

Session 16

The Lost Sheep

God is always with us. Even when we go astray, He keeps loving us.

Scripture: Matthew 18:12-14, Luke 15:3-7

Supplies:

- ◆ Enlarge the drawing that Word starts with
- ◆ Felt pens/crayons/paint to complete the story
- ◆ 1 Copy of the drawing per child
- ◆ Copy of the 2 plain sheep faces for each child
- ◆ 1 Mask per child
- ◆ 1 piece of twine /sticks for the masks
- ◆ 1 Copy of a sheep without legs for each child
- ◆ Wool/cotton wool
- ◆ 2 Clothes pins per child
- ◆ 1 Colouring-in page
- ◆ Pieces of material
- ◆ Glue



WELCOME

Hide a few things beforehand and let the children look for them. It can be sweets, toys or even little plastic sheep, pictures or soft toys.

Bring pictures of farm animals along. Divide the children into groups if it's a large group of children. One child picks up a picture, looks at the animal, and mimics that animal's sound. The other children must guess which animal is being mimicked. The one who guesses right first can mimic the next animal. Groups can mimic animals for other groups who need to guess. If the group guesses correctly, they get a point.

Let the children stand in a circle with their hands behind their backs like little bowls. Choose one child to stand in the middle. Name the child in the middle the shepherd. The shepherd closes his/her eyes and the leader walks around the circle of children and puts a small object (seen as the sheep) in a child's hands. Once the group is ready, everyone shouts together "Shepherd, Shepherd, where is your sheep?" The shepherd has three chances to guess where the sheep is, and the one who is holding the sheep is next to be the shepherd.

Today we are going to focus on the animal that we can really learn from. A parable is an easier way to tell us a story and teach us something. Jesus often used stories to teach people lessons. In today's session we are going to read about the parable of the lost sheep.



WORSHIP

Sing the **theme song** on which you decided for this term and do the **settle down prayer** as in session 15.



WORD

Our story today is about a parable that Jesus told of a sheep and its shepherd.

A shepherd in Israel spent day and night with his sheep. (*Draw a sheep in the first block.*) He always made sure to take them to the best places with nice grass (*draw grass*) and water (*draw puddle of water*). He also had to protect them against all sorts of animals like bears, jackals and wolves. He knew each one of them so well because he spent so much time with them. It also sometimes happened that sheep were hurt or fell into a hole and then the shepherd had to pick it up onto his shoulders and carried it and cared for it until it was healthy again. The shepherd in today's story had 100 sheep! (*Write 100.*) He loved each one of his sheep so much that he gave them all names.

One day they were grazing peacefully in the field. One of the sheep kept seeing a bit of grass that looked much tastier than the previous bit. While it was eating the bit of grass, it saw the most delicious puddle of water not far away. He climbed over the stones very carefully to get to the water (*draw stones*). Behind a bush were two wonderful yummy patches of grass (*draw 2 large bushes to cover the sheep*). The sheep wandered further and further away from the herd without anyone realizing. Next thing he knew, he was totally alone! He couldn't see any of the other sheep or the shepherd, he couldn't even hear them! Worst of all, he had no idea where he was!

The children now get a chance to reflect on the story:

I wonder how the sheep felt when he realized he was alone.

When the shepherd gathered his sheep for the evening, he couldn't believe his eyes! One of his sheep has gone missing! (*Write the word GONE.*) There were only 99 sheep left. (*Write 99 in the second block.*)

I wonder what the shepherd did.

Maybe he said: "What difference does one sheep make? I'm just going to leave him there; I have 99 left anyway." I wonder if he was angry at the sheep and said: "Well, he didn't want to listen to me. It's his own fault that he's missing!"

I think the shepherd was very sad because he loves all his sheep. (*Draw the shepherd's face in the second block and write the word SAD.*)

He put the other 99 sheep away safely and left them to go find his one missing sheep. He looked and he looked – behind the rocks, between all the long grass until he found him. (*Draw ricks and grass in the third block*) (*Write the word FOUND.*) He picked up the sheep and took it back to the other 99. (*Draw a sheep in the third block.*)

I wonder how the shepherd felt when all 100 of his sheep were together safely.

