

Growing in God's Love

A Story Bible Curriculum

At-Home Kit Instructions

Dear Family of First Presbyterian Church,

Here is your at-home kit! This kit is designed to engage your family in exploring this unit on ***Brave Women and Men of the Old Testament***, with 5 stories that have questions and activities for you to do together. There are three activities to do, called The Story, Around the Table, and Family Activity. You can do these activities at your pace, and you don't have to do everything all in the same day or in one sitting. Read the at-home kit instructions sheet to see what to do for this unit.

- ✦ **The Story**—This is the easy part! Read or listen to one of the stories from *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* together as a family. You can find a video of Pastor Rachel recording the story each week in the Virtual Sunday School Classroom. You will see a whiteboard with the words "Brave Women and Men of the Old Testament" written on it, and when you click those words you will be taken to a Youtube video with the reading. The video will change each week with each story. There will also be some questions asked for your child to consider that you can talk about together.
- ✦ **Around the Table**—This section contains wondering questions that everyone can discuss about the story. Wondering questions have no right or wrong answers. They are meant to evoke imagination and further discussion as everyone thinks about the story and wrestles with their place in it. A great time to ask these questions is during a family meal or at another time when your family can gather together.
- ✦ **Family Activity**—There are several suggestions for activities you can do together as a family. Choose one that works best for your family. Some activities require supplies found in this kit or things you may have at home. If you are missing something, feel free to substitute or adapt the activity. There are book and/or video suggestions that may be included in a session. You can borrow a book if it is in your local library, purchase a book, or watch a read-aloud version online. Internet links are provided in the at-home kit instructions.

We hope this helps your family learn about the stories of the Bible and guides you through talking about faith in your home. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Rachel or a member of the Christian Education Committee.

Blessings,
Pastor Rachel

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- In this kit, you will find:
 - ✦ At-home kit letter to families
 - ✦ Instructions on how your family can listen to the stories by clicking on the whiteboard in the Virtual Sunday School Classroom. You can find the classroom in the weekly Banner newsletter or on the church website at www.firstpresconcord.org.
 - Supplies provided in the at-home kit and the story it will be used for:
 - Bookmarks (The Hardest Thing)
 - Kaleidoscope (The Hardest Thing)
 - Blindfold Bandana (The Hardest Thing)
 - Resource Page 5 (The Hardest Thing)
 - Origami Paper (The Hardest Thing)
 - Resource Pages 1-4 (Miriam Hides Moses)
 - Resource Pages 2 and 3 (Samuel Tells a Hard Truth)
 - Card-stock or construction paper for notes (I Used All My Courage)
 - ✦ Supplies not included in the at-home kit:
 - *The Prince of Egypt* movie (Miriam Hides Moses)
 - Smart phone or other camera that records video (Miriam Hides Moses)
 - Paints, crayons, markers, or colored pencils
 - Play Dough
- The Story

For the next five weeks we will read from the ***Brave Women and Men from the Old Testament*** unit:

 - ✦ The Hardest Thing (Genesis 22:1–19)- **October 11**
 - ✦ Miriam Hides Moses (Exodus 2:1–10)- **October 18**
 - ✦ Samuel Tells a Hard Truth (1 Samuel 2:18–3:20)- **October 25**
 - ✦ I Used All My Courage (2 Samuel 17:17–21)- **November 1**
 - ✦ The Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:8–30)- **November 8**

In these stories we will think about times in our life when we have been like:

 - Abraham or Isaac, trying to figure out how to respond in a situation that doesn't seem very hopeful;
 - Miriam or the young woman who helped King David's men, deciding to take things into your own hands and risk doing something to help someone else;
 - Samuel, hearing God's voice pointing you in a direction;
 - or the men in the fiery furnace, choosing to take a stand for or against something because of your faith.
- The following pages will include the "Around the Table" conversation questions and the options for family activities. Feel free to do as few or as many activities as you choose. The activities will help your child and family engage through creativity, storytelling, spiritual practices, and service and mission opportunities.

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The Hardest Thing (Genesis 22:1–19)- **October 11**

- Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ **The Hardest Thing**

- How do you think Abraham felt throughout the story? How about Isaac?
- Who do you think did brave things in this story?
- When are times when you are scared?
- When are times when you are scared but you trust God?
- Why do you think Abraham didn't try to change God's mind?
- What would you have done in this story if you were Abraham? Isaac? The servants?
- What kind of hard decisions do people have to make?
- What are things we can do to be brave enough to say yes when God asks us to do hard things?

- Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

- ✦ **The Hardest Thing**

- *Words of Encouragement*

- For many people there are times when they feel as if they are being or have been tested. Share about a time you feel like you have been tested and invite others in your family to share as they feel comfortable. They may want to share the feelings and questions they have rather than the circumstances. If some don't have a story to tell or choose not to share, it's helpful to hear other people's stories to know that we can all experience trying times in our lives and challenges to our faith. Wonder together where God is in these times. It is helpful to remember that God is always present with us, even when we may not see or feel God.
- Take turns reading or listen to words of encouragement from the Bible: Exodus 14:14; Joshua 1:9b; Isaiah 41:10; 43:2; John 14:27; Philippians 4:6; 4:13, or a passage of your own choosing.
- Make bookmarks to remember these words of encouragement. Use watercolor paints to make abstract patterns on the bookmarks in your kit. After they are dry, use a permanent marker to write the verse on the bookmark. Assist younger children in writing simple phrases such as "God says, 'I am with you always.'" or "God loves you."

- *Encouragement Origami*

- Talk about how sometimes when we are faced with hard decisions, it is easy to get discouraged. Assure them that there are many words of encouragement in the Bible that may help us in such times. Create an encouragement origami device (also known as a paper fortune teller) to provide words of encouragement for one another or themselves, using Resource Page 5.
- Color it, cut it out, and follow the directions to make the device.
- Choose one of the characters in the story and spell out that name by opening and closing the device for each letter. Then a number is chosen, and the device is opened and closed again that number of times. Finally, a number is chosen

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- again, and that flap is opened to reveal a Scripture verse of encouragement. Some children may need assistance with reading.
- With the extra origami paper, consider making your own original origami encouragement.
 - *Trust Walk*
 - Place non-breakable objects like a pillow, book, chair, empty cup, and so forth randomly across the floor in a room with plenty of space to move around. Have one person stand in the middle of the room blindfolded among the scattered items.
 - Have another person stand to the side and use verbal directions to guide the blindfolded person from one side of the room to the other through the scattered objects without stepping on or bumping into any of them.
 - Repeat the play so that everyone has a turn walking and guiding. With younger children, have someone hold their hand while they are blindfolded and moving through the objects.
 - After the trust walk, have a conversation about the experience using the following questions:
 1. How did it feel to trust someone to guide you when you couldn't see?
 2. How did it feel to be the guide leading someone through obstacles?
 3. Did you trust the person guiding you? Why or why not?
 4. How is trusting God like trusting the person guiding you?
 - *Stories of Trust*
 - Watch the YouTube video "Books from Our Library (*Leap Back Home to Me*)" ([bit.ly /LeapBackHomeVideo](https://bit.ly/LeapBackHomeVideo), 2:11) or read the book *Leap Back Home to Me* by Lauren Thompson (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2011). Have a conversation about the story using the following questions:
 1. What kind of trust did Frog have in his mother?
 2. What did Frog's mother do to show him he could trust her?
 3. In what ways is God like Frog's mother?
 4. Notice the rainbow in the book. Read Genesis 9:12–17 aloud. Wonder together what the rainbow says to us about God.

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Miriam Hides Moses (Exodus 2:1–10)- **October 18**

- Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ **Miriam Hides Moses**

- Invite your child to share any thoughts about the women and girl in the story as they consider who each person was and how they were brave. Wonder together what emotions or feelings each person had. Ask why they think Moses' mother, Miriam, and the Pharaoh's daughter had to be brave.
- What do these women need in order to be brave?
- How does God help them to be brave?
- Why is it important to be brave?
- How does God help us to be brave like Miriam, or her mother, or the Pharaoh's daughter?
- How can we help others to be brave?

- Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

- ✦ **Miriam Hides Moses**

- *Brave Women Stained-Glass*
 - Some faith traditions call certain people saints. Saints are those who have been faithful, often times in difficult circumstances. They have helped others, been brave, and sometimes died for their faith. Oftentimes Catholic churches may have statues or stained-glass windows depicting saints. Protestant churches sometimes have pictures or stained-glass windows of people who are considered faithful and brave leaders.
 - Using Resource Page 1, invite your child to create their own stained-glass window of a brave person whom they know or admire. Encourage your children to share their pictures and tell about this brave and inspirational person.
- *Brave Interviews*
 - Watch the YouTube video "70 Women Ages 5 to 75: What's the Bravest Thing You've Ever Done? Glamour" (bit.ly/Brave5to75, 4:20) in which a girl or woman of each age between five and seventy-five shares a one-sentence response about a time when they were brave. Ask your child what they found interesting about the girl's and women's responses. Wonder together if being brave depends on one's age.
 - Using your smartphone, take a similar video asking the same questions to everyone in your family.
 1. "What's the bravest thing you've ever done?"
 2. "What helps you to be brave?"
 3. "Who do you think is brave?"
 4. "Who shows bravery in the Bible?"
 - Before filming a person, tell them that you are going to ask them a question about being brave. Ask them to answer the question when you ask it while filming, and then say their first name and age. Ask the questions aloud while filming so that the viewer can hear the question. For example: *Interviewer*: "What's the bravest thing you've ever done?" *Interviewee*: "I sang a solo in

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- church. Janie, age 12” or “I held my wife’s hand when she died after a long illness. Arturo, age 86.”
- After filming, consider sharing your video with Pastor Rachel so she can share it with the church.
- *Puppets*
 - Watch the video of Pastor Rachel reading the book *Brian the Brave* by Paul Stewart in the virtual classroom. Wonder together how ordinary Brian became brave Brian. Ask about when they may have had to be brave like Brian.
 - Using Resource Pages 2 and 3 make the figures into puppets by cutting them out. You could even tape a popsicle stick to the back of them. Use the puppets to tell the story of Brian the brave or to make up a story of their own about being brave.
- *Watching a Movie*
 - Watch the movie *Prince of Egypt* (DreamWorks, 1998) as a family. After the movie, discuss how hard it might have been for the women in Moses’ life to make the decisions that they made. What were their sacrifices? How were each of these women brave?
- *Places of Shelter*
 - The basket that Moses was hidden in as he floated down the Nile River provided him shelter and safety from the same river that the Pharaoh said he should be drowned in. Create spaces in your home where you feel safe.
 1. What would you put there? Blankets? Pillows? Snacks?
 2. How do these places make you feel safe?
 3. How can you help others to feel safe in these spaces?
- *Brave Biography*
 - Invite your children to choose one woman who they think is very brave. Wonder together how this woman resembles brave women from the Bible. Using Resource Page 4, invite your child to respond to the prompts and ask them how this woman showed bravery.

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Samuel Tells a Hard Truth (1 Samuel 2:18–3:20)- **October 25**

- Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ **Samuel Tells a Hard Truth**

- What are the different feelings you think Samuel had throughout the story?
- Why do you think this was a hard message for Samuel to give Eli?
- When have you had to give a hard message to someone? How did that make you feel?
- What do you think made Samuel brave?
- Have a conversation about the ways that we tell the truth when we might be afraid.
 - Who are the people you trust? Adults? Friends?
 - How do you know when you should tell the truth?
 - What if telling the truth might get someone you love in trouble?

- Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

- ✦ **Samuel Tells a Hard Truth**

- *The Night Gardener*
 - Read the book *The Night Gardener* by Terry Fan and Eric Fan or watch the YouTube video “The Night Gardener by the Fan Brothers” ([bit.ly /NightGardenerBook](https://bit.ly/NightGardenerBook), 5:51). In the book, a young boy named William wakes up to see a work of art outside his window. Then the night gardener calls on William to come and help him make his artwork. This is a story about how, when we work with God and answer God’s call on our lives, we become cocreators in justice for God’s world, just like Samuel. After reading the story, ask some follow-up questions:
 1. How is William’s story like Samuel’s story?
 2. What if William had said no to helping the night gardener?
 3. Do you think William might have been scared when the night gardener asked for his help?
- *Tattling or Telling*
 - Ask the children what the difference between tattling and telling is. Explain, if necessary, that it is about one’s motivation. Comment that tattling is often motivated by wanting another to get in trouble because they broke the rules. Wonder how Eli’s sons broke the rules. Suggest that telling is motivated by compassion, which means caring deeply about others. Wonder how Samuel’s motivation may have been caring. Wonder together if Samuel was tattling on Eli’s sons or telling Eli something he needed to know.
 - Show Resource Pages 2 and 3 and read the differences between tattling and telling. Apply Samuel’s situation to the chart and decide if Samuel was tattling or telling a hard truth.
- *Buzz In*
 - Explore passages in Scripture where God wants us to tell the truth:
 - Leviticus 19:11–12 • Exodus 20:16 • Psalm 15 • Colossians 3:9–10
 - Ephesians 4:25

