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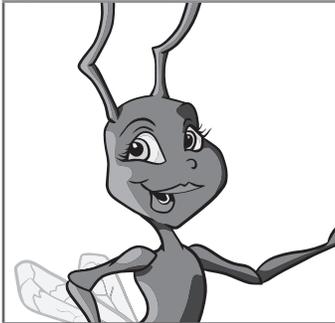


SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

ANIMAL PAL

JEZREEL VALLEY
OPENING AND CLOSING

PROPHET'S PEAK
BIBLE STORY



POWER POINT:
My God is real. That's rock solid!

BIBLE STORY
Facing Challenges
with God

KEY VERSE:
"I am with you, so do not be afraid"



POWER POINT:
My God provides. That's rock solid!

BIBLE STORY
Experiencing God's
Providing in Zarephath

KEY VERSE:
"I am with you, so do not be afraid.
I am your God, so do not be upset."



POWER POINT:
My God is powerful. That's rock solid!

BIBLE STORY
Battles of the Gods

KEY VERSE:
"I am with you, so do not be afraid. I am your God,
so do not be upset. I will make you strong..."



POWER POINT:
My God knows me. That's rock solid!

BIBLE STORY
Elijah Runs Away
from Everyone

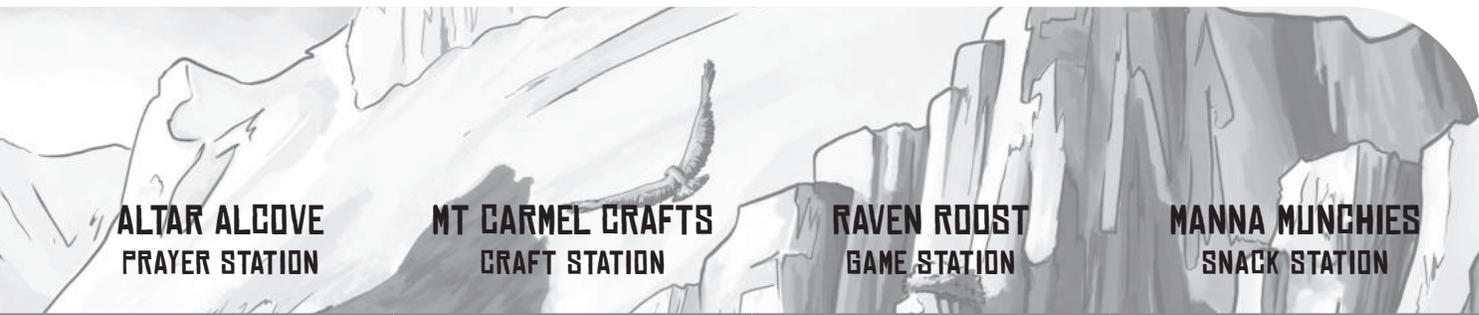
KEY VERSE:
"I am with you, so do not be afraid.
I am your God, so do not be upset.
I will make you strong and I will help you."



POWER POINT:
My God is preparing a place for me. That's rock solid!

BIBLE STORY
Elijah and Elisha
cross the Jordan
River Together

POWER POINT:
"I am with you, so do not be afraid. I am your God,
so do not be upset. I will make you strong and I will
help you. My powerful right hand will keep you safe."
Isaiah 41:30 (EasyEnglish Bible)



ALTAR ALCOVE
PRAYER STATION

MT CARMEL CRAFTS
CRAFT STATION

RAVEN ROOST
GAME STATION

MANNA MUNCHIES
SNACK STATION

AWE
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVITY
Wow, God!

ORIENTEERING ACTIVITY
I am thankful, God

MAIN CRAFT
Hiking Lantern

GRAB + GO
Stained Glass
Window Craft Kit

PRE-GAME
Stop & Listen

MAIN GAME
Over Under Mountain
Hike

DEBRIEF



LISTENING
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVITY
I hear you, God!

ORIENTEERING ACTIVITY
I can listen &
talk to God

MAIN CRAFT
Butterfly
Suncatcher

GRAB + GO
Scratch Butterfly
Ornaments

PRE-GAME
Mountain Express

MAIN GAME
Rippling Water Relay

DEBRIEF



TRUSTING
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVITY
You've got this, God!

ORIENTEERING ACTIVITY
I can trust God to
handle my burdens

MAIN CRAFT
Mountain
Spinner

PRE-GAME
Gather Up

MAIN GAME
Jezreet Tree Relay

DEBRIEF



AFFIRMING
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVITY
You know me, God!

