Reunion 2013
Lessons for Young Children
Ages 3–5
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this course is for children ages 3–5 to learn who we are as Community of Christ. Specifically, children will answer the question, “Who Are We?” by exploring how we follow Jesus, how we are peacemakers, how we are part of the sacred story, how we share shalom, how we receive and share, and how we belong.

This course includes six lessons based on the We Share picture book, written by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison, and produced by Community of Christ. The hardbound book and a digital version are available through Herald Publishing House.

These lessons also include stanzas from “We Share in Poetry” a rhyming poem that helps young children more fully understand who we are as Community of Christ. Find the poem in its entirety at the end of the lessons.

Tips for 3-year-olds

If your group consists of mostly 3-year-olds, allow more free playtime at the beginning and end of each session. In the Engage section of each lesson, consider using the recommended We Share pictures and poem but not the Bible story.
LESSON 1
We Follow Jesus

Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We follow Jesus Christ with others in communities of joy, hope, love, and peace.

Focus Scripture
Luke 4:14–21

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• experience Christ-like actions by playing “Follow the Leader.”
• explore promoting communities of joy, hope, love, and peace and Christ’s mission through poetry and pictures.

Materials
• Scroll (for each child): two dowels, cellophane tape, one piece of paper. (Ahead of time, make a small scroll for each child by taping paper to two dowels and rolling each side inward. On each scroll, write the words My name is ______ and I follow Jesus.)
• Crayons, pastels, markers, or stickers to decorate scrolls
• A globe or map of the world

• CC—A Shalom Bug Puppet (for each child): two matching buttons; about six balls of crumpled newspaper, plastic shopping bags, or fiber filling; one pipe cleaner for the antennae; five pipe cleaners for the legs; five rubber bands; one light green sock, green washcloth, or any other green fabric that can be shaped into a tube; craft glue; scissors; and stapler or needle and thread
• Joy, Hope, Love, Peace Relay: two large sheets of butcher paper; markers, crayons, or pastels; masking tape
• Optional: one pillow or mat for each child to sit on
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Bible (NRSV) or Lectionary Story Bible, Year C by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2009, ISBN 9781551455761), available from Herald Publishing House
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Ahead of time, make a small scroll for each child by taping paper to two dowels and rolling each side inward. On each scroll, write the words My name is ______ and I follow Jesus.

Warmly greet each child and give each a scroll. Help or invite each child to fill in the blank on the scroll with his or her name. Have them decorate their scrolls using crayons, markers, or stickers as you greet other students. As a way
of introducing the kids to one another, take turns holding up each scroll and say, for example, “This is Angela and she follows Jesus!”

Play a game of Follow the Leader with you as the leader. Begin with simple actions like reaching high or marching in place. Once everyone is engaged in the game, start portraying Christ-like actions—for example, giving a hug, picking up trash, serving food.

Have the children join you in marching and singing the refrain and the adapted version of “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.”

---

Invite the children to sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 4–5 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

Hi! I’m CC—a shalom bug—
Friend to all you girls and boys.
We are Community of Christ,
Filled with peace, love, hope, and joy.

After reading the stanza, discuss:

- Ask the children if they know who is talking? Who is CC? (CC is a shalom bug we will look for and listen to each day.)

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing? (CC is in the top left corner of page 4, and seems to be feeling and showing the joy, hope, love, and peace we share in Community of Christ.)

- Who are all the people we see on this page? (We are seeing Community of Christ. Pretend to see people you know and love; for example, your spouse, parent, grandparent, brother, friend, neighbor, or member of your congregation. Ask the children who they see.)

Display the illustration on pages 10–11, and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We want to live like Jesus Christ.
His mission is our mission.
Together in community,
We share his awesome vision.
After reading the stanza, discuss:

- **CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?”** (CC is on the bottom left corner of page 10. CC is jumping rope with two friends. Playing, exercising together, and taking turns are examples of living like Jesus.)
- **Where in the world might these people live?** (It could be in Africa or Haiti—point out those locations on a globe or map; point out the location where you live.)
- **What else is happening in this picture that is an example of living like Jesus?** (sharing food, including people of different ages and those who are in wheelchairs)
- **Our poem says, “We share Jesus’ awesome vision.”** What is a vision? (an idea or hope that you can imagine in your mind and work to make it real; when Jesus lived on Earth, he showed us a vision of how to live in community)

Invite the children to get the scrolls they made during the Gather section and bring them to the story circle. Explain that Jesus Christ is the example of how to live God’s way. Throughout his life, Jesus showed what it meant to share joy, hope, love, and peace with others. There is a Bible story that tells us more about the mission of Jesus. Read Luke 4:14–21 from the Bible or the Bible story “Jesus Learns about His Job” on page 54 of Ralph Milton’s *Lectionary Story Bible, Year C*. Decide ahead of time when to stop the story and invite the children to open their scrolls and chant together, “I have decided to follow Jesus!” Have them roll up their scrolls until it is time to chant together again. Explain that it sounds like Jesus had an important job! Tell them how glad you are that we have decided to follow Jesus. We can be his helpers!

