Community of Christ

Fully Awake and Ready to Respond

REUNION 2017
LESSONS FOR YOUTH
Contents

Introduction ............................................................... 3
1. Awaken to God’s Invitation ..................................... 5
2. Awaken to Spiritual Transformation ....................... 17
3. Awaken to Unfolding Mission ................................. 22
4. Awaken to Sacramental Living ............................... 29
5. Awaken to Living Sanctuary .................................. 42
Introduction

This class material contains five lessons for youth (ages 12–18) exploring the theme “Fully Awake and Ready to Respond.” Lessons contain a variety of learning activities to accommodate longer class session. Select learning activities from each lesson that fit within the time allotted for each class session. Recognizing this age group represents multiple stages of development, learning styles, and life experiences; instructors are encouraged to adapt the material to best meet the needs of the class or group. The following information can help guide your understanding of, and planning for, disciple formation at different stages of development.

Youth Ages 12–14

Youth in early adolescence have a third-person perspective on life, so they begin to debate accepted rules and facts. Physically and cognitively they are changing as much as young children do. They bounce from one extreme to another in their viewpoints and passions. They like to explore their gifts and talents and try out new experiences. Peer acceptance is a stronger influence than family and they discover their identity through reactions of peers and significant adults. While still in the joining and belonging stage of faith development, they now affiliate more with peers than with adults, so their connections with a group of the same age is strong and influential.

Youth Ages 15–18

Youth in later adolescence believe in compassion and inclusion, but may give in to be part of a group. They form values and beliefs by testing ideas and debating with others. They want their faith values to be relevant to their lives. At this age they form close, sometimes lifetime friendships. Youth ages 15–18 are in the searching stage of faith development, looking for new ways to express their faith and worship, are globally-oriented, and challenge the church with new insights.
Doctrine and Covenants 163:4c invites us to

Let the educational and community development endeavors of the church equip people of all ages to carry the ethics of Christ’s peace into all arenas of life. Prepare new generations of disciples to bring fresh vision to bear on the perplexing problems of poverty, disease, war, and environmental deterioration. Their contributions will be multiplied if their hearts are focused on God’s will for creation.

Thank you for your willingness to prepare these lessons and build important relationships that will help form youth in their discipleship.

**Note to Instructor:** This lesson is designed to accommodate up to two hours of class time. Recognizing class times vary for different family camps and reunions, you will need to select learning activities according to the time allotted for your class session.

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

Lessons created by Laura Bolton, Janné Grover, and Carla Long.
Lesson Focus
All are called to receive and share Christ’s peace.

Focus Scripture Passages
Luke 5:1–11
Ephesians 4:1–6
Doctrine and Covenants 163:1, 2a

Objectives
The learners will...
• be welcomed with personal invitations.
• learn about other members of the class or group.
• read about God’s invitation to disciples and to the church through focus scripture passages.
• discuss and illustrate the Enduring Principle of All Are Called.
• explore how disciples are invited to receive and share Christ’s peace.

Supplies
• Copies of invitations to send or give to each youth prior to the first class
• Journal for each student or paper and pens or pencils
• Flip chart or large erasable writing surface and markers
• Poster paper and markers
• Video: Community of Christ found at www.missionalleaders.org/videos-az/
• Projection equipment to show video

(Supplies list continues on next page)
• Items for prayer cards: foam board or card stock (cut in half an 8.5 x 11 inch paper to become 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A4 paper to become A5), scissors, glue or glue sticks, colored pens or pencils, and a variety of recycled magazines
• Basket to collect prayer cards
• Community of Christ Sings (CCS)

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

**PRIOR TO CLASS:** If you have a list of youth who may participate in the class, mail or give them a personal invitation to attend. You may create your own or use the reproducible invitation on page 11. Include a personal note and sign the invitation. On the first day of class, have extra invitations available to provide youth who attend that had not been sent an invitation.

Welcome each youth as they enter, and let them know you are glad they are here.

**Find Your Twin**
Write the following questions on chart paper or large writing surface for all to see:
1. What is your name?
2. How would you spend your last $10?
3. What do you like most about yourself?
4. Who invited you to Christ?

Give each youth a piece of paper and pen or pencil. There will be five rounds (you may choose more or less depending on the time available), and in each round the members of the group will find their twin (according to instructions). Each round they will interview their twin with the questions provided. You may choose from the following instructions, or create your own.
- Round 1: Find someone who is in the same grade as you.
- Round 2: Find someone who is wearing the same color shirt as you.
- Round 3: Find someone who likes the same music as you.
- Round 4: Find someone who is the same height as you.
- Round 5: Find someone who has the same color hair as you.

When the rounds are complete, have each person introduce one of their twins until everyone in the group has been introduced.

Offer an opening prayer of gratitude for the unique gifts of each youth, and for the time you will spend together in sacred community.

2 **Engage** (35% of lesson time)
Invites exploration and interaction

**Awaken to God’s Invitation**
Open discussion with the following questions:
- What is the best invitation you have ever received? Explain what it was
and how it made you feel.
• How did it feel to receive an invitation to this class?
• Describe how you were invited to Christ. Who have you invited to Christ?
• If you haven’t yet been invited to Christ, are you open to receiving that invitation?
• What comes to mind when you hear today’s theme, Awaken to God’s Invitation?

Community of Christ upholds nine Enduring Principles that express who we are and who we are called to be. They affirm God’s invitation for all to experience abundant life as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Enduring Principles Pictionary
Form two groups and provide a flip chart, or portion of an erasable writing surface, and marker for each group. A member from each group will come up, draw a slip of paper with an Enduring Principle, and draw clues for the group to guess. When the group guesses correctly, the next person comes up and draws another Enduring Principle. The first group to guess all nine Enduring Principles wins! You may choose to play Enduring Principles Charades as an option to Pictionary. The game works the same way, but group members act instead of draw clues for the group to guess.

