

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets and play dough.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Show kids how to roll the play dough to form an X shape. **Like Jonah, we all have things we don't want to do sometimes. We're going to play "Would You Rather?" There are some choices on the leaflet. In the section at the top, choose if you would rather brush your teeth or have rocks for teeth.** Invite kids to place a play dough X over the choice they do not want. **What would it be like to have rocks for teeth?**
2. **Look at the section with the bug. Would you rather try a new food every day for a week or eat a bug?** Have kids put a play dough X over the choice they do not want. **I wonder what bugs taste like.**
3. **Look at the section with the toys. Would you rather clean up your toys or clean a pigpen?** Have kids put a play dough X over the choice they do not want. **I wonder if God could find you if you hid in a dirty pigpen.**
4. **Sometimes you just don't want to get dressed. Would you rather get dressed for the day or wear footie pajamas to school or the store or church?** Have kids put a play dough X over the choice they don't want.
5. **What other choices would be fun to choose between? Would you rather do _____ or _____?** Have kids make up their own "would you rather" choices if time allows.

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we learned that it can be hard to do something even when it's the right thing to do. But when we try to run away from God, God always gives us a second chance. How does it feel to get a second chance? Take time to hear kids' responses.

Pass out leaflet panels and crayons.

The leaflet panel says, "Blank has a second chance!" Invite kids to write their names on the ticket. The next time you need a second chance with someone, give the ticket to them and ask for a second chance.

Send kids out.

Have kids sit in a circle. Let's pass our fish sponge again. Pass the sponge around again two times, saying, "God gives second chances."

Pray together: **Dear God, we want to do what's right the first time. But sometimes we mess up. Thank you for second chances! Amen.**

Thank kids for giving second chances when someone needed it today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.

Jonah in Nineveh

RELUCTANCE • EPIPHANY 3 • YEAR B

JONAH 3:1-5, 10

PreK-K



What is happening in this story?

The book of Jonah is unique. It's a four-chapter book that tells one continuous story about a guy named Jonah who was perhaps one of the most reluctant prophets. The story doesn't end with the fish spewing out Jonah. Jonah tried to run away, but God kept at him. Jonah eventually agrees, even with an angry attitude, and is successful in spite of himself. The Ninevites receive God's mercy and grace. Jonah was an instrument of God even when Jonah was not cooperating.

Why does this story matter for kids?

Kids likely haven't had this experience of running away from God's call, but they know what it's like to do things that aren't fun because their parents or teachers ask it of them. Doing the right thing is hard. Sometimes we need second chances to get "doing the right thing" right. The faithful action may not be the easiest one, but God loves us even when we need those second, or more, chances.

What is the lectionary connection?

The season of Epiphany is filled with call stories—from reluctant prophets to Jesus' disciples to early Christians. All of the stories may seem different from each other, but the common theme is that God calls humans to work with God!

AGE LEVEL TIP

The fish is a memorable part of this story, especially for young kids who might be hearing it for the first time. It's helpful to emphasize that Jonah couldn't hide from God even inside the fish! Jonah prayed to God from the fish's belly.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Scissors
- Crayons

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Play dough
- Kitchen sponges
- Sponge cut into a fish shape
- Medium-sized bowls, one filled with water
- Towels

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Have a bowl of water and one or more empty bowls on a table, along with some sponges. Encourage kids to use the sponges to transfer water from one bowl to another, or just fill the sponges and wring them out. Have some towels on hand for cleanup.

Invite kids to stand around the Floor Mat.

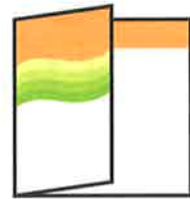
Point out the church season (Epiphany), color (green), and icon (star). **How do you know what good choices are? What if the good choice is a hard choice and you might not want to do it? Sometimes making a good choice is hard.** Have kids stand several steps away from the Floor Mat. **Let's step toward the Floor Mat by taking two steps forward and then one step back until we all reach the mat. Each step backward reminds us of when we don't want to do something. Each step forward is like when we are making good choices and doing them.** Cheer when everyone reaches the Floor Mat.

Have kids sit in a circle. Hold up the fish-shaped sponge. **Today's story is about second chances. There is also a fish in the story! Let's pass the sponge around the circle two times and say, "God gives second chances."**



Pass out leaflets and scissors.

Do you like to hide? What are some of your favorite places to hide? Take time for responses. **In our Bible story today, a man named Jonah tries to hide from God. Look at your leaflets. Which places do you think would be the best places to hide?** Have kids cut out the fish from the back of the leaflet panel and spend some time hiding and finding the video kids with the fish. **Is a fish a good place to hide? We'll find out later when we read the Bible story.** Collect their leaflets until Respond.



Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

It can be hard to tell a friend that he or she did something that made you feel bad. Ada has a chance to do this in today's video. Ada doesn't think it will help, but she tries anyway. Let's watch what happens.

View Episode 10, "Incredulous Intervention," on the Whirl Year B Winter PreK-Grade 2 DVD.

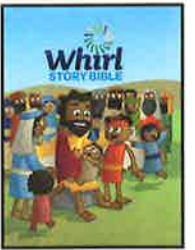
Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **How do Victor's friends feel when he plays tricks on them?**
- **Why do they not want to talk to him about it?**
- **Describe something you know you should do but don't like doing.**
- **How do your friends, family, and teachers help you when you don't want to do something you know you should do?**



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story today! Open your Bible with kids to "Second Chances" on page 158. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the star in the green circle for the Season after Epiphany. Before you read, invite kids to look for the big fish.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **What did God ask Jonah to do? Why didn't Jonah want to do it?**
- **What happened when Jonah tried to run away from God?**
- **How do you think Jonah felt to get a second chance from God? What about the people of Nineveh?**
- **When have you had a second chance?**

Play together.

