Breathe NEW LIFE
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Introduction

The 25th anniversary of the Temple dedication in Independence, Missouri, USA will be commemorated at World Conference 2019. Each lesson in this resource focuses on one of the purposes of the Temple outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 156:5.

- The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit.
- It shall also be for a strengthening of faith and preparation for witness.
- By its ministries an attitude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered.
- It shall be the means for providing leadership education for priesthood and member.
- And it shall be a place in which the essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding, inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world.

The Temple serves as a towering symbol calling the entire church to be a people of Christ's peace. Its design is a visual representation of the inward and outward journey of transformation that is the path of the disciple (Doctrine and Covenants 161:3d). Its ministries are not limited by its physical structure, but find expression in each disciple-member who breathes new life into its purposes.

Breath, in its inward and outward movement, is life-giving. How do the purposes of the Temple call youth to new life in Christ? How does the Temple inspire life-giving response? How do youth allow the meaning and purpose of the Temple to breathe new life into outward expressions of invitation, witness, hospitality, and generosity?

Youth lessons are designed to engage ages 12-18 for five, two-hour sessions. Youth classes can include a variety of ages. Younger youth may look to the older youth as role models. Older youth may enjoy sharing knowledge, while also seeking a challenge to deepen their understanding of the subject matter. Adapt these lessons as needed according to age-appropriate needs, learning styles, and time allotted for lesson.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a part of today's culture and youth have grown up with social media sites. You may choose to use these connections to share about reunion or family camp experiences, encourage ongoing exploration of lesson concepts, or to deepen relationships in community. Create a hashtag for your camp that youth can use to share pictures and stories.

This may not be suitable for camps that wish to "unplug" where use of the internet and phones is limited, or where youth do not have access to electronic devices. Make sure to discuss proper and safe use of social media with your group, and remember to adapt as needed to best fit the youth and culture in your area.
LESSON FOCUS
Pursue peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit.

FOCUS SCRIPTURES
Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a, 161:2a, 161:3d
Isaiah 11:6, 9

OBJECTIVES
The learners will...
• explore the Temple as a symbol of peace.
• discuss peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit, and what it means to live Christ’s peace.
• explore inward and outward responses of peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit.

SUPPLIES
• Cotton balls, small balloons, and tape
• Chime, bell, or soft instrument
• Paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils
• Images of the Temple in Independence, Missouri, USA
• 12x12-inch cotton or lightweight fabric squares in various colors

Gather
Activates background knowledge; prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of lesson time)

Form group in two to four teams to play these relay(s). Half of the teams will be allowed to work together in a collaborative way to complete their relay tasks, while the other half of the teams must have individuals complete each leg of the relay on their own. Play as many games as time and space allow.

Cotton balls: Designate with tape start and finish lines at each end of a long table. Each person blows their cotton ball from one end of the table to the other without using their hands as guides. If the cotton ball falls off the table, they must start over. The team that gets all their cotton balls across the finish line yells “Peace!”

Balloons (check for latex allergies): Give each team the same number of small balloons to blow up and tie. Designate start and finish lines on opposite sides of the class space. Each person must keep their balloon in the air by blowing as they move from one line to the other. If their balloon falls they must start over. The team that gets all their balloons across the finish line yells “Peace!”

Gather the group and discuss these questions.
Youths are confronted with competition in many facets of their lives, so the potential for discussion is great. How we approach competition says a lot about how we practice peace.

- Compare and contrast the collaborative and competitive approaches to the games. Which approach was more successful? (Note: Responses depend on how an individual or group understands success.)
- Which approach is more enjoyable? Explain.
- What do games teach us about society, cultural expectations, and success?
- What do games teach us about peace?

Spend a few moments centering in God’s presence with breath prayer. The practice includes three segments of 1 to 2 minutes moving from individuals to community. Adapt this practice according needs of the group and time allotted for this lesson.

Begin with self. As you inhale greet God with a name that has meaning for you. As you exhale share your needs or expectations with God.

Examples (some in Tahitian) to use or create your own:

- Creator (inhale)—shape me (exhale)
- Atua (inhale)—hamani (exhale)
- Divine love (inhale)—renew me (exhale)
- Deep peace (inhale)—heal me (exhale)

Sound a chime, bell, or soft instrument at the end of each segment.

For the second segment, silently form groups of three or four people. Hold hands and do the same practice. This time, as you exhale, express needs or expectations for your group.

Examples to use or create your own:

- Source of grace (inhale)—heal us (exhale)
- God of peace (inhale)—reconcile us (exhale)

Sound a chime, bell, or soft instrument.

For the last segment, unite the group in one large circle. Hold hands and guide the prayer aloud, following the rhythm of breathing.

Use these examples or scripture passages of your choice:

Be still and know (inhale)...that I am God (exhale)—Psalm 46:10
Guide our feet (inhale)...into the way of peace (exhale)—Luke 1:79
Become a sanctuary (inhale)...of Christ’s peace (exhale)—Doctrine and Covenants 163:8c

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Give each youth a piece of paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Invite them to a place and position in the room that is comfortable for them. On one side of the paper, have them draw or write what comes to mind when they hear the word “Temple.” Allow several minutes to complete, then have them turn their paper over and draw or write what comes to mind when they hear the word “Peace.” Allow several minutes to complete, and then gather the group to share and discuss responses.