ORIENTEERING ACTIVITY
I am unique

MAIN CRAFT
Clothespin
Paper Puppets

PRE-GAME
Whistle Freeze

MAIN GAME
Beach Ball
Relay Race

DEBRIEF



REMEMBRANCE
TRAILBLAZING ACTIVITY
We remember God!

ORIENTEERING ACTIVITY
I will remember
how much God
cares for me

MAIN CRAFT
Pompom
Celebration Popper

GRAB + GO
Picture Frame
Magnets

PRE-GAME
Whistle Scramble

MAIN GAME
Mountain Top
Obstacle Course

DEBRIEF



STATION OVERVIEW



Welcome to Altar Alcove! This station is designed to introduce the concept of prayer and demonstrate the many ways we can build a friendship with God. Altar alcove is deep in one of the clefts of the mountain of miracles. As children enter, they will be greeted by a trailblazer. This is a person who goes ahead of mountaineers to clear paths and explore new areas. Children will be delighted as they clear their own trails and build up altars of prayer to mark their discoveries. As they go through each engaging activity, they will come to understand that there is always a clear path to talk to God!

During their visit to your station, children will encounter different ways to pray. Each prayer will be represented by a letter, which will spell out the word: ALTAR

- Awe (Wow, God!)
- Listening (I hear you, God!)
- Trusting (You've got this, God!)
- Affirmation (You know me, God!)
- Remembrance (Come soon, God!)

Your station will include three segments:

1. TRAILBLAZING (5 MINUTES)

A short introduction time where children will search for a new trailhead to reveal the prayer topic of the day. This is meant to be a brief and playful opening.

2. ORIENTEERING (10 MINUTES)

A large group activity which focuses on each day's type of prayer. This is meant to be the most active portion of each rotation and helps children practice together.

3. MAPPING (10 MINUTES)

A quiet activity which allows for one-on-one reflection and personal prayer. This is also a time for you to **pray with and for your children**.

You're going to love teaching this station! Each segment is intended to help children understand what prayer is, why they pray, and how they can pray. Remember, you will be encountering a diverse group of children from many different walks of life. Some may have never heard of prayer. Some may have prayed with family or friends before. Some may be learning to pray on their own for the very first time. You have the privilege of modeling what prayer looks like and how it can be a blessing. Take the time to meet your children where they are at. **Pray for your children throughout the week. Pray with your children during the personal prayer time.** No matter what background they have, you can be sure that they will be excited to see how easy it is to talk to God and how wonderful it is to connect with Him. As you begin preparing to lead your station, contemplate this prayer of blessing. Remember its words and be encouraged!

Holy God, may the children who come to our church for VBS experience the amazing love you have for them. May they come to know and understand that the mighty and powerful God who created the heavens and the earth loves them, chooses them, and has adopted them into His family. Bless the smiles, words, and interactions they may have with each station leader, and provide divine appointments of laughter, joy, meaningful conversation, and deep connection.

May each child encounter you every day they attend. Thank you for entrusting us with these precious young hearts and minds. Amen.

COSTUME AND CHARACTER

You will be dressed in hiking attire, with boots, bandana, binoculars, hiking stick, map, backpack, and compass. Since you are



a trailblazer, your character is an adventurous explorer who is excited to share each new discovery.

DECORATIONS

- Large maps covering one side of the room's walls.
- This is where you will complete your map marking during the personal prayer activity
- Daily ALTAR posters—each with one letter and description. Write the letters in bold print, so they are visible from anywhere in the room. These will be added to the map wall each day.
 - A—awe (Wow, God!)
 - L—listening (I hear you, God!)
 - T—trusting (You've got this, God!)
 - A—affirmation (You Know me, God)
 - R—remembrance (Come soon, God!)
- Entryway will be a set of mountains divided in the center. Create freestanding mountains.
- Use brown contact paper and chicken wire to create a mountainous and rocky area.
- Set up a campsite in the room by the maps.



DAY 1 AWE [WOW, GOD!]

SUPPLIES

- A (Awe) poster
- Green paper or leaves (enough to cover the poster)
- Tape
- Sticky hands (1 per child)
- Hoops, paper plates, or Velcro dots
- Start and Finish signs
- Daily Map (1 per child)
- Pens/pencils (1 per child)



SETUP

Choose a corner of the room. Tape a line across the corner of the room and place your poster A (Awe–Wow, God!) poster in that corner. Your line should be far enough away that children will be able to use their “sticky hands” to reach the poster.



