Reunion 2013
Lessons for
All Ages Together
Introduction

For tips and guidelines on teaching an all ages group, read “Planning for All Ages” on the Disciple Formation Guide or following this introduction.

Daily Theme
Create and display a poster for each daily theme to remind all participants of the day’s focus.

Jesus Story
Each day a scripture from the Sermon on the Mount is available for sharing with the all ages group. To present this in the most engaging way, choose from one of these options:

• **Option 1:** Recruit an actor to play the part of Jesus Christ—to read (or speak from memory) the chosen scripture. Set the stage by sharing this part of class outside, under a tree, on a mountaintop, or wherever your location provides.
• **Option 2:** Illustrate the scripture through an artist’s interpretation of each day’s scripture. Or the artist could begin a drawing, sketch, or painting of the Sermon on the Mount on the first day, and add to the art each successive day.
• **Option 3:** Display a historic or contemporary illustration of the Sermon on the Mount. You may find several choices at wikigallery.org; search for “Sermon on the Mount.” Or you may choose an illustration from a children’s Bible. Find one in your mission center, congregation, or library.

Object Lessons
Find one or more object lessons suggested for each day. Gather enough materials so you can practice the object lesson before class to become familiar with it and ensure it works!

Bless
Various ideas affirm God’s love for each participant. You may also choose an experience that the group can repeat, sustain, and strengthen each day. For example:

• **Lord’s Prayer:** Create a poster so all may read aloud Matthew 6:9–15 in unison. Challenge participants to memorize the prayer.
• **Music:** Sing a favorite hymn or song that embodies the focus of the class or the theme of the week. You may choose one from the worship service suggestions or another source. This may be a good time to practice new hymns: “We Need Each Other’s Voice to Sing” at www.CofChrist.org/OnlineResources/reunion/2013/Worship2013-reunion.pdf; “Sacred the Body” and “Find Your Wholeness” (in the adult reunion book). Or you may listen and sing along with one of three songs recorded by Monica Bradford and available as downloadable MP3 files at www.CofChrist.org/Reunion2013.

Send

**STICKY NOTE “AHA!”**
Find this idea introduced in the Send part of lesson 1. Find it at the end of each lesson.

Provide sticky notes and ask participants to write their “Aha!” experiences (something new they learned or experienced in class) on notes and stick them to the door or wall while exiting class. This helps you know if the participants are engaging in and understanding the lesson concepts. As participants arrive the next day, the “Aha!” notes will also remind them of the key points from the day before.
Planning for All Ages
Learning Together
Disciple Formation

Throughout history, religion and culture have been transferred from one generation to the next through family or community groups. When so many schools and community activities isolate people by age groups, more families are looking to their church to provide significant involvement that brings all ages together. Churches are a natural place to provide that extended community for transferring knowledge.

When many generations learn together, it is called multigenerational, intergenerational, holistic, or community-of-faith learning. Community of Christ disciple formation calls it “All Ages Together.”

The goal of all-age learning is to grow individually, to grow together as a community, and to grow forward as individuals and community. In Community of Christ, we affirm the blessings of community, the worth of all persons, and the unity that is found in diversity when many ages come together.

To use this powerful form of teaching and growing, follow these tips:

1. Form an all ages planning team, including leaders from several generations.
2. Divide your large group into smaller groups of 8–10 people, with people of varying ages in each group.
3. Encourage participation by all. Different ages bring different perspectives, gifts, and energy the whole group needs. A community of blessing and support forms when we learn and try new things together.
4. It may be helpful to organize all-age experiences in five parts: gather, engage, respond, send, and bless. The Lesson Template in the Disciple Formation Guide (www.CofChrist.org/dfg/planningtools) will lead you through the five parts.
However, neither using the Lesson Template nor using all five parts is required to have a successful all ages learning activity.

5. Include simple movement (like walking from one side of the room to the other), find common traits (activities everyone can do), and include all the senses.

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

**GATHER.** Begin with an activity everyone can do, which helps people get to know one another. For example, toss a ball of yarn from one to another asking questions like “Can you drive a motorcycle?” or “What’s your favorite pie?” Everyone becomes connected as they answer. Or, play a “Stand Up” game to affirm likenesses (“Stand up if you ever walked to school.”) and differences (“Stand up if you ever lived in another country.”). Give everyone a chance to be a leader. Choose activities that will introduce the lesson and bring out background knowledge about the content.

**ENGAGE.** Explore the lesson’s scripture, story, or idea. Present stories in a way that all ages can be engaged in and learn from. Use **art** (sketch the story as it is read), **movies** (show films or film clips to explain ideas), **music** (choose songs that provide a sound track for your story), and **drama** (retell the story, or interpret it from a new perspective).

**RESPOND.** Design activities that take learners from **hearing** to **doing** so all ages can take part. For instance, seniors should not sit idly by while children and youth create posters or play a game. Always plan for reflection and discernment by using questions which are suitable for every development level. Simple questions should not embarrass children or seekers; difficult questions should not be reserved only for the most experienced.

