

Lessons for Young
Children (ages 3–5)

Of Water and Spirit:
Disciples in
Community of Christ



Community of Christ

Introduction

These lessons for young children explore the theme *Of Water and Spirit* using language and object lessons suitable for children ages 3–5. Children will explore scripture passages in story form that connect with each theme. Lessons include scripture stories, music suggestions, art activities, games, interactive activities, spiritual practices, and snack suggestions.

Each lesson plan provides suggestions to prepare and teach the class. Also included are suggested questions you might use to engage students. You may think of other questions or ways to phrase questions that are more suitable for the students in your class.

An estimate for time to complete each part of the lesson is included to help you plan. We realize class times vary. Select activities to fit your allotted class time. Time to complete activities will also vary based on the number of children in the class.

Young children enjoy process more than the finished product, so we’ve suggested art projects rather than crafts that all look the same. These reinforce the lessons, and children will enjoy telling about their creations. Where practical, write children’s words on their artwork so families will understand the process and what was learned.

For snacks, model “healthy relationships with...the earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:2b) by avoiding use of plastic (unless recycling is available) and Styrofoam. As much as possible, serve snacks using reusable or paper plates and paper cups, preferably those that are compostable or contain recycled content. If your schedule allows, let children help prepare, serve, and clean up snacks. Be aware of food allergies. Where possible, avoid such foods or ingredients. Always try to provide a similar snack for children with allergies, or offer such snacks to all the children.

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Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Bible quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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Of Water and Spirit: Disciples in
Community of Christ

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Focus

To introduce the theme We Believe with age-suitable language and introduce the ideas of baptism and belief in God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit using children's foundational knowledge of the five senses.

Focus Scripture Passage

Matthew 3:13–17

Objectives

The learners will...

- be introduced to one another, the teachers, and the theme for the day.
- discover through scripture the story of Jesus' baptism.
- engage in object lessons that introduce belief in God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*, Herald Publishing House, 2013
- Optional: *What Does Peace Feel Like?* by Vladimir Radunsky, Atheneum Books, ISBN: 0689866763
- Journal for each child—Journals can be small spiral notebooks bought for each child or simple handmade journals with construction paper covers. Journals should have enough pages for each day of class and for children to continue to use their journals when they go home.
- Stickers to decorate journal cover (optional)
- Markers, crayons, and pencils
- **Art supplies:** Dove pattern (p. 4), white card stock or poster board, white feathers, glue bottles or glue sticks, wiggle eyes, self-adhesive magnets
- Source of water for Senses Walk (pond, lake, or pool if available in your setting, or small wading pool)
- Pitcher of water and reusable or recyclable cup for each child
- **Snack supplies:** Hot air popcorn popper, popcorn, large bowl, small reusable or compostable serving bowls or napkins for each child

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing: CCS 71, "Jesus, We Are Here/Jesu, Tawa Pano" one time through. Introduce the children to one another by having children stand and say their names. Insert the child's name into the song. (Jesus, *child's name* is here...). Repeat for each child. Introduce teachers this way as well.

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, "Thank you, God, for helping us come to (camp, church, or class)." Go around circle and ask children to tell something they are looking forward to at camp, church, or class.



We Believe

Lessons
for Young
Children
(ages 3–5)

1

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction

We Believe

5 minutes

Ask: Have you heard this word before? **Believe.** Do you have any ideas about what this word means? (Allow time for children's ideas.)

To believe means you know something or think something is true. If your parent or teacher tells you they are going to feed you lunch, you know you have had lunch before, so you believe they will give you lunch.

Ask: Can you think of something you believe? (Allow time for children's ideas.)

In Community of Christ, we believe in God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Ask:

- Have you heard of God? What are your ideas about God?
- Have you heard of Jesus? What are your ideas about Jesus?
- Have you heard of the Holy Spirit? What are your ideas about the Holy Spirit?

Scripture Story

10 minutes

Paraphrased from Matthew 3:13–17

Introduce scripture story: Our story from the Bible tells us about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

A teacher named John was baptizing people in the Jordan River.

Ask:

- Have you seen someone being baptized? (Allow for children's responses and stories)
- What happens when someone is baptized?

John gently dipped people under the water. This showed other people that they wanted to follow God.

Jesus was traveling from a town called Galilee, and he came to where John was baptizing people. Jesus asked John to baptize him. But John thought Jesus was a greater teacher than he was, so he told Jesus, "You should baptize me." But Jesus said, "I want to do what is right so people will know I want to follow God." So John baptized Jesus. When Jesus came out of the water, the Spirit of God landed on him like a dove. And God said, "This is my son. I am happy with him."

In Community of Christ, adults and children are baptized when they decide they believe in God and believe

that Jesus loves them and the Holy Spirit will help them. Children can be baptized when they are eight years old.

Ask:

- How old are you?

Children will respond three, four, or five. Help children count on their fingers how many years until they are eight years old. This will give you time to learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and what it means to believe and learn more about being baptized.

Music Activity

10 minutes

Ask:

- Have you heard people talk about the Holy Spirit?
- What ideas do you have about the Holy Spirit?

The Bible story that we just read said that the Spirit of God landed on Jesus like a dove. There are many ideas people use to tell about what the Holy Spirit is like. This song tells about some of those ideas.

Sing the song CCS 42, "As the Wind Song through the Trees" as a call and response. Sing one phrase and ask children to repeat the phrase. Pause at the end of each phrase and invite children to act our motions for words in the song. (Examples: How can you move like the wind? How can you move like a storm?) At the end of the song, ask, "What words did you hear in the song that told what the Holy Spirit is like?"

