

Of Water and Spirit:
Disciples in
Community of Christ

Devotions and
Activities for
All-Ages



Community of Christ

Introduction

This guide provides devotions and object lessons for multigenerational groups focusing on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ invites all people to follow him by becoming disciples who share his life and ministry. Doctrine and Covenants 164:3a–b calls disciples in Community of Christ to “examine the depth of your baptismal commitment” to “become fully immersed in the servant life of Christ” and to “live the meaning of your baptism daily.” Sharing in sacred community provides growth opportunities for people of all ages.

The devotions and learning activities in this guide are about 45-minute sessions for morning worship or any event that welcomes all ages learning together. Adapt the suggested activities to best meet the needs of your group and the time allotted for your session.

Note: Biblical scripture references are NRSV.

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Of Water and Spirit: Disciples
in Community of Christ

Devotions and Activities
for All Ages

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Leading All Ages Together in Disciple Formation

Throughout history, one generation to the next transfers religion and culture through family and community groups. Many families look to the church to provide significant ways to bring them together when so many activities isolate family members by age. The faith community is a natural place to provide extended community for learning and growing together.

When a faith community learns and grows together, it more fully experiences the blessings of community. People of all ages bring insight, energy, and questions that benefit the whole group. The goals of all-age learning are to grow *individually*, grow *together* as a community, and grow *forward* as individuals and community.

Here are some tips that will strengthen the experience for all ages:

Form an all-ages planning team, including leaders from several generations. Take turns providing leadership for the group. Be open to all ideas. Affirm all and help every generation stay invested in this model of learning.

When possible, form smaller groups of 4–6 with people of varying ages in each group. This is not so adults can teach children, but so all can learn from one another.

Encourage participation by all. Different ages bring different perspectives, gifts, and energy that benefit the whole group. A community of blessing forms when

we learn and try something new together. For instance, seniors should not sit idly by while children and youth create posters or play a game.

Always plan for reflection by using questions that are suitable for every development level. Simple questions should not embarrass children or seekers; do not direct difficult questions to only the most experienced.

Include activities everyone can do, and include all the senses. Remember that adults can usually understand abstract ideas but children are at a concrete stage of learning. They will need physical, active, concrete examples, but adults benefit from these, too!

Use resources that appeal across many generations, such as children's picture books, video, music, art, and games.

Celebrate learning by asking learners to identify their "Aha moment" at the end of each session. Don't use it as a test or to seek "one right answer." Everyone will remember and learn something different from each lesson.

Lead with a focus on how to live your learning. What will we do as disciples of Jesus Christ? How can we make real and sustainable changes in the places where we live, work, and go to school by living our beliefs?

Continue to be an all-ages learning community. Be there when your co-learners need understanding or support as all grow in their lives as disciples.

Focus

We believe in one Living God who is revealed in Jesus Christ and moves through all creation as the Holy Spirit. We affirm the Trinity—God who is a community of three persons.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Computer and projection equipment to show the video *Missio Dei* (found at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-one-videos/>) (optional)
- Props for skit: large writing surface; three cards written with 1) Oneness, 2) Community, 3) Unity in Diversity, 3) LOVE (lettering large enough to be seen by large group); sign for Person 5 stating, “It’s Not about Math... It’s about Mission!”
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (www.HeraldHouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “I Will Sing, I Will Sing” CCS 112
- “Wa Wa Wa Emimimo (Come, O Holy Spirit, Come)” CCS 157
- “Jubilate Deo” CCS 123 (can be sung as a round in six parts)
- “Dios está aquí (God Is Here Today)” CCS 150

Welcome and Focus

Invite each person to choose one word (joy, hope, love, or peace) to complete the following statement, and greet one another with the completed statement:

As God is _____, I greet you with _____.

Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

We believe in one Living God who is revealed in Jesus Christ and moves through all creation as the Holy Spirit. We affirm the Trinity—God who is a community of three persons.