**SEND.** Send participants out with ways to live out their new learning and share it with others.

**BLESS.** Bless each participant, affirming God’s love.

**Other tips:**

1. Take turns providing leadership to the group.
2. Be open to all ideas. Affirm all and use various activities to help every generation stay interested.
3. Use various settings: parks or outdoor spaces, retreat centers, learning centers, or worship sanctuary.
4. Look for other ways to blend disciple formation into all age activities, such as at a church meal, Easter event, or congregational retreat.
5. Support participants in their significant events outside church: school plays, sport competitions, music recitals, baby and wedding showers, affirming that discipleship and the blessings of community filter throughout all of life.

Share with us your great ideas and successes. Send your stories to dfg@CofChrist.org. We’ll love to hear them!

To find out more about all-age learning, see **Learning God’s Stories Together, Intergenerational Program for Church and Home** by Dorothy Henderson with Lisa-Dawn McKenzie (Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada: Wood Lake Publishing, 1996. ISBN 9781551455594).
LESSON 1

Christ’s Peace

Focus
Is sharing Christ’s peace an impossible challenge?

Focus Scriptures
• Matthew 4:23–25 and Matthew 5:1–2 set the scene of the Sermon on the Mount.
• “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (John 14:27 NRSV).
• Let the church equip people of all ages to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace into all arenas of life (Doctrine and Covenants 163:4c, adapted).

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• attempt three tasks which seem simple, but are impossible for most people to accomplish.
• hear phrases from the Sermon on the Mount that reflect the meaning of Christ’s peace.
• examine the meaning of Christ’s peace by writing a “peace challenge” on a card, tape it to their own backs, and receive responses from the group regarding Christ’s peace in that situation.
• share a “peace challenge” and resolution with one other member of the group.
• participate in a blessing of Christ’s peace at the end of the class period.

Materials
• 4” x 6” (10.16 x 15.24 cm) index cards, one per participant
• Masking or duct tape to attach cards to each person’s back
• Pencils or pens
• Sticky notes
• Pens or pencils

Resources
• “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” song (download MP3 from www.CofChrist.org/Reunion2013)

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome everyone to the all ages activity. Invite them to sit in comfortable chairs and try some simple tasks.  

HUM—Invite everyone to hum “Jesus Loves Me” or another favorite song. Hum a few bars. Now, while still humming, pinch your nose shut and cover your mouth. Try again to hum “Jesus Loves Me.” Can you do it, or is it impossible?  

STAND—Sit in your chair. Fold your arms across your chest, and then try to stand up without leaning forward. Can you do it, or is it impossible?  

ROTATE—Try a third task. Hold your right hand out in front of you with your elbow bent. Rotate your hand (at the wrist) clockwise. Good! Now, extend your right leg (or cross your legs) and rotate your right foot clockwise. Good! Now, reverse the direction of your hand only. Make your hand go counterclockwise. Try to keep your foot going clockwise. Can you do it, or is it impossible?

**ENGAGE**
Invites exploration and interaction

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

Explain how we will share today’s theme in the all ages group activity. Select a way to portray the Sermon on the Mount (painting, illustration, or drama—see introduction notes). Read Matthew 4:23–25 and Matthew 5:1–2 to set the scene of the Sermon on the Mount and today’s theme.

Welcome everyone and explain that today’s theme is “Christ’s Peace,” and our overall theme is “Live Christ’s Peace.” Does it seem simple enough to live and share Christ’s peace? Or, is it like the tasks we just tried to do? These tasks seemed simple, but when we tried to put them into action, we discovered that they were very difficult—nearly impossible.

Sharing the peace of Jesus Christ can be complicated. Yet, sharing the peace of Jesus Christ is very possible. It is possible because we have the peace that Jesus Christ gives, and because we are part of Community of Christ, which equips us to share Christ’s peace.

Ask a volunteer to read the following passages:

> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.  
> —John 14:27 NRSV

Let the church equip people of all ages to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace into all arenas of life.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4c, adapted

In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, we receive a set of instructions and directives to live in peace and to share peace with others. This is about a changed perspective, a way of seeing, being a “new creation” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:5), a way of life, a way of response.

**RESPOND**
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

**Say:** Let’s practice sharing Christ’s peace in our all ages group.

Distribute a 4” x 6” (10.16 x 15.24 cm) index card and marker to each person. Ask everyone to think of a “peace-challenge” that is significant to them; a “peace challenge” is a situation about which they need ideas on how to share Christ’s peace. Peace challenges can include concerns such as “A bully takes my lunch money” or “My employer will not print on recycled paper.”

Using masking or duct tape, have participants tape their cards to their backs. Ask others to help as needed. Invite the group to walk around, read one another’s cards, and write ideas on the cards stating how they could share Christ’s peace in response to the particular needs. For example one person’s challenge may be, “I am being bullied,” some responses might be “I will be your friend,” “I will listen,” or “I will help you to not be bullied.”

If your group is large, create smaller subgroups. Every person does not need to respond to every peace challenge. But make sure that each person gets responses from at least three people. Once that is accomplished, everyone may take their tags off and sit down.

Invite the participants (or ask for volunteers) to read their peace challenge cards and the responses written on them.

**Ask:** Does that response answer your need? How do you feel about it?

With the whole group, discuss:

- Was it easy or difficult to think of a response to another person’s need?
- Was it possible or impossible to share Christ’s peace?
- How is sharing Christ’s peace different in community and with the support of others?