**RESPOND**

**Takes the learners from hearing to doing**

**CC—A Shalom Bug Puppet**

 Invite children to make their own CC puppet by following these directions with you:

1. Stuff balls of newspaper, plastic shopping bags, or fiber filling into a sack or fabric tube until it is full
2. Staple or sew shut the open end(s) of the tube
3. Wrap rubber bands in between each ball to form segments of the bug
4. Glue on buttons to make eyes
5. Use scissors to cut two small holes into the head segment of your bug
6. Fold one pipe cleaner in half, forming a “V”
7. Poke the folded pipe cleaner through the holes to make antennae
8. Wrap each antenna around your finger to make a spiral
9. To add legs, wrap a pipe cleaner around each segment and bend the ends to resemble feet

Give the children time to play with their CC puppets. Make your own puppet. Use your CC puppet to interact with the children’s puppets. During this guided play, reinforce concepts learned today—for example, joy, hope, love, peace; following Jesus; vision; and mission. We use the puppets in each lesson, so do not send them home with the children until the last session.
Joy, Hope, Love, Peace Relay
Ahead of time, attach two large sheets of butcher paper to opposite walls. Place markers, crayons, or pastels near each paper. A teacher or helper should stand by each paper to assist those who struggle. Divide the group into two teams. Each team forms a line behind a masking tape starting line. Ask the children what might make them feel joy, hope, love, or peaceful? Suggest children think of an answer before the game begins. (Help those who have difficulty.) When you say “go,” the first member of each team runs to the sheet of butcher paper and draws something that makes him or her feel joy, hope, love, or peaceful and then runs back to the starting line. The next child has a turn until each child has had a turn. Teams then guess what the other team’s pictures show.

SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Hand their scrolls to the children to take home. Ask them to imagine what it would be like to be the only follower of Jesus. Now ask them to imagine what it would be like to be part of a community who are all followers of Jesus, a community that shares joy, hope, love, or peace with others. What would the world be like? Have everyone close their eyes and imagine that vision. Discuss what they see in their visions. Do they see food and clean water for everyone in the world; giving a hug to someone who is sad or lonely; singing a song with other people; sharing toys with those who don’t have any; doctors and nurses helping all sick people?

Living like Jesus in community with others is part of what makes us Community of Christ…but there is so much more!

Sing together “We Are Community of Christ.”

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Offer a blessing that reminds the children that Jesus has given many examples of how to live, if we choose to follow him.
LESSON 2
We Are Peacemakers

Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We are peacemakers who share the peace of Jesus Christ in our words and actions everywhere.

Focus Scripture
Isaiah 2:1–5

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• participate in a Prayer for Peace.
• hear Isaiah 2:1–5.
• explore being peacemakers and the hands of Jesus through poetry and pictures.
• discover ways to be the hands of Jesus.

Materials
• One “peaceful” object for each child (for example, a blanket, pillow, stuffed animal, bottle, pajamas, favorite picture, or favorite book)
• A picture of Community of Christ Temple found at the end of this lesson
• One candle and matches
• CC puppets made in the first session
• Helping Hands (for each child): small clay flowerpot; markers, glitter glue, or stickers to decorate with; construction paper for tracing hands; child-safe scissors; glue; three or four craft sticks; and a small ball of clay
• Healing Lotion: baby lotion, several small containers, food coloring, and cotton swabs
• Optional: one pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Bible (NRSV) or Lectionary Story Bible, Year A by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake, 2007, ISBN 9781551455471), available from Herald Publishing House
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Warmly greet each child. Invite the children to come in quietly and sit in a circle. Show them objects they may use to comfort themselves (for example, a blanket, stuffed animal, bottle, pajamas, picture of someone they love, favorite picture book). If possible, have enough so each child will end up holding something. Show the objects one at a time and let the children look at and hold each object. Ask if any of the children use such “peaceful objects.” Explain how some people use these objects to help them feel peaceful and loved by those nearby and by God. As a group, describe what peaceful love feels like. God wants that feeling for all people in the world.

Show a picture of Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Missouri. Explain that every day—Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays...Christmas, Halloween, birthdays—
people gather in Community of Christ Temple for the Daily Prayer for Peace. Explain that today you are going to begin class with your own prayer for peace. Light a candle and invite the children to pray with you:

Loving God,

Today we pray for peace for children everywhere. We pray that all children will have enough to eat, fresh water to drink, and doctors and nurses to care for them when they are sick. God, please help us make peace real in the world. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Close your prayer time by singing together “Lord, I Want to Be a Peacemaker.”