1. Cover your poster with a pile of green paper leaves. The poster should not be visible.
2. Secure your hoops, paper plates, or Velcro dots to the floor scattered throughout the room.
3. Place a “start” sign on one side and a “finish” side on the other.

WELCOME

Welcome to Altar Alcove, friends! I'm so excited to have you with me this week. My name is _____ and I'm a trailblazer. My job is to explore the mountains, mark pathways, and clear trails for all the hikers. You never know what you'll find when you're a trailblazer! I've discovered all sorts of hidden areas. I do this with my handy dandy compass. (Show compass.) Do you know what a compass is used for? That's right! It helps me know the direction I am going.

(Point to maps.) A trailblazer doesn't just discover and maintain new pathways; we also keep records on maps so others can locate the places that have been found. When I want other people to know where to find an important site, I'll mark it down so that when people see it, they automatically know this is an important place, and a safe space to rest.

This week, you will do some trailblazing of your own! Every day when you visit Altar Alcove you'll discover that there is **ALWAYS a clear pathway to God**. But we don't need a compass or map to find this path. Not at all! God loves us so much that He gave us a simple way to talk to Him through prayer.

Praying is easy! It's just like having a conversation with your close friend. The best part is, you can pray anytime, anywhere about anything!

TRAILBLAZING

Now that you know what prayer is, it's time to start trailblazing! Do you remember the Power Point for today? My God Is Real! That's rock solid!

(Say it a few times.) That's right! So, our goal is to find a trail that will lead us to the kind of prayer which reminds us just how real God is. (Point to corner of room.) I see a trailhead now! (Point to the corner of the room where letter is hidden.) Let's go!

(Prompt children to sit behind the line that is taped to the ground.) It looks like the trailhead is covered with leaves. We'll need to use our hands to clear the pathway! But look on the ground, we have a safety line in place! We can't cross it until the trailhead is cleared. It looks like it might be too far away, and we'll need some help. Each of you will get a sticky hand grabber. When I say go, use your grabber to grab the leaves on the ground. Let's find out what's underneath.

Wait until I say GO to use your grabber. (Hand out grabbers.)

READY? SET! GO!!!! (Cheer and encourage children to use their grabbers to get the leaves off of the poster.) You did it! The trailhead has been cleared. What did we discover? (Point to poster.) It looks like it is our first kind of



prayer. It starts with the letter A, for AWE. (*Hang poster on map wall.*)

AWE is when you look at something and are completely amazed. It's when you say WOW! That's AWESOME!!! God has blessed us, and He has done some amazing things in our lives. When we say, "WOW, GOD! You are good! WOW, GOD! I've met some new friends at VBS... WOW, GOD! You have kept me healthy and strong... WOW, GOD! You love me!" we appreciate how awesome God truly is. This helps us appreciate that God is REAL (THAT'S ROCK SOLID), and He is always involved in our lives.

ORIENTEERING

Now that we have found the trailhead, we need to explore our trail so that others can follow. Are you ready to do some climbing? Me too! (*Point to markers on ground.*)

Here is our pathway. We need to jump on the circles to get from start (*Point out starting line.*) to finish. (*Point out finish line.*) Here's how we will play and pray. You will roll the dice. The number you roll is how many jumps we get. When you roll a number, we need to come up with the same number of things we can say "WOW, God!" for.

Each time someone rolls, you'll get to jump, but be careful! If you tip over off of your circle, you'll need to start over! We'll keep rolling until everyone reaches the finish line to the path! (*Model as an example.*) I'll start! (*Roll dice.*) I rolled a 3. What are some things I can be thankful for? Hmmmm...

- I can say I'm thankful God gave me a home
- God has kept me safe this week
- I can jump and run and play!

(*Everyone says*) WOW, GOD! (*Jump to three different dots and count out loud as you jump.*)

Now I will stay here until the next person rolls. I can jump to a different spot each time there is a roll. But I'll wait until everyone says WOW, GOD! first. Now it's your turn to roll!

(*Have children line up. Give the first child the dice and have them roll. If they roll a 2 have the group come up with two things they are thankful for. Everyone will then say WOW, GOD! and that child will jump on two different dots to move toward finish. Repeat until everyone has made it to the finish line.*)

NOTE: *Keep your children engaged in the activity by encouraging them to think together about the different things they are thankful for. Have them count together as they jump. Cheer when they make it to the finish. If they tip over or their foot moves off of their dot, they will start*

over. You can say, "Whoops! We fell off the path! Let's try again" etc.