Skit

Select participants of various ages to take part in the skit. Adapt suggested props to best meet the needs of your group. There are no speaking parts required for this skit.



We Believe

Devotions
and Activities
for All Ages

1

It's Not about Math...It's about Mission!

Scene: Write the following math problem on a surface large enough for the group to see:

Trinity
1+1+1=1

Math Student: Stares at the math problem with great confusion. Scratches head, turns away, looks back, but continues to be puzzled.

Person 1: Enters, looks at math problem with math student, and then places the word "Oneness" over the final sum of 1. Offers assurance to the main character (hand on shoulder or similar gesture) and exits.

Math Student: Remains puzzled.

Person 2: Enters, looks at math problem with math student, and then places the word "Community" under the word "Oneness." Offers assurance to the main character (hand on shoulder or similar gesture) and exits.

Math Student: Continues with gestures that suggest confusion.

Person 3: Enters, looks at math problem with math student, and then places the words "Unity in Diversity" under the word "Community." Offers assurance to the main character (hand on shoulder or similar gesture) and exits.

Math Student: Starts to "get it" but remains somewhat puzzled.

Person 4: Enters, looks at math problem with math student, and then places the word "LOVE" under the words "Unity in Diversity."

Math Student: Shows excitement about understanding, hugs Person 4, and welcomes Persons 1–3 back with hugs or high-fives. All join hands and face the group.

Person 5: Enters holding sign that reads, "It's Not about Math...It's about Mission!"

All: Take a bow!

Activity

Form intergenerational groups of eight to ten (can be larger or smaller depending on the size and needs of the larger group). Tell the groups that they will be asked to physically represent (without extra props) something from the following video that describes *Missio Dei* (what we understand as Christ's mission) or the nature of God. Note: if it is not possible to show the video, you may choose scripture passages, which describe the nature of God as expressed through Christ's mission (see *Of Water and Spirit* lesson one for suggested passages).

Show the video *Missio Dei* found at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-one-videos/> ([or assign scripture passages from the lesson manual](#)).

Allow time for groups to decide how they will represent God's nature. (For example, a group may choose to represent the nature of God as a community of oneness connected through the Holy Spirit. This could be done by joining hands in a circle and having someone, representing the Holy Spirit, move in and around the circle. It may be helpful to have a group prepare an example ahead of time to explain before watching the video. Encourage creativity!) Share with the full group.

Discuss the following questions in the same small groups formed above. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- What do you picture in your mind when you think of *Missio Dei*, or the mission of Christ?
- How have you experienced a loving community of God?
- How do we (individuals, congregations, communities) live what we believe about God?

Aha! Moment

Ask participants to share their Aha! moments today. How does their experience today translate into an important message they can share with others? Keep responses to one phrase or sentence. You may choose to create a mural of responses displayed throughout the week. Invite participants to write or draw their Aha! moment on a mural (this could be one mural throughout the week or one per day), record in a journal, or share in pairs or small groups.

Closing Hymn

"As God Is Joy" CCS 366

Closing Prayer

Invite people of different ages to lead the Mission Prayer. You may choose to add body prayer motions (included) with the prayer.

Leader 1: God, where will your Spirit lead today?
(hands together and head bowed in prayer posture)

Leader 2: Help me to be fully awake and ready to respond.
(arms extended outward above head)

Leader 3: Grant me the courage to risk something new
(hands folded over chest)

Leader 4: and become a blessing of your love and peace.
(arms extended outward)

All: Amen.

Focus

We learn about God's relationship to people and all creation through sacred story.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Paper, poster board, or pieces of recycled cardboard to make signs for dramatic readings (signs include: Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Self)
- Bags of balloons in various shapes and sizes, one for each small group (optional)
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (<http://www.HeraldHouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521>) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “Uyai Mose (Come All You People)” CCS 84
- “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” CCS 86
- “Si tuvieres fe (If You Only Had Faith)” CCS 249 Note: All ages will enjoy learning this scripture song about faith that can move mountains! Add these motions: step to one side and push both hands to that side as you sing, “¡Muévetel! (Move away!)” then step and push hands the other way when you sing it a second time.

