Format and Structure
The purpose of this course is to introduce young children to the concept of signal communities and our call to create signal communities. This course will explore how signal communities reflect Christ’s peace, embrace continuing revelation, make responsible choices, pursue peace, honor the sacredness of creation, and speak and live the mission of Jesus Christ. Some of the above concepts are enduring principles which complete the exploration of the nine enduring principles begun in the Reunion 2011 resource Wholeness through Christ—Balance and Connection available at www.CofChrist.org/dfg/lessons/wholeness_through_christ/default.asp

This course includes six lessons and an original children’s story illustrating the daily theme. Original artwork has been created to illustrate each chapter of the story and is also included in each lesson.

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To understand that God lets us make choices, and our choices can help or hurt ourselves, other people, and all the plants and animals in the world

Signal Communities...Pursue Peace .............................................. 19
To learn that “shalom” means peace and that God wants shalom for us, for other people, and for the plants and animals in the world

Signal Communities...Honor the Sacredness of Creation ............... 26
To hear that God made the world: everything we see and even things we can’t see and called it good. God is still making things today. We can help God by taking care of all that God made.

Signal Communities...Speak and Live Christ’s Mission ................. 32
To know that we are part of communities who love Jesus. To realize that it takes practice to learn how to live like Jesus, and our church gives us those chances to practice.
Signal Communities... Reflect Christ’s Peace

Session 1

Focus

To imagine being part of a signal community

Focus Scripture

Doctrine and Covenants 163:5a

A signal community is one that follows Christ’s way of living and is an example to others. It is an important part of God’s shalom. A community like this can also be called Zion. It is defined in scripture as a city on a hill, a sign of peace. Zion is where we can find our inner peace, but also where we live with others in loving relationships which are just and fair, where we can forgive and work out problems with others, where there is no poverty, and where we live in harmony with nature. It can be a real place, a place that we can help to create. Consider this definition of signal communities:

Signal communities positively deviate from trends and conditions in society that are contrary to God’s will for creation. They reveal a way of living that is a glimpse, demonstration, foothold, or foretaste of the peaceable reign of God on earth. Such communities provide a shining witness that the hope of the gospel is not wishful idealism. Conditions in creation can become better, more harmonious, and peaceful when we give tangible expression to the vision of Christ.


Objectives

The learner will...

• describe what they hope or dream for.
• learn how signal communities point the way to live like Jesus.
• build a signal community model.
• choose someone with whom to share their hopes or dreams.

Materials

• One cloud cut from white construction paper for each student (template provided)
• Crayons, markers, and stickers for decorating clouds
• Tape for attaching the clouds
• A color copy of today’s Signal Community illustration found at the end of this lesson
• One pillow or mat for each to sit on (optional)
• A variety of boxes of different sizes or small plastic containers—at least one for each child
• A variety of craft materials to use in building Signal Community. Some examples: ribbon, wallpaper scraps, paper plates, cups, wrapping paper, wood scraps, straws, feathers
• Several bottles of glue and glue sticks or Model Magic™ for attaching and connecting things
• A small flashlight for each participant (optional)

Resources

• A copy of today’s chapter from the story Signal Community found at the end of this lesson. (Signal Community story is also downloadable at www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion.)
Gather
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson.

• With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.
• Sit in a circle and tell the children about a dream or hope you have. For example, a dream or a hope that today there would be many boys and girls in class; that your good friend could come for a visit.
• Ask the children to take turns telling about their dreams or hopes. For example, to spend the night with friends or grandparents; to learn how to hold their breath under water; to not be afraid of the dark.
• Provide each child with a cloud cut from construction paper.
• Have or help the children write their names and their hopes and dreams on the clouds and decorate their clouds with crayons, markers, or stickers that you provide.
• Introduce each child to the class by attaching his or her cloud to a wall and say for example, “This is Mia, and she hopes and dreams that her Papa will soon come for a visit.”

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Display the illustration for chapter 1 of the story Signal Community. Plan for enough space to display a new illustration for each lesson.

Read or retell the story from chapter 1 “Welcome to Signal Community.” Try using different voices for different characters.

Engage
Invites exploration and interaction.

After telling the story:

• Discuss what part of the story is shown in today’s illustration.
• Remind the children that Sara has a dream just like they do.
• Ask the children to think of different types of signals. For example, traffic signals, flashlights, turn signals on a car, stars in the sky, lighthouses, a pointing finger. Explain that a signal points the way to go.
• Tell them that Sara has a hope and dream to build a signal community. A community that points the way to live. Signal communities are places where the people living there try to live like Jesus.
• Ask the children to think of what it means to live like Jesus. How did Jesus live?
**Build Signal Community**

Using the boxes, containers, and craft supplies you provide, ask the children to build buildings that will become part of Signal Community: a tower, a store, a house, a church. Anything goes! Give them plenty of time to be creative, and make sure each child finishes with a sense of being valued. Ask the children to bring their buildings, and as a group, join them together to make a Signal Community model. Encourage the children to “show and tell” about their building. Some may choose not to share. Explanations of their work are not required.

**Red Light Green Light Signal Game**

Ask the children to explain why there are traffic signals (to show us when to stop and when to go). In this game, one person plays the “stop light” and the rest try to touch him or her. At the start, all the children form a line about 15 feet away from the stop light. The stop light faces away from the line of kids and says “green light.” At this point the children are allowed to move toward the stop light. At any point, the stop light may say “red light!” and turn around. If any of the children are caught moving, they are out. Play resumes when the stop light turns back around and says “green light.” The stop light wins if all the kids are out before anyone is able to touch him or her. Otherwise, the first player to touch the stop light wins the game and earns the right to be “stop light” for the next game.

