Selfless Service
Sunday Service Children’s Story

Materials:
• Pictures for story

Preparations:
• Prepare any necessary materials.
• Invite children up to steps of altar.
• Reader of story sits in a chair with children sitting on floor in front of her.
• Include children’s story, even if there are no children in your congregation, to welcome families who may come to the service.
• You can add your own creativity to the stories.
• Feel free to adjust the content to fit your time frame. However, for the spiritual development of the child, we encourage keeping as much of the Ascended Master’s Teachings as possible.

Time: 9 – 10 minutes depending on storyteller delivery and children’s responses.

Good morning and welcome to our children’s story and welcome to the children and families on the broadcast. Today the service is about Archangel Uriel. Have you ever heard of this archangel? *(Allow children to answer.)* *(Show picture of Archangel Uriel.)*

Archangel Uriel is not mentioned in the Bible but in Jewish tradition, he is called, “the one who brings light to Israel.” Archangel Uriel serves as the Archangel on the sixth ray of service, ministration and peace. The angels on the sixth ray inspire doctors, nurses, teachers and all those who serve others. They help bring peace to individuals and help solve problems.
Our story today is a Jataka tale about serving others. *(Show picture of Gautama Buddha.)* Jataka tales are a part of sacred Buddhist literature portraying incarnations of the Bodhisattva who later would become Siddhartha Gautama, the future Buddha. Often in the stories, the Bodhisattva took the form of an animal. However, we know that in our teachings the ascended masters tell us that Masters or people do not embody as animals.

Jataka tales teach a moral or show a virtue. A virtue is a behavior that shows high, moral character. As you listen to this tale, see if you can discover the virtues shared in the story.

*The Selfless Hare*

Long ago, the Bodhisattva was reborn as a hare. He lived in a leafy forest among soft, tender grass and delicate ferns, surrounded by climbing vines and sweet wild orchids. The forest was rich with fruits and bordered by a river of pure water as blue as lapis lazuli.

This forest was a favorite place of wandering holy people who withdrew from the world to focus on their spiritual journeys. These holy ones lived on the food that they begged from others. The people of that time considered the giving of alms (charity or food) to the holy wanderers to be a sacred duty.

*(Picture of animals)* The bodhisattva hare had three friends -- a monkey, a jackal, and an otter. These three looked to the wise hare as their leader. He taught them the importance of keeping moral laws, observing holy days, and giving alms. Whenever a holy day approached,
the hare told his friends that if someone asked them for food, they were to give freely and generously from the food they had gathered for themselves.

(Picture of Buddha) Sakra, the lord of devas, was watching the four friends from his great palace of marble and light on the peak of Mount Meru, and on one holy day he decided to test their virtue. He wanted to see if they would keep their promise to share their food. For giving one’s word was a virtue as important as sharing and serving others.

That day, the four friends separated to find food. The otter caught seven red fish near a riverbank; the jackal found a lizard and a vessel of curdled milk someone had abandoned; the monkey gathered mangoes from the trees.

(Picture of Brahman) Sakra took the form of a Brahman, or priest, and went to the otter. He said, “Otter, friend, I am hungry. I need food before I can perform my priestly duties. Can you help me?”

Without hesitating, the otter said, “O holy man, I offer you the seven red fish I caught for my meal.”

Then the Brahman traveled to the jackal, and said, “Friend, I am hungry. I need food before I can perform my priestly duties. Can you help me?”

The jackal paused and then said, “This lizard I captured and curdled milk I found that I planned to have for my own meal, I joyously give to you.”
Next, the Brahman visited the monkey, and said, “Nature friend, I am hungry. I need food before I can perform my priestly duties. Can you help me?”

Even though the monkey looked forward to eating them himself, he replied, “Oh yes, dear Brahman, you may have these juicy, delicious mangoes.”

Last, the Brahman went to the hare and said, “Friend, Hare, I am very hungry and cannot perform my sacred duties until I eat. Do you have food you can share with me?”

The hare had found no food but the lush grass growing in the forest. So the Bodhisattva Hare said, “I have not yet found any food, but if you will build me a fire, I can help you.”

The Brahman built the fire. And when the fire was burning, the hare said, “I have nothing to give you to eat but myself!” Then, the hare threw himself into the fire. (Picture of hare in the fire)

Sakra, still disguised as a Brahman, was astonished and deeply moved. With his powers, the Brahman caused the fire to be cold, so the hare was not burned.

Then Sakra revealed his true form to the selfless little hare. “Dear Hare,” he said, your virtue of selfless giving and service and that of your sacred word will be remembered through the ages.”

And then Sakra painted the wise hare’s likeness on the pale face of the Moon, for all to see. (Picture of hare in the moon)

Sakra returned to his home on Mount Meru, and the four friends lived long and happily in their beautiful forest. And to this day, those who look up at the Moon can see the image of the selfless hare.
CONCLUSION:

Why did Sakra paint the hare’s face on the moon? *(Allow children to answer.*) Yes, to honor him because of his virtuous life. What were those virtues? *(Allow children to answer.*) Yes, service, sacrifice and keeping his promise. Can you remember to give to others selflessly this next week? *(Pause.)* Let’s end by saying together, “Archangel Uriel, make me an instrument of God’s Peace and Service.” *(Recite devotionally once with children.)*

Thank you for joining in our story. Have a wonderful day.