



Living Stewardship

About this Faith Practice

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation....

Let's Begin...

Now that you've downloaded the files for your faith practice and age group or setting, you can get started planning one or multiple sessions:

1 Open the .pdf file for Workshop Rotation. There are eight workshops which explore this faith practice:



Art



Computer



Drama



Food



Games



Music



Science





Video

2 Locate the Workshop you've chosen

3 Look through all 9 activities and select the ones you would like to do with your group.

- If you're planning a 30–45 minute session, choose 3 activities.
- It is best to select at least one activity from Exploring and Engaging, at least one from Discerning and Deciding, and at least one from Sending and Serving.
- For 45 minutes to 1 hour, choose 4 or 5 activities.
- For a 1½ to 2-hour session, you can use all 9 activities.

Tip: Look for this symbol  to find activities designed for Easy Preparation (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church).

④ **Make copies of any handouts** () **related to your activities. Order posters** () **, if using art** (see “Ordering Posters,” below).

Use of Art, Music, and Scripture in Faith Practices

Faith Practices activities include many opportunities to grow in faith through the use of scripture, music, and art.

Ordering Posters

If you choose activities that use an art image, you or your church will need to purchase posters of the art by clicking on the link provided in the activity. If you wish to use art, you will need to plan ahead, since it takes 1 to 2 weeks for the posters to arrive after you place your order.

Art

Six posters are used with the faith practice Living Stewardship and may be ordered by clicking on the links provided.

From Imaging the Word Poster Sets:

“Planting” by Rex Goreleigh (<http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>)

“The Moorish Kitchen Maid with the Supper at Emmaus” by Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velazquez (<http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>)

“With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark ...” by Barbara Reid (<http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>)

From AllPosters.com:

“Banjo Lesson” by Henry Ossawa Tanner (<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters4>)

“Baobab, Okavango Delta, Botswana” by Pete Oxford (<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters5>)

“Orion Nebula” by Stocktrek Images (<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters6>)

Music

Three music selections are used with Living Stewardship. We have selected music which is easily found in many hymnals. A web link is provided to give more information about each music selection.

Jesu, Jesu Fill Us With Your Love, Tune: Chereponi (<http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong4>)

Take My Gifts And Let Me Love You, Tune: Talavera Terrace (<http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong5>)

God Whose Giving Knows No Ending, Tune: Austrian Hymn (Hymn lyrics: <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong6>) (Austrian Hymn tune: <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong6a>)

Scripture

Twelve Bible passages are used with Living Stewardship, two with each Exploration.

Discovery	Deuteronomy 8:7-18	Matthew 2:1-11
Scripture	Genesis 1:26-31	I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19
Discipleship	Isaiah 55:1-3	Mark 10:17-22
Christian Tradition	Deuteronomy 14:22-29	Acts 4:32 - 5:11
Context and Mission	Isaiah 1:10-17	Mark 14:3-9
Future and Vision	I Chronicles 29:1-19	Revelation 21:10, 21:22-22:5

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Workshop: Art

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, that is, visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, considering age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

The use of images and the manipulation of materials helps all of us to enter into the world of possibility and imagination. Art provides windows of meaning for all ages. Younger children find particular delight in exploring different textures and colors. Art can also help those who are still developing verbal skills to express their feelings and hopes. Older children are able to think more abstractly and can use art as a way to stretch their imagination of God's future. By touching and manipulating art materials, we practice being co-creators with God who help shape God's peaceable kingdom.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

**Revelation 21:10;
21:22-22:5**

SUPPLEMENTAL STORY:

1 Chronicles 29:1-19

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Guided Meditation on the City of God (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- drawing paper and crayons or markers

In your own words, guide the participants with the following meditation.

Revelation 21 and 22 describe an imagined future city of God. The city is a hoped for city based on our trust that God loves all of creation and will heal it completely. Hopeful dreams of a future are not just about what might happen someday. Hopeful dreams of a future can inspire us to work with God to make our cities and our earth places of new life right now. By participating in a guided meditation, participants can visualize this city of hope and begin to make this hope their own.

Share: In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John had a wonderful dream of what life with God might one day be like. John was so amazed by this dream that he had to share it. I am going to share that dream with you now. To help us get ready, find a comfortable way to sit. Pretend that a string is attached to your head and is gently pulling your spine upward so that your shoulders are back and you can fill your lungs with a deep breath. Because this is a dream, close your eyes so you can imagine what John saw.

An angel came and carried me to the top of a great, high mountain. When I looked down, I saw a beautiful city shining out of the darkness. The city glowed, and yet there was no sun and no moon. The light that shined from

Leader Preparation

One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three "best ways" for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help partici-

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pants make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you “see with new eyes” and “hear with new ears.” Even when children don’t fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they are very attuned to how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used, such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper. Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways. As you prepare for this workshop, allow yourself to play with the materials you plan to use. Enthusiasm is catching and participants will pick up on your spirit of fun and exploration. Many of the projects in this workshop are less about developing craft skills than they are about finding joy in the manipulation of materials and stretching imaginations. Much of the art workshop focuses on imagining how God will bring new life and healing to people and creation. As you center yourself this week, focus on your own hopes and desires for yourself. Also bring to mind the needs of your community. Where do you sense the need for healing? Where do you see signs of hope?

Prayer: Loving God, all around us you plant seeds of hope and promise. You grieve with us and for us over the wounds we carry and the ones we cause. And yet, you have promised not to abandon us. New life does not always come quickly. Sometimes, you nurture hope in murky soil so that when healing rains come, hope is ready to bloom. Open my eyes to possibility. Awak-

the city was warm and made me feel very safe, The angel brought me down to the gates of the city, and I saw that the gates had no lock and were standing wide open. I looked around and saw the faces of many different people and many different animals walking into the city. Their faces were full of peace.

We followed a street that led us into the center of the city. Look around. Notice what you see. *(pause)* As the angel and I walked down the street, the angel pointed to a river flowing just ahead. The angel called it “the river of the water of life.” The water was as clear as crystal, and it was full of living things. On either side of the river grew a tree of life. The tree’s branches stretched wide over the entire center of the city. I looked up and saw at least twelve kinds of fruit, ripe and ready to be eaten. The leaves of the tree looked like no leaves I had ever seen before. They were sheltering leaves, and the angel whispered to me that God made them for the healing of all nations. As I looked into the tree, I felt as if I was looking into the face of God. I knew this because I felt completely loved. After awhile, the light of the city became so bright that I could no longer see the tree though I knew it was still there. The angel returned me to the top of the mountain. When I woke up, I felt rested and at peace.

Open your eyes. Invite the children to draw or create a picture of what they imagined during the meditation.

Use the questions below or some of your own to wonder about what participants imagined.

- I wonder where the light came from that filled the city since there was no sun and no moon.
- What kinds of faces did you see walking into the city? What did they look like?
- What did you see as you looked around the city?
- I wonder what kinds of fruit you saw hanging in the tree. What did you want to do with that fruit?
- I wonder what else you saw when you looked up into the tree.
- I wonder what leaves of healing look like and feel like.

2 Hands of Strength and Healing

Supplies:

- Bibles
- colored construction paper
- scissors
- pencils

Read 1 Chronicles 29:12–13 and the following explanation. These words are part of a blessing that King David said over the gold and silver, precious stones, and marble that he and others gave for the building of God’s temple. The temple was a special place where people could come close to God. Many hands helped build the temple.

Many years later the temple was destroyed, but people did not stop using their hands to help others come close to God. They remembered that God gave them hands of strength. They trusted that God could make good and sometimes even great things come from their hands.



en my hands to acts of caring. Strengthen me with the courage to be a co-creator with you. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Invite the children to trace around their hands on the construction paper and cut out these handprints. Spend a few minutes imagining together what hands of loving strength might do to help others. Ask participants to share different types of strength (physical, emotional, spiritual). Write each idea on one of the construction paper handprints. Imagine good things that hands can do.

Divide your group into teams of two to three. Ask each group to silently act out one way that hands can show God’s love. Give the groups about five minutes to prepare so that what they do is brief and fresh. Gather back together as a large group and invite each group to share their example of loving hands. After each presentation, ask the rest to describe what they saw. This may or may not be what the presenters intended!

③ The Ark: A Box of Hope

Supplies:

- poster: With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark ... by Barbara Reid, <http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>
- ornate wooden box

Display the poster of Barbara Reid’s painting “With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark . . .” Gather around the poster.

Explain that when David was getting ready to build a temple to God, he was full of joy; but he also remembered times of sadness. He asked God, “Who am I, and who are my people that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given only what comes from your hand. For we are aliens and strangers before you, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.”

The Hebrew word for ark literally means a box or chest. The people of God carried a kind of box, also called an ark, through the desert with them. They placed that same ark in the holiest part of the temple that David helped build for God. The ark helped them remember that God was with them always, even when things were very difficult.

Say: Do you remember what happened before Noah’s ark rested on top of the mountain? I wonder what it felt like to see only water for forty days and nights. I wonder if they thought it would ever stop raining. I wonder what it felt like when the ark touched land and the people and animals saw the sun for the first time in a very long time. When you look at this poster, how does it make you feel?

After they have had a few moments with the painting, show them a beautiful wooden box. It can be any size. Run your hand across the top of the box as you say: Imagine the ark as a box of hope. What kinds of hopes do you imagine the people and animals carried with them on the ark? This picture shows the end of the story. I wonder which of their hopes came true. I wonder how the end of this story is different from what they imagined or hoped for? Pause and then ask: What kinds of hope we might put in this box?



Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 A Rainbow of Hands (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- mural-sized paper or a white sheet
- multiple colors of tempera paint, paper plates or aluminum pans, wet wipes, or colored construction paper, pencils, and scissors
- poster poster: With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark ... by Barbara Reid, by Barbara Reid (optional), <http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>

Supplies for the final display:

- nicely printed copy of Teresa of Avila's reflection on Christ
- fabric markers or pens
- an invitation to congregation members to record acts of kindness, mercy, and love through their hands

In this activity participants will create a large mural of a rainbow created by their handprints. Each group that rotates through the art workshop will create a different color of the rainbow. When the rainbow is complete, it will be displayed in a public part of the church where members will be invited to write or draw acts of kindness they witness. To determine the size of your mural, talk with the appropriate church leaders about where to display the mural. Use a sheet or a large roll of white paper to create the background for the mural. If using a sheet or piece of white fabric, you may want to sew a simple hem along its borders in order to create a nice edge. The rainbow is a symbol of God's promise to all people and all animals to help care for and protect life (Genesis 9:8–17). If you have a copy of the poster of Barbara Reid's painting, "With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark . . .", display it. Ask: What is missing in the painting? What is the sign of God's promise to Noah and the animals that God put in the sky? If you do not have a copy of the poster, briefly summarize the end of the Noah story and ask what the sign of God's promise is.

Explain that the rainbow reminds us of God's dream for all people and all the earth. Talk first about what the rainbow looks like. Then, imagine together what God's dream for all people and all the earth might be. What might all the colors of the rainbow represent? (people of many different colors and backgrounds bound together by love; the many colors of animals and plants that have good places to live on earth; beautiful acts of kindness).

Read aloud the following reflection by the sixteenth-century mystic, Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body now but yours
 No hands, no feet on earth but yours
 Your eyes are the eyes through which look out Christ's compassion
 On this world.
 Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Ask participants to look at their hands. Your hands are God's hands in the world. How can our hands help God's dream come true? Create a rainbow of hands, using one color of paint for each group that will rotate through this workshop. Spread a thick layer of paint onto one or more paper plates. Have wet wipes nearby to help remove paint from their hands. One at a time, ask them to dip



their hands in the paint and place them on the mural. Guide participants where to place their hands so that their prints will create the shape of the rainbow. If necessary, have them make several prints in order to create the length of rainbow you desire. Ask another adult helper to use wet wipes to remove excess paint from their hands. Then allow participants to wash their hands more thoroughly with soap and water.

Option: Cut out handprints from colored construction paper instead of using paints. When the mural is finished, display it in the public space your group and church leaders have selected. Somewhere on the mural write the words “God’s Dream.” Near the mural, display the Teresa of Avila reflection written above. Provide pens and markers near the mural and invite congregation members to write or draw on the mural, under the rainbow of hands. Invite them to describe ways they have seen hands perform acts of kindness, mercy, and love.

5 Tree of Life in the City of God

Supplies: (You will not need all of these supplies at once. Check below for which part of the mural your group will work on each week.)

- Bibles
- tree trunk: mural-sized paper or a white sheet; brown paint and sponge brushes; pencils for tracing
- leaves: leaves for rubbing; crayons or leaf-colored construction paper and pencils for tracing hands, markers, glue
- fruit: construction paper, colored tissue paper, glue, craft sticks for spreading glue
- river of the water of life: a large selection of buttons, beads, craft glue
- throne of God: pencil for tracing, black marker for outline, shells, bottle caps, buttons or beads, craft glue
- people and animals: half sheet of card stock for each learner, selection of magazines, sponge brushes, bowls of slightly diluted glue or mod podge

Over the course of the entire Living Stewardship rotation, each workshop will help create a part of a mural depicting the tree of life from Revelation 22:2. Read the description of the tree of life in Revelation 22:1–5. You can create as many parts of the mural as you have groups doing the art workshop. Use a large piece of white paper or a sheet as your canvas, ideally at least 48" tall and wide. Support participants in doing as much of the outline and painting of the tree as possible. Guide them in making the tree tall and wide, but also leave space for other parts of the mural you might add, such as the river of life and a throne of God.

Here are some suggestions for parts of the tree.

Trunk and branches: In pencil (or fabric pencil if using a sheet), sketch an outline of the tree’s trunk. Ask a learner to look up Isaiah 25:4 and read it to the group. Using a large dark marker, write the words to Isaiah 25:4 along your pencil outline to form the shape of the trunk. Outline branches in pencil that stretch out from the tree. Squirt brown paint onto paper plates for each learner. Provide sponge brushes and painting smocks. Ask them to use their sponges to dab brown paint onto the trunk and branches so that the texture appears rough like bark.

Leaves: Ahead of time, gather large leaves. Using white coloring paper and crayons, have them do rubbings of the leaves. (If leaves are not available, have participants trace their hands onto green construction paper and cut them out. The leaves will be made of their handprints.) They can decorate the edges of the leaves with glitter or marker. On the front or on the back of each leaf, ask participants to



write the name of a person, animal, or place in need of healing. Brainstorm these together, possibly using your church's prayer list as a guide. Have them glue their leaves to the tree's branches.

Fruit: Read about the fruit of the spirit in Galatians 5:22–23 and 25. There are nine listed. Brainstorm together as many fruits as the group can think of. If possible, provide pictures of different types of fruit to use as a reference. Ask them to trace their favorite fruits on construction paper. Remind them to draw the fruits large so that it fills most of the 9" x 12" paper. Provide pieces of tissue paper, glue, and craft sticks. Instruct participants to use the craft sticks to lightly coat small sections of the fruit with glue. Tear one-inch pieces of tissue paper and attach these to their fruit. When they are finished covering their fruit, cut it out while leaving a small margin of paper around the edge so they are not cutting through tissue paper and glue. Younger ones will need help with cutting. Attach the fruit to the tree. Write out the fruits of the spirit for all to see and copy. Using a marker, have participants write one of the fruits of the Spirit on the background paper, along the edge of their fruit. It is okay if the names are repeated.

River of the water of life: Trace the outline of a river that flows around the base of the tree. If you are also going to create the throne of God, the river should flow between where the throne will be and the base of the tree. To create the effect of a crystal river, invite participants to sort through buttons or beads for those that remind them of a shining, clear river. Ask them to attach their finds to the mural with craft glue.

Throne of God: Imagine together what the throne of God might look like. Could it be a giant chair? A tree stump? A large rock? When you have decided, draw a general outline of the throne's shape onto the mural. The river of life should lead up to the throne. Have participants decorate the throne with small, lightweight decorative objects such as buttons, bottle caps, small shells, or beads. Use craft glue to attach these to the throne.

People and animals: Ahead of time, collect several magazines that contain pictures of people and animals. Ask participants to search for people and animals who might live in the city of God. Give each learner a large index card or half a sheet of card stock. Invite them to make a collage of people and animals. They can use sponge brushes to coat a thin layer of glue on the card stock before placing their images. Caution them to experiment with placement before gluing down. Attach finished cards to the mural wherever they wish. When your mural is complete, decide where the group would like it to hang. It could be on a wall in the art room, or it could be a public space in the church. (Check with appropriate church leaders about possible hanging spaces ahead of time.) You will need to judge the weight of your mural to determine the best way to hang it.

⑥ City of God Mobiles

Supplies:

- three recycled CDs for each learner
- white CD labels or construction paper
- scissors
- pencils for tracing
- permanent markers (optional) 6", 9", and 12" lengths of string or yarn for each mobile
- wire coat hangers for each mobile
- low temperature glue gun



If you chose not to do the City of God guided meditation (Activity 1), read the part of the meditation that describes the city in John's vision. John's vision of a new Jerusalem sounds very different from the cities we know. In the Apostle John's dream, an angel shows him a city where all can be healed, where all are welcome, and where there is delicious fruit and clear water.

Name a main street in your town or city that would be familiar to your participants. Ask participants to picture that street. What do they see? If that same street was transformed by God's love and healing, what do you think you would see? What living things would be there? How would people and creatures treat one another? How would they get food and water and shelter?

Distribute three used CDs per learner. Either provide white CD labels that will stick to the CD, or have participants trace the CD onto construction paper. Have participants cut out three circles to cover each CD. Be sure to trace and cut out the center hole as well. Apply or glue the circles to the front of the CD to cover up any writing or images. On each CD, use markers to draw what animals, people, and wildlife look like in a city of God. What are they doing? How do they feel? Participants can choose to draw people on one, animals on another, and wildlife on the third or create scenes of all interacting together. If they would like to draw on both sides of the CD, they will need to use permanent markers on the shiny side. Pass out yarn or string in lengths of 6", 9", and 12" to each learner. Use a low temperature glue gun to attach the strings to the top of each CD. Tie the other ends of the string to the base of a wire hanger. When the mobiles are complete, gently invite all to share what they drew with the group.

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Dynamic Group Prayer (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- newsprint or white board and markers
- index card-sized paper for each learner
- pens or pencils

Read part of the guided meditation on the city of God from Activity 1. Invite participants to imagine what the city of God might look like now, in our time and in our town. Record their responses on newsprint or a white board. Create two columns: "In the city of God we see . . ." and "In the city of God, no one . . ." After several minutes of responding together, pass out an index card-sized piece of paper to each learner as well as pens or pencils. These can be scraps of previously used paper with one blank side. Read short phrases from the list the group created. Give each learner the opportunity to choose one of the phrases he or she likes and write it on his or her paper. Gather in a circle for a group prayer that you begin with the words, "In the city of God." Ask them to read their phrases in any order (popcorn style) to complete the prayer. They can repeat their phrase as many times as they like. When you sense the prayer coming to an end say, "In the city of God, we are all welcome. Amen."

Adapt this activity for younger ones by making the prayer more spontaneous. Ask them to close their eyes and imagine the city of God you have been describing. Explain that they are going to help you say a prayer by sharing what they see or imagine in the city of God. If necessary, tell them that some prayers we say silently with our eyes closed and others are "open-eye" prayers we say together.



Begin in the same way with the phrase “In the city of God.” If they need encouragement to respond ask a particular child, “What do you see?” End in the same way as described above.

8 Fruit and Water Snack

Supplies:

- a variety of familiar and exotic fruits in individual containers
- wooden kabob skewers
- napkins
- attractive pitcher filled with water
- cups
- words to the Johnny Appleseed blessing

To celebrate God’s promise of healing for all nations, provide a variety of fruits to sample. Place familiar and more exotic fruits in different bowls. Give participants wooden skewers and invite them to make their own fruit kabobs. Fill an attractive pitcher with water to symbolize God’s water of life. Allow them to practice care for one another by giving them jobs such as passing out napkins, cups, skewers, and pouring water. When everyone is served, read Revelation 22:1–2. For a blessing, sing the Johnny Appleseed song together. A version with appropriate lyrics can be found at link, <http://www.tinyurl.com/28s3xop>. As you eat together, ask about their favorite trees and how trees bless us.