**Signal Community Singing Game**

Sit in a circle with the children. Have them practice holding one finger over their heads and waving it back and forth like a signal. (Option: provide a small flashlight for each child to wave.) When the group shouts the words “we give,” point your finger or flashlight at one of the children. Invite them to tell something they might learn, share, or give in a signal community. For example: learn how to plant a flower, share their snacks, give a hug. Continue singing and pointing until each child has been invited to participate.

**Signal Community**

(Tune: “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)

Signal communities
Teach us how to live.
Signal communities
We learn, we share, we give! (shout)

As you remove the clouds from the wall and hand them to the children to take home, remind them that their clouds tell about their hopes and dreams. Ask them to think of one person with whom they would like to share their hopes and dreams. Invite them to “show and tell” about their clouds to those people the next time they see them. If time allows, have them practice what they will say.

**Gather in a circle and pray,** “Dear God, we know that you are always with us and helping us live your loving ways. We thank you for our friend Anthony, for our friend Monique, for our friend [name each person in the circle]. In Jesus’ name, amen.” Send each child off with the blessings, “God loves you and I love you!”
Sara had a dream that started somewhere else. Someone else dreamed it first.

Sara dreamed...
of a city on a hill,
a light to the world,

a signal community.

The more she thought about it, the more she wanted to build it, so she rounded up her little sister Kimmie and her friend Julio.

Off to the park they ran. They gathered wood... and bricks... and glass... and started to build a city on a hill.

They worked and worked and laughed and talked and then they worked some more.

They built a whole city, a community with roads, and shops, and houses, and gardens.

They built a tall tower with a very bright white light on top.

They made a big sign that said “Welcome to Signal Community” and put a shiny red bell on it.

Julio looked around. He was puzzled.

“Who lives here?” he asked.

“We do!” squealed Kimmie. “It’s all ours!”

“It’s the dream I heard about from others,” said Sara.

“It’s not just any city on any old hill. It shines; it stands out like a signal for everyone to come.”

“Follow me,” said Julio.

They rode on the train, played in the park, drank cool water from the river, and filled their pockets in the candy store.

After a while, they lay on their backs in the green grass, with colorful flowers all around them and tall pine trees, reaching to the sky.

“Hmmm,” said Sara. “Something’s not right. There’s another part to the dream.”

Sara tried and tried to remember. Her forehead crinkled, she tipped her head from side to side, she closed one eye, and twisted her mouth.

All of a sudden, she jumped up and yelled, “Back to work!”

She had finally remembered. “Let’s get the biggest sheet of paper we can find,” she said excitedly. “We’ve got plans to draw. We’ve got to finish the dream!”

“There’s more?” asked Kimmie.

Julio cleaned sand from between his toes and smiled.
Cloud Pattern
Focus

To discover different ways to talk and listen to God

Focus Scripture

Romans 12:1–2

Objectives

The learner will...

• hear about Community of Christ books of scripture: Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants.

• discover different ways and different reasons to pray.

• understand that God always listens to one’s prayers.

Materials

• Make ahead one prayer pouch for each child by cutting a paper plate in half. Tape the two halves together face-to-face leaving the cut edge open. Punch a hole at each end of the pouch near the cut edges. Tie ribbon through the holes for a hanger.

• Crayons, markers, and stickers for decorating prayer pouches

• Pictures cut from magazines of things for which children are thankful—four or five pictures per child

• A color copy of today’s illustration found at the end of this lesson

• Old blankets for the children to take outside and lie on

• One pair of children’s scissors for each participant

• One flower pattern for each child cut ahead of time from white construction paper (template provided)

• Flower-colored construction paper (pink, yellow, red, purple) cut into 1 in/2.5 cm strips—four or five strips per child

• Glue or glue sticks

• One black permanent marker

• (Optional) One pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources

• One copy each of Community of Christ books of scripture: Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants

• A copy of today’s chapter from the story Signal Community found at the end of this lesson

• (Optional) Little Cloud by Eric Carle (Penguin Group, 1996. ISBN 9780698118300)
1 Gather
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson.

- With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.
- Spend time together looking at the model of Signal Community you made in the last session. Allow the children to point out their buildings and engage their imaginations as they decide in which building our story characters: Sara, Julio, and Kimmie might be.
- Sit in a circle and show the children the scriptures used in Community of Christ: Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants. Discuss with the children how God guides us through these scriptures and the lessons Jesus taught. Explain that “to guide” means to lead us, to help us, and to show us the way. Help the children understand that God can guide them, too. When they pray and listen for God or when they hear scripture stories, they are learning about God’s ways. God also uses parents and teachers to help guide them.
- Give each child a prayer pouch, made ahead from paper plates, to decorate with markers, crayons, or stickers you provide. Have (or help) the children write their names and the words Prayer Pouch on its outside. Spread out an assortment of cutout pictures of nature and encourage the children to choose several pictures to put in their pouches. Suggest the children pull out a picture, one by one, and say, “Thank you God, for ...” Remind the children that we can thank God for so many things in our world. Tell them that they can take their pouch home and put other pictures in it, too (for example, pictures of family, friends, pets, or their home).

2 Engage
Invites exploration and interaction.

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Add the illustration for chapter 2 of the story Signal Community to the illustration from yesterday.

Read or retell chapter 2 “Find Answers Together.” Remember to use your character voices from yesterday.

After telling the story:
- Discuss what part of the story is shown in today’s illustration.
- Ask what new characters were in the story today.
- Talk about times the children, just like in the story, have seen clouds that reminded them of other things like people, animals, or nature.
- (Optional) Read Little Cloud by Eric Carle in which a little cloud becomes all sorts of things—sheep, an airplane, trees, a hat—before joining other clouds and raining.
3 Respond
Takes the learners from hearing to doing.

God Listens
Take a walk together outside and find a nice spot to lie on blankets and look at the sky just like the children in the story. Look to find shapes in any clouds that may be in the sky. Then explain that we can talk to God anywhere or any time, day or night. Prayer is a way of talking to God. You can pray out loud, in a whisper, or silently. Many people bow their heads, close their eyes, or kneel, but you can hold your body however you choose. Take turns talking to God. Encourage the children to talk to God as a friend. Have them tell God about their day.