Show images of the Temple in Independence, Missouri, USA. The theme for this lesson series is Breathe New Life. Breath, in its inward and outward movement, is life-giving.

In these lessons we will explore how the purposes of the Temple call seekers and members to life in Christ. God breathes new life into the church and the world as disciples remember, reclaim, embody, and share the purposes of the Temple. Post images of the Temple in the class space.

Read and discuss these passages from Doctrine and Covenants and the reflections written by Apostle Mareva Arnaud Tchong. You may choose to do this as a large group and invite students to read the passages from Doctrine and Covenants; or you may choose to form three groups and have each group read and discuss one of the following segments. Share insights with the larger group.

Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a.

The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and healing of the spirit.

The Temple, with rock, steel, and glass, looks like a nautilus shell. Removing the tip of similar shells creates
a horn. Many cultures use this as a wind instrument. Musicians focus breath to produce a sound. In various cultures the sounds produced can be a messenger of invitation (to gatherings), of communication (news), of alert (in case of danger), of announcements (arrivals and departures, birth and death). The sound is produced from one place, echoes out with a large scope, and resonates across the air and water to finally reach other places. In that way, all receive and respond to it.

- How does this describe the Temple as a symbol of peace?
- Other than a shell, as described above, where do you see examples of the spiral design in nature?
- What is significant about the design of the Temple as a symbol of peace?

Doctrine and Covenants 161:3d

Understand that the road to transformation travels both inward and outward. The road to transformation is the path of the disciple.

The Temple is a symbol transcending its impressive physical structure. Energy flows in and through it. Movement is manifested in relationships inviting disciples to journey inward to God, from God to others, from others to self, from a transformed self to renewed relationships with others, from us to them, from us to God. The Temple is a symbol of life transformation.

- How does Apostle Arnaud Tchong describe the inward and outward journey of discipleship?
- How does the design of the Temple and the Worshiper's Path symbolize the inward and outward journey of discipleship?
- Discuss the significance of inward and outward expressions or practices of Christ’s peace. What happens if one practices or expresses one without the other?

Doctrine and Covenants 161:2a

Become a people of the Temple—those who see violence but proclaim peace, who feel conflict yet extend the hand of reconciliation, who encounter broken spirits and find pathways for healing.

The Temple is a symbol of redeeming relationships in sacred community that bring healing and reconciliation to transform lives. The Temple is a place, a symbol, a revelation that allows disciples to discover new understandings of the mission of Christ for our realities. Its message is boldly proclaimed in many languages, diverse cultures, and through various expressions. The Temple calls the entire church to be a people of Christ’s peace. It calls us to listen to God who calls us to dive into the depths and climb to the heights of what it means to be a prophetic people dedicated to peace, justice, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit.

- How do you understand the call to be a people of the Temple? In what ways do you find connection with this call? In what ways does it challenge you?
- What does it mean to be a person of the Temple if you have never seen it or been to it?
- Where do you see examples of people living peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit in your community? What do people do to practice peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit?

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

Our call to pursue peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit spreads beyond the walls of church buildings or the boundaries of a church campground. It is a call to be forerunners of Christ’s peace, catalysts of reconciliation, and agents of healing...everywhere, all the time, near and far, and as broadly as possible.

The musical Dear Evan Hansen is about a teenager who has extreme social anxiety and longs to fit in. He fabricates a story about a relationship with another youth who also longs to fit in. The second youth commits suicide. Although Evan’s actions might have been misguided, the story reveals the power of one voice to affect a community. In an effort to help others and to reconcile relationships Evan finds belonging and healing.

Place three large pieces of paper on the wall with one of these titles on each: Peace, Reconciliation, Healing of the Spirit. Invite participants to come forward and write about circumstances in their lives (self, family, or friends), communities, and the world where peace, reconciliation, or healing of the spirit is needed. As they are doing this, play a recording of “You Will Be Found” from Dear Evan Hansen.

Form groups of three to five and have each group select (or assign) a different scenario from those listed. Have each
group discuss these questions. Ask one member from each group to record responses and share with the larger group.

- What is the need? What are the inward and outward challenges in responding to this need?
- Where and when have you seen examples of this need in your life, community, or the world? What did others do to respond to this need?
- What can you do to actively promote peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit in this circumstance? With whom can you partner for help in responding?

**Send**

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(10% of lesson time)

Peace Flags

*Show the image of the Temple that includes the bronze peace doors. The doors display the church seal inspired by Isaiah 11:6, 9. The bronze doors lead from the Temple out onto the World Plaza. This symbolizes our call to move outward into the world and share the peace of Christ.*

Give each youth a fabric square and fabric markers or paint. Invite participants to write a brief prayer for peace on one side of the fabric square. On the opposite side, have them draw and decorate a symbol of peace. They may choose to use the stencil of the church seal (provided) to trace and fill in with paint; or they may choose to create their own peace seal.

Display flags around the class or worship space. Look for instructions at www.CofCchrist.org and in the Herald for submitting the Peace Flags to be displayed at World Conference 2019. Information about submitting peace flags for use at World Conference will be available on the World Conference 2019 web page.

