

*Shine!*

Living as  
Children of God  
in a Restless World

**Intergenerational Retreats for Camps and Conference Centers**

**Contributors:**

Sarah Bentley Allred (Studying the Bible Together)  
Jason Graffis (Worshipping Together)  
Suzie Lane (Introduction, Planning Your Retreat, and Editing)  
Sophie Maness (Playing Together)  
Cathy Pettibone (Breaking Bread Together)  
Phyllis Rose (Graphics)



Presbyterian Mission  
**Office of Christian  
Formation**

*Shine! Living as Children of God in a Restless World* was developed by GenOn Ministries in collaboration with the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association (PCCCA) and the Office of Christian Formation in the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Scripture quotations from the COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE. © Copyright 2011 COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE. All rights reserved. Used by permission. ([www.CommonEnglishBible.com](http://www.CommonEnglishBible.com)).

Inquiries about *Shine!* may be addressed to:

Office of Christian Formation in the Presbyterian Mission Agency  
100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202  
[pcusa.org/formation](http://pcusa.org/formation)

or

Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association  
9935 Tealridge Lane, Charlotte, NC 28277  
[pccca.net](http://pccca.net)

## Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	7
Using <i>Shine! Living as Children of God in a Restless World</i> .....	7
Defining an Intergenerational Retreat .....	9
SABBATH PRACTICES.....	10
PLANNING YOUR RETREAT.....	11
Making Decisions.....	11
Leaders, Dates, Place .....	11
Registration.....	12
Activities .....	12
Materials .....	13
Safety and Confidentiality .....	14
Safe Space Policies.....	14
Alternate Activities .....	14
Confidentiality .....	14
STUDYING THE BIBLE TOGETHER.....	15
Goals.....	15
Introduction.....	15
Sessions .....	17
Living as a Child of God.....	17
Made in the Image of God.....	20
One in Christ Jesus.....	24
Shine Like the Stars.....	27
PLAYING TOGETHER.....	31
Goals.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Activities .....	32
Campfire Stories and Prayers .....	32
Tell Us A Story .....	33
Conversation Starters .....	33
26-Sentence Story.....	33
One Word at a Time.....	33

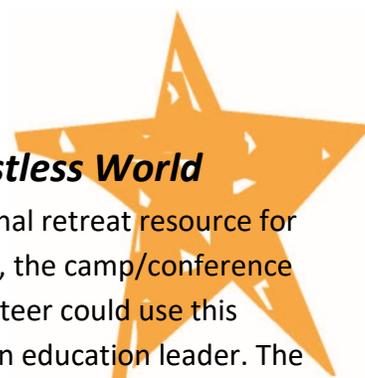
---

Closing.....	34
Dancing the Night Away .....	35
Limbo.....	35
Leaders Change.....	36
Arches .....	36
Spiral .....	37
Dance a Hymn – This Little Light of Mine .....	37
Closing.....	37
Bonus .....	38
Small Group Activities.....	39
Famous for Two Minutes.....	39
Blurt.....	39
Silly Vegetables .....	39
Motions.....	40
Countdown.....	40
This Is My Nose .....	40
On Pon Clap.....	41
Pass Your Own Name Game .....	41
Machine Charades .....	41
These Shoes Have Been .....	42
Closing.....	42
Large Group Activities .....	43
Four Corners, Four Choices.....	43
Cheerleader Rock Paper Scissors .....	44
Giants, Wizards, Elves .....	44
Build a Dance .....	45
Copy Cat .....	46
2 Truths and 1 Lie.....	46
Blind Drawing.....	46
One of a Kind.....	47
Service Project .....	47
Closing.....	47

BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER .....	48
Goals.....	48
Introduction.....	48
Meal Outline.....	49
Arriving .....	49
Welcome and Celebrations .....	49
Serving and Cleaning Up.....	49
Hopper .....	49
Grace.....	50
Table Conversation Starters .....	50
Thanking the Cooks .....	50
Activity .....	50
Dismiss .....	50
Themes .....	51
Animals .....	51
Ahoy! Matey!.....	53
Space.....	55
Olympics .....	58
WORSHIPPING TOGETHER .....	60
Goals.....	60
Introduction.....	60
Worship Templates .....	62
Morning Prayer 1.....	62
Morning Prayer 2.....	64
Evening Vespers 1.....	66
Evening Vespers 2.....	68
Worship .....	70
RESOURCES .....	75
Campfire Conversation Topics .....	76
Conversation Starter Questions.....	77
One of a Kind Questions.....	78
Doodle Bug .....	79

Who's On My Ship? ..... 80  
Dice Baseball Instructions and Score Card ..... 81  
Baseball Field ..... 82  
Table Winter Olympics ..... 83  
Ice Breaker Questions ..... 84  
Nametags ..... 85

## INTRODUCTION



### **Using *Shine! Living as Children of God in a Restless World***

*Shine! Living as Children of God in a Restless World* is an intergenerational retreat resource for use at camps and conference centers. This resource is designed for you, the camp/conference center staff. For small-staffed camp/conference centers, a strong volunteer could use this resource or leadership could be outsourced to a local pastor or Christian education leader. The retreats are principally for a church without a Christian education staff, or for multiple small churches in a presbytery or other denominational local judicatory. This resource is not intended for a church to use to lead their own retreats.

In *Shine!*, the key director of the retreat, often the camp and conference center staff person, is referred to as retreat leader.

Retreat leaders choose the activities from *Shine!* that will work best for each retreat's participants, and supplement those activities with outdoor or other activities that are available at the retreat location.

Four types of activities are included in *Shine!*:



**STUDYING THE BIBLE TOGETHER** – intergenerational groups read and reflect on Scripture in a variety of ways



**PLAYING TOGETHER** – participants experience great fun playing games, dancing, enjoying a campfire, and participating in other activities with all ages



**BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER** – mealtimes involve special seating to create intergenerational groups, a blessing for the food, a special way to thank the kitchen staff, table conversation starters, and a fun activity after the meal



**WORSHIPPING TOGETHER** – participants gather together for morning devotions, evening vespers, and one full worship service

The biblical basis for *Shine!* retreats is God's Word through Scriptures, in particular:

**Genesis 1:26** (CEB)

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth."

**Galatians 3:26-29** (CEB)

<sup>26</sup> You are all God's children through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> Now if you belong to Christ, then indeed you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise.

**Philippians 2:14-16a** (CEB)

<sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling and arguing <sup>15</sup> so that you may be blameless and pure, innocent children of God surrounded by people who are crooked and corrupt. Among these people you shine like stars in the world <sup>16</sup> because you hold on to the word of life. This will allow me to say on the day of Christ that I haven't run for nothing or worked for nothing.

Through Bible study, non-competitive recreation, shared meals, and worship, participants, together, will:

1. Understand that all are created in God's image and belong to God;
2. Recognize that, amid the restlessness of the world, God is ever committed to a deep relationship with each person;
3. Practice ways to be in a Christ-centered relationship with others.

## **Defining an Intergenerational Retreat**

*GenOn Ministries defines intergenerational ministry as nurturing Christ-centered community by bringing together two or more generations in planned and purposeful settings, where all are mutually invested.*

Therefore, intergenerational retreats are designed for all ages together, or at least two generations gathered together to grow in community. Retreats are well-planned with all participants taking equal part in activities that grow relationships with God and each other.

Retreats can be designed for a whole-church or, for a smaller age-range, for youth and parents, younger children and parents, young adults and older adults, grandparents and grandchildren. Retreats can be for a single church or multiple small churches, or family reunions and other non-church groups. Think about creating a retreat for a cross-denominational collaboration of churches in the same town, or confirmation classes and mentors. The ideas are endless!

