

COKESBURY'S

HERO

HOTLINE

**Called Together
to Serve God!**



**Mission
Leader**

Thank you to our consultant team! VBS 2023



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Cokesbury VBS 2023

HERO HOTLINE

CALLED TOGETHER TO SERVE GOD!

Mission Leader

ISBN: XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Published by Abingdon Press, 810 12th Avenue South, Nashville TN 37203. This leader book is part of Cokesbury's **Hero Hotline: Called Together to Serve God!**, © 2022 by Cokesbury. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

If you have questions or comments about using this resource, call 800-672-1789, a toll-free service available Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 4:00 Central Time. Calls at other times are recorded for response the next working day.

Theme Verse and scripture quotations are taken from the Common English Bible, © 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Two convenient ways to order in the U.S.: call 800-672-1789 or visit CokesburyVBS.com.

To place an order in Canada, call 800-265-6397 or email info@afcanada.com.

Mission Leader Overview

The *Mission Leader Guidebook* is a tool to teach Heroes at the Hero Hotline the value of service, giving back, and reaching out to everyone near and far with God's unconditional love. When we show kindness and love, and treat others with respect, we join God's team of Heroes in following Jesus and answering God's call to serve.

Use this guidebook as an inspirational assistant for helping the Heroes learn the value of service and caring for others. This guidebook offers an overarching, week-long mission project and daily mission moments tied into the Hotline Tips and Hotline Theme Verse. Read through the guidebook and choose activities that align with your church's mission and passion, your budget, congregation size, and where you see projects fitting your VBS schedule.

Hero Hotline VBS is based on Romans 14:19 (CEB): "So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up." This verse reminds us that we are called to join in God's mission of bringing peace and building up ourselves and our fellow humans. Here's how Hero Hotline helps Heroes do this:

- The Hero Hotline Headquarters is a secret place where Heroes go to help solve problems called in by other Heroes out in the community. At Hero Hotline, everyone's gifts are valued and each Hero has a role to play. Heroes receive a call/assignment each day and are guided by the Professor and Super Meer to help solve a problem that Heroes in the community are facing. Heroes will then explore the files and database of the Hero Hotline to discover how Heroes can work together to bring peace.
- Peace comes from God, and as God's people we are called to share that peace with the world. We work together, help one another, and encourage one another because God has called us to live in community and fellowship with one another. We all can strive, in both expected and unexpected ways, to bring peace, love, and justice to the world.

Items for Love in Action Mission Projects OR **Mission Items Heroes Will Collect**

Sometime during Session 1, make sure Heroes know that you will be receiving various items that they will collect throughout the week. For some items, it may be helpful to begin collecting among church members before VBS. You will need to coordinate where these items are dropped off, when they will be collected, and then delivered to your classroom for the appropriate session. Here's a comprehensive list:

Session 2, Project 1:

Heroes are collecting non-perishable food items for ???

Session 2, Project 2:

Heroes are collecting diapers, baby blankets, and other items for infants and newborns.

Session 4, Project 2:

Heroes are collecting coins to contribute to organizations that promote better hearing for people.

Session 5, Project 2:

Heroes are collecting funds or gift cards to help people with transportation needs.

Week-long Mission Project

Supporting Real-Life Hero Teams

Since ***Hero Hotline: Called Together to Serve God VBS*** is all about bringing peace, building one another up, and finding ways to support other Heroes who are doing great things in our world and for God, we invite you and your church to consider making your week-long mission or service project one where you support a real-life team of Heroes. This effort could be in your community, a church mission team, or any other team whose mission your church believes in and supports.

There are many excellent organizations and teams doing great work to make our world a better place that embodies the kingdom of God. Chances are your church already has a relationship with one of them. Some good places to look for an organizations are local community service organizations or denominational mission organizations like UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).

