

Speak, Lord! I'm Listening



CHILDREN'S SABBATH
PROGRAM GUIDE

WHAT IS CHILDREN'S SABBATH?

Children's Sabbath is a day set aside by churches all over the world for the purpose of spotlighting and affirming the children in our midst and for drawing attention to the needs of children at risk in our world.

Traditionally, this special day is the first Sabbath in October, but your church may choose to observe it at any time. This is a great excuse to invite neighbors and friends (or inactive members) to bring their children. The more you put into planning and promoting this special day, the more impact it will have on your church and your community. This material was developed for Children's Sabbath, October 2, 2010.

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THE THEME:

Speak, Lord! I'm Listening

Throughout history God has repeatedly called children into service for Him. Age is inconsequential when it comes to the calling of the Holy Spirit and the ability of a child to be obedient and respond to God's voice. Our heavenly Father goes to great lengths to save us and to reach us, whether we are a child or an adult. It is our duty and privilege to say, "Speak, Lord, I'm ready to listen."

As we gather to celebrate our children, this theme reminds us that:

- Children are uniquely called and gifted to share God's love with others.
- Adults enjoy the privilege and responsibility to recognize and encourage these gifts.
- Each of us has been lovingly called by God, and He is waiting for our response.

USING THIS BROCHURE

Normally the children's coordinator organizes Children's Sabbath. If your church has not appointed a children's coordinator, ask the pastor to appoint someone to act as coordinator for this particular day. The information in this brochure is meant to guide and assist the coordinator.



PLANNING AND PROMOTION

Plan this service as an opportunity to reach out to the community as well as a way to showcase children and their ministry. To get the ball rolling for your Children's Sabbath program, work with your pastor to develop a vision for Children's Sabbath and assemble a team to follow through on the organization and planning.

To get the children involved in the preparation and outreach, share with them the logo and the theme; talk about its meaning, Encourage children to pray every day that their hearts will be open to God's calling and that they will be eager to say, "Speak, Lord, because I'm ready to listen."

RIGHT AWAY

1. Order materials well in advance, while supplies of free items last (see Materials List on p. 7). Establish a Children's Sabbath prayer support group.
2. Form a planning team, involving the Pathfinder and Adventurer Club directors as well as children's Sabbath School division and VBS leaders.
3. At the first meeting of the planning team,
 - Cast a vision for your Children's Sabbath service; pray together that God will bring the vision to life.
 - Together distribute responsibility for the various parts of the service to adults or older teens who will coach the participants for that segment of the service.
 - Choose children to fill the roles, such as participating during the sermon time, Scripture, or special music.
 - Brainstorm additional creative touches for your program.
4. If your church has children who are preparing for baptism, work with their families and the pastor to plan a baptism as part of the Children's Sabbath service.

SIX WEEKS AHEAD

5. Ask the church communications leader to advertise your program in the church bulletin, in local newspapers, and on local radio stations (sample inserts and announcements at www.childmin.com/ChildrensSabbath).
6. Send "Speak, Lord!" postcards as invitations to inactive (or former) members. Hand out postcards in church, encouraging members to invite their neighbors, friends, and relatives.
7. Ask the church's hospitality team to plan a potluck or special meal for guests after the Children's Sabbath service.
8. Plan for someone to take pictures at your Children's Sabbath program. Send pictures and a write-up to local media, your conference, and the North American Division (see our address on p. 2).

THREE WEEKS AHEAD

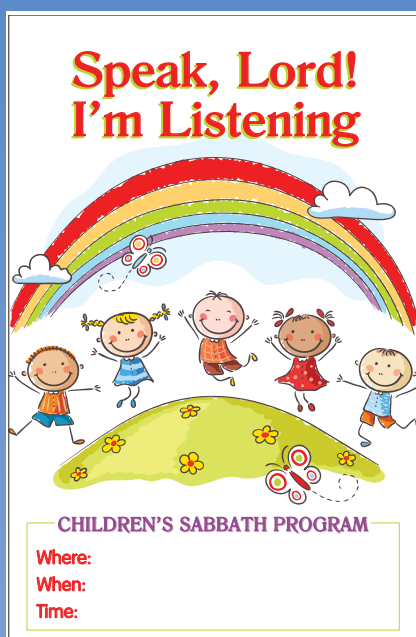
9. Hang "Speak, Lord!" posters around your church and school.
10. Enlist several children to help with a creative announcement during church.
11. Start practicing the entire program in the church. (Avoid keeping kids out late on Friday night.)



MATERIALS LIST

- “Speak, Lord! I’m Listening” poster (11” x 17”)
- “Speak, Lord! I’m Listening” invitation postcard
- “Speak, Lord! I’m Listening” button (1¼”)
- “Speak, Lord! I’m Listening” bookmark (2” x 6¾”)

To order these materials, visit
www.adventsource.org.



