



Son Seekers

FAMILY FOLLOW-UP EVENT GUIDE



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Psalm 8 declares the majesty of our God and his creation. Yet, most often we are so busy with the day-to-day that we rarely stop to marvel at the miraculous works of His fingers. The Son Seeker Family Event is aimed at helping families to seek out the wonder of all that God has done, not only in all creation around us, but also IN us as His creation!

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The Son Seeker Family Event can be used as a follow-up event to Vacation Bible School, or as a stand-alone summer event for families. This is a great opportunity to develop non-Kidmin volunteers, release your regular volunteer team to enjoy the event with their families, and empower youth volunteers to stretch their leadership capacity! This guide will walk you through the planning and preparations needed, as well as activities for the event itself.

Food is an excellent way to include the entire family. In this event we outline a BBQ meal. Another fun and easy option is an Ice Cream Social with all the toppings you can imagine!

Depending on your budget, you can host it for free or for as little as \$5-10/family. Use this event as an opportunity to provide a summary of the week's theme and what the kids have learned about themselves and God. And don't miss this chance to invite guests to the next churchwide event or launch of ministry season!



YOUR BBQ TEAM

What dad doesn't love to be in front of the grill on a beautiful summer evening? What dad doesn't want to grill with a bunch of his buddies while his kids entertain each other and their wives connect? This is the PERFECT event to get dads involved! So here's how to do it for dozens or hundreds!

- Find one dad that you know enjoys grilling, is outgoing and friendly and relatively well connected in the church community. Ask him if he'd be willing to lend his barbecue skills for this one-time event.
- Ask if he wouldn't mind also using his own grill.
- Ask if he has a few buddies that he'd like to spend the afternoon grilling with.
- Arrange transportation for all the BBQ's to/from the church.
- Set them up under a shady tent with their grills lined up, coolers for meat and cold drinks.
- Have a speakers ready to be playing the favorite VBS songs, or a summer party playlist!

FOOD

- Grilling selections (burgers, hot dogs, vegetarian options, buns. Consider needs of your community culture)
- Condiments (It's always nice to offer more than ketchup, mustard and relish. Consider having your snack team cut tomatoes, onions, pickles and lettuce to dress up burgers and dogs!)
- Salad (you would need cutlery) and/or raw cut veggies (prepared by your snack team during the day)
- Watermelon or other fruit
- Popsicles/ice cream treats (in coolers with wheels, served throughout the crowd as people enjoy their dinner. These servers are most visible if in costume/tropical themed clothing.)



INVITATIONS

Send out either an email to VBS parents or a little postcard home on the Monday of your VBS week with details. You can collect registration and money for the event at check-in each morning!

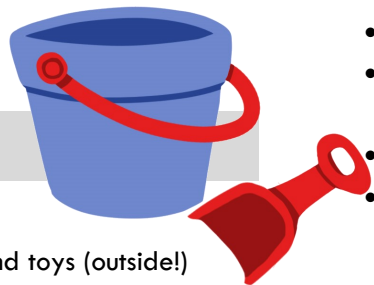
Be sure to include themed language and offered games/prizes for added appeal. This is the parents' chance to peek into their kids' world, and explore and engage as a family.

What to tell families to bring (optional):

- Tropical themed clothes
- Flip flops
- Beach blankets/towels or beach chairs for dinner
- Sun hats

DECOR

- Beach balls (everywhere!)
- Kiddie pools full of sand/sand toys (outside!)
- Patio lights strung up to delineate space
- Any/all food service containers can be sand pails/buckets and shovels
- Beach umbrellas
- Beach towels for families to sit on (grab some extras at your local thrift shop)
- Beach toys/inflatable rings as centerpieces on tables
- Straw/big brim hats
- Leis/floral garland
- Dollar stores are a great place to find summer-themed décor



EVENT SUPPLIES

(STATION SUPPLIES LISTED SEPARATELY)

- Small prizes for games (could be VBS related materials, or theme related loot bag treats like a flower clip for a girl's hair, tropical flavored candy or cute shades...)
- Youth volunteers that have been mentored throughout your VBS or Kids Ministry. You are looking for those who have sought out opportunities to lead, or have gone above and beyond without being asked. You've seen them shine, and the kids love them. You know the ones, and they would be thrilled to be asked to lead. These will be your key station leaders. They are enthusiastic, exuberant kid-magnets!
- At least 3 coolers on wheels for your frozen dessert treats (delivered by hand like at the fair or a baseball game)
- 3-5 BBQ's
- 2 x 6' tables per BBQ to set up condiments, salads, veggies, plates, cutlery, etc.
- Big ice buckets/coolers for water bottles
- Beach umbrellas (for atmosphere, but also for shade for your drink buckets)

LUAU WELCOME TEAM

Empower your grades 5 and 6 kids to be your welcome pep team!