Invite the children to bring the CC puppets they made last session with them as they sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 8–9 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

God sent Jesus to show the way
With his kind and gentle hands.
In all the things we do and say,
We help others understand.

After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is on the top left of page 8. CC is sharing in the sacrament of Communion. Discuss with the children times when they have seen others take part in Communion.)
- There are many hands on this page. Let’s count them. (We see 11 hands; there are 13 if you count CC’s hands.)
- What are the hands doing? (They are sharing, serving, praying, baptizing, and blessing. Point out how the hand of Jesus is touching the baby’s hands.) Children are important to Jesus. Hands are important for helping others understand how much God loves them.

Display the illustration on pages 26–27 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We work with God as peacemakers,
(We can also say, “Shalom,”)
Making the world a better place
Where everyone feels at home.

Words: Adapted by Monica Bradford, 2012
Tune: “Lord, I Want to Be a Christian” HS 464
After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is at the bottom right corner. CC is helping God make the world a better place by caring for someone who is sad.) Why might the ladybug be feeling sad?

- The poem says, “We can also say, ‘shalom.’” Can you say shalom? What does shalom mean? (peace where everyone feels at home)

- What do you like most about your home?

- What does every person in the world need to feel at home? (love, food, water, peace, to feel safe)

Invite the children to get one of the peaceful objects used during the Gather section of this lesson, and bring it to the story circle and hold it throughout the Bible story. From your earlier discussion, remind the children what peaceful love feels like and that God wants that feeling for all people in the world. There is a Bible story that teaches us about being peacemakers. Read Isaiah 2:1–5 from the Bible or the Bible story “Making Ploughs out of Swords” on pages 13–16 of Ralph Milton’s *Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*. After the story, go around the circle imagining turning a sword into each of the peaceful objects they are holding: a sword into a blanket, a sword into a stuffed toy, a sword into a book or picture. Let’s learn to be peacemakers—to be kind and not fight with one another anymore.

**RESPOND**

**Takes the learners from hearing to doing**

**Helping Hand Plant**

Give each child a small clay flowerpot and ask them to use markers, glitter glue, or stickers to decorate the pot. While the children are decorating pots, trace on construction paper three or four handprints for each child. Have the children cut them out. (Be prepared to help those who struggle.) Ask each child ways he or she can be the hands of Jesus. Invite them to, or help them, write each idea on a separate hand. Glue each hand to a craft stick and push the sticks into a ball of clay in the bottom of each flowerpot. They have just created a “helping hand plant.”

**Healing Lotion**

Ahead of time put baby lotion in many small containers. Add food coloring to create pastel colors. A variety of colors adds extra fun. Explain to the children that one way we can show special kindness is by putting a lotion design on the hand or arm of a partner. Divide the group into pairs. Ask them to decide who will be first to put the lotion on and who will be second. Show children how to dip a cotton swab in the lotion and make designs on the back of their partners’ hands or arms. As they paint one another, ask questions about how it feels, and encourage both the “artist” and the “canvas” to enjoy the process. If you have a child who is resistant to working with a partner, let him or her use one hand to paint the other. The lotion will easily rinse off or rub in. Take this opportunity to talk about how soft the skin feels where the lotion was applied.
**SEND**
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Invite the children to sit in a circle. As you hand their helping hand plants to the children to take home, remind them how much you learned today about being peacemakers. Help them remember what they wrote on their helping hands.

Being a peacemaker is part of what makes us Community of Christ…but there is so much more!

Sing together “We Are Community of Christ.”

---

**BLESS**
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Offer a blessing asking God to guide the children as they work to become peacemakers.
LESSON 3
We Are Part of the Sacred Story

Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We value the sacred story and listen for God every day.

Focus Scripture
Samuel 3:1–20

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• be introduced to prayer and scripture study as ways to learn more about God.
• explore the sacred story and listen for God through poetry and pictures.
• practice listening.

Materials
• One inexpensive compass for each child
• Maps and GPS devices to show ways of finding directions
• CC puppets made in the first session
• Listen for God Wind Chime (for each child): one empty aluminum pie tin; nine pieces of string cut to different lengths; eight objects that make a sound when hit together (for example, jingle bells, metal spoons, keys, bottle caps, aluminum can flip tops, seashells, and tin cans). Each object needs a hole for string to fit through.
• One object that makes a continual sound such as a music box, wind-up musical toy, or kitchen timer
• Optional: one pillow or mat for each child to sit on

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Bible (NRSV) or Lectionary Story Bible, Year B by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648), available from Herald Publishing House
• One copy each of Community of Christ books of scripture: Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Warmly greet each child and hand each one a small, inexpensive compass. As you are greeting other children, allow them to play with their compasses and discover what compasses do and how they work.