- 1) Research and determine which organization/team you would like your VBS participants to partner with.
- 2) Work with your VBS Director and church leadership to make sure your recommendation fits in with your VBS and church's mission focus.
- 3) Make whatever connections you need to with the partner organization.
- 4) If the organization you are partnering with has literature and publicity materials, work with your VBS Director and church leadership to help get the word out.
- 5) If the organization/team you are partnering with has local representation, invite them to one of your VBS assemblies or community celebration times to talk about the work they do and how your VBS is helping.
- 6) Follow the plans recommended by that organization and the guidelines of your church and VBS Director to collect funds or materials for the duration of your VBS.
- 7) Be sure to share your results at the Closing Assembly of each day/session of your VBS.
- 8) Work with your VBS Director to make sure that your mission work results are included with all reporting that shares the results of your VBS.



Bible Story

Jesus Builds the Team
John 1:35-51

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Follow Jesus!

Add Some Music

To make the project a little more fun, play the song "If U Wanna B A Hero" while Heroes work on their cards.

Materials

- copies of A Hero Was Spotted template, page 16
- markers or crayons to decorate cards
- 8.5"-x-11" cardstock or construction paper (one per card)
- glue sticks
- scissors
- Hero Hotline Craft Theme Stickers and/or Stay Put Stickers (optional)

Love and Action Project 1

A Hero Was Spotted Following Jesus Cards

In the story of Jesus building the team, we see the ways several of the disciples were called to follow Jesus and how they decided to answer that call. We may not be on the scene when people in our lives and our church receive the call to follow Jesus, but we definitely can spot when people are following the example of Jesus in so many ways. In this project, we will encourage Heroes to be on the lookout for other Heroes in their midst doing things that follow the example of Jesus. This could be connecting with a person who may be new or alone, sharing supplies, praying, encouraging others, volunteering to help others, and so many we can see people in our midst following the example of Jesus.

Directions

- 1) Invite Heroes to share ways they've seen others following the example of Jesus.
- 2) Explain that for this session's project, we are going to create cards to give to people when we see them following Jesus. Then, we'll keep the cards with us and watch for people we should give them to.
- 3) Pre-cut or have Heroes cut out speech bubbles from templates on page 16.
- 4) Heroes will fold construction paper or cardstock in half.
- 5) Have them glue speech bubbles onto the front of the cards.
- 6) Have Heroes decorate cards with markers and/or stickers.
- 7) Heroes can either prepare cards for specific people or just sign them to give to other Heroes they spot.

Mission Prayer

God, who made us to follow Jesus, thank you for Jesus and for people in our lives who set good examples of how we can do that. Help us to keep our eyes open for people in act of following Jesus. Guide us as we try to be good examples of Jesus' followers!

In the name of Jesus who we follow.

Amen.



Love and Action Project 2

Hero Teams Among Us Recognition Certificates

When Jesus called the disciples to follow him, he was building one of the most amazing teams of Heroes in all history. And that is awesome, but we shouldn't forget that we are surrounded by great teams of Heroes everywhere. We can find them in our churches, our schools, in our families and homes, in our neighborhoods and towns, and even working in our favorite places of business. In this project, we'll encourage Heroes to pay attention to and recognize the teams of Heroes who play a role in their lives.

Directions

- 1) Invite Heroes to share about teams of people who play an important part in their lives. Check the paragraph above to suggest places where these teams might be found.
- 2) Explain that for this session's project, we are creating certificates to recognize the teams of Heroes in our lives.
- 3) Pre-cut or have Heroes cut out the Hero Teams certificate on page 17.
- 4) Have them glue the certificate forms onto the cardstock or construction paper.
- 5) Heroes may decorate the certificates with markers and/or stickers.
- 6) Heroes may complete the certificates or save them to fill out for Hero teams over time.