- Equip them each with a basket/bag of leis and have them adorn each guest as they arrive with a colorful (inexpensive) gift.
- Greeters can be wearing grass skirts (available at any dollar store) and encouraged to wear a tropical print shirt/t-shirt/dress.



PLANNING TIPS

3-4 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT:

- Put out a request to your church community for paper towel rolls and old CDs (they can be scratched) for spectroscopes.
- Also ask for rolls of curling ribbon. Most people are happy to get rid of it after Christmas!
- Begin compiling and purchasing other supplies and décor.
- Make sure your family event is part of your VBS advertising, whether in print or in an announcement at your church. Highlight this opportunity to include families, and to be sure to have kids invite friends from school to VBS. Your family event is a powerful way to introduce friends and neighbors to your church!
- Begin to recruit volunteers
- Ask for prayer team volunteers to lift this event before God while you plan and prepare for what he has to do.
- Seek out couples/families in your church to “Sponsor a Bible”. These people would donate a new Bible (or funds) that can be given to those who identify at the event that they do not have one (see closing opportunity).

1-2 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT:

- Take a look at your VBS registration and pick out names of dads you can begin to swoon for your BBQ team!
- As you assemble your snack prep team, let them know about the additional prep for BBQ.



WEEK OF VBS/EVENT:

DAY 1

- Tell every parent about the event and ask if they'll attend. Let them know the price and give them a deadline to rsvp/pay.

DAY 2

- Be sure to have a cash box/means to make change (if you are charging for the event).
- Have a designated leader to organize the grilling team.
- Ensure that all food has been procured and organized for the BBQ team leader.

DAY 3

- Have necessary supplies moved to a convenient location for easy set-up.
- Give your event set-up team a map to guide them with set-up needs.





Outdoor Games

We all know little ones won't want to sit still for long at such an exciting event! Give them some fun things to do while parents and families mingle, chat, hang out on the lawn.

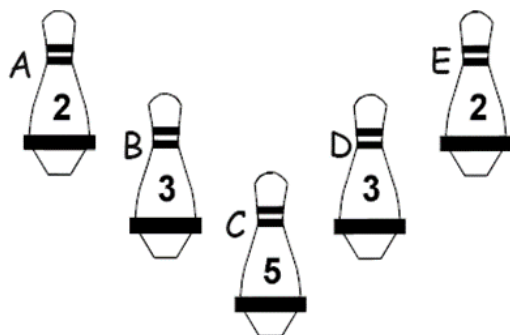
- If you have paved or concrete surfaces, provide large bins of sidewalk chalk for kids to draw, create hopscotch or write notes of gratitude to your team (without letting your team know!).
- If your budget allows, rent a bouncy castle for the kids, and an inflatable obstacle course for the grownups! Rental companies will often provide supervisory staff if you're short on team members.
- If you have access to a parachute, fill it with beach balls and have some fun!

PINEAPPLE BOWLING



In the spirit of summer fun, you will set up some "bowling lanes" on the lawn, next to the BBQ area.

You will need 5 pineapples and 1-3 coconuts per lane.



Set up the pineapples in chevron formation at one end of the lane, with the point facing the players

Each player gets three shots per turn with a coconut, scored as noted in the picture above.

Individuals can compete or families can play against each other for fun!

RING TOSS

Fill up a kiddie pool with a few inches of water.

Fill pool with many rubber duckies.

Use plastic bangles from the dollar store as your rings. See who can ring the most ducks!

BEACH TREASURE

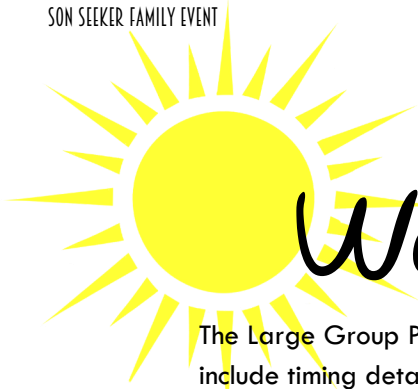
Fill a kiddie pool or other shallow container with sand (such as a plastic bin or tub)

Bury "treasure" items such as rocks, sea glass, plastic fish, and shells.