“Pray to God” Song
(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

Are you happy? Are you happy? (smile)
You can pray. You can pray. (spread arms out)
Tell God all about it (cup one hand around mouth)
You can even shout it (cup both hands around mouth)
Feel God’s love. Feel God’s love. (hug self)

Are you sad? Are you sad? (trace fingers down face like tears)
You can pray. You can pray. (fold hands together)
Tell God all about it (bow head)
Even if you pout it (frown)
Feel God’s love. Feel God’s love. (hug self)

Flowers for Signal Community
Show the children how to hold their scissors. Let them snip off pieces from the precut strips of construction paper. Either squeeze the glue onto the flower template (provided) for the children or have them use glue sticks to fill the template with the snipped pieces—don’t worry that they go over the lines. After letting the flowers dry, draw a circle in the middle of the flower. Invite the children to add their “flowers everywhere” (just like in today’s story) to your model of Signal Community.

Listen and Hear
Sometimes God speaks in a still small voice, through other people, through scripture, or through prayer. Have children stand in a single file line. Whisper into the first child’s ear “Remember to pray to God.” Have that child whisper what they heard to the next person and so on. Ask the last person to tell what they heard. Compare to the original phrase and talk about how sometimes we must listen carefully to God.

4 Send
Explores how the lesson might be lived out.

5 Bless
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope.

Hand the children their prayer pouches to take home. Gather in a circle and pray, “Dear God, thank you for hearing us when we pray. Amen.” Send each child off by saying “(child’s name), God loves you and listens to your prayers.”

Signal Communities...Live Christ’s Mission

Lessons for Young Children — 10
Signal Community
Chapter 2—Find Answers Together

Julio, Sara, and Kimmie were sitting on a blanket in the park looking at a large drawing. “Signal Community is perfect,” said Julio. “It has everything you need!”

They had built Signal Community, a city on a hill, a light to the world.

It was Sara’s dream. But it was also a dream she heard from others.

“It’s not quite right yet,” Sara said.

She stared up at the clouds and watched them change shapes across the blue sky.

“I still can’t remember part of the dream.”

Just then a large red ball rolled across the blanket. Their friends Micah and little Carlos came running up.

“Oh!” Micah exclaimed as he saw the city for the first time. “What are you doing?”

Sara smiled, “We built our dream! A city on a hill! It’s called Signal Community!”

Micah and Carlos looked around. Their eyes grew wide. The city was awesome! High on a hill, with beautiful buildings, a sparkling river, and flowers everywhere.

“Come on, we’ll show you!” Sara said, and they ran up the road to the city. They walked along the streets. They heard the train whistle. At the candy store, Julio gave everyone red licorice.

“This place has everything—homes, a school, a hospital, and places to worship God,” said Micah.

“This is what a city is supposed to be like,” Julio said. “And ‘signal’ means that it shows others what the dream is, too.”

“Oh!” Micah said. “I know those words. A city that is a signal…signal community.”

He frowned a little. “There is something more…”

He turned to Kimmie and Carlos who were drawing pictures in the sand. “Do you remember?”

Carlos shrugged. Kimmie shook her head.

They all lay back on the blanket to watch the clouds. The wind whispered through the trees. Birds sang. The smell of sweet flowers filled the air.

Sara tried to remember hearing the dream—the first time, before it was her dream. The other children tried to hear it too. They watched clouds bump into each other. The wind and birds made a beautiful song…

“… share the good news and create signal communities…”

They all heard it, but Sara was the first to jump up.

“That’s it! It’s to share the good news! That’s what Signal Community is for! Sharing the good news with others.”

“How do you know that?” Julio asked, still squinting at the clouds.

“It’s part of the dream,” said Sara. Kimmie and Carlos were already chasing each other through the grass.

“Who are we going to share the good news with?” Micah asked.

Sara smiled and said, “It’s not the dream yet—we need to invite others. Who shall we ask?”

“Let’s invite everyone we see,” Micah said. “There are lots of people in the park! They will love this place!”

Julio was still lying on the blanket, staring at the clouds. Then he saw what Sara and Micah had seen. Even Kimmie and Carlos saw it.

The clouds were turning into people—smiling people holding hands.

Julio knew this was more than just looking at clouds—he and his friends were praying. They were imagining what to do. “Remember to pray to God,” he thought. “Find answers together.”

Julio jumped up and raced to join the others. They were going to share the good news!
Flower Pattern
Focus

To understand that God lets us make choices, and our choices can help or hurt ourselves, other people, and all the plants and animals in the world

Focus Scripture

Romans 12:9–13

Objectives

The learner will...

• better understand what choices are.
• practice deciding what good choices to make.
• hear how choices can help or hurt others.
• understand that God hopes good choices are made.

Materials

• Pictures from magazines or the Internet that show where choices might be made (for example, a picture that shows someone crying, a lost pet, a messy room, someone in pain, or garbage thrown outside)
• A color copy of today’s illustration found at the end of this lesson
• Bunches of wadded-up newspaper
• One paper or Styrofoam cup for each child
• Pen or pencil
• Tape
• Markers and/or assorted stickers for bell craft
• Two pipe cleaners (chenille stems)
• Small jingle bell (approximately 1 in/2.5 cm)
• One label for each child with the words “Make Good Choices” written or printed on it
• (Optional) One pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources

• A copy of today’s chapter from the story Signal Community found at the end of this lesson.
With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.