(*Draw a face in the fourth block.*) Yes, he was very happy! (*Write HAPPY in the fourth block.*)

I wonder why Jesus told this parable to churchgoers.

To teach them that no one is more important than anyone else in God's eyes. He loves everyone equally because he died for EVERYONE'S sins on the cross. (*Paint a heart in the middle of all four blocks.*)



WORKING AND PLAYING TIME

 Children get the same picture to finish as they tell other people the story. Remember the heart in the middle at the end of the story!

 Use these "wonder" statements to help children draw the emotions for the sheep:

1. I wonder how you would feel if you were a sheep and got lost.
2. I wonder how it would feel once you were found.

(Smaller children can just draw the face and talk about the emotions. Older children can be helped to write down the words that describe their emotions.)

- ✍ Make sheep masks.
- ✍ Let children make their own sheep with some wool/cotton wool, two wooden laundry pegs and a cardboard sheep. They can use the pegs as legs and can wrap the wool or paste the cotton wool onto the sheep.
- ✍ Give each child a picture of the shepherd and sheep. Use pieces of material and decorate the shepherd's clothes with them. Use cotton wool to paste onto the sheep for wool.

Close with the following **blessing**:

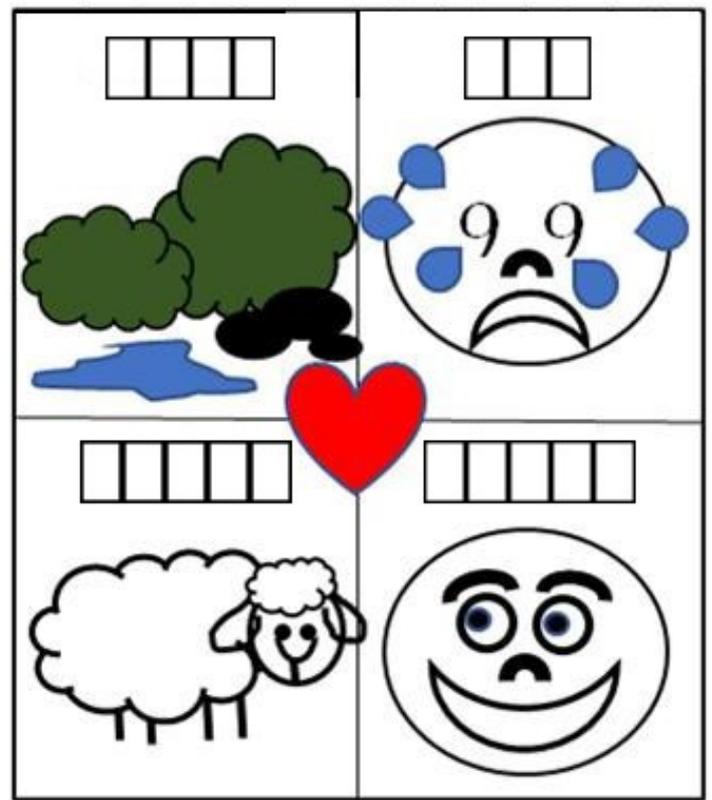
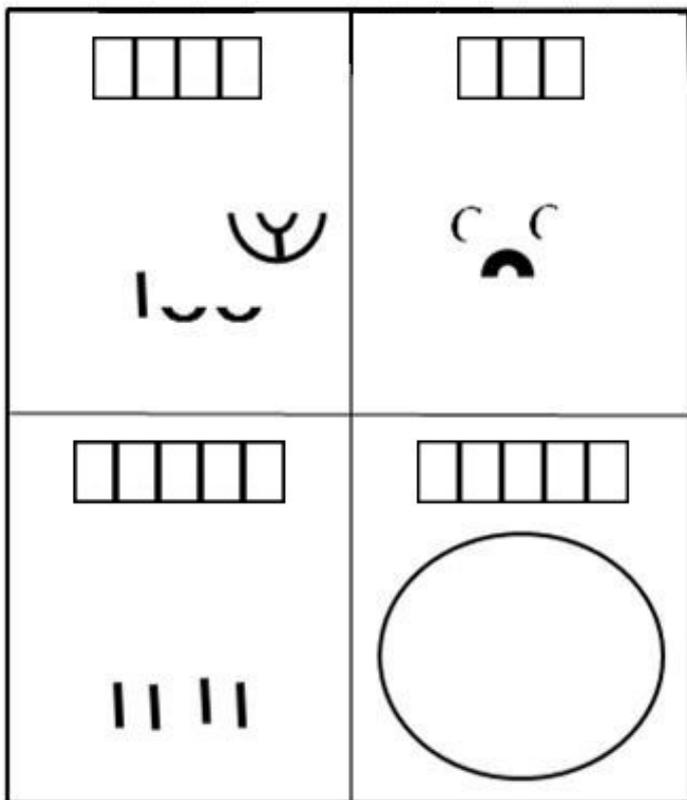
Children stand together and hold each other's hands. When we pray for each other we show our open hands to each other. This says that we are open to receive and find God's treasures and to share them with each other.