Give child a small sand shovel to dig, and a brush to dust off uncovered treasures (optional).

Allow each child a specified amount of time to dig, or a number of items they should find.





Welcome, Son Seekers!

The Large Group Presentation can be done before or after stations, with good directions. Be sure to include timing details on invitations: what time/where formal program begins. If you choose to do it before, let your guests know what time you're wrapping up. If you finish with your large group time, be sure timing is clear on the invitation and when to head to your auditorium space.)

EMCEE SCRIPT

EMCEE: We are so glad you are here for our Son -Seekers event! We hope you learned a little bit about how God created this amazing world for us, and how uniquely he made each of us to play a part in His creation.

[READ Psalm 8 from your Bible]

It's easy to look at all of God's amazing creation and wonder what he was thinking! I mean, take a peek at a camel for instance. Can you imagine having to carry water on your back like that?! And their feet are squishy, which is really weird, and their eyebrows are really bushy. They're pretty funny looking. But they were perfectly created for life in the desert!

And how about black holes up in space? Their whole purpose is to be the absence of something. Talk about lonely. But they are a fascinating part of astronomy.

Let's not even mention mosquitoes! What is the point of a mosquito? Have you ever met someone who thinks they're pretty great? I guess if you're a frog you might not mind them, but I have never met a mosquito I liked or invited on a picnic, but there they are!

This is the stuff that makes God's plan so amazing, though! He created nothing by accident, but rather He dreamt up and designed everything with a purpose, —especially you! Let's celebrate together and worship our amazing, super awesome, powerful and creative God!

WORSHIP & MUSIC

EMCEE OR WORSHIP LEADER: Psalm 8 says that the worship and praise of children is our stronghold against the enemy! Let's join together to fortify that stronghold today!

The kids will be excited to teach their parents all the songs they've been learning this week—of they already haven't! While you could invite the kids to the front to create a performance, why not let the music time be what it was designed to be: a time of worship? Allowing the kids to remain amongst their friends and family will compel guests to participate and feel included. The minute you put them at the front, it's a show. Allow your kids the opportunity to model worship and invite those around them to join them.

Song suggestions:

- Indescribable (multiple artists)
- Super Wonderful (Yancy)
- Lighthouse (Rend Collective)
- We Believe (Yancy)





Family Activity Stations

This is an opportunity for your L.I.T.s (Leaders in Training), Mentees, and Youth Leaders) to steal the show! They've been watching your leaders all week at VBS and are eager for an opportunity to make you proud. Because parents will be navigating each station with their kids, you only need one leader to facilitate the activity. Remember: the kids are now experts after a few days of VBS so they're eager to show their parents around and lead them through different stations.

STATION #1 - GRAINS OF SAND

This is a station to make a take-home sensory experience as a family—1 recipe per family, not per child!)

STATION LEADER SCRIPT

Psalm 139:17-18 NIRV

"God, your thoughts about me are priceless. No one can possibly add them all up. If I could count them, they would be more than the grains of sand. If I were to fall asleep counting and then wake up, you would still be there with me."

Your body is made up of trillions of cells—you can't see just one at any time because they're smaller than even a grain of sand. Yet God made you and each cell plays an important part in making you you.

In the same way that your cells have to work together to be you, we are going to make this sand work together to create something. And just like you'll need all of it to create one sculpture, the Kingdom of God only has one you, so you have a unique role to play in God's family!

STATION ACTIVITY

SAND FOAM

What you'll need (per family):

- Plastic or rubber bin
- 3 cups of play sand
- 1 can of shaving cream (250g can)
- Gallon zipper bag

Here's How:

Have rubber/plastic bins set up for mixing. Each family can measure out their own sand from a large bin/bag. Then, for the best part - spraying the shaving cream into the bin! Little ones love this part. Mix thoroughly with hands! Have families place their sand foam into a zipper bag to take home.



STATION #2 - POWER OF THE SUN

STATION LEADER SCRIPT

2 Timothy 1:7 NIV

"God did not give us a spirit that makes us weak and fearful. He gave us a spirit that gives us power and love. It helps us control ourselves."

