

Why Constance of Memphis?

Constance was the sister superior of an Episcopal group of five nuns. This small group wasn't afraid to take on a big job. When a virulent epidemic of yellow fever struck in 1878, they rushed from a retreat in New York to Memphis to nurse the victims, without any thought for their own safety.

To the leader: This is a suggested plan of study, based on a 1 ½ hour meeting. Do as many activities as time permits. All meetings can be changed or supplemented by service activities, crafts and games as planned by the leader.



First meeting (see pg 5 for details)

- Snack, prayer and fellowship time
- Read or tell the story of Constance and answer questions
- Draw a picture of Constance
- Learn about nurses and what they do
- Nurse craft
- Ambulance snack
- Friendship Circle Song

Second Meeting (see pg 6)

- Snack, prayer and fellowship time
- Review the story of Constance
- Learn about how germs spread and cause disease
- Slippery Soap project
- Basic 1st aid and safety for children
- Friendship Circle Song

Third Meeting (see pg 7)

- Snack, prayer and fellowship time
- Learn about community helpers
- Handprint craft
- Story of Florence Nightingale
- Internet games
- Friendship Circle Song

Fourth Meeting (see pg 8)

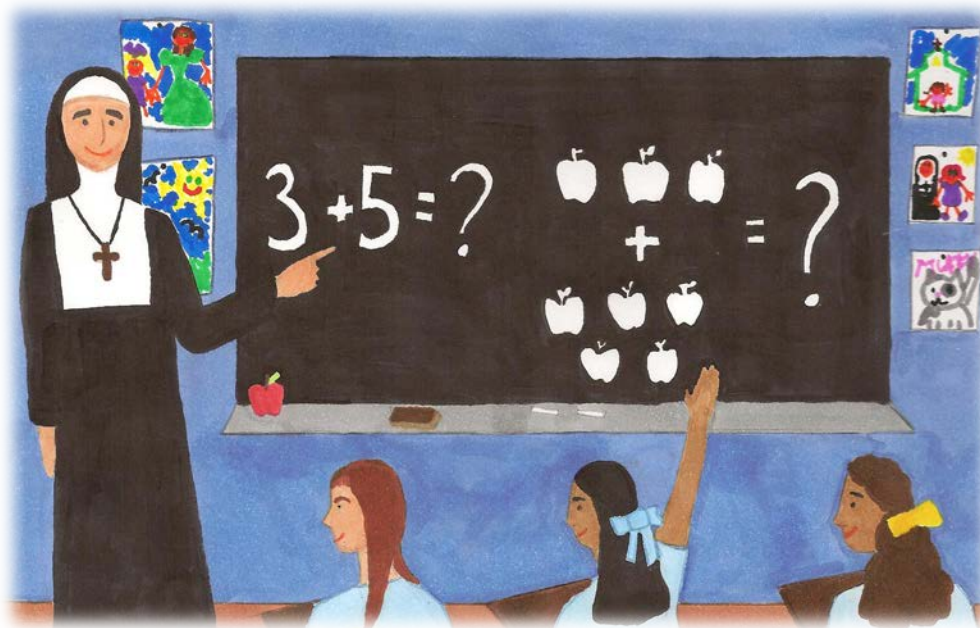
- Snack, prayer and fellowship time
- Constance as a little girl
- What is a cathedral?
- Craft stick cathedral on paper
- Stained glass crafts
- Friendship Circle Song

