THE GOSPEL PROJECT SR. Unit 14.2 Jonah prophet to Nineveh
Date: Sunday Nov. 15, 2026 **Teachers: Vicky (lead) Caleb (co-lead)**
Bible Passage: Jonah 1–4 **Key Passage:** Joel 2:13
Props: from home: If you have the materials and you are able to make this- it would be fun! Ocean in a bottle
Get an empty, clean 2-liter bottle. Fill the bottle halfway with water and add a few drops of blue food color. Swish to distribute. Fill the remaining space with cooking oil and add a few small toys (fish shapes, a Jonah figure, and so forth). Replace the bottle cap and seal it with duct tape. Show that holding the bottle horizontally allows you to tip it back and forth to make waves.
OR print/bring in a picture of a LARGE fish or a big toy fish
At centre: activity sheets- word search, make a large arrow: THIS WAY
Review Rules:
One Mouth speaking at a time (Teacher points to mouths/kids point to their mouths)
Two Hands kept to myself (kids wiggle hands and keep them to themselves)
Two Feet kept to myself (kids cross legs)
Speak Kind words like our God three in ONE!

BIBLE STORY INTRO materials: see props ***Vicky***
Let's remember the story from last week: We looked at the life of the prophet Hosea to learn that God loves people when they do not deserve it. God goes after sinners, just like Hosea went after his wife. Today's story is another story about God going after people when they don't deserve it, because that is the nature of God. God loves the world He made and His love pursues us even when we don't deserve it because we have rejected God to have our own way.
In today's Bible story God wants his prophet Jonah to go to a place called Nineveh and tell the Ninevites to turn from their ways and turn to the God who made them and loves them. Who knows this story? Does Jonah obey God and go do this? NO! Who can tell me what happened? This is a very famous story and the part that gets a LOT of attention is the FISH (show the ocean bottle OR fish) because it is so wild what happens to Jonah. But do you know there is another big part of this story and an image we don't hear about enough? Does anyone know what it is?
A TREE! It is a tree that God causes to grow….and well let's watch what happens…

BIBLE STORY VIDEO: BIBLE STORY VIDEO: JONAH PROPHET TO NINEVAH

DISCUSSION VIDEO ***Vicky***
Why did the cupcakes only help the cupcake that fell? How is this like our Bible Story? Jonah did not want to take God's message to the Ninevites because he didn't like them, and he was angry when God showed mercy to them. Do you know now why the tree/plant was a part of the story and what did that represent? God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" "Yes!" Jonah said. "It is right. I'm so angry, I could die."
God said, "You cared about the plant, but you did not take care of it or make it grow. It only lasted one day. But Nineveh is a big city with thousands of people. I created them and care about them. Aren't they more important than a plant?" God deeply loves the world He made, and He wants us to share His love for them, by sharing the good news- the gospel with the world.

DISMISS JR. KIDS-GR.1

KEY PASSAGE: ***Caleb***

"Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious, He is compassionate, slow to anger, rich in faithful love." Joel 2:13

*(construction paper in church bin if you want to wait until church to prepare cut paper into the shape of fish and write the memory verse on the cut outs, tape the fish to the backs of the kids and have them go around and order themselves into the proper memory verse sequen*ce)

BIBLE STORY WRAP UP AND REVIEW: (Split the kids into 2 teams for the review and keep score on the whiteboard) ***Vicky***

Jonah had a very important message from God, but he didn't want to deliver it. He went the opposite direction God told him to go! Despite Jonah's disobedience, God showed compassion and gave Jonah a second chance to obey. God sent a giant fish to change Jonah's plans into God's plans. (Jonah was in the whales belly 3 days…remind you of another 3 days in the Bible? Jesus! On the Third Day He rose again.

Sadly, even after Jonah had obeyed, he showed that he didn't really understand God. You see the Ninevites were enemies of God's people. Nineveh was an evil city, and Jonah didn't think they deserved God's mercy, but Jonah forgot that no one does! We are all choosing ourselves over God and to do what is right in our own eyes. None of us deserve God's mercy. God made every people group in His image and He cares about them. Jonah wanted to see his enemies punished, but Jesus wants to see those who have rejected God restored to God. Jesus gave his life by dying on a Roman and cross and 3 days later rising again in order to restore us back to God.

Ask the following review questions:

Where did God tell Jonah to go? (to Nineveh, Jonah 1:2)

How did God stop Jonah from running away? (He sent a terrible storm, Jonah 1:4)

What did Jonah tell the sailors to do with him to stop the storm? (throw him into the sea, Jonah 1:12)

What happened to Jonah when he was thrown into the sea? (A big fish swallowed him, Jonah 1:17)

How long was Jonah in the fish? (three days and three nights, Jonah 1:17)

What happened after Jonah prayed to God from inside the fish? (The fish spit Jonah onto dry land, Jonah 2:10)

What message did Jonah tell the people in Nineveh? (In 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed; Jonah 3:4)

What did the Ninevites do when they heard Jonah's message from God? (They turned from their evil ways and repented, Jonah 3:5-9)

When God saw the actions of the Ninevites, what did He do? (God showed mercy to the Ninevites and did not destroy them, Jonah 3:10)

How did Jonah feel when God showed mercy to the Ninevites? (Jonah was angry, Jonah 4:1)

God used a plant to teach Jonah a lesson. What happened to the plant? (A worm attacked the plant, and the plant died; Jonah 4:7)

What is God like? God is slow to anger, merciful, and loving.

ACTIVITY: 'Immediate Obedience" materials: none ***Caleb***

Give the kids a command, such as "sit down," "untie your left shoe," or "clap three times." Try to watch for who is able to obey the command the fastest. Whoever is the fastest to obey will give the next command. Continue until all kids have had a chance to give a command or as time allows.

These commands are silly and they are just for fun in our class, but God's commands are for our good and for the good of the cities we live in. We obey God because He loves us and knows what is best for us and for the flourishing of our cities.

ACTIVITY SHEET: WORD SEARCH

ACTIVITY: "*Circles of compassion*" materials: blank sheets of paper/markers/pens/pencils
Instruct the kids to make 4 concentric circles on their sheet of paper label the circles from smallest to largest: My home, My city, My country, and My world. Guide kids to name one person in those circles who needs to see God's mercy and love. Jonah didn't want his enemies to be forgiven! But God showed mercy to the Ninevites. God loves us and wants to forgive even the people we don't want to forgive.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IF TIME:"Mercy, please!"
Invite kids to play a variation of tag. One child will be It. Her job is to tag the other players. Another child will be Mercy. His job will be to help those who have been tagged. When a player is tagged, he must sit. He may call out, "Mercy, please!" If Mercy comes and tags him, he is back in the game.