The Enduring Principle of All Are Called affirms God’s invitation for all persons to be part of God’s vision for creation.

Write the following description on a large writing surface for all to see:
All Are Called
• God graciously gives people gifts and opportunities to do good and to share in God’s purposes.
• Jesus Christ invites people to follow him by becoming disciples who share his life and ministry.
• Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.
• We respond faithfully with the help of the Holy Spirit, to our best understanding of God’s call.

Form three discussion groups or pairs and assign each group one of the following passages. Give each group a piece of poster paper and markers. Have them discuss the questions, then write or draw how their passage expresses the Enduring Principle of All Are Called. Invite each group to share their poster with the larger group and display it for the duration of the class.

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets
for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Ephesians 4:1–6 Paul writes to the early church in Ephesus from prison. I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Doctrine and Covenants 163:1 Counsel to Community of Christ in 2007 “Community of Christ,” your name, given as a divine blessing, is your identity and calling. If you will discern and embrace its full meaning, you will not only discover your future, you will become a blessing to the whole creation. Do not be afraid to go where it beckons you to go.

Questions for Discussion:
• Who is called in this passage? To what are they called?
• How does this passage express descriptions of the Enduring Principle of All Are Called?
• What additional Enduring Principles are expressed in this passage?
• What is God’s invitation in this passage?

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

Show the video Community of Christ from www.missionalleaders.org/videos-az/. As the video is shown, ask the youth to write what stands out to them as God’s invitation to disciples and to the church. Share and discuss responses.

Symbols representing the Mission Initiatives appear throughout the video. Copy and display the Mission Initiative symbols found at the end of this lesson.

The Mission Initiative of Invite People to Christ is represented by the symbol of . The symbol is a reminder that all are invited to receive and share Christ’s peace. On a large writing surface, make two columns, one titled “Receive” and the other titled “Share.” Ask the group to list ways they receive the peace of Christ, and ways they can share the peace of Christ.
Read the following passage. In place of the words “all people” [indicated in brackets], have each person say the name of the person they introduced in the Find Your Twin activity.

Doctrine and Covenants 163:2a
Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God's shalom, invites [all people] to come and receive divine peace in the midst of the difficult questions and struggles of life. Follow Christ in the way that leads to God's peace and discover the blessings of all of the dimensions of salvation.

The dimensions of salvation include personal peace, peace in relationships (personal, family, societal), and peace for the planet.

Action Challenge: Between now and the next class, find a way to share Christ's peace with at least one person.

Invite each youth to write on a piece of paper a “difficult question or struggle” in their life. Have them indicate one of the following response options. Have them include their names so they can be returned, but keep names anonymous to other members of the group.

- Discuss (they would like to discuss this with the larger group—now or in a later class session, depending on available time)
- Respond (they would like a written response from the instructor or other minister; responses will be shared in writing only to the person requesting)
- Pray (they wish to have their question or concern upheld in prayer; respond by writing that you are upholding their question or concern in prayer)

When finished, have them fold and place their papers in a basket. It will be the instructor's responsibility sometime after class to read and respond as each youth has requested for their question or concern to be addressed.

Note: Community of Christ is a mandatory reporting entity. In the event a student shares about an event involving abuse or other criminal activity, you are required to report this information to the proper authorities. In most cases this will include a call to the police. You must also alert the camp director and the Office of General Counsel at International Headquarters by calling 800–825–2806 or after-hours emergency 816–509–2946.

If a student shares concerns involving addiction, substance abuse, threats of suicide, or other self-destructive behaviors, please contact a parent or guardian and make a referral to the appropriate agency (government or private support agency) for help. You must also alert the camp director to this situation.

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

Prayer Cards (allow 10–15 minutes for this activity each class session)
Provide each youth with a piece of foam board or card stock (the size of a half piece of paper 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A5). They will use this each class session and create a prayer card throughout the week. Using the recycled magazines, scissors, and glue, they will find a picture that expresses their relationship with God at that moment and place it however they wish on their prayer card.
Bless (5% of lesson time)

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Form a circle and offer a closing prayer of gratitude affirming God’s invitation for all to receive and share the peace of Christ.

Close by singing CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”
You are invited!

DATE:

TIME:

PLACE:

Join us for an exciting faith adventure, and explore God's invitation to you!

“Jesus Christ, who shows us God’s peace, invites all to come...”
Invite People to Christ
(Christ’s mission of evangelism)
Abolish Poverty, End Suffering
(Christ’s mission of compassion)
Pursue Peace on Earth
(Christ’s mission of justice and peace)
Develop Disciples to Serve
(equip individuals for Christ’s mission)
Experience Congregations in Mission
(equip congregations for Christ’s mission)
Lesson Focus
Youth will explore spiritual transformation as an invitation to live Christ’s mission of compassion, justice, and peace.

Focus Scripture Passage
2 Corinthians 5:16–20
Luke 7:36–50
Doctrine and Covenants 164:9

Objectives
The learners will...
• share experiences from Lesson 1.
• explore spiritual transformation through the focus scripture passages.
• create a faith adventure timeline.

Supplies
• Community of Christ Sings (CCS)
• Popcorn kernels, hot air popper, large bowl, and cups or bowls for serving popcorn
• Flip chart or large erasable writing surface and markers
• Large sheets of white construction paper (one for each person) and markers or colored pencils
• Video: What’s Your Biggest Regret? found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R45HcYA8uRA
• Projection equipment to show video
• Items for prayer cards: foam board or card stock (cut in half an 8.5 x 11 inch paper to become 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A4 paper to become A5), scissors, glue or glue sticks, colored pens or pencils, and a variety of recycled magazines
• Journal or writing paper for each student
**Gather (15% of lesson time)**

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Welcome youth as they enter. Gather with singing the following songs. If you are not comfortable leading the songs, use the recordings available through Herald House. Encourage singing in different languages!