Constance and Her Companions

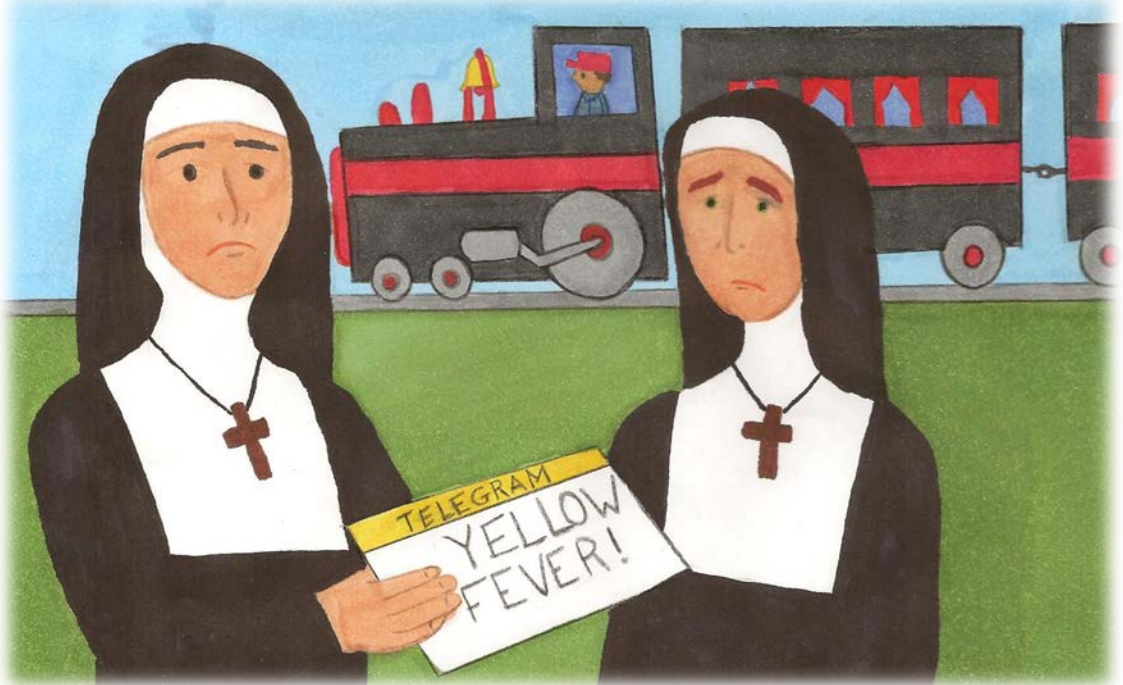
More than a hundred years ago, there was a terrible war right here in America. Soldiers died and homes and cities were ruined. After the war, everyone worked hard to rebuild the cities and schools so they could live a normal life again. One city, Memphis, was next to the great Mississippi River. There was a wooden cathedral near the river named St. Mary's Cathedral.



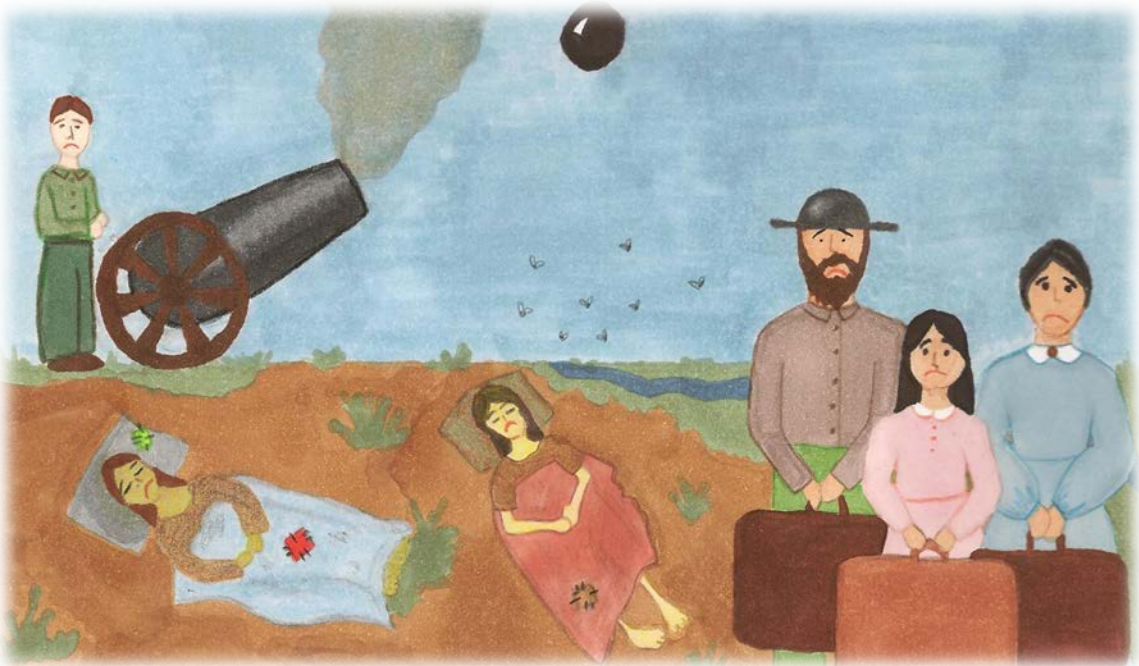
Sister Constance and her group of nuns traveled a thousand miles from New York to Memphis to help. They came to set up a school for girls. The nuns did everything! They taught English, Latin, French, history, art, math and piano. They helped at the cathedral and chapel. On Fridays and Saturdays, the nuns visited the poor and the sick.