Unlike the challenges we had at the beginning of our class, sharing Christ’s peace is not impossible. It is Christ’s mission and the mission of Community of Christ—it is a mission we can do...together.
To close the all ages activity choose one of the experiences from the introduction, or one of the ideas below:

• Read in unison “The Lord’s Prayer” (Matthew 6:9–15). The Lord’s Prayer is we focused (it uses us and we, not me and I) and expresses what it means to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace as a community—sharing peace, love, forgiveness, and acceptance as part of our very being.

• Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” (listen to the MP3 version by Monica Bradford)

• OR, sing or read together “Find Your Wholeness” (in adult reunion book):

  Find your wholeness in the reaching, in the lifting and the teaching, through your presence I am with them; if you love me, feed my sheep.

  Find your meaning in the holding, in the shaping and the molding, through your presence I am with them; if you love me, feed my sheep.

  Find your purpose in the feeding, in the showing and the leading, through your presence I am with them; if you love me, feed my sheep.

  Find your comfort in the crying, in the lying with the dying, through your presence I am with them; if you love me, feed my sheep.

  Find my strength in your believing, in your sacrifice true living, through my Spirit I am with you; if you love me, feed my sheep.

  Introduce the idea of an “Aha!” moment. Say: Have you ever heard someone say the word Aha? What does it mean? (These are times when a person discovers something new, or when they have a revelation or an epiphany.) If needed, explain that they might also think of it as the response to the question: “What did you learn in class today?” Explain that at the end of each class time, sticky notes will be provided on which participants can write their “Aha!” experiences. Then, they are to stick the notes to the door or nearby wall as they leave class. As they arrive the next day, encourage participants to read the sticky notes to remind them of key points—the “Aha!” observations from the day before.

  STICKY NOTE “AHA!”

  Ask participants to call out their “Aha!” observations from today’s class. Provide the sticky notes and have them write their “Aha!” observations now. Post them by the doorway so they can read them when exiting the class.

  BLESS

  Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

  I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS

  I have decided to follow Jesus;
  I have decided to follow Jesus;
  I have decided to follow Jesus;
  No turning back, no turning back.

  Though I may wander, I still will follow;
  Though I may wander, I still will follow;
  Though I may wander, I still will follow;
  No turning back, no turning back.

  Jesus beside me, the world before me;
  Jesus beside me, the world before me;
  Jesus beside me, the world before me;
  No turning back, no turning back.

  As a community, we live like Jesus;
  As a community, we live like Jesus;
  As a community, we live like Jesus;
  No turning back, no turning back.

  Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
  Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
  Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
  No turning back, no turning back.

  Words: Adapted by Monica Bradford
  Tune: Folk melody from India
LESSON 2
Right Relationships
(THE GOLDEN RULE)

Focus
The Golden Rule, a universal ethic, can guide us in right relationships with others.

Focus Scriptures
(The Golden Rule) In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

—Matthew 7:12 NRSV
(see also Luke 6:27–35)

God, the Eternal Creator, weeps for the poor, displaced, mistreated, and diseased of the world because of their unnecessary suffering. Such conditions are not God’s will. Open your ears to hear the pleading of mothers and fathers in all nations who desperately seek a future of hope for their children. Do not turn away from them. For in their welfare resides your welfare.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

—Jeremiah 29:7 NRSV

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL...
• experience the Golden Rule as a universal ethic found in almost every faith tradition.
• restate the Golden Rule in a way that has the greatest meaning for them.
• create “Golden Rulers” and write their interpretations of the Golden Rule on them.
• in groups, create skits to dramatize the Golden Rule in action.
• through an object lesson, observe that those who share the Golden Rule will not “faint” or “grow weary,” but can keep going.

Materials
• 12-inch (30.48 cm) wooden or paper rulers, one for each participant
• Yarn or thin ribbon
• Colorful permanent markers
• Two eggs: one hard-boiled, one fresh
• Clear bowl of water to float the eggs in
• Sticky notes
• Pens or pencils
• Flip chart or white board

Resource
• Golden Rule PowerPoint presentation (download at www.CofChrist.org/reunion2013 or print the pages)

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome participants at the door. As they enter the classroom encourage them to read the “Aha!” sticky notes posted in the previous session.

Show the Golden Rule PowerPoint (downloaded from the church website) to the group. Ask volunteers to read each slide aloud.

Alternative: Print the Golden Rule PowerPoint slides from the website, one slide per sheet of paper. Distribute the individual sheets for volunteers to read in turn.

Say: The Golden Rule is a universal ethic in many religions and faith traditions. It is also known as the source of all moral teaching. Some say it as commandment, others as a question. Some emphasize that only by healing others can you heal yourself.

Read the Golden Rule: “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12 NRSV or Luke 6:27–35).
ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

After reading or viewing of the Golden Rule, discuss:

• What came to mind when you listened to and read these statements?

• How would you state the Golden Rule another way? (write the responses on a flip chart or white board)

Ask a volunteer to read the following:

God, the Eternal Creator, weeps for the poor, displaced, mistreated, and diseased of the world because of their unnecessary suffering. Such conditions are not God’s will. Open your ears to hear the pleading of mothers and fathers in all nations who desperately seek a future of hope for their children. Do not turn away from them. For in their welfare resides your welfare.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

—Jeremiah 29:7 NRSV

Today’s theme is “Right Relationships.” Our relationships can be the most challenging aspects of our lives. We have a guideline for it. We simply need to follow the Golden Rule.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Present Matthew 7:12—the Golden Rule portion of the Sermon on the Mount—through drama, illustration, reading, or another method.