While sitting in a circle, show the group other tools people use to tell direction—like maps and GPS devices. Show the children how each works. Which tool would they choose if they were going on a trip? Why? Explain that these tools help us feel safe, strong, and confident that we will find our way during a trip.

We Are Part of the Sacred Story—12
GATHER continued

Ask them how we can feel safe, strong, and confident in our lives. Show the children the scriptures used in Community of Christ: Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants. Discuss with the children how God guides us through these scriptures and the lessons Jesus taught. Explain that “to guide” means to lead us, to help us, and to show us the way. Help the children understand that God can guide them, too. When they pray and listen for God or when they hear scripture stories, they are learning about God’s ways. God also uses parents and teachers to help guide them.

Sing together “I Will Pray and Listen for God.”

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

Invite the children to bring the CC puppets they made earlier with them as they sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 12–13 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We love to hear about those folks
Through our long, long history
Who help us learn more about God—
Recognize the mystery.

After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is on the top left of page 12. CC is reading to a friend.)
- Do we know everything about God? (No.) So that means God is a mystery—someone or something we don’t know everything about.

- What do we know about God? How do we know it? Reading from scriptures helps us know more about God. Scriptures are filled with stories written long ago about people who tried to live God’s ways.

- What are some other ways we can learn about God? (Point out the two people who are telling each other what they know about God.)

Display the illustration on pages 18–19 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

I pray and listen carefully
For God, each and every day.
My heart feels God is close to me
When I cry, or sing, or play.

We Are Part of the Sacred Story—13
After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is with friends in the middle of page 19 praying and listening for God.) The leaves at the top of the page come from the ginkgo tree. Ginkgo trees are planted in the World Plaza outside the Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Missouri. That same Temple is where the Daily Prayer for Peace happens just like the one that was offered in the last session.

- Where are you when you pray to God? How do you listen for God?

- When does your heart feel that God is close? God is with you when you pray, sing, or play—even when you are angry or cry.

Respond

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Listen for God Wind Chimes

Ahead of time, turn pie tins upside down and poke about eight holes evenly spaced around the rim and two holes in the center of each tin. Give each child a pie tin, nine pieces of string cut to different lengths, and eight objects that will make a sound when hit together (for example, jingle bells, old metal spoons, keys, bottle caps, aluminum can flip tops, seashells, and tin cans). Make sure each object has a hole for string to fit through. Have the children put a string through the hole in an object and then through the hole in the pie tin. Have them, or help them, tie a knot to secure the string. Repeat the process to string all eight objects. Have the kids insert the longest string through the two holes in the center to hang the pie tin. Invite the kids to bring their wind chimes outdoors. Explain that many people hear God through the wind and other parts of nature.

Find that Sound

While the children are making wind chimes and not looking, find a place to hide a wind-up musical toy, music box, kitchen timer, or other object that makes a continual sound. Ask them, “Do you hear something?” Ask them to listen carefully. Encourage them to discover where the sound is coming from. After they have found it, you may want to ask the children to cover their eyes and hide the object repeatedly so all the children who want to have a chance to find the sound.
Offer a prayer of blessing asking God to help each child listen for God.

Invite the children to sit in a circle. As you hand their wind chimes to the children to take home, remind them of how important it is to listen for God through stories, through nature, through prayer, or to discover their own ways of listening for God.

Sharing stories and listening for God every day is part of what makes us Community of Christ…but there is so much more!

Sing together “We Are Community of Christ.”
LESSON 4
We Care for Creation

Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We make good choices in caring for creation so we can all live peaceably together.

Focus Scripture
Matthew 13:3–33, 44–45

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• be introduced to the meaning of good choices.
• hear Matthew 13:31–33, 44–45.
• explore God’s vision for creation, Sacredness of Creation, and Responsible Choices through poetry and pictures.
• practice making choices.

Materials
• Before class, create a mess in the room—for example, put trash on the floor; turn furniture over; leave doors, cabinets and drawers open

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Bible (NRSV) or Lectionary Story Bible, Year A by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake, 2007, ISBN 9781551455471), available from Herald Publishing House
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Before class, create a mess in the room—for example, put trash on the floor; turn furniture over; leave doors, cabinets, and drawers open. As children come in the room, be eating a candy bar and texting or talking on your phone. Don’t really look at the children as they come in. Tell the children to sit down. As they do, begin by telling them how important it is for them to pick up after themselves when they are in the classroom. In the middle of your lecture, toss your candy bar wrapper on the floor, and find ways to do a few other irresponsible things like drawing and then leaving lids off markers or knocking things over and not picking them up. As children begin to question your behavior, discuss:
• What did you notice when you entered the room?
GATHER continued

- How did it feel when I told you to make good choices when I was making poor choices?
- What does it mean to be responsible? (to make good choices that make the world a better place)

When we create something, we want to see it taken care of. God feels the same way. God hopes we care for all that has been created and generously given to us.