After five years of hard work, Constance and another nun, Thecla, went home to New York for a rest. They had just traveled one thousand miles back to New York when they received a telegram from Memphis that yellow fever had again broken out in the city. They quickly rushed back home to Memphis on the train.



Everyone was upset because the yellow fever seemed ten times worse than ever! No one knew where the disease came from. (Now we know that the disease was spread by mosquitoes from the river.) The soldiers fired cannons to clear the air of the disease. Many people left Memphis to find a safer place to live. Sometimes healthy people were afraid to help the sick people. There were not enough doctors and nurses to help.



Constance and her companions knew that if the sick people were cared for properly, they would probably survive. Constance did not know that this yellow fever was stronger than usual. The nuns made soup and tea for the sick and put cool rags on their foreheads. Many parents were sick and dying and their children were all alone.



Constance and her companions worked night and day to help the sick and dying. Soon, Constance became ill from the fever. Constance and twelve other Episcopal nuns, priests and church workers died. Constance's last words were "Alleluia, Hosanna". When the frosts of November arrived, the mosquitoes died and the yellow fever went away again. Even so, the people of Memphis never forgot the work of Constance and her companions.



First Meeting

Lesson Plan

Begin the meeting with time for snack, fellowship and prayer. Ask the girls if any of them has ever been in the hospital or visited someone in the hospital. Talk about their experiences.

Talk about it!

Provide each girl with a copy of the story of Constance to keep in her notebook. Read the story, showing the illustrations.

- What kind of work did Constance do?
- Where did Constance work?
- What kind of disease broke out in the city of Memphis?
- What is an epidemic?
- What insect spread the disease? Did any one know that?
- How did Constance help the sick people?
- What do you do when someone in your family is sick?

Color your feelings

The story of Constance and the yellow fever epidemic is very sad. Ask the girls to imagine how Constance felt during the yellow fever epidemic. Can they draw a picture of the Constance they imagine?

Nurses



Teach the girls about nurses, their job and their role in the community. Check out a book about nurses from the children's section of the library. Share the following

- Some nurses go to people's homes to help them; flight nurses fly in helicopters to help get to sick people in an emergency.
- Nurses teach people how to take care of themselves and their families.
- Nurses are kind and caring to sick people and their families. They work very hard.

Nurse Craft

You will need:

- A toilet paper tube for each girl
- An outline of a head and a baby
- White and red construction paper
- Crayons, scissors and glue
- An example of the finished craft to show the girls



Glue a piece of white construction paper around the toilet paper roll. Color in the nurse's face and a swaddled baby. Glue a red strip of paper for a belt, the face and the baby on the covered toilet paper tube.

