COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS

CHILDREN

23 APRIL 2017 — 11 JUNE 2017
Lifelong Disciple Formation in Community of Christ is the shaping of persons in the likeness of Christ at all stages of life. It begins with our response to the grace of God in loving community and continues as we help others learn, grow, and serve in the mission of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, discipleship is expressed as one lives the mission initiatives of the church through service, generosity, witness, and invitation.

We invite you to use these lessons for your class, group, or congregation.

**Lectionary-based:** The weekly lessons connect the *Revised Common Lectionary* for worship with Community of Christ identity, mission, message, and beliefs.

**Quick, easy:** The lessons are designed for approximately 45-minute class sessions with two to three pages of ideas, discussion starters, and activities. Additional preparation help may be found in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament* (with focus on the gospel according to Matthew).

Lessons are available for three age groups. Recognizing each age group represents multiple stages of development, the instructor is encouraged to adapt lessons to best meet the needs of the class or group. When possible, optional activities are provided to help adapt lessons for diverse settings.

**Children (multiage, 6–11):** Help children engage in the Bible and introduce mission and beliefs with stories, crafts, and activities.

**Youth (ages 12–18):** Engage teens in scripture study and provocative questions about identity, mission, and beliefs.

**Adult (ages 19 and older):** Deepen faith and understanding with reflective questions, theological understanding, and discussion ideas.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Bible scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Focus Scripture Passage: John 20:19–31

Lesson Focus: When Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit onto his disciples, he invited them to receive and share his peace. We are also invited to receive the Holy Spirit and Share the Peace of Jesus Christ.

Objectives
The learners will...
• hear the story of the disciples’ encounter with Jesus after his resurrection.
• understand that through the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ is present with us.
• learn that we are invited to Share the Peace of Jesus Christ.

Supplies
• Small stone for each child
• Permanent marker
• Bible (NRSV)
• Sheet of paper for each child
• Washable paint thinned with water (one or more colors)
• Straw for each child (optional)
• Small lightweight objects (cotton ball, small piece of paper, feather, leaf, piece of yarn, etc.)
• Community of Christ Sings


GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Hide and Seek: Write a different word from the focus scripture passage on small stones with permanent marker (examples: Jesus, Disciples, Peace, Receive, Breathe, Holy Spirit, Rejoice, Believe, Send, Blessed). Hide stones in the classroom or class setting (enough for each child to find one). As children arrive, ask them to look for a stone. Once everyone has arrived and found a stone, ask children to read the words on their stones and share their ideas about what the words mean. Tell children we will hear these words again as we read the scripture passage.

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Say: Last week was Easter Sunday, and we learned about Jesus’ resurrection. Mary saw Jesus and spoke to him, and she went and told the disciples what Jesus said to her. But they did not believe her, and they were afraid. They were hiding in the house where they met with the doors locked.

• Why do you think the disciples were afraid?
• Can you think of times you have been afraid?
• What is something you might hide from?

Read the first part of the scripture passage (John 20:19–22). Ask children to tell you when they hear the words written on their stones:

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Say: Like our stones, the disciples were hiding. Jesus came to seek them and tell them they did not need to be afraid.
Jesus breathed on the disciples. Blow into your hand.

- How does your breath feel?
- What do we use our breath to do? (Breathe to stay alive, blow up a balloon, blow out a candle, cool off food)

Jesus breathed on his disciples and gave them the Holy Spirit. We will talk more about breath in a few minutes. Let’s hear more of the story:

One of Jesus’ disciples, Thomas, was not in the house when Jesus first appeared to them. When the disciples told Thomas about Jesus, he did not believe them.

Read John 20:24–25. Ask children to tell you when they hear the words written on their stones:

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

- Can you think of a time someone told you something that was hard to believe?
- What did it take for you to believe it was true?

Read John 20:26–29. Ask children to tell you when they hear the words written on their stones:

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

- Why did Thomas believe this time?
- Can you think of a time you believed something without seeing it?

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit (v. 21).

Object Lesson: Wind, Breath, Spirit

Put small lightweight objects on a table one at a time. (examples: cotton ball, small piece of paper, feather, leaf, or piece of yarn) Ask children to blow the objects. (Objects should blow off the table.) Invite each child to have a turn.

Say:
- What happened to the objects when we blew them? (blew off the table)
- Why did they move?
- What happens to the same objects if we don’t blow on them? (they stay there)

We are moving these objects with our breath. Wind also blows objects.

- What can the wind move?

In the New Testament, the same word (Pneuma—Greek) means wind, breath, and spirit. (Teach children the word in Greek and help them pronounce.)

In the same way we moved objects with our breath and the blowing wind moves objects, the Holy Spirit moves us. Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on the disciples and said he was sending them. He sent them to share his peace.

Breath Art:

Put dots of thin paint on a piece of paper. Blow the paint to make a design (or blow through a straw). Ask:

- What does your design remind you of?

SEND

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

Say: In Community of Christ, we proclaim Jesus Christ and become his disciples by following him and sharing his peace with others (Of Water and Spirit, p. 39). Like the disciples, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit and sends us to share his peace.

- Can you think of someone (family, friend, neighbor) that you could share peace with?
- How can you share the peace of Jesus Christ? What could you say or do? (Help children think of simple, practical ways they could share peace.)
**Going Deeper:**

Sharing the peace of Jesus Christ involves generously and compassionately offering witness, ministry, sacraments, and community life that reconciles and restores people to right or righteous relationships with God, themselves, others, and creation (Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd Edition, p. 7).

Ask open-ended questions to explore sharing the peace of Jesus Christ:

- What does it mean to be generous?
- What does it mean to be compassionate?
- Can you think of ways we can be generous and compassionate by sharing our witness (telling people what we are learning about Jesus and why it is important), **ministry** (helping people), **sacraments** (inviting friends to come to your baptism), and **community life** (inviting friends to church or camp)?
- Can you think of a time you invited someone?
- What do you think it means to have a “right relationship” with:
  - **God** (examples: prayer, learning about God in Sunday school, going to church and camp)
  - **Yourself** (examples: making responsible choices, taking care of yourself)
  - **Others** (examples: being kind, forgiving others who treat you unkindly, sharing)
  - **Creation** (examples: not wasting resources such as water, recycling, picking up trash)?