Play this game to help your class better understand what a choice is. Explain that this game of choice has no right or wrong answers. The choice is always up to them. State the choices by saying, for example, “You have a choice... You can sit down or stand up. It is your choice.” Wait for their responses and then go on to the next choice. Some suggestions are: You can shout or whisper your name to me. You can clap your hands or stomp your feet. You can reach for the sky or touch the floor. You can touch your ears or touch your nose. You can sit on the floor or sit in a chair. You can raise your right arm or your left arm. You can turn around or jump up and down. Have the children add some choices of their own. God gives us the ability to make choices.

Sit in a circle and one at a time show pictures of situations where choices might be made. Talk about the circumstance in the picture and have the children decide what they could do to help. What would be a good choice for them to make? Say, “God lets us make choices. Our choices can help or hurt ourselves and others.”

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Add the illustration for chapter 3 of the story *Signal Community* to the previous illustrations.

Read or retell chapter 3 “Make Good Choices.” Remember to use your character voices from yesterday.

After telling the story:
- Discuss what part of the story is shown in today’s illustration.
- Remind the children that they make choices every day. For example, deciding what clothes to wear, what to draw, or what to eat. Tell them, “God hopes you value making choices.”
- Invite them to tell about a good choice they made. For example, wearing a coat when it is cold outside or sharing their toys. Why were those good choices?
**Trash (Rubbish) Volleyball**
Divide the group into two teams with a dividing line between them. Throw bunches of wadded-up newspaper onto both sides. Ask the children to clean up their communities by throwing the newspaper on their side over to the other side. Since both sides will be throwing trash over to the opposite side, it will be impossible for either side to win. After a while gather the two teams and talk about what happened. Compare this to signal community. If people throw trash into other people’s yards, lakes, and streams, who wins? Nobody wins if we don’t take care of the environment. Talk about responsible choices for taking care of trash. Clean up with a game of trashcan (dustbin) basketball.

**Be Like Jesus**
Ask the children to pretend to do what the leader says only if the leader says “Be like Jesus.” For example, if the leader says, “Be like Jesus; be kind to animals”; children pretend to pet animals. But, if the leader says, “Hit yourself in the arm”; children should remain still.

**Make Good Choices Bell Craft**
1. Use a pen or pencil to poke a small hole in the middle of the bottom of each cup.
2. String the bell on one of the pipe cleaners, slide the bell to the center, and fold the pipe cleaner in half.
3. Put the pipe cleaner inside the cup by poking both ends through the hole you made earlier. Pull the ends up through the hole until the bell is hanging inside the cup.
4. Secure the loose ends of the pipe cleaner around a metal circle to create a handle.
5. Let children add stickers or draw with markers on the outside of the cup.
6. Attach the Make Good Choices label to the side of the cup and remind the children that in the story the kids rang the bell and all got together to talk about making good choices.

**If You Make Good Choices**
(Tune: “If You’re Happy and You Know It”)
If you make good choices, clap your hands. (clap, clap)
If you make good choices, clap your hands. (clap, clap)
If you make good choices, then shout with big, loud voices “I make good choices!” clap your hands. (clap, clap)

Other verses: stomp your feet, shout “Amen!”

Hand the children their bells to take home. Gather in a circle and pray, “Dear God, thank you for giving us the ability to make choices. Help me make good choices. In Jesus’ name, amen.” Send each child off by saying, “(child’s name), God hopes you make good choices.”
Signal Community
Chapter 3—Make Good Choices

Sara, Julio, and Micah were drawing on their paper in the park.

Kimmie and little Carlos were playing in the sandbox. They could hear the sound of people in Signal Community.

It was a wonderful sound. The children had all heard about the city that followed a dream, a signal community that shared the good news.

“Good news, good news…” Kimmie repeated as she played.

“What is the good news?” Julio asked.

“We invited everyone to live in Signal Community…” Sara said, “But that’s not all.”

Carlos said, “It’s the good news that Jesus shared!”

“Carlos, you’re right! It’s the good news Jesus taught—that God loves and accepts us all! We need to share the good news of how God loves everyone, watches over us, and wants us to live together peacefully.”

Julio grinned and jumped up. “Let’s go tell everyone!”

Sara and Micah grabbed hands with Kimmie and Carlos, and they all ran up the hill into Signal Community to share the good news with others.

People were everywhere in the city!
Families were riding the train.
Teachers were teaching.
Chefs were cooking,
and workers were building a pet store.

Children were taking turns on the swings.
They watched so no one fell off the teeter-totters.

Older children showed younger ones how to write their names.

But not all the people in Signal Community were making good choices.

In the candy store kids with sugary ooze running down their faces had eaten almost ALL the red licorice!

“Hey!” said Julio. “That was for everybody!” The kids ran away laughing.

They saw a family dumping picnic garbage into the river. It smelled bad.

They saw kids playing video games. The same kids who played video games all day yesterday. They needed to go outside, get some exercise or do their chores.

“We need to learn how to live like Jesus,” Sara said. “We need to learn about making good choices.”

So they rang the shiny red bell on the Signal Community sign. They called all the people to the park to talk.

“Signal Community is a great place. It’s a city on a hill, a light to world,” Sara said. She told about the dream, the dream that started somewhere else but had become hers. “Is this your dream too?” she asked.’

“Yes, yes!” they all exclaimed.

“Part of the dream is sharing the good news of God’s love for everyone. That means we live like Jesus. We share, love, and help one another.”

“Yes,” they agreed. They all had heard the stories of Jesus.

Then Micah said, “That means we have to make good choices. We can all have what we need if we share and take care of one another and the Earth.”

“Yes,” said the children who promised to share the licorice next time. “Yes” said the family as they cleaned their garbage out of the river. “Yes,” said the kids who put away their video games.

Julio remembered how he found an answer while looking at clouds. He told everyone about praying to God, and how the clouds looked like people. Those clouds helped him know that God wanted them to invite other people to Signal Community.

“So when you don’t know what to do,” explained Julio, “or if you’re having a problem, say a prayer. Listen and watch for an answer. God will help you find the answer and help you make good choices.”