Make an ambulance snack



While the girls make their snack, talk to them about why we move out of the way of an ambulance when its siren is on.

You will need:

- A paper plate
- Graham crackers (1 and ½ pieces)
- Tiny Ritz crackers
- White frosting
- A red jelly bean or other candy

Spread some white frosting on the whole graham cracker. Place the half piece on top; this is the cab. Use frosting to "glue" the red jelly bean on top of the cab. Use more frosting to glue the tiny Ritz crackers to the sides for the wheels. Have the girls make extra to take home and share.

Friendship Circle Song

Second meeting

Lesson Plan

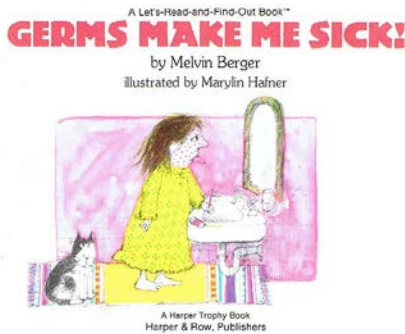
Begin the meeting with time for snack, prayer and fellowship. Discuss what is going on in church currently; has a holiday been celebrated recently? What color are the vestments and why?

Talk about it!

Review the story of Constance. Answer any questions the girls have about the story.

Germs cause disease

Obtain a book such as *Germs Make Me Sick* by Melvin Berger (ISBN 0-06-445053-8) which explains germs at the girls' level of understanding.



Share the following types of information:

- Germs are tiny living beings that are far too small to see.
- Germs are found everywhere, but they do not always make you sick.
- The body has many ways to keep germs out, most of the time. The skin blocks germs, the nose has tiny hairs to keep germs out and the wetness of the mouth and throat keeps germs out. The body has white blood cells to fight and kill germs that get into the body.
- When germs get into the body and multiply, they make you sick.
- Discuss the many ways we take care of our body when it is sick. Rest, drink fluids, visit the doctor, get medical tests, etc.

Make “Slippery Soap”



You will need:

- Slippery Soap template
- Light blue construction paper
- Scissors and glue stick
- Clear contact paper or
- laminating materials

Slippery Soap is a character from the TV program *Blues Clues*. Use the template on the following page to trace the shapes on construction paper for the girls. Have them cut out the shapes and glue the face, mouth and arms onto the body. Laminate the figure or place between two sheets of contact paper with a yarn hanger. Have the girls hang Slippery Soap in their bathroom to remind them to wash up with soap.

Basic First Aid and Safety for Children

As a general rule, small children should not be treating their own injuries and should ask for an adult's assistance. However, there are some simple treatments that they can be aware of and preventative steps they can take to avoid injury. Discuss the following topics.

- Cleanliness-when we should wash our hands.
- Healthy eating, sleeping and exercise habits. Visit the doctor and get shots when required.
- Simple scrapes-demonstrate how to clean scrapes and apply antiseptic and bandages.
- Nosebleeds-proper treatment is to pinch the soft part of the nose below the bridge and tilt head forward so blood does not flow down throat into stomach.
- Fire Safety-how to avoid injury in the kitchen; discuss how to escape house fire.
- Personal Safety when playing outside, swimming, crossing the street or traveling in a car.

Friendship Circle Song

Third meeting

Lesson Plan

Begin the meeting with time for snack, prayer and fellowship. Discuss the first aid and safety tips the girls learned at the previous meeting.

Community Helpers

At the last meeting, the girls learned about nurses. What other community helpers can they think of? (Police officer, firefighter, teacher, sanitation worker, minister, etc.) Talk about what these people do to help all of us live better.

Can the girls be community helpers?

Handprints

Our hands can do many things: carry, create, soothe, play, bake, build and protect. Make a handprint of each girl to remind them of what their hands can do.