Art Project: Dove Magnets

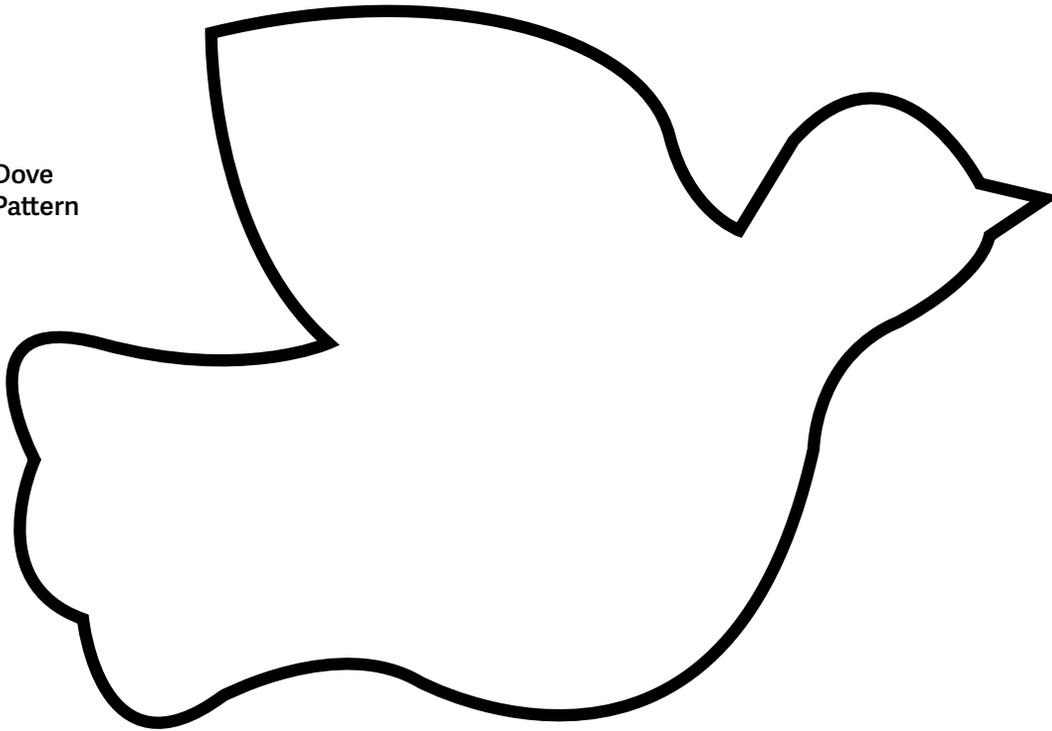
10 minutes

In advance, reproduce dove shape (p. 4) on card stock and or trace dove shape on poster board. Cut out a dove shape for each child.

Give children a dove shape and ask them to write their names on the back (assist as needed). Let children peel the paper backing off the magnet and adhere to the back of the dove, being careful not to cover up their names. Give each child a glue bottle or glue stick, feathers, and wiggle eyes to create their dove. Allow children to be creative with number of feathers and wiggle eyes used. Remind children of the story they heard from Matthew 13 where the Holy Spirit landed on Jesus like a dove.



Dove
Pattern



Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

Ask:

- Have you heard the word Peace?
- Do you have ideas about what peace is?

Read the book, *What Does Peace Feel Like* by Vladimir Radunsky. Ask for children's ideas on each page about what they can smell, see, hear, taste, and touch.

Peace is something we can't smell, see, hear, taste, or touch. However, we can think about peace being *like* something we can smell, see, hear, taste, or touch. This is like the Bible story that says the Holy Spirit was *like a dove* that landed on Jesus.

Can we smell, see, hear, taste, or touch God? Jesus? The Holy Spirit? No, but we can learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit by thinking about something we can smell, see, hear, taste, or touch.

Senses Walk

10 minutes

If your church or camp setting has a pool, lake, or pond, walk to the body of water. If your church or camp doesn't have a body of water, set up a small wading pool with water ahead of time. (Note: Make sure the pool is in a safe place away from areas where children may be unattended.)

Bring one pitcher of water and a cup for each child. Walk to the water source. On the way, ask children what they can see, hear, smell, or touch.

Invite children to use their senses to explore the water.

Ask:

- Can you see the water? What does it look like?
- Can you hear the water? What does it sound like?
- Can you smell the water? What does it smell like?
- Can you gently touch the water? What does it feel like?
- Pour a small cup of water for each child. Invite the children to taste the water.

Ask:

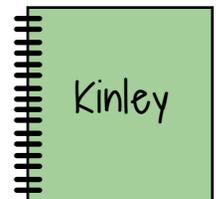
- What does the water taste like?
- Why do we need water? (Drinking, cleaning, for plants to grow, and so forth.)

Remind children that Jesus was baptized in water. Jesus wanted to follow God. Water can remind us of being clean and growing, like trying to make good choices and growing close to God.

Spiritual Practice: Journal

10 minutes

Give each child a journal. Invite children to decorate the cover with crayons, markers, and stickers. Help children write their names on their journals.



On the first page of their journal, invite children to draw a picture or help them write words for something they can see, touch, smell, taste, or hear.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for the snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks.)

Air-Popped Popcorn: Show children hard, un-popped popcorn kernels.

Ask:

- What is this?
- Have you ever eaten popcorn?
- Do you believe this hard kernel can become popcorn?
- How do you know?

Plug in the air popper and ask children to predict what will happen. Ask children what senses they are using as the popcorn is popping and as they eat the popcorn.

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

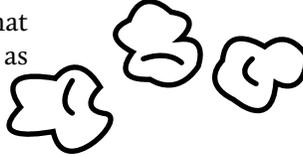
Remind children we are learning about what it means to believe. Invite children to ask an adult about something they believe and tell about it when they come back to class.

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, we are learning what it means to believe.” Invite children to complete the sentence: “God, I believe...”

Sing the goodbye song: CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord,” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with *child’s name*, Lord...”)



Focus

To explore ideas of learning using children's foundational knowledge of the five senses.

Focus Scripture Passage

Luke 2:41–52

Objectives

The learners will...

- discover through scripture how Jesus learned and what Jesus learned about.
- engage in ways to consider how we can learn and what they can learn.
- explore different ways to learn using the senses, especially hearing

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*, Herald Publishing House, 2013
- Optional: *Can You Say Peace?* by Karen Katz, Henry Holt and Company, ISBN: 9780805078930
- Journals
- Markers or crayons
- **Art supplies:** Copy of scripture sheet for each child (p. 9), construction paper, glue stick, yarn or ribbon
- **Hearing game supplies:** Objects that make sounds (examples: bell, box of pasta, bottle of water, electronic toy, rhythm instrument) Option: purchase a Sound Bingo game
- **Snack supplies:** Provide alphabet or shape snacks (examples: whole grain cereal or crackers, cheese or bread cut in shapes, etc.)