Mission Prayer

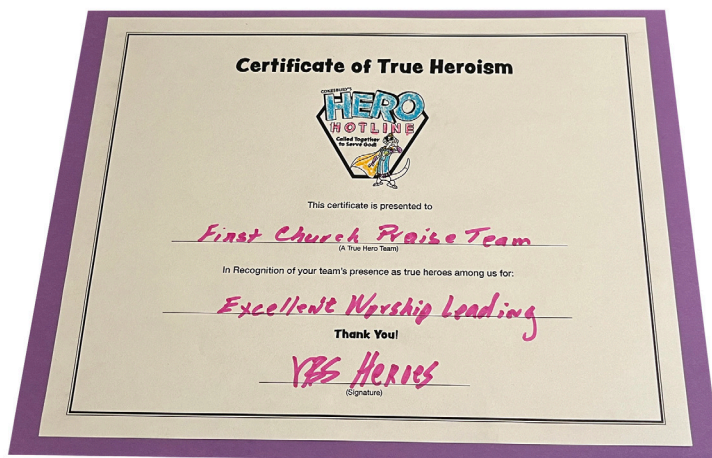
Jesus—who built an amazing team of Heroes—help us to recognize the many teams of Heroes who give so much to us. Help us to follow their examples, to play well, and to be positive team members.

In the name of our leader, Jesus.

Amen.

Reminder: Session 2, Project 2

Heroes are collecting diapers, baby blankets, and other items for infants and newborns.



Bible Story

Jesus Builds the Team
John 1:35-51

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Follow Jesus!

Add Some Music

To make the project a little more fun, play the song "If U Wanna B A Hero" while Heroes work on the cards.

Materials

- copies of the Hero Teams template found on page 17
- 8.5"-x-11" construction paper or cardstock
- markers or crayons
- glue sticks
- Hero Hotline Craft Theme Stickers and/or Stay Put Stickers (optional)

2

Bible Story

Shiphrah, Puah, and Miriam: God's Wonder Women
Exodus 1:8-2:10

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Help Others!

Add Some Music

To make the project a little more fun, consider playing the song "Hold Up" while Heroes assemble the baskets.

Materials

- various sized baskets or boxes covered with basket-patterned shelf paper
- non-perishable food items brought to VBS by Heroes

Love and Action Project 1

Baskets of Help Food Drive

In the story of God's Wonder Women in the Book of Exodus, Moses' mother placed him in a basket and put him in the Nile River to help him survive to be one of the most noted Heroes in the Bible. For this sessions' project, our Heroes were invited to give the gift of food, so necessary to the survival of all of us. And, as a way of remembering those inspirational wonder women who helped baby Moses, we'll assemble the food that was collected in baskets.

Directions

- 1) Earlier, Heroes were notified about collections of non-perishable food items. Prepare the area for an assembly line for Heroes to sort and assemble the items.
- 2) Talk with Heroes about how God's Wonder Women helped Moses survive to be the Hero he grew up to be.
- 3) Invite them to think about and list some of the things we need for survival. If food isn't mentioned, make sure to bring it up.
- 4) Have Heroes work together to fill the food baskets.

Mission Prayer

God, who calls us to help others, thank you for the example of your wonder women and for the chances you give us to help and take care of others. Let us understand that when we help and care for others, we are also doing the same for ourselves and making the world just a little bit better.

Thank you for calling us.

Amen.



Love and Action Project 2

Diaper and Baby Blanket Drive

In the story of God's Wonder Women in the book of Exodus, Shiphrah, Puah, Miriam, Moses' Mother, and Pharaoh's daughter all contribute to assure that the infant Moses has what he needs to become who God designed him to be. For this project, Heroes were invited to contribute diapers and baby blankets to provide necessities to insure that infants in their community have what they need to be who God designed them to be.

