

## Songs From Africa

The following songs are from *Sing a New Song* (1999) available from Herald House:

*Humble Yourself*, 17 from Zambia

*We Are Marching*, 46, from South Africa

*There's No One Like Jesus*, 49, from Zambia

## Daily Themes

### Day One: Wahabu (God of love)

(pronounced "wa-ha-boo" with accent on second syllable) Jesus is the center of our camp/lives.

God is love.

How we can follow Jesus' example.

### Day Two: Umoja (unity, harmony)

(pronounced "oo-mo-jah" with accent on second syllable) It is important to be a unified, harmonious community.

Being unified doesn't mean we all have to be the same. Celebrating diversity promotes unity.

**Day Three: Heri** (good wishes, good will, blessings) (heh-ree; "roll" the "r" sound, as in Spanish, with the accent on the first syllable)

We are blessed in order to be a blessing for others; sharing is a privilege.

How can we spread good will and promote *heri* in our communities?

What blessings and good wishes shall we send with our camp friends as we leave?

## Morning Devotions

### Preparation

Create a sacred space for the morning devotion gathering. The space should be a nice location outdoors. The focus of the space will be a prayer web upon which prayer ties and other special objects

will be hung throughout the week. Create a web out of natural twine. You can hang it between two trees, on a large fallen branch, or on a wooden or wire frame. The web should be at least three feet in diameter. The web will be used each day for devotions. You will need to plan the size of your web accordingly and/or create a new web in a different location each day. Leave the web or webs in place all week.

The sacred space you create will depend on the setting and natural materials you have available. Do you have a natural forest "cathedral," a meditative pond, or a majestic rock wall? Keep it simple and as natural as possible. You may choose to edge it with rocks or fallen branches. It should be a large enough area for everyone to gather in a circle.

## Morning Meeting Greeting

This is a fun way to start the day as a unified camp. Each morning, everyone should gather in a circle in the sacred space. When it is time to begin the devotion, the leader (or a camper) will start the "Morning Meeting Greeting" by greeting the person to the right with great enthusiasm. The greeting will be passed quickly around the circle and will end when the last person greets the leader (or camper) who started it. The first day will require a brief explanation, but after the first time they'll get it.

### Materials:

Prayer Ties: One strip of cloth or ribbon about 1 1/2 x 14" for each person. (Many different colors create a nice effect.)

Pens to write on the prayer ties (fabric pens, or sharp point permanent markers).

## KIDS CAMP DEVOTIONS

### Day One: Wahabu

*meaning: God of love*

*pronounced: "wa-ha-boo" with accent on the second syllable*

Leader: "Each morning this week we will be learning a Swahili word for our daily theme. Swahili is a language that is spoken in many African countries. Sometimes a word in Swahili can mean more than one word or concept in our language."

This is the greeting for today:

Greeting: "Good morning \_\_\_\_\_ (camper name). Wahabu!"

Gesture: Right hand on neighbor's left shoulder.

For Example: Pete turns to the person on his right, places his right hand on her left shoulder, and says, "Good morning Tracey. Wahabu!" (Pete removes his hand from her shoulder after his greeting.) Tracey responds to Pete, "Good morning Pete." Then Tracey turns to the person on her right, places her hand on his shoulder and says, "Good morning Todd. Wahabu!" Todd would respond, "Good morning Tracey." And so on.

Leader: After today's greeting share the following: 'Wahabu means 'God of love.' Jesus loves each one of us, and wants us to love each other. This week at camp, we want God's love to be in everything we do.

"This place we are gathered for our morning devotions is a sacred space. A sacred space is a special place that helps us get closer to God. In this sacred space, everyone is welcome and accepted. This is a place of peace and togetherness. Each morning we will gather here to greet each other and start our day with a special kind of prayer."

### Prayer Web and Prayer Ties

Explain the prayer web. Hand each person a prayer tie and pen. Ask each person to write on the prayer tie a one-sentence prayer for camp on the theme of God's love. Prayers can be general (Dear Jesus, please help us share your love with each other so we can have a great camp, Amen.); or targeted for one part of camp (Dear Jesus, please be with us at campfires, and let us feel your love in our hearts, Amen.). As campers finish, they may approach the web and tie their prayers anywhere along the web. Be sure to collect the pens to use tomorrow.

Leader: When everyone is gathered back in the circle, state something like: "Can we see the wind?" (Campers may shake or nod their heads. Take a couple of answers if anyone wants to respond.) "We see the results of the wind: swinging prayer ties, moving leaves, swaying branches, ruffled hair. We don't see the wind; we see what the wind does. "Can we see love? (Again, campers may shake or nod their heads. Take a couple of answers if anyone wants to respond.)

"Love is like the wind. We can't see love as a touchable thing, but we can see what love does. We can see love through people's good works. (camper name), what does love look?"

### Skit Activity: Love Made Visible

Ask campers the evening before to participate in this devotion so they have time to practice. Cabin groups could be used. This kit is optional and should be used as time permits, or it can be used at campfire.

Have three or four pairs of campers come to the center of the circle and act out short

scenes that make love a visible action. Before each skit, have entire group chant, “Wahabu” several times.