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing CCS 75, “Kum ba yah, Seigneur” as call and response. Ask for ideas about different ways to add rhythm (clapping, tapping knees, and jumping). After singing the song, ask: Do you know what “Kum ba yah” means? It means, “Come by here” in a language called Gullah. There are many ways to learn about new words or ideas. Today, we are going to find out about how Jesus learned and how we can learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, “God, help us learn something new today.” Invite children to complete sentence, “I want to learn about...”

Ask:

- Did you ask an adult about something they believe?
- What did they tell you?

We Learn

Lessons
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2

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction

We Learn

5 minutes

We can learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Ask:

- What are ways we can learn?
- What can we learn about? (Ask for children's ideas.)

We can learn using our senses. We use our ears to...(hear).

Ask: What can we learn by listening?

We use our eyes to...(see).

Ask: What can we learn by looking?

We use our nose to...(smell).

Ask: What can we learn by how something smells?

We use our hands to...(touch).

Ask: What can we learn by how something feels?

We use our tongues to...(taste).

Ask: What can we learn by how something tastes?

Scripture Story

10 minutes

Luke 2:41-52: Jesus learns in the Temple

Jesus lived in Nazareth. When he was 12 years old, he went with his parents on a trip to Jerusalem. They walked to get there. His family traveled with a large group of family and friends.

Ask:

- Where do you live?
- Have you ever gone on a trip?
- How did you get there?
- Who did you go with?

When it was time to go home, Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents didn't know. They thought he was walking with other family and friends. But when they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

Ask:

- Have you ever gotten lost from your family?
- How did you feel?
- How did your family feel?
- How did they find you?

It took three days for Jesus' parents to find him. They found Jesus in the temple. He was listening to the teachers reading stories from the scriptures, and he

was asking them questions. He was learning from them.

Ask: How did Jesus learn in the temple? (Hearing, listening, asking questions)

When Jesus' parents found him, they asked him, "Why didn't you come with us? We were worried about you." Jesus said to them, "I didn't know you were looking for me. I was here learning about God." He went home with his parents and listened to them.

Music Activity

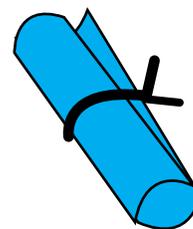
5 minutes

Use the song CCS 9, "Who Is God" as a call and response. Encourage children to stand and move during the song activity.

Art Project: Scrolls

10 minutes

Tell children that when Jesus read the scriptures, he used a rolled up scroll. Read the scripture sheet (p. 9) to the children. Give each child a copy of the scripture sheet, a piece of construction paper, glue stick, and markers or crayons. Help children glue the scripture sheet onto the construction paper. Using crayons or markers, ask children to write their names (offer help as needed) on the back of the construction paper. Allow time for children to color the scripture sheet. Help children in rolling up their scrolls and tying with yarn or ribbon.



Hearing Game

5 minutes

Use various objects that make sounds. Without seeing the objects, ask children to identify the sound. Try to include sounds children might not be able to easily identify. Option: purchase a Sound Bingo game.

Ask: Was it hard or easy to know what was making the sound?

We can learn by hearing. Once we hear something, we can remember what it is. We can learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit this way, too. When we hear about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the scriptures, at church, in Sunday school, at camp, and in our families, we learn and can remember what God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are like.

Visit the Adult Class

10 minutes

In advance, notify the adult class teacher that the young children will be visiting to listen for a couple minutes and then ask questions.

Ask: Where do you go to learn? (Day care, preschool, Sunday school, camp)

Children can learn from adults. Jesus learned by going to the temple and listening to the teachers and asking questions.

Ask: What questions can you ask adults to help you learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?

Write down their questions, or suggest a couple simple questions. For example: How did you learn about God when you were a child? Have you been baptized? How old were you? What does the Holy Spirit feel like?

Let children know you will visit the adult class like Jesus visited the temple. Suggest that you will go in quietly and sit and listen for a minute, then ask your questions and listen to the answers. (Let children ask the questions if they want to, or the teacher can ask the questions decided on by the class). Suggest ways to walk to the adult class quietly to listen (tiptoe, finger on lips, pretend to be quiet animal).

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

Read *Can You Say Peace?* by Karen Katz. (Note: When reading first page, leave out first sentence “*Today is Peace Day.*”)

Remind children that the song “Kum ba yah, Seigneur” is sung in another language. People around the world speak many languages, and we can learn by listening to other languages and learning how people are the same and different. Read each of the words for peace.

Ask:

- What do you see in the picture?
- What do you see that might make a sound?
- What do you see that is something you might do?
- What looks different?

Spiritual Practice: Dwelling in the Word

5 minutes

Use the scrolls children made earlier. Invite children to untie the ribbon and open the scroll. Tell the children: “I will read the words on the scroll. These words are from the story in the Bible about Jesus learning in the temple. Listen while I read the words, then think quietly about the words for a minute.”

Read: After three days they found Jesus in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions (Luke 2:46).

Pause briefly while children think quietly. Tell children, “I am going to read the words again. Listen quietly and think about the words.”

Ask:

- What were you thinking about when I read the words on the scroll?
- If you were in the temple like Jesus, what questions would you ask the teachers about God?

Help children tie the ribbons back on the scrolls.

Journal

5 minutes

Invite children to draw a picture or help them write words for something they want to learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks.)

Learning snack: provide alphabet or shape snacks (examples: whole grain cereal or crackers, cheese or bread cut in shapes). Ask children to identify letters or shapes they know. (Be sensitive to children with food allergies).

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Remind children that one way to learn is by listening and asking questions. Invite children to ask an adult, “How do you learn something new?” and tell about it when they come back to class.

