

Littlest Keiki: Kīhei Lutheran Church First Steps in Faith Book Club

Nurturing faith from birth to age six.



Growing in Faith Together.

Parent Tips: Birth to Age 1

Given with love from your Kīhei Lutheran Church 'ohana

“From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures...” — 2 Timothy 3:15

Your baby is already beginning a lifelong journey of learning about **love, trust, belonging, and God**. Long before babies understand words, they experience faith through the loving people who hold them, comfort them, talk to them, and care for them.

Your baby is growing ...

During the first year, babies are learning to recognize familiar faces and voices, develop trust in the people who care for them, explore the world through their senses, and communicate through sounds, expressions, and gestures.

These loving relationships provide an important foundation for faith. As your baby experiences your dependable love and care, you are helping create the earliest understanding of what it means to be **loved, safe, and cherished**.

Your baby's faith is growing ...

At this age, faith is something your baby **experiences** rather than understands.

Your baby can begin to:

- Associate prayer, songs, and Bible stories with the warmth and security of being with you.
- Hear the names **God** and **Jesus** spoken with love.
- Experience church as a place where people smile, welcome, hold, and care for them.
- Begin to experience God's love through your love and care.

Simple things you can do at home:

Pray out loud. Your baby doesn't need to understand the words. A simple prayer such as, “Thank you, God, for this beautiful day” introduces the sound and rhythm of prayer.

Give a bedtime blessing. Gently make the sign of the cross on your baby's forehead and say, “God loves you, and so do I.”

Sing songs of faith. Songs such as *Jesus Loves Me* allow your baby to hear words about God's love in the comforting sound of your voice.

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Share the book you received. Don't worry about finishing it! Let your baby look, touch, point, and listen. Even a minute or two together is meaningful.

Notice God's world. On a walk or while looking outside, say simple things such as, “Look at the beautiful flower God made” or “Thank you, God, for the rain.”

Bring your baby to worship. Babies learn by being present. The music, prayers, familiar faces, Communion, and loving attention of your church ‘ohana gradually become part of their experience of faith and belonging.

Most important of all ...

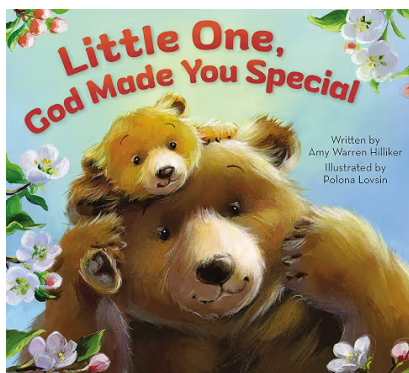
You don't need to be a Bible expert or have all the answers to nurture your baby's faith. **Love them, pray with them, talk naturally about God and Jesus, and let them experience faith as part of everyday family life.**

Small moments of faith, repeated over time, can become the beginnings of a lifelong relationship with God.

Infant – 6 mos.

Little One, God Made You Special

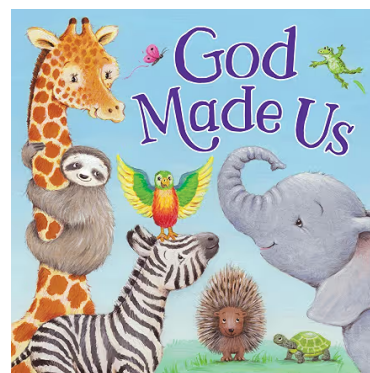
by Amy Warren Hilliker



6 mos. - Age 1

God Made Us

by Link Dyrdaahl



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Parent Tips: Age 1-2

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“We love because he first loved us.” — 1 John 4:19

Your little one is becoming increasingly curious and independent! At this age, children learn through **relationships, repetition, movement, imitation, and exploration**. These everyday experiences also provide wonderful opportunities for faith to begin taking root.

Your toddler is growing ...

Between ages 1 and 2, children are beginning to understand and use words, imitate what others do, express strong feelings, explore their surroundings, and become more aware of familiar people and routines.

Predictable routines and loving relationships help children feel **safe, secure, and loved**—an important foundation for beginning to experience God's love.

Your toddler's faith is growing ...

At this age, faith is still something your child primarily **experiences and imitates**.

Your child can begin to:

- Recognize simple words such as **God, Jesus, church, Bible, and prayer**.
- Imitate you folding your hands, saying “Amen,” or making the sign of the cross.
- Recognize familiar songs and Bible pictures.
- Associate church with people who welcome and care about them.
- Begin to hear that **God made them and God loves them**.

Simple things you can do at home:

Use simple faith words. Say naturally, “God loves you,” “Jesus loves you,” and “Thank you, God!”