**BLESS**

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

*(5% of total lesson time)*

Sing first verse of “Breathe on Me, Breath of God” CCS 190 as a call and response. (Change to contemporary language for age suitability and understanding, i.e., thou—you, wouldst—would, dost—do.)

Stand in a circle and hold hands. Close with circle sentence prayer started by teacher:

“Jesus, breathe your Holy Spirit on us. We can share your peace by... (Go around circle and encourage children to say the idea they thought of earlier to share peace.) Amen.”

Lesson Focus: Jesus’ followers were sad after he died. We, too, can feel sad or afraid and have questions. Jesus helps us with our feelings and questions through the Holy Spirit and the Blessings of Community.

Objectives
The learners will...

• hear the story of two of Jesus’ followers meeting Jesus after he had risen.
• talk about death as something about which we can feel sad or afraid and have questions.
• learn how the Holy Spirit and sharing the Blessings of Community can help us with our feelings and questions.

Supplies

• Ingredients to make play dough: flour, salt, oil, water, bowl, spoon for mixing (for gluten free, substitute rice flour and cornstarch for the flour)
• Reusable airtight container(s) to store play dough for future use (or send home with children) Example: recycled plastic tubs with lids (such as margarine or yogurt containers)


1 GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of total lesson time)

Play dough recipe
Ingredients: 2 cups (473.18 ml) flour
1 cup (236.59 ml) salt
1 tablespoon (14.79 ml) oil
1 cup (236.59 ml) cold water

Add ingredients to bowl. Allow each child to mix with spoon. As ingredients begin to stick together, give each child a lump of dough to knead until smooth. If dough is sticky, add more flour. Depending on how many children are in the class, you may need to make more than one batch. NOTE: Be aware of gluten allergies. Substitute a gluten-free recipe if allergies are present: 1 cup (236.59 ml) rice flour, 1 cup (236.59 ml) corn starch, 1 cup (236.59 ml) salt, 2 teaspoons (9.86 ml) oil, 1 cup (236.59 ml) warm water.

As children arrive, invite them to help you make play dough. Give each child a lump of play dough to knead while the focus scripture passage is read.

2 ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of total lesson time)

Say: When we made play dough today, we used some of the same ingredients used to make bread. There are several scripture passages that use bread to tell a story about Jesus. We will hear one of those stories today.
Read *Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*, pp. 102–104, or paraphrased Luke 24:13–35 NRSV.


Now on that same day two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all the things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but they didn’t recognize him. And Jesus said to them, “What are you talking about while you walk along?”

They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that happened?” Jesus asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be killed. And besides that, it is now the third day since Jesus died. Some women of our group were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had seen angels who said Jesus was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it empty as the women had said; but they did not see Jesus.”

- How did Jesus’ friends feel when he died?
- How do you think Jesus’ friends felt when they heard that the women said Jesus was alive?

Then Jesus said to them, “You’re having a hard time believing these things.” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he told them the things about himself in the scriptures. As they came near the village, Jesus walked ahead as if he were going on. But they said to him, “Stay with us, because it is almost nighttime.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, “Didn’t we have a warm feeling in our hearts while he was talking to us on the road?” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, “Didn’t we have a warm feeling in our hearts while he was talking to us on the road?” They got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the other disciples and their friends gathered together. They were saying, “Jesus is alive, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how they recognized Jesus when he broke the bread.

- Have you had someone you know or a pet die? Invite children to share experiences of loss. Ask open-ended questions: How did you feel? What did you do? Who helped you? Listen to children’s stories, but be careful not to minimize children’s experiences or give simplistic answers to their questions. Remind children that it is okay to have questions we can’t answer.

**Say:** When we think about people and animals we love dying, we can feel sad or afraid. The same Holy Spirit that we learned about last week that Jesus breathed on the disciples also comforts us. In fact, the Holy Spirit is sometimes called the Comforter. Jesus is always present with us through the Holy Spirit, even if we don’t recognize him or understand, like the travelers on the road.

**RESPOND**

**Ambiance:** Takes the learners from hearing to doing (35% of total lesson time)

**Ask:**
- How does it feel to squish the play dough?
- Have you ever used a stress ball? (Show example, if available, and pass around for each child to have a turn squeezing the ball.)

Sometimes people use something like a stress ball to feel better when they are nervous or afraid.

- What can you do when you have strong feelings—like sadness, fear, or anger—to help you feel better?

Talking to friends can help, too. Jesus talked to the travelers on the road and listened to their questions. After they realized it was Jesus, they went back to talk to their friends about what happened. Jesus’ followers had a lot of questions about what had happened, and it helped to talk about their questions together.

- Do you have any questions about this story?

**Spiritual Practice: Sharing in the Round**

**Say:** Jesus went into the home with the travelers and broke bread with them. It was in sharing a meal that they recognized Jesus. Jesus started this practice with his disciples before he died. We continue this practice today in Community of Christ when we share the sacrament of Communion. We also share with each other in fellowship at potlucks, going out to eat, and inviting people to our homes. We learn more about Jesus and each other when we talk and share together.

Have a simple, healthy snack to share at the table with the children. Ask children to pass the food to each other. Let children serve themselves and pour their own drinks. Help younger children as needed, or ask an older child to help younger children. Invite children into conversation by asking questions to get to know each other better.
Sharing in the Round

Sharing in the Round is an ancient practice of table fellowship. Some of the most meaningful ministry by Jesus occurred around the table of invitation and hospitality. Good food, friends, and meaningful conversation lead to deeper relationships and community. This missional practice is an important way to follow a model of ministry by Jesus and embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ (adapted from www.missionalleaders.org).

Send

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

Say: When we share together in food and conversation, we learn more about Jesus and each other. We can talk to each other about our questions. We can pray together. These are the Blessings of Community we share in Community of Christ. Last week, we were invited to Share the Peace of Jesus Christ. We can share peace by inviting someone to share a meal with us.