Also read Luke 6:27–35 about what Jesus Christ said about applying the Golden Rule to relationships.

RESPOND
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

THE GOLDEN RULE IN ACTION
Organize participants into groups of three or four, and invite them to create a skit in two acts: Act 1 reflects a situation of not following the Golden Rule. Act 2 shows the same situation, but this time the people are following the Golden Rule. After a few minutes to plan, invite groups to share their skits with the whole class.

Questions for Discussion

• Was it more difficult or easier to solve the problem by enacting the Golden Rule? Why?

• Why do we choose other responses than to love others as we love ourselves?

• What do we risk by loving others as we love ourselves? What do we gain?

CRAFT: GOLDEN RULER
Give each person a 12-inch (30.48-centimeter) wooden ruler, notepaper, and a permanent marker. Ask participants to write (first on the notepaper) the Golden Rule in their own words or as they like to remember it. Then they may transfer their statement to their ruler.

On the back of the ruler, challenge participants to write the names of one or two people or groups they find challenging to share the Golden Rule with. Invite them to pray for those people. Will the people follow the Golden Rule? How will participants share the peace of Jesus Christ with the people they named?

If the ruler has a hole in one end, provide each person a length of yarn or ribbon to thread through the hole. Suggest that participants hang the ruler in a very visible place to remind them often of this call to right relationships.

The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:9–12)
Often, people who have had right relationships, lifetime friendships, or have been married a long time, will share the secret of their success: to keep trying. Never give up. Keep talking, loving, and forgiving. Care for the other person first, in the way you wish to be cared for.

GOLDEN RULE OBJECT LESSON

Before class, take two eggs and hard-boil one of them. In class, say: Just as in our first class on sharing Christ’s peace, we may think that following the Golden Rule is more difficult than it sounds. If we get discouraged or stressed, we might not apply it in all situations. But as we share Christ’s peace, and are part of a supportive church community, it becomes easier to keep going.

Lay both eggs on the table. Don’t identify which is hard-boiled and which is fresh. Say that the fresh egg stands for someone who follows the Golden Rule. The hard-boiled egg stands for someone who doesn’t. Say that we can tell which is which by how they act.

Spin the fresh egg, then touch and release. It will keep spinning. Even when it’s challenged or under stress (the finger touch), it keeps spinning.

Spin the hard-boiled egg, then touch and release. It will stop spinning. With conflict or stress (the finger touch), it stops.

Which egg are you? With the support of our covenant community, can we keep trying, and continue to share the peace of Jesus Christ with others?


BENEFIT Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Share each one’s version of the Golden Rule around the circle. Close with a unanimous “Amen!”

STICKY NOTE “AHA!”

Remind participants to write their “Aha!” experiences on sticky notes and post them around the door as they leave.
Copy and cut each 6-inch half of the ruler. Overlap measurement marker 6 and tape two sides together.

Matthew 7:9–12

Cut inside dotted line
LESSON 3
Grace and Generosity

Focus
How can we participate in God’s grace and abundant generosity?

Focus Scriptures
Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

—Matthew 6:19–21 NRSV

Don’t worry about what you will eat or what you will drink…Seek God’s kingdom. Then everything you need will be given to you.

—Luke 12:29, 31 NRSV, adapted

Many are fearful and believe their security is to be found in the accumulation of possessions. The answers you seek are not inherent in the things of this world but in a faith that places its trust in the promises given to all who would follow Jesus Christ.

—Doctrine and Covenants 162:7b

Give generously according to your true capacity.
—Doctrine and Covenants 163:9

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL...

• observe that sometimes a person wants all the blessings of God’s kingdom as well as every earthly pleasure, which may result in more than she or he can “swallow.”

• hear sections of the Sermon on the Mount that reflect God’s grace and generosity.

• identify phrases that reflect God’s grace and generosity and illustrate those in groups through drama.

• offer a prayer while in a group circle of receiving and giving.

Materials
• Clear drinking glass that contains a colored drink (such as soda or punch)

• Two drinking straws

• One sheet of paper and marker per group

• Sticky notes and pens or pencils

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome participants at the door. Encourage them to read the “Aha!” sticky notes displayed there as they enter the classroom.

Demonstrate an object lesson. Invite a volunteer to come forward. Place a straw in a glass of colored soda, punch, or other beverage. Say that this drink represents everything we have received from God: all good things, all blessings. It is a very rich and fulfilling drink! Invite the volunteer to “partake of the good things which God has provided” (that is, sip a little through the straw).

Comment that you’ve noticed the volunteer wants more. She or he wants the good things God provides, but she or he may also want many of the other “good things” in this world. (Wave your hands in wide circles to include other good things of the world.) Maybe the person wants both: the best of everything. Give the volunteer the other straw,
and put it along the outside of the glass so the volunteer can drink from both straws at once. One straw is in the glass sipping the drink; one is outside, sipping “air.”