Everyone clapped. They loved that idea. Many already knew it. But for some, it was new. It was a good day in Signal Community.
Focus

To learn that “shalom” means peace and that God wants shalom for us, for other people, and for the plants and animals in the world

Focus Scripture

Romans 12:14–21

Objectives

The learner will...

• describe what peaceful love feels like.
• hear how stories in the Bible teach us how to live in peace like Jesus.
• learn that the meaning of *shalom* is peace.
• imagine bringing shalom to the world.

Materials

• Comfort objects such as, blankets, stuffed animals, pajamas, pictures of loved ones, favorite books
• One small noisemaker for each student
• A color copy of today’s illustration found at the end of this lesson
• Items to hide before class for the “Jesus Jobs” activity: a bandage (plaster), an invitation card, a fishing lure, a hymnal, a footprint, a candle, an apple, a Bible, a heart, praying hands (decorate with brightly colored ribbon)
• Two sturdy paper plates with the centers cut out for each student
• Two tongue depressors for each student
• One clothespin or peg for each student
• Tacky craft glue
• White and pink construction paper cut in the shape of lamb ears (template provided)
• Brown and yellow construction paper cut in the shape of lion ears (template provided)
• One stapler
• Lots of cotton balls
• Lots of yellow and brown yarn cut in lengths of ½ in/.5 cm
• (Optional) One pair of children’s scissors for each participant
• (Optional) One pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources

• A copy of today’s chapter from the story *Signal Community* found at the end of this lesson
• One Bible
**Gather**
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson.

- With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.
- Sit in a circle and show objects that children may use to comfort themselves. Show them one at a time and let the children look at and hold each object. Ask if any of the children use such “peaceful objects.” Explain how some people use these objects to help them feel peaceful and loved by those nearby and by God. As a group, describe what that peaceful love feels like. God wants that feeling for all people in the world.
- Give each child a small noisemaker. Let the children walk around using their noisemaker. When one person you choose whispers “peace,” everyone should stop making noise. If the group does not quiet down after the first whisper, the whisperer will tag a second person to whisper with them on the count of three. If the group is still noisy, add more whisperers until the whisperers (peacemakers) outnumber the noisemakers, and the room goes silent. Make the point that it is impossible to live in peace alone. It takes people working together to create peace.

**Engage**
Invites exploration and interaction.

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Add the illustration for chapter 4 of the story *Signal Community* to the previous illustrations.

Read or retell chapter 4 “Live Like Jesus.” Remember to use your character voices from yesterday.

After telling the story:

- Discuss what part of the story is shown in today’s illustration.
- Introduce “shalom” as a word that means living in peace. Explain that God wants shalom for all people, plants, and animals of the world.
- Hold up a Bible, and remind the children that people in Signal Community learned how to live in peace by reading about Jesus in the Bible. Jesus shows how to live in peace.
Jesus Jobs

Before class, hide the following items around your room for the children to find. Place a bright bow or ribbon on each. This will make finding each object easier. After the children find all the items, let them use the items as clues to learn what Jesus did to live a peaceable life. With the discovery of each clue, discuss ways they can do what Jesus did. Suggested items to hide: bandages or plasters (Jesus healed and cared for the sick); an invitation card (Jesus invited people to join him); a fishing lure (Jesus fished for people); a hymnal (Jesus sang with the disciples); a footprint (Jesus traveled to spread the good news); a candle (Jesus let his light shine to others); an apple (Jesus ate many meals with his friends); a Bible (Jesus read the Hebrew Scriptures); a heart (Jesus loved everyone); and praying hands (Jesus prayed often).

Lion and Lamb Masks

Help the children pretend to be lions and lambs by making a mask for each animal.

1. Use tacky craft glue to attach a tongue depressor to each paper plate to form a handle. Use a clothespin or peg to keep it in place until the glue is dry.

2. Use a stapler to attach the lamb ears and the lion ears to the masks.

3. Cover the outer rings of both paper plates with glue. Glue on lots of cotton to make the lamb mask fluffy and white.

4. Glue on lots of brown and orange yarn for the lion’s mane. You may want to allow the children to cut their own yarn so they can practice using scissors.

After the masks dry, allow the children to choose to be a lion or a lamb. Put the children with lion masks on one side and all the lambs on the opposite side of the room. Have them make the sound of their animal and act out the lambs being afraid of the lions. Then mix them all together to symbolize shalom—the peace of Christ.

The Lion and Lamb Song

(Tune: “Gunk, Gunk, Went the Little Green Frog”)

“Roar, roar” went the big, strong lions one day.
“Roar, roar” went the big, strong lions.
“Roar, roar” went the big, strong lions one day.
And they all went “Roar, roar, roar.”

“Baa, baa” went the young, little lambs one day.
“Baa, baa” went the young, little lambs.
“Baa, baa” went the young, little lambs one day.
And they all went “Baa, baa, baa.”

“Shalom” said the lions and lambs one day.
“Shalom” said the lions and lambs.
“Shalom” said the lions and lambs one day.
And together they all lay down.
Peace Train
Have the children line up behind one another. Explain that they are part of a peace train getting ready to leave the station. As the first person walks slowly and changes direction, have the rest of the children follow along making train sounds. Invite them to imagine taking a trainload of shalom to the world. After the train takes a wide journey, the leader will signal to stop. Talk together about what shalom they are unloading from the train. For example, food so no one is hungry, water so no one is thirsty and all can be clean, medicine to help sick people get better. As time allows have other children lead the peace train loaded with shalom for the world.

Hand the children their lion and lamb masks to take home. Gather in a circle and pray, “Dear God, we learned today what shalom is. Help us to live shalom here on Earth. In Jesus’ name, amen.” Send each child off by saying, “Shalom, (child’s name).”
Signal Community
Chapter 4—Live Like Jesus

Sara was happy today. After she and Julio and Micah gathered everyone and helped them learn about making good choices, she knew the good news of God’s love would be shared in Signal Community.