Welcome and Focus

Invite each person to greet someone new with the following:

My favorite story is _____ because _____.

Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

We learn about God's relationship to people and all creation through sacred story.

Dramatic Readings

Invite people of various ages to read the following passages and lead group actions. Two leaders will be needed in front of each third of the larger group. One leader will hold a sign (Love God, Love Neighbor, or Love Self) and the other will do motions to accompany the words on the sign. Note: You may determine the motions, have the leaders create their own motions, or use the Internet to look up sign language motions for “Love” “God” “Neighbor” and “Self.”

We Learn

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2

Reader 1: Disciples are called to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the scriptures so that they may ever increase in love for God, neighbor, and self.

Leaders: *One leader holds a sign in front of their group; the other demonstrates the sign motions.*

Reader 2: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:37–40).

Reader 3: “And behold, I tell you these things that you may learn wisdom, that you may learn that when you are in the service of your fellow beings you are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 1:49).

Leaders: *One leader holds a sign in front of their group; the other leads the group in the sign motions.*

Reader 1: Uphold the dignity and worth of all persons...

Reader 4: It is not pleasing to God when any passage of scripture is used to diminish or oppress races, genders, or classes of human beings. Much physical and emotional violence has been done to some of God’s beloved children through the misuse of scripture. The church is called to confess and repent of such attitudes and practices (Doctrine and Covenants 163:7c).

Reader 5: Scripture, prophetic guidance, knowledge, and discernment in the faith community must walk hand in hand to reveal the true will of God. Follow this pathway, which is the way of the Living Christ, and you will discover more than sufficient light for the journey ahead (Doctrine and Covenants 163:7d).

Leaders: *One leader motions for the group to stand and holds a sign in front of each group, the other leads the group in the sign motions.*

Reader 1: ...and faithfully follow the way of Jesus Christ.

All: *Read and sign together:* Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Self!

Activity

Form intergenerational groups of eight to ten (can be larger or smaller depending on the size and needs of the larger group). Encourage people to share in different groups each day. Give each group a bag of balloons. Note: if there are latex allergies, you may do this activity without the use of balloons.

Tell each group to act out silently a Bible story incorporating balloons as props. You may have groups choose a story, or you can prepare slips of paper with familiar Bible stories ahead of time and have a member from each group draw a story for the group to act out. Provide

appointed amounts of time for preparation and acting based on the size of the group and the time available for this object lesson. Each group will act out their story for the other groups, who will try to guess their story.

Discuss the following questions in the same small groups formed above. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- Share an example of a story (can be a true story, fable, or scripture story) that helped you learn a valuable lesson.
- How does the story your group acted out represent love of God, love of neighbor, or love of self? Explain.
- What aspect of sacred story (scripture, testimonies, songs, or personal or community experiences) has most influenced your understanding of God’s relationship to people and creation? How?
- How is the sacred story made real in your life?

Aha! Moment

Ask participants to share their Aha! moments today. How does their experience today translate into an important message they can share with others? Keep responses to one phrase or sentence. You may choose to create a mural of responses displayed throughout the week. Invite participants to write or draw their Aha! moment on a mural (this could be one mural throughout the week, or one per day), record in a journal, or share in pairs or small groups.

Closing Hymn

“The Living Word of Scripture” CCS 65 OR “We Limit Not the Truth of God” CCS 69

Closing Prayer

Invite people of different ages to lead the closing prayer. Form small prayer groups of six to eight people of different ages. Encourage new relationships by asking people to join groups with others they may not know well. Invite people of different ages to lead the closing “popcorn” prayer. Invite each prayer group to form a circle and join hands. After each leader reads a prayer statement, people in the prayer groups will offer their responses at random times.