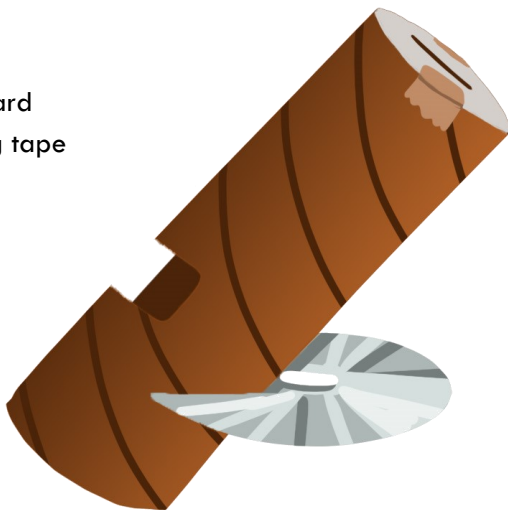
The sun is crazy powerful. It is literally a giant fire ball in the sky. And even though we love it in the summer and it warms us and gives us beautiful weather for beach days and splash days and fun at the park, we can only enjoy it because it is 93 million miles away! If we lived any closer to the sun, it would be too hot and we would not enjoy it. In fact, we might even be afraid to go outside. But the Bible says that God breathed the sun out of his mouth (Psalm 33)—that's how powerful God is. And he gives us that power and replaces our fears with love. Let's make spectroscopes to enjoy one of the very best gifts of the sun: light!

STATION ACTIVITY

SPECTROSCOPES

What you'll need:

- Paper towel roll
- A CD – you can use a blank or recycle an old one
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Index card
- Masking tape
- Scissors



Here's How:

1. Take the ruler and measure about 2-3' up from one end of the paper towel roll. Mark this measurement with the pencil.
2. Using the mark as your guide, cut a thin slit at a 45° angle, pointing down towards the bottom of the tube. This part will require a grownup's assistance. This could also be pre-cut by volunteers.
3. Now cut a small hole across from the slit. This will be your peephole into the spectrometer. Make it large enough to look in with your eye.
4. Trace one end of the paper towel roll on the index card or any small scrap of card stock (all of those pieces you have been saving can be put to good use here!).
5. Cut a rectangle slit in the center of the circle you cut from the index card (most simply by one single cut with scissors).
6. Tape the paper circle to the top of the paper towel roll.
7. Insert the CD, shiny side up, into the 45° slit and ta-da! You have a spectrometer!

To use the spectrometer, point the slit on top toward the sun (or a light source). Look through the peephole to see a spectrum of light!

While you are exploring light from Earth, imagine the astronauts that are using spectrometers from space! A spectrometer can be used to measure temperature or even how fast an object is moving. Pretty cool!

STATION #3- BEAUTY OF THE HEART

STATION LEADER SCRIPT

1 Samuel 16:7 NlrV

"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not consider how handsome or tall he is. I have not chosen him. I do not look at the things people look at. Man looks at how someone appears on the outside. But I look at what is in the heart.'"

Aren't you so glad you're not a jellyfish? Jellyfish are crazy creatures! Did you know that they don't have brains OR hearts?! Aren't you so glad you were made human? The cool thing about God's creativity is that jellyfish are super important to ocean life but can be difficult to get along with too. For example, how can something that stings or harms some also be a source of nutrition for others? They can also be beautiful when we keep our distance and observe them at an aquarium. Jellyfish are a great reminder of our scripture. God doesn't see us like others do. He looks at our hearts.

STATION ACTIVITY

JELLY FISH SUN CATCHER

What you will need:

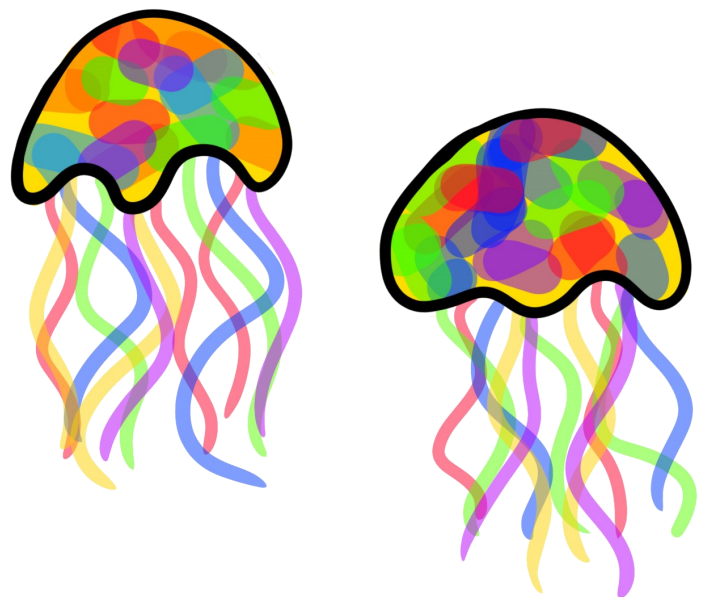
- Black construction paper
- Multiple colors of tissue paper
- Multiple colors of curling ribbon
- Scissors
- Contact paper (You can also use white glue, but you will need drying time, which is not ideal for a family event)