Bless

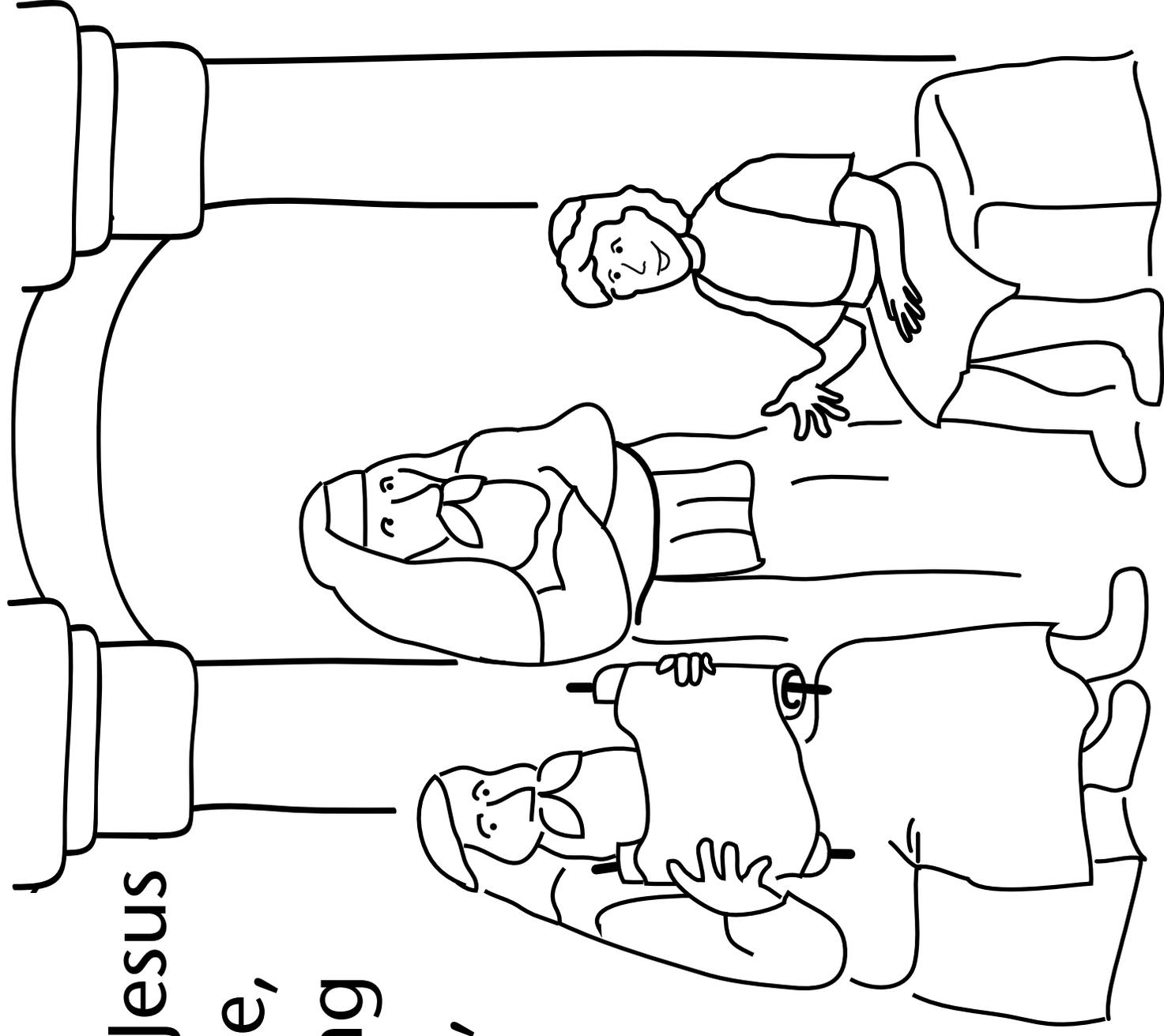
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, we learned something new today.” Invite children to complete the sentence: “Thank you that I learned about...”

Sing the goodbye song: CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with *child’s name*, Lord...”).

They found Jesus
in the temple,
sitting among
the teachers,
listening to
them and
asking
questions.

—Luke 2:46



Focus

To explore Community of Christ's vision of sharing in peaceable community.

Focus Scripture Passage

Isaiah 11:6

Objectives

The learners will...

- discover through scripture the meaning of the Community of Christ church seal.
- engage in ways to consider what it means to share peace.
- explore ways to share Community of Christ's Enduring Principles.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*, Herald Publishing House, 2013
- *We Share* by Monica Bradford, Herald Publishing House, ISBN: 9780830915224
- Journals
- Markers or crayons
- Picture of Community of Christ church seal (p. 13)
- Optional: Children's rhythm instruments or materials for making simple shakers using recycled materials. (Example: toilet paper tubes sealed with duct tape or small plastic bottles with tight-fitting lids filled with sand, gravel, or 100 percent clay cat litter. Avoid using food such as rice or beans for play).
- Optional: "Peace through All People" DVD, Herald Publishing House, 2013. UPC 680121001690
- **Art supplies:** White card stock or construction paper for each child, brown and black washable ink pads, access to sink or hand wipes (to clean ink off hands), yellow yarn (cut in 2 inch/5 cm pieces), white cotton balls, glue, wiggle eyes
- About Daily Prayer for Peace (For teacher review before class): www.CofChrist.org/about-daily-prayer-for-peace
- Photo of Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Missouri (p. 14)
- Daily Prayer for Peace: www.CofChrist.org/daily-prayer-for-peace
- Optional: Small chime or bell
- Optional: Candle with matches or lighter or battery-operated candle
- Peace stickers (two for each child)
- **Snack supplies:** Sharing Snack—several bowls of healthy snack items (dried fruit, whole grain cereal, peanut-free, gluten-free option for children with food allergies), small scoop in each bowl, reusable bowl or napkin for each child

We Share

Lessons
for Young
Children
(ages 3–5)

3

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing: CCS 85, “Pray to the Lord” (chorus only) as a call and response. Invite children to use motions as they sing (example: folded hands for “Pray”, lifted arms for “Praise”). Sing several times.

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, “God, we thank you that we can pray to you and praise you.” Invite children to complete sentence, “God, I pray for...”

Ask:

- Did you ask an adult how they learn something new?
- What did you learn?

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction

Scripture Story

10 minutes

Isaiah 11:6

Isaiah was a prophet, someone who taught the people about God. *Show picture of the Community of Christ church seal* (p. 13).

Ask:

- Have you seen this picture before?
- Where have you seen it?
- What is in this picture?

This picture comes from the passage in the Bible where Isaiah is telling the people about God’s vision for how the world could live in peace. Vision is a word that means to see.

The wolf will live with the lamb,
The leopard will lie down with the baby goat,
The baby cow and the lion and the baby lamb will play together,
And a little child will lead them.