9 Hands of Hope

Supplies:

- colored construction paper
- recycled drinking straws
- solution of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chlorine bleach in a gallon of water
- pencils for tracing
- scissors
- stapler
- markers

John’s dream of a new Jerusalem in Revelation 22 is about a future hope. This hope is not just a far-off dream of what might be. The promises of God’s healing can be found in the gifts of creation: a tree, a river, fruit. The lily flower is a beautiful symbol of God’s promise for new life. Gardeners plant bulbs in dark soil when the weather is still cold with the hope that the bulb will bloom, bringing the gift of joy.

Children can create their own lilies by tracing their hands and attaching them to recycled drinking straws. These “hands of hope” symbolize how God places the potential for healing and hope within all of us. We share this hope by using our hands to care for other people and for creation.

Disinfect drinking straws by soaking them in a solution of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup bleach per gallon of water. Trace one hand onto colored construction paper. Cut out the handprint. Curl the tips of the paper fingers around a marker. Trace simple leaves onto green construction paper and cut them out. Wrap the palm of the handprint around the drinking straw with the curled fingers facing outward. Staple the flower to the top of the drinking straw. Staple leaves to the base of the flower. Somewhere on the leaf or flower, write “God’s hope is in my hands.” If the flower



or leaves are too small, write this phrase on a slip of paper and attach it to the straw, just beneath the flower.

Participants can take home these “hands of hope,” or you can bundle them into a bouquet and display them somewhere in your church. If you display them, include a description of the lily’s meaning adapted from the beginning of this activity.

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Living Stewardship



Workshop: Computer

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, that is, visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, considering age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

This workshop offers several ways to utilize computers. It suggests activities that can be done using a complete computer lab and those that can be done by churches with no child computer access. If you have a limited number of computers, you can take turns doing each type of activity. The "Exploring and Engaging Activities" do not require a computer. The "Deciding and Discerning Activities" include an Internet Scavenger Hunt for children to do during the workshop as well as an option for the leader to print out an activity guide at home from one of the Web sites. The group can still benefit from information provided on the Web without direct access at church. If you want to maximize the time children are on the computer, devote the most time to your scavenger hunt. This workshop focuses on helping children develop a sense of wonder about our world community and the many different ways God's children look and live. By engaging with Web sites that tell children's stories, often through their own voices, all get to witness the joyful sharing of children from many different cultures. The best gift of the Internet is that it broadens our community to include the whole world. In a society with few positive messages for kids, participants can be inspired by the exciting ways that people (especially children!) are making choices that share love, build respect, and nurture understanding among all of God's children.

Ideally, two, but no more than three, participants will work on a computer together. Some activities can be done without reading, but it will be helpful for one of the users to be able to read. Adult leaders can assist children in navigating the websites as well as encourage them to make connections between the stewardship themes and the activities they will be doing.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Mark 10:17-22

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Isaiah 55:1-3

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 What Does It Mean to Have a Grateful Heart? (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- Bible
- three copies of the Mark 10 narrative, Attachment: Activity 1
- newsprint or white board and markers

Leader Preparation

Living Stewardship is about caring for all God has given us, including our very selves. Part of being good caretakers is learning to see all of God's creation with a sense of wonder and delight. The workshop rotation model encourages children to use all of their senses to explore what it means to be

Ask for two volunteers to help you tell the story in Mark 10:17-22 about what it means to have a grateful heart. In the Bible, the man is unnamed. In order to tell the story, ask your group to imagine what his name might be and insert that name into the narrative. Give a copy of the script to your two volunteers and ask them to fill in the name the group chooses. The narrator reads the first paragraph and then the unnamed man and Jesus enter into dialogue. Wonder about the story together using these thoughts or some of your own:



children of God who care for one another and for the natural world. Each workshop engages multiple learning styles so that children can more deeply integrate their own stories and life experiences with the faith practices they encounter in God's stories. One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three "best ways" for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you "see with new eyes" and "hear with new ears." Even when children don't fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they see clearly how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used (such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper). Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways.

Read through all the activities and decide which will work best in your setting. Prayerfully read one of the narratives described in "Exploring and

- I wonder what the man was seeking from Jesus.
- I wonder what eternal life with God is.
- I wonder what really bothered this man about Jesus' answer.
- I wonder what Jesus would ask me to do or give up to come closer to God.

If you have time, make a list together of positive ways to follow Jesus and another list of things not to do in order to follow Jesus. Discuss which list is more difficult to follow.

2 A Listening Heart

Supplies:

- Bibles
- a stuffed animal large enough for the whole group to see

In order to care well for one another, we first have to practice good listening. Read Isaiah 55:1–3. Explain that when the prophet says to eat what is good, it means listen to good words, good stories—God's good words. Repeat God's words through the prophet Isaiah, "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen so that you may live."

Explain that today they will have a chance to listen to children telling their stories through four Web sites: the Heifer Project International, UNICEF, Panwapa Kids, and Pennies for Peace. Some of the stories will be about how children in other parts of the world live, and some of the stories will be about some amazing ways kids are making a difference.

Talk together about how much each of us wants to be heard. Ask participants to think about a time when they were really hurting or felt especially lonely. How did someone show them good care? What does it feel like to have someone listen to you? What does it feel like for someone to help you, but not listen to you?

For younger children: Use a stuffed animal to help them talk about ways to show care. Name the animal and describe a need or problem it has, such as feeling lonely, sad, or sick. Then ask what good ways they can help their friend. You may even want to add a second stuffed animal who tries to help, but refuses to listen and so gives the wrong kind of help.

For all ages: Play a simple listening game. Invite everyone to close their eyes and become quiet. Tell them to pay attention to what they hear. After about a minute, invite participants to open their eyes again and share what they heard. What were they surprised to hear? What did they have to do to be good listeners?

For older children: Have participants get into pairs. Invite each person to think about something he or she did this week that was really fun. Have one person share a story while his or her partner listens. When the person telling the story finishes, the listener repeats back what he or she heard. After each pair has had a few minutes to talk and listen, reconvene as a large group. Ask the tellers what the listeners did to make them feel heard. Ask the listeners how it felt to really pay attention to someone else. The listeners have an added challenge because they were asked to think of a story of their own, but weren't given the opportunity to share it. How did this make listening harder?



Engaging” as a way to center yourself and ponder “joyful sharing.” If your group is going to complete the Scavenger Hunt during the workshop, keep in mind that it takes at least 30 minutes to complete. Adapt other activities as needed if you want to maximize computer time. During the week, explore the Web sites your group will be searching in the Scavenger Hunt. Use the clues in the hunt and become familiar with how to navigate these sites. This is also a good way, each time, to make sure that the Web sites used during this rotation are still “live.” Review the three best ways for Living Stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. Remind everyone that we can share because we trust God and because all that we are and have belongs to God and comes from God.

Prayer: Gracious God, You know each of us by name. You know our deepest gifts and our deepest fears. You know what keeps us from opening our whole selves to you. When we open ourselves to you completely, we want to share the gratefulness we feel. Help my own sense of joy in you—and in who you have created me to be—to grow. Be with me now as I hold each child I am leading this week in your light and love. Let our time together help them feel empowered to show care to their neighbors, both near and far. As we listen to the stories of children around the world, help each of us to connect with these stories so that we can see and hear one another in a deeper and more loving way. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from 9 activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and

3 Stories about Sharing Joyfully

Supplies:

- one of the following stories: *Beatrice’s Goat* by Page McBrier; *Give a Goat* by Jan West Schrock; or *Listen to the Wind* by Greg Mortenson

For all ages: Read and discuss one of these following stories as a way to introduce some of the Web sites participants will explore during their computer time. Each book has beautiful illustrations and is told with simple language that can easily be read to older or younger children.

***Beatrice’s Goat* by Page McBrier,** <http://www.tinyurl.com/238ebb9>. This is the true story of Beatrice, who lives in a small Ugandan village. Beatrice dreams of going to school, but is unable to attend because of school fees until her family receives a goat through Heifer Project International. Part of the proceeds from the purchase of this book benefits Heifer Project.

Questions for reflection:

- In what ways are you like Beatrice?
- What surprises you about this story?
- What would you ask Beatrice if you met her?
- How do Beatrice and her family respond to the gift they receive?

***Give a Goat* by Jan West Schrock,** <http://www.tinyurl.com/25hue6g>. The author of this book is the daughter of Dan West, founder of Heifer Project International. Jan Schrock tells the true story of a fifth grade class that read *Beatrice’s Goat* and decided that they wanted to help buy a goat for a family through Heifer Project. Like Beatrice, the class receives a gift from their teacher (in the form of a loan) that enables them to purchase ingredients for making healthy snacks. The class sells these snacks to raise money for a goat.

Questions for reflection:

- I wonder what part of Beatrice’s story made this class want to buy a goat.
- I wonder what kids can do to help other kids around the world.
- I wonder how Beatrice and the children in this class are similar.
- I wonder what makes each of them unique.
- What are some of the things the class had to do to make their dream of buying a goat happen?

***Listen to the Wind* by Greg Mortenson,** <http://www.tinyurl.com/29ug2xv>. This book is told from the perspective of the children of Korphe, a small village in the mountains of Pakistan. It tells the story of a mountain climber who became lost while descending K-2, the second tallest mountain in the world. Greg had failed to climb a mountain he had set his heart on, but he found his life’s passion on the way down. In the book, the village of Korphe provides Greg healing and hospitality, and he becomes inspired by the children’s desire to learn, even without a school. With beautiful, collage-style illustrations, the book tells how “Dr. Greg” and the whole village worked to build their first school. Grade school children in America provided Greg with his first significant donation to make the school a reality. Children can continue this tradition by collecting pennies through the Pennies for Peace program. Greg Mortenson eventually founded the Central Asia Institute, also known as *Ikat*, which helps build schools throughout the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The adult version of Greg’s story is *Three Cups of Tea*. If you purchase the book from the website <http://www.threecupsoftea.com>, part of the proceeds will help Dr. Greg build new schools.

Living Stewardship



WORKSHOP ROTATION

at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all 9 activities could take 90-120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30-45 minutes, choose 3 activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45-60 minutes, choose 4 or 5 activities using at least one activity from each category.

Questions for reflection:

- How did one gift of joyful sharing inspire another?
- How did Haji Ali help Dr. Greg to listen for the best way to work together?
- Greg Mortenson was different from other people from the West who had visited Korphe. I wonder what made his relationship with Korphe so special.
- One concept of mission is “building bridges.” I wonder what this way of helping one another means.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 URL Scavenger Hunt (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- at least one computer with Internet access per three participants
- copies of the URL Scavenger Hunt for each learner, Attachment: Activity 4a
- copies of the answers for adult helpers, Attachment: Activity 4b
- pencils or pens

Give each learner the URL Scavenger Hunt sheet, Attachment: Activity 4a. Answers to some of the questions may be found on Attachment: Activity 4b. It will take at least 30 minutes to complete the hunt. Participants can work independently or together in order to complete all of the activities suggested. The hunt will guide them to view videos, play games, and research information. Three of the websites they will explore are related to organizations that empower children to help other children around the world. Panwapa Kids, <http://www.panwapa.org>, is a Web site developed by Sesame Workshop to help build understanding among cultures and help children dialogue about difference and welcome. At Panwapa Kids, children can create their own world character, design a home, and select a flag to represent their interests. If they want to play on the Web site later, they will need a copy of their user name and password to take home.

5 Printable Activities from Panwapa

Supplies:

- a computer with Internet access
- printed materials described below

Go to <http://www.panwapa.org>. Click on the area that says, “Enter Panwapa World.” Click on the For Caregivers tab in the upper right corner. Go to Printable Activities. Download *Panwapa Magazine*. It has several creative, yet simple activities and games to help children understand the concepts of diversity, welcome, and cooperation. One of Panwapa’s goals is to empower children to engage responsibly with their world. If there is time, choose—or allow the children to choose—an activity or game to complete.

6 Pennies for Peace Tool Kit

Supplies:

- a computer with Internet access
- printed materials described below



Go to <http://www.penniesforpeace.org>. Click on the Pennies for Peace Toolkit. Select the K-4 Curriculum Resource Guide and download a copy. You can print the entire guide or select particular activities to print. This curriculum is geared toward a school setting and several of the activities are more complex. Some relatively simple ones are the Culture Quilt Square on page 17 and the Lesson 4, “100 Pennies Math,” on page 19. If there is time, encourage the children who have found this site to follow through with one of the activities—or suggest it as “fun” homework for all.

Sending & Serving Activities

7 Group Reflection (Easy Preparation)

Supplies: None

Gather together as a large group. Review together which Web sites the children liked best and which they would like to explore more at home. What are some ways that kids can help other kids? Have them name something new they learned about how a child lives in another part of the world. Even though many things in their lives may be different, what is the same?

8 Closing Prayer

Supplies: None

Use this or a similar prayer: *Loving God, Thank you for the fun ways we learned about all your children today. A lot of times, people think kids can't do very much to change the world, but we know that each of us can do something. We are your children—all of us. You show us that when we give love, we receive love. Help us to share joyfully and not be afraid that we won't have enough for ourselves. Thank you, God, for giving us what we need and most of all for loving us. Help us to show care to the people we meet this week by listening to them and respecting them so that your love shines through us. Amen.*

9 “Go My Children, with My Blessing”

Supplies:

- words and music to “Go My Children, with My Blessing”

Sing the hymn “Go My Children, with My Blessing” (tune: Ar Hyd y Nos). You can find the tune and lyrics at <http://www.tinyurl.com/27u7jqv>. After singing the first verse, help your group come up with simple motions to go along with the words. Sing the first verse through several times with your made-up motions so that your singing becomes your prayer for one another. Ahead of time, alert your adult helpers that you would like to give each learner a blessing before all



are dismissed. Speak quietly and privately to each learner before he or she leaves, giving each learner words of blessing. A sample blessing may be, “I noticed how you waited patiently to share your thoughts today. Thank you for being so mindful of others. God’s light and love shine in you. May God go with you now and be with you in all that you say and all that you do.”

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Mark 10:17-22

_____ woke up feeling good. He sat down to have his favorite breakfast. One of his servants brought it to him while another made sure he had everything he needed for his trip. He politely thanked his servants, but he didn't talk long. His true friends were James and Phillip, who had homes like his and servants of their own. _____ felt really good about his life—mostly. He felt excited lately. There was this amazing man, Jesus, who said such wonderful things about God's kingdom. Today, before he leaves on his trip, _____ decides to find Jesus and ask him how he, too, can worship God in every part of his life. But, _____'s also feeling nervous. The few times he's eaten with Jesus, lots of strange people were eating at the same table. _____ wasn't used to that. It made him feel uncomfortable. But, _____ is careful to follow God's commandments. He knows he is a good man and is confident Jesus will give him his blessing.

_____: "Good teacher, tell me please, what can I do to live with God always? I really want to be close to God."

Jesus: "You know what is right. Follow the commandments. Don't kill. Do not take someone else's wife. Do not steal at all. Don't lie. Don't be dishonest. Honor your parents. "

_____ smiled, feeling confident: "Teacher, I've done these things since I was a kid."

Narrator: Jesus looks at _____ again and this time really sees him. Jesus smiles. He loves this man and he knows his heart.

Jesus: "One thing holds you back. Go and sell all that you own and give it to the poor."

_____: Looks shocked and sad. He thinks, "How could Jesus ask so much of me?"

Living Stewardship

Attachment: Activity 4a

URL Scavenger Hunt

UNICEF

1. Go to <http://www.unicefusa.org/games>. Play UNICEF World Heroes or Halloween Coin Toss. Enter your score here: _____.

2. Go to <http://www.unicefusa.org>. Look for the About Us tab. List the five ways UNICEF money helps children.

Look for the FAQ tab. What does UNICEF stand for?

- How can you donate artwork for UNICEF to use on Christmas cards or other cards for sale?
- Go to the Shop Tab. Look for UNICEF cards and gifts. Name two things people can buy that also gives money to UNICEF.

Pennies For Peace

1. Go to <http://www.ikat.org>. This is the Web site for the Central Asia Institute founded by Greg Mortenson, who helps build schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. On Ikat's home page, look for the meaning of the word Ikat. What is it and why did they choose it?

2. Click on the Media and Press tab. Find the CAI (Central Asia Institute) videos. Watch the Pennies for Peace video. Who is the girl narrating the video? What is Pennies for Peace?

3. Go to <http://www.penniesforpeace.org>.

- What can a penny buy in Afghanistan and Pakistan?
- Look under the For Kids tab. Search the Feature Village. What kinds of food do they eat? How many homes are there? What animals do they have?
- Under the same For Kids tab, search the Feature School. Name three things you learned about the school Pennies for Peace helped build.

Heifer Project International

1. Go to <http://www.heifer.org>. Click on the Our Work tab. Click on Field Videos. Watch one of the videos. Several good ones are *Seeds, Hope and Concrete* in the Americas section, *Joseph's Boys* in the Africa section, and *Passing on the Gift* in the Heifer Mission section. Name three things you learned!

2. Go to the Give tab to learn about the animals you can give through Heifer Project. Pick three animals. How much do they cost to give? How do they help a family?

Attachment: Activity 4a, page 2

Panwapa Kids

1. Go to <http://www.panwapa.org>.
2. Click on the movie projector and watch the video. What was it about?
3. Click on the globe. Click on the Join button in order to make a Panwapa kid, design your home, and make your own flag. Be sure to write down your username and password so you can play some more later. You can also print your character's information.
4. Once you have made a Panwapa kid, look for the purple tab that says Treasure Hunt. Go on a treasure hunt and see if you can find the three kids from around the world who match the clues given. **Hint:** When you are trying to match more than one item, use the Search button.
5. Go to the Main Menu. Play "Hide and Seek" with Koko.

URL Scavenger Hunt Answers

UNICEF

2. Five ways UNICEF helps children: health care, clean water, nutrition, education, and emergency relief.

- UNICEF stands for United Nations Children’s Fund.
- You can donate artwork two ways. You can mail a digital copy of your artwork to Design Pool, Product Development, UNICEF/PSD, Palais des Nations 1211, Geneva 10, Switzerland. You can also e-mail a digital copy to egladstone@unicef.org.

Pennies For Peace

1. *Ikat* stands for “a vibrant silk fabric woven throughout Central Asia. Each strand is individually dyed, then woven into stunning vibrant patterns that are recognized from village to village. The name *Ikat* symbolizes the strength, beauty, and resilience of the Central Asia communities we serve” (quoted from the Central Asia Institute Web site).

2. The girl in the “Pennies for Peace” video is Amira Mortenson, Greg Mortenson’s daughter. Pennies for Peace is a program that provides a way for children in American schools to collect pennies that help build schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

3. A penny can buy a pencil. A dollar pays for a teacher to teach one day.

The featured village is Korphe, the village Greg Mortenson visited when he got lost after trying to climb K-2, the second highest mountain in the world. In Korphe, they grow potatoes, wheat, barley, beans, and small vegetables. The animals in the village are yaks, zou, cows, sheep, chickens, goats, and an ox.

Korphe’s school is the Featured School under the For Kids section. Statistics about the school can be found in the yellow box on the right.

Living Stewardship



Workshop: Drama

About this Rotation

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About this Workshop

In this workshop the children will use drama to explore the first creation story in Genesis. Participants will use their whole bodies to make this story come alive. Telling God's story instead of reading the story helps participants weave together their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences with God's story so that it truly becomes a part of them. Just like our ancestors who have given us this story, children will make choices about what is most important in the telling. When they do this, they are practicing theology! You will find options for different ages in the activities. In general, older children can do more improvisation and skit planning on their own. Younger children can work on expressing the story as it is read.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:
Genesis 1:26–31
SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:
1 Timothy 6:6–10,
17–19

Leader Preparation

Read the first chapter of Genesis as well as the retold version, "Joyful Creator." Pay special attention to what you see and hear. Allow yourself to receive the gifts and concerns of this passage. What excites you as you read? What leaves you feeling uneasy? What images of care come to mind? Center yourself and invite God to be with you as you bring to mind your participants and pray for ways to engage them and help them make this story their own.

