carefully and then sent it forth. It flew and flew. Noah held out his hand and received the dove. There was still nothing but water.

Noah waited seven days. He sent the dove forth again. It flew and flew.

This time when it came back it had a fresh olive leaf in its mouth. Now there was something green and growing on the earth again.

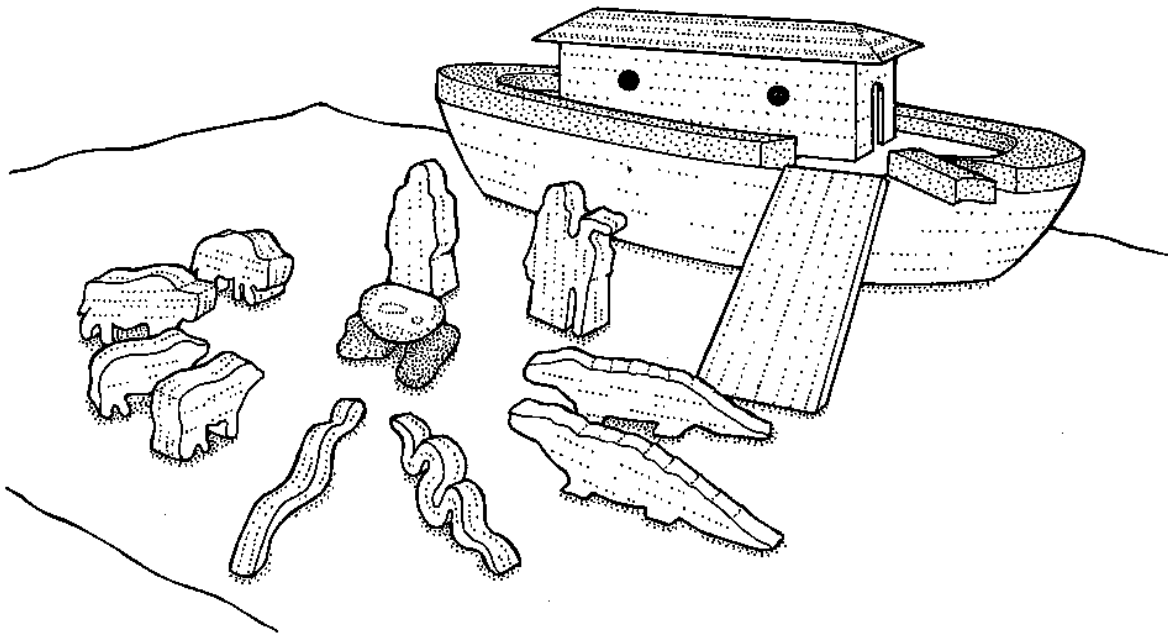
Noah waited seven more days. He sent the dove out again. This time it did not come back. It made a nest and it stayed there.

Pick up the ark again, gently rocking it. Then slowly settle the ark down on the underlay.

Take the creatures out of the ark and put them in a circle. Place the stones in the middle of the circle to show how Noah built an altar.

The water kept going down, then finally the ark came to rest upon the earth.

All the creatures began to come out of the ark. They were so happy to be home again that they could not help it. They had to say their prayers to try to say how happy they were. They made an altar and gave thanks to God.



NOAH AND THE ALTAR (CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE)

With your hand flat, your palm facing the children, make an arc that begins at one side of the underlay and goes up, then down to the other side of the underlay so the arc covers the whole earth.

Move the animal pairs out to the four corners of the underlay; Noah and his wife remain in the middle.

Sit for a moment to the story, then introduce the wondering questions.

Suddenly, all the creatures saw a great bow in the sky. It was a bow of many colors. You can still see it today when there is rain and the sun is shining. Today we call it a rainbow.

This rainbow was God's sign to say that God will never send such a flood again.

The creatures then went out into all the four corners of the earth and filled it up again with life.

- I wonder what part of this story you like best?
- I wonder what part is most important?
- I wonder where you are in the story or what part is about you?
- I wonder if there is any part of the story we can leave out and still have all the story we need?

When the wondering draws to a close, carefully replace everything in its basket and return it to its spot on the shelf. Return to the circle and dismiss the children to their work.