But that was not happening everywhere in Signal Community.

On their morning walk, they saw several people having trouble living in peace.

“Oh, oh,” said Kimmie and little Carlos. They pointed...

...to the stable. Children had been riding the ponies all day long. The ponies were very tired. Micah and Julio put the ponies in the barn to rest, fed them, and gave them water.

“Oh, oh,” Kimmie and Carlos said. They pointed...

...to a group of kids who were making fun of a younger girl. Sara, Julio, and Micah put their arms around the little girl and asked, “Would you like to join us on our walk?” Making fun of someone is not okay.

“Oh, oh,” Carlos said, as he pointed...

...to flowers that had been stepped on.

When Kimmie started to cry over the flowers, a tall girl laughed at her and called her a big baby.

“This is not good,” Sara said. “There is more to sharing the good news than we thought. Sharing the good news is more than inviting, and more than making good choices. It is teaching how to live like Jesus.”

So Julio rang the big red bell on the “Welcome to Signal Community” sign. He sent out the signal for all the people to meet in the park to hear the stories of Jesus. They stood in a big circle by the sandbox.

The people of Signal Community read their Bibles, and learned about Jesus sharing meals with people and helping others get well. They learned how Jesus made friends and invited them to go with him to other places where they made more friends.

The kids who made fun of others looked at each other and said, “Jesus showed us how we should live. He showed us how everyone should be treated with respect!”

“That’s right,” Julio said.

“And don’t eat all the licorice so there’s plenty for others,” said one of the licorice-eaters.

“Yep,” said Micah.

Then they read from the Bible about the sacredness of creation, about how God made the Earth and everything in it. They began to see how God was willing to help them create new things like music, gardens, and stories. They were to be partners with God to help all of creation be healthy and grow.

“You mean to take care of the ponies?” little Carlos asked. “And not ride them so long?”

“Yes,” nodded Julio. He was glad they were starting to get it.

“And to plant flowers and not step on them?” Kimmie asked.

“That’s right!” Sara smiled.

“I think we’re getting the good news!” several people said to each other.

“Share the good news!” others shouted.

Soon, they were back on their feet and running up the hill to Signal Community, to try again to live like Jesus.

“That was today,” Sara thought, “I wonder what tomorrow will be like.” She sat on the blanket and looked over her plans on the big paper again. Was there more? Maybe it was time to talk to God again and try to understand more of the dream.
Lion and Lamb Ear Patterns

LAMB’S EAR OUTSIDE PATTERN
Cut 2 — White

LAMB’S EAR INSIDE PATTERN
Cut 2 — Pink

LION’S EAR OUTSIDE PATTERN
Cut 2 — BROWN

LION’S EAR INSIDE PATTERN
Cut 2 — YELLOW
Signal Communities...  
Honor the Sacredness of Creation

Session 5

Focus

To hear that God made the world: everything we see and even things we can’t see and called it good. God is still making things today. We can help God by taking care of all that God made.

Focus Scripture

Doctrine and Covenants 164:9c

Objectives

The learner will...

• understand that God made the world: things we see and things we can’t see and called it good.
• celebrate all that God created.
• learn that we can help God take care of all creation.

Materials

• One sheet of drawing paper for each child; one large drawing paper for you
• Crayons or markers for drawing
• A color copy of today’s illustration found at the end of this lesson
• One small or medium-sized ball
• Supplies for the “Dirty Water” activity: tall clear bowl (2/3 full of water); attractive rock that fits inside the bowl; small plastic fish, turtles, or frogs; torn newspaper; red, purple or brown colored soda or fruit drink; soot or dirt
• One cardboard tube approximately 5 in/13 cm (from rolls of paper towels, toilet or wrapping paper) for each child
• One nylon stocking or sock long enough to cover the tube for each child. Ahead of time insert the cardboard tube into each nylon stocking or sock. Tie the end of the stocking with string as close to the tube as possible. Trim away excess stocking or sock.
• An assortment of craft supplies such as googly eyes, fabric scraps, glitter, buttons, pipe cleaners (chenille stems), stickers
• One crepe paper streamer for each child
• (Optional) One pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources

• A copy of today’s chapter from the story Signal Community found at the end of this lesson
1 Gather
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson.

- With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.
- Ask children to name five things God created. Draw them on a large sheet of paper so everyone can see. Ask them if God is done creating. Tell them some of creation is too tiny to see. Some of creation is very big. No matter what the size, we should try to take care of all God's creations.
- God made the world with great love. Ask the children to name their favorite thing in the world. What favorite color? What favorite animal? What favorite flower? Give the children paper and crayons, and ask them to draw a picture of their favorite things made by God. Invite them to share the pictures with the group. Tape the artwork on the walls around your Signal Community model because Signal Community is for all creation.

2 Engage
Invites exploration and interaction.

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Read or retell chapter 5 “For All of God’s Creation.” Remember to use your character voices from yesterday.

After telling the story:
- Discuss what part of the story is shown in today's illustration.
- Ask what new characters were in the story today.
- Ask the children to think of who or what they would invite to Signal Community. Maybe something or someone who often gets left out or ignored. For example, a person with no home, a stray dog or cat, someone who is sick or lonely, a person with a disability, a wilting flower or tree. Talk about how much more complete Signal Community is when all creation belongs.
All that God Made
Have everyone sit in a circle on the floor or ground. Remind the children that God created everything we see and even things we can’t see and God called it good. Work together as a group to think of as many things that God created as you can. One person will roll a small or medium-sized ball to another person who will name something God made. Keep rolling the ball and naming parts of creation until everyone has had a chance. Remind the children that God is still creating today.

