

Day 2—Seek the Kingdom: God’s Community

Scripture Reading

Do not be defined by the things that separate you but by the things that unite you in Jesus Christ

—Doctrine and Covenants 162:5a

In the Community of Christ, the cause of Zion refers to the kingdom of God as it finds expression on the earth. Sometimes called the peaceable kingdom, the vision of Zion calls us to imagine how things can be if our relationships and priorities were aligned with God’s purposes.—David Schaal, First Presidency

Music Suggestions

“Community of Christ” R-11

“Companions on the Journey” NS 7

“Seek Ye First” NS 44

“Gather Us In” SP 4

Gathering/Worship

Intergenerational book: *Russell and the Lost Treasure* by Rob Scotton (HarperCollins Children’s Books, 2006), ISBN 0-0605-9851-4.

Lesson

Web of Peace

Holding on to one end of the yarn in a yarn ball, toss the “ball” to another person. As you do so, ask the youth who caught it to share one good thing that happened to them during the past week. The receiving person should then hold on to their section of yarn, and toss the yarn ball to another person. Continue until everyone in the class is connected in a web-like manner with the yarn.

While still connected, ask everyone to follow your directions: stand up, take three steps to the right, sit down, stand up again and turn around, then take two steps back.

Stop the activity and ask everyone to let go of the yarn. Discuss the effects of being connected. Was moving in sync easy? What happened when one person moved and another did not? How is the connectedness within the web like the connectedness we have with others in our community and in the world? How do our actions affect others? If we choose to work against each other instead of together, what happens? When Christ is at the center of our life, how does it make a difference? What role does Christ play in bringing us together?

Creating Community

Open with a movie clip from *Men in Black* (Columbia Pictures, 1997, PG-13). Show the scene where recruits are taking a test. Begin movie as recruits tear open their test package. End at the scene where all the recruits stare at Edwards. This clip is about one minute and thirty seconds long.

Questions about the movie clip:

1. What does this say to you about building community?
2. What other situations give you flexibility in changing from an individual perspective to a community perspective?
3. How do we create a sense of community? Describe a process for community building. Are there several ways?

Activity: Draw a diagram of the process using stick figures and arrows.

4. How are you at inviting people to join our community?

Activity: On one wall of the room post a sign that says, "Intentionally Invite." On the opposite wall post a sign that says, "Timid, Never Invite." Ask youth to line up between the signs indicating how they see themselves as inviters to community. Ask everyone to observe the line. Where do most of the youth line up? What does this say to you?

5. Think about some communities you belong to. Who do they represent? How diverse are they?

Activity: Post one of these signs in each corner of the room, "Same," "Racially Diverse," "Generationally Diverse," "Economically Diverse." Ask youth to place themselves in a corner they think best describes their community. Ask everyone to look over the room and make observations about what they see.

Remove the signs from the corners. On one side of the room, post the "Same" sign. On the opposite wall post a sign that says, "Diverse." Now ask the students to line up between the signs indicating how they see their home church. Together make observations about what the line is indicating.

6. What would Jesus say about the diversity of our home congregations?
7. How can we intentionally create community between different types of people—racially, intellectually, generationally, economically, philosophically, and socially?
8. How do we make our community welcoming to others?

Seeking the Kingdom

Ask someone to read Doctrine and Covenants 162:5a and the paragraph by David Schaal from the adult reunion text included above.

Record the criteria below on poster board so all can see.

Zionic Values

1. A condition of community in which persons live in right relationship with God and one another.
2. Persons learn to resolve conflicts peaceably.
3. Values centered in the life of Christ so we are of one heart and one mind.
4. An absence of poverty and the presence of peace.
5. Allow God to work within us or call us to whatever place God chooses.

Based on this information, how does your community compare? Does the community formed by campers and participants at reunion have the potential to be the “peaceable kingdom”? How? What do you look for in God’s kingdom on earth? How do you align a community to God’s purposes?

Activity Suggestions

“Seek the Peaceable Kingdom” Theme Park

Draw a theme-park blueprint on a large sheet of paper with markers —based on your knowledge of the kingdom of God on earth. Look through scripture and other sources to find the specs on God’s peaceable kingdom. Think about all the exciting features your peaceable-kingdom park could offer to the people of the world. Some features might include the friendly Ferris wheel. People who ride the wheel become caring friends with one another. After getting off the wheel, they want to make more friends with the people around them. Another example may involve the concession stand where eating and sharing together with others is the object. Be imaginative God’s kingdom is big enough for everyone. When your blueprint is finished, design a brochure showing off your park’s good qualities, and invite others to come join you.

Scripture suggestions:

- Doctrine and Covenants 11:3
- Doctrine and Covenants 45:12, 14
- Doctrine and Covenants 72:5a–b
- Doctrine and Covenants 108:3a–c
- Doctrine and Covenants 140:5c
- Doctrine and Covenants 150:11–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 151:9–10
- Doctrine and Covenants 154:7
- Doctrine and Covenants 155:8
- Doctrine and Covenants 156:11
- Doctrine and Covenants 157:11–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 158:11–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 161:3a, c, 6a
- Doctrine and Covenants 162:1b, 4a–b, 5b, 6c, 7a

Working Together

This activity will take some preparation, but the results will be worth it. You’ll need four basic supplies: 80 feet (25 m) of strong string, a 2-inch (5 cm) plastic or metal ring, a small ball (about the size of a tennis ball), a small throw pillow. Cut the string into ten, 8-foot (2.5) lengths. Tie one end of each 8 foot (2.5 m) piece of string to the ring.

Place the ring in the middle of the room on top of a small pillow with the string spread out around it. Assign a person to each string. If necessary, one person can control two strings. Balance the small ball in the center of the ring. Challenge the group to lift the ball off the pillow by coordinating their strings. Then, as a group, move around the building, in and out of doors, while constantly keeping the ball balanced in the ring. The goal is to bring the ball and ring back into the room and safely place it on the pillow.

To accomplish this task, the group will need to communicate while they work together. The task will not always be easy, or even obvious, but it can be done. Make several attempts using different groups.

After the activity, sit down and discuss. How did they feel when posed with the challenge? What frustrations were experienced? Who took the lead? Did the lead change according to the circumstances? What part did each person play? How is this activity like forming God's community?

Reunion Community

Give each student a small sticky-note. Have them put their thumb on an ink pad then press their thumb on their sticky-note. Each student is to make a character from their thumbprint that represents them. Provide markers so they can add arms, legs, facial expressions, hats, earrings, or whatever helps identify them. Notes can be put on a chart with the student's name beside it and where they're staying in the reunion community. (Notes could also be put on the theme park activity. Give students the prompt, "Where would you like to visit in your peaceable kingdom theme park?" They could change theme parks each day of reunion exploring the theme parks of the other groups.)

Camp Survey

Send the youth out to interview campers of all ages. Ask each person the same questions, "What is the kingdom of God on earth? What is the peaceable kingdom? What is Zion?" Record the interviews on video. If video is not available, use a tape recorder or write down the responses. Compare and discuss the results of their interviews. How might all the answers fit together to help create a better understanding of Zion?

Journal

What does "Seeking the Kingdom: God's Community" mean you'll have to do more of or do differently? What supplies will you need?

Peace Prayer

Community Prayer

Form a circle. Begin the prayer giving thanks for the gift of God's kingdom and the scriptures that show us the way. Leave the prayer open-ended, allowing the person next in the circle to continue it. Each person adds their own thoughts about seeking the kingdom until the last person makes their contribution and closes the prayer with "Amen."