POSTER



BOOKMARK



BUTTON

THEME:

Speak, Lord! I'm Listening

ORDER OF SERVICE

Praise and Worship

Welcome

Opening Hymn

Opening Prayer

Call to Worship

Special Music

SPEAK, LORD! I'M LISTENING

Baptism (optional)

Closing Hymn

PRAISE AND WORSHIP TIME

If your church does not have praise and worship time in between the Sabbath School hour and the divine service, this is a great opportunity to start one. This allows you to bring your congregation into an atmosphere of worship. Begin with an upbeat song, and as the praise and worship time winds down, choose songs that are slower and more contemplative, with the final song being an introduction into the worship service.



Get the kids involved in this portion of the service, especially those who may not want to stand up front alone.

Praise and Worship Songs

All music is available at your local ABC or at www.adventistbookcenter.com.



Suggested Songs from the KGCN: Kids' and God's Communication Network CD Everybody Sing!

- No. 6 – "Let Us Come Together"
- No. 5 – "God Will Show You the Way"
- No. 9 – "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
- No. 4 – "Best Friend of All"

Suggested Songs from He Is Our Song

- No. 133 – "Micah 6:8"
- No. 102 – "Unto Thee, O Lord"
- No. 88 – "Thy Word"
- No. 111 – "I See Jesus"

Suggested Songs from the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal

- No. 249 – "Praise Him! Praise Him!"
- No. 573 – "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go"
- No. 579 – "'Tis Love That Makes Us Happy"
- No. 319 – "Lord, I Want to Be a Christian"



God Speaks to Us in

VERSE ONE

People speak in words

In front of your mouth, point left with your right index finger and draw circles rolling outward to mime words rolling out of your mouth.

To learn what life is for.

With your right hand, mime picking up something from your left palm, then putting it in your forehead.

There's a language from the heavens

Cup your hand to your ear and point upward and look up.

That tells us so much more.

Starting with your hands in front of you, palms up, pull them apart to the side.



CHORUS

God speaks to us in many different ways.

Tap your mouth, then tap your ear. Put your palms together and open them like a book.

We hear Him when we work

Pound your right fist on top of your left fist and then your left fist on top of your right fist (as if building something).

And when we play.

Smile and shake "Y" hands (fists with your pinkies and thumbs sticking out) in front of you.

He sends His message from above,

Point upward, and then scribble on your left palm with your right index finger.

So we can sing about His love,

Cup your hands around your mouth. Cross your arms across your chest.

'Cause God speaks to us in many different ways.

Tap your mouth, then tap your ear. Put your palms together and open them like a book.

Many Different Ways



VERSE TWO

We can hear Him in the thunder,

Cup your hand to your ear. Jump and burst both fists open near your face.

In the rain and wind.

Hold your hands in front of you like flags and rotate your wrists as if your “flags” are flapping in the wind.

He tells us in the Bible

Sign “Bible”—touch your right middle finger to your left palm and then touch your left middle finger to your right palm. Then put your palms together and open them like a book.

Jesus is our friend.

Point upward, then hook your fingers together in front of your chest and shake together to show the strong bond.

REPEAT CHORUS TWICE

REPEAT LAST LINE OF CHORUS TWICE

God speaks to us in many different ways.

Tap your mouth twice, then tap your ear. Put your palms together and open them like a book.

To see the song in action, visit www.kgcnvbs.com or purchase the **KGCN: Kids’ and God’s Communication Network** music DVD at www.adventistbookcenter.com or from your local Adventist Book Center.



WELCOME

Cast: Pastor

Thank you for joining us on this special Sabbath. Today we have the privilege of seeing our young people in action. Sometimes we forget the impact our children can have on this world—and this church. No doubt, when the service is done today, we will all praise the Lord for our young people and their testimony of God’s love and God’s sure calling. God bless you as we worship together.



OPENING HYMN

No. 245 – “More About Jesus,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

OPENING PRAYER

Cast: 1 boy, 1 girl

The children may opt to pray their own prayer—often their sweet prayers are moving and very touching. Here is an example if needed.

Boy or girl: Heavenly Father, Thank You for calling us to You.
We are longing to hear Your voice.
Thank You for the written Word.
We read the Scriptures and receive guidance and Your peace.
Thank You for the signs You send.
We look for Your love and care and Your will for our lives.
Thank You for dying on the cross.
The accepted gift gives us a heart of service to the world.
Thank You for rising and sending us the Holy Spirit.
The gift of comfort leads us to follow You.
We love You, Lord. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Cast: 1 adult, 1 boy, 1 girl

Choose an older boy and girl for this up-front responsibility. Have an adult out of sight speaking the lines, and the boy and girl respond.

These texts are to be spoken as an intimate conversation with God. Speak with excitement and obvious love. (It is not necessary to read the references after each line.)