- Can you think of someone you can invite to share a meal with you? (Examples: invite a friend from school over for dinner, ask your family to invite someone from church to go out to eat, take a meal to share with an elderly neighbor, etc.)

Going Deeper—Enduring Principle: Blessings of Community

Select one of the phrases from the Enduring Principle Blessings of Community to read to the children. Use a dictionary to look up words children may not understand. Ask questions and ask for children’s ideas to deepen understanding of what it means to participate in community.

- The gospel of Jesus Christ is expressed best in community life where people become vulnerable to God’s grace and each other.
- True community includes compassion for and solidarity with the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.
- True community upholds the worth of persons while providing a healthy alternative to self-centeredness, isolation, and conformity.
- Sacred community provides nurture and growth opportunities for all people, especially those who cannot fully care for themselves.
- We value our connections and share a strong sense of trust in and belonging with one another—even if we never have met.

- Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.
- We are called to create communities of Christ’s peace in our families and congregations and across villages, tribes, nations, and throughout creation.


Game: Draw the Circle Wide (Community Building)

Give each child a section of yarn. Ask them to make a circle with the yarn on the floor and stand inside it.

Say: We are invited to receive and share the Blessings of Community. Right now, we are standing in our own space, alone. When we join in community, we get to know each other, share our feelings, ask questions, and learn together how we can be disciples who follow Jesus.

Ask the children to work together to transform their individual circles of yarn into one circle that includes everyone.

Bless

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

While standing together in the yarn circle, sing “Draw the Circle Wide” CCS 273 (chorus only) or 611 “From You I Receive.”

If children are unfamiliar with the hymn, teach as a call and response.

Close with a prayer of blessing for each child as they think about how they can invite someone to share the Blessings of Community.
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
LESSON 24
7 May 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: John 10:1–10
Lesson Focus: Jesus calls us by our name. As disciples of Jesus, we listen for his voice and follow him.

Objectives
The learners will...

- hear Jesus’ teaching about listening for his voice and following him.
- think about what distracts us from following Jesus’ voice.
- explore how Community of Christ Enduring Principles All Are Called and Responsible Choices invite us to hear and follow Jesus.

Supplies
- Community of Christ Sings or audio recording (available through Herald House)
- Optional: Baby name book or research online for the meaning of each child’s name
- Bible (NRSV)
- Rhythm instruments or items that make noise (Example: pan and spoon) for each child
- Sheet of paper for each child
- Crayons, markers, or pencils
- Dictionary (at least one or one for each child, if available)
- Object to use as a “talking stick” (for example, rain stick, smooth stone, soft ball)


GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of total lesson time)

Sing first verse of “I Have Called You by Your Name” CCS 636. If children are unfamiliar with the hymn, teach as a call and response.

Say: Each of us has a name.

- What is your name?
- Who gave you your name?
- Do you know why you were given the name you have? (Give children time to share stories, e.g., “I am named after my grandfather.”)
- Optional: Do you know what your name means? If available, use a baby name book or research online to find the most common meaning of each child’s name.

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of total lesson time)

Give each child a rhythm instrument or something to make noise. Tell them you are going to read today’s scripture passage, and ask them to make noise while you are reading.

Adapted from John 10:1–6:

Jesus said, “If someone comes into the sheep’s pen by climbing over the fence instead of coming in the gate, he is probably a thief. The shepherd, who takes care of the sheep, comes in through the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and the sheep hear his voice. The shepherd calls each of his sheep by their names and he leads them out of the pen to the fields.”
When he has brought all of the sheep out of the pen, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger. They will run away because they don’t know the voices of strangers.”

When finished reading, ask children to put down the instruments or noisemakers.

• Can anyone tell me about what I was reading? Why not?

Read the scripture passage again, this time inviting children to listen. Ask:

• Can anyone tell me about what I was reading this time? What was different?
• When your parents call you, do you always respond right away, or do you sometimes not “hear” them (or pretend you don’t hear them)?
• What might distract you or keep you from hearing?

It can be the same with Jesus. We may hear Jesus “calling us” or know what choice we should make, but we might decide to make a different choice.

• What are other voices that might distract you from hearing Jesus or making a responsible choice? (friends, media, people in our neighborhood or school)

RESPOND

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

Say: In Community of Christ, we share Enduring Principles to help us hear and follow Jesus. We believe All Are Called by God and have gifts to share. We believe all are called to make Responsible Choices. Let’s think about how we can use our gifts and make responsible choices to hear and follow Jesus.

Acrostic Name Reflection on scripture passage:
Say: Jesus has called you by your name. How can you hear and follow Jesus?

Help children write their names down the left side of a sheet of paper. Ask children to think of something they can do to use their gifts to hear or follow Jesus and make responsible choices that begin with each letter in their name. Teacher can also help children think of ideas and children can help each other. If children want, they can color or draw pictures around their names.

Example:

P—Pray
E—Empathy
T—Try
E—Engage
R—Respond

Hearing Game:
Ask: Can we recognize each other’s voice?

Position one chair facing away from the other children. Ask a child to sit in the chair and close his or her eyes. Point to another child and ask them to say the name of the child in the chair. Let the child in the chair guess who is calling their name.

Alternative game: Have various common objects that make sounds. Ask children to close their eyes and try to identify sounds. (examples: clicking a pen, shuffling papers, closing a book)

Going Deeper

Explore one or two sentences from the Enduring Principles All Are Called and Responsible Choices. Help children think about what it means to be called by God and to make responsible choices to follow God. Ask open-ended reflection questions:

• What gift do you think you have—something you are good at and like to do, something that can help other people?
• How can you use your gift to follow Jesus?
• Can you think of an example of a good choice or a disrespectful choice?
• How can our choices help us follow Jesus or stop us from following Jesus?

All Are Called

• 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.

