



## A Celebration of Bible Stories

### Introduction

This celebration acknowledges some of the many kinds of stories that are in the Bible—everything from adventure stories to miracle stories. Each kind of story carries a message of God's love for us. This could be used as a children's message that leads into a celebration of scripture. You may want to print this liturgy in the bulletin/worship folder as a take-home piece for those who want to refer to it later.

### Preparation

Place symbols to illustrate each story type around the lectern so that they can be seen by the congregation. Use your imagination when coming up with symbolic items. Here are ideas:

- Adventure stories: a backpack
- Kid stories: a child's toy
- Travel stories: a passport, travel brochure, or poster
- Family stories: a family portrait
- Miracle stories: a bottle of water
- Food stories: a can of food or other nonperishable food item
- Animal stories: a stuffed animal
- Friendship stories: a friendship bracelet

Announce what the symbol is when you hold it up so that those who are not able to see can make the connection and feel included in the worship celebration.

### Litany

**Leader:** This morning we take a closer look at the Bible and celebrate the kinds of stories contained within its pages. Gathered around the lectern, where our Bible sits and where our weekly readings are read, are symbols of these stories.

**People:** We celebrate the presence of God's Word among us!

Leader: (*Holding up the backpack*) We give thanks for stories of adventure, such as the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea. These stories illustrate the never-ending presence of God in our lives. God does not desert the people of God throughout the adventures of our lives.

**People: Thank you, O God, for accompanying us throughout all times of adventure—both exciting and uncertain.**

Leader: (*Holding up child's toy*) We give thanks for stories that show God is present in the lives of children. God calls even the youngest among us and offers them the opportunity to respond, "Speak, for your servant is listening," as Samuel did when he was a young boy. These stories remind us that God speaks to us, no matter what our age.

**People: Thank you, O God, for speaking to even the youngest in our midst.**

Leader: (*Holding up passport*) We give thanks for stories that illustrate the journeys we engage in during life. Mary and Joseph make their way to Bethlehem, where Jesus is born. The wise men follow a star in search of the baby Jesus. These stories show us that God accompanies us throughout all our travels, no matter where they take us.

**People: Thank you, O God, for traveling with us through all of life's journeys.**

Leader: (*Holding up family portrait*) We give thanks for stories that celebrate and highlight families, such as Mary and Joseph looking for their son and finding him in the Temple. These stories show us that God blesses families of all shapes and sizes because they are the units in which we first come to know and love God.

**People: Thank you, O God, for giving us the gift of families that can teach us about you and your love for us.**

Leader: (*Holding up bottle of water*) We give thanks for miracle stories that show us God's incredible power over all things. Stories of Jesus walking on water and changing water into wine. These stories show us that nothing is ever impossible for our God, who can create miracles even when we lack hope.

**People: Thank you, O God, for the gift of miracles, large and small, that continue to surprise and bless us.**

Leader: (*Holding up food item*) We give thanks for stories in which God nourishes all people. Stories like the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus dining with his disciples on the road to Emmaus. These stories show us that God feeds the people of God and desires us to feed each other, especially those in need.

**People: Thank you, O God, for the gift of daily bread and nourishment. Open our hearts so that we, too, may feed people in need.**

Leader: (*Holding up stuffed animal*) We give thanks for stories that celebrate the gift of animals among us and for how you use them to fulfill your will, even as you used the donkey on Palm Sunday as transportation for your Son. These stories highlight the variety of God's creation and act as a reminder that we have been called to care for all of creation.

**People: We thank you, O God, for the gift of animals, especially pets that share our lives and remind us of your love for creation.**

Leader: *(Holding up friendship bracelet)* We give thanks for stories of human companionship and friendship. Stories such as the friendship among Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila highlight God's desire for us to be social beings and offer an opportunity to give thanks for the many friendships we have.

**People: We thank you, O God, for the blessing of human companionship and friends.**

Leader: Thank you, O God, for the many stories in your Holy Scriptures that speak to us in many ways. This day we celebrate them and your love for your people that the stories clearly demonstrate. Amen.