Sing together “Make Good Choices” to the tune of “Make New Friends.”

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

Invite the children to bring the CC puppets they made earlier with them as they sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 6–7 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

My friends and I, work, laugh, and share.
God hopes this for creation,
Taking care of one another
In every land and nation.

After reading the stanza, discuss:
- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is in the middle of page 6. CC is playing catch with a bird—birds are natural enemies of bugs like CC.)
- Do bugs and birds, lions and lambs, tigers and monkeys, cats and fish usually play together? Why not?

Display the illustration on pages 16–17 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

All around is God’s creation,
Flowers and bees in the park,
From the thunder and the lightning,
To stars that shine when it’s dark.

After reading the stanza, discuss:
- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is at the bottom of page 17. CC is creating a picture of God's beautiful creation. CC is creating with God.)
- Are you surprised that God created thunderstorms, hurricanes, and sandstorms?
- Does God create dirty water, dirty air, and dirty land? How do they become dirty? (Sometimes people make choices that harm the world and make the water, air, and land dirty.)

We Care for Creation—17
Display the illustration on pages 24–25 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

Sometimes our choices hurt the world.
Sometimes they make it greater.
We can ask God’s help to decide
Before we choose, not later.

After reading the stanza, discuss:

• CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is at the bottom of page 24 trying to decide with friends which choice to make.)

• How many different choices can I make? Let’s count.

Ask the children if they remember the meaning of shalom. Show them pages 26–27 of the picture book and remind them that they learned it when we read that page (peace where everyone feels at home). There are stories in the Bible that Jesus told to help us understand shalom. Read Matthew 13:31–33, 44–45 or the Bible story “Stories of God’s Shalom” on pages 166–167 of Ralph Milton’s Lectionary Story Bible, Year A. After the story, go around the room straightening up the mess you made during the Gather section of the lesson. Explain that God made this beautiful world. Ask the children to make good choices to take care of it and be kind to it.

**RESPOND**

*Takes the learners from hearing to doing*

**Stars that Shine When It’s Dark Mobile**

Give each child a piece of clear contact paper 9 in/23 cm x 11 in/28 cm. Have them sprinkle glitter on the sticky side of the contact paper. Have them or help them cover it with a second piece of contact paper—sticky sides together. Give each child a star-shaped template. Have or help them trace stars on the contact paper and cut them out. Have or help the children punch a hole in the top of each star then thread string through each hole. Have or help them tie the sparkling stars to a stick or branch. Use tape to hold the strings in place on the stick. Invite the kids to hang the Stars that Shine mobile in their rooms to remind them that stars that shine when it’s dark are part of God’s sacred creation.
A Web of Choices

Spin a web of choices using a ball of yarn. Ask children to sit in a circle. You then sit in the circle and hold the end of a yarn ball. Select a child and toss the ball of yarn to him or her. When the child catches the yarn, ask the child to make a choice. Then instruct the child to hold the yarn tightly and toss the ball of yarn to another child. Give a child a choice. That child holds onto the string and tosses the ball of yarn to another child. Give that child a choice. The game continues until all of the children have held the ball of yard and made a choice.

Choice suggestions

• Leave the water on when brushing your teeth or turn it off—it’s your choice
• Listen when someone is talking to you or ignore them—it’s your choice
• Turn off the lights when you leave the room or leave them on—it’s your choice
• Eat a healthy snack or a junk food snack—it’s your choice
• Throw trash out the car window or throw it away when you get home—it’s your choice
• Get a drink of water or a drink of soda pop—it’s your choice
• Watch television or go outside to play—it’s your choice
• Share one of your toys or keep it for yourself—it’s your choice
• Ignore someone who is feeling sad or give them a hug—it’s your choice

Point out to the children that our choices are connected. Our choices make a difference to others and to God.

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

While still sitting in a circle, as you hand their mobiles to the children to take home, remind them of the many different ways we can care for creation; it’s our choice. God hopes that we make good choices.

Caring for creation and making good choices is part of what makes us Community of Christ…but there is so much more!

Sing together “We Are Community of Christ.”

We Are Community of Christ

We are Community of Christ
Mmm and a little bit more.
We share joy, hope, love, peace
Mmm and a little bit more.
We love all people who come
Knocking at our door.
We follow Jesus Christ
Mmm and a little bit
Mmm and a little bit
Mmm and a whole lot more.

