



Christmas Joy Offering—“JOY”

Lesson Objectives—

- The children will learn that we share our joy with others because God shares Christ with us.
- The children will learn the names and locations of the three historically Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges that the Christmas JOY Offering supports.
- We will all understand that we have the opportunity and the responsibility to share JOY with others.
- We will discover how we are all connected to one another through the body of Christ.

Supplies—

- Card stock or construction paper
- Old (recycled) greeting cards
- Stickers
- Markers
- Crayons
- Envelopes
- Scissors
- Map of the United States

Show pictures of the Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges and the students who attend them. (Find them on each of the schools’ websites.)

Locations and backgrounds of the schools:

—Menaul School, 301 Menaul Blvd., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107; primarily Hispanic, Latino, and Native American students; grades 6–12; 98 percent of graduates go on to college; www.menaulschool.org

—Presbyterian Pan American School, 223 N. FM 772, PO Box 1578, Kingsville, Texas 78364; primarily Hispanic and Latino students who mostly live south of the U.S. border; students from 26 countries enrolled last year. Many of the students’ parents are mission workers; 85 percent of graduates go on to college; www.ppas.org

—Stillman College, 3601 Stillman Blvd., Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401; primarily African American students; founded by Presbyterians; www.stillman.edu





Christmas Joy Offering—“JOY” *(continued)*

Scripture—

Galatians 6:1–3 (MSG)

Live creatively, friends. If someone falls into sin, forgivingly restore him or her and save your critical comments for yourself. You might be needing forgiveness yourself before the day is out. **Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens, and so complete Christ’s law.** If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived.

Music—

“I’ve Got Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy Down in My Heart”

“Joy to the World”

Play songs as children arrive and again while working on greeting cards.

Welcome

Prayer

Show children the U.S. map. Ask children to place a sticker on each of the following places: Texas, New Mexico, Alabama.

Ask: What do these places have in common?

Explain that each of these states is home to one of our Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools or colleges.

Ethnicity: What is it?

Definition: ⁱⁱⁱethnicity

[eth-**nis**-i-tee]

noun, plural **ethnicities**.

1. an ethnic group; a social group that shares a common and distinctive culture, religion, language, or the like:

Representatives of several ethnicities were present.

2. ethnic traits, background, allegiance, or association:

The graph shows class enrollment by gender and ethnicity.



LESSON TWO

Christmas Joy Offering—“JOY” *(continued)*

Ask: What do all of these schools and colleges have in common?

These schools are dedicated to creating opportunity and environments for students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, built on a foundation of Christian values. Menaul School and Presbyterian Pan American School are secondary schools that prepare students for a path of higher learning, and at Stillman College, graduates are prepared for lives of leadership and service.^{iv}

Say: We are going to share our JOY with the students who attend these schools by creating and mailing “Thinking of you” greeting cards.

Show the class pictures and photos of the schools and their students.

Read Galatians 6:1–3 and Romans 12:13.

Encourage older children to look up passages in Bible. Help any who are having trouble locating them.

Read aloud, read together, read in a soprano voice, read in a monster voice, repeat after me—be creative!

Distribute crayons, markers, stickers, scissors and paper to students.

Invite each student to select a card or paper to create a new card for a student at college or school.

Explain that many of these students do not see their family for a whole year.

Say: We want to share God’s love with others, and one way we can do this is to send a “Thinking of you” card in the mail. God has given us a wonderful, huge church family, and we can lift up our brothers and sisters in Christ by being a friend.

Allow 10–15 minutes to create cards. Meanwhile, play music.

If students get done early, encourage them to create another card.

Collect the cards.

Place them in a large envelope and mail to one of the Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges (addresses are listed).

Close session with circle prayer and dismiss.

ⁱⁱⁱ<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/ethnicity>

^{iv}<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/2015-christmas-joy-offering-newsletter-blog-post/>

Written by Jennifer Whitford, Director for Children’s Ministry, Worthington Presbyterian, Worthington, Ohio

