

## The Call of Moses: Storytelling Workshop

Written for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA in 2002 by Beth Tobin. Updated in 2006 by Jill Esbeck, and again January 2010, and December 2017 by Beth Tobin. Copyright 2010 Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Olympia, WA. Permission to copy materials granted for non-commercial use provided credit is given and all cited references remain with this material.



**Bible Text:** Exodus 1-4

### Memory Verse:

*"Pray without ceasing."* 1 Thessalonians 5:17 NRSV

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* Philippians 4:13 NRSV

### Objectives:

- To help students become familiar with Moses' Calling from God in Exodus 3 and 4.
- To help students understand why we use candles during worship.
- To help students begin thinking about how God might use them, and to become aware of what excuses they may be making that get in the way.
- To help instill respect for the house of the Lord and holy ground.
- To help develop a better understanding of the Third Commandment.

### Materials:

- Burning Bush: (Sage Brush, flame lights, etc. to make it look realistic.)  
This is set up in front of the altar in the sanctuary.
- Extension Cord
- Flame Sheets: Red, Yellow, Orange construction paper cut in flame shapes.
- Dark Markers to write on flames.
- Faith Journal Sheets
- Moses or Aaron Costume for Storyteller
- Staff for Storyteller
- Construction Paper in red, yellow, orange to make pre-cut flames.
- Bush for window in the narthex.
- Tape, Pencils

### Preparation:

- Read Exodus 1-4
- Read Background Information
- Watch the Bible Study Video: [www.GloriaDeiKids.org](http://www.GloriaDeiKids.org)
- Construct a scene representing the Burning Bush.
- Assemble a costume to wear during the workshop
- Pre-cut flames for creating a burning bush on a bulletin board or window.

## **Opening:**

Introduce yourself and welcome students. Make sure everyone has a Bible. Ask:

- What kind of excuses do you make when you don't want to do something?
- Where do you meet God? What happens when you meet God?
- What is "Holy" ground? How is "Holy" ground different from any other ground?

Moses was called by God to help God's people. As we take a closer look at the story, listen for the excuses Moses was making, and how God reacted?

## **Bible Lesson/Activity:**

Be sure to "place" the story: Exodus is the second book in the Old Testament. (Make sure everyone has found Exodus.) The story of the Exodus begins 400 years after Joseph has died, and a new king is in position who did not know about Joseph. The pharaoh, was afraid of the Israelites because there were so many of them. He put them into slavery, and ended up having the baby boys thrown into the river.

This is when Moses was born. His mother hid him for three months, and then put him in a basket in the river. His sister watched the basket, and when a princess found the basket, Moses' sister asked the princess if she would like a nursemaid to take care of the baby. Moses' sister went and got Moses' mother, who raised Moses for a while longer, and then Moses was raised by the princess.

When Moses was grown he killed an Egyptian for being mean to an Israelite and the next day tried to stop two Israelites from fighting. The pharaoh found out, and wanted to kill Moses, so Moses ran away to the land of Midian. There he rescued seven daughters from some shepherds at a well, and ended up marrying one of the daughters. They had a baby boy.

During all of this time the King of Egypt (the pharaoh) died. Verse 2:23-25, "The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them."

### ***Continue the story from this point.***

- Moses takes his father-in-law's sheep to Mt. Horeb, the mountain of God.
- God speaks from a burning bush. (Turn out lights and plug in burning bush.)
- Moses goes to check it out.
- God calls, "Moses! Moses!"
- Take off shoes on holy ground. (Students should do the same.)
- When Moses realized who was speaking, he hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.
- God says, "I am sending you to pharaoh."
- Moses, excuse one: Who am I?
- Vs. 3:12, "I will be with you." God promises to be with us also.
- Excuse two: "What is your name? I need a name?"

- God: I AM WHO I AM.... The people became afraid to use this name. Yahweh... the intimate and personal name of God. God is giving us his name here. He wants us to know Him, to call on Him, to respect Him. Who knows what the second commandment is? (Do not misuse the name of the Lord.)
- God keeps talking about what to do, and what God will do...
- Excuse three: "What if they don't believe me?"
- God gives three signs: staff to snake, hand to leprosy, Nile River water to blood on dry land.
- Excuse four: "I cannot speak eloquently."
- God: I will help you and teach you what to say.
- Moses: "Oh Lord, please send someone else to do it."
- God: The Lord's anger burned against Moses. Your brother Aaron will help you.
- Aaron helps Moses. They speak to the elders of the Israelites, and they believed, and bowed down and worshiped God.

### **Discussion points:**

*(Note timing and move class from the sanctuary to the narthex when necessary.)*

- Why do we light candles during worship?
- What excuses do we use instead of doing what God wants?
- What are some ways God might use you?

Give each child a precut paper flame. Tell the children that they are going to put flames on the bush on the narthex/sanctuary window to make it "burn". Ask each child to write his/her name on a flame and write or draw one idea to pledge to carry out God's work. How is God calling you to do God's work at home, at school, at work, at play, at church?

With shoes off, ask the children to come forward quietly, and "holy," and tape their flame offering on the bush. Optional: The children can announce their pledge as they come forward. You may wish to have some quiet meditative music playing in the background to help with the mood. Use tape to stick the flames on the bush. The shepherds can assist.

Each week another class will add to the flames until it is a big burning bush by the end of the rotation. The flames will proclaim all the ways that we can carry out God's work in everyday life. Flames will also be available for parents and others to add to our burning bush.

Do you ever make excuses for not wanting to come to Sunday school or church? What about when faced with a decision about doing the right thing? What are they? How might you think differently after learning about Moses?

How can we show respect to God when we are at church? (God's House)

### ***Close with prayer.***

Hand out the Faith Journal Sheet. If there is time, work through it. If not, please ask students to take it with to work on at home.