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**Bless**

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and help

(5% of lesson time)

Read the following prayer, or invite multiple youth to read each line.

God, may your peace be in us.
May it manifest itself in everything we say and in everything we do.
May it overcome our shyness, our resistance to invite others to join your causes.
Too often, Lord, our daily life as disciples
Is void of missionary testimonies.
We are so occupied by tasks considered sacred
Like projects, programs, and reunions.
May these necessary tasks stop taking us hostage.
May they serve and not be served.
May we seize each day with new determination
To speak of hope to the hopeless, of love to the unloved, of joy to the heavy hearts.
We are so blessed, may we bless the friend and the stranger alike
With the living Grace of your peace.
It is our prayer in the name of the One
Who is our peace, Christ Jesus. Amen.

—Danny Belrose, *Vulnerable to Grace*, p. 43

Invite youth to complete the following challenge statement.
I will pursue peace, reconciliation, or healing of the spirit today by...
10—Breathe New Life - Youth Lessons
CHURCH SEAL STENCIL

PEACE
LESSON FOCUS
Strengthen faith and prepare for witness

FOCUS SCRIPTURES
Doctrine and Covenants 156:5b

OBJECTIVES
The learners will...

• compare advertising and witness.
• develop personal and community expressions of faith and witness.
• understand the importance of spiritual formation in strengthening faith and witness.

SUPPLIES
• Images of logos cut from magazines or downloaded from the Internet; one image per student
• Pencils, pens or markers, blank paper
• Poster paper or flip chart
• Dictionary or access to internet search engine
• Copies of Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd Edition
• Video: The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOksW_NabEk.
• Projection equipment to show video

• Items for prayer walk: sacred space, element of nature, light source, foundation (rock)

Gather
Activates background knowledge; prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of lesson time)

Prior to class, cut logos out of magazine advertisements or ads downloaded from the internet. Prepare enough images for one per student. Write or project sample questions for students to view during the opening activity. Use the following sample questions or create your own.

• What did you have for breakfast?
• How did you get to camp or to this class?
• What is something most people don’t know about you?

Welcome youths as they enter, and have them sit in a circle. Without showing the images, attach one to the back of each youth’s shirt with tape. Each participant must figure out their logo by asking yes-or-no questions of others. Before they can ask a question, they must first ask the other person their name (if they do not know it) and a get-to-know-you question (examples provided). Continue until each has guessed their logo. Gather participants into a circle and have them introduce a person they met by giving their name and response to the get-to-know-you question.
Engage
Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Form groups of three to five students and give each group a piece of paper and a pencil, pen, or marker. Have one person from each group create a Venn diagram with three interlocking circles. Create a large example on poster paper or flip chart. Label each circle with the words Advertisement, Evangelism, and Witness. Have each group look up definitions for each word in a dictionary or through an internet search engine on a mobile device. If the internet is not accessible, print copies of definitions to provide groups.

Have groups record descriptions of each word, and include common descriptions of all three words in the middle where the three circles connect. Allow time for groups to complete, then gather as a group and share responses. Record responses on the poster Venn diagram.

Read this passage by Seventy Adam Wade (adapted) and discuss the questions that follow.

There’s a church I drive past almost every day because it is on the main road to my house. Every time I pass by something makes me cringe. I’m not even sure what denomination it is. I have never looked that closely because I need to concentrate on the road, but something catches my eye first. It’s...their advertising. Each month there is typically a theologically simple, one-line billboard poster meant to be humorous yet clever at the same time. These posters often make me uncomfortable. One poster had a black Bible with a bright gold cross on the cover, the acronym beside it reading:

“Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth, Have you read it?”

• What does this image say about belief and witness?
• In what ways do you connect or find discomfort with what is described in the poster?

Another had a cartoon drawing of a globe with lots of roads and buildings drawn all over it. It was drawn to look dirty and messy, with puffs of smoke and pollution. The quote for this one was: “When God said ‘Fill the world and subdue it,’ is this what He meant?”

• What does this image say about belief and witness?
• In what ways do you connect or find discomfort with what is described in the poster?

The cringe in me rises from the responses that start flooding my mind. I cannot stop my mental retorts: “But the Bible is not basic! It is rich, has depth, and is complex!” My split-second instinctual response is, “Creation is sacred, not something we need to overpower and subdue! Harmony is what is needed! God is looking for us to lovingly commune with the Spirit to move forward together!”

I’ll admit “advertising” often does not sit well when discussing matters of faith. It conjures images of big business and competition for time, dedication, or money. Advertising often is designed to create a sense the seller has something far superior to an alternative, that you are not as significant without their product.

Within my cultural context, the word evangelize conjures those similar images. “Sharing” our faith is one of the terms I use most frequently. Sharing includes speaking and listening, mutual respect and dignity, and a natural sense of equality. It is being vulnerable to the other, being willing to open your heart and let another see a core part of what makes you whole.

• What is your response to Adam’s reflections about advertising, evangelism, and sharing our faith?
• What expression is meaningful to you and why?

Invite participants to respond to these questions in groups of two or three.

• Name someone who shared their faith with you. What did they do or say? How was the experience meaningful to you?
• Is it easy or difficult to share your faith with others? Explain.

Respond
Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

Invite a participant to read Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a-b.

