

ALLEY Rundown November 22nd- 23rd, 2025

Bible Story: Esther • *Esther*

Conversion Starter: When has someone stood up for you?

Monthly Memory Verse: *Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.* Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

CAMPUS Supplies: 2 clipboards with blank paper and 2 markers or pens

PRE- SERVICE VIDEOS: *Dude Perfect*

SLIDE: *Theme*

Hey, hey, hey! What's up, Alley? I'm absolutely pumped to see you! Let's make some noise for the awesome people around you—give your neighbor a confidence-powered high five or a big 'You're awesome!'

All month, we've been diving deep into something super-important. Confidence!

But the kind of confidence is not just feeling good about ourselves. We're talking about the kind of confidence that comes straight from God. It's confidence that comes from knowing and living in the reality that God is with us! And when we know God is with us, we can have confidence to try what seems impossible, confidence to do what's right and follow God's ways, and as we'll see this week in our Bible Story, confidence to stand up for others.

But before we dive into our story today, it's game time! Who's ready for a game called 'Stand Up for Me'?

Set up two chairs in the front. On each chair, place a clipboard with several sheets of paper and a marker.

To play this game, I need two volunteers who know each other really well—either siblings or friends. If you want to play, raise your hand!

Choose a pair of kids with their hands raised. Instruct the kids to sit in the chairs, holding the clipboards and markers.

(NOTE: If it's a better fit for your group, this game can be played with adult volunteers.)

Okay! Now that we're set up, we're going to play a game where I ask you questions about the other person. I want you to write down how you think the other person would answer this question I ask. The kid with the most correct answers at the end wins!

I'll go through each of these questions one at a time, but before we start the game, let me read through

all our questions first so you know what's coming. These are the questions I'm going to ask you to answer about the other person!

Read through the following questions.

- What's their favorite color?
- What's their favorite song?
- What's their favorite food?
- What's their pet's name?
- What city were they born in?
- Without looking at their face, what color are their eyes?
- What is their favorite hobby or sport?

Now that we know what questions are coming, let's start our first round! Kid 1, one at a time, I will ask you those questions about Kid 2 first.

For each question, you'll write down what you think the other kid will answer. Once you are done writing the answer to that question, turn the clipboard around and show us the answer.

Kid 2, if your partner answered the question correctly about you, stand up!

Read back through the questions one at a time, with Kid 1 answering for Kid 2 and Kid 2 standing up when the answer is correct.

Repeat the game so Kid 2 answers all of the questions about Kid 1. Keep track of which kid gets the most correct answers.

Wow, you guys! It's so awesome that you know so much about each other! Having people know things about us—even if they don't know everything—means a lot. It's a gift in life to have a friend!

And you know what means even more? When someone stands up for you, when someone looks out for you. Today, we're going to talk about someone who realized God had put her exactly where she was to stand up for a whole group of people.

But before we get into her story, let me tell you about something amazing we're doing this year! We're going through key stories in the Bible from cover to cover!

But are we going through the Bible just so we'll become really smart Bible people? Not exactly! One of the reasons God gave us the Bible is so that we can get to know Him! He wants us to be His friends! So as we go through the Bible this year, our hope is that we learn about Him!

We're going to go through God's Big Story.

SLIDE: God's Big Story

Let me bring you up to speed on where we've been in God's Big Story so far!

So you might remember that in the very beginning, God made the world, the animals, people ... everything! God made the first people for the same reason He made all people—to be His close, close friends. But sadly, the first people God made chose to turn away from Him and sin. God wanted people to be close to Him, but they couldn't anymore! It was so sad.

And awful things happened to the world too. Pain, sickness, and death entered into it.

But God didn't want to leave things that way! So He put His rescue plan in motion right from the start!

God was going to rescue everything through a family—Abraham's family! Many years after God first spoke to Abraham, Abraham's great-grandson Joseph ended up in Egypt. After some hard times, God helped Joseph become a super-important leader there! Joseph saved his whole family by bringing them to Egypt. But hundreds of years passed. God grew and grew His people. A new Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, came along. He didn't know about Joseph. He saw how many of God's people there were, he got scared, and he started being mean to them.

God's people cried out to God for help. He answered! God brought His people out of Egypt into a beautiful home He had for them—the Promised Land!

After some time living in the Promised Land, God's people wanted a king like the other nations around them. God gave them a king, and then many more kings (and one queen) followed. Sadly, the nation of God's people split in two—into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

During this time, there were prophets in both kingdoms who spoke and taught on God's behalf. Many of the prophets delivered the same message from God: 'Come back to Me!'

But many of the kings didn't listen. They turned their hearts away from God, and as a result, the northern kingdom of Israel was totally destroyed and never heard from again. The southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive by other nations. God's people were taken from the Promised Land! It was sad, but God was preserving a remnant, mostly from the nation of Judah.

After some time in captivity, God worked through a foreign king to allow His people to come home to the land of Judah, which is part of the Promised Land. Many of God's people came back home! But some stayed in foreign lands—like Esther and her family. But even there, God was still in charge, protecting His people and His promise to rescue us!

And that's where we are in God's Big Story. Let's check it out.

VIDEO: The So and So Show (13:01)

Wow—what an epic story we explored today! Esther was an ordinary person, but she showed extraordinary confidence—not because she was the biggest or the bravest, but because she realized that God had put her right where she was to stand up for people!

God has put you right where you are so you can show your world His love too. God has put you right where you are to stand up for people!

God was with Esther every step of the way, and He is with you every step of the way too.

When you stand up for others, you're living out God's love in a real, powerful way. You're being a leader, just like Esther. Next time you see someone who needs a friend, or you notice something unfair, ask God for confidence. You might be the answer to someone's prayer!

As you head to your Small Groups, really think about this Conversation Starter:

SLIDE: Conversation Starter

When has someone stood up for you?

How did it feel when someone stood up for you? You can make someone feel the same way by standing up for them!

Let's pray and ask God to help us stand up for others.

God, thank You for giving Esther the confidence to stand up for her people. Thank You for being with us, giving us what we need to stand up for others too. Help us trust You and reflect Your love, even when it's tough. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

OFFERING

We started supporting a new organization with our offering last month. We are going to help kids and adults who live right near us! Our mission is Shady Oaks Camp for People with Disabilities in Homer Glen, IL. Their mission is to give kids and adults the same kind of camp experience that kids without disabilities can enjoy.

SLIDES: Shady Oaks 5-8

I'm so excited that we are raising money to help Shady Oaks provide summer camps for people with disabilities!