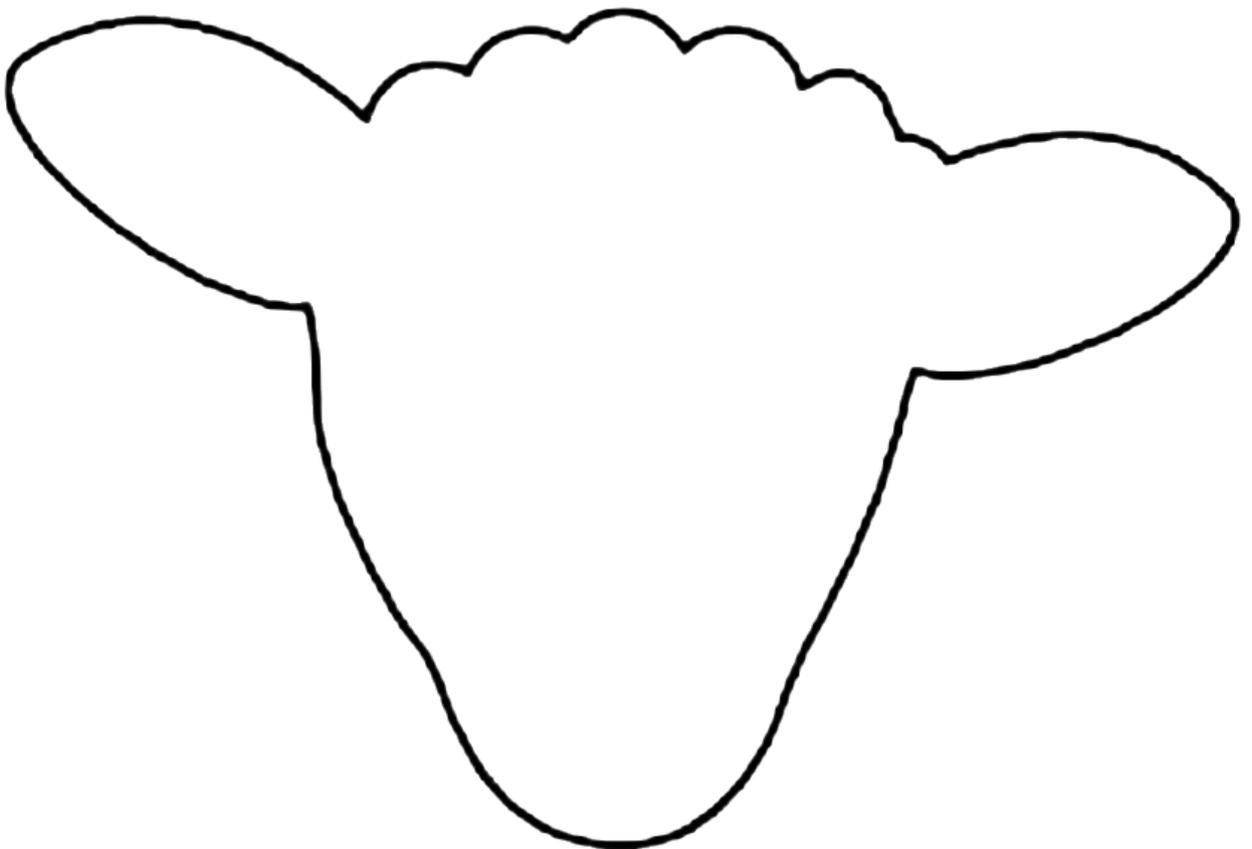
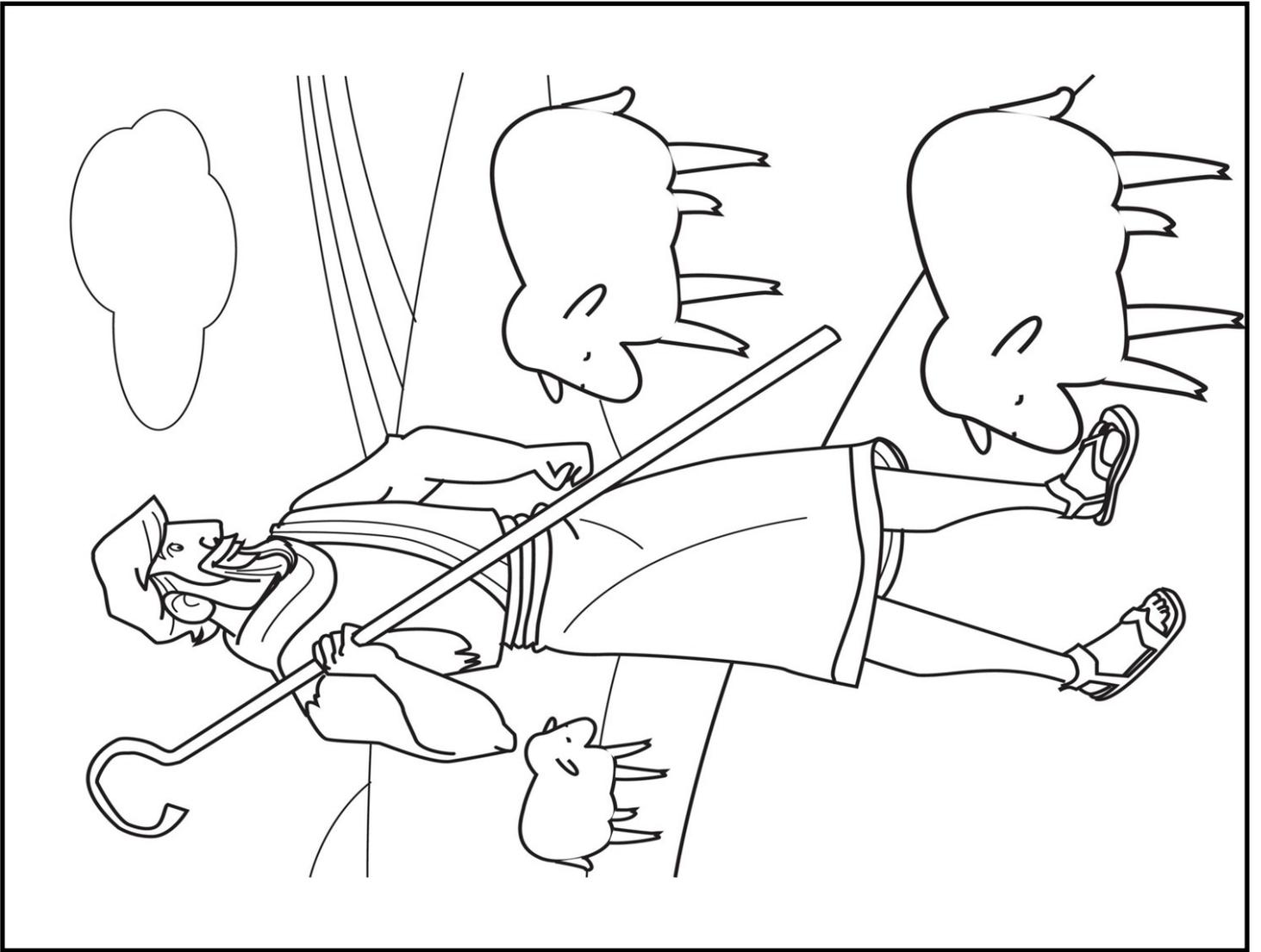
Say together:

God has treasures for me (hands to myself) and for you (hands to your friend).

God gives treasures to me (hands to myself) and to you (hands to your friend).

May my hands, eyes and ears always be open to God's treasures and surprises.





Jesus is my Shepherd.