Older adult: God of the past, we thank you for these vibrant witnesses, whose stories shape our sacred story...
(prayer groups respond with specific names or groups of witnesses)

Youth or young adult: God of the present, be in us a revelation of... (prayer groups respond)

Child: God of the future, help us live your word by... (prayer groups respond)

All respond: Amen.

Focus

According to scripture, God’s vision for creation is shalom, a fullness or completeness of peace.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Video projection equipment for the video *Peace Through All People* available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBQ-KsGo_BI
- Recycled poster board or cardboard to make a sign reading “SHALOM”; box with recycling logo on the outside; sign reading “EARTH” or soft Earth globe, plastic bottle, fruit or snacks for skit
- Creation stations with the following items: containers of Play-Doh® or modeling clay, Lego® or any building blocks, poster paper, markers or crayons, pipe cleaners, recycled magazines
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (www.HeraldHouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “Amen” CCS 113
- “Mayenziwe ’Ntando Yahko (Your Will Be Done)” CCS 191
- “Shalom chaverim” CCS 653—this song is based on a Hebrew greeting, “Shalom, my friends.” After learning the song as a group, sing in a round.

Welcome and Focus

Invite each person to greet someone new with, “Shalom, my friend.”

Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

According to scripture, God’s vision for creation is shalom, a fullness or completeness of peace.

Show video *Peace Through All People* (www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBQ-KsGo_BI)

Skit

Select participants of various ages to take part in the skit. Adapt suggested props to best meet the needs of your group. The narrator is the only speaking part for this skit.

We Share

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3

SHALOM

Setting: a sign reading “SHALOM” located toward stage left.

Person 1: Enters stage right looking distressed. Sees the “SHALOM” sign and reluctantly moves toward it. Stands beneath the sign and displays a countenance of peace.

Couple: Enters stage right appearing to be arguing. Person 1 sees them and motions for them to stand underneath the sign. When they do so, they reconcile with one another and embrace.

Group: Enters stage right. Three people are together sharing food. A fourth person, who is hungry and alone, is on the outside of the group, trying to get their attention, but is ignored by the group. Person 1 goes to the person in need and leads him or her to the “SHALOM” sign. The couple goes to the group and leads them to the “SHALOM” sign. The outsider and the group are reluctant at first, but once they are together under the sign, they all share food.

Person 2: Enters stage right drinking from a plastic water bottle or drink container and carelessly tosses it on the ground when finished.

Earth: Person carrying “EARTH” sign or soft Earth globe enters stage right, sees the litter and looks sad. Person 1 goes to pick up the bottle and gently leads Person 2 to the recycle bin (box) and places bottle inside, then leads Person 2 to the “SHALOM” sign. Someone from the group leads Earth to the “SHALOM” sign, and Earth embraces Person 1 and Person 2.

Narrator: God’s vision of creation is shalom, a vision of reconciliation, salvation, wholeness, justice, and peace. “God yearns to establish a lasting covenant of peace with humankind and with all creation” as a way to make shalom a reality (“We Share a Vision for Creation” *Sharing in Community of Christ: Exploring Identity, Mission, Message, and Beliefs*, 3rd Edition., 4).

All: *Take a bow!*

Activity

Form multigenerational groups of eight to ten (can be larger or smaller depending on the size and needs of the larger group). Encourage people to share in different groups each day.

Creation Stations—to prepare these stations, set up tables supplied with various art supplies (such as Play-Doh® or modeling clay, poster paper, markers or crayons, pipe cleaners, recycled magazines) and Lego® or building blocks. Use recycled supplies as much as possible.

Assign each small group to a creation station (table with supplies) and tell them to create something as a group

that represents shalom. Set a time limit for this object lesson based on the size of group and time available. Have each group select a spokesperson. Tell each spokesperson to go to a different group and, with no help from the new group, describe to the larger group how that group’s creation represents shalom and why they chose that creation.

Ask spokespersons if it was challenging to describe another group’s creation. Why or why not?

This is a fun object lesson that shows how we have different life circumstances (supplies) and different ways of understanding and expressing shalom within those circumstances (various creations).

