

Workshop Focus: Jesus holds us in the palm of his hand.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday Storytelling

Activity Instructions

Start today with a parade! As the kids enter the room, have parade music playing (or select song from Spark Song CD). Hold a palm leaf in your hand as kids enter and invite them to parade around the room with you. Expect some excitement. Act like you're looking for something or someone. Keep encouraging the kids to play along and celebrate.

Hey, parade-goers! Are you having fun? Can you shout a big "Hosanna" to encourage everyone? Have you seen anything or anyone yet? It's getting a bit hot from all of this walking! Let's take a break on the parade route and visit for a moment.

Gather the kids together to talk about the day and the Bible story, focusing on Palm Sunday. Engage kids in a lively conversation about their experiences with parades and celebrations. Expect some stories . . . and be prepared to have to stop the conversations a bit short to save time for the art project.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles
Spark Song CD (optional)

Supplies

Large palm leaf, paper or real
"Parade" music CD
CD player

Have any of you ever watched a parade? Been in a parade? What are some of your favorite parts? Why do we have parades? Did you ever scoop up candy from the side of the road? Visit with a character? Watch for a favorite float? Listen to music? Parades can be a lot of fun.

Did you know that there was a big parade event in the Bible? Pass out Spark Story Bibles. **Find page 457 in your Spark Story Bibles. What are the people in the road doing? What are they waving? What do you think they are saying?** Accept answers with enthusiasm.

Turn back a page (page 456). **There's Jesus and some of the disciples. Let's find out how this whole celebration got started and what happened on this day.** Read pages 454-459 with the class.

Great job! I could really hear the enthusiasm as you read. Accept all answers to the following questions. **What is a "king of peace"?** Accept kids' answers. **How do you think Jesus felt about being a king of peace? Why did he choose to ride on the donkey? Why did he say that the whole earth was celebrating?**

Take the story to another level. Lift up your large palm leaf. **Did you notice all of the bits of green on pages 456-458? Those palm leaves are a big part of the story. What happens when you wave a palm leaf?** (*breeze, fresh air, celebration*) **Why did the people put them on the ground?** (*a carpet, recognizing Jesus' entry*) **Take a look at your own hands. What is the inside of your hand called?** (*the palm*) **Isn't it cool that we can look at our own "palms" and remember this story? We wave our palms** (in greeting, to fan ourselves, for high fives) **and we put them "down" or put them together in prayer. What else do we do with our palms?** (*hold things*) **Have you ever held a small kitten or animal in your hands? When we have a living creature in our hands we often want to protect it and keep it safe. That is exactly what Jesus does for us. He wants to love us, protect us, and keep us safe so that is why we say that Jesus holds us in the palm of his hand. So now whenever you look at your own palm you can remember the Palm Sunday story and how much Jesus loves us!**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

High Five

Set Up: Prepare a bulletin board with a long piece of green construction paper to serve as the central stem of the palm and the heading “Jesus holds us in the palm of His hands.” Assemble a collection of wallpaper books, decorative papers, and/or wrapping paper. Enlist a couple of volunteers to help kids staple projects to bulletin board.

Activity Instructions

The palm leaf is a great reminder that Jesus holds us in the palm of his hand. Today we will work together to create an enormous “palm leaf” project. When we’re finished, we’ll be able to stand back and see a great celebration of our palms that have come together to celebrate Palm Sunday and remember that Jesus holds us in the palm of his hands.

I’ll show you what to do and then you’ll be able to start creating. First, here’s our blank canvas. Point to bulletin board with palm stem. **Next, here’s a collection of super-cool paper choices.** Show a couple of samples.

Here’s what you will need to do: (demonstrate each step for them while you are giving directions)

- 1) Select a piece of wallpaper or other kind of paper that you like.**
- 2) Turn the paper pattern side down.**
- 3) Place your non-writing hand on the paper with fingers spread out.**
- 4) Hold it down firmly.**
- 5) Trace your non-writing hand with a pencil. (Or you can have a friend trace it.)**
- 6) Use a pair of scissors to cut out your wallpaper hand.**
- 7) Use a pencil and roll each of the paper fingers around it to “curl” it and make it look more like a leaf.**
- 8) Repeat all these steps! And make as many as you can!**

When you have three or more hands ready to go, bring them over to the board and we will start stapling them on to create our enormous palm leaf.

Have a volunteer helper or two with staplers ready to start creating the giant palm leaf on the bulletin board. As the “paper palm leaves” start arriving, staple them onto the central stem and overlap them to create the group project.

What a great celebration of palms we made! As we look at this creation, what do you notice? Accept all answers. **Each time that you see this bulletin board or a palm branch remember the love Jesus has for every one of us and how he holds us always in the palm of his hand.**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Bulletin Board “Jesus Holds Us in the Palm of His Hands” and construction paper “stem” of palm leaf
Wallpaper books, decorative papers, and/or wrapping paper
Scissors
Pencils
Staplers

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Pages for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Let's take a parade around the room and meet up at our giant palm leaf! Let's all wave our "palms" in the air as we walk. Lead the kids with hands/palms in the air and shouts of "Hosanna!" until everyone is gathered in front of the finished art piece.

Let's put our "palms" together and pray. There are a few actions you will need to do, so listen and follow what I do.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Finished bulletin board

Prayer Time

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for being the king of peace.

You rode into Jerusalem on a donkey,

And the whole world celebrated.

We celebrate, too!

We clap our hands together in praise. (lead kids in clapping)

We high five each other in happiness. (lead kids in giving high fives)

We wave our hands in greeting. (lead kids in waving hands)

We put our hands together in prayer. (lead kids in clasping/folding hands in prayer)

All of this, because you hold us in the palm of your hands.

Amen.