****If you're on a tight timeline, precut tissue into small squares of varying sizes, and ribbon to desired length. Alternatively, encourage the older siblings and/or parents to do the more skilled cutting and let the little ones choose colors and assemble!**

Here's How:

1. Have guests choose colors of tissue and ribbon
2. Distribute one sheet of black construction paper and scissors per family. (If you have enough budget/supplies/time, siblings can each make their own.)
3. Encourage families to be easy going and creative with their jellyfish shape. Be sure to cut out the outline first, and then the inset, giving enough frame to support the artwork.
4. Distribute contact paper. Guests can trace it before they peel it to precut it. Alternatively, they can peel and stick it, decorate it and then trim it.
5. Families will stick the frame to the contact paper, ensuring it goes to all edges. Tissue can stick and overlap, but some part of each square must come into contact with the sticky paper. Be sure to leave enough margin at the bottom of the jellyfish to stick on the curling ribbon.
6. Trim contact paper so that there are no sticky edges.

Depending on the species of jellyfish they've created, they may want to curl the ribbon for a "ruffled" effect!



STATION #4- CALLING OF STARS

STATION LEADER SCRIPT

Isaiah 40:26 NIV

"Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:

Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name.

Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing."

Have you ever stared at the sky on a clear night? While we look into total darkness, we see something amazing. You can't possibly count the endless number of stars in the sky. It's amazing to think that every single little light was placed by our creator God. He even calls each of them by name! Just like one of those stars, God created you magnificently! And He knows you by name, too. In fact, Matthew 10:30-31a says this:

"And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid;"

God loves us so much, that he calls us by name, and cares for all our needs. We don't need to fear darkness of night or anything else, because of our great God!

STATION ACTIVITY

GREAT GALAXY JARS

What you will need (per family):

- Small empty water bottle or jar (WITH TOP)
- Mineral water (enough to fill bottle 3/4 full)
- Gel food coloring (approx. 1 tsp); Dark Blue
- Star Sequins
- Glitter; Blue and Silver
- Glue

Here's How:

1. Give each family a small bottle/jar.
2. Instruct them to fill the jar about 3/4 full with mineral water.
3. Next, add 1 tsp. of food coloring.
4. Add stars and glitter.
5. Place glue around the edges of the top, then twist the cover onto the jar.
6. Shake up your starry sky!

****OPTIONAL:** Print labels or small tags with Isaiah 40:26 printed on them to attach to each jar.





As a closing or addition to the Large Group presentation, invite families to discover God's most marvelous plan—His Son Jesus.

EMCEE SCRIPT

EMCEE: We hope that you have had a wonderful time tonight discovering more about God's marvelous creation! Even more so, we hope that this time of discovery has given you a hunger to seek to learn even more about our Creator!

Another amazing thing about God is how much He loves each and every one of us. God's word, the Bible, tells us all about it!

John 3:16-17 (NIV) reads:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him".

God loves us SO much that He created an amazing rescue plan when sin entered the world. We know that we may have just introduced you to our friend and Savior Jesus for the first time today. You can read the whole story in this book (hold up your Bible; here is an opportunity to offer Bible's to families who do not have one by giving them away). *Optional: If you do not have a copy of this book in your home, we want to make sure that you take one home with you today. After our prayer, you'll find them at the table next to _____).*

Here's what our desire is as a church community:

- We'd love to be able to walk alongside you as we continue to seek Him.
- We'd love to be able to help you understand this good news.
- We'd love to help you grow deeper in your relationship with God and to get to know Him better together.
- Most of all, we want to be a safe place for you to ask questions.

Our pastors (staff, leadership team, or other language you choose) would love to serve you and get to know you. Please know that we are here for you and your family beyond today!

CLOSING PRAYER

Father God, we thank you for this world that you have given us. We praise you for it's beauty, and marvel at the detail and care that you give to even the smallest of things! We ask you Lord fill our hearts and lives with a desire to continue to awe and wonder over all you have done. Draw us closer to you with each new day! Amen!