- CCS 75, “Kum ba yah, Seigneur”
- CCS 84, “Uyai Mose/Come All You People”
- CCS 567, “Spirit of the Living God”

Allow time for group members to tell how they responded to the action challenge by sharing Christ’s peace with others.

Return all “difficult questions or struggles” papers from the previous class with responses. Allow time for group discussion of those who requested that response.

Offer a prayer of blessing for Christ’s peace to be realized amid all the difficult questions and struggles of life.

**Engage (35% of lesson time)**

Invites exploration and interaction

Ask youth to describe things in nature that transform (butterfly, seed, egg). Show the group popcorn kernels and ask if they know what kind of seed it is. How does this seed transform into something new?

Use a hot air popper to pop the kernels and watch the transformation process. If a hot air popper is not available, provide packaged popcorn and talk about how the kernels become popcorn. Serve the popcorn to the group and read 2 Corinthians 5:16–20.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

**Questions for Discussion:**

- What does this passage say about spiritual transformation?
- What is God’s invitation to those who experience new life in Christ?
- How does new life in Christ impact the way we see ourselves and others?
- Share in groups of two or three how you have experienced spiritual transformation or new life in Christ.
- How do you want others to see you from a changed perspective?
Form three groups and assign each group one of the following characters: Simon the Pharisee, Jesus, the sinful woman.

**Read Luke 7:36–50** and invite the groups to experience the story from their character's perspective. Pay attention to thoughts, questions, feelings, and frustrations as they hear the passage from a different perspective.

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner.” Jesus spoke up and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” “Teacher,” he replied, “speak.” “A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?” Simon answered, “I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt.” And Jesus said to him, “You have judged rightly.” Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.” Then he said to her, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Share responses to the following questions in the small groups, then share insights with the larger group.

- What were your thoughts, questions, feelings, or frustrations as you experienced the story from your character's perspective?
- How did your character experience transformation?
- What did you learn from hearing this passage from a character’s perspective?
- Who showed compassion? Who stood for justice? Who showed peace?

Apostle Ron Harmon writes,

“Jesus calls the Pharisee to see the woman for who she really is—a child of God. He says to the Pharisee, “Do you see this woman?” He then goes on to share all the ways the woman extended hospitality and love to him. Having received Jesus’ compassion and love she understood its transformative power. She was freed to see an alternative vision of her worth as Jesus courageously spoke and stood in solidarity with her” *(Fully Awake and Ready to Respond, p. 11)*.
Respond (35% of lesson time)
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

“Spiritual awakening calls us into a space of seeing, feeling, and acting differently when we encounter the Holy Spirit in relationship with others” (Harmon, *Fully Awake and Ready to Respond*, p. 13).

Project, or have written on a large surface, Doctrine and Covenants 164:9a–b; and read together.

a. Beloved [children of the Restoration], your continuing faith adventure with God has been divinely-led, eventful, challenging, and sometimes surprising to you. By the grace of God, you are poised to fulfill God’s ultimate vision for the church.

b. When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ’s new creation exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation, you will become who you are called to be. The rise of Zion the beautiful, the peaceful reign of Christ, awaits your wholehearted response to the call to make and steadfastly hold to God’s covenant of peace in Jesus Christ.

This passage reminds us we are on a faith adventure that is divinely led and sometimes surprising to us. This is the nature of spiritual awakening. If often leads us to insights and places we would not ordinarily go on our own.

Faith Adventure Timeline

Give each person a large sheet of white construction paper and provide markers or colored pencils.

- With the paper lengthwise, draw a line across the middle of the page.
- Mark each year of your life on the line leaving space for the future.
- Mark above the line times when you felt God was present, and below the line when you felt God was not present. (See example below)
- Copy Doctrine and Covenants 164:9a–b onto the paper above or below your timeline. In place of “children of the Restoration,” indicated in brackets, write your name.
- Share your faith adventure timeline in groups of two or three.

**FAITH ADVENTURE TIMELINE**
Show the video, *What’s Your Biggest Regret?* found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=R45HcYA8uRA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R45HcYA8uRA)

Ask:
- What would you change about your timeline if you had a clean slate?
- How can you awaken to spiritual transformation and become who you are called to be?
- Indicate on your timeline what you hope for the future in your faith adventure with God. Share this in groups of two or three.

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

**Prayer Cards** (allow 10–15 minutes for this activity each class session)
Hand out the prayer cards from the previous lesson and provide recycled magazines, scissors, and glue or glue sticks. Have the youth find a picture from a magazine that expresses their relationship with God at that moment, and place it however they wish on their prayer card.

5 **Bless** (5% of lesson time)
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
Form a circle for the closing blessing. Begin the following prayer statement and invite each person to add how they would complete the statement:

*God of new beginnings, awaken me to spiritual transformation and new life. Help me change the way I see _______________________________.* Amen.

Close by singing CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”
Lesson Focus
Community of Christ has a long history of being led (and pushed) by the Holy Spirit into mission.

Focus Scripture
Acts 1:8
Doctrine and Covenants 38:7b–c; 92:2a, 3e–f; 156:5a–e; 163:8a–

Objectives
The learners will...
- experience how Spirit, mission, and invitation are interconnected.
- discuss examples of Spirit, mission, and invitation through instruction given to the first-century church and to the early Restoration church.
- explore how the temples in Kirtland, Ohio, USA and Independence, Missouri, USA symbolize Spirit-led mission and invitation.