Throughout retreats, activities take place in intergenerational groups. Planning teams decide whether the same groups stay together for the duration of retreats or if and when new groups are formed. There are many ways to create intergenerational groups. A few suggestions:

- Use different colored markers on nametags, like one color for each age group. Create groups by having different colors in each group.
- Form groups by month or quarter in which participants are born; months can be combined for larger groups.
- All participants pick a phone number they know (young children may know their home or parents' number). Leader divides participants into small groups using the first or last number of the phone number. For example: all zeros are in a group, ones are in a group, and so on, or twos and threes are in a group, sixes, sevens and eights are in one group and so on.

Intergenerational retreats can have activities that are age-segregated, as long as most activities take place in intergenerational groups, large or small. Examples of combining age-segregated activities and intergenerational activities:

- Bible study in age-segregated groups; recreation, meals, and worship with all ages together
- One recreation session in age-segregated groups; remaining recreation, meals, Bible study and worship with all ages together

## SABBATH PRACTICES

The Office of Christian Formation of the Presbyterian Mission Agency has curated five Sabbath practices through a Christian formation symposium hosted by the Office of Christian Formation in 2017. Over 30 notable ministry practitioners and academics came together to discern a short list of practices that could be used through various types of age and stage ministry. When used regularly in faith communities, these practices offer a means to connect the different life stages in life-long formation.

More information about Sabbath practices, including toolkits, can be found at [www.pcusa.org/formation](http://www.pcusa.org/formation). Each toolkit explores one of these Sabbath practices and includes “age and stage” guides that digs deeper into the practical application for specific ministry contexts. Think of these practices as Sabbath practices because each one taps into the essential nature of what it means to celebrate Sabbath communally. Not surprisingly, it’s through communal participation that we connect with God and one another in a qualitatively different way.

These five practices, which are used throughout *Shine!*, are



HOSPITALITY is practiced as participants are welcomed to retreats and as participants tend to the well-being of each other.



PRAYER is practiced in Worshipping Together, Breaking Bread Together and Studying the Bible Together.



SERVICE activities are included in Studying the Bible Together and Playing Together.



STORYTELLING is used in Playing Together, Worshipping Together around the campfire and Studying the Bible Together.



The Sabbath practice of RETREAT is lived out in every aspect of *Shine!*

## PLANNING YOUR RETREAT

### Making Decisions

Planning for retreats should begin at least six months before each event. Key areas of retreat planning, particular to each retreat, include leadership, dates and location, participants, costs, publicity, and schedules. For each retreat, use the following questions to guide decisions.

#### **Leaders, Dates, Place**

*Who is the retreat leader?* This is usually a camp and conference center staff person or a strong volunteer associated with the retreat location.

*Who is on the planning team?* Successful retreats are the work of a group of leaders, rather than a single person. The planning team can be volunteers or paid staff. All should have a strong knowledge of the retreat location, work well with others on the team, and understand the focus and objectives of *Shine!*

*Who publicizes the retreat? How is it publicized?* A multi-faceted approach to publicity is the most effective. Use mailers, social media, word of mouth, e-mail, newsletters, any means that directly connects to the churches or organizations that are invited. For churches that are new to retreats, consider these ideas:

1. Camp and conference center staff can visit churches to share about the benefits of church retreats and activities available at the retreat location, including pictures from retreats.
2. In newsletters and social media, invite those who have been on retreats to share their experiences.
3. Invite churches that have attended retreats to share their experiences with other churches via letters, pictures, and one-on-one conversations.
4. Invite a core group of churches to participate and encourage others to join them.
5. Invite two specific churches to partner together.
6. Offer discounts for first-time retreat participants.
7. Offer a family discount.

When sharing about intergenerational retreats, emphasize the positive relational aspects when multiple generations are together. The joy of the Lord crosses generations when we open our hearts and minds to the power of the Spirit of God.

What is the length of the retreat? Here are some ideas:

LENGTH	OVERNIGHT	WEEKEND	ONE DAY
START	day 1 afternoon or evening	day 1 afternoon or evening	day 1 morning
DISMISS	day 2 late afternoon	day 3 late afternoon	day 1 evening
MEALS	day 1 dinner (if starting in the afternoon), day 2 breakfast and lunch	day 1 dinner (if starting in the late afternoon), day 2 breakfast, lunch, dinner day 3 breakfast, lunch	day 1 lunch, dinner
LODGING	1 night	2 nights	none

When will the retreat take place? Determine the beginning and ending dates and times.