Directions

- 1) Earlier, Heroes were notified about collections of diapers, baby blankets, and other items for infants and newborns. Prepare the area for an assembly line for Heroes to sort and assemble the items.
- 2) Invite your Heroes to share any experiences they might have had watching infants/babies grow. Ask if anyone has seen a younger sister, brother, or another person grow from a baby to an older child. Ask what that was like. Explain that we never know who a person will grow up to be, but that God has designed each of us uniquely for a special purpose and that just by sharing these items being collected, we play a small part in seeing God's purpose through.
- 3) Have Heroes work together to sort and assemble the items.

Mission Prayer

God—who calls us to help others—we don't know what the purpose is for each child born, but we do know that you've designed all of us uniquely. Guide us to observe and understand how we may support others as they achieve your purpose in their lives.

Thank you for calling us to help.

Amen.



Bible Story

Shiphrah, Puah, and Miriam: God's Wonder Women

Exodus 1:8–2:10

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Help Others!

Add Some Music

Make the project a little more fun by playing the song "Hold Up" while Heroes assemble the diapers and other items.

Materials

- box(es) to collect items for infants
- wrapping or shelf paper with infant themes to cover the boxes (optional)
- diapers, baby blankets, and other items collected for infants and newborns



Bible Story

Jethro Mentors Moses
Exodus 18

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Work Together!

Add Some Music

To make the project a little more fun, consider playing the song "Work Together" while Heroes work on their thank-you notes.

Materials

- rolls of mint candies to gift to mentors
- markers or crayons
- paper squares sized to wrap the mint rolls you provide
- clear tape

Love and Action Project 1

Mints for Mentors Thank-you Project

In the story of Jethro mentoring Moses, Jethro helps Moses understand that he doesn't have to lead the people of Israel all alone, but that he can invite and train others to join in and work together. One way Moses thanks his mentor in this situation is by following his advice. We all have mentors, and it can be very rewarding to offer them our thanks. For this sessions' project, we'll guide our Heroes in creating thank-you gifts for the mentors in their lives.

Directions

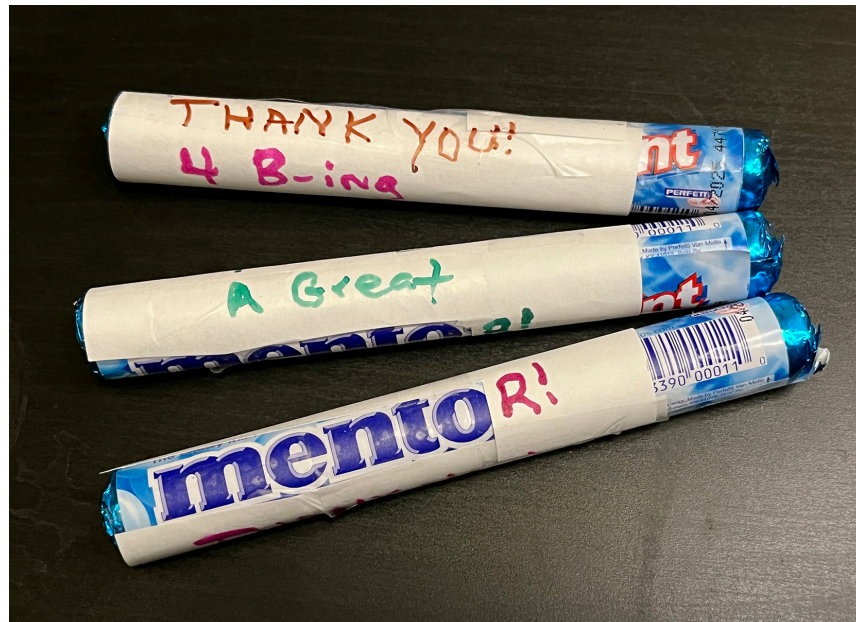
- 1) Share a story of a mentor who has guided you in some way. Then, have Heroes talk about people who have mentored and guided them.
- 2) Encourage Heroes to write notes to their mentors on the paper squares.
- 3) Help them to wrap the paper squares with notes around the rolls of mints.
- 4) Decide how you will share these thank-you notes and instruct your Heroes.

