

Year A, Week 26 (May 25, 2008)
Genesis 18: 1-15, 21: 1-7 Birth of Isaac

Hymn suggestions: *Father Abraham* (calmly!); or *Shout to the North and the South*

Items Needed:

- Abraham figure
- Sarah figure
- Three male figures (angels)
- Tent (made of paper folded in half)
- Baby or small child figure

Directions: Set up the tent with Abraham and Sarah nearby. Keep three men/angels nearby. Keep baby/child figure hidden but nearby.

Last week, we learned that God chose Abraham and his wife Sarah. (*Touch Abraham and Sarah figures.*) He sent them to a new place, and he made a promise – or a covenant – with them.

The Lord said to Abraham, “Look all around you, north, south, east, and west. I will give all this land to you and your children. You will have as many *descendants* – that means children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren... You will have as many descendants as there are specks of dust in the earth.”

God also told him, “Look at the stars in the sky and see if you can count them. You will have that many descendants, and more.” Abraham – though he was old and had no children – believed the Lord, which the Lord counted as righteousness.

God said, “This is my covenant. I will be your God, and you will be my people.”

When God made this promise, Abraham and Sarah were already old enough to be grandparents.

One day, Abraham looked up from his tent and saw three men standing nearby. (*Place men nearby.*) He ran out to the men to greet them, and he bowed down to them to show them respect. (*Can make Abraham figure bow down if you like.*)

He told them, “You rest here under the trees, and I’ll have a servant bring you some water. And I’ll bring you some bread.”

Abraham ran into the tent and asked Sarah to make some good bread. He himself prepared a calf for his guests to eat, and he brought it to them.

When he did, one of the men said, “Where is your wife Sarah?”

Abraham said, “She’s over there, in the tent.”

Another man said, “In one year, I will return to you, and Sarah will have a son.”

Inside the tent, Sarah laughed, because she knew that she and Abraham were too old to have children. She said, “Here I am an old woman – am I to have a baby?”

Through the guests, the Lord asked Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh just now and said, “Here I am an old woman – am I to have a baby? Is anything too wonderful for the Lord to do? I tell you, in one year, I will return, and Sarah will have a son.”

Sarah came out of the tent and said, “I did not laugh,” because she was afraid. (*Set Sarah by the other figures.*)

But the man said, “Oh, yes, you did laugh.” (*Remove the angel figures.*)

And so a few months passed, and everything the Lord told Abraham and Sarah came true. Sarah became pregnant and had a son, and they named him Isaac, which means laughter. (*Place baby figure near them.*)

Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; let everyone who sees this child laugh with me.”

And she laughed again, saying, “After all these years, who could have imagined that I could have a baby?”

Questions without Response:

- I wonder ... whether Abraham and Sarah thought the man was crazy when he told Sarah she was to have a baby?
- I wonder ... whether they knew it was God talking to them?
- I wonder ... if they really believed they would have a baby?
- I wonder ... how God will start a whole nation of people with just one baby?
- I wonder ... why so many Bible stories are about babies and children?