Pray at predictable times. A short prayer before meals or bedtime helps prayer become part of the rhythm of family life.

Let your child participate. Encourage your child to fold their hands, say “Amen,” or repeat one or two words of a prayer.

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Sing together. Songs with simple words, repetition, and motions make faith fun. *Jesus Loves Me* is a wonderful place to start.

Share Bible stories and books. Let your child hold the book, turn pages, point to pictures, and name familiar things. It is perfectly fine if story time lasts only a few minutes!

Notice God's creation. Point to a bird, flower, rainbow, ocean, or tree and say, “God made that!” Help your child begin to connect the beautiful world around them with God.

Worship together. Let your child experience the sights, sounds, people, and rhythms of worship. Their wiggles and noises are part of being little—and they are part of the church ‘ohana.

Most important of all ...

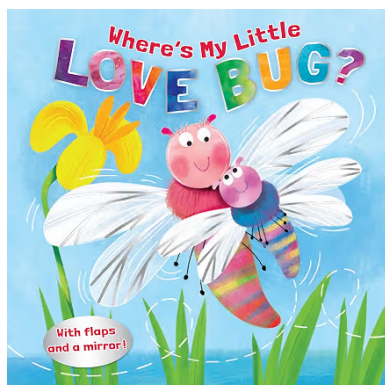
Your child learns about faith by **watching you**. When they see you pray, sing, show kindness, attend worship, and talk naturally about God, they begin to learn that faith is part of everyday life.

You don't need to do anything complicated. **Small, loving moments of faith matter.**

Age 1 – 1 ½

Where’s My Little Love Bug

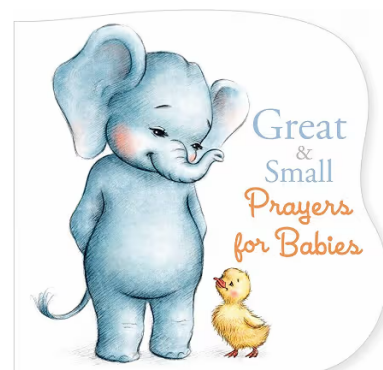
by Pamela Kennedy



Age 1 ½ - 2

Great and Small Prayers for Babies

by Anna Abramskaya



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Parent Tips: Age 2-3

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***"Let the little children come to me, ...
for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Mark 10:14***

Your child is discovering an exciting world of words, imagination, independence, and questions. At this age, children learn best through **stories, play, repetition, imitation, and loving relationships**—all wonderful ways to nurture faith.

Your child is growing ...

Between ages 2 and 3, children are rapidly developing language, becoming more independent, engaging in pretend play, learning to identify feelings, and beginning to understand simple ideas about caring, sharing, and helping.

They love repetition and may want the same song, story, or routine again and again. That repetition makes this a wonderful age for establishing simple family faith practices.

Your child's faith is growing ...

At this age, children begin to participate more actively in faith.

Your child can begin to:

- Understand the simple message **"God loves me."**
- Recognize Jesus as someone important who loves and cares for people.
- Join in very short prayers and say **"Amen."**
- Recognize favorite Bible stories, characters, and songs.
- Understand simple ideas such as **loving, helping, sharing, and saying thank you.**
- Feel that church is a place where **"I belong."**

Simple things you can do at home:

Let your child help pray. Ask, "What should we thank God for today?" Their answer might be Grandma, a puppy, pancakes, or a favorite toy—and that's a wonderful beginning!

Use a simple bedtime blessing. Make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead and say, "God loves you. Jesus is with you. Sleep well."

Read together often. Ask simple questions about the pictures: "Where is Jesus?" "Can you find the sheep?" "Who helped?" Let your child tell parts of familiar stories.

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Sing faith songs with motions. Movement helps young children remember words and makes faith joyful.

Connect kindness with faith. When your child shares or helps, say, “That was kind. Jesus teaches us to love and help one another.”

Talk about God's world. At the beach, park, or backyard, wonder together: “Look what God made!” Encourage your child's natural sense of wonder.

Make worship familiar. Help your child participate in simple ways—singing, saying “Amen,” sharing the peace, bringing an offering, or coming forward for a blessing or Communion as practiced by your family.

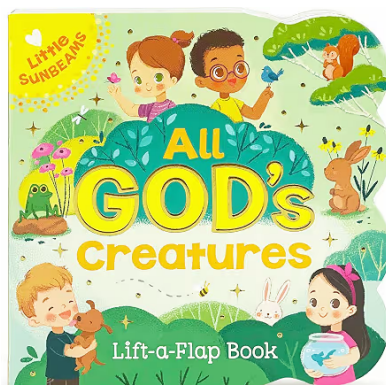
Most important of all ...