Responsible Choices

• God gives humans the ability to make choices about whom or what they will serve. Some people experience conditions that diminish their ability to make choices.
• Human choices contribute to good or evil in our lives and in the world.
• Many aspects of creation need redemption because of irresponsible and sinful human choices.
• We are called to make responsible choices within the circumstances of our lives that contribute to the purposes of God.

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

Say: Let’s practice listening to each other and for Jesus’ voice by thinking about responsible choices we can make.

Use an object as a “talking stick.” Pass the object to each child to offer opportunity to answer a question. If they prefer not to answer, they can pass the object to the next child. To practice listening and hearing, remind the children that only the child with the talking stick can answer, but everyone will have a turn.

Question suggestions:

- What is something you like to do? (Children may respond: watch TV, read a book, play outside) How does this help you listen or distract you from listening for Jesus?
- Imagine you are doing the activity you like to do, and a parent or adult calls you by name and asks you to come clean up the dinner dishes. (Illustrate using a child in the class: [Child’s name], it’s your turn to do the dishes.) What choices could you make? (Encourage children to list all choices as the talking stick is passed, including those that don’t include listening.)
- Can you think of a situation where you would need to listen for Jesus’ voice? (examples: bullying at school, argument with a sibling or friend) What choices could you make in that situation? Which choices would show that you hear Jesus’ voice and want to follow him?

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Sing “Sizohamba Naye (We Will Walk with God)” CCS 377 or play audio recording. Use instruments or noisemakers. After singing once, insert a child’s name in place of “we.” Sing until each child has been named.

Offer a simple prayer naming each child: Jesus, help [child’s name] hear your voice and follow you.
Focus Scripture Passage: John 14:1–14

Lesson Focus: To live in God’s house is to receive God’s love and share God’s love with others.

Objectives
The learners will...
- hear the story of Jesus talking to his disciples about preparing a place for them in God’s house.
- understand that Jesus asks us to do what he did, including recognizing the Worth of All Persons.
- learn that we can do what Jesus did when we share our Disciple’s Generous Response.

Supplies
- Sheet of paper for each child
- Crayons, markers, or pencils
- Optional: Sheets or blankets to drape to make a shelter
- OR Bible (NRSV)
- Optional: supplies for Manna Bags (see Manna Bag handout at end of lesson
- Optional: copy of Manna Bag handout for each child


GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

As children enter the classroom, ask them to draw a simple picture of the place where they live. How many rooms are in the dwelling? Ask children to label the rooms. If there is more than one room, ask them to write or draw who sleeps in each room. If the dwelling has one room, draw or write where each person sleeps.

Say: In our scripture passage today, we will talk about what it means to live in God’s house.

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Optional: Drape sheets or blankets over chairs or shelves (or outside over tree branches) to make a shelter. Invite children to sit in the shelter to hear the story.

Read Lectionary Story Bible, Year A, pp. 110–111. (If Lectionary Story Bible not available, read the focus scripture passage: John 14:1–14.)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.”

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has
**Note to teacher:**

Jesus speaks of his Father’s house and tells the disciples he will prepare a place for them there. This should be understood metaphorically, rather than literally. To speak of going to “my Father’s house” is a way of stating that Jesus is in close or intimate relationship with God. In preparing places for the disciples, Jesus is telling them they too are invited into intimate relationship with God and to take part in God’s unending hospitality.

—Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament, p. 69

**Say:** Jesus’ disciples were confused about what Jesus was trying to tell them. Jesus wasn’t talking about God’s house as a physical place he was going. He told the disciples he was talking about his relationship with God, and that God’s love includes all people. When we know Jesus, we know God. When we know Jesus, we will treat people the way Jesus treated people. When we know Jesus, we will do the same things Jesus did!

- What kinds of things can you think of that Jesus did? (fed people, loved people, stood up for people)

**3 RESPOND**

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

(35% of total lesson time)

Jesus said God’s house has many rooms. We are already living in God’s house of love. And God’s love includes everyone! Everyone has a right to love and a safe place to live. Jesus also said we will do the same kinds of things he did.

- How can we do the same kinds of things Jesus did?
- How can we treat people with love and respect?
- How can we help people who need love, food, or a safe place to live?

We also do what Jesus did when we share our Disciple’s Generous Response. When we give money to local and world mission tithes, we support local ministries (mention any your congregation may support) and ministries around the world. Show children an offering envelope and point out the categories for local and world mission tithes. Ask children if they have offering envelopes. (If children do not have offering envelopes, ask the congregation financial officer to provide them for each child.)

You can also tell children about Community of Christ affiliates and associated organizations and ministries that are working in many places to “do what Jesus did,” such as Outreach International, HealthEd Connect, a congregational or mission center ministry.

Inform children if your congregation is sponsoring a project or regularly receives offerings for one of these ministries. If there is a place in the church where the offering is received or the project is documented with a photo or other information, take a walk to show the children what the congregation is doing.

**Note to teacher:** For more information about these organizations, visit their websites:

- Outreach International: http://outreach-international.org
- HealthEd Connect: http://www.healthedconnect.org

**Optional:** Read Houses and Homes by Ann Morris. Discuss with children how people all over the world live in different kinds of dwellings, but everyone needs a safe place to live.

**Optional:** Manna Bags

If you live in an area where you are approached by people without homes asking for money or food, help children assemble Manna Bags as one way to respond with love and compassion (with an adult). If gathering supplies for Manna Bags is not practical, send children with a bag with the directions inside as a project for families to do together at home. Copy the handout at the end of the lesson to send home with children.

**Going Deeper**

**Explore the Enduring Principle Worth of All Persons:**

- God views all people as having inestimable and equal worth.
- God wants all people to experience wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships.
- We seek to uphold and restore the worth of all people individually and in community, challenging unjust systems that diminish human worth.
- We join with Jesus Christ in bringing good news to the poor, sick, captive, and oppressed.

“Wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships” includes the right of all people to have a safe place to live, enough food to eat, and people that love them.
Ask children if they can think of situations where people are not treated fairly or of worth (situations in their school, local or global issues they have heard about on the news). What might it mean for each of us to “join with Jesus Christ in bringing good news”?