Here are some suggestions:

- Befriending a lonely person who has no friends
- A young person volunteering to do the dishes so his/her parents can have a break
- Adopting an older person as a grandparent
- Picking up trash along a road and putting it in the recycle bin
- Apologizing for being mean and hurting the feelings of a sister/brother

Leader: “The Holy Spirit is also like the wind: we can’t see it, but we can feel it. The Holy Spirit is like a gentle breeze that blows love into our hearts. This week, whenever you feel the wind on your face, let it remind you of the presence of love and the Holy Spirit at our camp.”

Closing Song: “Love, Love, Love, Love (the Gospel in One Word...)”

## **Day Two:Umoja**

*meaning: unity harmony*

*pronounced: “oo-mo-jah” with  
accent on the second syllable*

### **Materials**

Prayer ties, one strip of cloth or ribbon about 1 ½ inches by 14 inches for each person.  
(Many different colors create a nice effect.)

Pens to write on the prayer ties (fabric pens, or sharp-point permanent markers).

### **Morning Meeting Greeting**

Greeting “Good morning \_\_\_\_\_ Umoja!”

Gesture — Shake neighbor’s hand.

Leader: After today’s greeting share the following: “Umoja” means ‘unity’. Jesus wants us to enjoy being together at camp this week. That doesn’t mean we all have to think alike or act alike. It means we need to celebrate what we have in common. It also means celebrating our differences and letting it be okay that we’re not all exactly the same.

“Here we are standing in a circle where everyone is equal and everyone is loved. Are we all the same? No, we have many differences. Now we’re going to play a game that celebrates our differences and creates unity.”

## **Game: Symphony of Diversity**

### **Directions**

Each person thinks of a sound that they can repeat over and over. It can be a vocal sound or a percussion sound made with their body (examples: clapping in a certain rhythm, stomping feet, clucking tongue). The rules are (1) No real words can be used for sounds, and (2) the sound must be made only with one's body, no other instruments, rocks, sticks, etc.

The leader will start with his/her sound and then go around the circle adding one person at a time until everyone is making their sound. After a few moments, the leader stops and the wave goes around the circle again, one person stops at a time until all is quiet.

Leader: "Isn't it amazing how different everyone's sounds were? There was a great diversity of responses to the instructions to make a sound with only the body. We used those differences to come together. When everyone was making their sound, we were working together to make a symphony with our differences.

"That's the way it is with serving God. We all have different gifts and talents, but it takes all of us doing our part to make the circle of Jesus unified and complete."

### **Prayer Ties**

Hand each person a prayer tie and pen. Ask each person to write on the prayer tie a one-sentence prayer about unity and celebrating each other's differences. They can ask God to help them create unity at camp and at home, they can write a prayer for other people, or they can ask forgiveness for a time when they used differences to make fun of someone.

As campers finish writing, they can approach the prayer web and tie on their prayers. Collect the pens.

Optional: play soft instrumental or Christian music on a boom box during this activity.

Closing Song: *The More We Get Together*  
(public domain)

The more we get together, together, together,  
The more we get together, the happier we'll be!  
For your friends are my friends,  
and my friends are your friends.  
The more we get together, the happier we'll be!

## **Day Three: Heri**

*meaning: good wishes, goodwill, blessings*

*pronounced: heh-ree; "roll" the "r" sound, as in Spanish, with the accent on the first syllable*

### **Materials**

Prayer ties—one strip of cloth or ribbon about 1 ½ inches by 14 inches for each person. (Many different colors create a nice effect.)

Pens to write on the prayer ties (fabric pens or sharp-point permanent markers).

## **Morning Meeting Greeting**

Greeting “Good morning \_\_\_\_\_ heri!”

Gesture — One arm hug. Put arm around neighbor’s shoulders and squeeze.

Leader: After today’s greeting share the following: “Heri means ‘good wishes, goodwill, and blessings.’” Today is our last morning in this sacred space. We will send each other off with good wishes for the future. Remember that back home you can also have sacred space. Your sacred space could be your church, a special place in nature, a certain part of your room, or even a place you just think about and go to in your mind. Try finding a sacred space that is special to you so you can go there to be quiet and feel close to God.

We can be a blessing to our family, friends, and neighbors by spreading goodwill. Later today, we are going to be playing some games about how we can be a blessing to the world. Right now, let’s tell God one thing we can do to spread goodwill. When I talk of spreading goodwill, I mean sharing the love of God with those around us.”

## **Prayer Ties**

Hand each person a prayer tie and pen. Ask each person to write on the prayer tie one thing they can do in their home, church, school, or neighborhood to spread goodwill. Ask them to hold their prayer ties for now.

When everyone is finished, tell them that as they tie on their prayers, they are committing to Jesus to do what is written on them and asking Jesus to help them. Then, go around the circle for each person to share their idea. After each person shares, they will quietly walk over to the web, tie on their prayer, then quietly return to their place in the circle.

## **Closing Song - “Vive l’Amour” (public domain)**

Let every good person here join in the song,  
Vive la compagnie!  
Success to each other and pass it along,  
Vive la compagnie!

Chorus:

Vive la, vive la, vive l’amour,  
vive la, vive la, vive l’amour  
Vive l’amour, vive l’amour,  
Vive la compagnie!

A friend on your left and a friend on your right, vive la...  
In love and good fellowship let us unite, vive la...  
Chorus

Now wider and wider our circle expands, vive la...  
We sing to our good friends in far away lands, vive la...  
Chorus