Leave the creations displayed throughout the day. Recycle supplies that can be reused when finished.

Discuss the following questions in the same small groups formed above. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- How would you describe shalom to another person?
- Where do you see examples of shalom in your community or in the world?
- When and how have you experienced shalom?
- Where do you see a need for shalom in your community or in the world?

Aha! Moment

Ask participants to share their Aha! moments today. How does their experience today translate into an important message they can share with others? Keep responses to one phrase or sentence. You may choose to create a mural of responses displayed throughout the week. Invite participants to write or draw their Aha! moment on a mural (this could be one mural throughout the week, or one per day), record in a journal, or share in pairs or small groups.

Closing Hymn

“Peace Salaam Shalom” CCS 310

Closing Prayer

Invite four people of different ages to offer the following prayers for peace:

Peace for me (individual well-being)

Peace for us (personal relationships)

Peace for the world (justice in all communities)

Peace for the planet (care for the environment)

Focus

We proclaim Jesus Christ and become his disciple by following him and sharing his peace with others.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Props for skit: bench and items for children's game
- Computer and projection equipment to show the video *Who Is Jesus to Me* available at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-five-videos/>
- Slips of paper placed in a hat or bowl, with various scenarios of need in the lives of individuals, communities, or in the world (choose scenarios of need that are relevant to your congregation or community)
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (www.HeraldHouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “Takwaba Uwabanga Yesu! (There’s No One Like Jesus!)” CCS 121
- “Jésus est le rocher de ma vie (Jesus Is the Rock for You and Me)” CCS 265 (add motions for “in front”, “behind”, “above”, “below”, and “all around”)
- “Jesu, Tawa Pano (Jesus, We Are Here)” CCS 71 (sing in all languages)

Welcome and Focus

Invite each person to greet the people around them with, “Peace be with you.”

Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

We proclaim Jesus Christ and become his disciples by following him and sharing his peace with others.

Skit

The purpose of this skit is to demonstrate how proclaiming Jesus Christ is not about what we say, but about how we choose to respond to the needs of others. Choose settings and scenarios appropriate to your group, space available, and items available for props.

We Proclaim

Devotions
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4

Proclaiming Jesus

Setting 1: *Two children are quietly playing a game.*

Proclaimer: *Confidently enters space and declares, "Good morning, world! I proclaim Jesus Christ!"*

Child 1: *"Can you help us with this game? We are having trouble understanding the instructions.*

Proclaimer: *"No, I am very busy and important. I must continue proclaiming Jesus Christ." Moves across the space and declares to passersby, "I proclaim Jesus Christ!" Those who are passing by look at each other, puzzled, and continue on their way.*

Helper 1: *While the above is taking place, a youth quietly enters the space, sees the children frustrated about their game, and stops to help. The people who ignored the proclaimer stop and notice the response of the youth and show approval.*

All exit the space while the next setting is prepared.

Setting 2: *A person is sitting alone on a bench, feeling rejected and lonely.*

Proclaimer: *Confidently enters the space and declares, "I proclaim Jesus Christ!"*

The person on the bench looks up, hopeful, but the proclaimer sees two different people passing by and moves toward them declaring, "I proclaim Jesus Christ!" The people passing by look puzzled and annoyed, but move along, ignoring the proclaimer.

Passersby: *While the above is taking place, the people from Setting 1 who first ignored the proclaimer walk by the bench and see the person who is alone. They stop and sit down at the bench to begin a conversation with the person who is alone.*

Proclaimer: *Sees what is taking place at the bench and becomes more determined and animated in declaring to more people passing by, "I proclaim Jesus Christ!" Again, the proclaimer is ignored and becomes frustrated.*

While the above is taking place, the children and youth from Setting 1 reenter the space, see another child who is walking by alone and invite the child to join them. The people who just ignored the proclaimer walk to the bench and see it is full. The two passersby get up and offer their seats, introducing them to their new friend.

