

GATHER [30 MINUTES]

Planting Seeds



Daily Eco-Question: Why do people plant seeds?



Daily Spiritual Question: Why does God plant seeds?



Daily Tagline: God's love is a seed in me.

Celebrate [10 minutes]

SONGS

Play the ReNew Music CD. Stand at the entrance to greet kids as they arrive and invite them to dig into the seeds on the sensory table.

“Let’s Go ReNew” (track 1, 13 [instrumental only])

Move quickly and energetically to the front to invite kids to stand and join you every time they hear “Grow in faith. Change the world.” Sing straight through. Teach kids actions line by line. Ask for a few volunteers to jump up and go wild leading the actions with you as you sing the VBS theme song again.

Let’s give our action leaders a hand! Hey, everyone. Welcome to ReNew VBS, where we’ll explore the parable of the Sower. Parables are stories Jesus told to teach about God’s love.

“The Farmer and Me” (track 3, 15 [instrumental only])

Singing helps us learn stories. The song “The Farmer and Me” tells the first part of Jesus’ parable. Use call and response to teach the refrain, “Grow, grow, grow, . . .” Teach a few actions, then ask kids to sing the parts they know and listen to the rest of the story. Invite volunteers to help you lead the actions as you play and sing “The Farmer and Me.” **Hey, everybody. Sing with us!**

MISSION MOMENT

Tell kids about the mission organization their VBS offering will support.

Offering Song

“Oats and Beans and Barley Grow” (track 8, 20 [instrumental only])

Invite kids to bring offerings forward and put them in (or around) the watering can as you sing this song. When everyone is finished, lead the actions and sing the song again.

continued

Get Ready

- ReNew Music CD
- CD player or piano and accompanist
- score for “Let’s Go ReNew,” “The Farmer and Me,” and “Oats and Beans and Barley Grow,” pages C-2, C-10, and C-32
- song lyric sheets or projector and screen (wearesparkhouse.org/renew)
- watering can
- storage tote or sensory table (optional)
- seeds (optional)

Get Set (Up)

- Place a sensory table filled with seeds near the entrance to your gathering space.
- Place the watering can near the offering space. Ask your VBS Director for information about the mission your VBS supports.
- Select and practice songs. Bring copies for an accompanist or note track numbers on CD. Reproduce lyric sheets or set up the projector and screen. Power the AV equipment just before kids arrive.

Celebrate *continued*

Offering Prayer

Invite kids to echo your prayer.

Gardening God,

We plant.

We grow.

We share with others.

And all God's kids say . . .

Wait as everyone says "Amen."

DAY 1

Bible Storytelling: Mark 4:1-9 [10 minutes]

OPTION 1: ACTIONS AND REACTIONS

Kids divide into groups to tell the story using actions and sound effects.

1. Divide kids, shepherds, and other volunteers into five groups. (It may work best to mix ages in each group so younger kids can copy the older ones.)
2. Teach Groups 2-5 their sounds and actions (see chart).
3. Ask Groups 2-5 to face Group 1.

Teach Group 1 the sound and reaction to the other groups. **Okay Group 1.**

When I hold up the picture of the birds, (point to Group 2) **the birds will** (wait for them to caw and flap their wings). **When they do that you go "Aaa! Aaa!" and duck and cover your head.** Practice.

Continue moving through the groups, holding up each sign in turn.

Get Ready

- NRSV Bible
- construction paper (11" x 17" [28 x 43 cm])
- marker
- enlarged copy of images on pages 12-13

Get Set (Up)

Use the construction paper, marker, and images on pages 12-13 to make signs for Groups 2-5 (birds, rocks, thorns, good soil). Save the signs to use on Day 3. Read Mark 4:1-9 and mark the appropriate group number near the text where kids will do actions and sound effects (for example, mark verse 8 as the place where you will point to Group 5 while reading good soil; brought forth grain; growing up; thirty, sixty, and hundredfold). The more moving the better. You can also find this Bible story on page 10 of the ReNew Program Guide.

Leader Tip

Tell the Bible story using one of the two options. The first includes a reading directly from the biblical text while the second is a retelling connected to today's theme.

Bible Storytelling *continued*

	Sound and Action	Group 1 (Seeds) Sound and Reaction
Group 2 / Birds	“Caw! Caw!” / Flap wings	“Aaa! Aaa!” / Duck and cover
Group 3 / Rocks	“Ugh. Ugh.” / Slouch over	“Wee! Wee!” / Jump high and land low
Group 4 / Thorns	“Pokey! Pokey!” / Poke fingers out	“Ouchy! Ouchy!” / Step gingerly
Group 5 / Good Soil	“Welcome! Welcome!” / Stretch out arms and wiggle fingers	“Grow! Grow!” / Start low and stretch high

Are you ready? It's time for you to help me tell our Bible story. You'll shout, flap, wiggle, jump, and stretch as I read the parable of the Sower. The Bible says, “A Sower went out to sow.” Don't know those words? Sower is another word for a person who plants. Sow is another word for plant. So when you hear, “A Sower went out to sow,” it means someone—maybe a farmer or gardener—went out to plant. The parable of the Sower is a story about a farmer or a gardener going out to plant seeds. Got it? As I read the parable keep your eyes up here. When I hold up a sign you'll know what to do!

