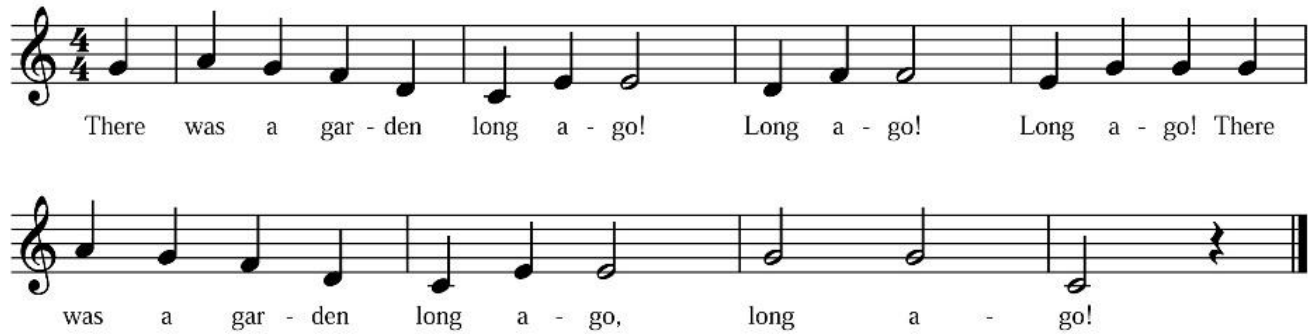


Story 1: God Plants a Garden (Genesis 2)

→ Genesis 2.4–15

→ Song: 'There was a garden long ago'. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

→ Tune: 'There was a princess long ago' (traditional).



You may like to ask one of the children to open a box with a trowel, or a watering can, and a tray or bowl of mud/soil to represent the garden.

What's in the box? Ask the child to respond.

In our story today, God plants the world
like we plant a garden or park.
Let's tell our story together.

In the beginning there was a garden.
Let's look around our garden!
Lead the children in looking right and left around an imaginary garden.

There were no trees, no plants, no grass!
Just mud! Let's squelch our feet in the mud.
Lead the children in squelching feet in imaginary mud.
Freeze!

The garden was called Eden,
which means 'misty place' because it was full of mist!

Can you show me misty?
Lead the children in waving hands in the air.
Misty means there's lots of tiny bits of water in the air.
The water is making the mud very, very muddy!

Shall we sing a song about our garden of Eden?
Let's squelch in the mud as we sing.

**There was a garden long ago,
long ago, long ago.
There was a garden long ago.
Long ago! Both thumbs pointing behind shoulder**

In this story, we're going to be God the Maker.
Let's stand up tall and be God!



When all the children are standing up tall . . .

God bent down.

Lead the children in kneeling down . . .

God took a handful of mud.

Lead the children in miming taking a handful of mud . . .

And God made it into a shape.

Let's make our mud into a shape.

God made the mud into a man!

Shall we make our mud into a man as well?

Lead the children in miming shaping the mud as you sing.

**God took some mud and made a man,
made a man, made a man.**

**God took some mud and made a man,
made a man.**

Then God, very gently, held the man.

Lead the children in holding an imaginary tiny man in your cupped hands.

And puffed wind into the man's nose.

After three, shall we blow wind very gently into our man's nose?

1, 2, 3 . . . *Blow.*

The mud man got up!

Lead the children in showing the mud man's legs with their fingers.

And walked around!

Walk the 'finger man' around on your other arm, up over your shoulders and head and down your body as you sing.

**The man got up and walked around,
walked around, walked around!**

**The man got up and walked around,
walked around!**

Next, God did some planting.

God dug. Let's dig together like God.

And God planted plants.

Let's kneel down and plant like God.

I wonder what colours and flowers and trees will be in your garden?

Let's be a flower or tree growing from the ground.

Let's curl up into a little ball like a seed.

Lead the children in curling up into a ball.

First, we need to put our roots down.

Let's show our roots with our fingers.

Lead the children in wiggling fingers.

We need to let our roots grow down deep.

Lead the children in wiggling fingers down.



Then after three, let a little shoot pop up.

1, 2, 3 . . . Pop!

Poke your hands up over your head like a little shoot.

Then start to grow up tall.

Gradually stand up, swaying like a growing stalk.

Taller and taller onto our tiptoes . . .

Reach up with pointy hands and on tiptoes.

Let's turn our faces up towards the sun!

Then let our leaves or branches spread out wide.

Arms stretch slowly outwards.

Let's do that again as we sing.

Lead the children in miming the movements from seed to plant as you sing.

Then God planted the trees and flowers,

trees and flowers, trees and flowers.

Then God planted the trees and flowers.

Trees and flowers.

Look at our beautiful garden!

Look at all those beautiful colours!

And smell! *Breathe in deeply*

Smell those beautiful flowers!

God put the man in the garden

to look after it.

Let's be God again!

Let's hold the garden in one of our hands

with the little man in it.

Let's sing to the man and point to our garden.

'This is my garden! Care for it!

Care for it! Care for it!'

'This is my garden! Care for it!

Care for it!'

Sit down together for a moment of quiet.

That story from long ago is in the Bible.

When we're telling the story the garden looks tiny.

Point to your cupped hand.

And the man looks tiny.

Show the little finger man standing in your cupped hand

But that's because we're being God!

Everything looks tiny to God!

But let me tell you a secret.

Whisper: The garden in our song is the whole world!

Move arms upwards and outwards.

Normal voice: The tiny man *Show the little finger man*



is as tall as me! *Stand up as leader*
Much taller than you!
Sit down again.

God made the whole world!
In our song, who did God ask
to look after the world, the garden?
Accept responses from the children.

God still asks people to look after our world.
That means it's our job, too!

If appropriate, give a short example that would be relevant to your group. For example:

Either: How can we care for our world?
We can grow things!
Has anyone here grown a plant?
That's helping to take care of God's world.
Who'd like to do some planting like God?
We can do that after *we finish our story.*

Or: How can we care for our world?
We can 'recycle' things.
That means use things again
instead of throwing them away.
Let's not fill God's world with lots of rubbish!
Let's 'recycle' and use things for something different.
Show a box of recyclable materials that look interesting.
Like these!
Who'd like to make something new out of these?
If you will be providing recyclable materials as a Creative Response:
We can do that after *we finish our story.*

Let's sing 'This is my world! Care for it!' again.
This time, let's sing it to each other.
As we sing, let's show our world. *Hands out*
Then point to each other. *Point to three children, one by one*

And let's not forget to point to ourselves too! *Point to self*
What will we do to look after our world?

This is my wor-ld! *Hands out. Care for it! Point at three children*
Care for it! *Point at three children. Care for it! Point at three children*
This is my wor-ld! *Hands out. Care for it! Point at yourself three times*
Care for it! *Point round the circle at everyone*
Repeat