Proclaimer: *Exits through the congregation, declaring in frustration, "I proclaim Jesus Christ!"*

Child 2: *"We proclaim Jesus Christ..."*

Youth: *"...and promote communities of joy..."*

Person alone: *"...hope..."*

Last to enter: *"...love..."*

All: *"...and peace..."*

Everyone exits through the congregation, sharing joyfully with conversation and smiles.

Show the video *Who Is Jesus to Me* available at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-five-videos/> (stop at 5:55).

Form multigenerational groups of eight to ten (can be larger or smaller depending on the size and needs of the larger group) and discuss the following questions. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- Who is Jesus to you?
- Who helped you learn about Jesus? How did they teach you?
- Describe someone who embodies the peace of Jesus Christ.
- How do you proclaim Jesus Christ and share his peace with others?

Activity

Have each discussion group draw a scenario of need (from the hat or bowl that was prepared before class). Invite each member of the group to imagine how they could respond to that particular need. Affirm that everyone has unique gifts and skills—from prayer to tangible response—that could provide ministry in each scenario. As time allows, have one person from each group share some of their ideas with the larger group.

Aha! Moment

Ask participants to share their Aha! moments today. How does their experience today translate into an important message they can share with others? Keep responses to one phrase or sentence. You may choose to create a mural of responses displayed throughout the week. Invite participants to write or draw their Aha! moment on a mural (this could be one mural throughout the week, or one per day), record in a journal, or share in pairs or small groups.

Closing Hymn

"Prayer of Peace" CCS 164 OR "Peace of Jesus" CCS 318

Closing Prayer

Invite one person to read the following passage. Then close with a prayer of blessing and peace.

Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God's shalom, invites all people to come and receive divine peace in the midst of the difficult questions and struggles of life. Follow Christ in the way that leads to God's peace and discover the blessings of all of the dimensions of salvation —Doctrine and Covenants 163:2a.

Focus

We experience covenant and blessings through the sacraments.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Computer and projection equipment to show the video *You Are Loved* available at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-three-videos/> (optional)
- *Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition
- Eight large poster papers or flip chart pages and markers or crayons
- Extra art and building supplies from Day 3 creation stations (optional)
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (www.HeraldHouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “Amen, Siakudumisa! (Amen, Sing Praises to the Lord!)” CCS 109
- “Louez le Seigneur! (Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord!)” CCS 106
- “Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises” CCS 656 (add different words in place of sing, such as “live” or “share”)
- “Nimwebo Ba Yahweh” CCS 613

Welcome and Focus

- Invite people to greet and affirm one another with, “You are God’s beloved.”
- Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

We experience covenant and blessings through the sacraments.

Drama

This drama incorporates visual representations of each sacrament set to the hymn “I Have Called You by Your Name” CCS 636. Invite a soloist or ensemble to sing the hymn while people of different ages portray the various sacraments. Invite someone gifted in dance to portray the presence of the Holy Spirit in each sacrament by weaving in and around the participants. You may choose to represent the Holy Spirit with the symbol of a dove, or with a white flag or streamer that is woven around and through the sacrament participants. Have instrumental music continue between verses as needed to

We Receive

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allow movement of participants without feeling rushed. For each sacrament, minister(s) and recipient(s) must be represented. Other family or community representation can be added as desired. The sacraments will be visual only, there is to be no speaking throughout.

Verse 1: Portray sacraments of Blessing of Children (ministers, baby or young child, parents or family members) and baptism (minister and disciple)—*Holy Spirit weaves throughout*

Instrumental music plays during transition of participants

Verse 2: Portray sacraments of Confirmation (ministers, candidate of any age) and the Lord's Supper (minister, emblems, recipients)—*Holy Spirit weaves throughout*

Instrumental music plays during transition of participants

Verse 3: Portray sacraments Marriage (minister and couple) and laying on of hands for the sick (ministers and recipient)—*Holy Spirit weaves throughout*

Instrumental music plays during transition of participants

Verse 4: Portray sacraments of Evangelist Blessing (evangelist and recipient) and ordination (ministers and ordinand)—*Holy Spirit weaves throughout*

Instrumental music finishes as participants exit

Show video *You Are Loved* (<http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-three-videos/>) or invite someone to read "You Are Loved" by Nelda Kerr (see page 14).