Read through the parable you marked with notes in your Bible. Congratulate kids on their work with a high five or round of applause.

OPTION 2: HEY SEEDS

Kids hear the parable of the Sower from the seed's point of view.

In Jesus' day a farmer or gardener was called a *sower*. The sower would fill a bag with seeds and scatter them one handful at a time. I'm going to be the Sower in our skit. I need volunteers to be seeds. Gather 3–12 kids up front. **When I tap you on the shoulder, pretend you're being flung out of the bag and go flying back to your seats.** Invite the readers to come up front to read “Hey Seeds” as you tap the *seeds*.

greenER:

Make your signs on the back of used paper or cereal boxes.

greenEST:

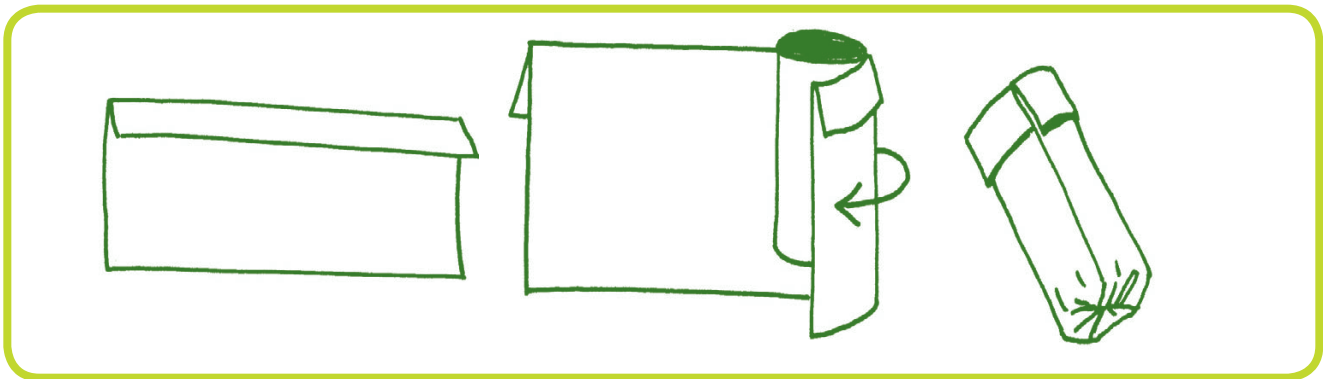
Skip the signs and point to each group instead.

Get Ready

- ☐ 3 copies of “Hey Seeds!” skit, p. 11

Get Set (Up)

Before you gather select two readers. Give each person a skit script. Read it together several times, following the italicized stage directions.



Daily Ritual [5 minutes]

So . . . a Sower went out to sow. That's the part of the Bible story you'll talk about today. A Sower planted seeds and lots of good things (and some not so good things) happened.

God sent Jesus to this earth many years ago. You could say God was planting a Seed of Love in the world. Jesus grew and taught and showed others how to live in God's way.

God continues to plant seeds of love everywhere—in you and you and you and you. That little seed of God's love blooms with lots of love to share. This week we'll talk about sharing God's love by caring for all of God's creation. We'll plant and root downward and grow upward and work through hard times and enjoy living together.

Each day at ReNew VBS you'll make a seed pot and plant a seed. You might want to think of them as seeds of God's love as you watch them grow. Look closely while I show you how to make the seed pot. Show and tell each step of making the seed pot.

1. Cut today's planting strip from your Bible Books. Write your name on it.
2. Read the planting strip together. Then roll it around the can or jar, leaving about one and a half inches (4 cm) hanging past the bottom of the cylinder.
3. Fold in the overhanging edge.
4. Carefully slide the strip off the can or jar. Voila! Your very own seed pot to plant God's Word!

Get Ready

- Bible Books
- tomato paste cans, baby food jars, or other cylinders about 2 inches (5 cm) in diameter
- scissors (each group)
- pencils (each group)

Get Set (Up)

An important part of each day is making a seed pot where you'll plant a seed from the ReNew Planting Pack. Talk with your VBS Director to determine how and when kids will do this. Before ReNew VBS begins, collect tomato paste cans, baby food jars, or other cylinders about 2 inches (5 cm) in diameter. Choose one of the Planting Station options on page 25 of the ReNew Basics section or make a plan that fits your context. Be sure to practice making a seed pot before demonstrating it to the kids.

Daily Ritual *continued*

Tell kids when and where they'll make their seed pots and plant a seed today. **Here are a few questions you can talk about while you make your pots today. Why do people plant seeds? Where do you see God's love at home, in church, or when you're playing? What's the biggest seed you've ever seen? The smallest? Have you ever eaten a seed?**

Ask shepherds and kids to look at the Day 1 Bible story in their Bible Books and talk about the questions.

Leader Tip

Check with the VBS Director for any announcements or logistics to share with the groups before they head to their activity sites.

Let's Go! [5 minutes]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In a minute your shepherd will take you to discover more about seeds and the love God has for you, for your community, and for the world. But first a word from (name of person who makes today's announcements).

SENDING

Are you ready? Send kids out with this chant:

When I say "Re," you say "New!"

Re! (New!) **Re!** (New!)

When I say "Planting," you say "Seeds!"

Planting! (Seeds!) **Planting!** (Seeds!)

God's love is a seed in you! Amen!