The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit. It shall also be for strengthening of faith and preparation for witness.
Review discussion from the previous lesson about the Temple in Independence, Missouri, USA as a symbol of peace; and the significance of the inward and outward journey of discipleship.

Ask these questions:

• What are ways of strengthening our faith?

• What does Community of Christ share with the world about who we are and who we are called to be? (Temple and church seal as symbols of Christ’s peace, Enduring Principles, Mission Initiatives, Basic Beliefs, sacraments)

Form groups of three or four, and assign each group an Enduring Principle or Mission Initiative. Each group will create an advertisement that expresses how we can live the Enduring Principle or Mission Initiative as a witness of Jesus Christ. Provide copies of Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd Edition for youths to read about their Enduring Principle or Mission Initiative. This can be a poster (billboard), commercial (acted out), or jingle (song). Encourage creativity! Share with the larger group.

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived (10% of lesson time)

Show the video The Time You Have (In Jelly Beans) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOksW_NabEk.

If it is not possible to show the video, summarize the content with these facts from the video:

The average person’s life has 28,835 days. The video shows this measured in Jelly Beans and asks what you will do with that time. It begins by counting out beans for your first year of life, then your first 15 years (5,475 days). This brings people to the threshold of adulthood, where on average we each have 23,360 days remaining.

Here’s a breakdown of how we will spend most of our days:

• 8,477 days sleeping
• 1,635 days eating, drinking, preparing food
• 3,202 days commuting or traveling
• 2,676 days watching TV
• 1,576 days doing household activities
• 564 days spent on the well-being of others

• 671 days bathing and grooming
• 720 days in community activities: religious, civic, charity, taking classes

The time we have left is time to laugh, play, explore, read, and so on. What will you do with this time? If you only had half of this time, what would you do differently? How much time have you already spent worrying instead of doing something you love? What if you just had one more day? What are you going to do today?

Discuss thoughts about the images and figures of time spent on various aspects of daily life.

• What will you do with the time you have today to strengthen your faith or witness of Christ’s peace to another?

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and help (5% of lesson time)

Spiritual formation is essential to strengthening our faith and preparing for witness. Spiritual formation includes intentional practices such as the breath prayer. It also involves a prayerful awareness of God’s presence in creation and in the lives of those around us. Spiritual practices keep us connected to God as source of our faith and witness.

Close this session with a prayer walk. Prepare the stations prior to class. These can be outdoor stations to which the class walks, or they can be items placed in a worship setting in the class space. Read the reflection at each station and allow a few moments for silent prayer. Encourage students to create their own prayer walk or prayer stations for a similar practice at home.

Sacred Space

We pause here to recognize the sanctuaries and sacred spaces of our lives; the places that provide us with shelter, comfort, blessing, a sense of home. Safe places for us to renew, strengthen, and prepare to witness with refreshed eyes and revived passion. Lord, we ask you to breathe new life into the sanctuaries of our peace.

Silent prayer

Element of Nature (Tree or Garden)
We pause here to recognize the wonder of nature and the beauty it provides in our lives. The color, the smells, the life we see and the potential within as it grows and changes; a place to remember we are a part of this wondrous creation, that we too grow, have great potential, and change with the world around us. Lord, we ask you to breathe new life into our awareness of the sacredness in, and connection with, our surroundings.

Silent prayer

Light Source or Sun

We pause here to see the light! The light, a source of illumination, warmth, and clarity. It enlightens and fills dark places. It stands as a beacon; a place of hope that stretches in all directions, far and wide. Lord, we ask you to breathe new life into us so that we may shine your light in this world.

Silent prayer

Foundation (Rock)

We pause here on solid ground, a firm foundation that we trust; a place of strength, might, and assurance. It stands as an example of God’s firm promise that we are supported, loved, and cherished. A place that reminds us to have confidence in the Spirit that moves to support and sustain us. Lord, we ask you to breathe new life into the very foundation of our being so that we may be assured of your strong, faithful love in this world.

Silent prayer

Invite participants to notice how others live their witness of Christ’s peace, and support one another in living their specific witness of Christ’s peace.
Lesson 3: Embody Wholeness

LESSON FOCUS
Wholeness of body, mind, and spirit

FOCUS SCRIPTURES
Doctrine and Covenants 156:5c, 163:2b
Mark 5:1-20

OBJECTIVES
The learners will...
• understand wholeness of body, mind, and spirit.
• discover ways to practice wholeness of body, mind, and spirit.
• explore what wholeness means for individuals and communities.

SUPPLIES
• Index cards or slips of paper—one per person. Prior to class, write or print on each card “body,” “mind,” or “spirit” so there is an equal number of each word.
• Video Because Who Is Perfect? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8umFV69fNq
• Projection equipment to show video
• Poster paper, flip chart, or large erasable writing surface and markers
• I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness by Susan Verde

Gather
Activates background knowledge; prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of lesson time)

Welcome each youth into the space by name and gather in a circle. Invite students to share how they lived their witness, or how they saw others living their witness of Christ’s peace.

The following two activities are suggested to guide students in thinking about wholeness of body, mind, and spirit. They can be used together, as time allows, or you may choose to use only one of the activities.

Wholeness is...

Give each youth an index card with body, mind, or spirit on it. Invite them to find someone else in the class and, allowing one minute for each person to share, fill in the blank with the word on their card.