Where will the retreat take place? This is, likely, the location of the camp and conference center staff person. If another location is chosen, what accommodations need to be made?

### **Registration**

What are the retreat costs? Consider cost for participants, discounts that might be offered, and costs for the camp and conference center. Determine procedures for registration.

### **Activities**

What is the daily schedule? Schedules can be designed to work for each retreat. Here's one idea:

Morning: morning prayer, breakfast, large-group Bible study, recreation activities

Afternoon: lunch, small-group Bible study, free time

Evening: dinner, recreation activities, campfire, evening vespers

Post the schedule for each day around the retreat center.

What Shine! activities will be used? The activities in Shine! are intended to be flexible. They can be lengthened by adding questions/movements/directions or shortened by removing some steps. When choosing activities, consider the amount of time allotted to each activity in the daily schedule and adjust plans accordingly.

What other activities need to be added? What outdoor activities are available? Consider recreation, hiking, canoeing, or anything else available at the retreat location.

*Who will lead each activity on the schedule? What adult leaders will be needed from the churches? What materials will they need to prepare?*

*What plans need to be made for inclement weather?*

*What accommodations are needed? For example, reserve lodging, determine number of meals and location of registration check-in. Make appropriate accommodations for all participants, including those with special needs, to enjoy all the activities.*

## **Materials**

Materials are listed for each activity. Once the activities have been chosen, the appropriate materials can be gathered. For each retreat, the leader may ask individuals to bring certain items with them.

A star nametag template is included in the Resources section. To use, copy the template, making enough for all participants, and cut them out. Provide wide tip markers for participants to add their name as they arrive.



*Shine!* focuses on treating others as children of God. To reinforce this concept, Child of God buttons are available from [GenOnMinistries.org](http://GenOnMinistries.org).

## **Safety and Confidentiality**

### **Safe Space Policies**

All Safe Space policies of the camp/conference center and participating organizations must be observed during retreats. The retreat leader will communicate policies with all participants before they arrive.

### **Alternate Activities**

At times during retreats, young children or those who may be unable to concentrate for extended periods may need alternate supervised activities, like a play area with age-appropriate toys. Retreat leaders should work with other adults to ensure the safety and well-being of these young people.

### **Confidentiality**

During retreats, there may be opportunities for participants to share personal stories and feelings, yet no one should be forced to share. In order to create a safe space for participants, share these guidelines at the beginning of and during the retreat:

1. We treat each person as a beloved child of God, accepting and respecting one another.
2. You may hear personal stories during retreats. If you hear a story or feeling from someone at the retreat, you must ask for their permission before sharing it.





## STUDYING THE BIBLE TOGETHER

### Goals

1. To foster intergenerational relationships through meaningful conversations around Scripture
2. To understand God's creation of all people as children of God, made in God's image
3. To define what it means to be a child of God and explore ways to treat others as children of God

### Introduction

Retreat Bible study time provides a casual, relaxed space for growing intergenerational relationships. Bible study sessions in *Shine!* create a space to discuss the joys and challenges of moving from believing that everyone is a child of God and deserves to be treated that way to living out these truths.

Intergenerational relationships are fostered when different generations encourage each other, listen deeply, and take steps to include all ages in conversations and activities. For example, when younger participants have not spoken up, someone might say, "For this next question, choose someone to go first who hasn't yet shared, if they would like to." Or, for larger groups, leaders can use "pair and share" where two participants are paired to discuss a question. To add movement to the "pair and share," invite participants to spread out around the room.

Bible study sessions may be held inside or outside, taking advantage of special spaces at the camp/conference center. If using a large space, all participants can participate in the study together. Or Bible study sessions may be held in smaller spaces for multiple intergenerational groups or age segregated groups. To accommodate different groupings, discussion questions are provided for:

- Younger elementary (this group requires several youth or adult helpers)
- Older elementary/intergenerational groups (groups of older children require several adult helpers)
- Youth and adults

Materials are included for each session. Two sessions require tables and chairs.