Dirty Water
While the children watch, place an attractive rock in a tall clear bowl, and fill it two-thirds full of water. Add a small plastic frog, fish, or turtle. Talk with the children about all the creatures that live in the water. Discuss what those creatures must feel like when people don’t take care of the water. Pour bits of torn newspaper into the water and ask how the creatures might feel when we litter their home. Pour some red, purple, or brown colored soda or fruit drink into the water. Next, pour soot or dirt into the water. Explain that factories sometimes put junk like that in the water. Ask if they think fish, frogs, and turtles like living in this water. Would they want to drink this water? We can partner with God by taking care of the water in the lakes and streams near our homes.

Creation Creatures
God created a world full of creatures! Distribute prepared cardboard tubes. Invite children to make “creation creatures.” Provide craft supplies for the children to glue on their creatures. When completed, encourage them to imagine different settings for their creatures. For example, what might their creatures say if: the day was warm and sunny and there was plenty of fresh air and water; they went through a big storm; if they were surrounded by rubbish or garbage and didn’t have enough sunshine, rain, or food.

God Made the Land and God Made the Sea
Learn this new song:

(Tune: “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”)
God made the land, and God made the sea. (hold hands out, palms down)
God made it all, and God loves me. (arms wide, then point to self)
God made day and the sun so bright. (touch fingertips overhead)
God made the moon and the stars at night. (wiggle fingers for twinkling stars)
God made the land, and God made the sea. (hold hands out, palms down)
God made it all, and God loves me. (arms wide, then point to self)
Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out.

Give the children streamers and have them practice praising God by saying, “Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!” as they shake their streamers. Take the children outside for a nature walk. Ask them to look around to find something that God has made. When someone finds something, gather around it and look at it together. Say, “God made the world, and God is still making things today.” Have those gathered around shake their streamers as they shout “Alleluia!”

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope.

Hand the children their “creation creature” to take home. Gather in a circle and pray, “Dear God, thank you for your wonderful world. Help us to remember to take care of all you have made. In Jesus’ name, amen.” Send each child off by saying, “(child’s name), you are a special part of God’s creation.”
The next day when Sara, Julio, and Kimmie went to Signal Community they heard crying outside the park. The sound came from a small puppy and a little boy in a wheelchair. Both were whimpering.

“What’s the matter?” Sara asked the boy.

“My puppy is sad because he can’t go to the park and play,” the boy sobbed.

Sara patted the puppy on the head. “But why can’t he? This is a pet-friendly park!”

The little boy looked up at Sara from his wheelchair. “Because I can’t go in the park.”

Sara looked at Julio and Kimmie and they all looked at the wheelchair.

“Those little wheels will get stuck in the sand,” Kimmie said. She was right.

“Signal Community is for everyone!” said Julio. He and Sara picked up the wheelchair and carried it and the little boy into the park. Kimmie ran with the puppy to the sandbox.

“Welcome to Signal Community,” said Sara as she pointed to the city on the hill, the light to the world.

The little boy’s mouth fell open.

“Can I go there too?” he asked.

“Of course!” and they all raced up the road to Signal Community, trying to keep up with the boy and his puppy.

At the top of the hill, they stopped to rest.

“I’m tired!” Julio said. The puppy was tired, too. “What are your names?”

“I’m Ahmil and this is Happy,” the boy said, pointing to his dog. “And this,” he said, pointing to his wheelchair, “…is Dreamer.”

“Oooo,” Sara said. “Dreamer!”

“Dreamer takes me up to the sky, where I dream of flying. It’s where I like to pretend to be.”

Sara and Julio thought about the dreams that helped make Signal Community.

Julio said, “There might be more kids like Ahmil and dogs like Happy. We should invite them all.”

“Everyone can help us,” Sara said. So they rang the big red bell. All the people stood in a circle.

“Have you heard the stories of Jesus helping people who were hurt or sad or weren’t loved by others?” Sara asked, opening her Bible to read those stories. Everyone was all ears. They all knew people who were sad or sick or were left out, like Ahmil.

They all thought of someone they could invite to Signal Community.

“May I bring my grandmother?” one girl asked. “She can’t go to church anymore, but maybe she could come here.”

“Yes!” Sara said. “Bring everyone! Signal Community is a city on a hill, a light to the world, and everyone is welcome.”

“Dogs too?” asked Ahmil.

“Doggies too,” Kimmie shouted, giving Happy a big hug. “It’s for all animals, isn’t it Sara?”

“It’s the good news for all creation, for everything God created. Signal Community needs healthy and happy plants and animals, too,” Sara said.

The children ran off in all directions. Some went to invite their friends and families. Some invited people who were sad. Others planted flowers. Some helped Julio add the words “for all of God’s creation” to the “Welcome to Signal Community” sign.

Sara smiled. Could Signal Community get any better? She was glad she followed her dream, the dream that began somewhere else.
Focus

to know that we are part of communities who love Jesus. To realize that it takes practice to learn how to live like Jesus, and our church gives us those chances to practice.

Focus Scripture

Doctrine and Covenants 164:9b

Objectives

The learner will...

- learn that God gives us feelings to express ourselves.
- understand that signal communities can be anywhere in the world where people care for all creation.
- discover ways we can live like Jesus.
- begin to learn Community of Christ mission statement.

Materials

- One shoebox lid or other shallow container for each child
- Enough salt or sand to pour a thin layer in each shallow container
- A color copy of today’s illustration found at the end of this lesson
- A world map or globe with a star marking where you live and a star marking the country of Haiti
- Blocks or Lego’s™ to build a pretend spring for fresh water
- One plastic pipe to show where the pretend water comes from
- Buckets or containers for carrying the pretend fresh water
- Four person-shaped cutouts from tag board or poster board for each child (template provided). Write either the word Joy, Hope, Love, or Peace on each cutout
- Crayons, marker, and stickers for decorating the cutouts
- Tape
- One plush Earth ball
- (Optional) One pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources

- A copy of today’s chapter from the story Signal Community found at the end of this lesson
• With a warm smile, welcome each child by name.

