

date: **2/25/18**

# REMEMBER & CELEBRATE

## Feast of Harvest: Remembering and Celebrating God's Abundant Provision

### Inspire

*Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

My mom has a holiday tradition of asking questions while we sit around the dinner table. Each person poses a question, and the others answer. We ask questions such as, "Where do you see yourself in five years?" or "What is your favorite childhood memory?" Some questions elicit laughs; some evoke tears.

A few years ago, my family gathered at my parents' cabin in the woods. Together we remembered the questions we'd asked the year before. That year, we had wept together as we shared our hopes for the future, including the desire of my brother and his wife for a child. Now, we celebrated God's gracious answering of our prayers—my brother's baby boy was there.

In Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 4 we read, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens ... a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance." During our time together as a family, God made it possible for me to remember and celebrate His provision during both a period of weeping and a period of laughing.

*Tori Funkhouser*  
ROCKHARBOR Church

### Equip

*Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

#### **Feast of Harvest: A Feast Celebrating God's Abundant Provision**

This festival, also known as the Feast of Pentecost or Weeks, corresponded with the nation's harvest season. Pentecost, which means "50," was celebrated 50 days after Passover and recognized when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. During this festival, the Israelites celebrated a season of gladness and thanked God for abundantly providing for their physical and spiritual needs—including a way into relationship with Him.

## Support

*Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

Philippians 4:8 reads, “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” In this verse, Paul encouraged the Philippians to continually remember and celebrate the good things that God has done and the good things He’s created. He encouraged them to remember that God the provider had already given them many things over which to celebrate.

Take some time today and make a list, on paper or in your head, of the good things God has done for you. Then make a list of the good things you see around you—in nature, in your community, in your home, in the lives of your friends and family. Then praise God for these things, because He is the provider and the creator of everything good.

## SMALL GROUP SECTION

## EXPLORE// 10 min.

### Small Group Leaders

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day’s biblical feast or festival.*

## Harvest of Souls

Israel celebrated the Feast of Harvest every year as they began to harvest grain. During this celebration, God’s people set aside time to remember that God is the abundant provider of everything. This activity will help children remember that God is the abundant provider and the One who calls us to be harvesters who invite others to trust in Jesus.

### SUPPLIES

- Images: [Wheat Sheaves](#) (see Resources)
- Construction paper (1–2 sheets per child, brown or tan)
- Scissors
- String (about 12" per child)
- Optional: long grasses, hay, raffia, or other materials that resemble wheat 

### SET UP

Print the images of Wheat Sheaves and set them out along with the supplies. Optional: Cut the construction paper into strips.

### RELATE

Invite the children to make as many sheaves of wheat as they’d like. Encourage the kids to cut strips from the construction paper and tie them into sheaves with string. Optional: The kids can use natural materials such as long grasses, hay, or raffia to bundle together sheaves of wheat.

During the Feast of Harvest, the Israelites celebrated God's abundant provision. Israel was a farming society, so the people's lives depended on God sending rain so the crops could grow. Then, at just the right time, when the harvest was ripe, workers would go out into the fields and harvest the grain. After the harvest, all of Israel would gather together and present food offerings to God.

During Jesus' day, He told His followers, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Jesus wasn't talking about crops; He was talking about souls. Jesus was explaining that there are many people, many souls, ready to hear about God and put their faith in Him. Today, as we spend time remembering and celebrating what God has done for His people, remember that we're harvesters, called to invite people to trust and obey Jesus.

After the children finish their wheat sheaves, have them bring the sheaves with them to the large group area and place them in one big pile. This pile will symbolize the harvest being plentiful.

## LARGE GROUP SECTION

# REMEMBER// 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

*Through a sequence of traditions and play, children are given the opportunity to pause and remember who God is.*

## Traditions and Remember Verse

### SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse 7–9 image (see Resources)
- Remember Verse 10–12 image (see Resources)
- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)

### RELATE

After everyone gathers as a large group, open with Traditions. During Traditions, you're helping the children work toward a common goal and giving them mementos to celebrate accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse, inviting friends to church, or bringing their Bibles. Once children receive their mementos, have them put the objects in the designated container. Once kids fill the container, hold a celebration.

If your kids fill a clear container or build a structure as part of a Tradition, give out simple foods (e.g., pretzels or animal crackers) if you eat together on Remember & Celebrate weekends. Save the more extensive party for when they complete their goal.

Recall the Remember Verses from the previous weeks. Lessons 7–9:

**He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.  
Isaiah 40:29**

Lessons 10–12:

**How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you. Psalm 31:19**

## Remember and Play

### SUPPLIES

- Images: ZONK! Questions, ZONK! Answers (see Resources)

Note: See the How It Works document for more information.

## ZONK!

### Questions and Answers

1) How did God bring His people into the Promised Land?

- a. On a boat
- b. By stopping the flow of the Jordan River
- c. By building a bridge over the Jordan River
- d. By carrying them on His back

**ANSWER: B**

2) What 12 things did the Israelites take out of the river as a remembrance of what God did for them?

- a. Stones
- b. Feathers
- c. Fish
- d. Wakeboards

**ANSWER: A**

3) True or False: God won the battle of Jericho by having the Israelites fight with weapons.

**ANSWER: False.** God won the battle of Jericho by making the walls fall down when the Israelites blew their trumpets and yelled.

4) In the third battle that God won for the Israelites, God made the \_\_\_\_ stand still for a whole day.

**ANSWER: Sun**

5) As a young man, what kinds of things did David do?

- a. Play with a slingshot
- b. Shepherd sheep
- c. Work at the movie theater
- d. Tend to his father's camels

**ANSWER: A and B**

6) When King David brought the ark of the covenant back to his kingdom, what did he do in front of the ark?

- a. Jogged in place
- b. Played a game
- c. Walked quietly
- d. Worshipped and danced

**ANSWER: D**

7) What did God promise to build for David?

- a. A pool
- b. A barn
- c. A house
- d. A lawn mower

**ANSWER: C.** Remember, it wasn't a real house that God promised David! God promised to build David a "house," or a family line that would last forever, because Jesus Christ would come from his family.

8) For what did King Solomon ask God?

- a. Wisdom
- b. Wealth
- c. Fame
- d. A kitten

**ANSWER: A**

9) What did King Solomon do for God that David, his father, could not do?

- a. Build God a big boat
- b. Build God a temple
- c. Make God a friendship bracelet
- d. Write God a poem

**ANSWER: B**

10) True or False: Solomon always followed what God wanted for him.

**ANSWER: False.** Solomon disobeyed God and fell away from Him.

## SMALL GROUP SECTION

# BLESS// 5 min.

### Small Group Leaders

*Children are blessed through a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance.*

### SUPPLIES

- Bible

### RELATE

As you bless your kids, tell them they have the opportunity to also be a blessing to others. Encourage them to freely share the joy and love they have received from God.

Open a Bible and read Psalm 67:1–2.

**May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.**

Then, have children stand in a circle and link elbows as you bless them:

**May our God provide you with love, joy, peace, and comfort this week! He is our abundant provider, and we can always trust Him!**