With the exception of two activities for young children, all Scripture references use the Common English Bible. Though Bibles are listed as materials, the sessions work well when only the leader has a Bible.

When choosing locations for Bible study, consider the abilities of participants. For example, if participants are sitting on the ground, make accommodations for those who are unable to do so.

Because Scriptures inform all aspect of *Shine!*, Bible study is the core activity and should be required for each participant. If dividing into groups, Bible study may take place at different times in the schedule.

It may be helpful to provide tactile activities for young children and others who need activities to keep their hands busy. Soft clay, paper and crayons, and stress balls work well for these situations.

Songs are suggested in each session. Hymns from Glory to God, published by Westminster John Knox Press may be suggested.

---

## Sessions



### **Living as a Child of God**

#### **Scriptures**

- Genesis 1:26
- Galatians 3:26-29
- Philippians 2:14-16a

#### **Materials**

- easel paper
- marker for each participant
- Bibles
- banner materials: 3 pieces of white cotton fabric cut to 24" x 60", water-based paint, brushes, water, markers, anything else that might be used to create banners, water and soap for cleaning up, 3 post-it notes, 3 dowel rods, string

#### **Set Up**

- Read the session outline thoroughly.
- Read Genesis 1, Galatians 3, and Philippians 2.
- Spend time in prayer with Scripture and for the Bible study participants.
- Write verses from Genesis 1:26, Galatians 3:26-29, and Philippians 2:14-16a on separate sheets of easel paper in large print. Put each page and markers on separate tables. For larger groups, make multiple copies of the easel pages.
- Write one of the following phrases on each of three post-it notes: "Image of God," "One in Christ Jesus," and "Shine Like the Stars."
- Attach a dowel rod to one short end of each piece of banner fabric and attach string to each end of the dowel rods for hanging.

## **Session Outline**

### Welcome

1. Welcome the group. Give instructions for where participants should sit.
2. Invite participants to share with each other the things they are looking forward to the most about this retreat.

### Listen

1. Invite participants to share words and phrases that describe children of God.
2. Introduce Scriptures by sharing that this session uses three Scriptures that describe being a child of God.
3. Divide participants into three large intergenerational groups. Assign each group to tables with easel pages, one group per Scripture.
4. Invite groups to read the Scripture on the easel page. Then, use the markers to underline important words, draw pictures of the Scripture, or write words to describe the Scripture.
5. After three minutes, have groups move to a new Scripture. All groups rotate to all Scriptures.

### Respond

1. Invite participants to one large group. Discuss the Scriptures using the following suggestions:
  - Wonder together about how the three Scriptures are alike.
  - Wonder together about what it feels like to be created in the image of God.
  - Wonder together about what it means to be one in Christ Jesus.
  - Share a story about someone you know who shines like a star in the world.
  - Wonder together about ways we can help others shine like stars in the world.
2. Making Banners
  - a. Put one banner, art materials and a labeled post-it note on each table.
  - b. Divide participants into three intergenerational groups and assign each group to a banner.
  - c. Invite groups to look at the phrase on their post-it note and brainstorm ways to illustrate it on their banner using the available art materials. Encourage groups to have all ages participate in the banner making.
  - d. Tell groups how much time they have to make their banner and give them plenty of notice as time is coming to a close.

NOTE: Though all ages should be encouraged to participate in the banner making, have an alternate activity ready for young children or others who may prefer something else.

### Send

---

1. Invite one participant to lead the closing prayer with participants repeating each phrase:  
Gracious and loving God,  
thank you for making us in your image,  
for creating us to be in relationship with you,  
for surrounding us with new friends  
and friends we have known forever.  
Help us to live in ways that show others  
we are your children.  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen.
2. As an alternative or addition, sing "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

## **Made in the Image of God**

### **Scripture**

- Genesis 1:26

### **Materials**

- timer
- paper and writing implements or play dough (when children are present, we highly recommend offering these kinesthetic ways of engaging in the Bible study)
- smartphone app from [www.inaturalist.org/](http://www.inaturalist.org/) (optional)

### **Set Up**

- Read the session outline thoroughly.
- Read the first chapter of Genesis.
- Spend time in prayer with Genesis 1:26 and for the Bible study participants.
- Map out an area for a brief group nature walk.