Supplies
- Bible and Doctrine and Covenants (one for each discussion group)
- Community of Christ Sings (CCS)
- Flip chart or large erasable writing surface and markers
- Projection equipment or copies of “Temples and Mission” passages (optional)
- Art supplies such as Playdoh® or modeling clay, paper and markers or colored pencils
- Items for prayer cards: foam board or card stock (cut in half an 8.5 x 11 inch paper to become 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A4 paper to become A5), scissors, glue or glue sticks, colored pens or pencils, and a variety of recycled magazines
- Journals or writing paper for each student
1 Gather (15% of lesson time)
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Spirit, Mission, Invitation Tag
This game works best in a large, open space, preferably outside. Assign each member of the group the title of Spirit, Mission, or Invitation. Form the group in pairs. Encourage youth to partner with someone they do not know well, and someone with a different title than they have. Have pairs link arms and spread out around the space. Designate one pair as “It;” one partner will be the runner, the other will be the chaser. When the game begins, pairs will move about with arms linked together. The runner will join a pair by linking arms. If they join on the left, the partner on the right becomes the runner. If the chaser tags a runner before they link arms with a pair, they are out. The game may be played multiple times, as class time allows. You may choose to vary the game by designating more than one chaser and runner; or join pairs into groups of four and designate a pair as runners and another pair as chasers. This makes movement more challenging, and groups have to work together.

The purpose of the game is to have fun! It is also to illustrate the idea that Spirit, mission, and invitation are interconnected and work together.

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

On a flip chart or large writing surface, make three columns titled Spirit, Mission, and Invitation. Make a list in each column of word that describe each title.

- Where do you see connections?
- What words could be used in all three columns?

Apostle Lach Mackay writes,
“Spirit, mission, and invitation have always been intimately intertwined in Community of Christ. The Holy Spirit propels us forward in mission, and mission is an expression of the Holy Spirit moving in and through us. This relationship is deeply rooted in both the early Christian church and in the Restoration period of the 1830s” (Fully Awake and Ready to Respond, p. 16).

- How would you describe the ways Spirit, mission, and invitation are interconnected?
- What happens when they are viewed separately? (Example: people can engage in mission, but without the work of the Spirit, it can be a personal agenda rather than a response to God’s vision and will. Without invitation, the capacity for mission is limited.)
- How are they more effective working together? (Example: Spirit-led mission is invitational by nature. Inviting others into Spirit-led mission increases our capacity for compassion, justice, and peacemaking.)

Form two discussion groups and give each group a copy of Response Sheet 1 or Response Sheet 2 found on pages 27–28 at the end of this lesson. If you have a large group, form four groups and have two groups discuss the same passage. Groups with Response Sheet 1 should have a copy of the Bible, and groups with
Response Sheet 2 should have a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants. Have each group designate a recorder to complete the response sheet, and a reporter to share with the larger group.

3 **Respond (35% of lesson time)**

*Takes the learners from hearing to doing*

**Temples and Mission**

Project or have written the following passages about building the temples in Kirtland, Ohio, USA and Independence, Missouri, USA. You may choose to provide copies of these passages found below. Read the passages and discuss the questions which follow.

![Image of temples](image-url)

(Larger images of these temples are on pages 47 and 48.)

**Kirtland, Ohio, USA**

Doctrine and Covenants 92:2a; 3e–f (counsel given to the church in 1833)

2a. Yea, verily I say unto you, I gave unto you a commandment, that you should build an house, in the which house I design to endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high, for this is the promise of the Father unto you:

3e. and let the lower part of the inner court be dedicated unto me for your sacrament offering, and for your preaching; and your fasting, and your praying, and the offering up your most holy desires unto me, saith your Lord.

3f. And let the higher part of the inner court be dedicated unto me for the school of mine apostles...

**Independence, Missouri, USA**

Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a–e (counsel given to the church in 1984)

a. The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit.

b. It shall also be for a strengthening of faith and preparation for witness.

c. By its ministries an attitude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered.

d. It shall be the means for providing leadership education for priesthood and member.

e. And it shall be a place in which the essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world.
Questions for Discussion:

Make a list of the similarities and differences between the two passages.
- How are Spirit, mission, and invitation represented in these passages?
- What specific statements represent each?

Community of Christ has five Mission Initiatives in response to Jesus Christ’s call to mission:

1. **Invite People to Christ** (Christ’s mission of evangelism)
2. **Abolish Poverty, End Suffering** (Christ’s mission of compassion)
3. **Pursue Peace on Earth** (Christ’s mission of justice and peace)
4. **Develop Disciples to Serve** (equip individuals for Christ’s mission)
5. **Experience Congregations in Mission** (equip congregations for Christ’s mission)

- How are the five Mission Initiatives represented in these passages?

Provide each person with Playdoh® or modeling clay. You may also choose to use paper and markers or colored pencils. Have students create their own temple (a replica of either temple, or their own design) and say how their temple represents Spirit-empowered mission and invitation. They can use statements from either passage of scripture, but encourage them to be creative and find their own language for what their temple represents.

Read Doctrine and Covenants 163:8a–b as they work on their creations.

a. The Temple is an instrument of ongoing revelation in the life of the church. Its symbolism and ministries call people to reverence in the presence of the Divine Being. Transformative encounters with the Eternal Creator and Reconciler await those who follow its spiritual pathways of healing, reconciliation, peace strengthening of faith, and knowledge.

b. There are additional sacred ministries that will spring forth from the Temple as rivers of living water to help people soothe and resolve the brokenness and pain in their lives. Let the Temple continue to come to life as a sacred center of worship, education, community building, and discipleship preparation for all ages.