Mission Prayer

God, who leads and guides us, thank you for providing mentors and guides to show us the way in life. Help us to follow their example of following you and to be good guides for others.

Bless all the people who guide us.

Amen.



Love and Action Project 2

Prayer Works Together Prayer Chains

In the story of Jethro mentoring Moses, Jethro helps Moses understand that he doesn't have to lead the people of Israel all alone, that he can invite others to join in and work together. One way we can all join in and work together is by offering our prayers. For this session's project, Heroes will work together to offer their prayers to build up one another in the form of a prayer chain.

Directions

- 1) Talk with Heroes about how Moses invited others to help him in leading the Israelites. Explain that today we are going to practice working together by connecting our prayers in a prayer chain. We will each write prayers that encourage people to build up one another.
- 2) Pre-cut or have Heroes cut construction paper into one-inch strips (wide enough to write prayers).
- 3) Have them write prayers that build one another up on the strips.
- 4) Work together with your Heroes to create circular links and join them into one long chain of prayer.



Mission Prayer

God—who calls us to work together—thank you for hearing our prayers. As we pray, help us to remember to pray for one another and people beyond our normal paths. And help us to focus our lives on building up one another.

Thank you for calling us together.

Amen.

Reminder: Session 4, Project 2

Heroes are collecting spare coins to contribute to organizations that provide tools and support for improving hearing.



Bible Story

Jethro Mentors Moses
Exodus 18

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Work Together!

Add Some Music

Make the project a little more fun by playing the song "Work Together" while Heroes work on their prayer chain links.

Materials

- construction paper or construction paper strips cut at least 1-inch wide
- scissors
- clear tape, glue sticks, or stapler (for adult use only)
- pens, markers or crayons



Bible Story

The Magnificent Magi
Matthew 2:1-12

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Listen to God!

Add Some Music

Make the project a little more fun by playing the song "Beat Like Yours" while Heroes work on their gifts of wisdom.

Materials

- strips of construction paper cut to 1"-x-5.5"
- markers or crayons
- glue sticks
- Hero Hotline Stay Put Stickers
- jars or boxes (1 per Hero)

Love and Action Project 1

Gifts of Wisdom for Magnificent and Super Friends

In the story of the Magnificent Magi, our Heroes are sometimes called "wise men." And, these men certainly did use wisdom as they paid attention to the star in the night time sky, discerned prophecies, and paid attention to and followed the directions in their night-time dreams. For this session's project, we'll have our Heroes create jars or boxes of wise sayings to give as gifts to people who they find to be magnificent and super friends. This can be prepared for individual special friends or your class may decide to give them to groups of people who are friends to your community.

Directions

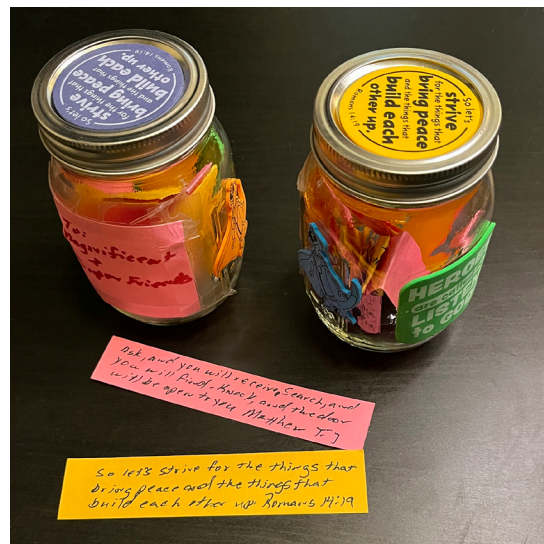
- 1) Create a list of wise sayings that can be posted so your Heroes can read and copy them. Here's a list to get you started:
 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart; don't rely on your own intelligence.
Proverbs 3:5
 - Think of all the various test you encounter as occasions for joy.
James 1:2
 - Happy are people who show, mercy, because they will receive mercy.
Matthew 5:7
 - Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.
Matthew 7:7
Romans 14:19
- 2) Heroes will copy sayings onto strips of paper provided.
- 3) Heroes may decorate boxes or jars with stickers.
- 4) Have them place the sayings in jars or boxes.