We made it! You are amazing! There are so many different ways we have found to say WOW, GOD! Let's pray together.

WOW, GOD! You are awesome! You are amazing! You are mighty! And you are real! Thank you for all the many ways you have blessed us, amen!

MAPPING

Now that we have prayed as a group, you'll get the chance to go back to our orienteering camp and spend some time in personal prayer. (*Have children walk back to campsite area of room. Give each child a Daily Map.*) Today we learned about awe and how we can say WOW, GOD! You are REAL and you are amazing!

I've given you a Daily Map with a flag as a marker. You'll have a few minutes to write WOW! and something you are thankful for on your flag. You can also draw a picture. I'll play some soft music for you while you write, and when we are done, you'll be able to take your flag home.

(*Play soft music for kids—use songs from VBS program, or you can use quiet background music. As children write, walk around the room and pray with and for your children. Ask them, "May I pray with you?" and model a short one-on-one prayer such as, "God, thank you for and please bless him/her today. Amen."*)

You've discovered a trail, you've cleared the path, and you've marked a brand-new way to pray. (*point to A*) Remember to be in AWE of God! And remember that YOUR GOD IS REAL... That's rock solid! We'll see you tomorrow!

DAY 2 LISTENING (I HEAR YOU, GOD!)

SUPPLIES

- L (Listening) poster
- Sticks (enough to cover the L poster and enough for children to have 1 each)
- Tape
- Sign that says
Caution: Rockslide Ahead
- Daily Map (1 per child)
- Pens/pencils (1 per child)
- Blindfolds
- Folded paper with Philippians 4:6-7 (download at AdventistVBS.org)
- Music player and speaker
- Daily Map

SETUP

1. Choose a corner of the room. Tape a line across the corner of the room and place your poster with your second letter (L) in that corner. Your line should be far enough away that children can only reach the poster using their sticks.
2. Cover your poster with a pile of sticks. You should have enough sticks so that each pair of children can pick up 1-2 sticks.
3. Print caution sign.
4. Print Daily Maps (1 for each child).
5. Print Philippians 4:6-7, fold it, and put in your pocket.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to Altar Alcove, friends! At this station we discover together that there is always a clear path to God! That path is prayer. We can pray together and on our own. No matter how we pray, God will always hear us.

How has your journey been so far? (*Listen to some responses.*) It sounds like you have had a lot of adventures already! Are you ready to do some trailblazing with me? Today, our Power Point is My God Provides—That's Rock Solid! There are all sorts of ways that God promises to provide in the Bible. These promises give us comfort

when we hear them. Let's search for a trailhead to find out more. (*Look around room and point to trailhead setup.*)

TRAILBLAZING

AHA! There's our trail over there! But it looks like the trailhead is blocked by all sorts of branches. We have a safety line on the ground and will need to clear the brush before we can cross.

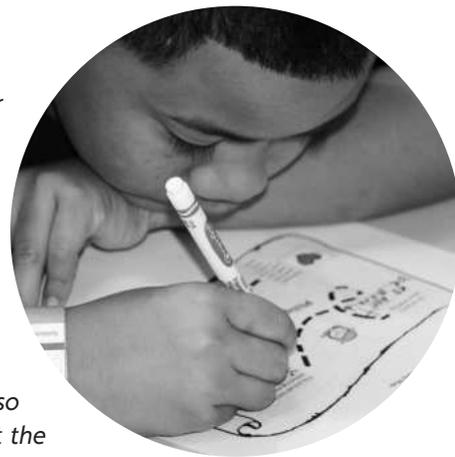
Hang maps up on walls behind tent safety line. (*Demonstrate, then give each child a stick. Have the children work in pairs to pick up a stick from the pile together using their sticks. Cheer and encourage your children. You can have them pick up multiple sticks if you have time.*) You did it! The trailhead has been cleared. What did we discover? It looks like it is our second kind of prayer. It starts with the letter L for LISTENING.

Did you know that during prayer, we don't just talk out loud? Remember, prayer is having a conversation with God, just like you would a friend. When we talk with our friends, it would be a bit silly if we talked and talked and talked and talked and talked and talked and talked. (*Keep going until children notice or start to smile/laugh.*) That's funny, isn't it?