With your own needs and those of your children in mind, begin to choose which activities will work for your group and adapt them as needed.

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Noticing Creation (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- newsprint or white board and markers

Invite the children to describe what they noticed in God's creation this week. What did they see that looked beautiful to them? What did they see that looked ugly or made them feel sad? List their responses on newsprint or a white board. If more than one child mentions the same thing, such as "the sky," encourage them to be more specific in their description, such as: the sky that was full of white fluffy clouds, or the bright blue sky with no clouds, or the night sky full of twinkling stars, or the sky at dusk when the sun was setting and everything looked orange and red. Help the children use lots of adjectives in their descriptions.

2 "Joyful Creator"

Supplies:

- "Joyful Creator," Attachment: Activity 2
- Bible

Show the children where to find the story of creation in the Bible. Then read "Joyful Creator," Attachment: Activity 2.

Living Stewardship



WARNING: DO NOT try to fit all of the following activities and discussion into one hour. The activities described below are intended to help participants explore stewardship through the creation story in Genesis 1. The “Exploring and Engaging Activities” help all to enter into the story, The “Deciding and Discerning” section helps them celebrate and ponder issues of stewardship raised in the story, and the “Sending and Serving Activities” include ideas for how to help participants practice stewardship in their own environment.

Prayer: Holy and Gracious God, thank you for creating me and all your children as beautiful and beloved creatures. Help me receive your good gifts. Help me to see beauty in the very smallest and oddest parts of your creation as well as in the most majestic. Be with me in my sadness for the wounds borne by all your creatures and even by the air, sea, and sky. Guide us in our retelling of our beginning. Show us how to walk more gently and care more fully for one another and for the healing of our world. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

3 Act Out the Story

Supplies:

- “Joyful Creator,” Attachment: Activity 2
- a creation wand made out of a stick and colorful streamers (optional)
- colored scarves to represent
 - light: yellow, orange, purple scarves;
 - earth: brown and black scarves;
 - plants: green scarf;
 - moon and stars: rainbow scarves or metallic colored cloth;
 - water and wind: blue scarves (optional)

Invite the children to sit in a circle while you explain how they will act out this story. Explain that before God created the earth, the world was *tohu wabohu* (pronounced so that the two words rhyme, toe-who wah-bo-who). The NRSV translates the Hebrew phrase *tohu wabohu* as a “formless void.” In general, it means complete chaos, like a messy bedroom with everything scattered all over the floor. One child will be “God” in the story, and the rest will be parts of the world waiting to be created. Ask everyone but God to scatter throughout the room and curl into balls on the floor. As God creates, God will “wake” each part of creation by touching his or her shoulder. It may be fun to give God a special “creation wand” made of a stick and colorful streamers. If you have a small group, have the children act out their part for only the time they are created and then return to a ball, waiting for God to make them into something else. It is possible to act out this story with no props, but simple props to represent the different colors of creation add to the fun. If using props, pass them out before you read the story, asking the children to make sure that “God” can see the prop, so he or she can awaken that part of creation. If time allows, invite different children to play the role of God.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Creation Symphony (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- colored construction paper for each learner
- two pieces of white paper with the words “God made it” printed on one and “It is good” printed on the other
- a second set of signs with creation categories written on them, such as land animals, fruits, vegetables, water creatures, things that grow, lights in the sky, parts of the land, things that fly (for older children)

For younger children: Select a conductor (either yourself or a child). Pass out different colors of construction paper. Either have two helpers hold the two signs that say “God made it” and “It is good,” or display the signs where you can easily point to them. Have enough pieces of construction paper so that every child has something to hold up. Explain that when the conductor points to you, that person will hold up his or her color while the rest of the group calls out things God has made that are that color. For example: Orange—Pumpkins! =Before pointing to another color, the conductor points to the signs that say, “God made it” and “It is good” cuing the group to say this blessing together.

For older groups or for a greater challenge: Provide two sets of signs, one that



represents color and the other that represents categories (you will need to create this second set by writing categories such as "things that fly," "things that grow," and so forth on white paper). The conductor points to two signs at once, such as orange and animals or purple and food. Challenge the group to name things that fit both categories. Write the noncolor categories on white paper so it's easy to point to a color and an object category at the same time. If you do not have very many participants to hold up multiple signs, the conductor can simply call out a color and a category. After the group has been able to name several things that fit each pair of categories, the group says together, "God made it! It is good." Repeat this blessing after each response.

5 Backward Creation Scenarios

Supplies:

- "Backward Creation Scenario," Attachment: Activity 5
- newsprint or white board and markers

Invite the children to play with the order of the creation story. Because it is such a familiar story, retelling it in this way invites them to enter deeper into the emotions and perceptions of the characters. In addition, imagining what it would be like for animals to have dominion over people can help them think through this difficult concept.

Use Attachment: Activity 5 to help retell "Joyful Creator" in a backward way. In this version, the creation of light and darkness is reversed so that animals and creatures are left wandering in the dark. Have the children act out what happens next. If needed, use these guiding questions to start the discussion:

- How did the people explore their world?
- How did they feel when they heard and felt all the things in creation?
- How do the animals, sea creatures, and people move and work and play?
- Did God ever create light? How did the creatures react?

Older children: Have the children create their own backward scenario. They can work in one large group or several small groups. Let them pick anything in the creation story they would like to "mix up." Things could be created out of order, or roles could be reversed. Some examples: God could create animals in God's image and ask them to rule over people; God creates fish and sea creatures first and water second; God makes trees that can walk the earth to care for the other plants. Give about 10 minutes to come up with their backward story and assign roles. Then, let them act out their stories for the group.

6 Divine Gardener

Supplies:

- poster: "Planting" by Rex Goreleigh, <http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>
- basket or hat
- two slips of paper with the words "gardener" printed on one and "plant" on the other

Spend time looking at the poster of Rex Goreleigh's painting "Planting." Use this poster to stimulate discussion about God as a gardener as well as what it means for us to be caretakers of creation. These questions may help guide the discussion. Choose two or three to explore with your group.



- How old is the plant? When was it planted? Who planted it?
- Imagine what's beyond this picture. If the woman walks off the hill where she's standing, what will she see?
- Where do you see God in this painting?
- How does the woman in the painting make you feel? How is she caring for the plant?
- What was the soil/ground like before she planted? Was there anything on the land she had to remove? What did she do to get the soil ready?
- I wonder what the plant will become. What color will it be? Will it produce fruit and, if so, what kind?
- I wonder how big the seed was before it grown.
- I wonder who you might be in this painting.

Gather in a circle. Explain that sometimes the Bible describes God as a gardener. In the creation story from Genesis 1, God gives humankind the responsibility to care for creation. One way we are made in God's image is to act as gardeners. Brainstorm together what makes a good gardener. What does the plant need? Put two slips of paper in a hat or basket. One says "gardener" and the other "plant." Have children take turns drawing each slip. The gardener and plant go into the center of the circle. Ask the gardener to imagine how he or she will help the plant grow. Ask the plant to imagine what it feels like to grow and to be cared for by the gardener. The gardener and plant briefly act out tending and being tended. This should be about a two-minute scene. When they are finished, invite two more children to draw roles. Continue until everyone who would like to is able to participate.

Sending & Serving Activities



7 We Are Christ's Hands and Feet (Easy Preparation)

Supplies: None

Read the following reflection by the sixteenth-century mystic Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body now but yours
No hands, no feet on earth but yours
Your eyes are the eyes through which look out Christ's compassion
On this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Discuss what it means to be Christ's hands and feet in the world. How can we use our hands and feet in ways that care for one another? How can we use them to care for creation?

8 Walking Lightly on the Earth

Supplies: None

Sit in circle. Take turns showing different ways of walking on the earth. Each child chooses a way to walk, walks around the circle, and then chooses another child to walk. After everyone has had a turn, sit back in the circle.



For younger children: Ask how it felt to walk in different ways. Remind them that when we walk gently on the earth, we are able to notice and wonder at all God created. Walking gently reminds us to show care and kindness to people, insects, animals, plants, and all that God created.

For older children: Ponder together how the way we walk on the earth affects what we see and how we treat one another and creation.

🕉 Body Prayer

Supplies: None

Invite participants to raise their hands above their heads in the shape of a globe. In this way, they are remembering that we are a part of an entire world that God created. Next, model bringing the hands down across the chest, in a hugging motion. This motion models receiving God's love. Finally, extend your hands outward, toward one another, exemplifying how we are made to share God's love. Invite participants to repeat these motions several times as their prayer. They can hold each pose for as long as they like. The prayer will end when everyone places their hands by their sides. Conclude by singing "God Has the Whole World in God's Hands."

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for everyone.

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Attachment: Activity 2

Joyful Creator

Based on Genesis 1:1-2:3

In the beginning, when the earth was very, very young there was darkness all around. There was no light at all. The darkness was thick and heavy. It covered the earth completely.

Out of the darkness, God breathed a deep yet gentle breath that was warm and full of life. God's breath created a strong wind that began to part the darkness so that all of creation had room to be born.

Then God breathed the words, "Let there be light." Slowly, bright oranges, yellows, and purple lit the sky so that now there was light above and darkness below. When God saw all the wonderful colors, great joy filled God, and a great voice boomed out, "It is good."

God saw that water covered all the earth. God moved over the earth and again breathed a deep yet gentle breath that parted the waters and made space for dry land. When God saw the land, again great joy filled God, and a voice loudly declared, "It is good."

God looked at the land and imagined how wonderful it would be to plant a seed and watch it grow. So God spoke, and the land began to fill with seeds of every kind that grew and grew so that now the brown, red, and black earth was covered with green. And God's great and joyful voice said, "It is good."

God loved the plants and flowers and trees full of fruit that covered the earth and wanted to warm them with light that would always help them grow, so God created the sun to fill the day. The darkness of the night was still very deep, so God created the moon and stars to remind creation that morning would come again. God danced among the great and lesser lights and shouted out, "It is good."

God moved over the waters of the earth with great delight, sometimes dipping into the waters below and then swirling into the dome above, and God imagined how fun it would be for winged creatures to fly in the sky and finned creatures to swim in the waters below. God said, "Let every kind of swimming and flying creature fill the earth!" And they did—so many that they bumped into each other as they played and moved in this new, beautiful earth. God loved the creatures and blessed them and said, softly this time, "It is good."

God enjoyed the swimming and flying creatures so much, that God decided to create creatures to live on the land. God spoke, and creatures of every size, from the very, very small to the huge and lumbering began to creep and walk on the earth. God was greatly satisfied with creation and said, "It is good."

God looked at all God had created and was filled with a tender yet fierce love for every plant, tree, and creature—even the water and the air. God's love was so great that God wanted to create one more time. This time, God created out of God's very self, and breathed life into humankind. In God's image God created them. Male and female God created them. God was overjoyed with these new and peculiar creatures and so very excited to share all of creation with them. God proudly moved over the water and the earth, and pointed out all the beautiful, wonderful, and useful things God had made. And God said, "I have breathed life into all that you see. They are my gift and my joy and I give them to you for their care." Then God smiled, a great smile that filled all the earth and said, "It is very, very good."

The earth was complete. God had finished God's good work. God rested and blessed the day of rest, for it was good.



Attachment: Activity 5

Backward Creation Scenario

In the beginning, when the earth was very, very young there was darkness all around. There was no light at all. The darkness was thick and heavy. It covered the earth completely.

God created a dome in the darkness that separated the waters below and the waters above, where the sky would one day be.

God said, "Let there be winged creatures to fill the sky and swimming creatures to fill the oceans." Great birds and raptors began flying above and huge sea monsters and fish swam below, but they could not see!

God separated land from water and made creatures that could walk and crawl on the land, but darkness still covered the earth. There was no light at all.

God created people in God's image, and told them all about the plants and trees that grew delicious fruit as well as the many creatures that filled the land, sea, and sky. God asked them to work the land and to care for everything on earth. The people were filled with wonder, but the darkness was still great and they could not see any of the amazing things God described. They explored the best they could by their touch, hearing, and smell.

Living Stewardship



Workshop: Food

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, that is, visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, considering age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

In ancient Israel, the people of God expressed their tithing by sharing food from their crops with God and with people on the margins. When we share our food, we share the gift of life. Many of us, including children, no longer have a connection to the source of our food or to those who prepare it. In this workshop, participants are encouraged to remember God as the giver of what we have by also remembering where our food comes from and who grows it. This workshop also helps participants experience tithing as a joyful gift that we can share when we open our eyes to who is sitting at our table and who is missing.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Deuteronomy 14:22–29

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Acts 4:32–37

Acts 5:1–11

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Empty Chair (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- Bible
- a cup on which you can write, or paper
- permanent marker

Leader Preparation

Living Stewardship is about caring for all God has given us, including our very selves. Part of being good caretakers is learning to see all of God's creation with a sense of wonder and delight. The workshop rotation model encourages children to use all of their senses to explore what it means to be children of God who care for one another and for the natural world. Each workshop engages multiple learning styles so that children can more deeply integrate their own stories and life experiences with the faith practices they

Often we think of the things we have or the talents we have as ours, but scripture reminds us again and again that all that we are and all that we have comes from God. Everything is a gift! When we sit at a table and eat together, we often remember to give thanks, but God asks us to do something more. God asks us to look around and notice who is sitting with us—and who is missing—at our table. Read Deuteronomy 14:26–29, beginning with the first full sentence in verse 26, “You and your family can then feast in the Presence of God, your God, and have a good time” (The Message). Who is missing at the family's table that God asks them to remember? Remind participants that Levites were priests who had no land of their own. Who could we invite to sit at our table? It may help children to understand the social implications of table fellowship by imagining a school cafeteria and who sits with whom.

Find a space either in the kitchen or the area where you will share a snack and designate a place or chair as empty. The empty chair marks the place for the people with whom God asks us to share our gifts of food. Decide as a group who the empty chair represents. Mark this space with a cup (on which you can write) or piece of paper and list the names of people you want to include in your feasting party.



encounter in God's stories. One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three "best ways" for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you "see with new eyes" and "hear with new ears." Even when children don't fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they see clearly how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used (such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper). Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways. Read Deuteronomy 14:22–29. How does this description of tithing fit your own experience of what it means to give back to God? In this passage, the people of God are encouraged to have a tithing feast. Picture the mood of this scene, paying attention to what you see, hear, and smell. When have you experienced a feast in which everyone shared generously with one another? In your own community, whom might God remind

2 From Where Does our Food Come?

Supplies:

- a list of local and seasonal foods from the website Sustainable Table, <http://www.sustainabletable.org/home.php>
- local produce
- produce from far away
- knife for cutting fruit
- serving dishes

Living stewardship means caring well for the gifts God has given us. The first step in caring for what we have is remembering where it comes from. We know that our food comes from God, but how? Does God beam it into the supermarket? One way to care for our planet and for the farmers who grow our food is to pay attention to what grows near our homes at different times of the year. For help in locating local farms and produce stands as well as learning which fruits and vegetables are in season, search <http://www.sustainabletable.org/home.php>. Look for the "eat locally" or "eat well" guide. You should be able to search according to zip code. Purchase some produce from your grocery store that comes from another country. Look for a sticker that tells the country of origin, but if you can't find one just name where it came from. Also, purchase some produce from a local produce stand, farmer's market, or personal garden. Share both types of produce with your participants. Talk about how each of them got to their table—by plane, truck, car. Talk about the energy used to produce the food and to transport it. If possible, cut up the produce and sample the items. How do we show good care to small farmers and to our earth by buying locally? Can you tell a difference in taste?

3 Prepare our Food with Love: Begin with a Blessing

Supplies:

- ingredients from the food you will prepare
- copy of the prayer
- names of people who will receive your food

Let each learner hold one or more of the ingredients. Acknowledge the ingredients they are holding in their hands and explain that some cooks believe that our feelings also go into the food we make. They believe that food tastes better if it is made with love. Wonder together how that may be true.

We often say a blessing before we eat our food, but today we are going to bless the ingredients before we put them together. Hopefully, some of that blessing will pass on to those who will eat what you have made. As you hold the ingredients, say the following blessing together. You can read the blessing as an echo prayer, meaning that a leader reads a line and then the group echoes it, or you can ask each learner to read one line or phrase. If you ask each person to read a line, print a copy of the blessing ahead of time and mark each speaking break with a colored pen. If you know the names of the people who will receive what you make, you may include them in your blessing.

Creator God, thank you for everyone who helped bring this food to our kitchen. Thank you for the seeds that were planted, the soil that a farmer tilled, for the rain that fell, and the hands that cared for this food and brought it to our table. Help us prepare our food today with love. Bless our own hands as we mix and pour and work together. We ask that your love move through us to those who will eat this food. Please bless them with your comfort and strength and joy. Amen.



you to invite to the table and share part of your bounty with?

Review the three best ways for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. Both biblical passages for this workshop emphasize the joy God intends for us when we share what we have been given. Sharing is not a dull duty. Rather, sharing is the celebration of a great party to which we are all invited. We share out of gratefulness that God welcomed us when we too have been strangers. The plan for this workshop differs slightly than others in the rotation. In the “Exploring and Engaging” section there is a general introduction you can use for all your groups. Then choose one of the following three activities to further introduce the food workshop. Decide ahead of time which food activities your group will do from the “Deciding and Discerning” section. This workshop also requires more up-front planning as you consider which menus best fit the stewardship project you choose. Since all the food options involve the larger congregation, it will be very helpful to talk through options with appropriate church leaders. Sharing food is a natural outgrowth of Christian care and ministry. Enjoy your preparation, serving, and eating!

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the soil that nourishes our food. Thank you for the hands that grow it. In this workshop, help us to remember that you give us all that we need so that we are free to share what we have. Help us to experience tithing as joyful rather than as a burden. Guide us in our selection of how to best share the gift of food and with whom to share it. Be with us as we prepare our food so that some of our love and joy is passed on to those who receive it. Amen.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Meal to Go (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- ingredients based on the menu you choose, including soup, bread, fresh fruit, and vegetables
- sample recipes, Attachment: Activity 4
- clean, recycled plastic containers for storing soup and other menu items
- gift bags

Ahead of time, ask your pastor or congregational care committee to help you identify a family (or four individuals) in your congregation or community who could benefit from a take-home meal. These persons could be caregivers, those who are ill, someone who lives alone and would enjoy a gift of love, or someone with economic needs. If you will be repeating this workshop several times, compile a large enough list for all the workshops. On Attachment: Activity 4 you will find recipes for one dry soup mix, one hot soup recipe, and a simple frozen bread dough recipe. You can either create a lunch that can be eaten later, or a hot one to go. A sample menu may include: fresh fruit, baby carrots, soup, and mini focaccia bread. Approximate preparation and cooking times are included in the recipes. For packaging the soup, consider using a recycled dairy container (such as yogurt, sour cream, or cottage cheese) cleaned in a dishwasher. The menu is simple so that several stations can be set up at once. The focaccia station and produce station will take less time than the soup station, so they may be combined. Participants could prepare the bread and then wash and divide the produce while the bread is baking. You will need at least two adult helpers to help oversee the various stations.

5 Meal-To-Go Auction

Supplies:

- “raffle tickets” or bulletin insert that lists the menu with space to write in a silent auction bid
- description of the organization receiving the auction's proceeds
- ingredients based on the menu you choose, including soup, bread, fresh fruit, and vegetables
- sample recipes, Attachment: Activity 4
- clean, recycled plastic containers for storing soup and other menu items
- gift bags

In Deuteronomy 14:22–29, the people of God celebrate God as the source of what they have by returning some of their best crops and animals to God. But this passage also recognizes the practical difficulty of transporting food to an offering site or to those who most need it. Sometimes, the best that we have to offer God can be sold so that the money can be returned to God for its best use. By preparing a meal and then auctioning it off, participants can experience giving twice: once when they prepare the food with love and again when they donate the money they make to an organization that can multiply their gift of love. Prepare one family meal (or four individual lunch meals) to go using the recipes and instructions in Activity 4 and on Attachment: Activity 4. Instead of giving the meals away, auction them off to congregation members and donate the proceeds to your mission budget or to one of the nonprofit organizations explored during



Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

the Computer Workshop. These organizations are: Heifer International, Pennies for Peace, and UNICEF, all of which benefit families and children. If you choose to raffle your meal(s), you will need to publicize ahead of time. You can include silent auction tickets in the bulletin. Congregation members write down how much they would be willing to spend/donate for either an individual meal or a meal for a family of four to six people. Include the menu and information about the organization to which the proceeds will be donated. At the end of worship, select the highest bidder(s), and, if necessary, draw the winning names.