Your child doesn't need complicated explanations about God. They need **simple words, loving experiences, familiar stories, and opportunities to participate.**

When faith is woven naturally into meals, bedtime, play, nature, kindness, and worship, your child begins to discover that **God is part of everyday life.**

Age 2 – 2 ½ All God's Creatures

by Ginger Swift



Age 2 ½ - 3 Great and Small Christmas

by B&H Kids Editorial Staff



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Parent Tips: Age 3-4

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“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; ... Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” Deuteronomy 11:18–19

Your child is entering an age filled with **imagination, curiosity, conversation, and lots of questions!** This growing curiosity provides wonderful opportunities to talk naturally about God, Jesus, faith, and the world around them.

Your child is growing ...

Between ages 3 and 4, children are developing rapidly in language and imagination. They enjoy pretend play, stories, songs, and asking questions. They are becoming more aware of other people's feelings and are beginning to understand ideas such as kindness, fairness, helping, and taking turns.

Children this age still learn best through **relationships, repetition, stories, play, and hands-on experiences.**

Your child's faith is growing ...

At this age, your child can begin to:

- Understand that **God made them, knows them, and loves them.**
- Know that Jesus loves people and teaches us to love others.
- Recognize and retell simple parts of familiar Bible stories.
- Participate in short prayers and begin suggesting things or people to pray for.
- Connect kindness, helping, sharing, and forgiveness with following Jesus.
- Ask questions about God, Jesus, church, and the world God made.
- Develop a growing sense that **church is a place where they belong.**

Simple things you can do at home:

Let your child help with prayer. Ask, “Who should we pray for tonight?” or “What would you like to thank God for?” There are no wrong answers.

Ask simple questions about Bible stories. Try: “What happened?” “How do you think that person felt?” “Who helped?” or “What do you think Jesus wants us to remember?”

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Welcome the questions. Three-year-olds ask lots of them! You don't have to know every answer. It's perfectly fine to say, "I don't know. Let's wonder about that together."

Practice kindness together. Let your child help choose food to donate, make a card for someone who is sick, help a neighbor, or care for an animal. Explain simply, "Jesus teaches us to care for other people."

Practice saying "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you." Children are beginning to understand that relationships can be repaired when someone gets hurt.

Look for God in everyday life. At the beach, looking at the stars, seeing a rainbow, or watching an insect, share your child's wonder: "Isn't God's world amazing?"

Participate in worship. Encourage your child to sing, pray, share the peace, listen for familiar words, come forward for Communion or a blessing, and participate in other ways your congregation invites children to join.

Most important of all ...

Your child is beginning to ask bigger questions, but you don't need to have big answers. **Listen, wonder together, tell them that God loves them, and let them see what faith looks like in your own life.**

Faith grows through countless ordinary moments of **love, prayer, stories, questions, kindness, forgiveness, and belonging.**

Age 3 – 3 ½

Training Young Hearts Boxed Set of 6

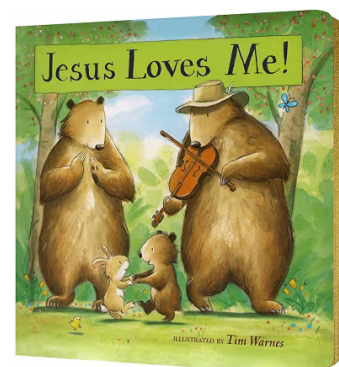
by Abbey Wedgeworth



Age 3 ½ - 4

Jesus Loves Me

by Tim Warnes



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Parent Tips: Age 4-5

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“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.” — Ephesians 4:32

Your child is becoming an enthusiastic **storyteller, question-asker, helper, and explorer**. They are developing their own ideas about the world and becoming increasingly aware of how their actions affect other people.

This is a wonderful age to help children discover that faith isn't something that happens only at church—**following Jesus is something we practice every day.**

Your child is growing ...

Between ages 4 and 5, children are developing longer attention spans, richer imaginations, and greater ability to remember and retell stories. Friendships become increasingly important, and children are learning about cooperation, empathy, rules, fairness, responsibility, and self-control.

They are also likely to ask many “why?” questions as they try to make sense of the world.

Your child's faith is growing ...

At this age, your child can begin to:

- Understand that **God loves them and loves every person**.
- Know that Jesus teaches us how to love, help, forgive, and care for others.
- Remember and retell familiar Bible stories in their own words.
- Pray using their own simple words.
- Recognize that prayer can include **thank you, help, sorry, and please care for...**
- Connect caring for other people and God's creation with living our faith.
- Understand that church is not just a building—it is a community of people who follow Jesus together.
- Develop a stronger sense that **they have a place in the church 'ohana**.