That's because when we have conversations, we don't just talk, we also listen. (*Cup your hands to your ears.*) Listening is important. It's when you pause in silence, think about what you are hearing and learning, and respond with "I hear you, God" as you pray.

ORIENTEERING

NOTE: This game is similar to "blindfold tag." This portion moved quickly during our test run. Times may vary depending on the size of your group. With a large group you may want to split the number of children in two and have a second helper so you can do the activity at the



same time. Keep an eye on your time and adjust accordingly. If you have extra time, you can have children wear the blindfold. The goal is to emphasize listening closely.

Since we have found the trailhead, we'll need to explore our trail so that others can follow. (Point out sign that says *Caution: Rockslide Ahead.*) But this path is a little bit more dangerous. (Look around and lower voice while looking cautious.) I noticed that there are some rocky places on our trail today. We'll have to be very quiet to be able to get through it. Too much noise, and there could be a rockslide! (Continue to talk at a whisper during the game and through the activity unless you are saying "ROCKSLIDE!")

I'm going to be blindfolded. You'll try to tiptoe past me to here. (Point out finish line.) Try to be very very quiet. In the silence, I'm going to listen for your footsteps. The whole team has to sneak past undetected. If I hear you, I'll try to tap you and say ROCKSLIDE, and you'll try again. Are you ready? Let's go! (Start in the middle of the playing area. When you say go, let the children try to tiptoe past you. The room should be very quiet. If a child makes a noise, try to follow and tag them. If they are tapped, say "ROCKSLIDE!" and they will start over and try again.)

NOTE: It is helpful to have a second adult helper as a spotter. This person can watch to make sure children are tiptoeing and keeping safe during the game.

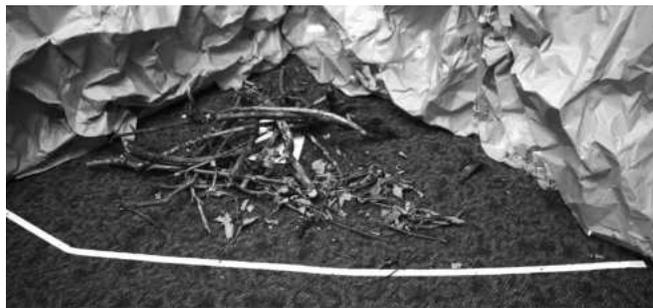
(Talk in a normal voice at the end of the game.) Phew! Great job, everyone! You all made it safely to the end of the trail! The silence was important because in it I could listen carefully and give you any warnings for an incoming rockslide.

Silence has a purpose. It helps us focus and pay attention when we need to notice something really important. I noticed something important while we were exploring. Look! (Pull piece of paper out of pocket.) Someone left a message out on the trail. Let me read it to you.

Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray... always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

That's a pretty amazing promise. It reminds me that my God provides—that's rock solid! When I listen to this promise, I can talk to God about what it means to me.

Let's go back to our camp and mark the trail by using what we have learned about listening.



MAPPING

(Hand out Daily Map.) Your map today has the note I found on the trail! Let's read it out loud together!

Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray... always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

When I listen to this verse, I remember that my God provides—that's rock solid! It tells me to pray about everything, and God's peace will be with me. What do you think about this Bible verse? Let's pray together, then do a bit of listening. Talk to God about the verse, write down your thoughts and prayers, then we will pray as a group. (Play soft music and allow a few moments for children to write down their prayers or color the sheet. As the music plays, pray for and with your children.)

Let's all pray together now, repeat after me: We hear you God! We are listening. Thank you for providing for us every day. Amen.

You've discovered a trail, you've cleared the path, and you've marked a brand-new way to pray. (Point to L.) remember to listen for God in His Bible promises. You can take your maps with you as a remind that your God provides—that's rock solid. We'll see you tomorrow.

DAY 3 TRUSTING [YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD!]

SUPPLIES

- Plastic shovels (1 per child)
- Bucket
- Small river rocks (five per person)
- Black permanent marker
- T (Trusting) poster
- Plastic pool with water
(**OPTIONAL**) Large tarp: place the pool on top of the tarp to keep your ground dry
- Washable markers
- Daily Map
- Pens or pencils (1 per child)



SETUP

1. Choose a corner of the room. Tape a line across the corner of the room and place your poster with your third letter poster (T) in that corner. Your line should be far enough away that children can only reach the poster using their shovels.
2. Cover your poster with a pile of rocks. You should have enough rocks so that each pair of children can pick up a few.
3. Using a black marker, write down one of the words below on each rock. You'll need for one rock with each word per child.
 - Home
 - School
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Feelings
4. On the other corner of the room, place a kiddie pool filled with shallow water

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to Altar Alcove, friends! This is where we discover there is **always a clear path to God!** Do you remember what that path is? That's right! PRAYER. We're going to find another way to pray when we look for the new trail. But trailblazing is going to be tough today! I hope you are really STRONG! Do you have strong

muscles? We're going to need A LOT of POWER to get to our trailhead. Are you ready? Let's Go!