6 Decorating Gift Bags

Supplies:

- paper gift bags large enough to hold each of the meals to go
- stamps
- markers
- stickers

Remind participants of the three best ways for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. Provide stamps, markers, and stickers. Deuteronomy 14:22–29 focuses on having grateful hearts and on joyful sharing. With these two ideas in mind, invite participants to decorate paper gift bags that are large enough to hold the meal you are preparing. The Deuteronomy passage describes giving as a celebration. As participants share their joy through their artwork, they enhance the gift being given.

Sending & Serving Activities

7 Tithing Figures (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- cut-out figures, Attachment: Activity 7
- pens or pencils

Summarize Deuteronomy 14:22–29 as follows. Long ago, the people of God raised food and animals to support their families. Some people, such as orphans, widows, priests, and foreigners, did not own their own land. This meant that they often did not have enough to eat. In the book of Deuteronomy, God asks that the people give back to God some of their best food and best animals. God asks them to give one tenth of what they have. This is called a tithe. When the people of God bring their gifts before God, God asks them to invite everyone—especially orphans, widows, foreigners, and priests—to come have a great feast together. They have a tithing party!

During this workshop, participants have practiced several ways of giving joyfully. The emphasis of tithing in Deuteronomy is on giving from the best that we are and have. Explain that many people practice tithing by giving a portion of their income back to God. Tithing can also be a gift of ourselves. Cut out the figures from Attachment: Activity 7. Give one to each learner. Ask them to think about their talents. What do they enjoy doing? How do these things match up with needs in your church? Have them write or draw ways that they can show care or share God’s love in your church. They can take their figures with them to worship and place them in the offering plate.



8 Tithing a Snack

Supplies:

- variety of small snack foods for each learner to have 10 items (these should be easily counted items such as grapes, raisins, small crackers, or pretzels)
- baskets for each snack
- napkins
- plate or container for the “mystery guest”
- pitcher of water
- cups

Deuteronomy 14:22–29 tells us how the people of God shared what they had by having a tithing party. Giving a tithe is giving some of what we have back to God for the blessing of all. In Deuteronomy, a tithe is one-tenth of all of the food each family had grown in their fields or one-tenth of their money. Explain that each learner will be invited to select ten of each snack item to enjoy as part of his or her feast. Share a snack together of small foods that children can easily count out, such as small crackers, raisins, grapes, pretzels, or small cookies. This snack is meant to be a feast, so ideally you will want to provide a variety of foods for the children to count and share. Use this opportunity to have your participants practice serving one another. You will need helpers to pass out napkins, cups filled with water, and snack items. One at a time, helpers can serve each snack. Make sure that each learner has a total of at least ten items on his or her napkin and that all of the baskets are empty once everyone has been served.

After your helpers have served the snack, quietly set an extra place within your circle or at your table, but do not serve any food or water to the empty place. Explain that you also have a place for a “mystery guest.” Wonder with your group about who might sit with them to enjoy their feast. Who does God invite to sit at the table and enjoy the tithing party?

Notice together that the mystery guest has not been served and that the baskets are empty. Imagine your mystery guest coming to sit with you at the table. How can you make this person feel welcome? How can you show God thanks for the gifts of food that you have received? What does God ask us to do in Deuteronomy? Move the discussion toward everyone giving one tenth of his or her snack to the mystery guest, but also emphasize that giving one tenth is just a guide. The important aspect of tithing is not the amount, but giving and sharing joyfully. They may choose to share a portion of their snacks with the mystery guest. While your mystery guest may be imaginary, your group may also choose someone in your congregation with whom to share this symbolic gift.

As you eat together, use these questions or some of your own to reflect on the practice of tithing.

- Wonder together what it would be like to always sit an empty place at our tables.
- What difference does it make to think of what we have as ours or as a gift God has given us to care for?
- In what ways can something we work hard to earn still be a gift we have received from God?
- If you earn an allowance, what gifts has God given you to do that?
- How does it feel to share part of your snack?
- I wonder why the people of God had a party to share their food. Why did they make it a celebration?



- How is giving some of your snack at the beginning different from sharing your leftovers, or the broken parts that you do not want?

9 “Take My Gifts” Blessing

Supplies:

- a copy of the first verse of the hymn “Take My Gifts and Let me Love You”
- musical accompaniment, as needed
- small cards for each gift bag (use the blank side of old Christmas cards or use one large sheet of card stock that can be cut up into smaller cards) The cards can be blank or preprinted with the first verse of “Take My Gifts.”
- fine-tipped markers or pens

The hymn “Take My Gifts and Let Me Love You” (tune: Talavera Terrace), affirms that we are able to give because we have first received love from God. You can find the lyrics at <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong5>. Sing the first verse of this hymn together. Either type out and print the first verse of this hymn onto card stock ahead of time, or ask the children to copy it onto each card. They may also add personal notes or drawings. Ask participants to place these cards in each gift bag as a blessing for the families or individuals who will eat your meal. “Take My Gifts” can be sung to the tune Talavera Terrace or Holy Manna.

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Attachment: Activity 4

TORTELLINI AND SPINACH SOUP

This hearty and nutritious soup can be made in about 30–40 minutes. This soup does not freeze well. It makes 6–8 servings.

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 slices bacon, finely diced (optional)
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 9 cups chicken broth
- 2 tsp. Italian dried seasoning
- 1 pkg. frozen chopped spinach
- 1 9 oz. pkg. spinach or plain cheese tortellini
- 1 28 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 can Great Northern beans (15.5 oz.)
- Fresh grated Parmesan cheese

Heat oil in stockpot over medium high heat. Add bacon, cooking until lightly brown. Add the onion and cook until it and the bacon are brown (about 10–15 minutes). Add the broth, tomatoes, and herbs and bring to a boil. Add the tortellini and simmer just until they are tender, 7–10 minutes. Add the spinach, season with salt and pepper to taste, and then add the beans. The spinach wilts and cooks immediately upon putting it into the soup. Serve topped with the freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

POTATO SOUP IN A CUP

- 1 ½ cups instant potato flakes.
- 1 cup powdered coffee creamer
- ½ of a 1 oz. packet chicken gravy mix
- 1 Tbsp. dried parsley flakes
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. salt-free seasoning blend (Mrs. Dash)
- ½ tsp. dried minced onion
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper

Mix all the ingredients. Make sure they are blended well. Divide the mix into five individual servings of ½ cup + 1 Tbsp. Place the individual dry soup mixes into Ziploc bags. Be sure to also include a copy of the following instructions for preparing the soup at home.



Attachment: Activity 4, page 2

POTATO SOUP

1. Empty soup mix into a cup that can hold 1 ½ cups of liquid.
2. Add 1 scant cup water. Stir very well.
3. Microwave on high for 90 seconds.
4. Stir. Cover and let stand 3 minutes. Enjoy!

MINI FOCACCIA BREAD

Preparation time: About 15 minutes

Bake time: 13 minutes

Makes eight mini focaccia rounds

11-ounce can refrigerated soft bread stick dough

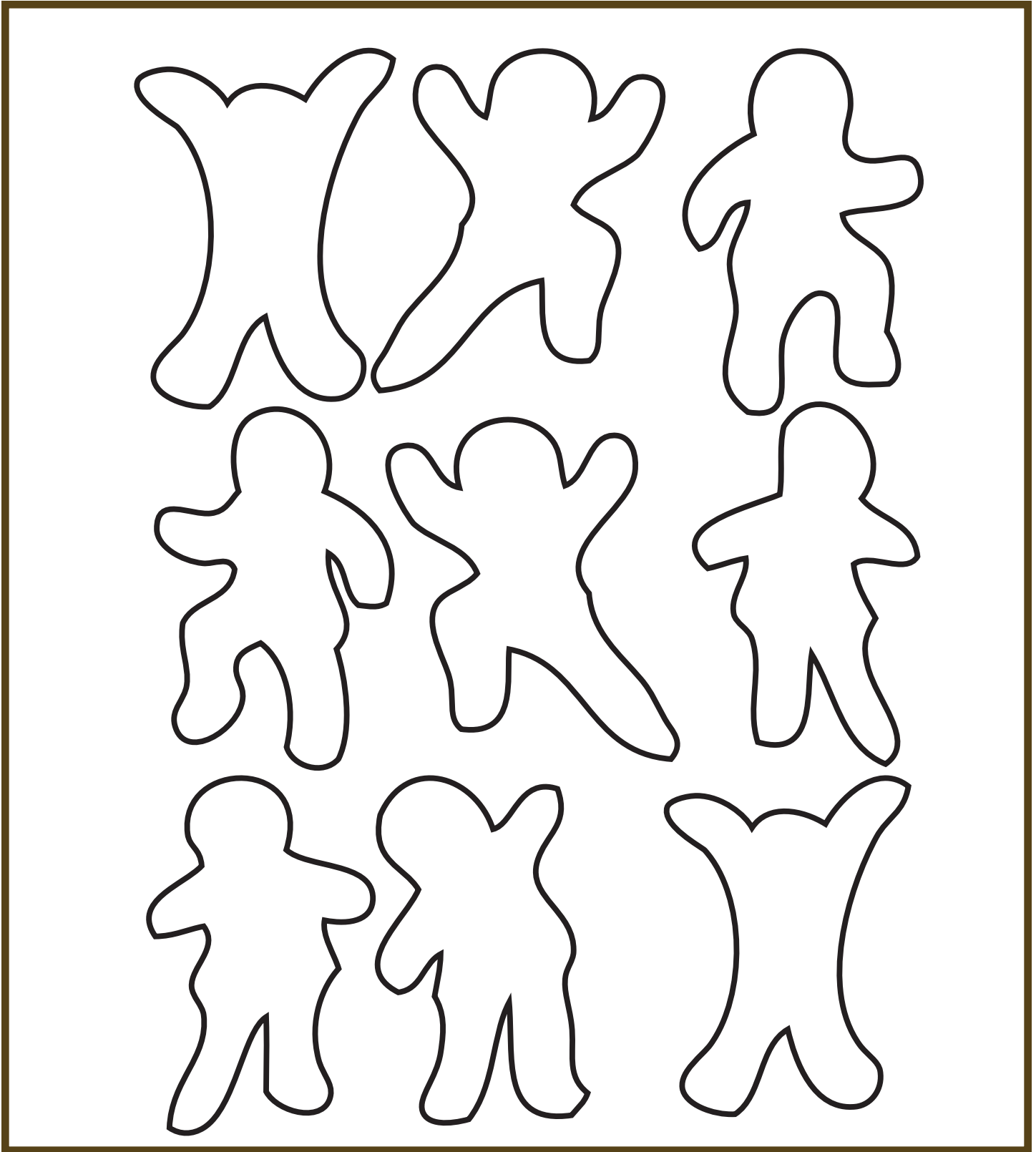
2 Tbsp olive oil

¼ cup grated Parmesan

2 tsp. dried Italian seasoning

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease two cookie sheets. Remove dough from the can and separate into eight coils, but do not unroll. Place the dough on prepared pans and press each coil of dough into a five-inch circle. Drizzle the tops with olive oil. Combine cheese and seasoning and mix well. Sprinkle the cheese mix over each coil. Bake at 375 degrees for 8–14 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from the cookie sheets immediately to prevent overbrowning.

Attachment: Activity 7



Living Stewardship



Workshop: Games

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, that is, visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, considering age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

Most of the games for this workshop encourage cooperation and creativity. Through play, children can experiment with what it means to be a part of the larger body of Christ. You may choose to do group reflection after each game, or once after they have played several games. Questions for reflection after each game are there to help you link the game with the Acts passage and larger stewardship themes. Instructions for how to adapt the game for younger or older children are provided when possible.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Acts 4:32–37; 5:1–11

SUPPLEMENTAL STORY:

Deuteronomy 14:22–29

Leader Preparation

Living Stewardship is about caring for all God has gifted us, including our very selves. Part of being good caretakers is learning to see all of God's creation with a sense of wonder and delight. The workshop rotation model encourages children to use all of their senses to explore what it means to be children of God who care for one another and for the natural world. Each workshop engages multiple learning styles so that children can more deeply integrate their own stories and life experiences with the faith practices they encounter in God's stories.

One of the great gifts of the work-

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Whole Hearts (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- poster board
- marker
- Bible
- scissors

On a large piece of poster board, draw a big heart. Write the words from Acts 4:32–37 on the heart so that the passage fills the entire space. Cut the heart into six puzzle pieces.

Read Acts 4:32–37 aloud one time for the group. Hand out the puzzle pieces to different participants. Explain that each of them has part of the Acts passage they just heard. Explain that they will need to work together to put the verses in order. First, line the participants up side by side and ask them to put the verses in order. If they haven't immediately caught on to the shape of the puzzle, have them try to arrange the verses vertically. Then ask how else they could put them together. Anyone who is not holding a verse can help the rest of the group figure out how to stand and position the pieces. When the group has completed the puzzle, read the verses together.

Questions for reflection:

- Why did it not work to stand side by side to put the verses in order?
- What would happen if someone decided to cut off a part of his or her puzzle piece and only share a part of it?

Living Stewardship



shop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three “best ways” for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you “see with new eyes” and “hear with new ears.” Even when children don’t fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they see clearly how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used (such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper). Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways.

To prepare yourself for this workshop, read Acts 4:32–37. Try to imagine the testimony of the apostles who were so moved by their experience of Jesus as alive. When have you felt “of one heart”? When do you feel divided? Recall a time when you gave of yourself and received a deep sense of satisfaction. Bring to mind each of your learners and allow yourself to receive the gifts and challenges of being their leader. Read the activities in each sec-

- What were the best and worst ways they worked together to solve the puzzle?
- I wonder what it means to be of one heart.
- I wonder what inspired people in the early church to share everything they had with one another.

2 Cooperation Tag or “Wilson”

Supplies:

- large play area for running
- a comforting or joyful object that can easily be tossed between players

Invite everyone to sit in a circle to hear the story of Acts 4:32–37. One day when the church was very, very young, the apostles gathered together with others who followed the way of Jesus. The apostles’ faces glowed with joy. They loved to tell the story of how they felt Jesus alive inside them. As each of them shared how they experienced Jesus with them in powerful ways, they were filled with gratefulness. The apostles were so full of joy that they couldn’t hold it all inside and had to share it. They saw one another in a new way and no longer feared that someone else might have more than they did. So, they decided to share everything. Everyone did not have the same amount, but everyone had what he or she needed.

Designate a playing area large enough for participants to run, but that is also a defined area to avoid long chases. One person is “It” and tries to chase and tag other players. A player is “safe” if he or she is holding “Wilson.” “Wilson” is any comforting object that can be tossed between players. “Wilson” can be a stuffed animal or a ball or a rubber chicken. Try to choose something that is pleasing, happy, or joyful. You can even draw a happy face on an old volley ball (such as in the movie *Castaway*). Players who are not “It” work together to help one another by tossing “Wilson” to anyone who is at risk. If a player is caught when not holding “Wilson,” he or she becomes “It.”

Reflect together on how this game of tag differed from a regular game in which players do not receive or give help to one another. How did players choose whether to run or help? What did it feel like to be “It”? In communities bound by the love of Christ, what do we “pass” to one another to help one another feel safe and cared for? How difficult is friendship to give? To receive?

3 Passing on What You Love

Supplies:

- poster: “Banjo Lesson” by Henry Ossawa Tanner
<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters4>

Display a copy of the poster “Banjo Lesson” by Henry Ossawa Tanner.” Wonder about this image together as a group and then create a group story about it.

Wondering questions:

- What clues in the room do you see that suggest where the lesson takes place?
- I wonder how the man and the boy know one another.
- Who suggested that they play together? Why?

Living Stewardship



tion of the workshop, and choose those that best fit your group. Several of the games are high energy. A simple way to quiet your group in order to reflect on their play experience is to ask everyone to make rain together by dribbling your fingers down or rubbing your hands together.

Prayer: Holy God, even when we feel broken, at our core, you have created us as whole. Help me to receive the gifts and sorrows of my own life and fill me with your gracious acceptance. I pray for laughter and joy through our playing together. I pray for patience for children who are still maturing and learning who they are as your children. I pray that you touch each of them through my presence so that they might know your gracious and loving welcome. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

- I wonder what was happening just before the lesson.
- Who is giving the lesson, and who is learning the lesson? How do you know?
- I wonder what the boy will remember from this day.
- I wonder what the man will remember from this day.
- I wonder where you see God in this painting.

As a group, tell a story about the banjo lesson portrayed in this painting. Begin with: The boy heard music playing and couldn’t keep from tapping his toe and then his leg, and then he couldn’t help but move all over. Each person will add one word to the story. The only rule is that the word makes sense in the sentence, one word at a time. It is okay if the story becomes silly. The goal is to have fun imagining a story inspired by this painting.

When the story has either fallen apart or come to an end, look back at the painting as a group. Refer to the three best ways for living stewardship (a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing) either by stating them or pointing to them if you have them posted in your room. Ask: How do you see the three best ways for living stewardship in this painting.

For younger children: Instead of telling a story together, ask them to complete the following sentences. Wait for several responses to each scenario.

- The boy was walking by and heard . . .
- He was out of breath because he had just come from . . .
- The boy smelled . . . cooking on the stove.
- When he saw the banjo player, the boy felt . . .
- The boy watched closely as the banjo player . . .
- The boy loved to watch . . .
- When the boy heard music, he always . . .
- Today, the boy learned . . .
- It was clear that the banjo player loved . . .
- When the boy got older, he . . .

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Group Sit (Easy Preparation)

Supplies: None

This is a game of cooperation and trust. Stand in a circle. Turn to the right and stand so that each player’s toes are almost touching the heels of the person in front of them. All left shoulders should be pointing toward the center of the circle. Emphasize that everyone must sit at the same time. Instruct players to hold onto the waist of the person in front of him or her. On the count of three, each player sits down onto the knees of the person behind him or her. While the group is sitting on one another’s laps, ask them to look across the circle. Even though they are not touching that person, what would happen if that person were missing or fell down?

If you are comfortable with it, have everyone fall down. Try this game again, but remove one person from the circle, leaving a gap.

After the group has successfully sat on one another’s laps, reflect on this game



together. What was most challenging about this exercise? How is everyone in the circle related to one another? Think about the circle as a church. Who might the people be sitting next to you? Sitting across the circle from you? What else might the circle represent (your neighborhood, your school, the world)?

5 Three Noses

Supplies: None

This is a fun and simple game that can be used to talk about the church as the body of Christ. Call out a body part and a number, such as “three noses,” “six feet,” or “two elbows.” Players match up body parts with one another to get the correct number. Encourage them to switch partners. Repeat several times, varying body parts and numbers.

After you have brought the game to an end, gather in a circle to reflect on this game. Use body parts as a way to ask how people in their church share God’s love, such as: What are caring ways we use our hands? How have you seen someone in your church use his or her feet to show God’s love?

Challenge participants to think of different body parts and how we use them to act out God’s love. How do we depend on one another for care?

6 Table, Chicken, Soup

Supplies: None

This is a game of cooperation based on the idea of table fellowship. There are three set motions in this game that must be performed by groups of three. One person (the caller) stands or sits in the middle of the circle. The caller points to someone in the circle and calls out “table,” “chicken,” or “soup.” The chosen player and the person on each side of him or her get into position to become either a table, a chicken, or a soup bowl. The last person to get into position becomes the new caller. Before you begin, demonstrate the positions because they will be the same for everyone. (Try these yourself with friends or your family so you have a good idea of how it works.)

Table: The person in the middle gets down on hands and knees and forms a table with his or her back. Players on either side become chairs that sit underneath the table by forming a seat with his or her lap and their arms as the sides of the chair. (If necessary, they can place one knee on the floor for balance).