The volunteer will not be able to swallow anything through either straw. This represents trying to receive the treasures on Earth as well as the treasures of heaven. Ask participants how they would summarize this experiment, for example “The volunteer has taken on more than she or he can swallow,” or “when we desire everything, we may end up with nothing.”


**ENGAGE**

Invites exploration and interaction

Tell the class that today's theme is “Grace and Generosity.”

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

Present Matthew 6:19–21 and 25–33 through drama, illustration, reading, or another method. In this part of the Sermon, Jesus tells us what not to desire, but assures us not to worry about what we need.

Ask volunteers to read these scripture passages:

Don’t worry about what you will eat or what you will drink…Seek God’s kingdom. Then everything you need will be given to you.

—Luke 12:29, 31 NRSV, adapted

Many are fearful and believe their security is to be found in the accumulation of possessions. The answers you seek are not inherent in the things of this world but in a faith that places its trust in the promises given to all who would follow Jesus Christ.

—Doctrine and Covenants 162:7b

Give generously according to your true capacity.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:9

**RESPOND**

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Organize the class into small multiage groups, and move the groups apart from one another for privacy. Give each group a pencil or pen and a sheet of paper. Invite everyone to think of other expressions, scriptures, or familiar phrases, that describe God’s generosity (for example, “enough and to spare”). Challenge each group to think of a phrase and keep it quiet so people from other groups do not hear it.

Some examples are below:

- “enough and to spare” (Doctrine and Covenants 101:2f)
- “all things come from God” (1 Chronicles 29:11–17)
- “good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over…” (Luke 6:38)
- “more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35)
- “…God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- give even a cup of cold water to these little ones, you will not lose your reward (Matthew 10:42)
- “Give generously according to your true capacity” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:9).

Once the groups have thought of a phrase, they are to write it on the paper and create a way to demonstrate it (like a game of Charades).

When everyone is prepared, have each group in turn demonstrate its phrase while other groups guess it. Discuss what each phrase means.

**Ask:** What phrase or scripture passage touches you deeply enough to make you respond to God’s grace and generosity?
SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

In your group, or partnering with another, respond to these two inquiries:

1. Tell about a time when you didn’t need to worry because you had more than you needed.

2. Tell of a time when you knew you could share generously just as God does.

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Form a prayer circle to receive and give. Gather everyone in a circle and give these instructions:

1. Hold your hands in front of you, palms together.

2. Turn your hands flat to the right, thumbs pointing right, palms still together. The left hand will be on top of the right palm.

3. Separate your hands, keeping your left palm down and right palm up.

4. Hold hands with the people next to you. Again, your left hand will be palm down on top of the other person’s hand. The right hand will be palm up, under the next person’s hand (left hand, palm down; right hand, palm up).

Begin a prayer of thankfulness for God’s grace and generosity and invite others to offer one sentence or one thing for which they are thankful. Close by lifting all hands up and shouting, “Amen!”

STICKY NOTE “AHA!”

Remind participants to write their “Aha!” observations on sticky notes and post them around the door as they leave.
LEsson 4
God’s Justice

Focus
God’s justice is reflected in the Beatitudes.

Focus Scripture
The Beatitudes—Matthew 5:1–12
(at end of lesson)

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• sing “O How Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit” HS 322, to introduce the Beatitudes.
• explore the Beatitudes and rephrase in language that is personally meaningful.
• create a “Blessings” poster illustrating the Beatitudes and share it with the class.
• hear sections of the Sermon on the Mount that reflect the Beatitudes.

Materials
• Poster materials: chalk, paint, markers, glitter or puffy glue, construction paper, poster board, or white board or chalkboard, and markers
• Copies for each person or group of the Beatitudes expressions (at end of lesson)
• Sticky notes
• Pens or pencils

Resources
• Hymns of the Saints (HS)

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome participants at the door. Encourage them to read the “Aha!” sticky notes displayed there as they enter the classroom.

Sing together “O How Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit” HS 322.

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

Today’s theme is “God’s Justice.”

SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Present Matthew 5:1–12—part of the Sermon on the Mount—through drama, illustration, reading, or another method.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus taught the qualities of true discipleship—a new set of Christian ethics that focus on love and humility rather than force and fear. The Beatitudes focus on mercy, spirituality, compassion, and justice, and support shalom—the most holistic form of justice that reveals God’s vision for creation.
Each Beatitude includes two phrases: who it is for (the condition) and the blessing (or promise).

As a class, read through the hymn just sung, “O How Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit,” HS 322, and write the phrases of the hymn in two columns under “Who” and “Blessing,” on a flip chart or white board as shown (right).

Now read two other “Expressions of the Beatitudes” at the end of this lesson—one from Matthew 5:1–12 NRSV, and the other written for children. You may wish to photocopy them for each participant or group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO (Condition)</th>
<th>BLESSING (Promise)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor in spirit</td>
<td>kingdom of heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad and mournful</td>
<td>consoled by God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meek and humble</td>
<td>inherit the earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger for goodness</td>
<td>feast with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy givers</td>
<td>will receive mercy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure in heart</td>
<td>will see God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True peacemakers</td>
<td>known as God’s children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffer for justice</td>
<td>honored by God</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESPOND
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

BLESSING POSTER

Invite participants to create a Beatitudes poster that illustrates who the blessings represent, and what they promise. Do this activity together with the whole class or in smaller groups to provide more opportunities for hands-on participation by all.