(Give each child a plastic shovel.) There are a lot of rocks and dirt in the way of our trailhead. We need to use our strength to shovel all the rocks away! *(Demonstrate.)* Be sure to stay behind the safety line, reach out, and pick up a HEAVY HEAVY ROCK *(Pretend to strain while picking up a river rock.)* using all your strength! And move the rock from the pile, into the bucket. *(Drop river rock from shovel into bucket.)* PHEW! Let's clear the area to find out what our trailhead will look like. *(Give children time to pick up a few rocks and place them in the bucket.)*

We did it! Great job, everyone! You all are very strong. Our trailhead letter is T—for TRUSTING. Trusting is a BIG part of praying. When we talk to God, we trust that God hears our prayers and will respond.

Do you remember our Power Point? That's right! Our Power Point is my God is powerful—that's rock solid! The Bible tells us that God is MIGHTY. He is STRONG. He is stronger than all of our muscles put together! He doesn't move rocks for us though... He moves our burdens. *(Pick up the bucket of rocks and dump them in the center of the room.)*

Did you notice something strange about these heavy rocks? They have different words written on them. These words are some of the things that we deal with every day. Sometimes these things can feel a bit heavy for us.

(Hold up FEELINGS rock.) For example, I might have felt really sad today, or had my feelings hurt. That can feel heavy. But I can talk to God about my feelings and trust that God is powerful and can help me with my feelings.

(Hold up SCHOOL rock.) Maybe I feel nervous because I'm going to a new school this year. That may feel heavy too! But I can talk to God about my new school year.



I trust that God is powerful and can help me in my new school.

There are many other burdens God helps us to carry, and we can talk about each one. (*mix up the rocks*) Since we have cleared the trailhead of all of these rocks, let's make sure they are placed where they won't block us again.

TRAILBLAZING

In our trailblazing, we are going to take these rocks and place them back where they came from, in the river! (*Point out pool and place the FEELINGS rock and SCHOOL rock in the water.*) I've put my two rocks back in the water. Let's do it with the other rocks we've found.

Everyone search through the pile and finds a rock that says HOME. Hold up your rock. How can we trust God in our home? Hmm... we can pray for safety. "God, you are powerful! Please keep us safe in our home! Amen."

Now say this with me: YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD! Great job! Take your rock that says HOME and toss it back into the river. (*Give children time to toss into pool and hear the "splash."*)

Let's do another one! Find a rock that says SCHOOL and hold up your rock. How can we trust God in our school? Hmm... we can ask God to help us with our grades and to do our best. "God, you are powerful! Please give us the help we need to do well with our grades, amen."

Now say this with me: YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD! Great job! Take your rock that says SCHOOL and toss it back in the river. (*Give children time to toss into pool and hear the "splash."*)

Let's do another one! Find a rock that says FAMILY and hold up your rock. How can we trust God with our family? Hmm... we can ask God to help us get along with our siblings. "God, you are powerful! Please help us to have good conversations with our brothers and sisters. Help us to be able to be kind to one another, amen."

Now say this with me: YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD! Great job! Take your rock that says FAMILY and toss it back in the river. (*Give children time to toss into pool and hear the "splash."*)

Let's do another one! Find a rock that says FRIENDS and hold up your rock. How can we trust God with our friends? Hmm... we can ask God to be with our friends, and to help our friendships grow! "God, you are powerful! Thank you for the friendships we have. Help our friendships to get even stronger. Bless each of our friends, amen."

Now say this with me: YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD! Great job! Take your rock that says FRIENDS and toss it back in the river. (*Give children time to toss into pool and hear the "splash."*)

Let's do the last one! Find a rock that says FEELINGS and hold up your rock. How can we trust God with our feelings? Hmm... we can talk to God about how we feel. "God, today I feel happy... or sad... or mad... or worried... help me understand my feelings and work through them. Thank you for seeing my feelings. Amen."