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

**Same and Different Game:**
Play a game to help children think about how people are the same and different. Even though we have differences, we are all of worth to God and we can treat each other with love and respect.

Say a statement, and then ask children to stand if the statement applies to them. After each set of statements, affirm: “We are the same and we are different. We are all of worth.”

Examples:
- Stand up if you are a person. Stand up if you are a girl. Stand up if you are a boy.
- Stand up if you have eyes. Stand up if your eyes are (name various colors).

**Manna Bags**

Manna Bags (sometimes called Blessing Bags) are one way to respond with compassion to people you meet who ask for food or money. Prepare a bag (or several bags) to keep in your car, backpack, etc. Extend kindness by having a conversation with the person to whom you give the Manna Bag. Ask his or her name. Keep in mind counsel from Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a as you respond to requests for food or money with a Manna Bag:

God, the Eternal Creator, weeps for the poor, displaced, mistreated, and diseased of the world because of their unnecessary suffering. Such conditions are not God’s will...Do not turn away from them. For in their welfare resides your welfare.

Use gallon-size plastic bags or small reusable bags. Fill each bag with any of the items listed below:
- Socks
- Bottled water
- Canned tuna or chicken—pull top (include spoon or fork)
- Bags of peanuts, sunflower seeds, mixed nuts
- Small boxes of raisins
- Granola/cereal bars
- Wrapped packages of crackers
- Fruit cups—pull top (include spoon or fork)
- Hard candy or mints
- Travel-size package of wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Other travel-size toiletry items

Do not include homemade items, anything requiring refrigeration, unwrapped items, chocolate, fresh fruit, soft drinks, drinks in a bag, bottles with snap-off tops, glass bottles, money, cigarettes, or anything with a torn package or expired usage date.

Include a note of encouragement. Notes can include congregation contact information and a simple note of support and caring. Do not sign full name or include any personal information (first name only, maybe age if a child).

After playing the game, ask children for ideas or help them think of ways people around the world are alike and have differences (live in different countries, practice different religions, eat different kinds of food, live in different kind of dwellings).

Affirm again: All people are of worth. God’s love has room for everyone.

**BLESS**
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Sing verse 1 of “For Everyone Born” CCS 285. If children are not familiar with the hymn, teach as a call and response.

Close with a prayer affirming God’s love and care for all people, starting with each of the children in the class, and including family, friends, neighbors, strangers in our communities, and people around the world.
Focus Scripture Passage: John 14:15–21
Lesson Focus: Jesus will not leave us alone! He loves us and sends the Holy Spirit as an Advocate.

Objectives
The learners will...
- hear Jesus’ words of promise to be with us.
- learn that Jesus asks us to keep his commandments to love God, others, and ourselves.
- explore how we can keep Jesus’ commandments by being an advocate for others.

Supplies
- Copies of Love handout (end of lesson)
- Markers or crayons
- Community of Christ Sings or audio recording (available through Herald House)
- Bible (NRSV)
- Dictionary
- Newspaper or news magazine
- Pillar candle or battery-operated tea candle for each child
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape


GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of total lesson time)

As children arrive, give them a Love handout and ask them to write or draw ways they can show love (See handout on p. 16.)

When everyone has arrived, sing “Ubi Caritas et Amor” CCS 152 (“Where there is charity and love, God is to be found”) or play audio recording. If children are unfamiliar with the hymn, sing as a call and response, one phrase at a time.

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of total lesson time)

Read focus scripture passage: John 14:15–21.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

Say: Jesus says that if we love him, we will keep his commandments. Let’s look at two scripture passages to learn what Jesus asks us to do:

Read or ask a child in the class to read the scripture passages below:

John 13:34–35:

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will
know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Matthew 22:36–39:

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘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.’”

- What does Jesus want us to do to keep his commandments? (love God, others or neighbors, and self)

Ask children to write on their Love handout: Love God. Love others. Love myself.

Say: Jesus also says he will ask God to send an Advocate.

Use a dictionary to look up the word advocate. Read definitions and help children identify which definition best describes what Jesus means when he says he will ask God to give the disciples an advocate.

Say: An advocate is someone who stands up for another person. Advocate is another word used to describe the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit that Jesus breathed on the disciples after the Resurrection.

RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

(Spiritual Practice: Holding in the Light)

Say: Our scripture passage today says that Jesus will send the Holy Spirit as an Advocate, so we will know Jesus is with us. If we love Jesus, we will keep his commandments to love God, ourselves, and other people. Part of loving people is standing up for them in unfair situations. The Holy Spirit will help us have the courage to stand up for and love other people.

Read several headlines in a newspaper or news magazine. Help children name situations of injustice where people might need an advocate.

Light a pillar candle in center of the table, or provide each child a battery-operated tea candle. Ask each child to name someone or a situation (either from their life or from the news) that they can pray for and stand up for. If using battery-operated candles, send candles with children to continue prayer practice at home.

SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(Helping Hands Game)

Ask children to sit on the ground in pairs facing each other with their knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Ask...
children to keep their hands in their laps and feet flat on the floor and try to stand up without moving their hands or feet.

Then ask children to grasp each other’s wrists and help each other stand up, keeping their feet flat on the floor. If classroom is small, consider moving outside if weather permits or to a large area, such as a fellowship hall.

After children finish playing the game, ask:

- Was it easier to stand up by yourself or when you helped each other?
- How can we be advocates for each other and other people?
- How does helping other people show Jesus that we love him and want to keep his commandments to love God, our neighbors, and ourselves?

**BLESS**

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

Sing "We Are One in the Spirit" verses 1 and 2, CCS 359. On verse 2, join hands and walk together in a circle.

Close with a circle prayer. Invite each child to take part in the prayer: “God, help me use my hands to show love by...”
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, ASCENSION OF THE LORD

LESSON 27
28 May 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Luke 24:44–53

Lesson Focus: Jesus blessed his disciples before he left them. We can use our hands and actions to bless.

Objectives
The learners will...