Provide a variety of media (chalk, paint, markers, glitter glue, poster board, newsprint or large construction paper, chalkboard or white board). Show the sample (print the sample on large paper). Around the word Blessed, the artist who created the sample wrote who the blessings are for, and what they promise. Blessings may be expressed in many other ways. Encourage creativity!

When groups have completed their tasks, invite them to display and explain their posters to the rest of the class participants.
SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Give each participant a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Invite participants to each choose one of the Beatitudes, and use it to create a personal message. They may follow a format of “When I am feeling meek and humble, I know I will be blessed with…” These messages can be used for personal reflection or participants may share them during the Bless section of class.

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

In a circle prayer, participants may share one Beatitude from their own creations, or a chosen Beatitude as expressed through scripture or one of the expressions in this lesson. Close in an affirmation of thankfulness for the Blessings of Community, and the blessings of God’s justice and peace.

As a group, you may wish to sing “O How Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit” HS 322 again.

STICKY NOTE “AHA!”
Remind participants to write their “Aha!” moment on sticky notes and post them around the door while exiting class.
Expressions of the Beatitudes

MATTHEW 5:1–12 NRSV

1 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”
The Beatitudes

(paraphrased for children)

Glad are those who are kind, for they will take care of God’s world.

Glad are those who cry, for they will find comfort in God.

Glad are those who follow God, for they will become leaders.

Glad are those who treat everyone the same, for they will be blessed.

Glad are those who are gentle, for the Earth will be theirs.

Glad are those who live like Jesus, for they will know God.

Glad are those who make peace, for they will be called children of God.

Glad are those who are bullied when they do what God wants, for heaven will be theirs.

You are a disciple when you follow Christ. It will not always be easy. Others will not always be nice to you. But when you are happy or sad, courageous or afraid, look for joy and peace within yourself and know that God loves you and is with you always.

—Mary Kay Speaks
LESSON 5
God’s Reign on Earth

Focus
To participate in the reign of God on Earth is easy; first, we must draw close to God in prayer.

Focus Scriptures
• Concerning prayer—Matthew 6:5–15 (the Lord’s Prayer is Matthew 6:9–14)
• Mary and Martha story—Luke 10:38–42
• Doctrine and Covenants 163:3a–b

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• engage in an experiment to see what difference it makes to connect to God and be in God’s presence.
• hear sections of the Sermon of the Mount that reflect Christ’s counsel about prayer and how to pray.
• identify and tally where and how they pray as individuals and as a group.
• engage in an experiment about sharing God’s love and Christ’s peace with others.

Materials
• A hardcover book and a sheet of paper
• Two uncooked eggs
• Permanent marker
• Glass bowl filled with water
• Sugar
• Flip chart and markers
• One sheet of paper per small group
• Sticky notes
• Pens or pencils for each participant

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome participants at the door. Encourage them to read the “Aha!” sticky notes displayed there as they enter the classroom.

Invite everyone to gather while you demonstrate a simple experiment. Make an “X” on the floor with tape. Hold a hardcover book in one hand and a sheet of paper in the other; hold them about shoulder-height. Encourage everyone to imagine that God is the book and we are the paper. Drop them at the same time. The book will hit the floor first and the paper will float down later.

Ask the participants to express what happened. Say: if we are not with God, we may float around, not quite hitting our mark, not reaching our goal. We may not be able to share and live out God’s reign on Earth. We may not be able to live Christ’s peace.

Ask what happens if we draw close to God. Set the paper on top of the book and drop them—they will fall together. Ask participants to offer a phrase to express what happened, for instance: God led the way for us. God gave us a foundation. God will be with us, all the way.

Tell the class that today’s theme is “God’s Reign on Earth.”

God calls us to live out covenant community, and to share the peaceful reign of God. Can we truly share the Blessings of Community with all others so God’s reign on Earth is shared with all, or is it another impossible challenge?

It may be like our book and paper experiment. We may be able to share the peaceful reign of God. But to feel, realize, and visualize God’s reign on Earth—God’s vision of shalom—we need to know God, and be with God, like the paper with the book.

Apostle Stassi Cramm states in her article “God’s Reign on Earth” in *Live Christ’s Peace* (the adult reunion text—order at www.HeraldHouse.com):

> The good news is we don’t have to wait to be perfect to create zionic conditions. As we center on God, we are compelled to act in ways that bring forth the kingdom. Spending time with God changes who we are and how we respond through holistic stewardship to bring forth the kingdom in little and big ways.

> …When people center on God, they see one another and the world more like God does. They enthusiastically respond to make the world more like what God wants it to be. It’s just that simple.

Jesus Christ modeled a life of centering on God and taught his disciples how to pray to God.

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

Present Matthew 6:5–15 through drama, illustration, reading, or other method.

Ask volunteers to read these scriptures aloud:

> Now as they [Jesus and his disciples] went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”

> —Luke 10:38–42 NRSV

You are called to create pathways in the world for peace in Christ…The hope of Zion is realized when the vision of Christ is embodied in communities of generosity, justice, and peacefulness. Above all else, strive to be faithful to Christ’s vision of the peaceable Kingdom of God on earth…. Pursue peace.