Activity

Form eight multigenerational groups and assign each group one of the sacraments celebrated in Community of Christ. Provide each group with poster paper and markers or crayons. Invite each group to record responses to the following questions about their sacrament. Encourage all ages to record responses by writing or drawing. Have one person from each group share responses with the

larger group. Note: you may offer supplies used in Day 3 creation stations for those who like to shape, draw, or build their responses.

- How is God's shalom expressed or experienced through this sacrament?
- What Enduring Principles are represented (see *Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 12-13) in this sacrament? How are they represented?
- How can this sacrament be generously shared as an expression of Christ's mission?

Discuss the following questions in small multigenerational groups. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- Share a sacrament experience that was significant for you. What made it important?
- How have you experienced reconciliation, justice, and peace through the sacraments?
- How can the sacraments bring blessing to others either by receiving them directly or by sharing in a service where others participate in receiving one of the sacraments?

Aha! Moment

Ask participants to share their Aha! moments today. How does their experience today translate into an important message they can share with others? Keep responses to one phrase or sentence. You may choose to create a mural of responses displayed throughout the week. Invite participants to write or draw their Aha! moment on a mural (this could be one mural throughout the week, or one per day), record in a journal, or share in pairs or small groups.

Closing Hymn

"Yo quiero ser (I Want to Be)" CCS 498

Closing Prayer

Invite an evangelist to offer a closing prayer of blessing. If possible, invite evangelists to offer specific prayers of blessing for children, youth, families, all who long to follow Jesus.

You Are Loved

By Nelda Kerr

My song is from my heart
and though I long to start
a love that dares to be so real,
I'm a little scared, I feel unprepared, undeclared,
unaware
So, if my voice isn't quite steady,
It's because I'm not sure if I'm ready
To share a love too big for words,
To care for you so much it hurts
To dare to shout in a silent church
Of the radical love I've found
It's not a can't touch the ground
Kind of love,
Or an eloquent, profound
Kind of love,
It's a barely makes a sound
Kind of love that
Dwells in the mystery,
Gives way to simplicity,
And sparks a light deep within me
And though that spark is small,
It will grow to be
Alive in such divinity
If you would only sing with me!
And together we will grow to see
The beauty of true community
When "me" becomes "we"
When harmony grows from melody
We will love so radically
We're gonna need
A microphone, a megaphone, a mountain
To declare the hope that is found in
A love we can all share.
My hope is that you dare
To abandon despair
And begin to repair
The brokenness found in

The fear I was bound in
Until I discovered something new:
The song in me met the song in you!
Love is something we have to do!
And so I bring my song to you
In hopes that we'll sing something true,
That our generation will grow to be
The change that our world needs to see
A declaration of generosity
Shaking foundations of animosity,
And saying yes to a call
That runs deep within us all.
Though it may start small,
You have to let it move you.
Let it breathe and improve you
So that you may be one with
The mystery
Saying, "I am me" authentically.
That's Gandhi, King, and Kennedy,
But it can be me and you
If we choose to believe!
And I believe in you.
I believe you have so much more
And so if my feet fall to the floor,
You leave your seat,
You walk out the door
And carry with you nothing more,
Let these words rise above:
You are loved,
you are loved,
You are loved.
Let my voice, soft and sweet,
Or loud in the busy city street
Echo these words on repeat, may they always rise above:
You are loved,
You are loved,
You are loved.

Focus

We can respond to God's generous grace through baptism.