You will need:

- Paint shirts
- Plaster of Paris
- Large container for mixing and a wooden stick or spoon for stirring
- Aluminum pie plate for each girl
- Large paper clips
- Disposable plastic gloves
- Permanent marker

Warning! Do not wash extra plaster of Paris down the drain. It will clog up the pipes. Wear paint shirts or old clothes and work outside.

Have an adult mix the plaster of Paris in an old container. The plaster should be stiff but creamy. Wear plastic gloves and use a stirrer to mix the plaster. Do not breathe the plaster dust.

Pour the plaster into the pie pan. Have a child quickly make a handprint in the plaster. Wash the child's hand immediately afterwards, as prolonged exposure to plaster can burn the skin.

Before the plaster hardens, push a partly unfolded paper clip into the plaster or use a straw to make a hole. The plaster will

be completely dry in a day, but you can take it out of the molding container after 20 minutes.



Write the child's name, date and age on the plaster with permanent marker.

Florence Nightingale



Constance enjoyed a similar childhood experience as that of Florence Nightingale. They were both raised in privileged situations, were well educated and cultured. Share a children's story book about the life of Florence Nightingale.

Internet Fun

Go to

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/famouspeople/standard/nightingale/index.shtml>

To find a fun, interactive story about Florence Nightingale.

Friendship Circle Song

Fourth meeting

Lesson Plan

Begin the meeting with time for snack, prayer and fellowship. An active game outside helps the girls unwind.

Talk about Constance

This is what we know about Constance as a little girl. She was born in 1846 in Boston, an old city with brick buildings and a harbor. Her original name was Carolyn Louise Darling. Her father was an executive for a textile company. She received an excellent education, which included piano lessons. Constance grew up to become a woman of culture, intelligence and ability. Her natural qualities led her to become a teacher and a leader. She was baptized into the Episcopal Church as a young adult.

Constance as a little girl



These are similar to dresses worn by little girls when Constance was young.

What is a Cathedral?

A cathedral is a church that has a special chair for the bishop called a *cathedra*. Without this special throne for a bishop, a cathedral would simply be a church. Many cathedrals are very large with beautiful stone carvings and stained glass windows. The beautiful art work inspires us to imagine the majesty of God.

Cathedral by David Macaulay (ISBN 0395175135) follows the planning and construction of a magnificent Gothic cathedral in an imaginary French town in the 13th century. The book is a unique presentation of the architecture of a cathedral.



St. Mary's cathedral was a wooden structure when Constance worked in Memphis.

Make a cathedral on paper

You will need:

- Construction or other heavy paper
- Popsicle sticks and garden clippers to cut sticks
- White glue, crayons

Use Popsicle sticks to create a wooden cathedral on heavy paper. Put a cross on top of the cathedral. Use colored paper to add windows and a large front door.