> —Doctrine and Covenants 163:3a–b

**RESPOND**

**PRAYER SURVEY**

Divide the class into smaller multiage groups and give each group a sheet of paper and pencils or pens. Write the following questions on a poster board or flip chart. Each small group will discuss these questions and a recorder in each group can tally the responses. Encourage group members to share their answers to these questions, and tell about their other significant experiences with prayer.

1. Where do you pray most often?
2. Do you have a regular time for prayer? When and where is it?
3. What is your most unusual place of prayer?
4. Do you pray a regular prayer, such as the Lord’s Prayer or Psalm 23?
5. What has been your most successful prayer practice?
6. Have you tried a new prayer practice lately? What is it? Where did you learn it?
7. How do you feel during and after prayer?

Invite group members to share their responses with the whole class. You may keep a class tally on the flip chart.
EXPLORES HOW THE LESSON MIGHT BE LIVED OUT

Before class, hold a raw egg with the small end up and draw a frown on it using a permanent marker (see illustration). Hold the second raw egg with the large end up and draw a smile on that egg.

Practice the following experiment before class. Add a teaspoon of sugar to the water. (You may need to add additional sugar to the water to make both eggs float.) When the sugar water is the right amount to make both eggs float, save it to use when you present this experiment in your all ages group.

Hold the egg with the small end down (with a smile) to demonstrate how we feel when we’ve prayed and paid attention to God in our lives. Then hold up the other egg, with the small end up which is frowning. Say: This may be how a person feels who hasn’t experienced the love of God, the reign of God, with whom no one has shared Christ’s peace.

In a large clear bowl, place the smiling egg in about five inches of water. It will float upright. Say: this represents us within God’s love—God’s reign on Earth.

Now show the egg with a frown. Say: let’s see what happens when we share those blessings, when we live Christ’s peace, with others. Put the frowning egg into the water. It will flip over so the frown becomes a smile. Demonstrate this again or ask a volunteer to try it.

Summarize that when we pay attention to our closeness to God through prayer, we can better live and share Christ’s peace, God’s reign on Earth.


BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Recite together the Lord’s Prayer. Someone may lead in sign language.

STICKY NOTE “AHA!”

Remind participants to write their “Aha!” observations on the sticky notes and post them around the door while exiting class.
LESSON 6
Live the Ethics of Christ’s Peace
(WE SHARE)

Focus
We can share the ethics of Christ’s peace by living out the Enduring Principles.

Focus Scriptures
Salt of the earth; light of the world; city on a hill (from Matthew 5:13–16).

Let the church equip people of all ages to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace into all arenas of life.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4c, adapted

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

—2 Corinthians 5:17 NRSV

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL...
• accomplish an “impossible task” of embracing the world by creating a banner of love to wrap around a globe.
• engage in an experiment about becoming a new creation.

Materials
• World map or globe, one for entire class or, if class is divided into groups, one for each group
• Sticky notes
• Washable markers
• For each group: scissors, 5- x 8-inch (12.7- x 20.32-centimeter) index card, one non-latex balloon, permanent marker to make balloon look like a globe
• Four clear plastic drinking glasses, water, white glue or glue gel (1 bottle), Borax soap (1/2 level teaspoon or 2.46 milliliters), food coloring (one drop), utensil for stirring, clean dish towel (or other item for wiping hands), small reclosable plastic bag

Resources
• “We Share in the World” handouts for each group

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome participants at the door. Encourage them to read the “Aha!” sticky notes displayed there as they enter the classroom.

First, state that together we are the light of the world, living Christ’s peace in all arenas of life. In Community of Christ we have defined Enduring Principles—our values, our beliefs. They are what we live. We witness to others what we believe, and share when we live out our values and beliefs.

Create small groups and provide a We Share picture book to read aloud together. Since the children have explored this book in their classes, they may take leadership and be the readers.
Tell the class that today’s theme is the “Live the Ethics of Christ’s Peace.”

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

Present Matthew 5:13–16 (the final part of the Sermon on the Mount) through drama, illustration, reading, or other method.

**RESPOND**

*Takes the learners from hearing to doing*

**SHARING IN THE WORLD**

How would it be different if we lived out these Enduring Principles? How do the Enduring Principles impact each of us as a disciple? How would they impact others as we live them out?

Maybe one way to live the ethics of Christ’s peace is to live out our Enduring Principles.

Do this experience as a whole-class group, or in smaller groups. If in small groups, create groups of multiple ages, and give each group a map of the world or a globe. Distribute washable markers and sticky notes.

Instruct the groups to write the Enduring Principles—one on each of their sticky notes. Write them on a flip chart before class or ask class members to name them as you write on a flip chart. Then each group will gather around their world maps or globes. Distribute the “We Share in the World” notes below, one sheet to each group.

As the groups read each one, they should find the location on their maps or globes. After each statement, a group leader says “We Can Share...” and invites others to fill in what Enduring Principle might be shared for that need. Various Enduring Principles may apply to each situation—some suggestions are given at the end of this lesson. Be open to all suggestions and ask participants to explain their comments.

Invite everyone look at the world maps or globes with the Enduring Principles on them. Say:

See how different our world looks when we share the Enduring Principles! Jesus Christ told us to go and share.