Now say this with me: YOU'VE GOT THIS, GOD! Great job! Take your rock that says FEELINGS and toss it back in the river. (*Give children time to toss into pool and hear the "splash."*)

Look at the trail now! It's been cleared of all those heavy rocks. Remember that God is powerful—that's rock solid! He can handle all of our burdens every single day. When we trust Him and talk to Him about these things, we feel so much lighter.

Let's go back to our camp and mark the trail by using what we have learned about trusting.

MAPPING

Thinking of the things that make us feel heavy and burdened is not always easy. But our powerful God is always there to listen to us. Today we will mark our maps with the things that we want to talk to God about. Whether you are feeling heavy because of something at school, or home, or with family or friends, or the feelings you have. God can hear it all, and He can carry it all.

(*Hand out rocks.*) Each of you will get a Daily Map. On the rock, write or draw the things that you feel have made you feel heavy. I'll play some soft music while you are thinking, drawing and writing.

(*Play soft music and allow a few moments for children to write down their prayers and place their rocks in the water. As the music plays, pray for and with your children.*)

It's amazing to remember that our God is powerful! And we can trust Him with each and every burden. In every trail we blaze in this life, our powerful God goes before us.

You've discovered the trail, you've cleared the path, and you've marked a brand-new way to pray. (*Point to the T poster.*) Remember to trust that God hears your prayers, and He is powerful enough to answer. We'll see you tomorrow!

DAY 4

AFFIRMING [YOU KNOW ME, GOD!]

SUPPLIES

- Animal track printouts (print enough for 1 print per child)
- A (Affirming) poster
- Additional animal tracks (enough to create a trail for each animal—there are 6 in total)
- Animal picture printouts
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Daily Map (1 per child)
- Ink Pads
- Pens/pencils (1 per child)
- Large map



SETUP

1. Choose a corner of the room. Tape a line across the corner of the room and place your poster with your fourth letter (A) in that corner. Place animal footprints (1 for each child) covering the letter.
2. Create trails of footprints leading to different animals in the room. Place the animal printout face-down at the end of their footprint trail.

NOTE: In testing this activity, we hid our animal tracks well, so it took some time for the tracking teams to find their animal. We also let our animal prints crisscross in the room. Adapt the print trails to the size of your room and the number of children you may have.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to Altar Alcove, friends! Today we have a new trail we are going to uncover. This one is a bit tricky, and you will need to do some detective work! I know where the trail is, but I'm not quite sure where it leads. It's been covered up by a bunch of tracks! Some of these tracks I know really well, but there are others I have never seen before! Can you help me get to know the tracks of each animal? In this way, we'll be able to mark and walk the right trails, and not the ones the animals have made! Ready? Let's go! (*Walk to trailblazing corner.*)

Do you see all the tracks on the ground? Pick one set of tracks up and follow its trail. When you find the animal, write the name of the animal next to your print. There are 6 different sets of tracks. How many can we find and know? (*Let each child choose one set of tracks and follow it to their hidden animal. When they have found their animal they can come back to the trailhead area.*)

Let's see! What is this one? (*Hold up track.*) That's right! A fox!

What about this one? A bear!

How about this one? A deer! (*Continue until you have identified all the tracks.*)

Now that we have sorted out the tracks we know the tracks and we know the animals they belong with! That helps us walk each trail clearly. Each animal that we identified by its track has something unique about them. A fox is not the same as a bear, and a bear is not the same as a deer.

It's important to be known and to see that we are all unique. The one who knows us best is God! Our Power Point today is God knows me—that's rock solid!!! Look at your own prints on your hand! God knows you so well that He knows every fingerprint that's there.



Wow! Not only does He know that, but He knows who we are inside and out.

Our trailhead is the letter A—for affirming. Affirming is a big word that means God knows us. He cares for us inside and out, because He made us. He made each of us special, with different traits, talents, personalities and more!

TRAILBLAZING

I have an idea! Let's make a new trail, with each of our individual marks! *(Give each child a piece of paper and markers. Trace your handprint on this paper. Write on your handprint some unique things about yourself.)*

Think of a special talent that you have and write it down.

Think of some of your favorite foods and write them down.

Think of your favorite subjects in school.

Think of the roles you play. Are you a brother or sister? A son or daughter? A helper?