Ask:

- Have you ever been to the zoo?
- Are the animals all together?
- What might happen if a lion and a baby lamb were in the same pen at the zoo?
- What might happen if a child tried to play with a lion at the zoo?

This story tells about “God’s vision for creation where all live peaceably together” (quote from *We Share* by

Monica Bradford, p. 6). We are all part of God’s vision. In Community of Christ, we share that people can get along with one another and take care of creation.

Ask:

- How can we get along with people?
- How can we take care of creation?
- What can children do to share peace?

Music Activity

10 minutes

Sing CCS 310, “Peace, Salaam, Shalom” as a call and response. Encourage children to dance and express rhythm in different ways (clapping, stomping, and jumping).

Optional: Use rhythm instruments or help children make simple shakers using recycled materials.

Optional: Use “Peace through All People” DVD.

Art Project: “A Little Child Will Lead Them”

10 minutes

Give each child a sheet of white construction paper. Ask children to draw a simple picture of themselves in the middle of the paper with crayons or markers. Using the washable inkpads, help children put an upside down handprint on each side of the self-portrait (a brown handprint to represent the lion and a black handprint to represent the lamb). Invite children to use glue, yarn, cotton balls, and wiggle eyes to decorate their lion and lamb. Ask (or assist) children to write or copy their names at the top of the paper, and write the word “PEACE” at the bottom of the paper.



Game: Lion and Lamb Tag

10 minutes

Play outside or in a large indoor space. Tell the children they are “lamb.” The teacher is the first “lion.” The lion chases the lambs. When the lion “catches” a lamb, he or she gives the lamb a high-five. That child then becomes the lion. Continue until all children have had an opportunity to be the “lion.”

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Spiritual Practice: Daily Prayer for Peace

10 minutes

Ask:

- What is prayer? (Talking to God)
- How can we pray? (Ask for children’s answers—folded hands, bowed head).

We can pray on our knees. We can raise our hands. We can sit with our hands cupped. We can lie down in our beds. (Let children act out prayer postures.) We can pray anytime and anywhere. We can have our bodies any way we want. We can have loud prayers, quiet prayers, and listening prayers where we do not use any words.

Ask: What can we talk to God about?

We can talk to God about anything! We can tell God thank you. We can ask God questions. We can talk to God about our day like we talk to our parents or our friends.

In Community of Christ, we pray for peace.

Ask: What are your ideas about what peace means?

Show a picture of the Community of Christ Temple (see p. 14). Do you remember how Jesus went to the temple to listen to the teachers and learn about God? Community of Christ has a Temple in Independence, Missouri, USA where people learn about God and pray. Every day in the Temple, there is a prayer for peace.

Review in advance “About Daily Prayer for Peace”: www.CofChrist.org/about-daily-prayer-for-peace. Decide which portions of the Prayer for Peace to include in the lesson. Choices include using a small chime or bell to begin the time of prayer and lighting a candle or using a battery-operated candle. Read or paraphrase the prayer. Invite children to offer a word or sentence prayer for peace.

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

The book, *We Share* by Monica Bradford, introduces Community of Christ’s Enduring Principles in easy-to-understand language. Read each page. Ask children what they see in the illustrations.



Ask questions to help children understand the Enduring Principle or identify actions children can take. Sample questions:

- p. 8, **Ask:** What words can we say to share peace with people?
- p. 10, **Ask:** Community is people we know or live near. Who are people we know or live near?
- p. 16, **Ask:** How can we help take care of the Earth?
- p. 20, **Ask:** How are people the same and different?
- p. 32, **Ask:** What can you share with people?

Journal

5 minutes

Invite children to draw a picture or help them write words for something they can share.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks.)

Sharing snack: Have several bowls of healthy snack items (dried fruit, whole grain cereal) with a small scoop in each bowl. Invite children to serve themselves a scoop and pass the bowls.

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Put a peace sticker on each child. Tell children; “I want to share peace with you.” Give each child another sticker. **Ask:** Can you share peace with someone today? Invite children to give the sticker to someone today and tell to whom they gave the sticker in the next class.

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, we want to share peace.” Invite children to complete the sentence: “God, today I will share peace by...”

Sing the goodbye song: CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with child’s name, Lord...”).





Photo by Jeff Piedimonte

Focus

To explore the Community of Christ Enduring Principle All Are Called.

Focus Scripture Passage

Luke 5:1–11

Objectives

The learners will...

- discover through scripture how Jesus called the first disciples.
- learn about proclaiming that all are called to follow Jesus.
- explore ways to discover and share their gifts.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*, Herald Publishing House, 2013
- Optional: *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, Voyager Books, ISBN: 9780152007874
- Journals
- Markers or crayons
- **Art supplies:** Uncoated paper plate or card stock circle for each child, stick or dowel rod for each child (about 12 inches/30 cm long), yarn or string, aluminum foil (recycled if available)
- Reproducible large print Mission Prayer for each child (p. 18)
- **Snack supplies:** “Fish Food”—make “fish food” by mixing a variety of whole grain cereals with different textures and tastes

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing CCS 84, “Come All You People” as a call and response. Try to use each translation. Remind children that around the world, people speak many languages. Invite children to move and dance to the rhythm of the song.

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, “God, we thank you that you love all people.” Invite children to complete sentence, “God, I love...”

Ask: To whom did you give a peace sticker?

Scripture Story

10 minutes

Luke 5:1–11

Ask:

- Today we are learning about the word “Proclaim.” Have you heard this word before?

We Proclaim

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- What are your ideas about this word?

Proclaim means to tell someone about something.

Jesus was standing on the shore beside a lake called Gennesaret. Crowds of people were getting close to him because they wanted to hear what Jesus had to say about God.

Ask:

- Can you tell about a time you were in a big crowd of people?
- How did you feel about being around so many people?

Jesus saw two boats near the shore. The fishermen had gotten out of their boats and were washing the nets they used to catch fish. Jesus got in one of the boats and asked the fisherman, Simon, to take him out into the lake. Simon put the boat out in the water, and Jesus told the crowds of people about God from the boat.

Ask: Jesus was proclaiming God, or telling the people about God. Can you think of a time you told someone about something important?

When Jesus finished talking to the people about God, he told Simon to go deeper in the water and put his nets back in the water to catch some fish. Simon was very tired from fishing all night long. He hadn't caught any fish, and he had already cleaned his nets to put them away.