Ask volunteers to read aloud the following scriptures:

*Let the church equip people of all ages to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace into all arenas of life.*  
—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4c, adapted

*So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!*  
—2 Corinthians 5:17

Our Enduring Principles are what we live. They are what we can share.

**SHARE THE LOVE**

Make a craft to demonstrate how we can share the love of God by embracing the world—how we can make “pathways of peace.”

Ask participants to get into multiage groups of three or four. Give each group one balloon and a permanent marker, and two 5- x 8-inch (12.7- x 20.32-cm) index cards (one is extra in case they make a mistake), and scissors.

Say: God’s vision for creation (shalom) can embrace the whole Earth. Let’s see how God’s reign, God’s love can embrace the whole Earth.

Take a balloon and first draw on it to represent the Earth. Then, take an index card and write “God’s reign” on it. Try to fit it to your balloon. Cut a large circle out of the index card and try to fit it around the balloon. It still won’t fit. Comment that if we all are sharing God’s love, we should be able to share God’s reign on Earth.

Instruct all groups to follow along with your demonstration. (They may cut their cards at the same time, or wait until you are finished.)

Fold a new index card in half lengthwise. Hold the card with the fold at the top. Press the two folded sides (flaps) together.

Start ¼ inch (0.63 cm) from the end, and cut downward from the fold toward the two flaps. DO NOT cut all the
way through but leave one inch (2.54 cm) at the end (see illustration).

For the next cut, cut from the flaps up to the fold, ¼ inch (0.63 cm) from the other cut.

Continue cutting alternating cuts about ¼ inch (0.63 cm) apart.

Very carefully, cut along the folded top of the middle strips. DO NOT cut through the first and last strip. These strips hold the paper together.

Very gently, spread out the circle you made. Fit it around your group’s “globe.” You may write “God’s Reign on Earth” on the circle. Invite all groups to do the same.

Ask class members how they would summarize the experiment or the model they just accomplished.


Share this, experiment about becoming a new creation.

Before class label two clear large plastic cups “A” and “B” using a permanent marker. In cup A, measure .35 inch/.85 cm up from the bottom of a large plastic cup and draw a line with a permanent marker. Pour white glue or glue gel in the cup, up to the line. Add 4 teaspoons (19.71 ml) of water and stir well. Add two drops of food coloring (any color) to this glue/water mixture.

In a microwave-safe, clear bowl, put 3 teaspoons (14.78 ml) of water. Add ½ level teaspoon (2.46 ml) of Borax soap. Stir well. Heat carefully in a microwave for 10 seconds to dissolve soap powder. Pour into cup B.

Practice adding cup B into cup A, stirring, and forming a ball. The ball will become more bouncy as you handle it.

Prepare the two new cups of water and ingredients to conduct the experiment in class.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it says that if anyone belongs to Christ, that person is made new. We can more readily share the ethics of Christ’s peace as a new creature in Christ. Demonstrate being a new creation:

Show cup A and pour some glue into it, to the line. Add water and food coloring and stir.

Say: We might say this is the stuff we’re made of. We see that this mixture is changing into a new creation. We know we change as we live out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Show cup B. Say: let’s imagine this is Jesus Christ coming into our hearts, transforming us, changing us. Pour cup B into cup A and stir. The “ooze” will stick to the stirring spoon. Take it out of the cup and roll it in your hand to form a ball. Show everyone the “new creation,” perhaps passing it around to each one, then save in a reclosable plastic bag.

So, we can share the ethics of Christ’s peace because Christ forms us as a new creation.

STICKY NOTE “AHA!”

Ask participants to share their “Aha!” moments for today’s class, and the previous classes, if they can, in a few words. Have them imagine they are having an “Aha!” moment to share how to live Christ’s peace, and to say it in a few words or phrases.

They may write these on sticky notes and post them on a classroom wall or around the door with the notes from previous sessions. Or they may call these out in the classroom.

Close by sharing one of your favorite Bless experiences, such as reciting the Lord’s Prayer, singing a favorite hymn or song, a circle prayer, or other experience.
We Share in the World

1. A small congregation in our mission center wants to visit sick members and friends. We can share *All Are Called* or *Worth of All Persons*.

2. Visitors to a beautiful island throw trash on the beach and in the ocean. We can share *Responsible Choices* or *Sacredness of Creation*.

3. A boy in India doesn’t have school clothes or lunch money. We can share *Grace and Generosity*.

4. The rain forests are being cut down for lumber. We can share *Sacredness of Creation* or *Responsible Choices*.

5. A child in Zambia has to work instead of going to school. We can share *Worth of All Persons*.

6. Growing nations need more and more of the world’s precious resources. Sometimes this leads to fights. We can share *Pursuit of Peace (Shalom)*.

7. A classroom in Bolivia includes Joey who is in a wheelchair, Maria who is good at math, Juan who speaks mostly English, and Angela who likes to take charge. They don’t always get along. We can share *Unity in Diversity*.

8. People living in a poor urban neighborhood feel alone and hopeless. We can share *Blessings of Community*.

9. Our congregation needs prayerful direction and discernment for moving forward in mission. We can share *Continuing Revelation*.

10. Add other situations in your congregation or ministry area that participants would be aware of, or they may suggest situations. Ask what can be shared in each situation.