Describe a time when you experienced wholeness of _________________ or what wholeness of _________________ means to them.

Once each person in the pair has completed their explanation, have them find new partners and repeat.
Allow as many repetitions as time permits. Gather the group and invite them to share what wholeness of body, mind, and spirit feels like. What insights did they gain by listening to one another?

Wholeness is...

Form the class into groups based on how they self-identify, leaving a common space in the center of the groups. Examples of groups include: intellectuals, athletes, gamers, musicians, artists, hipsters. Allow the group to determine the categories.

Ask participants to come forward for each question that applies to them, then return to their original groups. Most students will come forward multiple times. Encourage students to notice the people around them when they come forward. See them as an unrepeatable miracle with God living and breathing within each one. Notice without judgment, only grace.

Choose from the following questions, or create your own as needed. Some questions will be personal. Encourage students to respond honestly as they feel comfortable.

- Who feels comfortable about the group with which you identify?
- Who feels misrepresented by the group with which you identify?
- Who loves to dance?
- Who loves to sing in the shower?
- Who likes olives on a pizza?
- Who has a food allergy?
- Who has a stepparent?
- Who has had cancer affect someone close to you?
- Who feels “comfortable in their own skin”?
- Who feels judged by their appearance?
- Who has questioned their faith?
- Who has been bullied?
- Who has bullied?
- Who has had their heart broken?
- Who feels accepted as you are?
- Who has made a difficult choice for the sake of good health?
- Who feels alone, sometimes even in a group?
- Who is burdened by a regret?
- Who finds it difficult to pray?
- Who experiences stress about grades?
- Who has been angry at God in the past year?
- Who feels you would be judged by others in this class if they knew your political or religious views?
- Who has lost a friend to suicide?
- Who has lost someone close due to addiction?

This activity is intended to demonstrate unity in diversity, and to experience the act of breaking down walls and letting go of the labels we give ourselves and others. For this lesson, the activity also represents experiences and realities that affect wholeness of body, mind, and spirit.

Questions for discussion:

- Did you feel limited by choosing one group as your identity? Why or why not?
- In what ways were you surprised by your own responses or the responses of others?
- What did this activity reveal to you about wholeness of body, mind, and spirit?

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction (35% of lesson time)

Invite participants to read these passages:

The Temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit. It shall also be for a strengthening of faith and preparation for witness. By its ministries an attitude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered. (Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a-c)

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)

Our pattern for living the purposes of the Temple is Jesus. His ministry focused on restoring persons to wholeness of body, mind, and spirit.
Read or tell the story of Jesus healing the Gerasene Demoniac from Mark 5:1-20, stopping after verse 14.

In this story, Jesus meets a suffering person whose life is a living death—he exists on the outskirts of society among the tombs—and he can't find a way to stop repeating the behaviors that cause damage to him and distance him from the people around him. Despite his difficult behavior, Jesus sees him as a beloved child of God. He offers healing of body (no longer bruised and chained), mind (no longer screaming and hearing multiple voices), and spirit (restored to the community as he talked with Jesus and the people came near). Jesus offered peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit to this tormented stranger. The Gerasene's life was radically transformed by his encounter with Jesus.

It is easy to look at a person like this and misunderstand the depth of their suffering, or the reasons for their self-destructive behavior. In a situation like this, it is easy to judge. But that was not Jesus' response. The Rev. Gregory Boyle puts it this way, “Here is what we seek: a compassion that can stand in awe at what [they] have to carry rather than stand in judgement at how they carry it.”

Discuss these questions in groups of two or three, or as a large group. You can give youths paper for writing or drawing their responses.

• Have you met a person who looked different, made questionable choices, or lived on the margins of society? When have you sensed the Spirit nudging you to see them differently?
• What might wholeness mean to someone like this?
• When were you this person? Who offered you peace, reconciliation, or healing of the spirit?
• How did the experience change you?

Return to the story of Jesus healing the Gerasene Demoniac, describing how the story ends in verses 15-20. When the people saw the Gerasene healed and the next step was reintegration into their community, they were afraid and resisted.

Discuss these questions in the full group.

• Why do you think the people were afraid of the Gerasene once he was healed?
• In what ways is it easier for our communities to ignore the needs of those on the margins than to work with them toward healing and wholeness?

We are called to receive Christ’s peace in the form of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit. But the gospel calls us to much more than individual healing. We are also called to form as a Spirit-filled community to live in ways that uphold wholeness of body, mind, and spirit for all.

Studies tell us that in any gathering, as many as 40 percent of those present are in crisis. Imagine the people in your school, neighborhood, congregation, or in this class. How might they be in crisis at this very moment? How can we as disciples of Jesus Christ invite these people to wholeness of body, mind, and spirit in Jesus’ name?

Respond
Takes the learners from hearing to doing (35% of lesson time)

Show the video Because Who Is Perfect? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8umFv69fNq

This video about mannequins, created to reflect bodies of the differently abled, focuses on how we see others who seem physically different from us or from cultural norms. It also focuses on seeing others and ourselves with more compassion.

• Invite youths to share their reactions to the video. What was challenging? What was inspiring?
• What did the video portray about wholeness of body, mind, and spirit?
• How can we begin to see ourselves the way God sees us?
• How can we begin to see others the way God sees them?