We're going to play a game that reminds us of second chances. Play "Jonah Says." Have kids follow your instructions when you say, "Jonah says..." but do nothing if you don't say, "Jonah says..." first. When kids make a mistake, offer them a second chance! Start with simple actions: pat your head, turn around, hop on one foot, rub your tummy. Then move on to actions from the story: pretend to run away, swim, be swallowed by a big fish, be spit out by the fish, wipe off sticky sand, stomp and pout.

BIBLE BIT

The Bible says Jonah was swallowed by a great fish, not necessarily a whale. What's important is not what kind of animal it was, but that Jonah couldn't hide from God anywhere!

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you view the video again, ask kids to notice how Victor responds when he finds out that his "tricks" have been hurting his friends.

OUR CHURCH

If you know of a pastor or ministry leader in your congregation who tried to "dodge" God's call like Jonah did, invite the person to share his or her story.

Jonah in Nineveh

EPIPHANY 3
JONAH 3:1-5, 10



This week's theme is **RELUCTANCE**.
Jonah was an unwilling prophet who ended up in a fish belly, but there's more to the story! Try these activities to learn more about what happened with Jonah.

Punishing Questions

Ask family members about a time when they did something wrong and deserved to be punished but weren't. What did that feel like? Why did God choose not to punish the Ninevites?

Fast(ing) Family

In Jonah 3:5, the people of Nineveh "proclaimed a fast." If family members' health allows, try fasting by not eating dinner one night, going without snacks for several hours, or giving up a certain type of food for the entire week.

Sackcloth Q & A

Do some online research to learn more about sackcloth. What is it made of? How is it used? Why do you think people in the Bible wore sackcloth to show they obeyed God?

Repentance → Forgiveness

When the people of Nineveh repented, God forgave. Talk about times when it is easy to forgive others, and times when it is hard to forgive others. What is the difference?

A Long Walk

Calculate the distance of a "three day's walk" like Jonah walked. Choose a walking speed and assume you walk for 8 hours in a day. How far could you walk? How large in diameter might the city of Nineveh be? How many people do you think could have lived in Nineveh in Bible times?

You Want Me to Do What?

Jonah was reluctant to share God's message—but he did. Can family members think of other people in the Bible who were reluctant at first to answer God's call?

Season of Light

Epiphany is a longer season than Advent or Christmas. How is your family enjoying this season of light together? Try lighting a candle during mealtime or placing a nightlight in the hallway to remind family members of the season.

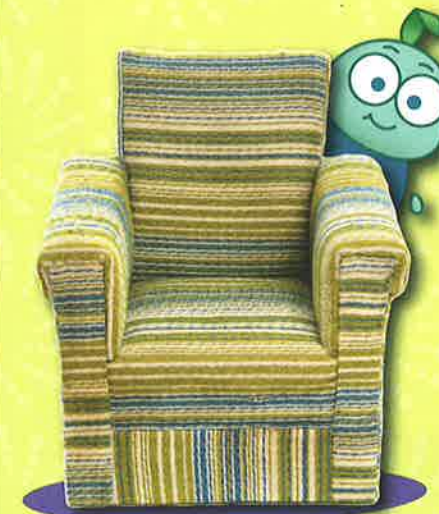
This week our family is praying for . . .

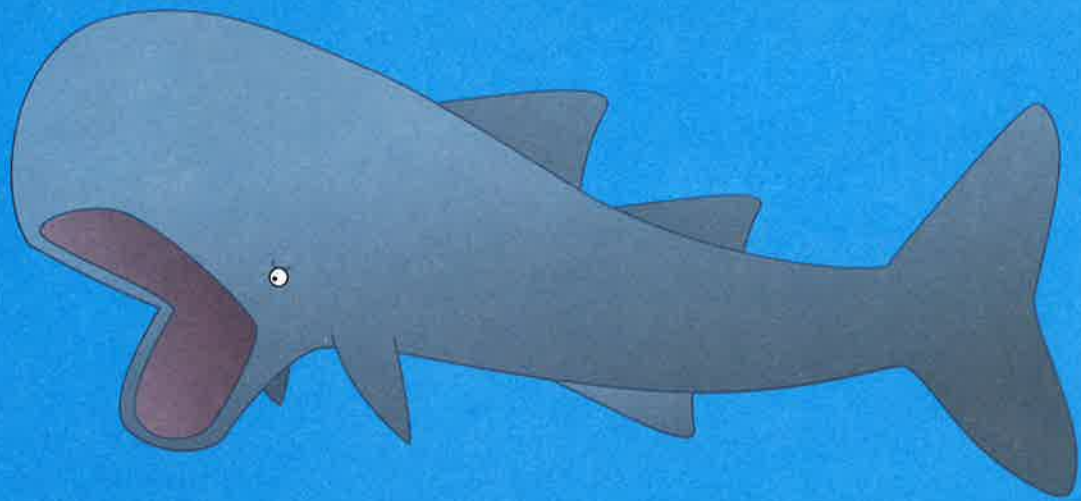


Jonah in Nineveh

EPIPHANY 3 • RELUCTANCE

PreK-K





Brush your teeth?



OR



Have rocks for teeth?

Wear pajamas to school?



Eat a new food every day?



OR

Get dressed?



OR

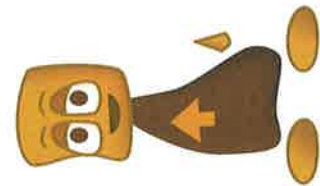
Clean up your toys?



Clean a pigpen?

OR

Eat a bug?



has a second chance!