Words: Adapted by Monica Bradford, 2012
Tune: “I Wanna Be a Friend of Yours”
by Kermit Goell, 1947

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Offer a prayer of blessing asking God to help each child make good choices.

We Care for Creation—19
Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We receive God’s love and gifts and share them with others.

Focus Scripture
John 6:1–13

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL...
• experience how sharing makes themselves and others happier.
• explore through poetry and pictures the love and gifts God gives each of us and asks us to share with others.

Materials
• Treat Bag (for each child): one small gift bag containing one ingredient or tool needed to make treats (see a sample treat recipe at the end of the lesson); one small container for serving the treats
• CC puppets made in the first session

• We Share Friendship Bracelet (for each child): toilet paper, paper towel, or wrapping paper tube; poster paint (preferably white); paintbrush; multiple colors of tissue paper cut into small squares; paper plate or cardboard to use as a work space; cellophane tape
• Practice Sharing and Working Together (for each pair of children): one towel; one beach ball
• Optional: PowerPoint slides of the We Share picture book, available from Herald Publishing House

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Bible (NRSV) or Lectionary Story Bible, Year A by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake, 2007, ISBN 9781551455471), available from Herald Publishing House
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineresources/reunion

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Before class put each item or ingredient needed to make treats in small gift bags. Find a sample treat recipe at the end of the lesson. Have a bag with one ingredient or tool for each person. You can wrap each measuring cup and utensil in separate bags and subdivide the ingredients if needed.

As children come in ask them to sit by a gift bag, but not to touch it or open it yet. Tell them that today you want to share with them a special gift. You want to give them a delicious, homemade treat. Be very excited for them to open their gifts. Ask them to open the gifts very carefully so they don’t make a mess of their special treat. As they open their gift bags don’t let on that you know anything is wrong. Smile big and tell them how much you hope they like their treats. As the children begin to question you, be very disappointed as you realize you forgot to
make the treat. Tell them you don’t know what you are going to do, and that you really wanted them to have a yummy snack. Say that you would make it right now if you only have a plastic bag to get started. The child that has the bag may volunteer it for you to use. Say, “Really? You’ll share this gift of a bag with me?” Thank the child and then continue naming each thing you need. Each time thank the child for sharing his or her gift with you.

When the treats are made, and you are eating them, say to the children, “You each were given gifts when you came in today, and if you hadn’t shared your gift, none of us would have been able to enjoy this wonderful snack.

Sing together “The More We Share Together” to the tune of “The More We Get Together.”

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

Invite the children to bring the CC puppets they made earlier with them as they sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 14–15 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

God fills the world with all good things
Then says, “Please, everyone share.
My world has more than enough when
You open your heart and care.”

After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is in the bottom left corner of page 14. CC is receiving a food basket from a friend.)
- With what good things has God filled the world? What do you see?
- How do you receive those good things? How can we share them?

Display the illustration on pages 22–23 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We are all given gifts from God.
We can use them to do good.
They live and grow inside us and
Help us become who we should.
After reading the stanza, discuss:

- CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is on the bottom of page 22 watering the plant. CC is using the gift of gardening. Point out that sometimes gifts are things we receive or give, and sometimes gifts are skills or talents we are good at and love to do. We can receive or give both kinds of gifts.)
- Why is working in a garden an example of doing good?
- What gift is the young girl using?
- Why is making music an example of doing good?
- What gifts do you have and use to do good?

There is a Bible story about a little boy who shared his food to help feed many people. Read John 6:1–13 from the Bible or read the Bible story “A Child Helps Jesus” on page 173 of Ralph Milton’s *Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*. It is amazing to think that because one little child was willing to share his food all the people were fed.

- Today when the first person offered to share his (her) gift with me, did it make you more willing to share your gift?
- When you saw that by sharing we would all be happier, did it make it easier to share your gift?

**RESPOND**

*Takes the learners from hearing to doing*

**We Share Friendship Bracelets**

Give the kids paper tubes, paintbrushes, and paint and have them paint their paper tubes. You might need to give help in smoothing out the drips.

Direct the kids to start applying the tissue paper squares, patting them into the paint while it is wet so they stick well. When finished, set aside to dry.

When the tubes dry, cut them in half; then cut each half in half again (longer tubes will require additional cuts). You should be able to get either two or four bracelets out of one tube, depending on its size. Older kids can tackle this on their own, younger kids will need help not to destroy their handiwork. Cutting can straighten out the cardboard a little, so use a piece of tape to hold the bracelet closed if necessary. Now it’s time to go find some friends and share!

**Practice Sharing and Working Together**

While waiting for the painted tubes to dry, pair the children and give each pair a towel. Have the children in each pair face each other and tightly hold the corners of their towel to extend it. Place a beach ball on the towel. Have them shake the towel up and down to bounce the ball in the air. Have them pick up and put back into play any balls that fall on the ground. During this time, invite the children to sing together “The More We Share Together” from the Gather section.

