

The Pumpkin + Prayer

Kids

EVENT OUTLINE

Expanding the Impact of Your Gifts of Encouragement



Fall Festival
or
Halloween Alternative Event

The Pumpkin Prayer



This event outline is designed for children ages 3–8 and provides ideas for a one-hour event based on the theme *The Pumpkin Prayer*. It's perfect for use in Sunday school on the fifth Sunday of the month. Or use one or more of the activities in VBS or during your church's midweek Bible club.

The event includes Bible Time, a snack idea, crafts, and games. As you choose activities, take into account the size of your group, the children's ages and interests, their background knowledge and skill levels, and the time available to you.

May God bless you as you share the transforming, empowering work of the Holy Spirit with the children in your care!





As Children Arrive

Position group leaders throughout your welcome area and urge them to greet families warmly as they arrive. Gather children into groups, four to six children per group. Mix older children with younger ones in each group. That way, experienced children can help the little ones. Assign one or two adult leaders to stay with each group throughout the event.

As you wait for everyone to arrive, pique the children's interest using one or both of the options below.

Option 1

Tell some pumpkin-related jokes and riddles like these:

- How do you mend a jack-o'-lantern? With a pumpkin patch!
- Who helped the little pumpkin cross the road? The crossing gourd!
- What do you get when you drop a pumpkin? Squash!
- What's the best thing to put into a pumpkin pie? Your teeth!
- What did the disgusted farmer say to the green pumpkin? Why orange you orange?
- What do you call a beautiful pumpkin? Gourd-eous.
- Why do pumpkins sit on the front porch? They have no hands to ring the bell.

Option 2

You can find songs about Jesus, the Light of the world, on YouTube and in children's ministry materials. If your church has a traditional favorite, by all means use it! If not, find one online and begin teaching it to your group. Or, teach the following song to the group. It's easy to sing because the children will simply repeat your words. (Your words are in italics, while the children's echo is in bold print.)

Sing to the tune "Are You Sleeping?" (Frère Jacques)

Verse 1:

Little pumpkin,

Little pumpkin,

Shine your light.

Shine your light.

Shine for all to see.

Shine for all to see.

Shine brightly!

Shine brightly!

Verse 2:

All you Christians,

All you Christians,

Shine Christ's light.

Shine Christ's light.

Shine for all to see.

Shine for all to see.

Shine brightly!

Shine brightly!





After singing, ask the group to talk about how a pumpkin is able to shine (because of a candle's flame or a battery-operated light).

Ask how a Christian might shine the light of Christ (for example, helping others, obeying parents and teachers, playing fairly). Remind participants that the Holy Spirit enables us to share the love of Jesus with others.

If time permits, sing the song again.

After everyone arrives, it's time to begin the small-group activities. Get everyone's attention and explain that the groups will be moving from one activity to the next. Let them know that you will give a signal (ringing a bell, sounding a whistle, or playing "traveling music") every fifteen minutes to indicate that it's time to rotate.

Bible Time

Visit the Resource & Idea Center at www.CTAinc.com to download and deliver CTA's *Pumpkin Prayer* Ministry Message to help children (and adults, too!) learn how much Jesus loves them.

Allow time for families to personalize Christ's love as they work a few activities in the *Pumpkin Prayer* Gospel Fun for Little Ones (Item #PPR18GF, ages 3–6) or the *Pumpkin Prayer* Activity Book (Item #PPR18AB, ages 7–11).

If time allows, sing the second verse of the "Little Pumpkin" song once or twice more. Invite participants to pantomime how they can shine Christ's light. See if others in the group can guess the shining (loving) action.

Snack Time

Pumpkin Muffins

What You'll Need

- 1¾ cups flour
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 Tbsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin puree
- ½ cup canola oil
- 1 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla



What You'll Do

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a muffin tin (12 muffin cups) with paper liners (or grease a nonstick muffin tin with butter).
2. In a bowl, add flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir to combine.
3. In another large bowl, add the eggs and whisk them with a fork. Add the pumpkin puree, canola oil, milk and vanilla. Stir with a spoon to combine until smooth.
4. Add the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients. Stir with a spoon to combine until the batter is smooth.
5. Using the spoon, put the mixture into a muffin tin (it should fill 12 muffin cups to make 12 large muffins).
6. Put the pumpkin muffins in the oven and bake for 25 minutes.

(Note: This recipe makes 12 regular-size muffins or about 40 mini muffins.)

Option: As an alternative, you can purchase round, premade sugar cookies. Let children decorate their cookie with orange frosting and add candy corn for eyes, nose, and mouth.