Setup and Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings* hymnals or projected lyrics (use with permission)
- Recycled paper or cardboard pieces and markers or crayons, one each per person
- Large paper or surface for Aha! mural and markers (optional)
- Soft, meditative music

Gathering Music

The songs for gathering each session are taken from the core repertoire of *Community of Christ Sings*. Use this time each day to learn hymns from our worldwide community. You may find the audio recordings of *Community of Christ Sings* (<http://www.heraldhouse.org/cart/edit.asp?p=344521>) helpful when introducing new hymns. Embrace the richness of languages found in these songs; do not be afraid to risk learning something new! Note: All ages may benefit from adding motions to support the lyrics. Encourage children and youth to lead the congregation when adding motions or other instruments. Incorporate songs used in children and youth music classes whenever possible.

- “Kanisa Litajengwa (Oh, Who Will Build the Church Now?)” CCS 338
- “Sizohamba Naye (We Will Walk with God)” CCS 377
- “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” CCS 499

Welcome and Focus

Invite people to greet one another by completing the following:

I choose to follow Jesus because _____.

Invite someone to read the focus statement for the day (use people of different ages throughout the week):

We can respond to God's generous grace through baptism.

Readings

Invite people of different ages to read the following passages while soft meditative music is played. You may choose to have people portray actions relating to each passage, or you may choose to project visual images about each passage. You may also choose to have more than one reader for some passages.

Reader 1: Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him...And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:13, 16–17).

We Respond

Devotions
and Activities
for All Ages

6

Reader 2: “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit...” (John 3:5).

Reader 3: So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Reader 4: As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:27–28).

Reader 5: The Eternal Christ invites those who have yet to experience the blessings of baptism to “Follow me in the way of righteousness and peace.” Be baptized of water and the Spirit and discover your spiritual home as a fully functioning member of the body (Doctrine and Covenants 164:3c).

Reader 6: When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ’s new creation exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation, you will become who you are called to be. The rise of Zion the beautiful, the peaceful reign of Christ, awaits your wholehearted response to the call to make and steadfastly hold to God’s covenant of peace in Jesus Christ (Doctrine and Covenants 164:9b).

Have a soloist, ensemble, or congregation sing “In My Life, Lord” CCS 602

Activity

Invite each person to pair up with someone of a different age whom he or she does not know well. Each member of the pair should choose five questions to interview their partner about baptism. People of all ages can share in this activity, even if they have not been baptized. It provides an opportunity to learn from one another about what it means to follow Jesus and the sacrament of baptism. After each has had an opportunity to interview the other, invite pairs to join with four or five other pairs to form groups of eight to ten. Each person will introduce the person he or she interviewed and share one or two facts they learned about their partner during the interview.

Discuss the following questions in the same small groups formed above. Make sure each person has an opportunity to respond.

- What is something you have learned this week about being a disciple of Jesus Christ?
- How will you live differently because of what you have experienced?
- What would you like to learn about being a disciple, or what gift of ministry would you like to develop?

Personal Commitments

Provide each person with a piece of recycled paper or cardboard. (If you have used an Aha mural throughout the week, you may choose to cut or tear it into pieces and give to each person to record their personal commitment. This is a way of representing the importance of individual response with the support of the community.) Allow time for each person to write or draw their response to the following:

I will proclaim Jesus Christ by _____.

Form a large circle around the meeting space. As the closing song is sung, go around the circle and reveal responses one at a time. If the group is too large to see all responses, you may form two or three circles.

Closing Hymn

“Fanana” CCS 596 (choose words to show how can follow Jesus in all we do)

Closing Prayer

Invite multiple readers of different ages to read this prayer excerpt from “Prayer of Saint Patrick’s Breastplate” as a closing prayer. Hum or have guitar play “Prayer of Peace” CCS 164 while the prayer is read.

Christ with me

Christ before me

Christ behind me

Christ in me

Christ beneath me

Christ above me

Christ on my right

Christ on my left

Christ where I lie

Christ where I sit

Christ where I arise

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me

Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me

Christ in every eye that sees me

Christ in every ear that hears me.

Salvation belongs to the Lord.

Amen.