Adult: "Listen to me. . . . I have called you to be my people. I am God." (Isaiah 48:12)

Girl: "Lord, I call to You with all my heart."
(Psalm 119:145)

Adult: "I will make you wise. I will show you where to go." (Psalm 32:8)

Boy: "I see your love. I live by Your truth." (Psalm 26:3)

Adult: "I will put my teachings in their minds. And I will write them on their hearts." (Jeremiah 31:33)

Girl: "How I love Your teachings! I think about them all day long." (Psalm 119:97)

Adult: "I will not forget you. See, I have written your name on my hand." (Isaiah 49:15, 16)

Boy: "I will tell of your goodness. I will praise You every day." (Psalm 35:28)

Adult: "I will search for the lost. . . . I will put bandages on those that were hurt. I will make the weak strong."
(Ezekiel 34:16)

Boy and girl: "Lord, teach me what You want me to do." (Psalm 86:11)

[Boy and girl exit the platform.]

SPECIAL MUSIC

Ask an adult to work with the children to prepare a special music song. We recommend "God Speaks." Sheet music for this song is available at www.childmin.com or www.adventsource.org. For the accompaniment track, purchase **KGCN: Kids' and God's Communication Network** CD at www.adventistbookcenter.com or at your local Adventist Book Center.

Speak, Lord! I'm Listening

During this section of the program you can either have a child recite the script or you can have an adult read it and have the child stand in costume on the stage. If necessary, adapt this service to fit your church's worship style, needs, and abilities.

Cast:

- Narrator—boy or girl; if you prefer, you can have several children fill this role and share the responsibilities of reading the script.
- Samuel—boy dressed in Bible costume with coins in his hand
- Gideon—boy dressed in armor with a small “fleece” in his hand
- Josiah—boy dressed like a king with a crown and holding a scroll
- Mary—girl dressed in Bible costume
- Paul—boy in Bible costume

Narrator: The Bible, God's written word, tells us of God's great love for us. He called Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and He can do the same for us. In fact, the Bible also tells of a time God spoke directly to a young child like me. Let's listen to the story.

Boy Samuel—[God Calls—I Answer]

[Samuel walks up to the platform and stops as he notices the congregation. He smiles and speaks to them.]

Oh, hello! I am Samuel, and I live at the tabernacle. Isn't it a fine day today? I am on my way to the market for Priest Eli. We have a few shekels to spend on dates and pomegranates; they are my favorite treats, and I may purchase all I can with these coins. *[Samuel holds out his hand to show the coins.]* In my prayer time this morning, I thanked God and shared

with Him my plans for the marketplace.

[Samuel stops and looks at the congregation.]

Why are you smiling? Don't you talk to God? I love to speak to Him, but it is most exciting when He speaks with me. Why, just the other night I was asleep in my bed, and God called me! He said, "Samuel." At first I didn't know it was Him, but Priest Eli helped me understand. When I realized God was calling me with His own voice, I answered, "Speak, Lord! I'm listening."

[Samuel then walks off the platform.]

Narrator: It's amazing to think that God spoke to Samuel when he was just a boy. It lets me know that God can speak to me too. God not only speaks to us, He shows us signs. Listen to this story.

Gideon—[God Shows—I See]

[Gideon walks up to the platform and sits on a stool or step.]

Greetings in the name of the one true God; I am Gideon. At times I have been called upon to make grave decisions and to lead men into battle. A man in my position has to make important decisions, and I must make sure that I am following God at all times. Sometimes I get directions from God, and they just don't seem to be logical—I'm a reasonable man, but I like to know that what I'm doing is right. I need God to show me; I need to see in order to believe.

God has been patient with me and has shown me signs—why, one time there was no dew on the ground except on the sheepskin I left out. Another time the opposite happened—the ground was wet, and the sheepskin was dry. Now, that is something a man can see with his own eyes. I said to God, "Show me—I want to see."

[Gideon leaves the platform.]

Narrator: What a blessing to know that God isn't impatient with us. Sometimes our faith isn't strong, but God is always faithful.

We have the Bible, and we say that it is God's written word. We can read it to learn more about Him. Well, God actually wrote part of it with His own finger! But that's not our story today. Listen to this young king.

Josiah—[God Writes—I Respond]

[Josiah enters regally with head held high.]

Greetings, subjects! I see you are in a holy temple, and it is a blessing to be here with you. I am King

Josiah. Some of you may think me too young to be a king, but I assure you I have ruled these lands since I was 8 years of age.



Long ago God shared a plan showing how we could have a long and profitable life. He gave that plan to Moses and called them the Ten Commandments. Since then God has spoken to men and showed them signs to convey His word and His will,

and different subjects have faithfully written these words down.