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- Read one or more of the passages. When your child hears a reference about God wanting us to be truthful, invite them to make a buzzer sound. When they make a buzzing sound invite them to point out the part of the passage regarding telling the truth. After all the passages are read, talk together about when it is easy and when it is hard to tell the truth to someone.
- *Witnessing to the Truth through Prayer*
 - As a family, talk about the ways in which you can serve as a public witness to hard truths in our world. What are some hard truths in your neighborhood, community, schools, and world? Pray for people who are afraid to speak out about the truth.

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I Used All My Courage (2 Samuel 17:17–21)- November 1

- Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ **I Used All My Courage**

- Why did the little girl need courage in this story?
- Where do they think she got her courage from?
- Why do you think the girl and her mother decided to help the king's men?
- What would you have done in this situation?
- How did God help the girl and give her courage?
- Who would they want to be in this story: one of King David's soldiers, one of Absalom's soldiers, the child, or the parent?
- What do you like about that character?
- When has been a time you have had to be brave?
- How did you feel before and after the situation?
- How is God with us when we need courage?

- Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

- ✦ **I Used All My Courage**

- *Random Acts of Courage*
 - Consider people you think might need a little encouragement today. Maybe it's someone at school or work. Perhaps it's someone who is anxious about a presentation or project. Take some time to write short notes of encouragement to send to people you know who are having a hard day.
- *Courage as a Habit*
 - According to *Forbes Magazine* (bit.ly/CourageIsAHabit), courage is something that should be practiced every day. We don't all just magically have courage. Most of the time, we have to practice it! For one week, practice these three habits daily whenever you have the opportunity:
 1. *Speak Up*: take some time to talk to someone every day about something that is important to you.
 2. *Make Big Requests*: think of something that you would like more of—support, communication, feedback, help with something—and ask for it!
 3. *Confront Your Fears*: acknowledge whatever it is that you are afraid of and think about ways that fear might hold you back. Make a plan using a “when, then” statement: “When I feel X, then I will do Y.”
- *Statues of Courage*
 - Wonder together about statues of people who have been brave and shown great courage. Share any examples of statues that they have seen.
 - Using play dough and have them create a statue of one or more of the characters in the story who were brave. Engage them in conversation using the following questions.
 1. Who is the person in their statues?
 2. How does their statue show the person's courage?
 3. Where does that person's courage come from?

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- *Courage Looks Like . . .*
 - Using drawing supplies, invite your child draw their responses to the following prompts first and then share their thoughts. Encourage them to keep adding to their picture with each additional question. Comment that their drawings may just be colors and shapes, it may include words, or it may have pictures; there are no right or wrong ways to draw courage.
 1. What color is courage?
 2. What does courage feel like?
 3. How do you know when you have courage?
 4. How do you get courage?
 5. What kind of courage do we get from God?
- *Stories of Courage*
 - See if you have or if your library has any of the books below. Read the book together. Have a conversation about the storybooks using the following questions:
 1. How did the characters in the stories have courage like the little girl from the story?
 2. What gave them their courage?
 3. When are times when you need courage like the character in the story?

Picture Books about Courage

- ✦ *Before She Was Harriet* by Lesa Cline-Ransome (Holiday House Publishing, 2017)
- ✦ *The Boy and the Whale* by Mordecai Gerstein (Roaring Book Press, 2017)
- ✦ *The Bravest of Us All* by Marsha Diane Arnold (Dial Publishing, 2000)
- ✦ *Courage* by Bernard Waber (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2002)
- ✦ *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music* by Margarita Engle (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2015)
- ✦ *Let the Children March* by Monica Clark-Robinson (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2018)
- ✦ *Malala's Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2017)
- ✦ *Peep! A Little Book about Taking a Leap* by Maria van Lieshout (Feiwel & Friends, 2009)
- ✦ *The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet!* by Carmen Agra Deedy (Scholastic Press, 2017)
- ✦ *Ron's Big Mission* by Rose Blue (Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2009)