• hear the scripture passage about Jesus blessing his disciples and ascending to heaven.
• think about what it means when the scripture passage says Jesus was carried up to heaven.
• learn that blessing means to “speak well of.”

Supplies
• Bible (NRSV)
• Construction paper
• Several colors of washable paint
• Paintbrushes
• Sheet of paper for each child
• Crayons or markers
• Scissors for each child
• Community of Christ Sings


1 GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson (15% of total lesson time)

Spiritual Practice: Body Prayer
Say: Prayer helps us listen for God and follow Jesus. There are many ways to pray. Today, we are going to pray with our bodies.

Body Prayer (excerpted and adapted from The Prayer of St. Patrick—Anonymous)

Use motions and ask children to repeat words and motions:
Jesus before me (stretch arms out in front of you)
Jesus behind me (stretch arms out behind you)
Jesus in me (cross hands over heart)
Jesus beneath me (sweep arms toward feet)
Jesus above me (raise arms above head)

Jesus on my right (stretch both arms to right)
Jesus on my left (stretch both arms to left)
Jesus when I lie down (lie down on floor)
Jesus when I sit up (rise to sitting position)
Jesus when I rise (stand up)
Jesus in all I say (point to lips)
Jesus in all I see (point to eyes)
Jesus in all I hear (point to ears)
Jesus in all I do (hug self)

2 ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction (35% of total lesson time)

Say: We’ve heard about several encounters between Jesus and his followers after his resurrection. But we know Jesus didn’t stay with his followers. Our story today is about what Jesus said and did before he left his disciples.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “These are the words I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” He helped them understand what was written about him in the scriptures, and he said to them, “Remember, I told you that I would die and rise again on the third day. You have seen this happen…And now, I am getting ready to send upon you what God has promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was carried up to heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

**Say:** The scripture passage says that while Jesus was blessing his disciples, he left them and was carried up to heaven. There are many ideas of what or where heaven is. Some people think heaven is up in the sky. Scientists tell us that the sky is not only up; it is all around us. The earth’s atmosphere begins at our feet, with the air around us. At night, we can imagine how far the sky extends by looking into the stars, but the sky is still all around us. When we look up at the stars at night, we say we are looking up into the heavens, but the heavens are still part of the atmosphere that is all around us.

The Bible uses parables and stories to help us learn about God. When the scripture passage says Jesus was carried up to heaven, it may have been a way for the writer of the scripture passage to help his readers understand that Jesus had been with them, but he was no longer. Heaven is around us, not beyond us. Jesus is with us through the Holy Spirit, even though he is not physically with us.

**Going Deeper into Basic Beliefs and Enduring Principles**

Share with children ideas from the Basic Beliefs statement on Creation and the Enduring Principle Sacredness of Creation. Emphasize God as Creator and our role as caretakers of God’s creation, including “the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.” Ask children to share ideas about how we can take care of God’s creation and why it is important.

**Basic Beliefs: Creation**

As an expression of divine love, God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and called them “good.” Everything belongs to God and should be cherished and used justly according to divine purposes. God sees creation as a whole without separation of spirit and element. God calls people of every generation to join with God as stewards in the loving care of creation.

**Enduring Principle: Sacredness of Creation**

- In the beginning, God created and called it all good.
- Spirit and material, seen and unseen, are related.
- Creation’s power to create or destroy reminds us of our vulnerability in this life.
- God is still creating to fulfill divine purpose.
- We join with God as stewards of care and hope for all creation.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 12, 15

**Painting the Heavens**

Provide construction paper and several colors of paint. Ask children to paint their ideas of the heavens. Remind children that the heavens are all around us, and the sky begins at our feet. So they can paint anything they see or think of.

**RESPOND**

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

**Say:** The scripture passage says Jesus blessed his disciples. Blessing means to speak well of someone. Jesus was getting ready to leave his disciples, but he wanted to bless them first.

- What do you think Jesus might have said to bless, or speak well of, his disciples?
- If you were going to leave someone for a while, what is something you might say to bless him or her?

**Blessing Each Other**

Ask children to sit in a circle on the floor. Teacher starts by going around the circle and briefly blessing each child by “speaking well” of them. Depending on size of class, ask children to bless each other by going around the circle and “speaking well” of each child or the child next to them if you have a large group.

**Blessing Walk**

**Say:** “God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and called them ‘good.’ Everything belongs to God…” (Basic Beliefs statement on Creation) We can pay attention to everything around us and speak well of, or bless, anything we see.
Take a walk outside, if weather permits, or around the church or class setting. Remind children that they are “walking in the sky,” since the earth’s atmosphere is all around us, even when they are inside. Ask children to notice what is around them. Tell children when they see something they would like to bless to tell you. The class will pause the walk to share in blessing. (examples: Bless you, tree. You give me shade. Bless you, car. You take me places. Bless you, kitchen. You help us share food. Bless you, book. You help me learn.) Continue the walk until everyone has had a chance to offer blessing.

Say: Jesus lifted up his hands to bless the disciples. We can use our hands to bless people with our actions.

Help children trace one of their hands on a sheet of paper. Ask them to think of someone they can bless today at church. On the hand, ask children to write the person’s name and how they will bless that person today. Help

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

Read the last verse of the focus scripture passage, “And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.”

Remind children that to bless means to speak well of. Sing “Uyai Mose (Come All You People)” CCS 84. If children are not familiar with the hymn, teach as a call and response.

Close with a sentence prayer of praise. Stand in a circle and ask each child to complete the sentence, “God, I praise you for...”
DAY OF PENTECOST/
ENDOWMENT SUNDAY

LESSON 28
4 June 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Acts 2:1–21
Lesson Focus: Jesus sent the Holy Spirit for all people in all places.

Objectives
The learners will...
• hear the story of Pentecost.
• talk about ways we can be the church.
• learn that Community of Christ is a worldwide church.