(Come up with your own suggestions.) Color your prints and make them bright! *(Give some time for each child to create a hand print.)*

Great job, everyone. Now let's mark a trail with our prints. Where do you want our prints to lead? *(Have children choose a location in the room, then place the prints from the start line to the location of choice.)*

That's a wonderful trail! And look at all the unique handprints that went into marking this trail. I see each handprint as precious, treasured by God and known by Him! Let's say a group prayer together! Stand next to your handprint while we pray.

"God, we thank you for making us each unique. Thank you that you know us so well, and that you treasure each of us for who we are. Amen!"

MAPPING

Next you'll get some time to pray on your own as we do our mapping. Look at your hand again. Remember, God made you unique and knows every print on your hand. He loves you inside and out! *(hand out maps—1 for each child)* Trace your hand on the map. As you look at your handprint, thank God for how He has made you, and thank God that He knows you and all your needs. I'll play some soft music in the background as you pray. *(give children some time to trace their hand)*

You've discovered a trail, you've cleared the path, and you've marked a brand new way to pray. *(point to A)* remember that knowing God is AFFIRMING. God loves you. He KNOWS you and will always care for you inside and out! We'll see you tomorrow.



DAY 5

REMEMBRANCE [WE REMEMBER, GOD!]

SUPPLIES

- Red solo plastic cups
(tape small paper bricks to the cups)
- R (Remembrance) poster
- Small balls
- Building materials
NOTE: any type of building toys or open play craft items will work. The idea is to have multiple items to choose from so that children can create their own shelters. We used Duplo blocks, wooden blocks and popsicle sticks, waffle blocks, and Legos.
- Music player and speaker
- Daily Map (1 per child)
- Pens/pencils (1 per child)

SETUP

1. Choose a corner of the room. Tape a line across the corner of the room and place your poster with your fifth letter (R) in that corner. Your line should be far enough away that children can only reach the cups by rolling a ball.
2. Cover your poster with the cups. You should have enough cups so that the entire poster is covered.
3. Tape a building material to each cup.
4. Print bricks (1 for each child).

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to Altar Alcove, friends! This is where we discover together **that there is always a clear path to God!** We have learned so much this week about the clear path we call prayer. We can pray anytime, anywhere, about anything, and we know that God hears our prayer! For our last day on the trail, I have something very special in mind. Let's go through the trailhead letters we've discovered first. (*point out the letters hung up by your map wall*)

What does A mean? What does L mean? What does T mean? What does A mean?

I'm excited because the last letter will be one that will bring the other letters all together! Hmm...it looks like this trailhead is blocked by a large wall! We'll need to knock it down in order to see what our last letter is. Can you help? Let's go! (*Have children line up and have several try to roll the ball to knock away the cups.*)

What is underneath all of these bricks? What is our last letter? That's right!

R. Put all of the letters together and what does that spell? A-L-T-A-R altar. You've found all of the trailheads. Great job! An altar is what was built in the Bible to help us remember—that's what the R in ALTAR stands for, remembrance. What are we remembering?

Our Power Point is my God is preparing a place for me—that's rock solid! It's wonderful news that God is building a special place for us in heaven! We remember God's promise that He is coming again soon, and He is preparing a place for us.

TRAILBLAZING

Since this is our last day of trailblazing, let's build up something that will help us remember. We are going to build shelters, so take some of the building materials from the trailhead wall (*Point out building blocks.*) and make a one-of-a-kind house or shelter for fellow hikers, so they will have a place to stay when they come here after us.

What will your shelter look like?

Will it be tall or short? Will it be long or wide? How many rooms will it have? I can't wait to see your shelters!

(*As children are building their shelters, ask questions and let them share.*)

The shelters you've built remind me of the home God is preparing for us. When we pray, we can



REMEMBER God's promise that He is going to come again, and He has a special home prepared for us in heaven. Let's say a prayer together

"God, we thank you for the home you are preparing for us in heaven. We can't wait to be with you! Help us to always remember your promises and hope in you. Amen."

Now let's say it loud together: We remember, God!
(Repeat several times.)

MAPPING

We'll mark our maps today with some personal time in prayer. Today we'll build up an ALTAR of prayer. Each of you will get a Daily Map with an altar. You can talk to God about anything we've shared this week in Altar Alcove. Write or draw a prayer on your altar.

(Hand out Daily Maps and give time for children to create their altar. Pray for and with your children.)

Remember that God hears all of our prayers! Remember that your prayers are important to God, and most of all remember how much God cares for you.

You've discovered the last trail. Thank you for coming to be with me here at Altar Alcove! You're ready to blaze paths and pray even more all on your own! Goodbye!