Chicken: The person in the middle scrunches his or her neck down and places both hands in front of his or her mouth to form a beak. Players on either side form the chicken’s wings by placing their foreheads and one hand on the middle person’s shoulder and making a Z shape with the arm facing away from the middle.

Soup: The middle person gets down on his or her knees and forms a large bowl with both arms (fingers touching). Persons on either side place one hand on the middle person’s hip and one on his or her shoulder to form handles for the soup bowl.

After you play the game, imagine other “sets of three” people or things that make up the church. For example: choir, teacher, maintenance person or communion table, steeple, baptismal. Challenge the group to come up with motions that rep-



resent each person or thing using three people to do so. For group reflection ask whether it is easier or more challenging to act out each part together. How does working together to make a whole remind you of your church?

Sending & Serving Activities

7 Cross If You . . . (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- a chair for each learner, minus one, arranged in a circle

This is a game that affirms ways that children are already sharing the gifts and talents God has given them. It is also a good way to imagine different types of stewardship being done in your church.

Begin by discussing different gifts that God has given us that we can use to build up God's reign in the world. Frederick Buechner has a helpful idea about vocation that may help you begin this discussion. He says that our vocation is the place "where the world's greatest need meets our greatest joy." You do not have to use the word "vocation." Simply talk about the gifts God has given us and the ways we can use these gifts to make our families, our church, and our world a better place. Start with simple examples of sharing or bringing joy to another person.

To play the game, sit in chairs in a circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle names something he or she has done or can do to show God's love to another or to creation. An example may be, "I shared my lunch with someone who didn't have any." Everyone who can do or has done the same thing gets up and switches chairs with someone else who answered "Yes." The person in the middle also tries to sit in an empty chair. Whoever is left standing becomes the next person in the middle who names something he or she can do or has done to show God's love.

At the end of the game, remind your group of how early believers were inspired by the Holy Spirit to share all that they had with one another. Talk together about the difference between giving and giving joyfully. When do we give with the most joy?

You can play this game with all ages. For younger children, simplify your language and talk about ways we show love to one another. Then give starter ideas for saying ways they have shown love such as, "I helped someone when I . . ." or "Name a way that you have shared."

8 Pass the Ball

Supplies:

- small rock or another object that can be hidden in small hands

For older children: This is a fun and simple game that can be used to talk about what we pass on to one another and to future generations. All stand in a circle. Players mime tossing and catching an imaginary ball. As the ball gets passed, it can either become heavier, larger, or lighter as it moves around the circle. Each person shows what the ball is like by the way he or she passes it. The catcher should catch the ball in a way that fits the way the ball was thrown, but can choose



to make the ball heavier or lighter or larger in the way that he or she chooses to throw it. In other words, a player catches one type of ball and then chooses what kind of ball to pass on. Play a warm-up round until everyone catches onto the idea of passing an imaginary ball. Once everyone is comfortable with the general idea, start passing and catching a ball that changes weight and/or size.

After you have played several rounds of this game, reflect together about what we choose to pass on to one another. Compare receiving one type of ball with receiving a situation (something good or bad) and remind them that they can choose how to pass on that experience. You can broaden the discussion to include what each person wants to pass on to future generations. Refer to people in the early church described in Acts 4. What did they pass on to us? What would you like to pass on?

For younger children: Play a simpler passing game. Ask everyone to sit in a circle with one person in the middle. Ask the person in the middle to close his or her eyes. Everyone else puts their hands behind their backs. Give one player a pebble or other small object. Tell the group to pass the pebble to one another with their hands behind their backs. After the pebble begins moving around the circle, the person in the middle can open his or her eyes. He or she then tries to guess where the pebble is. If they guess correctly, the person holding the pebble goes to the middle and the game repeats. If children have trouble figuring out where the pebble is, use a slightly bigger object.

When you decide the group has played long enough, quiet them and talk about ways we pass happiness or sadness on to other people. You may choose to end your time together by singing “This Little Light of Mine,” <http://www.tinyurl.com/2cwbzzt>, and reminding them to shine God’s love in the world.

9 One Heart

Supplies:

- Bible
- one of the following to pass out to each learner: heart stickers, temporary tattoos, or a heart stamp and red ink

Read Acts 4:32. For the followers of Jesus in Acts 4, having one heart meant sharing all that they had with one another so that no one would be lonely or needy. They did not just give a part of their heart to God, but their whole selves. Give each child a reminder of how God fills us with God’s love so that we can be of one heart. The reminder can be a heart sticker, temporary tattoo, or a heart stamp. Ideally, the reminder will be something that will stay with them or on them for a few days. If you would like a more permanent take-home heart, see the directions below for how to make salt dough hearts. Ask everyone to look at his or her heart throughout the week and think about how his or her whole heart or whole self reflects God’s love.

End with this or a similar prayer: *Loving God, All that we are and all that we have comes from you. When our hearts feel small because we fear that we do not have enough or are not enough, fill our hearts to bursting. Help us know that we are your beloved children so that we can share with great joy. Go with us this week and fill us with your love. Amen.*



Salt Dough Hearts

Ingredients:

1 cup flour
1 cup salt
1/2 cup water

Supplies:

permanent markers or acrylic paint

Ahead of time, mix the ingredients together, adding water a little at a time. To get the desired dough texture, add a little more flour or salt. Store the dough in a sealed plastic bag or container. Divide the dough into six to eight pieces and give one piece to each learner. Invite them to shape the dough into a heart. Remind them that hearts come in all shapes and sizes and that being unique instead of perfectly symmetrical is great! To harden the dough, microwave the hearts two at a time for 20-second intervals for no more than a total of two minutes. (The dough will also harden on its own over time or can be heated in a 200-degree oven until hard.) Allow the dough to cool for about 5 minutes. Invite participants to decorate their hearts with permanent markers or paint.

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Living Stewardship



Workshop: Music

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Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

Teaching hymns to children can sometimes seem daunting because of the complexity of language and tune. But, particularly in the Protestant tradition, hymns express the people's voice in worship, including children's voices. It is important to take the time to teach children our hymns in a way that helps them claim these songs from our tradition as their own. Hymns build a sense of community and identity as we sing them together and as they linger with us during times of sadness and celebration. Art and movement encourage learners to more deeply engage with the music so that it becomes a part of them.

In the statement "About This Rotation," Living Stewardship is described as "shalom: living in harmony with others and the world." The hymns chosen for this workshop are drawn from a wide variety of cultures and traditions. Singing these hymns in their native language as well as in English reminds us of the great breadth of the Christian and human community.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Matthew 2:1-11

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

Leader Preparation

Living stewardship is about caring for all God has given us, including our very selves. Part of being good caretakers is learning to see all of God's creation with a sense of wonder and delight. The workshop rotation model encourages children to use all of their senses to explore what it means to be children of God who care for one another and for the natural world. Each workshop engages multiple learning styles so that children can more deeply integrate their own stories and life experiences with the faith practices they

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Star Dust (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- stars drawn on poster board or card stock
- markers
- brightly colored stickers
- thin dowels or sticks cut into 18" lengths (approximately)
- ribbon
- scissors
- duct tape
- poster: "Orion Nebula" by Stocktrek Images (optional)

<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters6>

Set up a center for making star wands, so that participants can work on this as they arrive. Since the stars may be used during the workshop, avoid decorating them with materials that need to dry. Instead, provide brightly colored markers and/or stickers. Gem stickers, in particular, may add some fun sparkle. If possible, display the poster "Orion's Nebula" for inspiration. It shows that stars do not always appear to be gold or silver. Through a telescope, the nebula looks more like a swirling rainbow. When everyone has finished decorating their stars, attach them to a wand-sized dowel with strong tape. For added interest, staple brightly colored ribbons onto the base of the star.

As participants are working, talk to them about star stuff. Carl Sagan popular-



encounter in God's stories.

One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three "best ways" for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship.

As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you "see with new eyes" and "hear with new ears." Even when children don't fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they see clearly how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used (such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper). Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways.

The music for this workshop is all about celebration and participation rather than performance, so allow yourself to have fun as you select and practice the hymns you wish to use. You will need someone who can provide accompaniment on the piano or keyboard for this workshop. If you cannot find a person

ized the idea that the earth and all creatures are made up of star stuff. The atoms that eventually became you and me began their life billions of years ago inside a star. Having God inside of us is kind of like knowing that the smallest parts of us are made of star dust. God made us in God's image. We have a divine spark—or "God flame"—inside of us. How do you think God shines out from us?

② Searching for Jesus

Supplies:

- hymn: "Wakantanka Taku Nitawa" (Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works) (tune: Lacquiparle), <http://www.tinyurl.com/5tmclh>
- piano, keyboard, or hand drum
- star wand or flashlight
- streamers for each learner made of ribbon, crepe paper, or scarves

Participants will experience the search of the Magi in a new way by singing a hymn not associated with Christmas or Epiphany. "Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works" is a Native American hymn often sung with great reverence by the Dakota people at significant times in the community, such as birth, death, and in worship. You can find the lyrics and hear the tune at

<http://www.tinyurl.com/5tmclh>.

Like the people of ancient Israel, the Dakota have known times of great struggle and hardship, yet, in this hymn, they remember God as the source of life.

Play this hymn without words so everyone gets comfortable with the tune. If possible, ask someone to accompany the piano or keyboard with a hand drum (possibly a youth or older child). While the music plays, invite participants to act like Magi—wise ones—who are searching for the Christ child. Give one child a wand with a star attached to it and others brightly colored streamers. See Activity 1 for instructions. The star can be one that a learner made or that you provide. You could also use a flashlight as a quick, last-minute star. Invite participants to wander throughout the room, following the star as they search for the Christ child. When the hymn has been played through, stop the wandering even though the Christ child has not yet been found.

③ Finding Jesus, Light of all People

Supplies:

- Bible
- words of the hymn "Wakantanka Taku Nitawa" (Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works) displayed for all to see, <http://www.tinyurl.com/5tmclh>
- piano or keyboard for accompaniment

Read Matthew 2:9–11; then post the hymn lyrics for "Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works" large enough for all to see. You can find the lyrics and hear the tune at <http://www.tinyurl.com/5tmclh>. Gather in a circle and learn the words to this hymn. Practice singing at least one verse in Dakota. Then read or sing in English. Emphasize the phrase, "O star abiding One, Come unto us and dwell with us: with you are found the gifts of life." The Dakota people imagine God as a star whose light lives in their hearts. In the Gospel of John, John describes Jesus' life as a light for all people. Jesus is a light that shines in the darkness (John 1:3–5). How do you imagine the Magi differently after singing this hymn? How do they react when they see Jesus? What do you think they saw that made them feel this way? I wonder what gifts of life the Magi might find when they meet Jesus?

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to join you during the workshop hour, the music could be prerecorded, but that is definitely a last solution.

Read Matthew 2:1–11, the focus passage for this workshop. As you center yourself this week, imagine the Magi's search for the Christ child. They responded to an invitation to seek God in the form of a young child. Where in your own life are you experiencing an invitation to seek God in a deeper way?

Review the three best ways for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. The Bible passages for this workshop remind us that when we remember God as the giver of what we have, we are better able to share joyfully and generously. The Magi are able to see a way to the infant Jesus because they have taken time to wonder at an unusual star. When they find Jesus, they share what is most precious to them because they are so full of joy.

Many of the activities in this workshop use stars as a metaphor for God's light that leads us and lives within us. Take a few moments to stargaze this week and ponder how stars connect us to God.

Think about the materials you will need to teach the hymn lyrics you select. Some options include: writing the lyrics on paper large enough for all to see, projecting lyrics onto a wall, or having participants learn the lyrics by echoing you as you sing them.

This workshop includes several optional supplies. Where possible, suggestions are given for quick substitutions, but some advance preparation will enhance the workshop experience. **Warning:** Do *not* try to fit all the following activities into one workshop. Typically,

Name together several "gifts of life." Ask: I wonder what brings you the most joy.

Play the hymn once more. The first time the children moved to this hymn, they followed a star. This time, ask them to imagine that a piece of that star is now inside their hearts. Ask them to imagine seeing Jesus after searching for a long time. Then invite them to move around the room as Dakota people, celebrating the gifts of life. If you chose Activity 1, the star-making activity, each learner may pick up his or her star and move with it to the hymn's tune.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 "O Star Abiding One" (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- poster: "Orion Nebula" by Stocktrek Images
<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters6>
- hymn "Wakantanka Taku Nitawa" (Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works) (tune: Lacquiparle), <http://www.tinyurl.com/5tmclh>

Display the poster. You can find other star images on your own, but this one is particularly alive with color and light. Read the following introduction, and then guide your participants in wondering how this image reminds them of God. If you were to go outside at night with a pair of binoculars or a simple telescope, you could see Orion's Nebula just south of the constellation Orion's Belt. It is a part of our Milky Way. Remember again the phrase from "Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works" that says, "O star abiding One, Come unto us and dwell with us: with you are found the gifts of life."

We have many ways of imagining God. How does this image help you imagine what God is like? Many times, we think of gifts as things that can be wrapped up or bought. This part of our galaxy is a gift from God. How does it make you feel? What are some of the most precious gifts that God gives us?

5 Art Response

Supplies:

- hymn "Halle, Halle, Halleluja" (tune: Halleluja, Caribbean Melody)
<http://www.tinyurl.com/22tpsfl>
- keyboard or piano
- mural-sized paper
- cups
- sponge brushes
- paint
- drop cloth
- painter's tape
- box with a lid for each learner
- tape to secure box lids
- marbles
- paper cut to fit the base of the box
- several cups filled with different colors of paint
- spoons for each cup

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WORKSHOP ROTATION

three activities will fill a forty-five minute session. You may want to choose one activity from each section.

Prayer: God of mystery and delight, thank you for the spark of divine love that you have embedded in all of creation. Be with me as I am mindful of both shadow and light in my life. Guide me in how to respond to both. Help me to honor your divine spark within myself and open my eyes to see it in others. Holy God, enfold each of the children who are part of the group I will lead week in your loving arms. Be with me now as I contemplate how to best guide them in encountering you. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Play some of your favorite praise music while participants work with bright paints to make free-form art. A wonderful hymn for this purpose is “Halle Halle,” also known as “Halleluja.” It has a lively Caribbean melody. The words are very simple so that even first time hearers can easily sing along as they move to the music. You can hear the song at <http://www.tinyurl.com/28ylnob>.

The Magi felt great joy when they found Jesus. Music and art both help us celebrate God’s love. Instruct participants to paint what they hear in the music. The art work can be created in several ways. You can post mural-sized paper on the wall and write “God’s gifts of life” at the top.” Put a thick strip of painter’s tape around the edge of the mural to keep paint from getting on the wall. Give each learner a sponge brush with paint in individual cups. It will be easiest if each learner works with only one color, but they can choose to work together to create different colors and designs. To simplify, provide each learner with a piece of paper and drawing or paint materials you have on hand. If using paint, be sure to cover the work space with newsprint or provide plastic trays that fit 8-1/2” x 11” paper.

For younger children: Provide each child with his or her own “marble box.” Shoe boxes, envelop boxes, and plastic containers with lids all work well. Cut paper to fit in the bottom of the box. Set up a series of paint cups with various colors and drop marbles into the cups. Provide spoons so that all can transfer the paint covered marbles into their boxes. Provide enough marbles for each color so that each learner can add several marbles to their boxes at the same time. Secure the lids well. Participants can shake the boxes to the music while moving around the room. When the song ends or when you are ready, remove the lids and admire the beautiful designs that have been made. Place the marbles back into the paint cups.

6 “God Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

Supplies:

- lyrics for “God Whose Giving Knows No Ending” (tune: Austrian Hymn or Hyfrydol) displayed for all to see, <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong6>
- piano or keyboard for accompaniment
- a copy of the “God Whose Giving Knows No Ending” circles for each learner, Attachment: Activity 6
- pens or pencils
- crayons or markers

You can hear the Austrian Hymn tune at <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong6a> and see the lyrics for the hymn at <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong6>. Practice singing this stewardship hymn together. This is a long hymn, so you may want to limit singing to the first two verses. Post these verses on paper or newsprint, and read each verse before singing it. Make sure that you feel comfortable singing this hymn so that you can lead it confidently. A helpful learning method for all is for the leader to sing a phrase that the participants repeat, or echo. In this way, they can participate more fully in singing instead of on trying to read the words.

Sit in a circle as you say something like this: Circles are like God’s love. There are many beginnings, but no endings. Point to each learner in the circle as you say in a meaningful and loving way: In you is a beginning of God’s love. Pass out copies of Attachment: Activity 6, which has an image of a circle made up of the words, “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending.”

Invite participants to write or draw ways that they receive God’s love. Encourage them to do so in a spiral pattern within the circle. Journaling or drawing in this



way can free them to think and draw more creatively. To write or draw in a spiral pattern, pick a beginning point and then follow the curve of the circle rather than a typical block pattern. Turn the circle as you work so that the writing or drawing moves toward the center of the circle. If possible, create an example ahead of time that you can share with your group. If you are unable to create an example ahead of time, do a quick one in front of your group.

For younger children: Younger children are often less bound by writing or drawing in a line and will have fun drawing or even writing in a circular pattern. Simply show them how to draw different ways God loves them by turning the circle around and around. When everyone has finished their work, gather back into a circle and invite those who would like to share what they have created to do so.

Sending & Serving Activities

7 Marching Out (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- words to the hymn: “Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’/We Are Marching in the Light of God” (tune: Siyahamba)
- piano or keyboard for accompaniment

Remind participants that just as the wise men followed a star on their way to meet the infant Jesus, God’s light continues to guide us. A joyful hymn, “Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’/We Are Marching in the Light of God,” celebrates living according to God’s light. The word “marching” brings to mind all those who have walked in peace to protest injustice. You can find the lyrics and the tune at <http://www.tinyurl.com/yzdaqy6>. The words to this hymn repeat, making it very simple to learn. Practice singing this hymn together. Encourage clapping or shaking noise makers of any kind. I once heard an entire congregation shake their keys to this hymn! If the children made stars earlier in the workshop, they may wave these as they sing. Once everyone is comfortable with the words, lead the group in marching around the room. Remind participants that the light of God isn’t contained in a building. We take it with us when we walk out into the world and follow the way of Jesus. If it will not disturb other classrooms, lead the march throughout the church while singing a capella. Encourage everyone to walk or march in their own way, showing that while we march together we also each follow God according to our uniqueness.

8 Mandala Prayer Art

Supplies:

- printed simple mandalas from the Web site, <http://www.tinyurl.com/2bmprw3>
- crayons or markers
- listening music such as "We Are Marching in the Light of God"

A mandala is a circular design whose pattern connotes a sense of harmony. Many people find that coloring mandalas brings them a sense of peace and balance. Print some simple mandala coloring patterns from

<http://www.tinyurl.com/2bmprw3>.

Allow participants to pick out a design that they find pleasing. Several mandala



patterns on this Web site include star patterns that you can use to remind everyone that God's light still guides us. Hold up one of the mandala coloring sheets and trace your finger around the edge of the outer circle while saying, "God's love holds us just like this circle holds the pattern inside. Like this circle, God's giving knows no ending." Explain that many people color mandalas as a type of prayer. The colors you choose as you draw can express how you are feeling. Coloring can also help us to become quiet so that we can listen for God. Coloring can also be a fun way to show our joy and thanks!

As participants color, play "We Are Marching in the Light of God." A particularly poignant recording of this song is sung by girls from the Amazing Grace Children's Home on the CD, *Amazing Grace, Songs from the Amazing Grace Children's Home*. All proceeds from the purchase of this CD support a home for girls in Kenya who have been orphaned by AIDS. You can purchase the entire CD or download "We Are Marching to the Light of God" from iTunes or <http://www.cdbaby.com>.

The songs on this CD were recorded during a week-long vacation Bible school facilitated by All Saints Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

9 Namaste

Supplies: None

In the Hindu tradition, *namaste* is a greeting that acknowledges a divine spark in all people. In Sanskrit, *nama* means "to bow," *as* means "I" and *te* means "you"; in other words, "I bow to you." The word *nama* can also mean "not mine." In essence, *namaste* acknowledges the divine as our source of being. Throughout Christian tradition, faithful people have infused meaningful non-Christian practices with their Christian beliefs. While acknowledging differences between Hindu and Christian beliefs, we can also celebrate their similarities. Doing so helps build points of connection and respect.