Mission Prayer

God, who calls us to listen, help us to hear your voice and gain your wisdom. Guide us to share your wisdom with those who will hear.

In the name of your all wise son.

Amen.



Love and Action Project 2

Coin Drive for Easier Listening

In the story of the Magnificent Magi, Heroes paid attention to the star in the night time sky, discerned prophecies, and seriously acknowledged and followed the directions in their night-time dreams. They actually listened to God in all of these ways. For some, listening is not always an easy thing as one's hearing may be impaired; in some cases, people have difficulty hearing the way sound travels in a particular space. For this session's project, we'll have our Heroes bring coins to contribute to organizations that promote enabling others to hear, and thus, listen more effectively. The coins may be contributed to organizations that provide hearing aids, to church funds that provide hearing assistance for worshippers and for other church functions, or that provide much needed sound equipment for your church or another organization.

Directions

- 1) Earlier, Heroes were notified about collections of collecting spare coins. Prepare an area for Heroes to count, organize, and roll the coins.
- 2) When you are together, explain where these coins are going, who they'll be helping, and how.
- 3) If time permits, invite Heroes to assist in counting/rolling the coins and adding the total.

Mission Prayer

God—who calls us to listen for your voice—guide us in the ways we can listen to you. Bless all the people who may be helped to hear and listen through the offerings we make today.

May we remember to listen for you.

Amen.

Reminder: Session 5, Project 2

Heroes are collecting funds or gift cards to help people with transportation needs.



Bible Story

The Magnificent Magi
Matthew 2:1-12

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Listen to God!

Add Some Music

Make the project a little more fun by playing the song "Beat Like Yours" while Heroes count the coins.

Materials

- jar or boxes to collect coins
- coin rollers



Bible Story

Unexpected Heroes Give Paul a Basket Ride
Acts 9:1-25

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Show Grace!

Add Some Music

To make the project a little more fun, consider playing the song "Your Grace" while Heroes work on their bookmarks.

Materials

- construction paper or cardstock cut to strips of 3" wide by 7.5"-8.5" long
- copies template of the lyrics to "Amazing Grace" on page 16
- glue sticks
- scissors
- Hero Hotline Stay Put Stickers

Love and Action Project 1

Amazing Grace Bookmarks

In the story of the unexpected Heroes giving Saul/Paul a basket ride to safety, we see that Paul is shown grace by God, by Jesus, and by disciples of Jesus who had previously feared Paul and his actions. The project for this session is simply to create reminders of God's amazing grace for each of us and to share them with anyone who may need a reminder.