Ask: Have you ever tried hard to do something and it didn't work out?

Simon told Jesus, "We fished all night and didn't catch any fish, but if you say so, I will put my nets back in the water."

When they put the nets in the water, they caught so many fish that the nets began to break. Simon called another boat to help, and the fish they caught filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

Simon and all the fishermen were amazed at how many fish they caught. Simon was afraid and said to Jesus, "Go away, Jesus. I have made bad choices and you shouldn't be helping me." Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on, you won't be catching fish. You will follow me and help people."

When Simon and the other fishermen brought the boats back to the shore, they left the boats and the nets and the fish and followed Jesus.

Music Activity

10 minutes

Proclaim means to tell about something. Jesus told the crowds about God. The fishermen decided to leave fishing to follow Jesus after hearing Jesus tell about God and seeing how Jesus helped them catch fish.

Sing the first verse of CCS 499, "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" as a call and response. Invite children to share ideas about something they could do to follow Jesus and proclaim, or tell about, God through their actions. Use these ideas for more verses. (Examples: "Be kind to my family and follow Jesus." "Help my neighbor and follow Jesus.")

Art Project: Fishing Poles

10 minutes

Before class, prepare a paper plate fish for each child by folding plate in half and cutting a one-inch/2.5 cm circle near the top of the fold on one side.

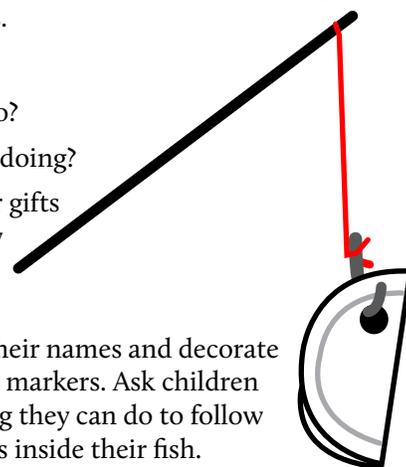


A Community of Christ Enduring Principle is All Are Called. This means that all have gifts to share.

God calls everyone to follow Jesus. God gives each of us gifts, or skills and talents that we like to do and are good at, to help us follow Jesus.

Ask:

- What do you like to do?
- What are you good at doing?
- How can you use your gifts to follow Jesus? (Allow time for children's ideas and stories.)



Invite children to write their names and decorate their fish with crayons or markers. Ask children to think about something they can do to follow Jesus. Write their answers inside their fish.

Help children tie yarn or string on the stick or dowel rod to make a fishing pole. Give each child a six-inch/15 cm piece of aluminum foil and show how to twist the foil into a hook shape. Tie the string at the end of the fishing pole onto the hook.

Invite children to "catch" their fish. When they catch their fish, ask each child to proclaim how they will share their gift (written on their fish) and follow Jesus.

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

As an optional activity, read the story *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox.

Ask:

- How are people the same? (We want love, to be happy, to learn, to have peace)
- How are people different?

- How does being different help us follow Jesus? (We have different gifts that help people.)

Game: Follow the Leader

10 minutes

Have the class stand in a circle. The teacher is the first “leader.” The teacher does a motion, and going around the circle, children mimic the motion one at a time. Go around the circle until everyone has had a chance to be the leader.

Ask:

- What actions does Jesus take? (Loves, helps, feeds)
- How can we follow Jesus’ actions to help others?

Spiritual Practice: Mission Prayer

10 minutes

Reproduce Mission Prayer for each child (p. 18).

Give children crayons to color and decorate their Mission Prayer paper. Invite children to make their paper colorful while you read the prayer aloud.

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?**

Ask:

- The Holy Spirit helps us listen for God and make choices. 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 on the morning?
- Is it sometimes 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.**

Ask:

- Have you heard the word “blessing”? Sometimes, when we pray over our meals, we call it the “blessing”. We ask God to bless our food so we can be strong and follow Jesus. Blessing can mean saying something good about someone.
- How can we bless people?
- How can we share peace?

Invite children to take their colorful prayer home, hang it on their refrigerator, and say the prayer with their family.

Journal

5 minutes

Invite children to draw a picture or write words about how they would like to proclaim (or tell about) God.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

“Fish food”—make a mix of several varieties of whole grain cereal of different textures. Let children serve themselves “fish food” with a small scoop.

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Ask: Let’s think of something new we can try to follow Jesus and help people. What are your ideas? (Agree on something everyone in the class will try.)

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, we want to follow Jesus.” Invite children to complete the sentence: “God, help me follow Jesus by...”

Sing the goodbye song CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with child’s name, Lord...”).

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

Focus

To consider how we receive God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit through exploring the Community of Christ Enduring Principle Responsible Choices.

Focus Scripture Passages

Romans 12:1–2, The Message; Genesis 9:13–16 (NRSV)

Objectives

The learners will...

- explore through scripture what God will help them do.
- find ways to consider their choices.
- discover ways they can receive God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Supplies

- Bible (The Message, NRSV)
- *Community of Christ Sings* (CCS), Herald Publishing House, 2013
- Optional: *God's Dream* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams, Candlewick Press, ISBN: 9780763633882
- **Art supplies:** Uncoated paper plates; hole-punch; strips of ribbon, crepe paper, or construction paper in rainbow colors (1 or 2 inches/2.5 or 5 cm by about 10 inches/25 cm); cotton balls; glue bottles, glue sticks, or double stick tape; thin string or ribbon
- Dirty rock (about 4 to 6 inches/10 to 15 cm) for each child
- Bucket of soapy water, towel, paper towels
- **Rainbow relay supplies:** Large sheet of construction paper or poster board, double stick tape, construction paper or crepe paper strips in rainbow colors
- **Snack supplies:** Variety of cut-up vegetables, hummus or dressing for dipping

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing: CCS 20, “God Within God Around” as a call and response. If the class has more than one teacher, lead as a round.

Ask:

- What do you think it means that God is within us? Around us?
- What is creation?
- What are your ideas about how we can find God in creation?

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, “God, thank you for creation.” Invite children to complete sentence, “God, thank you for...”

Ask: How did it go when you tried (*whatever the class decided during the last class from the Send section*)?