Demonstrate *namaste* to your participants while saying, "The God in me greets the God in you." To express *namaste*, place your hands together and hold them in front of your heart. Slightly bow your head and shoulders in a sign of respect. Explain the meaning of *namaste* in the Hindu tradition, and then affirm similar beliefs in Christianity. As Christians, we, too, believe that God's spirit dwells within each of us. Bowing to one another is a way of saying, "The God in me honors the God in you." When we pass the peace of Christ in worship, we share God's peace that lives in each of us. Stand in a circle together. Turn to your neighbor, show *namaste*, and say, "The God in me honors the God in you." Turn back to the center of the circle, join hands and pray the following prayer: *Holy and Loving God, thank you for your giving that knows no ending. Every moment, every day, you bless us with hope and love. Help us to live in your Light and to carry it with us as we walk and talk. May the words and music that we sung this day keep bringing us joy throughout this week. Amen.*

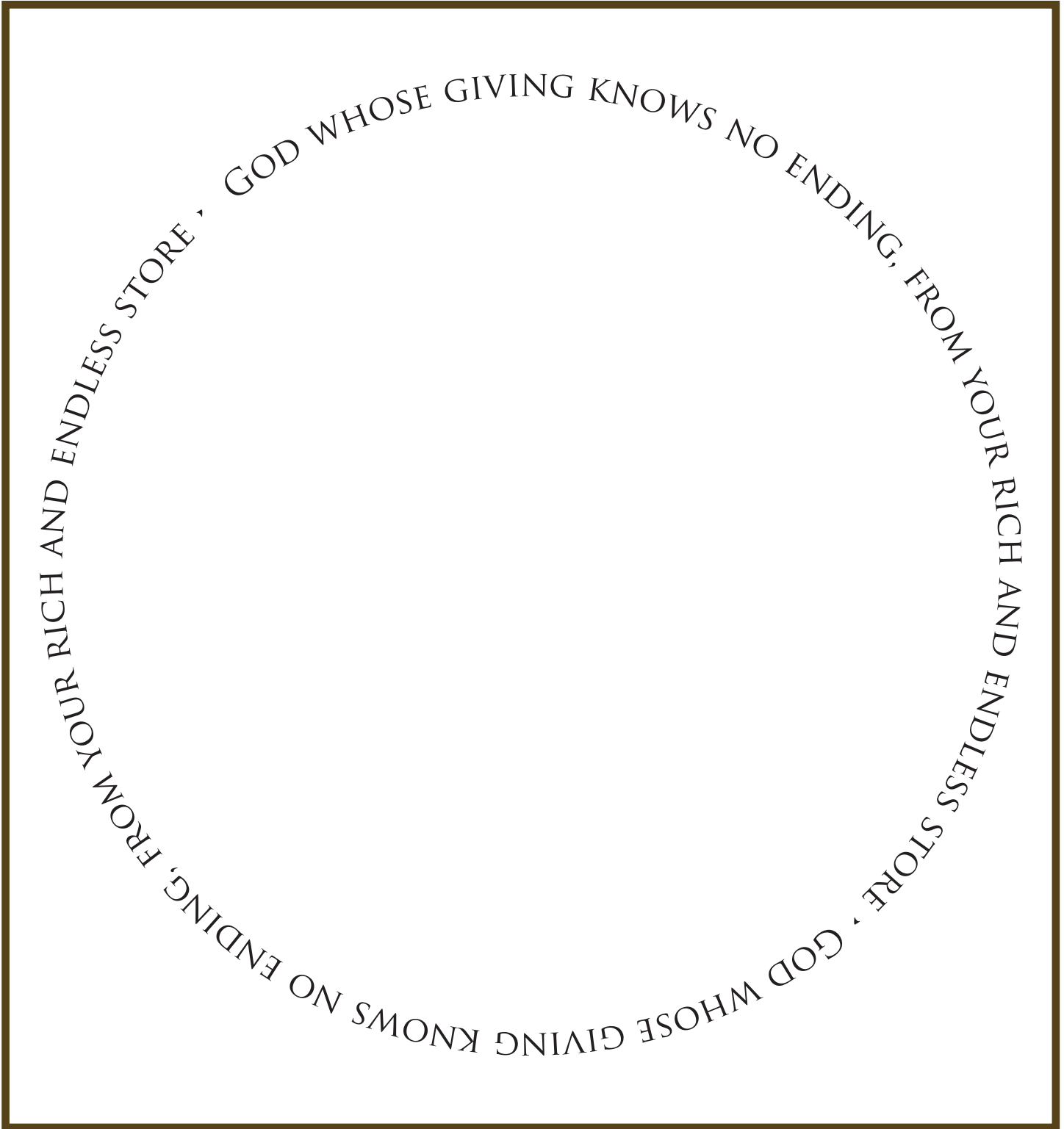
Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Attachment: Activity 6



Living Stewardship



Workshop: Science

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple Intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, i.e. Visual Spatial, Logical/Mathematical, Verbal/Linguistic, Bodily/Kinesthetic, Musical/Rhythmic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of Workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the Intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop Leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the Workshop, adjusting each Workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e. age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

In this Science and Nature Workshop, participants will have the opportunity to experience the wonder of creation, make connections between trees and God's care, and learn how trees can be a source of healing and peace. There are three options for helping participants understand Revelation 22:1-2 in the "Exploring and Engaging" section. The "Deciding and Discerning" activities offer ways to encounter nature through touch and observation either inside or outside. In the "Sending and Serving" section, they will explore ways they can nurture trees of life at home and in the community.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Genesis 2:2-4

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Mark 2:23-3:6

1 Corinthians 11:17-26

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Wondering about Key Scriptures (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- Bibles

Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-15. Explain that David is making a large offering for building a Temple that will be a place where people can honor God. Ask these wondering questions, or some of your own.

- I wonder how David is able to give so freely from what he has.
- I wonder which stories of his people he remembers when he talks about being an alien in a strange land. How does remembering these stories help him give freely?
- I wonder how David sees other people who live in a strange land.

Read Revelation 22:1-2. Explain that this is a vision or dream of what life will be like at the end of time when all of the earth and all people will be transformed by God's love. Ask these wondering questions or some of your own.

- I wonder how this tree of healing is different from the tree in the Garden of Eden—could it be the same?
- I wonder how a tree can heal people or even a whole nation.
- I wonder how trees make you feel.

Leader Preparation

Read the scripture passages for this session, and let yourself imagine God's promise of a transformed world. What do you see? What is your own hope for people and creation? As you come close to God this week, spend time outside experiencing the holy. Explore your own yard or neighborhood and notice the trees. Contemplate how trees have been important to you in your life. One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship from many different

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learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three “best ways” for Living Stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you “see with new eyes” and “hear with new ears.” Even when children don’t fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they are very attuned to how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used, such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper. Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways.

Prayer: Loving God, Let our hope in your future transform who we are and what we do now. Help me see the children in my care through your eyes. Instill me with your wonder, patience, and delight. Help prepare me now for the best ways to lead and encourage them. Help me find my joy in this workshop and find peace with the ways I still need to grow as a leader. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

2 Gazing at the Baobab Tree

Supplies:

- poster: “Baobab, Okavango Delta, Botswana” by Pete Oxford
<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters5>

Display the poster of a baobab tree entitled “Baobab, Okavango Delta, Botswana.” If your church does not own a copy of this poster or you cannot afford to buy it for your group, find images of baobab trees by doing an image search on Google. Explain that baobab trees are amazing trees that grow in very dry, desert areas in Africa and Australia. Invite the participants to spend a moment looking at this tree. What do you notice in this picture? If you were standing near this tree, what would you most like to do? Where do you imagine God is in this picture?

3 Wangari Maathai’s Story

Supplies:

- children’s books: *Wangari’s Trees of Peace* by Jeanette Winter
<http://www.tinyurl.com/24z7jqe>
and *Planting Trees in Kenya* by Claire Nivola,
<http://www.tinyurl.com/2cptjig>
- brief description of Wangari Maathai’s work (see below)
- “Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai” Film Clip #2
<http://www.tinyurl.com/2d8ey5r>
- Bible

Share a story about Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for encouraging women all over Kenya to plant trees. There are two children’s stories written about her that you may find in your public library. They are *Wangari’s Trees of Peace* by Jeanette Winter and *Planting Trees in Kenya* by Claire Nivola. If you do not have access to these stories or the Internet materials listed below, you may choose to read the short description of Wangari and the Green Belt Movement that follows.

Explain that people cut down many trees in Kenya to grow cash crops that would make a few people lots of money. When the trees were gone, streams dried up, families did not have firewood for daily cooking or boiling water, and many children did not have enough food to eat. Wangari Maathai is a Kenyan woman who had the simple idea of helping women in small villages learn to plant trees. When these women began planting trees, they first helped their families and then they began to change all of Kenya as they asked why the trees had been cut down in the first place. The trees they planted became trees to heal a nation. Remind participants of the vision of trees to heal the nations in Revelation 22:1-2. If you have access to a computer, play this three-minute YouTube video describing the Green Belt Movement Wangari began. “Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai” Film Clip #2 <http://www.tinyurl.com/2d8ey5r>. You can also find information about Wangari Maathai at <http://www.greenbeltmovement.org>. One of the resources on this website is a printable “Action Guide” that contains images of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, activity suggestions, and information about how to plant trees in your community. You can locate the guide by clicking on the link to the “Taking Root” documentary <http://www.tinyurl.com/2an6qt6>.

Discuss together what trees provide in your community. Recently, a project in the Kansas City area measured street tree benefits in dollars for several cities around the metro area. The 415,000 trees growing on city rights-of-way in Kansas City



- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

provide an average benefit of \$123 per year per tree, or more than \$51 million annually. To find out more about the benefits of trees go to

<http://www.tinyurl.com/2cd7wco>,

Natural Environments for Urban Populations. Consider taking a tree census on your church property. Does your church have enough trees? Your yard? Your neighborhood? Make a list of the ways that trees benefit the environment: shade means cooler temperatures, street trees reduce heat buildup, trees absorb carbon and store it, trees act as standing air filters, trees increase public safety, and so forth. See the article “Street Trees Pay Us Back,” at <http://www.tinyurl.com/23dqwvr>.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Tree Observation (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- bags or recyclable containers for collecting small nature items
- notebook or paper and a writing surface
- utensils for drawing and writing
- “Tree Observation,” Attachment: Activity 4

Invite your group to walk around the church grounds or neighborhood. For safety, you may want to ask them to find a buddy and walk in pairs. (Determine for your group whether they will focus better working together or alone.) They will need a bag for collecting small nature items and a notebook or something to write on. Please use a recycled or recyclable container for collecting nature items, and remind participants to only pick up found objects on the ground rather than live parts of the tree.

Ask everyone to walk the grounds or neighborhood and observe the different trees they see. Ask them to explore for several minutes before choosing a tree to sit under, observe, and write about. As they walk around, invite participants to collect small rocks, flowers, or other natural items that they find interesting.

To help them see with fresh eyes, ask them to pretend that they are nature discoverers from another country who have never seen trees and shrubs and flowers like these. The more specifically you can describe who they are, the easier it will be for them to get into their role. For example, you may want to suggest that they are desert nomads from Botswana, Africa, who are curious about what kinds of trees grow here and if any are like the baobab tree.

Ask them to pick one tree to write/draw about. Encourage them to collect a sample leaf from their tree, preferably one that has fallen on the ground, as well as any nuts or seeds that have fallen from the tree. Ask your participants to describe the tree as much as possible. They can do this by drawing the tree, tracing a leaf, drawing a close up picture of the bark, or by writing about the tree. If you want to give your group more guidance, see “Tree Observation,” Attachment: Activity 4. Let them know that when you get back together, they will be asked to describe the tree in a way that the rest of the group can picture it in their mind.

Gather back together as a large group. Let everyone share their findings. Open the sharing by asking why they chose their tree to observe. For younger children: Together, choose a tree as a group to sit under and describe. Pass out leaves, if they have fallen on the ground, and have the children do rubbings of the leaves on their paper. Talk about what they notice about the tree, focusing on their senses. Invite them to draw the tree.



5 The Tree of Life: In the Bible and in the Wild

Supplies:

- two copies of "Tree of Life," Attachment: Activity 5 (one intact and one cut into strips for each tree fact and Bible verse; one basket for tree facts)
- one basket for Bible verses (do not include the category title with the fact or verse when you cut it up)

Ahead of time, print two copies "Tree of Life," Attachment: Activity 5. This document describes the many ways a baobab tree gives people who live in the desert what they need to survive. It also lists Bible verses that parallel how God provides with how the tree provides.

Keep one copy of the "Tree of Life" intact to use as a key to which Bible verses match which categories. Use the second copy and cut each of the tree facts and Bible verses into strips. Place the tree fact strips into one basket and the Bible verses in another. Pass out all of the tree facts and Bible verses to different participants who enjoy reading. If possible, do not have the same ones who read the tree facts also read the Bible verses. Ask those holding tree facts and Bible verses to read them silently to themselves. Then name one of the following categories: Origins, Water, Food, Shelter, Daily Needs, and Beauty. Ask a learner to read a tree fact matching that category. Then ask those holding Bible verses to find one that matches the same tree fact category and read it aloud. Some verses may match multiple categories. It is okay if different facts or verses are read multiple times! The idea is to get participants to reflect on how the fact or Bible verse matches each part of essential daily living. Repeat until you have covered each category. Discuss how God and the people of God can be like a "Tree of Life." If needed, the following questions may help guide your reflection.

- What can we learn from a tree about how to care for one another?
- What else does a tree provide that is not listed?
- I wonder what stories you have about your favorite trees.

6 Nature Mandala

Supplies:

- nature items collected during the tree observation of Activity 4
- something to create a large, temporary circle such as a hula hoop, large lid, or a rope made into a circle
- additional nature items to supplement those collected such as shells, rocks, or seeds (optional)
- battery operated candle

Create a natural mandala from all the nature items the group collected. A mandala is a pattern of shapes or a design that is contained in a circle. The design often repeats in such a way that it creates a sense of balance or harmony. Use a hula hoop, large lid, or string to create a circle on the floor (about two feet in diameter, depending on how many items your group collected). If you have your own supply of shells or other natural items, add these to the design. Ask the participants to create a pattern together with the items they collected on their nature walk. It does not have to repeat or have symmetry. They can arrange it in any way that pleases them. If you have a candle (natural or battery operated), place it in the center of your group mandala and light it.



Sending & Serving Activities

7 Where Could We Plant a Tree? (Easy Preparation)

Supplies: None

Ask participants if they noticed places around the church where it would be good to plant a tree. Where around the church could use more shade? Do birds and animals have places to find shelter? If your church could use more trees, talk together about what you would need to do and learn in order to plant the right tree in the right space. Would you need to draw a map of your church grounds and mark places of sun and shade? Would you need to talk with a local nursery about which trees grow well in your area? What groups in the church would you need to speak with about your desire to plant a tree—either for permission or help? Check with your state Department of Conservation about how to get free trees, or check out programs sponsored by Forest ReLeaf at <http://www.moreleaf.org>.

8 Make a Pledge to Plant a Tree.

Supplies:

- slips of paper for each learner with the following statement printed on each slip: United Nations Tree Planting Pledge

Inspired by Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, the United Nations encourages people all over the world to make a pledge to plant a tree in your yard or neighborhood. At the UN Web site, <http://www.tinyurl.com/yx42x9>, you can enter your tree planting pledge and record the number of trees you plant. For more help in identifying trees in your yard and learning about the best ways to plant a tree, you can also check out <http://www.arborday.org>. Review the benefit of street trees as described in Activity 3. Hand out strips of paper with the United Nations web address listed on it. Encourage participants to talk with their families about planting a tree together. Trees survive best when planted in the Fall or Spring, but children can make a pledge any time and do research about the best tree to plant at any time.

9 Prayers of Gratitude and Thanks

Supplies: None

Say a prayer of thanks together for what each person has seen and experienced today during the nature walk. If you opted not to do the walk, you may also say a prayer of thanks for trees and all that they give to us and other creatures. You can begin with the prayer below and then continue “popcorn style,” with each person contributing a word of thanks. *Holy and Amazing God, You are like a tree of life for us. You give us shelter and places to play and rest. Your roots are deep and your branches wide. Thank you for trunks that remind us of your strength and also for branches that bend with the wind, reminding us that your Spirit is always moving and changing. Thank you, God, for all that we saw today and for trees that are special to us. [Allow time for prayers to be offered quietly or aloud.] Thank you, God, for all that you have created. And all of God’s people say, Amen.*

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants

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Attachment: Activity 4

Tree Observation

1. What do you notice about the tree?
2. What kind of bark does it have?
3. What shape are the leaves? What color?
4. What kind of nuts, fruit, or seeds does this tree make? Describe what you find.
5. Does the tree look healthy and happy where it is?
6. Does it look like the best tree for that space? Have the roots caused any damage to sidewalks or patios?
7. What things might enjoy the tree's shade (for example, plants, animals, people)?
8. What birds, animals, or insects do you see near the tree?



Attachment: Activity 5

Baobab Tree /Tree of Life

The baobab tree is a symbol of endurance, conservation, creativity, ingenuity, and dialogue. For the people of the desert, it is a tree of life because it provides the basic needs of daily life.

Origins

Some baobab trees are 1500 years old. It is possible that some trees have existed since before the time of Christ, making them the oldest living artifact from that time. In parts of Africa, people would gather under these old trees that feed and shelter them to hear stories about their people and to discuss important topics to their community.

Deuteronomy 8:14: Do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery .

Water Source

The trunk is made of a spongy wood that can hold up to 25,000 gallons of water. The water in this tree helps people and creatures survive in the dry desert heat!

Isaiah 55:1: Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Food

The baobab tree produces a fruit that looks like a big brown nut covered in fine hair (kind of like a smooth, flattened coconut). This fruit has the most Vitamin C of any plant (10 times that of oranges!). The leaves of the baobab tree are also rich in Vitamin A. Most parts of the tree are edible.

Revelation 22:1-2: Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit for each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.



Attachment: Activity 5, page 2

Shelter

The soft bark can be hollowed to make shelters. Some of the trunks are hollowed while still alive and standing, so people could take shelter inside them. When on the tree, the leaves provide cool shade.

Acts 4:34-35: There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Daily Needs

Aboriginals can use the baobab tree to provide for many of their daily needs, such as oil from seeds, rope and cloth from the bark fibers, type of baking powder from the fruit, tannin for curing leather from the bark, glue from the pollen of the flowers, pulp for making paper.

Deuteronomy 8:15-16: The LORD made water flow for you from the flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna.

Beauty

While these trees look odd with their enormous "bottle" trunks, they grow beautiful, light pink flowers during the wet season.

Song of Solomon 2: I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. (*The rose of Sharon is a symbol later associated with Jesus*).

Living Stewardship



Workshop: Video

About this Rotation

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world. For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:



- **Multiple intelligences:** ways of incorporating information, that is, visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist.
- **Rotation:** the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- **Workshop:** primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the rotation's overarching concept(s).
- **Workshop leader:** person who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, considering age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- **Shepherd:** leaders who travel with a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners in which faith is shared.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week: age ranges, learning styles, and experiences in previous workshops within this rotation.

About this Workshop

Young learners are used to watching video as a form of entertainment but are less familiar with using it as a way to explore faith. Two potential video options were chosen for this workshop. Both options help learners explore how to see and hear in ways that show care and build community. The two options are labeled as "track one" and "track two" in the Deciding and Discerning section of this workshop. Track one involves viewing a very brief movie clip followed by opportunities for learners to capture their own images of beauty around the church. It is more suitable for older or more mature learners. Track two involves playing 30 minutes of selected scenes from *Horton Hears a Who* and is appropriate for all ages. Learners then discuss selected scenes after viewing them. Track one uses video to compliment ideas explored in Mark 14:3–9. Track two builds on the idea of listening well that is introduced by Isaiah 1:10.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Mark 14:3–9

SUPPLEMENTAL STORY:

Isaiah 1:10–17

Leader Preparation

Living stewardship is about caring for all God has given us, including our very selves. Part of being good caretakers is learning to see all of God's creation with a sense of wonder and delight. The workshop rotation model encourages children to use all of their senses to explore what it means to be children of God who care for one another and for the natural world. Each workshop engages multiple learning styles so that children can more deeply integrate their own stories and life experiences with the faith practices they encounter in God's stories.