Now sing it using the word *work* instead of *share*.

---

*We Receive and Share—23*
SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Make sure each child has a friendship bracelet to take home. While sitting in a circle, remind them that God gives each of us gifts, and we can share those gifts with others. Ask them how they felt when they shared their gift bag treats and their friendship bracelets. Point out that sharing makes them and others happier.

Sharing our gifts and God’s love is part of what makes us Community of Christ…but there is so much more!

Sing together “We Are Community of Christ.”

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Offer a prayer of blessing. Mention a gift you recognize in each child and encourage him or her to use that gift to do good.

Sample Treat Recipe
Makes enough for one person. Multiply by the number of students in the class.

**INGREDIENTS**
- ¼ cup (57 grams) of crispy cereal squares
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) caramel syrup
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) powdered sugar
- 1 small sealable plastic bag for each
  - or 1 large bag for the group to share

**DIRECTIONS**
Place the cereal in a sealable plastic bag. Add the caramel syrup. Seal the bag and shake it until the caramel coats the cereal. Open the bag and add the powdered sugar. Reseal the bag and shake it until all the cereal is coated with the powdered sugar. Eat!

---

We Are Community of Christ

We are Community of Christ
Mmm and a little bit more.

We share joy, hope, love, peace
Mmm and a little bit more.

We love all people who come
Knocking at our door.

We follow Jesus Christ
Mmm and a little bit
Mmm and a little bit
Mmm and a whole lot more.

Words: Adapted by Monica Bradford, 2012
Tune: “I Wanna Be a Friend of Yours”
by Kermit Goell, 1947
LESSON 6
We Belong

Focus
Who are we? We are Community of Christ! We belong to and love all people just as God does.

Objectives
THE LEARNERS WILL…
• understand that it takes all parts to create a whole.
• explore the Worth of All Persons, Unity in Diversity, and Blessings of Community through pictures and poetry.

Materials
• One puzzle with enough pieces for each child to have at least one piece
• CC puppets made in the first session
• Diversity Band Instruments—each child should make one instrument
• One Maraca: two paper cups; beans, seeds, pebbles, paper clips, popcorn kernels, or nuts and bolts; tape
• One Tambourine: one small plastic lid with four holes punched around the lid, four short lengths of string; four large bells

Resources
• We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)
• Optional: Downloadable MP3 file for “We Are Community of Christ” from www.CofChrist.org/onlineressources/reunion

Warmly greet each child and hand one or two pieces of a puzzle to each. Sit together in a circle and spend time admiring each piece of the puzzle. Each is different—a different color, a different shape, a different size. Ask each child to take turns adding his or her pieces to the puzzle. Notice how much better the whole puzzle looks after adding a new piece. When the puzzle is complete, spend time admiring it. Mention how important each piece is. Ask one child to remove a piece of the puzzle and walk away from the group. Can the puzzle be complete if one person walks away? Remove half the pieces. What just happened to our beautiful puzzle? This is a great way to show that it takes different people in Community of Christ—singers, writers, huggers, sewers, gardeners, listeners, talkers—to make us beautiful, strong, and whole.

Sing together “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.”

We Belong—25
Invite the children to bring the CC puppets they made earlier with them as they sit in a circle for story time. Providing pillows or mats for children to sit on helps them understand this is a time and place to listen to a story.

Display the illustration on pages 20–21 in the We Share picture book or its digital version. Read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

God's love is for everyone, and  
God knows all of us by name.  
The light of God is found inside  
Each one of us just the same.

After reading the stanza, discuss:
• CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing? Who is helping me?” (CC is in the bottom left corner of page 20. CC is joining with others to make a circle of friends.)
• How many boys and girls are in this circle of friends? Let’s count. (There are 20; CC makes 21. The circle can grow bigger and bigger and God will still know each person by name—even if there were one million boys and girls!)
• If you were in this picture, where would you be in the circle?
• How can we show others that the light of God is inside each of us?

Display the illustration on pages 30–31 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We belong to one another,  
And we don’t want to forget,  
That it’s God’s love that joins us all,  
Even if we’ve never met.
• CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is in the middle of page 31. CC is giving a bonsai tree to a friend. Bonsai trees are an art form from Japan.)

• Is it possible to meet all the people in the world? Is it possible to meet all the people from Europe, from Asia, from Africa, from Australia, or North or South America? (No.) But even though we’ve never met, each of these communities joins together through God’s love to become one big community!

Display the illustration on page 32 and read aloud the following rhyming stanza:

We are Community of Christ.
You heard me say it before.
We are part of one family.
We share this and so much more.