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Engage

Invites exploration and interaction

Scripture Story

10 minutes

Romans 12:1–2 (The Message)

Today we are learning about the word “Receive.” Have you heard this word before? What are your ideas about what it means to “receive”? Receive means to get something (like a present, or a new pair of shoes) or to welcome someone or something (like a new person in your class). In this scripture passage, Paul was a person, like Simon, who followed Jesus. Paul tells people what they can do to receive, or welcome, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Friends, here’s what I want you to do, and God will help you. Take everything you do in life—eating, sleeping, going to school, playing—and place it before God.

Ask: Do you know what it means to place something before God? It means think about God first and ask God to help you with everything you do.

Receiving what God does for you is the best you can do for God.

Ask:

- How can you think about God first before you eat, sleep, go to preschool or day care, and play?
- Do you know what a choice is? It is what you decide you are going to do.

Don’t become so used to what you do every day—like watching TV and playing video games—that you forget to think about God. Instead, think about God first. God will change you from the inside out. God will bring out the best in you.

Ask:

- What is inside our bodies?
- What do you think it means that God will change us from the inside out?
- Think about your feelings. When you are mad, how do you act?
- What do you think would happen if when you are mad, you ask God to help you first before you act mad?

God can help you with your choices—how you decide you are going to act and what you decide you are going to do. God can change how you feel inside and how you treat other people. God will bring out the best in you.

Music Activity

5 minutes

When God brings out the best in us, we feel good on the inside, and good on the outside. Sometimes when we feel good, we want to sing!

Sing CCS 112, “I Will Sing, I Will Sing” as a call and response. Ask, “What else can we do when we feel good on the inside and on the outside (dance, jump, twirl, etc.)?” Add children’s action ideas as additional verses.

Rock Walk

10 minutes

Before class, make sure a large dirty rock is available for each child. If you are in a location where rocks are available outside, go for a walk and let children choose and dig up a rock. If rocks are not available in your location, you can place dirty rocks outside before class.

Ask: Why did you choose this rock?

Take the rocks back to class and wash them with soapy water. Dry them with a towel. Set them on a paper towel with child’s name to dry thoroughly until the next class.

Today we chose a rock. Next class, we will use our rocks to learn more about how God brings out the best in us.

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

Read the story *God’s Dream* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams. Ask questions to go with the words and illustrations. Sample questions:

- What can people share?
- How can people care about one another?
- What can we play with one another?
- Are there times you don’t want to be friends with someone? Why not?

Art Project: Rainbow Mobile

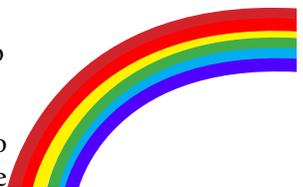
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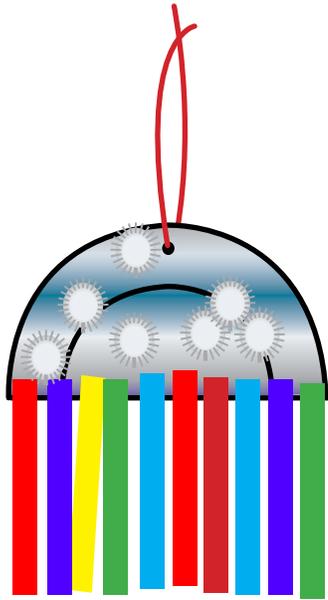
Ask:

- Have you ever seen a rainbow?
- When can you see a rainbow (after a storm or rain)?
- Have you heard the story of Noah’s ark?

In the Bible, there is a story of a big storm and a flood. After the storm (Genesis 9:13–16), God told Noah that a rainbow means that God will always be with us. God will help us with our choices.

Cut a paper plate in half so each child has half a plate. Use



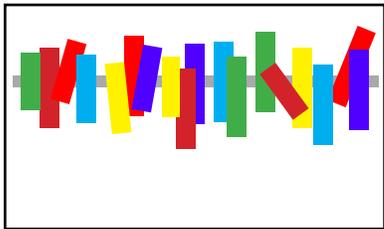


a hole-punch to put a hole in the top of the rounded part of the plate. Ask children (help as needed) to write their names on the back (flat part) of the plate. Invite children to color the plate with various sky colors with crayons or markers (light blue, dark blue, gray). Let children select rainbow color strips of their choice and glue toward the bottom of the plate using glue bottles, glue sticks, or double stick tape. Let children glue cotton balls on the rest of the plate wherever they want them. Tie a string or ribbon through the hole in the top of the plate to hang.

Cooperative Rainbow Relay

10 minutes

Hang a large sheet of paper or poster board on the wall. Put a piece of double stick tape all the way across the top of the paper. Have the children line up in one line. Have a basket or box with rainbow colored paper strips at the front of the line. Ask the first child to choose a paper strip, run down to the paper on the wall, and stick their colored paper strip to the double stick tape. The child goes to the end of the line and the next child has a turn. Continue until all the paper strips are used and the class has created a beautiful rainbow.



Ask:

- What is your favorite color?
- How did it feel to work together to make a rainbow?

Spiritual Practice: Body Prayer

5 minutes

We can receive God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit when we pray. There are many ways to pray. Today, we are going to pray with our bodies.

Body Prayer

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 (*lay down on floor—then stand*)

Jesus when I sit down (*sit down of floor—then stand*)

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*)

Journal

5 minutes

Ask children to think of something they have received (a gift, new shoes, toy, book, and so on) and think of who gave it to them. Help children write a sentence, “I got _____ from _____.” Invite children to draw a picture of what they received.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

Healthy snack: God dreams of healthy food for all children. We are grateful to receive healthy food to help us grow. Serve various cut up vegetables with hummus or dressing for dipping.

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Ask God to help you with something before you do it. Tell about it next time you come to class.

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, we want to receive your help with our choices and our feelings.” Invite children to complete the sentence: “God, help me when I feel...”

Sing the goodbye song: CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with child’s name, Lord...”

Focus

To consider how we respond to God by exploring ideas from the Community of Christ Enduring Principles: Worth of All Persons, Sacredness of Creation, and Grace and Generosity.

Focus Scripture Passage

2 Corinthians 5:16–21 (The Message)

Objectives

The learners will...

- discover through scripture that God changes them from the inside out.
- understand ideas of love for all people, generosity, and care for the Earth.
- explore what it means to respond to God’s love, generosity, and care.