Recently a priest found a book that had been hidden for quite some time and read it to me. It troubled me greatly because our people were not following the plan in the book. It was clear we were not living a godly life. So I called my people together, and we read from the book. We all agreed to change our actions to be in accordance with God's will. We want to follow Him. Thankfully, God wrote to us so that we could respond in obedience.

[Josiah leaves the platform.]

Narrator: I love to read my Bible. Just holding it makes me feel secure and closer to God. So far we have learned that God calls to us and we must listen for His voice. He also shows us signs and wonders, and we must have our eyes open to take in His grace. And He writes to us letters of love that we call the Bible. But when Jesus died on the cross, He communicated His love for us in a different way. He used His body. Let's listen.

Mary—[God Cares—I Care]

[Mary enters humbly and shyly, but as she shares her story she becomes bold and excited.]

Hello. I wasn't expecting there to be a large crowd to hear my story, but I'm glad to share with you. My name is Mary, and you may know that I'm a friend of Jesus; well, I was before He died. His death was horrible, and I can't talk about it without crying. I saw Him on the cross—He didn't say much, He just stretched out His hands and showed His love for you and for me with His death.

I went to the tomb early Sunday morning so that I could make sure no one had disturbed the body, but when I got there—He was gone! At first I was devastated, thinking that a thief had come in and done something with Him. But the angels talked with me, and then I heard His voice. It was beautiful, and exciting, and so full of love. He told me that He will come again someday. In the meantime, I'm sharing my story with anyone who will hear it. You see, Jesus cares for me—He proved it when He died for me, and now I want to care for others.



Narrator: We show our love for others through hugs and holding hands. If Jesus were here now, I would climb up on His lap and just gaze at Him. I can't wait to hold His hand in heaven.

When Jesus left this earth and went back to be with God in heaven, He didn't leave us alone. He sent the Holy Spirit, called the Comforter. I like that; it sounds warm and snug and secure. Here's a story of someone who knows all about that.

Paul—[God Comforts—I Follow]

[Paul enters with energy and enthusiasm.]

Ah, fellow believers—welcome, and may the Holy Spirit be in this place! My name is Paul, and I am a traveling evangelist. I go where God tells me to go and share the love His Son, Jesus, has for each of us.

You are probably wondering how I know where to go. That is a wonderful question, and I'm excited to tell you more. My traveling companion Titus and I decided to visit a town a great distance away. As we neared our destination, we were impressed that we should not go there. I can describe it only as heaviness in our hearts and a sense of unrest. We changed our course and started toward another town, and the same thing happened! Once again we prayed for direction, and we both came to the conclusion that we should not go to the town at all.

That night I had a dream—really, it was a vision. That's a dream that is inspired by God. In the dream a man from Macedonia—a place we hadn't even considered going—was calling to me, asking Titus and me to come to them. When I woke up, Titus and I agreed that this was the leading of the Holy Spirit. God was guiding us through the Holy Spirit—comforting us with the knowledge that we were on the right track. When God sends the comfort of the Holy Spirit—I will follow.

Narrator: God calls, and I listen. God shows, and I see. God writes, and I respond. God cares, and I care. God comforts, and I follow. I'm so glad that God reaches out to each of us. He wants to have a relationship with me—and He wants to have a relationship with you. It doesn't matter how old we are, or aren't. It doesn't matter what happened yesterday. God wants you, and He is using every way He knows to reach you. God is calling you. Please answer, "Speak, Lord! I'm Listening."

BAPTISM [optional]

CLOSING

Cast: boy or girl

Child: Thank you for being with us on this wonderful Sabbath day. If you want to know more about a relationship with God, please come forward after the service. The pastoral staff is available to speak with you. Our closing hymn is number 482, "Father Lead Me Day by Day."

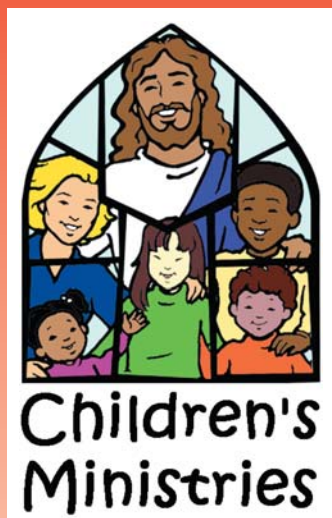
CLOSING HYMN No. 482 – "Father Lead Me Day by Day," *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

CLOSING PRAYER

Cast: boy or girl

Child: Heavenly Father, thank You for this Sabbath program and for all of the children in this church. Keep calling us, Lord, because we are listening, and we want to follow You. Amen.





CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

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Speak, Lord! I'm Listening was written to complement **KGCN: Kids' and God's Communication Network** Child Evangelism and VBS kit. This kit along with other uniquely Adventist programs are available at www.adventistbookcenter.com.