Invite each person to share their temple and what it represents.
4 **Send** *(10% of lesson time)*

Explores how the lesson might be lived

Prayer Cards *(allow 10-15 minutes for this activity each class session)*

Hand out the prayer cards from previous lesson and provide recycled magazines, scissors, and glue or glue sticks. Have the youth find a picture from a magazine that expresses their relationship with God at that moment, and place it however they wish on their prayer card.

5 **Bless** *(5% of lesson time)*

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

Form a circle for the closing blessing. Begin the following prayer statement and invite each person to add how they would complete the statement:

*God who calls each of us to serve. Help me live your Spirit-led mission and invitation by _________________________________. Amen.*

Close by singing CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”
Response Sheet 1

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Questions for Discussion:

1. Using background information found in the introduction to the book of Acts, and the verses in Acts 1, when is this instruction given, and to whom is it given?

2. What is the mission?

3. Where is mission beginning?

4. Where are disciples instructed to take the mission?

5. How are Spirit, mission, and invitation represented in this passage?
Response Sheet 2

Doctrine and Covenants 38:7b–c

wherefore, for this cause I gave unto you the commandment, that you should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high, and from thence, whosoever I will, shall go forth among all nations, and it shall be told them what they shall do.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Using background information found in the introduction to Doctrine and Covenants Section 38, when is this instruction given, and to whom is it given?

2. What is the mission?

3. Where is mission beginning?

4. Where are they instructed to take the mission?

5. How are Spirit, mission, and invitation represented in this passage?
Lesson Focus
Youth will explore how the sacraments awaken us to living God’s grace and blessing.

Focus Scripture
Doctrine and Covenants 158:11c
Various scripture passages related to sacraments

Objectives
The learners will...
• explore descriptions, symbols, and meaning of sacraments.
• make connections between sacraments and mission.
• consider ways of living sacramentally.

Supplies
• *Community of Christ Sings* (CCS)
• Flip chart or large erasable writing surface and markers
• Slips of paper with a sacrament written on each (two sets of eight)
• Copies of sacrament descriptions and elements representing sacraments for each sacrament station
• Copies of Sacrament Worksheet for each youth
• Bibles (one for each small group)
• Variety of ordinary objects (shoes, keys, food, phone, objects from nature, pictures of people or animals)
• Music video *Holy Now* by Peter Mayer and projection equipment to show video. Find the video at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjyqURysz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjyqURysz4).
• Items for prayer cards: foam board or card stock (cut in half an 8.5 x 11 inch paper to become 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A4 paper to become A5), scissors, glue or glue sticks, colored pens or pencils, and a variety of recycled magazines
• Journals or writing paper for each student
Gather (15% of lesson time)
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Sacraments Pictionary
Form two groups and provide a flip chart, or portion of an erasable writing surface, and marker for each group. A member from each group will come up, draw a slip of paper with a sacrament, and draw clues for the group to guess. When the group guesses correctly, the next person comes up and draws another sacrament. The first group to guess all eight sacraments wins! You may choose to play Sacraments Charades as an option to Pictionary. The game works the same way, but instead of drawing, group members act out clues for the group to guess.

Form groups of two or three and have each member share with their group a memorable or meaningful sacrament experience. If there are those who have not had sacrament experiences, ask them to share what they think about sacraments and what has led them to this perception. Provide an opportunity to share with the larger group for any who wish to do so. Share your own experience with the larger group!

Read Doctrine and Covenants 158:11c. You may choose to have it projected or written so all can see.

Look especially to the sacraments to enrich the spiritual life of the body. Seek for greater understanding of my purposes in these sacred rites and prepare to receive a renewed confirmation of the presence of my Spirit in your experiences of worship.

Consider the following themes from previous lessons. What connections can be made with this passage?
- Awaken to God’s Invitation
- Awaken to Spiritual Transformation
- Awaken to Unfolding Mission

Presiding Evangelist Jane Gardner writes, “All of the sacraments are based in God’s self-revelation to the world and God’s desire to be in relationship with creation. God is the gracious initiator—God chooses to be in relationship with us and through the sacraments offers tangible ways for us to experience the Divine presence that leads to spiritual awakening” (Fully Awake and Ready to Respond, p. 22).

Offer a prayer of gratitude for God’s love expressed through sacraments.

Engage (35% of lesson time)
Invites exploration and interaction

Sacrament Stations
Prior to class, prepare eight stations representing each sacrament. At each station, include an image and description (these can be found beginning on p. 34) and elements used in or representing each sacrament. Option: Invite priesthood members to be part of the stations and demonstrate the sacrament.

Give each youth a copy of the Sacrament Worksheet (found on p. 33) and invite
them to rotate through the sacrament stations. In the spaces provided for each sacrament, have students write something new they learn at each station.

After everyone has visited each station, form eight groups or pairs. Assign each group one of the sacraments. Have them look up the scriptures for their sacrament found on the Sacrament Worksheet. Ask one member of the group to record responses to the questions, and another to report to the larger group.

- Who is part of the sacrament in this passage?
- What does the passage teach us about the sacrament?
- What does the passage teach us about sharing the sacrament?
- What questions do you have about the scripture passage or the sacrament?

Allow time for each group to share what they discovered about their sacrament. After each group has shared, discuss the following questions as a large group:

- What is something you learned about a sacrament for the first time?
- What is something you learned that you misunderstood before?
- For how many sacraments do you have to be a member of Community of Christ to participate? (one—ordination)
- What changes ordinary elements (bread, juice, water, oil) into sacramental elements (emblems)? (This is a good opportunity to encourage critical thinking. Rather than getting to a “right answer,” allow different ideas and perspectives to be shared. Jesus used common, everyday items to point us beyond the item to sacred connection with God.)