Supplies

- Bible (The Message)
- *Community of Christ Sings* (CCS), Herald Publishing House, 2013
- Optional: “10 Things I Can Do To Help My World” by Melanie Walsh, Candlewick Press, ISBN: 9780763659196
- **Art supplies:** washable paint or markers, permanent marker, glue bottles, wiggle eyes, other craft supplies as desired (feathers, craft pom-poms, fabric scraps, etc.)
- Generosity Jar, Herald Publishing House, UPC 680121050407 (Order free from www.HeraldHouse.org); one for each child
- Markers or crayons
- **Snack supplies:** “Twig” snack (Pretzel sticks or gluten-free option)

Gather - 10 minutes

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Gather the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Sing: CCS 95, “We Are Marching in the Light of God” as a call and response. Ask children for other action words and add additional verses using children’s ideas.

Pray: Invite children to join in word or sentence prayer. Teacher, “God, today is our last day of class together. We have had so much fun! Thank you, God!” Invite children to complete sentence, “God, my favorite part of class has been...”

Ask: Did you ask God to help you with something before you did it?

Engage

Invites exploration and interaction

We Respond

5 minutes

Today we are going to learn about how we can respond to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

We Respond

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Ask: Have you heard the word “Respond”?

Respond means what we can give to someone. If someone gives us a hug, we can respond by giving a hug back.

Ask: What have we learned about in class that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit give us or help us with?

Today we will talk about how we can respond to God by sharing what we have, helping other people, and caring for the Earth.

Scripture Story

10 minutes

2 Corinthians 5:16–21 (The Message)

Paul, who told about how we can receive God and how God will help us with our choices in our last lesson, tells about how people can change from the inside out.

Because of Jesus, we don’t judge people based on what they have or how they look. We used to judge Jesus based on how he looked and acted but we don’t do that anymore.

Ask:

- Can you think of a time someone said something good about how you looked?
- Can you think of a time someone said something unkind about how you looked?
- How did you feel?

Now we look inside a person, and we can see that because of Jesus, everyone can have a fresh start.

Ask:

- What is inside a person?
- Can we see inside a person?

When Paul talks about looking inside a person, he is talking about when people follow Jesus, they can become like a new person. Someone who was angry can be calm, someone who was hateful can love, someone who was sad can be happy. (Ask children for other ideas of opposites.)

God has given us the job of telling everyone what God is doing. When we follow Jesus, people look at us to see what Jesus is like. They don’t look at our clothes or our shoes or our toys. They look inside us, at our hearts, to see how we treat people. When we treat people kindly and with love, we’re speaking for Jesus.

Become friends with God; God is already a friend with you.



Art Project: New Creation Friend Rocks

10 minutes

When rocks from the Rock Walk activity are dry, write child’s name on the bottom with a permanent marker. Give children their rocks. Invite children to decorate the rock with washable paint or markers or other craft supplies provided. (Allow rock to dry thoroughly before sending home with child.)



Ask:

- How did your rock look when you found it outside?
- How does it look now?
- How is this like the story we just read?
- How does God bring out the best in us?
- Do you remember the story of Jesus’ baptism?

We talked about how water can change or clean something in the same way we washed our rock. God is like the water. God can change people and help them grow. When people grow, they can learn to act like Jesus (love, share, and help).

This rock can remind you to be friends with God, because God is already a friend with you.

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Generosity Jars

10 minutes

We can respond to God by taking care of our money. We can spend some of our money, save some of our money, and share some of our money.

Have a Generosity Jar for each child (available free from www.HeraldHouse.org). Help children assemble banks and write their names. Children can decorate their banks with markers. As children are decorating their banks, ask questions about sharing, savings, and spending.

Ask: What does it mean to share?

You can put money in your share bank to give to help people. You can help people by giving money at church, change for Outreach International (name other organizations your class might support).

Ask: What does it mean to spend?

It means to buy something you want. You can put money in your spending bank until you have enough to buy something at the store.

Ask:

- What does it mean to save? It means to keep money for something important.
- What is something important you could save money for?

Invite children to take banks home to take care of their money. If wanted, give each child a few coins and help them separate the coins into share, save, and spend..

Music Activity

10 minutes

Sing the chorus of CCS 135, “All Things Bright and Beautiful” as a call and response. Before singing each verse, ask children for their ideas of motions for the verses.

Ask:

- How can we move like a blooming flower?
- How can we move like a singing bird?
- How can we move like glowing colors?
- How can we move like tiny wings?

Act out motions and sing all or select verses as call and response.

Read and Discuss

10 minutes

God created the Earth to give us everything we need to live. Ask, “What do we need to live (food, water, shelter, air)?”

We can respond to God by taking care of the Earth. Ask, “How can we help take care of the Earth?”

Read the story *10 Things I Can Do To Help My World* by Melanie Walsh. On each page, ask children if the idea is something they do at home.

Spiritual Practice

10 minutes

Nature Walk or Pronouncing Blessing

Adapted from *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor, HarperCollins, Chapter 12, “The Practice of Pronouncing Blessings.”

Start practice by describing blessing.

God created the Earth to give us everything we need to live.

Ask: What do we need to live (food, water, shelter, air)?

We can respond to God by taking care of the Earth.

Ask: How can we help take care of the Earth?

Giving a blessing means saying something good about something or someone. We are going to go for a blessing walk. Everyone will have a turn to bless something they see on our walk—a tree, a stick, a plant, an insect, the sky, whatever you see. When you see something you want to bless, you can say something like, “Bless you, bee. You help flowers grow.”

Journal

5 minutes

Invite children to draw a picture of something they blessed on the nature walk.

Snack Suggestion

10 minutes

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks.)

“Twig” snack (pretzel sticks). Allow children to serve a scoop of pretzel sticks. Invite children to use the pretzel sticks to form the trunk and branches of a tree before they eat their snack.

Send and Bless 5 minutes

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Ask children for ideas about how they can respond to God. Invite them to try their ideas when they go home.

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, help us to respond to you.” Invite children to complete the sentence by asking God to help with their idea about how they can respond (in Send above): “God, help me to...”

Sing the goodbye song: CCS 612, “Go with Us, Lord” through once, and then insert each child’s name (for example, “Go with *child’s name*, Lord...”).