Chapter Books about Courage

- ✦ *The Boy Who Dared* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti (Scholastic Press, 2018)
- ✦ *Fire from the Rock* by Sharon M. Draper (Speak Publisher, 2008)
- ✦ *A Girl Named Disaster* by Nancy Farmer (Scholastic Paperbacks, 2012)
- ✦ *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2006)
- ✦ *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy* by Gary D. Schmidt (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2013)
- ✦ *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2011)
- ✦ *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2011)
- ✦ *True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi (Scholastic Paperbacks, 2015)
- ✦ *The Wanderer* by Sharon Creech (HarperCollins, 2011)

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The Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:8–30)- November 8

- Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ **The Fiery Furnace**

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were all strangers in a new land. The king gave them all new names. Why do you think the king did that?
- How do you think that made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego feel?
- The three men were in a place that worshiped different gods than they did. What do you think it would be like if you went to a new place where people weren't the same religion as you?
- If you have been somewhere like that, how did it feel?
- King Nebuchadnezzar made rules that worshiping the golden statue was required. How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego feel about this? What did they do? Why do you think they did what they did?
- Who do you think the fourth person in the fire is?
- How did King Nebuchadnezzar change in this story?
- Invite your child to act out the story using their own words. Encourage them to add feelings, thoughts, and insights that the different characters may have had but that aren't described in the story.
- Look at the following scriptures from the Old Testament: Leviticus 19:34; Deuteronomy 10:19; 1 Chronicles 16:19-22; Job 29:15-17; Jeremiah 7:5-7; and Ezekiel 47:22. Wonder aloud together:
 - What do each of these Scriptures have in common?
 - Why does God want us to welcome new people?
 - How does our church welcome new people?

- Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

- ✦ **The Fiery Furnace**

- *The Voices of Children*
 - Watch the YouTube video "To Be Happy / An Immigrant Student's Tale," at bit.ly/ImmigrantChildrenVideo (3:38).
 - Wonder together what it means to be a new person or to have new people in a community.
 1. What do the children in the video struggle with?
 2. What might it feel like to not understand much of the language around you?
 3. Do you know anyone who has had to adopt a new name while living in this country? Why do you think people have to do that?
 4. Happy in the video gets a name for a different reason. What do you think about that? What would you like your name to be if it could reflect a character trait?
 5. What does Ms. Hile say about these children and others like them?
 6. What can we learn from people who are different from us?
 7. How are these children brave?
 8. How can we be brave?

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- *God's Big Plan*
 - Watch the video in the virtual classroom of Pastor Rachel reading *God's Big Plan* by Elizabeth Caldwell and Theodore Hiebert. This book is about the story of Babel from Genesis 11:1–9. Often this story is seen as a description of a punishment, scattering the foolish people across the lands, but what if God made us all different on purpose? We aren't supposed to be just like one another. Wonder together the pros and cons of being all the same versus being different from one another. Ask about ways in which it takes courage to accept the differences in others.
 - Play a game to name five things that everyone in the family has in common and five things that are unique about each person. Celebrate and give thanks for both!
- *Refugees Among Us*
 - Read a book or watch a YouTube video of children's stories about refugees.
 - *Crocodile Crossing: A Search for Home* by Yoeri Slegers (Flyaway Books, 2020)
 - *Marwan's Journey* by Patricia de Arias (minedition, 2018), bit.ly/MarwansJourney (8:07)
 - "Kids, Refugees, Questions: 'What Is It Like to Have No Home?'" at bit.ly/KidsRefugeesQuestions (3:11)
 - *My Beautiful Birds* by Suzanne Del Rizzo (Pajama Press, 2017), bit.ly/MyBeautifulBirds (7:03)
 - *Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey* by Margriet Ruurs (Orca Book Publishers, 2016), bit.ly/SteppingStonesBook (7:27)
 - "Welcome to the Small Town in Georgia That's Welcomed Thousands of Refugees / TODAY," at bit.ly/RefugeeWelcomeVideo (7:21)
- *Service: Supporting Refugees*
 - There are many ways you can help refugees in your own community. Check out [bit.ly /ChildrenHelpRefugees](https://bit.ly/ChildrenHelpRefugees) for ways children can help refugees.
 - As a family, find the local organization assisting refugees near you. Consider hosting or sponsoring a refugee family. Be intentional about how you can help and support them and reach out to other families who would be able to help as well so that it is a larger community effort.