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

Living Sacramentally
Ask youth: What is the difference between sacrament and sacramental?

In Community of Christ, sacrament refers to the eight sacraments of the church. Sacramental can be descriptive of sacraments, but it also points us to how we live as sacrament or blessing in a broken world. Just as ordinary elements become sacred symbols, living sacramentally honors the sacred in the ordinary—the sacredness in all creation. We experience blessing through the sacraments, and our living becomes sacramental and connected to the mission of Jesus Christ.

Read the following, or invite a different person to read each sentence.

The same pattern of rebirth that I learned in baptism showed up in everything from bathing to watering plants. The same pattern of relationship that I learned in communion was available in every meal eaten mindfully. The laying on of hands took place as I held a crying baby or rubbed the shoulders of a tired friend. When I walked outside and looked at the smoking compost heap, I saw a sacrament of death turning into life. When I used my little bottle of Wite-out [eraser] to correct a mistake, I remember that my errors did not have to be permanent. Everywhere I turned, the most insignificant things in the world were preaching little sermons to me. Everywhere I turned, the world was leaking light. All that was required
was my willingness to walk through the world aware of God’s presence, ready to hold ordinary things up to heaven with my own hands so that I and anyone else who was interested could see the holiness in them—even the soiled and broken things that were just waiting for someone to come along and love them.

—Barbara Brown Taylor in The Living Pulpit (July/September 2003), adapted

Arrange the group in a circle, and place a display with a variety of ordinary objects (shoes, food, keys, phone, stick, leaf, rock, pictures of people or animals, etc.).

On the back of the Sacrament Worksheet, have the youth write or draw ways of seeing ordinary objects, people, and relationships sacramentally.

• How can ordinary objects be sacramental?
• What would it look like in an ordinary day to live sacramentally, being mindful of the sacredness in all creation?

If possible, play the music video or recording of Holy Now by Peter Mayer while youth write or draw their responses. At the conclusion of the song, invite youth to share one idea or response.

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

Prayer Cards (allow 10–15 minutes for this activity each class session)
Hand out the prayer cards from previous lesson and provide recycled magazines, scissors, and glue or glue sticks. Have the youth find a picture from a magazine that expresses their relationship with God at that moment, and place it however they wish on their prayer card.

5 Bless (5% of lesson time)
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
Form a circle for the closing moment of blessing one another. Have each person say to the person on their right, “You are God’s beloved.”
Close by singing CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SACRAMENT</th>
<th>SCRIPTURES</th>
<th>SYMBOLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAPTISM</td>
<td>Matthew 3:13–17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matthew 28:18–20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John 3:1–8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFIRMATION</td>
<td>Luke 3:16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John 3:1–8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark 14:22–25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matthew 26:26–29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORDINATION</td>
<td>Matthew 9:37—10:1–4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts 6:1–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts 13:1–3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRIAGE</td>
<td>John 2:1–11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matthew 19:4–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark 10:6–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLESSING OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>Matthew 19:13–15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark 10:13–16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luke 18:15–17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAYING ON OF HANDS FOR THE SICK</td>
<td>Matthew 9:18–26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark 6:13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James 5:14–15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVANGELIST BLESSING</td>
<td>John 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numbers 6:24–26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luke 24:50–53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BAPTISM

WHO: Anyone who is old enough to make their own decisions (Community of Christ recognizes age eight) and chooses to covenant with God and follow Jesus Christ may be baptized.

WHAT: A priest or elder performs this sacrament by immersing the person in water. Before the person is lowered under the water, the minister recites the following prayer statement, "[Name], having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Spirit). Amen."

WHERE: A baptism may take place in a font, pool, river, lake, or any body of water.

WHY: Baptism is a public act announcing you are choosing to follow Jesus Christ. Jesus was baptized as a model for us to follow. Being immersed in water represents a death to old ways of being, and coming up out of the water represents new life in Christ.

WHEN: At any time after age eight, and following a time of preparation, a person can be baptized. In Community of Christ, a person celebrates this sacrament as a part of a specially planned worship service.
WHO: Anyone who has been baptized of water at age eight or later may be confirmed a member of Communi-
ty of Christ.

WHAT: Confirmation (baptism of the Spirit) affirms the Holy Spirit’s continued blessing for each disciple, and
confirms membership in Community of Christ. Elders place their hands on the head of a new disciple. One elder offers a special prayer seeking God’s blessing to help new members grow in their covenant and generously share their giftedness in support of the church’s mission.

WHERE: Confirmation is celebrated as part of a specially planned worship service.

WHY: Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (John 3:5, emphasis added). Confirmation invites disciples into the life and mission of Community of Christ.

WHEN: Following a time of preparation, confirmation can take place any time after a person is baptized.
WHO: Priests and elders may serve the Lord’s Supper “to all committed followers of Christ” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:4a).

WHAT: We eat bread and drink wine (usually grape juice) as symbols or emblems representing Jesus’ body and blood. Participants kneel as the prayers are read for the bread and wine. The prayers for the bread and wine are taken from Doctrine and Covenants 17:22d and 23b. Only the prayers from Doctrine and Covenants or the ones using contemporary language (approved by the First Presidency) are to be used with this sacrament. The following is a combined prayer using contemporary language.

Combined Prayer on the Bread and Wine (contemporary language)
Eternal God, we ask you in the name of you Son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread and wine to the souls of all those who receive them, that they may eat and drink in remembrance of the body and blood of your Son, and witness to you, O God, that they are willing to take upon them the name of your Son, and always remember him and keep the commandments which he has given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

WHERE: The Lord’s Supper (Communion) is served as part of a worship service.