Serve the snack with apple cider, juice, or milk.

Crafts

Mosaic Sticker Activity

What You'll Need

- One *Pumpkin Prayer* Mosaic Sticker Craft Kit (Item #PPR18AK)
- Permanent marker

What You'll Do

- Follow the directions printed on the activity. Be sure to mark completed projects with the child's name.

Paper-Strip Pumpkin

What You'll Need

- Paper cutter
- Orange construction paper
- Blue construction paper
- Green construction paper
- Glue or glue sticks
- Safety scissors
- Markers

What You'll Do

Before the event, use a paper cutter to cut strips of orange construction paper one-half inch wide. Place the strips and blue construction paper on the craft table. Also set out green construction paper, safety scissors, markers, and glue sticks.

1. Direct crafters to sketch a pumpkin shape on the blue background paper.
2. Ask someone in the family to cut out a green leaf shape and on it print: "I am thankful for . . ."
3. Use the glue stick to glue the leaf to the top of the pumpkin sketch.
4. Encourage families to work together, each person naming things for which he or she thanks-God. Print each blessing on an individual orange strip.
5. Trim the orange "blessing" strips to fit vertically within the pumpkin sketch. Continue the process until the pumpkin sketch is filled with blessings.

Invite the children to use the *Pumpkin Prayer* Goodie Bag (Item #PPR18TS12) to keep track of their crafts and other mementos during the event.

Games

Choose the game(s) below that will work best in your setting and are age appropriate for your children. Before each game, explain the rules. Also, remind the children that God is making us more and more like Jesus, helping us to grow and share Christ's love and light in the world.

Check out CTA's website for potential prizes at http://www.ctainc.com/category/Shop-By-Ministry_Childrens-Ministry_Fall-Festival.

Hoop That Pumpkin

What You'll Need

- Several large pumpkins with stems still attached, if possible
- Embroidery hoops

What You'll Do

Invite participants to toss an embroidery hoop so that it lands on a stem or top of a pumpkin. (Hint: Let younger children stand closer to the pumpkins to experience success.)



Leaf Races

What You'll Need

- Package of drinking straws
- Fall leaves (real or silk)
- Table

What You'll Do

Challenge participants to use a drinking straw to blow a fall leaf from one end of a table to the other.

Pumpkin Roll

What You'll Need

- Hazard cones, boxes, crawl-through tubes, and other obstacles to make the course
- Two medium-size pumpkins
- Finish line (masking tape on the floor works well)

What You'll Do

Arrange an obstacle course. Invite two participants at a time to roll their pumpkin through the course. The first person to cross the finish line wins.

The Great Pumpkin Push



What You'll Need

- Medium-size pumpkins
- Tape measure

What You'll Do

- See who can roll a pumpkin the farthest—with just one push.

Funny Face

What You'll Need

- Mr. Potato Head toy pieces
- Small-size pumpkins

What You'll Do

Predrill holes in each pumpkin. Let young children use the Mr. Potato Head toy pieces to form their own "Mr. Pumpkin Head." Take pictures of the pumpkins and their creators.

Pumpkin-Patch Relay

What You'll Need

- Two Hula-Hoop rings
- Two child-size wheelbarrows
- Medium-size pumpkins

What You'll Do

Place two Hula-Hoop rings on the ground a distance away from the "start." Fill each Hula-Hoop ring with the same number of pumpkins. This is the pumpkin patch. Put the wheelbarrows at "start."

Form two teams. At your start signal, the first person in each team will roll the wheelbarrow to the pumpkin patch, put one pumpkin inside the wheelbarrow and push it back to "start." The next relay team member will remove the pumpkin and repeat the process, to bring another pumpkin back from the pumpkin patch. The first team to clear the patch of pumpkins wins.

Pass That Pumpkin!

What You'll Need

- Plastic pumpkin
- Candy and small treats to fill the pumpkin (See CTA's website.)
- CD player or radio

What You'll Do

Seat players in a circle. Explain that when the music begins, players must pass the pumpkin to the person on their right. When the music stops, whoever has the pumpkin has to the count of five to grab a treat. Continue play until everyone has won a prize.

Virtual Pumpkin Carving

What You'll Need

- Computer
- Smart board (or other compatible screen)

What You'll Do

Let participants take turns virtually carving their own pumpkin, using this site: http://www.abcya.com/pumpkin_carving.htm. Take a picture of each creator with his or her pumpkin.



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Scripture quotation is from the King James Version of the Bible.

#PPR18DCE