Stained Glass Craft Activity

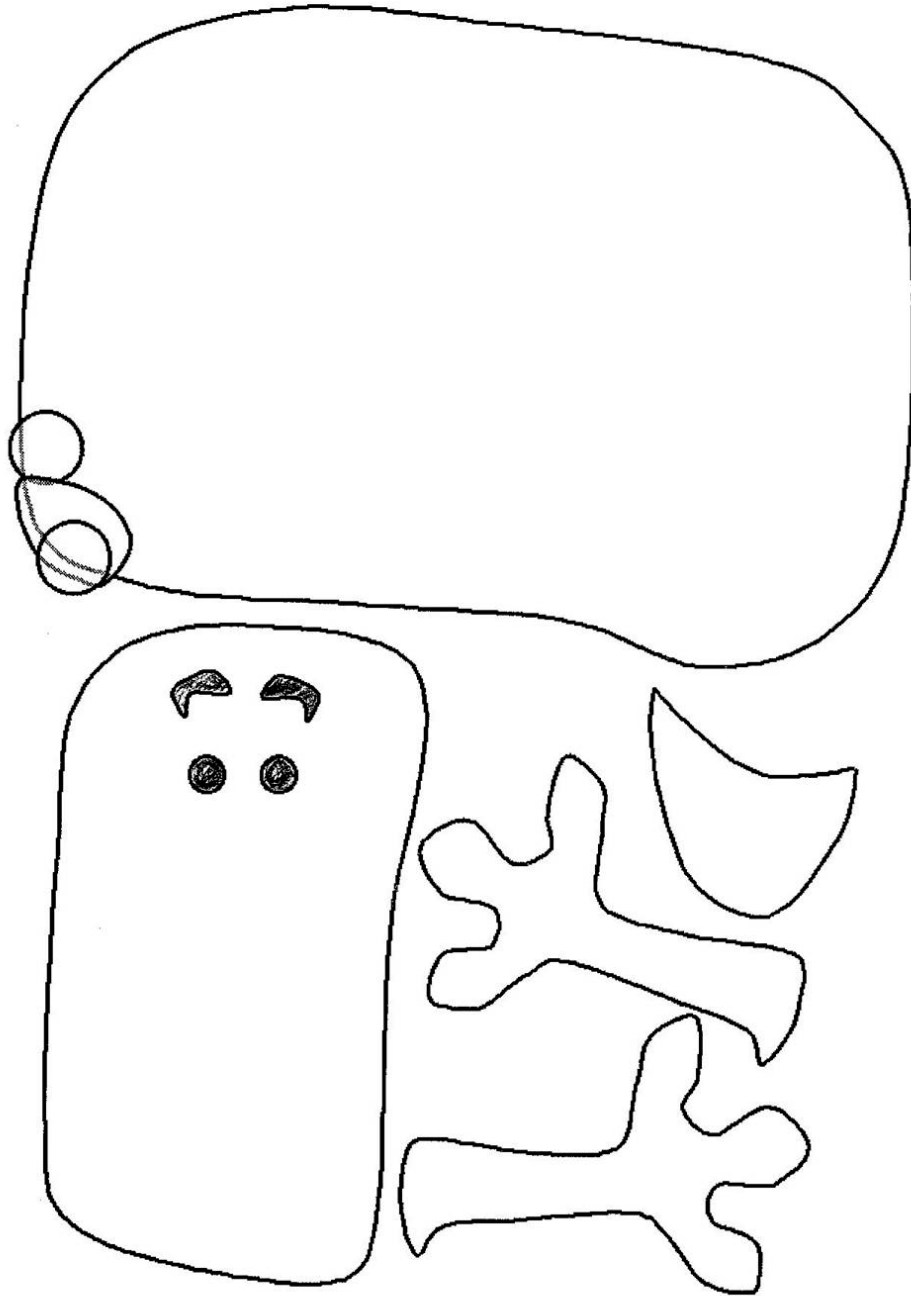
Instructions for two ways to do a stained glass activity on last page of this section.