WHY: The Lord’s Supper is “a visible witness of loving Christian fellowship and shared remembrance of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:4a). It is an opportunity to celebrate again our baptism and confirmation covenants, reconcile relationships, and mutually recommit to the church’s mission.

WHEN: Community of Christ celebrates the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as part of a public worship service, but it can also take place in homes or more private worship moments. In Community of Christ it is traditionally celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. It is also tradition that an oblation offering for the poor and needy be received at a Communion service.
WHO: Children from newborn to age seven may be blessed.

WHAT: The blessing of children is administered by two elders. Babies are held by one elder while the other places hands on the baby and offers a prayer of blessing affirming God's desire to bless all children. Older children may be held or seated.

WHERE: This sacrament usually takes place during a worship service in the presence of the child's family and the congregation.

WHY: During Jesus' adult ministry, parents brought their children to him to be blessed (Mark 10:14). When a family brings their child to be blessed, they are responding to God's grace by choosing to raise their child in God's loving community and promising to provide guidance and nurture throughout the child's lifetime. The congregation also commits to being a loving community in which the child can thrive and grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

WHEN: Children may be blessed any time before the age of eight.
ORDINATION

WHO: Some disciples in Community of Christ are called by God to be ministers because their gifts help them serve the covenant community in specific ways.

WHAT: Officiating ministers, usually two, lay their hands on the person’s head. One minister offers a prayer that proclaims a specific priesthood office to which the person is being ordained and may include added guidance and blessing.

WHERE: This sacrament is often performed in a worship service.

WHY: Ordination confers authority on priesthood members according to the responsibilities of their particular priesthood offices for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.

WHEN: Ordination takes place after the call has been approved through appropriate administrative channels, the candidate has completed the required preparation courses, and has been supported by the congregation, mission center, or World Church.
MARRIAGE

WHO: Two people who love and commit to each other in sacred covenant. Community of Christ priests and elders may perform this sacrament, regardless of the couple’s membership in Community of Christ, as long as local laws governing marriage are followed.

WHAT: Marriage is a legal agreement. A Community of Christ marriage ceremony includes a statement of mutual covenant, “You both mutually agree to be each other’s companion...” (Doctrine and Covenants 111:2b), and a pronouncement prayer, “May God add his blessings and keep you to fulfill your covenants from henceforth and forever. Amen” (Doctrine and Covenants 111:2d).

WHERE: A marriage ceremony can take place in any setting the couple chooses.

WHY: God cares about relationships that are rooted in the principles of Christ-like love, mutual respect, responsibility, justice, covenant, and faithfulness (adapted from Doctrine and Covenants 164:6a).

WHEN: Local laws governing marriage determine the age at which a couple can be legally married. Ministers performing the marriage sacrament meet with the couple for a period of preparation prior to the ceremony.
WHO:  Anyone may seek this sacrament of blessing during times of physical, mental, or emotional distress.

WHAT:  Usually two elders administer this sacrament, but only one is required. One elder places a drop of consecrated oil on the forehead of the person, places hands on the person’s head, and offers a statement of purpose and blessing. The second elder then places hands on the person’s head and offers a prayer of blessing and healing.

Consecrated oil is usually olive oil. It is consecrated by elders saying a prayer of blessing on the oil (usually with the bottle open) that it may be used for the sacred purpose of offering a prayer for healing of the sick.

WHERE:  This sacrament may take place in any setting that is comfortable for the person requesting the sacrament.

WHY:  God desires wholeness and shalom for all creation. Jesus blessed those who were hurting in many ways. The disciples anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them (Mark 6:13).

WHEN:  This sacrament can be requested at any time for persons of any age, regardless of membership in Community of Christ.
WHO: This sacrament is offered to individuals (members and friends of the church), families, households, groups, and congregations at times they need to feel God's loving grace and guidance.

WHAT: An evangelist places hands on the head of the person and offers a special prayer of blessing to give hope, assurance, and insights. For a group blessing, the evangelist may hold hands outward while the prayer of blessing is offered.

WHERE: With the exception of an evangelist blessing for a congregation, this sacrament is not done during a congregational worship service. It is one-on-one ministry between the evangelist and the person(s) seeking the blessing.

WHY: This sacrament expresses the universal love of God in very personal terms. Jesus prayed a special prayer for his disciples to guide them in their journey (John 17 and Luke 22:31–32).

WHEN: The evangelist's prayer of blessing follows a period of preparation between the evangelist and the person(s) seeking the blessing.
Lesson Focus
To discover what it means to become a living sanctuary.

Focus Scripture Passages
1 Corinthians 6:19
Ephesians 2:21–22
Doctrine and Covenants 92:2a, 3e-f; 156:5a-e; 161:2a-b

Objectives
The learners will...

• engage in spiritual practice with the text of CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”
• explore what it means to be a living sanctuary.
• participate in a holy ground nature walk.
• complete prayer cards and personal reflections.

Supplies
• Community of Christ Sings (CCS)
• Flip chart or large erasable writing surface and markers
• Stones, one for each person
• Items for worship center, including the words of 1 Corinthians 6:19 printed or projected
• Copies of the Mission Prayer (projected or printed)
• Large paper and markers for creating a mural (optional)
• Slips of paper with verse one of CCS 87, “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” printed, and colored pencils (one for each person)
• Items for prayer cards: foam board or card stock (cut in half an 8.5 x 11 inch paper to become 5.5 x 8.5 inches or A4 paper to become A5), scissors, glue or glue sticks, colored pens or pencils, a variety of recycled magazines, white construction paper, and markers or colored pencils.
• Journals or writing paper for each student
Youth will need extra time during the Send section to complete their prayer card reflections.