After reading the stanza, discuss:

• CC is asking, “Where am I? What am I doing?” (CC is swinging from one of the stars that shine when it’s dark.)

• Can you remember the four things that fill the hearts of people in Community of Christ? (You may want to show again pages 4–5 to remind them: joy, hope, love, peace.)

A Diversity Band
Allow each child to make one of these instruments and join your Diversity Band. Demonstrate how beautiful music sounds when different instruments play together.

Maracas
Place a few beans, seeds, pebbles, paper clips, popcorn kernels, or nuts and bolts in one paper cup. (Different fillings make different sounds.) Turn the second cup upside down on top of the first cup. Tape the cup rims together to form a maraca. Now shake!

Tambourines
Use small plastic lids to make tambourines. Punch three or four holes around the edge of a lid; use short lengths of string to tie a large bell to each hole. Jingle those bells!

Drum Set
Tape an assortment of boxes (shoeboxes, gift boxes, heavy cardboard boxes) securely shut. Place them all together and experience the different sounds your hands make tapping on the boxes. Rum-pa-pum-pum those drums!

Blocks
Wrap sandpaper around two blocks of wood that are the same size. Glue the sandpaper edges in place. Rub the blocks together. Rub-a-dub-dub!

Now play or sing lively music. Invite the children to play along. Have each instrument play alone; then all together. Which do the kids like better? Why?
God’s Love Is for Everyone
Sharing God’s love comes straight from the heart as the children play this game. Form a circle. Give each child a heart cutout, then invite one of them to walk around the outside of the circle as you lead the group in singing “God’s Love’s for Everyone.”

At the end of the song, have the child give the heart to a classmate; then have the two children exchange places.

Repeat the activity, encouraging each child to give the heart to someone who has not had a turn.

While still in a circle, have the group create a living picture like the one on pages 20–21. Link arms and lean in. Put a copy of the We Share book, open to pages 20–21, on the floor in the middle of the circle so everyone can see and imagine the book is a mirror reflecting their faces. Repeatedly chant together, “God loves all people, and so do I!”

SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Invite the children to sit in a circle. As you hand the musical instruments and CC puppets to the children to take home, tell them there is something special about our community. We are all different—how we look, how we feel, how we think. We care for one another and are all loved by God.

Caring for one another is part of what makes us Community of Christ...but there is so much more!

One last time sing together “We Are Community of Christ.” Use the musical instruments made earlier for a big sending forth sound.

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Offer a prayer of blessing. Ask God to go with each child. Ask God to guide each one in sharing with others about God’s community.
We Share in Poetry

*Promote Communities—pp. 4–5*

Hi! I’m CC—a shalom bug—
Friend to all you girls and boys.
We are Community of Christ,
Filled with peace, love, hope, and joy.

*Vision for Creation—pp. 6–7*

My friends and I, work, laugh, and share.
God hopes this for creation,
Taking care of one another
In every land and nation.

*The Peace of Jesus Christ—pp. 8–9*

God sent Jesus to show the way
With his kind and gentle hands.
In all the things we do and say,
We help others understand.

*Christ’s Mission—pp. 10–11*

We want to live like Jesus Christ.
His mission is our mission.
Together in community,
We share his awesome vision.

*A Sacred Story—pp. 12–13*

We love to hear about those folks
Through our long, long history
Who help us learn more about God—
Recognize the mystery.
Grace and Generosity—pp. 14–15

God fills the world with all good things
Then says, “Please, everyone share.
My world has more than enough when
You open your heart and care.”

Sacredness of Creation—pp. 16–17

All around is God’s creation,
Flowers and bees in the park,
From the thunder and the lightning,
To stars that shine when it’s dark.

Continuing Revelation—pp. 18–19

I pray and listen carefully
For God, each and every day.
My heart feels God is close to me
When I cry, or sing, or play.

Worth of All Persons—pp. 20–21

God’s love is for everyone, and
God knows all of us by name.
The light of God is found inside
Each one of us just the same.

All Are Called—pp. 22–23

We are all given gifts from God.
We can use them to do good.
They live and grow inside us and
Help us become who we should.
Sometimes our choices hurt the world. Sometimes they make it greater. We can ask God’s help to decide Before we choose, not later.

We work with God as peacemakers, (We can also say, “Shalom,”) Making the world a better place Where everyone feels at home.

We are different in many ways. Those differences make us strong. And even when we disagree, We find ways to get along.

We belong to one another, And we don’t want to forget, That it’s God’s love that joins us all, Even if we’ve never met.

We are Community of Christ. You heard me say it before. We are part of one family. We share this and so much more.

Poems for young children adapted by Mary Gill based on We Share by Monica Bradford, illustrated by Sue Cornelison (Herald Publishing House, 2012, ISBN 9780830915224)