

# Children's Church for the First Year!

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The first year's Children's Church is based around the character, Safari Sam. This character will be used for all of the first year's Children's Church (fifth Sundays or once a quarter) special services. This character is looking for his lost friend Jungle Jim but along the way he has to find out about "Repentance", "Baptism in Jesus' Name", and "Receiving the Holy Ghost". Safari Sam needs to be dressed in tan, khaki-type safari clothes with multiple pockets and a safari hat. An essential item is a pair of binoculars because Safari Sam is always looking!

## **Church wide introduction/ promotion the prior Sunday**

The Sunday before the planned Children's Church, Safari Sam greets the whole congregation and tells the church about his plans to find Jungle Jim. Sam should use his binoculars and be funny! Sam encourages the congregation if they know any "Jims" out there in the world, which is one "BIG JUNGLE". Instruct them to bring them next Sunday, and together we can help our lost friends find their way out of the jungle.

**Introduction: *Sam finds the snake!*** Before Sunday, you will need to make a snake suit in which you can put a person in. This is a fairly simple project; first get a long piece of material, (snake skin design is best) and then sew the ends into points. Next stuff them with fiber fill or pillows, making sure to leave enough room for a person to get in and out of it. Put the person in the center of the snake, and remember, it's ok if it looks lumpy, because snakes look lumpy when they have just eaten. Have the snake with the person inside lying in the room somewhere in view, but not out in the front, before the children arrive. Seat and greet all the children. Then, Sam comes in, and tells how he would like to find his friend, and that he has looked everywhere. He then spies the snake! He is just sure that the snake has eaten his friend Jungle Jim! Sam then runs over to the snake and pretends to cut the snake open. Out pops another friend/ teacher to help Jim in his misadventures throughout his four adventures this year. We call her "Big Game Jane." She is grateful to be loosed from the snake and eager to help out Sam.

**Big Song Service:** Pick at least four songs that you will sing at each of the children's church services, don't limit yourself to just singing acappella. Bring in a

boom box and play kids songs about the jungle or get a keyboard and a musician to accompany you. Put the words on PowerPoint or a poster board. Pick one to be your theme song.

Some suggestions are: “Who’s the King of the Jungle,” “It is a Jungle out There,” “Don’t Monkey around with the Devil,” or any kid’s split-track that you can find, that the kids can really sing and enjoy. This portion of your service can work into a kid’s choir with little effort.

**Pretend Jeep Ride:** This is a FUN thing to do with your class! Sam tells all the kids that they all have to be able to stay in the jeep to go on this safari, and then he tells them to get in! Sam pantomimes opening a jeep door and climbing in. Sam sits in the pretend driver seat facing the same way as all the kids. He encourages the kids to do all the same things he is doing. He pantomimes putting on a seat belt, turning the key, putting the jeep in gear, revving the engine, and peeling out! Sam pretends to go around sharp curves, hangs off of his chair, goes over bumps, forges rivers, climbs steep mountains, and treks low valleys; all the while pantomiming what it would be like to be in a jeep on a safari. Lastly, Sam comes to an abrupt halt and falls off of his chair!

**Sam sees a kite!?!** As the group of passengers dusts off and gets back into their jeep seats, Sam also dusts off, and pulls down a kite, which is stuck in a pretend jungle tree. Sam has never seen a kite in the jungle, but kites do get stuck in trees, and there are certainly a lot of trees in this pretend jungle. On the kite is written... “All have sinned”... Romans 3:23 and the words, “We are all lost and need a savior!” Sam is struck with emotion! He is lost! Lost is scary! He freaks out, and then screams, **“I WANT MY MOMMY!”**

**Big Game Jane to the rescue:** First, she consoles Sam and thinks of ways to get unlost. She reasons that maybe a compass or a map would help. Sam starts looking through his multiple pockets, for a compass. He pulls out funny things such as: toilet paper, golf balls, which are Sam’s cousins, because he is a goof ball, and so on. (Use your imagination and have Jim take out many things from his pockets) Jane reasons that the kite had a verse on it, so maybe what they need is a Bible. She gives a short talk on how the Bible is like a compass, or a guide, or like a map to show the way of salvation.

**Sam doesn't know where to start:** Sam starts frantically flipping through the Bible and doesn't know where to begin! Remember, Sam is scared! To make his sermon effective, he must remain scared, while he is searching. Then a bookmarker pops out, that has Acts 2:37-39 marked on it.

**Sam Preaches:** As Sam reads Acts 2:37 he realizes that these people were scared, and didn't know what to do when they found out that they were lost, just like he did when he read Romans 3:23 on that kite and wanted his mommy! Lost is scary! Sam then preaches some about the bad feelings that go along with being lost. But wait! The Bible tells us what to do if we are lost. (Read/preach Acts 2:38 on a kid level) Be sure to explain the word "repentance," and then tell the children that we can all do that right now! Read/preach Acts 2:39 where the Bible says that this is for children today! They can receive the Holy Ghost!

**Sam and Jane altar call:** No one needs to be afraid, because God is in the finding business! No one needs to walk around with any bad feelings. The Bible says in 1John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So, let's all come up front and tell God that we are sorry, and start on the road to being found.

**NOTES:** If you have puppets, we suggest you break up some of the character skit with a puppet song, however, work with what you have. Puppet songs work best at the beginning when the energy is high, and preaching even on a kid level should be done with circumspect and with the leading of the Holy Ghost. Also, we would really push the altar call time. Have music playing and be expecting an out pouring of the Holy Ghost! Do not be surprised, when the children you pray with receive the Holy Ghost fast and easy! Remember, children do not come with all of the baggage adults do; therefore, it is easier for them to just let God take control!