Simple things you can do at home:

Invite your child to lead a prayer. Don't worry about the words being “right.” A child's own words to God are enough.

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Wonder about Bible stories together. Ask questions such as, “What was your favorite part?” “What surprised you?” “What would you have done?” or “What does this story tell us about God?”

Talk about God during ordinary moments. Faith conversations can happen in the car, at dinner, at the beach, or while getting ready for bed.

Practice gratitude. At dinner or bedtime, let everyone name one thing they are thankful for that day.

Find simple ways to serve. Let your child help collect food, choose something to donate, make a card, pick up litter, care for an animal, or help someone who needs a hand. Tell them, “When we care for others, we share God's love.”

Talk about forgiveness. Help your child understand that everyone makes mistakes. We can say we're sorry, forgive one another, and try again—and God's love for us doesn't disappear when we make mistakes.

Help your child participate in worship. Encourage them to sing, pray, listen for familiar Bible stories, share the peace, give an offering, and participate in Communion or receive a blessing.

Most important of all ...

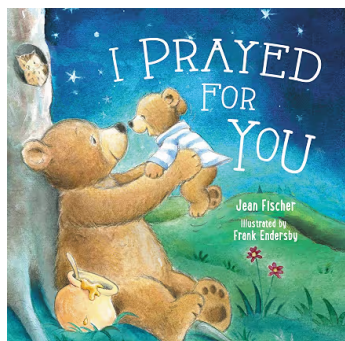
At this age, children are watching to see whether the faith they hear about connects with the life they see around them.

When your child sees you **pray, forgive, show kindness, help someone, care for God's creation, and participate in worship**, they learn that following Jesus is something we live.

You are one of your child's most important teachers of faith simply by **living your own faith alongside them**.

Age 4 – 4 ½

I Prayed for You by Jean Fischer



Age 4 ½ - 5

Near: Psalm 139 by Sally Lloyd-Jones



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Parent Tips: Age 5-6

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"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." — Mark 12:31

Your child is becoming increasingly able to **think, remember, ask deeper questions, understand other people's feelings, and take responsibility for small things.** As their world expands through school, friendships, and new experiences, their understanding of faith can grow too.

This is a wonderful age to help your child see that they aren't simply learning *about* faith. **They are already an important part of God's family and can participate in God's work of loving and caring for the world.**

Your child is growing ...

Between ages 5 and 6, children are developing greater independence, longer attention spans, stronger language skills, and an increasing ability to understand cause and effect. They are becoming more aware of fairness and rules, developing empathy for others, forming friendships, and beginning to understand that other people may think and feel differently than they do.

They also may begin asking surprisingly big questions about **God, life, death, heaven, fairness, and why difficult things happen.**

Your child's faith is growing ...

At this age, your child can begin to:

- Understand that **God loves them always** and that nothing they do earns or takes away that love.
- Know that Jesus teaches us to love God and love our neighbors.
- Become familiar with important Bible stories and begin connecting them with everyday life.
- Pray independently using their own words.
- Pray for other people and situations beyond themselves.
- Understand that following Jesus includes kindness, generosity, forgiveness, helping others, and caring for creation.
- Ask thoughtful questions about God and faith.
- Recognize that they have **gifts they can use to help others.**
- Participate increasingly in the worship and service life of their church.

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Simple things you can do at home:

Let your child lead prayer sometimes. At meals or bedtime, take turns being the person who prays.

Go beyond “What happened?” in Bible stories. Ask, “Why do you think Jesus did that?” “What can we learn from this?” or “What could we do if we were in that situation?”

Take their questions seriously. If your child asks a difficult question, listen first. It's okay to say, “That's a really good question. I'm not sure, but let's think about it together.”

Connect faith with real life. When you see someone helping another person, talk about it: “That reminds me of what Jesus teaches us about loving our neighbor.”

Serve together. Help your child participate personally rather than simply watching adults serve. Even small acts teach children, “**I can make a difference. I can share God's love.**”

Practice gratitude and generosity. Talk about the things your family has received and ways you can share with others.

Make worship their worship too. Help your child follow parts of the service, sing familiar hymns, pray the Lord's Prayer, listen to Scripture, participate in Communion, give an offering, and discover ways they can serve at church.

Most important of all...

Your child is beginning to form ideas about what faith means and whether it matters in everyday life. They don't need you to have every answer. They need you to **listen to their questions, explore faith with them, pray with them, worship with them, and show them through your own life what it means to love God and love your neighbor.**

Remind them often of the most important message of all:
You are God's beloved child. God loves you—always.

Age 5 – 5 ½

All the Things I Say to God
by Tanner Olson



Age 5 ½ - 6

Mostly What God Does Is Love You
by Savannah Guthrie