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

Create a worship center that includes stones (one for each person) and the following verse taken from 1 Corinthians 6:19.

...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you...?

Welcome youth as they enter, and open by singing CCS 280, “Lord Prepare Me,” which has been the closing song throughout the week.

Provide each person with a piece of paper and pens or pencils.

Each day we have explored the themes Awaken to God’s Invitation, Awaken to Spiritual Transformation, Awaken to Unfolding Mission, and Awaken to Sacramental Living. Today we explore the theme Awaken to Living Sanctuary, which is what our closing song each day is about. Let’s take a look at what each part of the song means to us.

Use the following phrases and reflections as a spiritual practice. Encourage youth to write or draw their personal reflections during the moments of silence. If possible, play an instrumental arrangement of the hymn, or other meditative music.

- Lord prepare me... Where is God leading you?  
  Moments of silent reflection and response
- To be a sanctuary... How do you welcome and include others?  
  Moments of silent reflection and response
- Pure and holy, tried and true... What choices will help you honor your own sacredness?  
  Moments of silent reflection and response
- With thanksgiving... For what are you most grateful?  
  Moments of silent reflection and response
- I’ll be a living sanctuary for you... How will you respond?  
  Moments of silent reflection and response

Recite the Mission Prayer together:
God, where will your Spirit lead today?  
Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.  
Grant me courage to risk something new,  
and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.
Engage (35% of lesson time) 
Invites exploration and interaction

Ask the youth to recall what was discussed about the purposes of the Temples in Lesson 3 Awaken to Unfolding Mission. Make a list of words and phrases they recall. Review Doctrine and Covenants 92:2a, 3e–f and 156:5a–e as needed to complete the list.

Keeping that list in mind, invite youth to read the following passages aloud. You may choose to have them projected or written so all can see.

Reflecting on his hymn, “Can Steel and Stone and Swirling Spire,” CCS 281, Danny Belrose wrote:

The Temple is more than an architectural marvel of swirling stone, steel, and glass; its ministries flow outward, extending far beyond its fixed physical footprint. The Temple serves to bless not simply those who gather within its walls but also (and, perhaps primarily) those who may never enter its doors. They hymn text reminds us the Temple “comes alive in us” whenever the dining room table, the office [school] desk, and the workbench become extensions of the Communion table.

Doctrine and Covenants 161:2a–b

a. Become a people of the Temple—those who see violence but proclaim peace, who feel conflict yet extend the hand of reconciliation, who encounter broken spirits and find pathways for healing.

b. Fulfill the purposes of the Temple by making its ministries manifest in your hearts. It was built from your sacrifices and searching over many generations. Let it stand as a towering symbol of a people who knew injustice and strife on the frontier and who now seek the peace of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Becoming a people of the Temple is both about how you view the sacredness of your own body and spirit, and how you treat others as sacred.

Form groups of two or three to discuss the following questions.

• What holds you back from being more present to God who seeks a sanctuary in you?

• What spiritual awakening is taking place (or is needed) in your life?

• What spiritual awakening is taking place (or is needed) in the community with which you seek to be the body of Christ in the world?

As a large group, respond to the following question. You may choose to discuss ideas as a group, or create a mural of visual responses.

• What would it look like in your community if the church (body of Christ) got serious about being a people of the Temple?
Respond (35% of lesson time)
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Holy Ground Nature Walk
Invite each youth to take a stone, a slip of paper with verse one of CCS 87, “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” and a colored pencil. Take a nature walk as a group and notice how God is present in everything you see and experience. Find a place to sit as a group and form a circle. Breathe in the Holy Spirit that surrounds all life in the air you breathe.

Explain to the group that together we will build an Ebenezer. An Ebenezer means a “stone of help.” Wherever we are, where we are right now, is holy ground. God is always with us, always guiding and helping us, whether or not we are aware of it. We raise our Ebenezer to mark this time and place where we have felt God with us, where we recognize God working with us. Invite each person to place their stone in the center of the circle to build an Ebenezer while you sing verse one of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.”

Read Ephesians 2:21–22.
In [Christ] the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

On the back of their slip of paper, have each student write a line of poetry—any form they choose—that expresses how God is being revealed to them in that moment. Note: this may be easy for some and difficult for others. Encourage all to express simply what they are feeling at that moment. Share the group’s poem by going around the circle and having each person read their line of poetry. (You may choose to collect and compile the lines of poetry to give to each youth before leaving family camp or reunion. Or you may choose to have them read their group poem as part of a closing worship service.)

As you leave this space and return to the classroom, have each youth take a stone (the one they added or a different one) to remind them of how together they are living sanctuaries of Christ’s peace in the world.

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

Prayer Cards (allow 15–20 minutes to complete this project)
Hand out the prayer cards from previous lessons and provide recycled magazines, scissors, and glue or glue sticks. Have the youth find a picture from a magazine that expresses their relationship with God at that moment, and place it however they wish on their prayer card.

Give each person a half sheet of white construction paper. Project or have the following questions written so all can see. Ask youth to consider the following questions as they look at what they have included in their prayer card.
1. What do I see in my prayer card?
2. What is this card telling me?
3. What is God’s invitation to me through this card?

Have them write or draw their responses on the construction paper. Glue to the back of the prayer card. Add the date so they will know what their relationship with God looks like at this moment. They may also choose to “name” or title their prayer card.

5️⃣ Bless (5% of lesson time)

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Form a circle for a closing moment of blessing. Ask each person to show their prayer card and share one word that describes their prayer card or their relationship with God.

Close by singing CCS 280, “Lord, Prepare Me.”