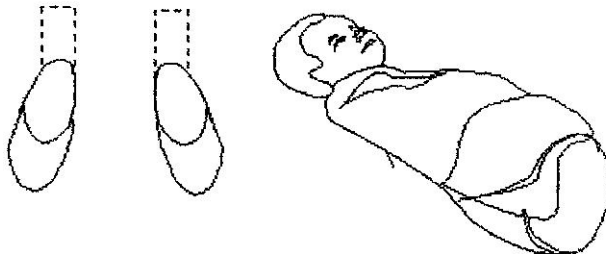
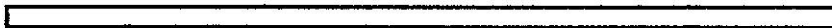
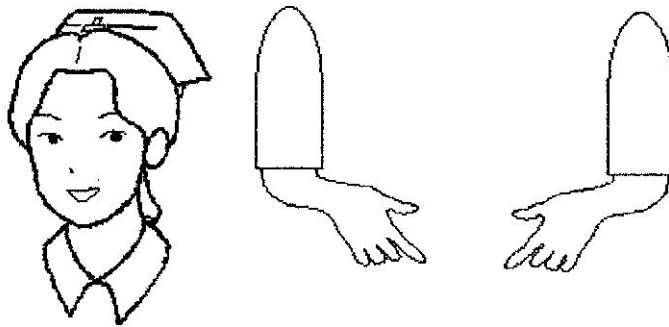
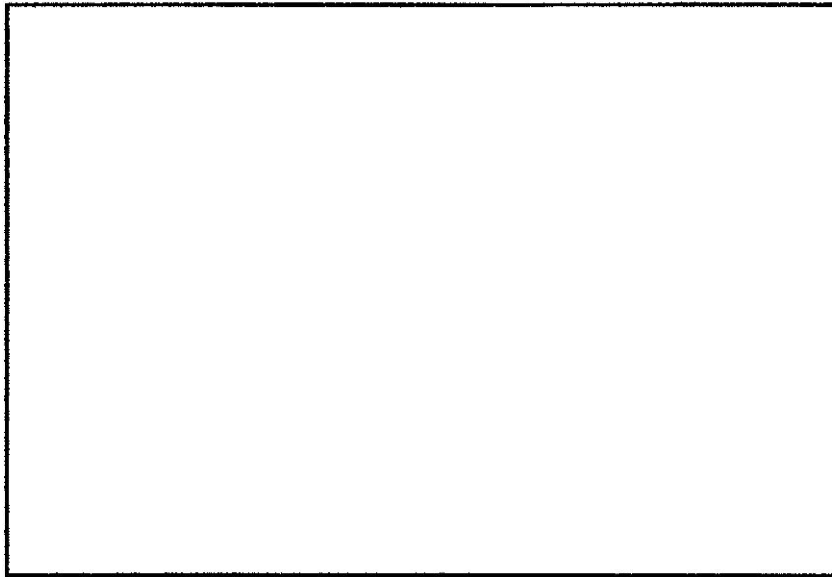
Just for Fun!

- ♥ Let the girls help plan a party for their mothers or special someone at the end of a meeting. Guide the girls in making most of the decisions and show them how to greet their mothers when they arrive.
- ♥ Teach the girls a simple Bible song that they can sing to share their faith.

Friendship Circle Song



Nurse Craft



Instructions

- Print out the above template, color as appropriate, cut out the parts.
- Glue the large rectangular piece around the toilet paper tube.
- Glue the thin rectangular piece at about the center as a belt.
- Glue on the arms and head.
- Glue the feet onto the bottom of the tp roll, bending the tabs to make a 3D effect.
- Glue the baby onto the hands. (Optional)

Stained Glass Craft Activity

Here are two options for creating “stained glass”.

Water-color Stained Glass(picture of process)

You will need:

- Coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Spray bottle filled with water
- Construction paper
- Scissors and glue stick

Color random patterns on the coffee filter with washable markers. Mist with spray bottle until colors run together. Place in sunshine to dry. Cut filter into a cross shape and attach to construction paper with glue stick.

Crayon shaving stained glass(picture)

You will need:

- Wax paper
- Crayons
- Crayon sharpener or knife, scissors
- Glitter, stickers or pictures from magazines, other flat objects
- Iron, preferably an old one in case it gets crayon on it

Use a crayon sharpener or knife to make shavings from the crayons. Cut 2 pieces of waxed paper the same size. Place one sheet of waxed paper on a piece of newspaper. Sprinkle shavings and glitter on waxed paper. Place pictures on top of sprinkles. Put the second piece of waxed paper on top. Cover with a few more sheets of newspaper. Now iron the whole thing on medium heat. Press down and lift, don't rub back and forth with the iron. Check frequently to make sure it doesn't burn. Stop ironing when the layers are stuck together and the crayon shavings have melted. Trim into an attractive shape and punch a hole for hanging.