Supplies
• Copy of “Community of Christ around the World” handout for each child (end of lesson)
• Crayons or markers
• OR Bible (NRSV)
  • White construction paper
  • Washable paint (red, yellow, orange)
  • Community of Christ country list (end of lesson)
  • World map or globe
  • Community of Christ Sings or audio recording, available from Herald House


1 GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

As children arrive, give them the Languages of the Church handout. Invite them to color the church seal. Help children pronounce the name of the church in different languages. Ask:
• What language do you speak?
• When someone talks in a different language, can you understand what he or she is saying?
• Do you know any words in another language?

2 ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Read Lectionary Story Bible, Year A, pp. 116–117, or read the excerpts from Acts 2:1–21 that follow.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.
Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard in their own language. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh… Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”

Say: A few weeks ago, we talked about Jesus giving the disciples the Holy Spirit in the room where they were hiding.

• Do you remember what Jesus did? (He breathed on the disciples. He said “Peace be with you.” He said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”)

In this story in Acts, we learn that Jesus sends the Holy Spirit not just to the disciples but to everyone! People from many places who spoke different languages were gathered in one place. Because of the Holy Spirit, each person could understand what the disciples were saying about Jesus in their own language, even though the disciples didn’t speak those languages.

If you are not using the Lectionary Story Bible, tell the rest of the story from Acts 2.

The story from Acts 2 tells what happened after Peter spoke to all the people: (excerpted from Act 2:37–42)

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “What should we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

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

Tongues of Fire Painting
Give each child a sheet of white construction paper. Ask them to fold the paper in half and make a crease. Open the paper and have children squirt a small amount of red, yellow, and orange paint in the crease. Refold paper and press lightly from the crease outward to the edges of the paper to make “flames.”

Say: The scripture passage today describes the Holy Spirit as fire and wind.

• Can you think of other ways we have described the Holy Spirit? (dove, breath, Comforter, Advocate)

After this experience at Pentecost, people got together to
• help each other,
• eat together,
• remember the things Jesus said, and
• talk about living God’s way.

They called it the church! (adapted from Lectionary Story Bible, Year A, p.117)

• Can you think of ways we help each other at church?
• Can you think of times we eat together at church?
• How do we learn about the things Jesus said at church?
• How do we talk about living God’s way at church?

Since the day of Pentecost, the good news about Jesus has spread throughout the world. Community of Christ is a worldwide church! Community of Christ has about 250,000 members in more than 60 nations.

Show children the list of countries where Community of Christ has members (end of lesson). Refer to the “Community of Christ around the World” handout. Find those countries on the world map or globe. See how many other countries from the list children can find on the world map or globe.

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


If the book is not available, look up the word peace in several languages.
Note to teacher: If you need help finding the word peace in various languages, contact the Peace Pavilion: 816-521-3033 or e-mail kidpeace@kidpeace.org. Several websites also list words for peace including www.planetpals.com/IKC/peacedictionary.html.

Help children pronounce the words in various languages. Remind children of the scripture passage from John 20 where Jesus said to his disciples, “Peace be with you” and “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

BLESSTime of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Teach children “Wa Wa Wa Emimimo (Come, O Holy Spirit, Come)” CCS 157 in all four languages as a call and response, or play audio recording and invite children to sing along.

Say a prayer that with the help of the Holy Spirit we will help each other, eat together, remember the things Jesus said, and live God’s way.
The following list reflects the order in which Community of Christ was established in each country.

1. United States of America
2. Canada
3. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
4. Commonwealth of Australia
5. French Polynesia
6. Kingdom of the Netherlands
7. Kingdom of Norway
8. New Zealand
9. Federal Republic of Germany
10. Cayman Islands
11. Japan
12. Republic of South Korea
13. United Mexican States
14. Federative Republic of Brazil
15. Republic of Peru
16. Federal Republic of Nigeria
17. Republic of India
18. Republic of the Philippines
19. New Caledonia
20. Republic of Haiti
21. Republic of the Fiji Islands
22. Republic of Honduras
23. Republic of China (Taiwan)
24. Republic of Liberia
25. Republic of Kenya
26. Democratic Republic of Congo
27. Dominican Republic
28. Republic of Zambia
29. Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
30. Jamaica
31. Republic of El Salvador
32. Republic of Malawi
33. Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal
34. Plurinational State of Bolivia
35. Republic of South Africa
36. Aruba
37. Republic of Chile
38. Republic of Zimbabwe
39. Russian Federation
40. Ukraine
41. Republic of the Congo
42. Republic of Nicaragua
43. Kingdom of Spain
44. Republic of Togo
45. Republic of Angola
46. Republic of Sierra Leone
Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 28:16–20/28:15–19 IV

Lesson Focus: Jesus told his disciples to “Go!” baptize and teach people to be disciples. Jesus also tells us to "Go!”

Objectives
The learners will...

- hear the scripture passage known as the Great Commission.
- explore Mission Initiatives Invite People to Christ and Develop Disciples to Serve.
- learn the Mission Prayer as a spiritual practice.

Supplies
- Globe or world map
- Bible (NRSV)
- Dictionary
- Poster board (or card stock)
- Street map (map of area where children live, if available)
- Printed copy of Mission Prayer for each child (end of lesson)
- Glue sticks
- Adhesive magnet strips
- Optional: scissors for each child
- *Community of Christ Sings* or audio recording, available from Herald House


1 GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

As children arrive, ask them to explore the globe or map. Ask them to try to find where they live, places they have visited, where friends or family members live.

When everyone has arrived, show children on the globe or map where Jesus would have lived; then follow a path to show how far it is between where Jesus lived and where they live. Ask children what kind of geography is between the two places. Ask for ideas about how someone could get from where Jesus lived to where they live.

2 ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Read paraphrased focus scripture passage: Matthew 28:16–20/28:15–19 IV.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey
everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Say:** This scripture passage is known as the Great Commission. Commission means to instruct or charge with a task. Jesus’ commission is sending his disciples to tell people about him and to invite them to live as disciples.

Refer back to globe or map.

Even though Jesus and his disciples lived far away from where we live today, we know about Jesus and his commandments to love because the disciples took Jesus seriously and told people about him. The good news about God's love for all people has traveled all over the world! Remind children of the places in the world we explored last week where Community of Christ is located.