God created us to live in wholeness and harmony together. The Community of Christ Health Ministries Association says, “Wholeness exists when there is harmony among the three dimensions of our lives: body, mind, and spirit. Wholeness also means harmony exists in our relationship with God, other people, and nature.”

Wholeness List

Using a large paper or writing surface, write three column headings: body, mind, spirit. Under each, ask the group to list ways they seek wholeness.
• Where do you find connections among the categories?

• In what ways do these activities connect us to God and others as well?

_Draw a line under the original responses. Ask the group to list what wholeness of body, mind, and spirit looks like in relationships and communities._

• What is different between personal wholeness and wholeness in relationships or communities? How are they connected?

**Send**

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(10% of lesson time)

Shalom is a Hebrew word that means a completeness or fullness of peace. Sometimes we use the word peace, but shalom is more than peace. Shalom is the vision God has for all creation to be healthy and whole. Shalom does not mean that everything or everyone is perfect; and wholeness of body, mind, and spirit does not mean people are perfect. As we receive, live, and share the peace of Jesus Christ, we experience and create shalom (wholeness) with God, shalom with self, shalom with others, and shalom with creation.

_Invite youths to find comfortable position sitting or lying down. Read the book I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness by Susan Verde (also available on www.eBooks.com). This book expresses the importance of mindfulness in practicing wholeness and peace for self, others, and creation._

_Challenge participants to practice mindfulness throughout the day: notice their surroundings, see others as God sees them, consider choices that promote wholeness of body, mind, and spirit._

**Bless**

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and help

(5% of lesson time)

Prayer Cards

_On the back of the index card or paper participants received at the beginning of this lesson, have them write a prayer concern about body, mind, or spirit in their life or the life of another. Place the cards in a basket._

_Invite a youth to read Doctrine and Covenants 163:2a._

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.

_Offer a prayer of blessing for the class and the concerns they have shared. Invite youths to take a prayer card as they leave and make that concern a matter of prayer as they seek wholeness for self and others._
LESION FOCUS
Develop Disciples to Serve

FOCUS SCRIPTURES
Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a–d, 9a–c

OBJECTIVES
The learners will…
• share learning experiences that shape who we are and who we are becoming.
• examine calling and giftedness.
• explore Community of Christ identity, mission, message, and beliefs.

SUPPLIES
• Small slips of paper, enough for two or three per person
• Pencils, pens
• Large poster paper or erasable writing surface and markers (optional)
• Paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils
• Slips of paper with descriptions of All Are Called (see p. 13 of Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd Edition)
• Copies of Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd Edition; books available through Herald House, or download pdf at www.CofChrist.org
• Video Change Your Life, Change Your World found at www.CofChrist.org
• Projection equipment to show video

Gather
Activates background knowledge; prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of lesson time)

Welcome each youth into the space by name and gather in a circle. Invite them to share how they practiced mindfulness. What did they notice about their surroundings? How did they see others? What choices did they make to promote wholeness of body, mind, and spirit?

Give each participant two or three small slips of paper. Ask each youth to write down a skill they have developed, or something they have learned, that is important to them (one skill per slip). Have them fold their slips and place them in a bowl or basket. Give each team a poster paper or space on an erasable writing surface and a marker. Each member of the team will pick one of the slips and draw what is on the paper for their team to guess. Alternately, have the teams act out what is on the paper instead of drawing.

Each team must keep track of the slips of paper their team guesses. Play continues until there are no more slips of paper. The winning team is the team that has the most slips of paper with items guessed correctly.

Form groups of two or three to discuss these questions. Repeat with new pairs or small groups, so each one shares with different people and describes different skills they included for the game.

• How did you learn the skill you shared?
• Who taught you?
Was it easy for you to learn? Explain why or why not.
What did you do to develop what you learned?

Gather the group and offer a prayer— or invite participants to offer prayers — of gratitude for gifts we have, skills we have learned, and people who have invested their time and giftedness in teaching others.

Engage
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of lesson time)

Provide each youth with a piece of paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils.

The gathering activity provided opportunity to share and describe something you have learned that is important to you. Personal gifts, skills, and knowledge shape who you are and who you are becoming as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Invite participants to briefly describe, with words or images, who they are now—in their community, school, neighborhood, family, and church. Allow several minutes to complete, then have them turn the paper over and briefly describe, with words or images, who they are becoming.

When the descriptions are complete, have the youths stand in a circle and reveal who they are now. Allow a few moments for all to notice what is revealed, and have each one share one word they would use to describe what is on their paper. After everyone has shared, have participants reveal, one at a time, who they are becoming. Invite them to share one word that describes who they are becoming.

Return to seats and review the purposes of the Temple explored in previous lessons. Invite someone to read Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a-d.

The purpose of the Temple we will focus on in this lesson is leadership education for priesthood and member. Recognizing and developing personal gifts, skills, and interests is an important facet of disciple formation.

Spiritual formation, or the inward and outward journey of discipleship (see the first lesson), is essential in discovering and responding to God's call in each life. Community of Christ upholds All Are Called, an Enduring Principle.

- What is your understanding of All Are Called, an Enduring Principle?
- How have you experienced God's call in your life? How have you responded?
- What concerns or questions do you have about calling and giftedness?