Directions

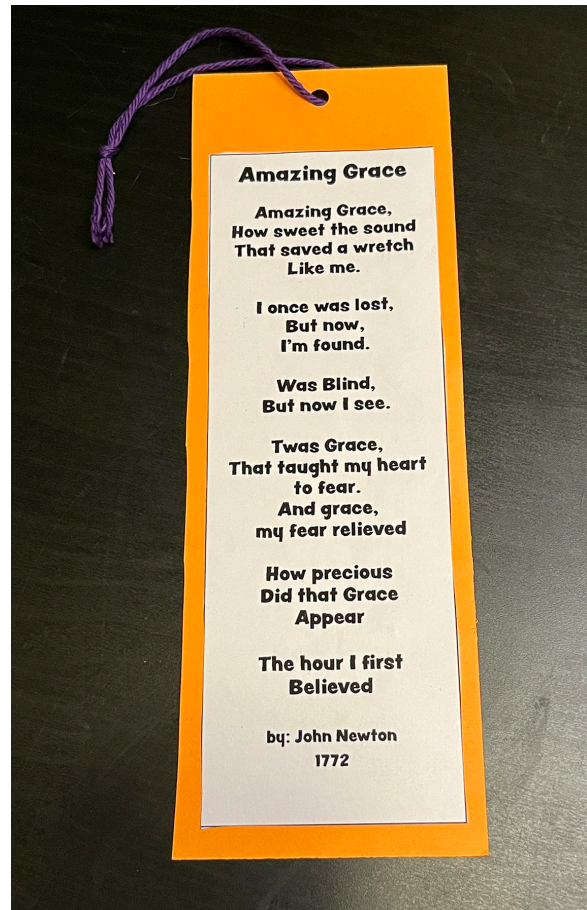
- 1) Talk with your Heroes about the ways Paul/Saul experienced grace from God and Jesus, Ananias, and the followers of Jesus in Damascus.
- 2) Pre-cut or have Heroes cut out the words to "Amazing Grace" from the template on page 16.
- 3) Pre-cut or have Heroes cut construction paper or cardstock into strips of 3 inches by 7.5 or 8.5 inches.
- 4) Have them glue the words to "Amazing Grace" onto the strips.
- 5) If time and space permit, let Heroes add stay-put stickers to the bookmarks.

Mission Prayer

God, who calls us to show grace, lead us to those who need to know of your love. Help us to accept your grace for ourselves and give your grace to all who cross our paths.

In the name of Jesus.

Amen.



Love and Action Project 2

Safe Ride Drive

In the story of the unexpected Heroes giving Saul/Paul a basket ride to safety, we see that Paul is shown grace by God, by Jesus, and by disciples of Jesus who had previously feared him and his actions. In this session, Heroes will collect funds or gift cards that will assist in providing safe and reliable transportation to those in need.

Directions

- 1) Earlier, Heroes were notified about collecting spare coins. Prepare the area for receiving the Heroes' contributions.
- 2) Invite Heroes to share how they got to VBS for this session. Invite them to consider what they would do if the way they came was not available.
- 3) Explain that their contributions to this session's project will go to those in need of safe and reliable transportation.
- 4) Pray a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing over each contribution.

Mission Prayer

God—who calls us to show grace—help us to remember the simple grace you've provided by giving us safe transportation and be thankful. Guide us to pay attention to all the needs of those around us and help us uncover the ways we can show your grace in each situation.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.



Bible Story

Unexpected Heroes Give Paul a Basket Ride
Acts 9:1-25

Hotline Verse

So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.
(Romans 14:19)

Hotline Tip

Heroes are called to...
Show Grace!

Add Some Music

Make the project more fun by playing the song "Your Grace" while Heroes organize and assemble the gifts.

Materials

- collection box or tray, decorated with various modes of transportation



Amazing Grace

Amazing grace
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch
like me.

I once was lost,
but now I'm found.

Was blind
but now I see.

'Twas grace
That taught my heart
to fear

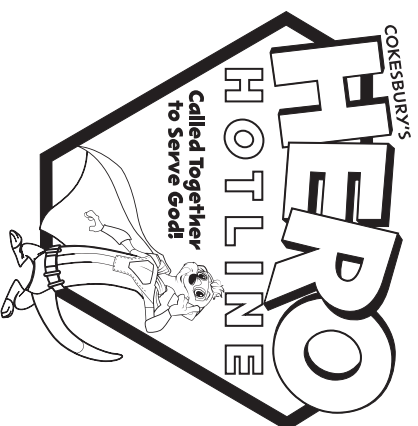
And grace
my fears relieved

How precious
did that grace
appear

The hour I first
believed.

by John Newton
1772

Certificate of True Heroism



This certificate is presented to

(A True Hero Team)

In Recognition of your team's presence as true heroes among us for:

Thank You!

(Signature)