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Making Ourselves Clean (Easy Preparation)

Supplies:

- Bible
- coffee filters
- water-soluble markers
- spray bottle filled with water

Read this version of Isaiah 1:10–17: "Hear the word of God. Listen to the teaching of your God. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; Remove evil from what you do. Say no to wrong. Learn to do good. Work for justice. Help the down-and-out. Stand up for the homeless. Go to bat for the defenseless" (adapted from *The Message*).

At times, the words of the prophets comforted the people of Israel and, at times, the prophets pointed out what they were doing wrong and helped them to do right. All of us make mistakes and do wrong. God's good news is that God loves us anyway. Part of living stewardship is learning how to ask God for forgiveness when we make bad choices. When we recognize what we have done that is wrong, God can help us find ways to make it right. What is Isaiah reminding us to do? Name together choices that we can make that do and don't show God's love. To help make this exercise concrete, use body parts as reference points. Name good and bad choices we make with our heads, our eyes, our mouths, our hands, and our feet.



One of the great gifts of the workshop rotation model is that children typically get to experience one biblical story through each of the different workshops so that they learn the story in a deeper and more profound way. In this rotation, children will hear different biblical focus passages, but will experience stewardship through many different learning styles. Because stewardship is such a broad topic, each workshop will remind learners of three “best ways” for living stewardship: a sense of wonder, grateful hearts, and joyful sharing. At the beginning of each workshop, review these three best ways. Doing so will help learners make more concrete connections between the activities and an overall understanding of stewardship. As you lead this workshop, be mindful of how you model stewardship. Take time to reflect on the stories and activities in a way that lets you “see with new eyes” and “hear with new ears.” Even when children don’t fully comprehend the ideas they will encounter, they see clearly how you model a generous and gracious spirit, which forms the very heart of stewardship. Modeling stewardship also involves being frugal and creative in the resources used (such as printing this material on the backside of previously used paper). Finally, modeling stewardship involves helping children interact with one another in respectful and thoughtful ways.

Part of stewardship is learning to see all of creation with a sense of wonder. In the Gospels, Jesus often encourages his followers to see and hear in ways that reveal the reign of God around them. This workshop practices using our senses to honor people and things we encounter every day. This week, be mindful of what you see and hear. Where do you see instances of beauty?

Distribute two coffee filters to each learner. Do not separate them. The second will help catch any bleeding from the markers. Distribute water-soluble markers. Instruct participants to pick out several different colored markers. Then, each person will write on the coffee filter choices that he or she has made that do not show God’s love. Participants do not need to share these with anyone. When they are finished, spray each filter with water. Then, scrunch up the filter to mix the colors. When you or the learner opens the filter, the words should be erased and be replaced with a rainbow of colors. Say a blessing of forgiveness such as the following: *When we tell God what we have done and ask for help in doing what is right, God forgives us so that we can start again with a new heart that has been washed in love.*

2 Using Our Senses to Make Good Choices

Supplies:

- poster *The Moorish Kitchen Maid with the Supper at Emmaus* by Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velazquez, <http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>
- cloth or paper for covering the poster
- paper and pens or pencils
- Bible

Display the poster of “*The Moorish Kitchen Maid with the Supper at Emmaus*” by Diego Velazquez, but cover the image with a cloth or piece of paper. Pass out paper and writing utensils. Say: In order to make good choices, we need to pay attention to what we hear and what we see. Let’s practice by naming what we notice in a painting by Spanish artist Diego Velazquez. I am going to uncover the poster of this painting and give you two minutes to write down everything you see in this painting. Describe as best you can what is happening in this painting. Also write down the objects you see.

Uncover the poster for two minutes while participants write what they see. Recover the poster. Ask participants to share what they observed. Uncover the poster again and compare their lists to what you observe in the painting as a group. Compliment everyone on what they observed. Ask why they noticed some objects and why they missed seeing others.

As you look at the poster together point out the following. Spanish painter Diego Velazquez first painted it in 1618. Over time, the painting became dirty and part of it could no longer be seen. In 1933, restorers carefully cleaned the painting and discovered a part of it that had been hidden. Look in the top left-hand corner. What do you see? If we look very closely, we can see Jesus sitting with two persons. This part of the painting is based on a story found in Luke 24:13–35. This story takes place on the same day that Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, mother of James found Jesus’ empty tomb and learned from an angel that Jesus was no longer there. Two friends of Jesus are walking on a road to the city of Emmaus when Jesus joins them, but they do not recognize him. Eventually, they invite Jesus to the place where they have been staying and ask Jesus to join them. Ask a learner to read what happens next in Luke 24:30–31. The artist, Velazquez, imagined what this story would look like if told in his own day and time. In the background, he painted Jesus sitting with the two friends at a table.

How does seeing and hearing this part of the story change how you see the kitchen maid? What is she doing? What do you imagine she hears? She has been working in the kitchen. What kind of food or drink do you imagine she brought to the travelers? What do you think Jesus did or said when he saw her?



When do you find yourself listening well? When do you “tune out”?

Early in the week, read the video options in this workshop and choose which is most appropriate for your group. Then secure the movie and equipment you will need for this workshop. Once you have chosen your video option, read through the other activities and choose the ones that best complement the video you have chosen.

Prayer: God of mystery and delight, thank you for creating our world in love. Where we see ugliness, you see beauty and the potential for hope. Help us to see and hear in ways that honor what you have created as beloved. Help me to see myself through your loving eyes and receive the gift of being your beloved child. Help me also to view the children in my group this week with compassion. Be with me now as I consider the needs of our group and how I can be a conduit of your love and care for them. Relieve my anxieties and enhance my gifts. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from ten activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activ-

Remind participants that we can only show care to someone if we learn to see and hear well.

③ What Do You See? What Do You Hear?

Supplies:

- guest reader wearing a lot of accessories
- Bible
- paper and pens and pencils

This activity invites everyone to practice seeing and hearing with care. Ask an adult or older youth to be your helper for this activity. Ask him or her to dress with lots of accessories such as jewelry, a hat, scarf, purse or bag, and layers of clothing. In addition, ask your helper to be prepared to read Mark 14:3–9. Have your helper wait outside your meeting space until you are ready for this activity.

Explain that a guest is going to join your workshop for a few moments to read one of the Bible stories for today. Ask participants to remember what they see and hear. Invite your guest into your meeting space and thank him or her for reading the Mark story. Have your guest read the story and then make a polite, but quick exit. Ask your helper to remain outside the room.

For older children: Distribute paper and pencils and invite them to write down what they remember seeing and hearing. Younger participants can hold up their hands to name what they saw and heard. After a few minutes, invite your helper back into the room. Let everyone observe what he or she is wearing. Compare what you see to the lists the participants made or to what younger children called out. Also ask what they remember from the story. Talk about what they remembered. Why? What did they miss and why? What would have made it easier to notice what they were seeing and hearing?

Refer briefly to the story about the woman who anointed Jesus in Mark 14. What did Jesus see when he looked at this woman pouring out expensive oil? What did others see?

Even though we can all be looking at the same thing, we *see* differently. Sometimes what we see is colored by what we feel or believe. What do you imagine Jesus was feeling that affected what he saw when he looked at the woman? What do you think the others were feeling that affected what they saw?

Discerning & Deciding Activities

Note: There are two main choices for using video in this workshop. You will not have time to do both. The first is designed for older participants; the second is appropriate for all ages. Track one has three activity choices based on a video clip from the movie *Bella*. The *Bella* clip and activities were chosen to complement the story about Jesus seeing beauty in the woman’s anointing him with oil in Mark 14. Track two focuses on watching and discussing scenes from *Horton Hears a Who*. This movie and discussion questions complement Isaiah 1:10 in which he cautions the people of God to listen well. Choose the track that best fits your group.



ity from each category.

- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

④ Track One: Beauty—*Bella: A Beautiful Day*

Supplies:

- equipment to play a DVD or Internet movie clip;
- the clip "A Beautiful Day" from *Wing Clips*, <http://www.tinyurl.com/2cf6npj> or scene 5 from the movie *Bella*, <http://www.tinyurl.com/5tsl2r>

Introduce a movie clip from the movie *Bella*. Bella is the name of the woman they will see in this clip. She has just lost her job as a waitress at a very nice Cuban restaurant. The chef from the restaurant, Juan, notices that she is upset and chooses to spend the day with her even though it may cost him his job. In this scene, they are walking through New York City and talking about Bella's problems.

View the clip, "A Beautiful Day." You can download this clip for free from *Wing Clips*, <http://www.tinyurl.com/2cf6npj>, but you must register with the site to do so. On the website, enter "Bella" in the search window and select the clip titled, "A Beautiful Day." If you rent the movie, this clip takes place during scene 5. In order to find this clip, select scene 5 from the DVD menu. It is important to preview this scene ahead of time so that you can start the movie when Bella is walking down the street with Juan and sees the blind man. Some mild adult language occurs at the very beginning of scene 5, so be careful where you begin to play the clip. The scene lasts for 1 minute and 36 seconds. Stop the scene after the camera focuses on the sign that says "God closed my eyes, now I can see."

Begin your discussion of this clip with an open-ended question such as, "What did you notice in this clip?" Then, lead your group in a more detailed analysis of what they saw and heard. Some of the following questions may help you do so.

- How was what Bella saw valuable to the blind man? He borrowed Bella's eyes for a few minutes. When Bella described the people moving on the street she says, "Nobody cares about nothin'." How does the blind man help her to see the people and things in the street differently?
- At the end of the clip, the camera focuses on the sign sitting by the blind man. What does it say? I wonder what the sign means?
- I wonder what Bella thought of the blind man when she first saw him sitting on the street. Do you think that what she noticed about him changed by the end of the scene? How?
- What did you see that was beautiful in this clip?

⑤ Recording Beauty around the Church

Supplies:

- one or more video cameras
- Bible

In this activity, participants will use video cameras to record objects or people they see as beautiful around the church. If your group has not already heard the story of the woman anointing Jesus with oil in Mark 14:3–9, read it together. Ask: How did Jesus view what she did as beautiful? Name together all the things in this passage that are beautiful. How did her action show love for Jesus?

Give the following assignment. As a group, walk through the church together and search for things or people that are beautiful to you. Remember that beauty can be the way something looks or how it makes you feel when you see it. You



do not have to agree on what is beautiful. You may take turns using the video camera to record your choices. If you know someone who makes or does something beautiful, such as knitting prayer shawls or writing cards to people who are homebound, you may interview that person as your “object of beauty.”

Make sure that participants are comfortable using the video camera before leaving the workshop area. Have an adult helper accompany the group. It is best to limit each group size to four persons. If necessary, divide your group and either provide multiple cameras or alternate activities for those who stay behind. One group can go out to film while another does a different activity described in this workshop (such as viewing the *Bella* movie clip). Name a time for the group to return (twenty minutes should be sufficient).

⑥ View the Beauty Recordings

Supplies:

- equipment to play back video recordings for group viewing

When all have returned, play back what each group has recorded. After viewing the videos, ask the group as a whole what they saw in the video recordings that they thought was beautiful. Then invite those who recorded the scenes to share what they saw as beautiful. When all have had a chance to share, say the following words from Psalm 96 together: “For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised. Strength and beauty are in God’s sanctuary.”

⑦ Track Two: Listening—*Horton Hears a Who*

Supplies:

- DVD player
- movie *Horton Hears a Who* (be sure you have the ability to select particular scenes from the movie)

Learn more at IMDB, <http://www.tinyurl.com/3y59kd>
or YouTube, <http://www.tinyurl.com/2g2crvc>

Participants will view sections of *Horton Hears a Who* and then talk about good and bad ways of listening. The movie is too long to view in one workshop, so this activity will guide you in playing sections of the movie followed by brief discussion. Use the DVD menu to select the scenes indicated. Note the time of each scene so that you can plan accordingly. If you play all of the scenes suggested and take time to talk after each one, this exercise will take about 45 minutes.

Introduction: We are going to watch parts of the movie *Horton Hears a Who*, a movie based on the book by Dr. Seuss. We will not be able to watch the whole movie during our time today. Instead, we are going to watch scenes in the movie and then talk about ways that the characters listen well to each other and ways that they ignore each other or listen poorly. Be sure to pay attention to how the characters listen so you can share during our talking time.

Section One: (12-1/2 minutes) Play the movie from the beginning until the mayor of Whoville is introduced while drinking his coffee. Stop play. Questions for discussion:

- What does Horton hear on the speck?
- Horton is one of the biggest animals in the jungle. What are some good and bad ways he could choose to act?



- What does Horton choose to do when he hears something on the speck calling for help? What would have happened if he had ignored what he heard?
- I wonder why the kangaroo did not hear anything?

Section Two: Scene 8, Family Tradition (2-1/2 minutes). Stop play when Horton appears.

- How well does the mayor listen to his son, Jo Jo?
- I wonder why Jo Jo doesn't speak.
- Whose dream is it for Jo Jo to become mayor?

Section Three: Scene 10, Good News Only (2 minutes). Stop play when the "W" sign appears.

- Why does the town council not want to listen to the mayor's news?

At this point, you will skip most of the middle of the movie. Summarize what happens. Kanga does not believe that there are people on the clover. She asks a vulture to chase Horton and destroy the clover. At the same time, Horton goes on a difficult journey to the top of Mt. Nool in search of a safe place for the clover. The hardest part of his journey happens when the vulture drops the clover into a huge field of clover and Horton has to search through three million clover to find the speck again! In Whoville, the mayor tries to get the town to listen to him when he tells them they are all in danger, but no one believes that they live on a speck being carried by a giant elephant. We are going to start the movie again right after the kangaroo convinces the whole town of Nool to capture Horton and destroy the clover.

Section Four: (12-1/2 minutes) Play the movie from scene 27 ("Admit You are Wrong") to the end.

- The only way to save Horton and Whoville is for the animals of Nool to believe people live on the speck. But the people of Whoville are so small. How can they be loud enough to be heard?
- What does Jo Jo do? Why?
- When is it okay not to listen? (When someone is telling you to do something that you know is wrong.) When do the animals of Nool choose not to listen to the kangaroo?
- How does Horton treat the kangaroo at the end of the movie? What else could he have chosen to do? How does the kangaroo show a change of heart?

8 Borrowed Eyes

Supplies: None

When the woman in Mark poured expensive oil and perfume on Jesus' head, he saw what she did as beautiful. Others saw it as wasteful. Sometimes, someone else can help us see more clearly than we can on our own. Jesus helps us to see through eyes of love.

Sit in a circle and ask one learner to sit in the middle. This person must close his or her eyes. Pick another learner in the circle to be the blind person's eyes. The person in the middle says, "Show me something beautiful." The "seer" picks



something in the room and describes its color, size, texture, behavior, and so forth. When the person in the middle guesses what it being described, he or she joins the circle and the person who played “seer” goes into the middle. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to be either the blind person or the seer.

Conclude by saying, “This week, be on the lookout for beauty that reminds you of God’s love.”

9 Listening Ears

Supplies:

- words and music to the hymn “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love” (tune: Chereponi), <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong4>

You can find the lyrics and the tune for the hymn a <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong4>.

Say to the group: Listening well to one another is a way that we show God’s love. We are going to sing part of the hymn “Jesu, Jesu Fill Us with Your Love” together. When we learn to sing, we practice good listening. When we sing today, I am going to give you an added challenge. I will give you a hint. Listen carefully to the words I sing the first time.

Sing the hymn “Jesu, Jesu Fill Us with Your Love” (tune: Chereponi). This hymn has an African folk melody that is easy to sing without accompaniment once you are familiar with the tune. While accompaniment is not necessary, you may wish to ask a musician to play “Jesu, Jesu” on a keyboard in your meeting space or do this activity in a place where you have access to a piano.

Teach the refrain to your group by singing it through and having participants repeat after you. Then sing the first verse once while they listen. Sing the refrain together. Sing the first verse again, but omit one of the words and replace it with humming. See if they can guess which word you omitted. Sing the refrain together again as a group. Sing the second verse through once and then sing it again, but omit two words, humming in their place. (The two words do not have to be sequential). Ask them to guess the missing words. Sing the refrain together. Sing the third verse through once and then again while omitting three words. Ask them to guess the missing words. End by singing the refrain together.

10 Taking Beauty With Us

Supplies:

- Bible
- pleasant-smelling lotion,
- words and music to the hymn, “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love” (tune: Chereponi)

Say: Today, we have practiced seeing and hearing as ways of showing care and experiencing God’s love. (Read Mark 14:3.) The woman poured perfumed oil on Jesus just before the most difficult time of his life when all of his closest friends would betray him. I wonder how long the smell of that oil stayed with Jesus. I wonder what he remembered when he smelled it.

Sit together in a circle and pass around pleasant-smelling lotion. Do this by inviting each person to place a small amount of lotion into the hand of the person



sitting next to him or her. The learner first rubs in the lotion he or she has received and then “anoints” the next person.

Before you begin, say: “May the smell of this lotion remind you that God sees you as beautiful and loved.”

As you pass the lotion, sing together the refrain from “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love.” Repeat the refrain as many times as you like until everyone has received some lotion.

Reflect

While the workshop is still fresh in your mind, take a moment to receive the gifts and challenges you all experienced. Allow yourself to pause, breathe deeply, and give thanks. Then take time to reflect with your other adult helpers on what went well and what did not. Brainstorm together how you might adjust the materials used, process, or dynamic of the group to make the next experience more enjoyable for you and the participants.

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Living Stewardship



Intergenerational

About this Setting

Intergenerational experiences are rare in our North American society, although they used to be more common and still are the norm in many parts of the world. Faith communities are one of the few places where people can experience being part of a “village” where children can experience nurture and care from adults who are neither their parents nor paid professionals; where adults and youth can be part of the “whole village” that it takes to raise a child; and where all ages can learn and grow together. An intergenerational event offers an opportunity to focus on this unique dimension of being church, by intentionally bringing together all ages. There is no one right way to create a positive intergenerational experience, but careful preparation is key (so that younger participants do not have a lot of “empty” or unfocused time). It is also important to encourage interaction across age groups and to invite a spirit of mutual playfulness and creativity so that older participants do not participate only as helpers or observers. This setting offers an “intergenerational event”—a workshop style experience for all ages, including children, youth, and adults. Activities are designed so that all ages can participate and take something meaningful from the experience (although what a teen or five-year-old or adult will take from the experience may be very different). Because of this wide age span, participants will engage in learning activities in a variety of ways and at many different levels. Group members will learn from one another and assist, challenge, or inspire one another. Children may become “teachers” for youth or adults, helping them to participate more playfully or spontaneously. Adults and youth may share experiences or ideas that may stretch and enlarge the worldview of younger participants, and children will also have important ideas and experiences to share. It will be important for leaders to be open to the variety of gifts, spirituality, wisdom, and experiences present in the group. The activities in this component are written as if there were a single leader. Ideally, however, you will have youth and other adults sharing in the leadership of the intergenerational event.



About this Faith Practice

As a way of life, expressed in gratitude, living stewardship is a practice that involves all that it means to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. It grows out of a deep caring for and joy in who we are as God's created people and the natural world in which we live. Living stewardship is about how we live our lives and how our lives express our values. It affects all of our decisions, especially the ones we make about the natural and human resources entrusted to us for care. Living stewardship is shalom: living in harmony with others and the world. It is about our relationships, liberation, grace, justice, peace, and mutuality as well as our material possessions. As faithful stewards, we are joined by our common gift of life and the reality of finite resources. We recognize that each of us is a mixture of neediness and fullness and so have responsibility to care for each other as we honor the holy in creation and ourselves. As faithful disciples, we are called to live as generous creatures created by a generous God who mutually shares responsibility with us for all creation. Stewardship involves all people because all are connected in mutually covenanted stewardship within God's original intent for creation.