• Sit in a circle and explain to the children that God has given us feelings to express ourselves. Understanding those feelings and learning how to handle them is part of learning to live like Jesus. Give each child the lid of a shoebox or some other shallow container containing a thin layer of salt or sand. As you talk with the children about feelings, ask them to use their fingers to draw a face in the salt or sand to represent the different feelings you are discussing: happy, sad, angry, excited, worried, and scared. For each feeling, let the children think of a circumstance that caused them to feel this way. Also talk about how they should act when they feel this way. Softly shake the box to erase that feeling’s face. When all the feelings have been discussed, relate erasing the feeling faces to the way our feelings come and go. Nobody is happy or angry or sad all the time. Tell them that in today’s Signal Community chapter, the children will feel lots of different feelings. Discover together what feelings the boys and girls experience while listening to the story.

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing a pillow or mat for each child to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place for them to listen to a story.

Add the illustration for chapter 6 of the story Signal Community to the previous illustrations.

Read or retell chapter 6 “Signal Community Is Right Here.” Remember to use your character voices from yesterday.

After telling the story:
• Recall together what feelings the children felt in the story.

• Discuss what part of the story is shown in today’s illustration.

• Ask the children if they knew that the Signal Community in the story was made from sand. Help them understand that they can be part of building real signal communities right now at home, at school, in their families, in the neighborhood, in their churches.

• (Optional) Read the story Herman the Helper by Robert Kraus in which Herman, the helpful octopus, is always willing to help anyone who needs him—old or young, friend or enemy.
Learning about Mission through Pretending
Mark two locations on a globe or world map with a star—where you are today, and the country of Haiti. Ask the children to find the stars that show their current location and the place called Haiti. Pretend to fly with the children over the land and ocean to Haiti. Hold out your hands and become your own airplane. When you land, use blocks to pretend to help build and cap a pretend spring for clean water. Place a piece of plastic pipe on top of the blocks to show where the water comes from. Let the children pretend to help the Haitians carry the water in buckets or containers back to their home. When we help others, we are living like Jesus.

Signal Communities
Help children begin to learn the mission statement of the church and connect it to things they can do. (“We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace.”) Ask them to think of ways they can bring joy to the world. Write each suggestion on the person-shaped cutout with the word Joy. Follow the same procedure for hope, love, and peace. Invite the children to decorate their four cutout people with crayons, markers, or stickers. Help them tape together the hands of their four cutouts to make a signal community where all are welcome.

Jesus Shows the Way
Form a circle to sing and act out this song (Tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

Jesus shows the way
Jesus shows the way
Hi, ho the derry-o,
Jesus shows the way

Other verses:
Jesus teaches to love (hug self)
Jesus teaches to give (pretend to give)
Jesus teaches to pray (fold hands)
Jesus teaches to learn (point to brain)

A Prayer of Blessing for the Earth
Hug a plush Earth ball in your arms, like the “Hugg-A-Planet” Earth ball, and say a prayer of blessing for all the people, animals, and plants of the Earth. Pass the Earth ball around the circle and give each child who cares to a chance to offer a prayer.

Hand the children their “signal communities” to take home. Gather in a circle and pray, “Dear God, thank you for giving us your son Jesus to show us how to live. Help us to share our joy, hope, love, and peace with others. In Jesus’ name, amen.” Send each child off by saying, “(child’s name), you are part of a community that loves and cares for you always.”
Fluffy white clouds bumped together across the blue sky all day. That night, the clouds turned gray, and it rained hard. The wind blew and lightning flashed.

Sara, Julio, and Kimmie loved storms. The rain watered God’s creation and brought fresh water to the rivers. But they were glad when the rain stopped and they could go to the park.

All the people were already there, standing in a big circle around Signal Community. They were quiet. And looked sad.

Sara stopped when she saw their sad faces. Julio stopped. Micah and Ahmil stopped. Kimmie and little Carlos, and even Happy, stopped.

The “Welcome to Signal Community” sign was on the ground.

The buildings were gone.
The train was off its tracks.
The licorice in the candy store was soggy.
The streets were flooded.
Everything was under water.

“Oh no, Signal Community…” Sara said. Julio dropped to his knees.

They all looked down into the sandbox where they had built Signal Community,
where their dream had come true,
where they played,
where they learned to be kind like Jesus
where they learned to care for animals and the Earth,
where they learned to share peace
and the good news of God’s love.

Signal Community, their city of dreams, had washed away.

“It was only a sand city,” Julio said. “I’m tired of sand between my toes anyway.”

He kicked away the bag of red licorice he had brought every day, now full of water.

“This is where we learned how to get along,” Micah said.
Sara jumped up. That’s where she heard the dream! The dream that started somewhere else, that became her own.

The dream of a city on a hill. 
A light to the world.

All the children were quiet.

Then Julio said, “We can create Signal Community right here—in our church.”

“And in our schools,” Micah said.

“In our neighborhoods, our homes, and our city,” Ahmil said.

“And in our families,” Kimmie and little Carlos said.

“Now that we know how to do it, we can do it ANYWHERE!” Sara said. The children jumped for joy. Their signal community wasn’t just a sand city. It was everywhere they shared the good news of God’s love and lived like Jesus. It was everywhere they cared for one another and all creation.

Sara and Julio looked out the window at the sky.

The white clouds were forming shapes of signal communities all over the sky.

Not just one or two, but a hundred and even more!

Made from bricks and thatch, bamboo and adobe,
With people of all ages and all abilities,
People from many lands; speaking all languages,
Signal communities were everywhere in the world.
And they were beautiful.

“It’s not just a dream anymore,” Sara sighed. “It’s real. And we know what it takes to make it happen!”
PAPER DOLL PATTERN

Cut 4 for each child