Write or print these descriptions on individual slips of paper. Form four groups and give each group one of the descriptions to explore.

- God graciously gives people gifts and opportunities to do good and to share in God's purposes.
- Jesus Christ invites people to follow him by becoming disciples who share his life and ministry.
- Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.
- We respond faithfully, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to our best understanding of God's call.

Assign a member of each group to record responses and share with the larger group. Have each group discuss these questions. As you listen to the groups discuss, encourage deeper, critical thinking about each description. Allow small group responses to guide further discussion.

- What is the “surface meaning” and the “deeper meaning” of this description?
- What is possible in the lives of individuals, communities, and the world if this description is lived to its fullest?
- In what ways are you challenged by, or do you experience resistance to, this description?
- What questions do you have about this description?
In Section 156 of the Doctrine and Covenant, the church was counseled about the purposes of the Temple. Additionally, the church received the following counsel regarding the ordination of women. *Invite a participant to read Doctrine and Covenants 156:9a-c.*

a. I have heard the prayers of many, including my servant the prophet, as they have sought to know my will in regard to the question of who shall be called to share the burdens and responsibilities of priesthood in my church.

b. I say to you now, as I have said in the past, that all are called according to the gifts which have been given them. This applies to priesthood as well as to any other aspects of the work.

c. Therefore, do not wonder that some women of the church are being called to priesthood responsibilities. This is in harmony with my will and where these calls are made known to my servant, they may be processed according to administrative procedures and provisions of the law.

Consider the significance of counsel regarding the purposes of the Temple...a symbol of Christ’s peace and wholeness...and counsel regarding the ordination of women contained in the same section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

- How does this represent peace and wholeness?
- How does this represent the holistic nature of Christ’s ministry and mission?

Becky L. Savage, the first woman called to serve in the First Presidency, writes: “In 2005, our newly ordained Prophet-President Stephen M. Veazey declared ‘no new programs.’ Rather, our focus is to Share the Peace of Jesus Christ. World Church leaders agreed members needed to know clearly the church’s current identity, mission, message, and beliefs. Thus began a journey toward clarity. We reclaimed our identity with the help of new inspired scriptures, official statements, initiatives, principles, and leadership and member education” (Breathe New Life, Adult Lessons, p. 31).

Sharing in Community of Christ: *Exploring Identity, Mission, Message, and Beliefs* is a result of the work of church leaders in response to the need to clearly articulate who we are and who we are becoming.

*Provide copies (books or copies of pdf files) for individuals or small groups. Invite students to look briefly at what is contained in the document and consider these questions:*

- With what do you find the greatest connection? (For example: a particular Enduring Principle, Mission Initiative, or Basic Belief)
- What would you like to learn more about?

*Allow time for youths to explore the document, then gather them together and share with the larger group what the selected in response to the above questions and why.*

*Show the video Change Your Life, Change the World found at www.cofchrist.org. Discuss with youth what they notice about the video and its message. Where do they find connection? Of what are they most proud? Challenge youth to consider what kind of church they want Community of Christ to be and how they will use their gifts to make that happen.*

*Lead the youth in a guided meditation practice. Read this prayer and allow time for participants’ silent prayers after each statement.*

Gracious God, thank you for the specific gifts and skills that make me who I am now... Help me discover who you are calling me to become... Guide me as I use my gift of ________________ to share in your purposes... Bless me to be a blessing in my family, school, community, and church... Amen.
LESSON FOCUS

Restoration as healing and redeeming agent inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a–e

OBJECTIVES

The learners will…

• learn the meaning of restoration.

• discover significance of restoring persons to right relationship with God, others, and creation.

• explore how youth can be part of a new understanding of a restoration movement.

SUPPLIES

• Paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils

• Large poster paper or erasable writing surface and markers

• Paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils

• Video Imagine by Pentatonix

• Projection equipment for video

Gather

Activates background knowledge; prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of lesson time)

Welcome each participant into the space by name and gather in a circle. Invite each youth to share thoughts or insights related to the challenge from the previous lesson.

What kind of church do you want Community of Christ to be; and how will you use your gifts to make that happen?

Invite each youth to find a comfortable space and position to engage in this practice. Ask several youth to serve as readers, and invite youth to pray silently for people who come to mind during moments of silence between readings.

The following readings are taken from “Is There One Who Feels Unworthy,” Community of Christ Sings 526.

READER 1: Is there one who feels unworthy? Is there one who feels unknown? Is there one who feels uncared for? Is there one who feels alone? In this place among these people, let a welcome here be found; and let broken souls be mended here upon this holy ground.
Here in this holy place, here in this gentle space, there is no lack of grace, here in this holy place.

(Allow 20 seconds of silence.)

Is there one who's been rejected, left alone or left behind; walking through the lonesome valley, where new hope is hard to find? Come and find a place at table with a people called by grace; and let hope be sought and nurtured in this gentle, loving space.

Here in this holy place, here in this gentle space, there is no lack of grace, here in this holy place.

(Allow 20 seconds of silence.)

We've so often failed at loving and ignored compassion's call. Drawing back the hand of mercy, we have built dividing walls. Now we come to ask forgiveness and to claim renewing grace; and to say that all are welcome at this table in this place.