Look up the word disciple in the dictionary. Decide together which definition Jesus means when he asks us to go and make disciples.

**Say:** “God calls us to be disciples in sacred community with other disciples. We learn and grow with others. This way, we can learn more, and do more, and enjoy our discipleship even more along the way. We can become who God calls us to be” (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 90).

Jesus wants all people to become disciples and keep his commandments.

- Do you remember what Jesus commands us to do?

Refer back to lesson 26 to review Jesus’ commandments to love God, others, and yourself.

**RESPOND**

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

**Say:** “This mission to ‘go and make disciples’ is one of our Mission Initiatives—Invite People to Christ! People are waiting to hear the good news!” (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 115).

Develop Disciples to Serve is another Mission Initiative. “Being a disciple includes inviting others to be disciples and to live out their discipleship in sacred community. Such communities make positive changes in their neighborhoods, villages, towns, and cities” (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 115).

Going Deeper

Review the Mission Initiatives Invite People to Christ and Develop Disciples to Serve with the children.

**Invite People to Christ—Christ’s mission of evangelism**

We are poised to share the peace of Jesus Christ with those who are waiting to hear the redeeming words of the gospel.

We fulfill God’s ultimate vision as we...

- baptize and confirm many new members.
- open new congregations.
- launch the church in new nations.

**Develop Disciples to Serve—Equip individuals for Christ’s mission**

We are poised to equip men, women, and children to be true and living expressions of the life, ministry, and continuing presence of Christ in the world.

We fulfill God’s ultimate vision as we...

- help all ages deepen their discipleship.
- empower priesthood for mission.
- grow pastors and leaders for mission.
- train and send ministers for mission throughout the world.

Look up the word poised in the dictionary. Decide together which definition is being used in the Mission Initiatives (be ready to do something).

The word poised is also used in Doctrine and Covenants 164:9a, “By the grace of God, you are poised to fulfill God's ultimate vision for the church.”

**Discuss:**

- How does baptizing and teaching people to love God, others, and yourself help the church fulfill God’s ultimate vision?
Action Game: Jesus Says Go! (Play with the same rules as Simon Says.)

Invite children to do an action when they hear “Jesus says Go!” If they don’t hear “Jesus says Go!” they should stand still. Use actions that would invite interaction with another person for the “Jesus says” actions.

Sample actions:

Jesus says, “Go shake hands with a friend!”
Jesus says, “Go give a high five.”
“Go touch your toes.” (If children move, remind them, “I didn’t say, ‘Jesus says’...”)
Jesus says, “Go wave to someone in the class.”
“Go spin around.”
Jesus says, “Go give a hug.”

Spiritual Practice: Mission Prayer (adapted from https://missionalleadersdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/mission-prayer.pdf)

Say: When we invite people to be baptized, we are inviting them to be part of our community and family. This means we have a relationship with them, and we are inviting them to learn with us how to be a disciple. Jesus tells his disciples—and us—that all people are invited to follow him and keep his commandments to love God, themselves, and their neighbors. Sometimes it is easy to think of people we can invite: our friends, other family members, and classmates at school. But there are people we don’t even know yet that Jesus cares about and wants to include. The Mission Prayer can help us be open to new relationships and people we can invite.

Tell children many people throughout Community of Christ are using this prayer to listen for God and make choices to help our world be a better place for all people.

Read: God, where will your Spirit lead today?
The Holy Spirit helps us listen for God and make choices.

Ask:
- Do you remember some of the ways we learned what the Holy Spirit is like?
- What does lead mean?
- How do you think the Holy Spirit can lead us?

Read: Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.

Ask:
- How do you feel when you first wake up in the morning?

Sometimes it is hard to do what you are supposed to when you first wake up. If your mom or dad asks you to get dressed, you might lie in bed for a while because you are not quite awake yet. It is hard to listen when you are not fully awake.

Read: Grant me courage to risk something new...

Ask:
- Do you know what courage means?
- Have you ever been afraid to try something new, like go to a new school, or swim underwater?

Courage is when you decide to try even when you are not sure what will happen. When have you had courage to try something new?

Read: ...and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

Refer back to lesson 27. We learned a couple weeks ago that to bless someone means to “speak well” of them.

Ask:
- How can we bless people?
- How can we share love?
- How can we share peace?

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

Mission Prayer Map Magnet

Before class, cut poster board and street map into the same size circle shape (to represent the earth) for each child. Copy Mission Prayer for each child and cut into a rectangle smaller than the poster board and map circle. Provide each child the poster board, map section, Mission Prayer, glue stick, and adhesive magnet. Direct children to make a magnet:

- Glue the map to the poster board.
- Glue the Mission Prayer to the map.
- Put the magnet on the back.
- Write name on the back.

Option for older children: Provide pre-drawn circle shapes on poster board and map sections or a circle pattern. Ask children to cut the shapes to make their magnets.

 Invite children to take the magnet home and hang it somewhere, like their refrigerator or school locker, where they will see it every day.

Explore ways children can continue the Mission Prayer as a spiritual practice:

- Say the prayer each morning before school.
- Say the prayer with family members each day.
- Say the prayer together in Sunday school.
- Offer to read the Mission Prayer during a worship service.
Read the Xhosa/Zulu text of “Thuma Mina” CCS 661. Explain that the words mean “Send me, God.” Teach children the hymn as a call and response or play audio recording and invite children to sing along.

Ask children to read the Mission Prayer aloud together. Commission the children: “Go to your families, schools and neighborhoods! Tell people that Jesus loves them. Invite people to come with you to learn to be a disciple. Go in peace.”

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**MISSION PRAYER**

God, where will your Spirit lead today?
Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.
Grant me the courage to risk something new
and become a blessing of your love and peace.

Amen.

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**MISSION PRAYER**

God, where will your Spirit lead today?
Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.
Grant me the courage to risk something new
and become a blessing of your love and peace.

Amen.

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**MISSION PRAYER**

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and become a blessing of your love and peace.

Amen.

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