Intergenerational Options

These activities may be used to build an intergenerational event for the commencement or conclusion of your series on "Living Stewardship" (up to 3 hours). Or the activities may be used independently (15–20 minutes each), interwoven with age-specific activities throughout the series. An intergenerational event might be used during a time of year that is already set aside as special, such as Advent, Kwanzaa, Lent, Vacation Bible School, or forty days of prayer for children.

Familiarize yourself with all twelve activities, Consider the age of participants and the time available for this event, and choose a group of activities that will meet your needs. For an event lasting 1–2 hours, choose three or four activities from the list of twelve. There are enough activities for three or four events! Or choose a single activity (15–30 minutes) to use as the activity at a community meal or other gathering. Wearing name tags is a good idea, as often older and younger members of a church do not know one another's names.

Each activity ends with a prayer appropriate for the end of the session. Gather as a church family to grow together and have fun!

Intergenerational Leader Preparation

As you prepare to lead this intergenerational experience, read Genesis 1:26–31 and consider how you have heard this passage before. What stands out as you read it now? You will be gathering with a group of all ages, each entrusted by God with the care of creation, each equipped for the task with particular skills, resources, passion, and energy, and each made in the image of God the Creator. What are your hopes for this event? What gifts, commitment, or resources do you bring to your role as leader? How does the knowledge that you are made in God's image empower you for this ministry of leadership?

Prayer: Creator God may your Spirit blow through us as it did at the birth of creation. Keep us attuned to your presence and alert to your wisdom. Help us to honor one another as bearers of your holy imprint. Inspire us as we seek to share the gifts you have entrusted to our care. Amen.

Exploring & Engaging Activities

Whether we are new to a particular faith practice or an old hand with much experience, all of us benefit from new opportunities to explore the shape of the faith practice and to engage the issues of faith that the practice offers. Sometimes this is a matter of learning new ideas about the practice. Sometimes this is more about reflecting on what we have done in our practice. The activities in the Exploring and Engaging sphere help us figure out how a faith practice intersects with our life and the life of the community of faith.



Discerning & Deciding Activities

Practicing our faith always involves discernment: naming the realities of our community and world and seeking the will of God for our lives and for the world. We then decide how we will act, what we will do, what values move us forward, what faith has called us to do. The activities in this sphere give us opportunity to practice by discerning and deciding.

Sending & Serving Activities

Practicing our faith involves serving others and being sent out as empowered disciples of Jesus Christ. We need time in our exploration to plan how we will serve. We need moments that send us forth blessed by the community from which we venture out. The activities in this sphere offer opportunities to practice our faith through sending and serving.



Exploration: Discovery

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:

Genesis 1:26–31
1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17–19

1 Make a Stewardship “Connection” (Discerning and Deciding)

Leader preparation: Imagine the kinds of gifts participants might mention and consider how they might interconnect. Reflect on what gifts you offer for care of the earth.

Supplies:

- a large ball of yarn (choose a medium weight—something that you can break if you pull hard your hands but doesn't snap easily)
- a teaspoon
- scissors

Tie the end of the yarn securely to a spoon handle. Invite everyone to stand in a circle. Explain that each person must thread the spoon and yarn through themselves in some way (through a sweater sleeve, through a shoe lace or belt loop, under a bracelet or watch band, but NOT AROUND THE NECK). As each person receives the spoon, each should share one or two ways in which they help to care for the gifts and resources that God has entrusted to us by giving money, time, or talents. Start by looping the spoon with the yarn through some part of your clothing. State a way you offer gifts of time, money, or talent. Pass the spoon with the yarn to the next person in the circle. That person loops the yarn through something, states a way they share, and passes the spoon on to the next person around the circle. Continue until the yarn and spoon have gone all the way around the circle and everyone is connected. Note: All the people who have received and threaded the yarn through themselves will need to pay attention and continue to help pass out the yarn around the circle.

When the yarn and spoon have traveled all the way around, ask the group to leave the learning area and reenter, without breaking connection. This will be challenging and requires the group to cooperate. When you are safely back in the learning area, use scissors to disconnect yourselves from the yarn. Gather in a circle to reflect on the experience. Invite the group to recall the different gifts people in the group can offer one another and our world. Even though we are not connected as we were with the yarn, we are still connected in other ways as



we care for one another and our world. Invite the group to suggest some of these connections. Ask: How does what someone does in one way connect with what someone else is offering? (Suggest particular examples, based on what the group has shared. For example, someone might give money to help an organization working with the poor, while another might help protect the environment by recycling, but both are working to care for God's creation).

 **2 Washing Machine: A Drama Game (Easy Preparation) (Discerning and Deciding)**

Leader preparation: Prepare a movement to illustrate the "washing machine" (see below).

Supplies:

- Bible (preferably a children's Bible)

This is a fun cooperative game. Enjoy yourselves! Ask participants to form groups of three or four. Ask each small group to find a way to act out the object or situation that you ask them to depict by a single repetitive motion. Begin with an easy example, such as a washing machine. One person (or two) could be the tub, and the other one (or two) could be the agitator (the big part in the middle of the tub that moves back and forth to wash the clothes). The tub might rock back and forth repetitively while the agitator does a back and forth flailing motion. If you have more people, someone could be the clothes in the machine. Encourage groups to use their whole bodies. Invite groups to be creative, but stress that they must make a continuous repetitive motion, like a machine, rather than a series of actions.

Next, ask groups to add a single sound, repeated over and over, to go with their movement, for example "chug, chug" or "swish, swish" for a washing machine. First have every small group be a washing machine. Then ask them to be something else: perhaps a pair of scissors cutting paper, an axe cutting a tree. Remind participants to keep the motions simple and repetitive and to add only a single repeated sound. Then, suggest something more complex such as a train. Gather in a circle. Read aloud Genesis 1:26 or share a paraphrase such as the following: God said, let us make human beings in our image, just like me. Let them care for the fish of the sea and the birds of the air. Let them tend the cattle. Let them protect the wild animals and the snakes and insects. Let them care for all the creatures that I have made.

Have participants think of ways that we care for the creatures of the planet. Return to the small groups and have each group create a movement and sound that depicts one way people can care for the creatures of the earth. Give each group an opportunity to present their sound/movement creation.



Exploration: Scripture

3 Tell a Creation Story (Exploring and Engaging)

Leader preparation: Read the following paraphrase of Genesis 1:26–31 or write one of your own, and prepare to tell it to the group. Do an Internet search for a creation story from another culture or context. For example, see Australian *dream-*



time creation stories at <http://tinyurl.com/2fo95s7> or Native American creation stories at <http://www.tinyurl.com/25rjj8a>.

Supplies:

- poster: Orion Nebula by Stocktrek Images
<http://www.tinyurl.com/AllPosters6>

Put up the “Orion Nebula” poster and ask the group to gather around to look at it. Use the following information to tell the group about the Orion Nebula. Nebulae are enormous clouds of dust and gas far away in outer space. Over millions of years, gravity pulls the gas, dust, and other materials together to form larger and larger clumps which eventually become big enough to form stars and planets. The Orion Nebula is 100,000,000,000,000 kilometers away from Earth (on the scale of the universe, that’s fairly close). It is the closest place to Earth where stars are being made. But because the Orion Nebula is so far away, it takes light a long time to get from there to here. So when we look at the Orion Nebula we’re looking at what happened almost 1500 years ago.

Explain that in the Bible there is a story about creation. It is a story that was written down long before people knew anything about the Orion Nebula. Tell the story using the following paraphrase:

God created people to be like God. God blessed them and said to them, “You will have children and grandchildren and great-great-great grandchildren. Soon, people will live everywhere on earth. Take care of all the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and the creatures that live on the ground. I have given you plants to eat and berries to pick and trees with fruits and nuts. And all the creatures will have plants and berries and grasses to eat as well.” So, that’s what happened. God saw everything that was made and it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning on the sixth day.

Ask questions to promote conversation about this story: What do you like about this story? What does it make you think about? Tell another creation story from a different culture or context. Then invite the participants to work in small groups to make up a story of their own about creation. It might begin like this: “Long, long ago, when the universe was very new . . .” Encourage each small group to practice their story so that they can tell it to the whole group.



4 Reflect on an Image of Tenderness (Exploring and Engaging) (Easy Preparation)

Leader Preparation: Spend a few minutes in silence with the poster “Planting” and consider how this image speaks to you today.

Supplies:

- poster: Planting by Rex Goreleigh, <http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>

Put up the poster “Planting” and invite participants to gather around to take a look. Ask people to share what they notice in this picture. Ask people to form groups of three to talk about it. Suggest a question such as one of the following for them to talk about: How does this picture feel to you? Does this picture remind you of anything? If so, what does it make you think of? Gather back in the whole group. Invite the group to imagine this as a picture about God’s care for the world. Pause for a moment. Then say: Imagine that you are the plant and God’s hands are caring for you. How do you feel?



Gather in a circle, standing if possible. Ask participants to cup their hands the way the hands are cupped in the poster. Say, “Pretend I am going to ‘pretend’ to pass something very special around the circle something that we must care for. Each person must take it in their hands, very carefully, and pass it on to the next person.” Do not say what it is, but pass something light such as a soft, fluffy feather around the circle. Ask people to say what they imagined they were passing. Next, pass something heavy but very fragile, such as a beautiful glass ball. Again, ask people to say what they imagined they were passing. Invite other participants to choose something special to pass around the circle. Close by passing an imaginary butterfly, have it alight on one finger then carefully transfer it to your cupped palms. When the creature returns around the circle to you, let the butterfly go (release it with your hands) at the end.

Say a short prayer such as the following: *Thank you God, for all the special and beautiful things in our world. Help us to hold them in our care as you do. Amen.*



Exploration: Discipleship

⑤ Sing a Song and Respond with Watercolors (Exploring and Engaging)

Leader preparation: Experiment with watercolor paints. If you have not used watercolors before, ask someone to show you some basic watercolor techniques or invite a painter from your church to do this activity with the group. Arrange for an accompanist or someone to teach the group the hymn.

Supplies:

- watercolor paints
- brushes
- cups of water
- flat dishes or plates to use as palettes
- masking tape
- damp towels
- hymnbooks with the hymn “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love” (tune: Chereponi), <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong4>

Teach the hymn “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love.” Invite conversation about the lyrics of the song. What might it be like to be filled up with Jesus’ love? What would it be like to spend time with someone who was filled with love? How do we show the love of Jesus in our world? Encourage participants to create art that responds to this song in some way. Show them how to tape the paper to the work surface by putting strips of masking tape all around the edge. Wet the paper using water and brush (so that the surface of the paper is damp but not soaking wet). Create a “wash” using a very wet brush and a very small amount of paint. Paint the color over the paper to produce a very pale background color. Then choose a second color of paint and place a small dot of paint on the wash (while it is still wet). The paint will bleed out in a star-like pattern. Repeat with different colors but do not overwork the art (if too many colors are used it will end up as an overall brown or gray). Leave paintings taped in place until they dry so that the paper doesn’t curl.



If participants wish to share their art, after the finished paintings are hanging up, take a tour of the pieces that have been created. Sing "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love" again.

 **6 Self-Portraits of Gifted People (Deciding and Discerning, Sending and Serving) (Easy Preparation)**

Leader preparation: Take a moment to reflect on what it means to see yourself as "made in God's image."

Supplies:

- washable markers
- charcoal or drawing pencils
- paper (large sheets if possible)
- masking tape

Set out paper and markers, charcoal, or drawing pencils. Ask each person to make a self portrait using the art supplies that you have provided. Have everyone sign their self portrait. Remind the group that as creatures who are "made in God's image," who we are reflects the creativity and giftedness of the Holy One. Encourage participants to be creative—this portrait can be an abstract or impressionist piece, or they can use words and colors rather than an exact line drawing of themselves. The key is for people to try to convey a sense of who they are, their individual "style" or personality, and so on. When the self portraits are complete, post them in the learning area with masking tape. Tape another piece of paper beside each self-portrait. Have an "artist's tour" of each portrait. Stop at each person's self portrait and take a moment to share appreciations of the piece (things the other participants like, appreciate, notice, things the self-portrait reminds them of, and so forth.) Encourage positive responses. Then, ask the group to think of some of the gifts this person has to share with the world, things that help them to celebrate, share, and care for the gifts that life offers. For example: Sammy's jokes help people feel good; Ying helps the younger kids with crafts; Miguel is generous and shares his allowance. Encourage specific, positive comments. Have participants write their comments on the paper beside the self portrait or have people say out loud the gifts they see in each person while a leader records them.



Exploration: Christian Tradition

7 Take a Tour of Your Church (Exploring and Engaging)

Leader preparation: Gather information about the history of your congregation and the history of your denomination (date founded, major events over the years, mission involvements over the years and currently, pastors). Plan a tour through the building or arrange for someone to act as a "tour guide" for the group.

Supplies: None

Tell the story of Acts 4:32–36, as follows:

The believers gathered to talk about Jesus. They gave thanks for all that he had taught people of love, of God, and of the way to live. If someone had never heard of Jesus, they told him or her stories. Some of their favorite stories were . . . [invite the children to suggest stories about Jesus]. Some



of the believers were rich; they owned houses and land. Others were very poor. The believers who had lots of property sold it and shared the money with the poor. Then, everyone had enough and no one had too much. A man sold a field that he owned. He came and laid the money at the feet of the apostles. His name was Joseph but everyone called him Barnabas—a name that means “son of encouragement.”

Talk about what the earliest Christians did (told others about Jesus, cared for people who were poor and sick, worshiped and prayed together). Ask: What kinds of things do we do as a church family? Invite older members of the group to share memories of the way your church has helped to care for others and the world over the years.

Take the tour of your church building. Have fun. Pretend you are tourists visiting a historic site. As you visit the different spaces, talk about what goes on there. Ask participants, both old and young, to share special memories they have of something happening in that part of the building. Ask: What does our church family do to care for one another and our world?

8 Share a Meal (Sending and Serving)

Leader preparation: Invite others to help you with the meal (and with leadership in this event); this is not something you should do single-handedly.

Supplies:

- ingredients for a simple meal (something that does not require a lot of time to cook, such soup made ahead of time, or make-your-own sandwiches)
- supplies to decorate the tables

Recall with the group how the earliest followers of Jesus shared their possessions and worked together so that everyone had enough to eat, shelter, and care. At their community meals, they remembered how Jesus had shared bread and wine with his friends at the last supper and told them to do this in remembrance of him. From the shared meals of the early Christian community, we get our communion celebration. The meal is an act of justice-making—an act of sharing equally with everyone. Prepare and eat a simple meal together. Make sure that everyone has a role to play in the meal preparation or setting up and decorating the tables.

Before you eat, invite participants to say aloud things for which they are thankful as well as concerns they have for themselves, for other people, and for the world.

Alternative: Say a prayer of thanks before the meal; give thanks for the food and for those who prepared it. Invite God to help you discover ways to care for one another and the world around you.



Exploration: Context and Mission

9 Saving the Birds: Action Research (Discerning and Deciding, Sending and Serving)

Leader preparation: Do an Internet search for information on a “Lights Out” program near you. “Lights Out” programs work to reduce nighttime lighting of high rise buildings in an effort to help prevent migratory birds from hitting the build-



ings. Go to a site such as <http://lightsout.audubon.org> or search the Internet with the key words “lights out” and “migratory birds.” Find out what volunteers can do to help protect migratory birds that strike high rise buildings.

Supplies:

- poster: With hoot and squawk and squeak and bark ... by Barbara Reid
<http://www.tinyurl.com/UCCResources>
- crayons or markers
- pencils
- paper

Post a copy of the poster of the painting by Reid “With Hoof and Squawk and Squeal and Bark . . .” and invite the group to look at the poster. Ask participants: What do you like about this? How does this picture make you feel? Remember the story of Noah saving animals from the flood? What did Noah do to save the birds and animals? What are some things that people can do to protect or care for wildlife? Share information you have located about Lights Out programs to prevent migratory birds from hitting high rise buildings. Invite participants to work in groups of two or three to create their own illustrated story about someone or some group working to save a wild creature or group of creatures that are in danger, such as a group working on a Lights Out program (or helping clean up birds fouled by an oil slick, a dolphin caught in a fishing net, and so forth. You can also find lots of images to go along with these incidents.) Talk about how your group might participate in a project to help local wildlife (such as volunteering with a group that rescues migratory birds that strike high rises or making posters for a Lights Out campaign). Plan an action project in which everyone can participate.

Alternative: If you have access to computers with Internet connection, have participants do this research themselves.

10 Caring for the Earth: A Tissue Art Activity (Sending and Serving)

Leader preparation: Think about what the balls might look like when completed. How will you help the group to work together on this project? Consider the anticipated (or possible) size of the group so that you prepare sufficient supplies. This activity will not work well if groups are too large or too crowded together. If your group is large, have several balls and supplies (about one small ball for every three to four participants or one large ball for every five to six participants).

Supplies:

- large beach ball or exercise ball (the ball can be reused later)
- paint brushes
- blue and green tissue paper (if possible, obtain a variety of different shades of green and blue)
- water-soluble white craft glue (not Podge or acrylic-based glue)

Create a large planet Earth using the ball. Cover the ball with craft glue (use brushes) and paste on pieces of blue tissue paper; overlap the pieces until the ball is completely covered and none of the plastic is showing. Then tear pieces of green paper in the shape of the continents (approximate shape is fine). Paste the continents over the blue tissue using layers of green paper.

When the ball is complete and dry, have participants sit in the circle and slowly pass the ball from one person to another in turn around the circle. As the ball is held by each person, have them say one thing they love about the planet Earth.



Wonder together how God feels about Earth. Say a prayer of care for the Earth, such as the following: *Thank you, God, for this beautiful planet that is our home. Thank you for mountains and seas, forests and skies, plants and birds and animals. Help us to find ways to work together to keep our world safe; help us to keep it always blue and green and beautiful as it spins through space. Amen.*



Exploration: Future and Mission



⑩ Vision of a Future World: Body Sculpture (Discerning and Deciding) (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: This activity does not require any outside supplies but it will help if you can offer some examples or ideas to illustrate what is meant by "body sculpture." For example, show the group how an arm can be gently shaped to form a tree branch by lifting it up, curving it slightly, separating the fingers, and so on. "Practice" some possibilities in your imagination.

Supplies: None

Help the group make a collective sculpture as follows: Ask for two volunteers to be the sculptors. The rest of the group is the clay. The sculptors shape the "clay" into a statue by gently moving people's bodies or asking them to move into a particular position. Practice with a simple idea, using just one person, such as "make a statue of a child playing with a balloon." Then, make a complicated statue using many bodies.

Ask the sculptors to create a statue of a problem in our world that they would like to change. When the sculpture is created, have everyone "freeze" in position. Have people take turns stepping out of position (the sculptors take their places) so that everyone has a chance to look at the sculpture.

Reflect

Remind yourself of some of the gifts (inspiration, hope, ideas, new learning) that you gained from this intergenerational experience. Recall some of the highlights of the session. What leadership or gifts did the participants share? Pause to give thanks to God for the gifts life offers. What do you celebrate? How has this experience enriched your faith or hope? How can you let the participants know of your appreciation for the gifts they have given you? What will you do again, because it was joyful or seemed particularly meaningful? What will you do differently in future events of this kind?

Then, talk about how you could make a statue of this problem being fixed, solved, or changed. Have two new sculptors make the new statue. Again, give everyone a chance to see the new statue.

Alternative: Have people work in small groups to create a sculpture of "our hope for a future world."

⑪ Sing a Song With Movement (Sending and Serving)

Leader preparation: Arrange for an accompanist; if necessary, arrange for someone to teach this song to the group.

Supplies:

- hymnbooks (or photocopies) with the song "Take My Gifts and Let Me Love You" (tune: Talavera Terrace), <http://www.tinyurl.com/FPSong5>

Teach the song "Take My Gifts and Let Me Love You" and sing it together. Invite the group to make up simple actions to go with the words to the song. Plan to sing this song in a congregational service of worship.