Here in this holy place, here in this gentle space, there is no lack of grace, here in this holy place.

(Allow 20 seconds of silence.)

Provide each youth with paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Invite them to write or draw responses to these questions. Read each question, then allow several minutes for responses.

- How did you first recognize God's presence in your life and receive God's love? How did you respond to God's love and how did it change your life?

- Think of a time you felt alone or broken. How did you experience God's presence of healing and love during that time?

- Think of a time you experienced the love of others and it became a bridge to comfort and finding your way to healing? Think of a time you offered that to someone else. How did you recognize God's presence in those relationships?

- What do holy places look like? Who is there? How have you experienced restoration and renewal in a holy place of loving welcome?

Have participants turn to a partner and share a response to one of the previous questions.

Offer a prayer or invite youths to pray for gratitude for holy places of love and welcome, blessing for times we experience brokenness, awareness of God's presence during this time of learning and sharing.

Engage
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of lesson time)

Review the purposes of the Temple explored in previous lessons. Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a-e.

The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit. It shall also be for a strengthening of faith and preparation for witness. By its ministries an attitude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered. It shall be the means for providing leadership education for priesthood and member. And it shall be a place in which the essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding, inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world.

Form groups of three to five and give each group a paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Have each group write the letters in R-E-S-T-O-R-A-T-I-O-N stacked down the side of their paper, then work together to come up with words or phrases starting with each letter that describes their understanding of restoration. Share responses with the full group and discuss different ideas expressed.

Read and discuss the following, written by Apostle Robin Linkhart.

Continuing Revelation is an integral facet of Community of Christ’s journey. As a people we are open to listening for God’s voice. Through experience and scripture our encounters with God continued to enrich and broaden our understanding of Restoration.

By the 1960s our evolving theology of Zion gave birth to an emerging understanding of Restoration reflective of Christ’s first-century teachings. Faithful to the spirit of the Restoration we opened ourselves to our
continuing adventure with God, searching in faith to understand as we shared the message of Christ’s peace across the globe. We moved into a place of experiencing Christ’s message as inclusive, open, and welcoming. We let go of our exclusive claim as the only church that had it “right.”

The centrality of Christ and our commitment to community rang loud and clear in the 1994 mission statement: We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace. ‘Given as a divine blessing’ (Doctrine and Covenants 163:1a) in 2000, and made official in 2001, our new name, Community of Christ, re-energized our ministry and witness. But it was the introduction of the Mission Initiatives in 2011 that poignantly clarified the essential meaning of Restoration as it related to the healing and redeeming work of Jesus announced in Luke 4:18-19. (Breathe New Life, Adult Lessons, p. 40)

Questions for discussion:

• How would you describe the emerging understanding of Restoration?

• What did Apostle Linkhart attribute to an evolving understanding of Restoration? (Continuing Revelation, Christ-focused rather than church-focused, new name of Community of Christ, Mission Initiatives)

• How do you understand Restoration through the lens of the Mission Initiatives?

• Where have you seen examples of disciples and congregations restoring persons or communities by living the Mission Initiatives?

Meggan began her journey of healing and wholeness in a community that celebrated who she was and enthusiastically welcomed her participation in all dimensions of life together. In a 2017 podcast interview, Meggan shared these words about her new understanding of Restoration as healing and redeeming agent inspired by the life and witness of our Redeemer.

I love the message of Christ in reaching out to the outcast and kind of flipping things upside down in society and empowering those who have felt outcast by society, because that was me. I felt kicked out by religion by a lot of things—to find that Jesus—in the scriptures that I had grown up with—was so incredible to me, and something that I love. [ In Community of Christ I found ] the idea of God’s unconditional love and grace in a way I never really grasped [ before ]...Until I let go of a [ theology ] that [ was ] very rule-based, I felt condemned by God and tossed aside...[ and now I’ve ] come to know a God that loves me with a love I cannot understand, which I heard thrown around a lot when I was growing up, but never really understood until I came to Community of Christ.

Meggan experienced Christ’s presence among a people earnestly seeking to be a people of the Temple. People who encounter broken spirits and find pathways for healing, who do the hard work of becoming a community of joy, hope, love, and peace so they can offer a holy place of welcome and renewing—a sacred space of safety and rest.

• How does Meggan’s story inform your understanding of Restoration?

• After studying the purposes of the Temple, how would you describe to a friend what it means to be part of a Restoration movement?

Return to the previous small groups with the RESTORATION papers. What words or phrases would you add or change? What new understandings have emerged? Share any new insights with the larger group.

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of lesson time)

Attach a large poster or mural paper to the wall. Write RESTORATION MOVEMENT in the middle, and invite
students to come forward and write or draw what it means or looks like to be part of a restoration movement dedicated to sharing Christ’s peace.

While students are contemplating, writing, or drawing, play the video Imagine by Pentatonix [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLiWFUDj9SI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLiWFUDj9SI).

Challenge students to consider how they can live and share Christ’s peace in new ways that bring healing, wholeness, and peace in their life, the lives of others, and for creation.

### Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and help (5% of lesson time)

Gather youths in a circle, hold hands, and invite any who would like to offer a prayer to close your time together as a learning community.

Close with the following statement: Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with the very next thing I do!