

## LESSON 1: Where is God?

### AIM

To give the learners an opportunity to reflect on questions about the nature of God (2.1.3, **10.2**)

### OUTCOME

Learners understand that God is everywhere.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Burn incense** or some pleasant smelling oil, like lavender, so that it can be detected anywhere in the classroom. If it is invisible, so much the better. Allow the children to quieten. They close their eyes, breathing slowly and deeply.
- 2 **Sing** together the first verse of the spiritual, *Kum ba yah, My Lord*. (The title means 'Come by here, my Lord'). ⇨
- 3 **Two questions:** Let the children know that in this lesson, they will be thinking about the questions: Where is God? Can I See God?
- 4 **Where Is God?** Ask the children where they think they would find God? Could they draw a map to where God is? Allow time for them to think. Note their responses, which may include the following: God is in heaven; God is everywhere; God is in each person. Do all these answers make sense together? We may say:
  - Heaven is where God is.
  - God is everywhere (just like the incense in the room, even though we may not be able to see it).
  - Therefore, heaven is everywhere.

Heaven is not a place in the sense South Africa, or London, or New York is. So we cannot draw a map to God. When we say that Jesus ascended into heaven, we mean that Jesus is with God, and therefore is everywhere. People used to picture heaven in the sky, a place above the earth. That is why a Russian astronaut, on returning to earth from a space trip, said, "There is no God. I have been to heaven, and I did not see Him."
- 5 **Can I See God?** Invite the children to talk about air. What do they know about it? It is everywhere, but invisible. How do they know it is there? Signs of its presence are evident in the wind which blows the trees or the clouds. We feel it on our faces when we run. Read 1 John 4:7&12 or render it in a simple way that the children will be able to grasp. No one has seen God, because God is spirit, and therefore invisible, but just as we can 'see' the air in the moving clouds, so we can 'see' God in love. When we love others can 'see' God in us, just as we 'see' God in others when they love us.
- 6 The children present an exhibition titled WHERE IS GOD? Give each group a large piece of paper or cardboard to present their findings. They add something to that presentation after each lesson in this focus. They also bring things and ideas from home and the community during this period.



### WHAT YOU NEED

- \* Incense and burner (1)
- \* 🎵 *Kum ba yah, My Lord* (2) ⇨
- \* Bible (5)
- \* An A4-sized label for each group WHERE IS GOD? coloured pencils, paints or chalk (6)
- \* 🎵 *Kum ba yah, My Lord* ⇨ (7)
- \* 🎵 *God Is Love* (8)
- \* Colouring pencils or paints (10)

Examples:

- photographs
- names of different places of prayer and worship
- different names for God
- prayers from other religions and cultures
- pictures of articles associated with prayer
- pictures of nature and articles found in nature that remind them of God
- pictures illustrating good deeds

At the end of this focus, the groups display their presentations. Invite people from the community to view the exhibition, allowing a loose page for viewers to add items to the collages and to give their comments on the presentations. In this lesson, the children work in groups to **decorate a label** that says WHERE IS GOD?

7 Conclude with the **song** *Kum ba yah*. ⇒

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 8 **Sing** *God Is Love*.
- 9 Before the lesson, play a **game** of Hide 'n Seek.
- 10 The children individually draw, colour, or paint a **picture** called HEAVEN.

### TO REMEMBER

Heaven is where God is. God is everywhere.

### MATERIALS

#### KUM BA YAH

Kum ba yah, my Lord,  
kum ba yah,  
kum ba yah, my Lord,  
kum ba yah!  
Kum ba yah, my Lord,  
kum ba yah!  
O Lord, kum ba yah.

Someone's crying, Lord,  
kum ba yah,  
Someone's crying, Lord,  
kum ba yah!  
Someone's crying, Lord,  
kum ba yah!  
O Lord, kum ba yah.

Someone's singing, Lord, ...

Someone's praying, Lord, ...

## LESSON 2: Who Is God?

### AIM

The children will be introduced to the idea that there are three Persons in one God. (2.1.4)

### OUTCOME

Learners have a basic knowledge of the Trinity.

### TEACHER'S NOTE

Images help us understand something about the mystery of the Trinity. However they can also lead us to mistaken ideas. The Three Persons in God are not three parts of God, like the three leaves in the shamrock. Nor are the Three Persons like different ways that God appears, like ice, water, and steam.

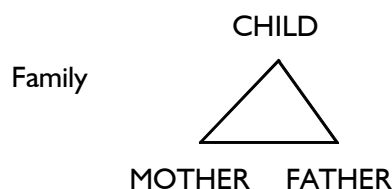


### WHAT YOU NEED

- \* Pictures of threeness (2)
- \* Bible (3)
- \* Cardboard 'threes' (6)
- \* 🎵 *Father, We Adore You* (7)
- \* Three candles, matches (7)
- \* 🎵 *Sing for Life – Sign of the Cross Chant* (p.30) (8)
- \* Art prints or pictures (10)
- \* 🎵 *What God Is Like* (11)

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Invite the learners to explore their own bodies to discover **threeness**:
  - the fingers have three joints (thumbs only two)
  - the toes have three joints each
  - the arms have three parts - hand, lower arm, upper arm
  - the legs have three parts - foot, calf, thigh
- 2 Display **pictures of things** that illustrate threeness, such as a tricycle, a triangle, a shamrock or clover -leaf.
- 3 There is also a threeness in the one God who made the things looked at above. You could read a few short **Scripture passages** to illustrate this.
  - God the Father cares and takes responsibility for us. [Matthew 6: 8-9, 26:42]
  - Jesus, God the Son, is one with the Father. [John 17: 1-2, 21-23]
  - God the Holy Spirit is one with the Father and with the Son. [Luke 3: 21-22 John 15:26]
- 4 **Trinity**: We use the word 'Trinity' to describe our understanding of God as Three Persons in One Being. See below for some common misunderstandings of what this might mean.
- 5 Some **pictures or images** may help us understand something of this mystery of God. Think, for instance of the family made up of father, mother, child. You cannot have one without the other two. A man or woman without a child are not father or mother, and a child cannot come into being without a mother and a father.



The triangle shape itself is helpful. You cannot have a triangle with one or two sides. The triangle is a 'trinity' shape.

- 6 **Number Three:** The number itself can be used to illustrate 'trinity'. Provide the children with a large shape as illustrated here. They write Father, Son, Spirit in the three arms of the number. They colour and decorate in any way they like.



- 7 **Sing** the following song:

Father, we adore you.  
Jesus, we adore you.  
Spirit, we adore you.

Have three children with lighted candles. As the second line is sung, two candles are brought together to make a single flame. During the third line, all three candles are brought together.

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 8 The lesson might begin with the **Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. A version of this could be sung – *Sing for Life – Sign of the Cross Chant* (p.30)
- 9 The lesson could end with the **Glory Be:**
- Glory be to the Father,  
And to the Son,  
And to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning,  
Is now,  
And ever shall be. Amen.
- 10 No one has seen God, but God has revealed some of the mystery of his being. Artists through the centuries have portrayed their understanding of the Trinity. If you have access to some **art prints or pictures** featuring the Trinity, you might show these to the children.
- 11 **Sing:** *What God Is Like*