### **Session Outline**

#### Welcome

1. Welcome the group.
2. Give any instructions for where participants should sit for this session.
3. Invite participants to share their favorite part of creation with three different people near them.

#### Listen

1. Introduce Genesis 1:26 by inviting participants to share what they remember about the creation story from Genesis 1. Welcome all responses. Some points that might be shared:
  - “The earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep” (Genesis 1:2).
  - “Day by day, God created all that is: light and water, dry land and vegetation, sun, moon, and stars, and then creatures of every kind.”
  - Finally, God created humans. God saw all that was made and it was good. And on the seventh day God rested.
2. If Bibles are available, invite participants to locate Genesis 1:26. Older participants can help younger participants.

3. Invite two participants to read Genesis 1:26 for the whole group as follows:
  - a. Invite reader 1 to share the verse with enough volume for all to hear.
  - b. Set the timer for 15 seconds. Invite participants to think quietly about the verse for 15 seconds. This is a time of quiet, not silence. There may be some sounds such as sneezing or shifting. That's ok!
  - c. Invite participants to hear the Scripture again, this time listening for important words.
  - d. Invite reader 2 to share the verse with enough volume for all to hear.
4. Form groups of three, trying to have a variety of generations in each group, and invite participants to share their important words with their group.

### Respond

1. Determine groups for Scripture reflection. Choose topics to discuss using the following suggestions:

#### Topics for intergenerational groups or older children:

- Share the word that was important to you and why you chose that word.
- Wonder together about what it means to be made in the image of God.
- Wonder together about ways to treat others as children of God. Share ways to put these ideas into practice after returning home.
- Share stories about ways people care for animals as this verse directs.

#### Topics for youth and adults:

- Share what you noticed in listening to this verse. What word was important to you?
- Wonder together about what it means to be made in the image of God.
- Wonder together about the difference in the *image* of God and being made in *God's likeness*.
- Wonder together about what this verse teaches about treating each other and the earth. Share ways to put these ideas into practice after returning home.
- Wonder together about what this scripture tells us about God.

Topics and activities for younger children:

- Share Genesis 1:26 from The Message with a helper reading each phrase below and the children repeating it.

God spoke:

“Let us make human beings in our image,  
make them reflecting our nature  
So they can be responsible  
for the fish in the sea,  
the birds in the air,  
the cattle,  
And, yes, Earth itself,  
and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.”

(Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from THE MESSAGE, copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, a Division of Tyndale House Ministries.)

- Invite conversation appropriate for their ages using these ideas:
  - a. Wonder together about what it sounds like when God speaks.
  - b. This verse tells us that God created human beings. What is a “human being”? [people]
  - c. This verse also tells us that people are created in God’s image. That means we can all make good choices, we can all think about good things, and we can care about others just like God does.
- Teach the following prayer, having children repeat each phrase and action:

God made the sky. (*stretch arms up to the sky*)  
God made the sea. (*slowly bend down to touch the ground*)  
God made you. (*reach arms out to indicate all others in the room*)  
God made me. (*pull arms inward to point to yourself*)  
Thank you, God. (*bring hands together in a prayer position and bow your head*)

2. Nature Walk

- a. Invite participants to take a walk together as a way to give thanks for creation. Share that our ability to explore nature with our senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste) are gifts from God. Reflections and pictures from the walk may be shared in worship.
- b. Determine if/how groups are formed for the walk. Give specific directions for the path and the time to return. Also, be clear about groups staying together, whether or not foliage can be touched and/or picked up, and keeping a low level of noise in order to hear sounds of nature.
- c. While groups are walking, invite participants to look and listen for things listed in Genesis 1:26. Invite participants to be fully present in the walk, to see what they notice through sight, sound, smell, and touch. Some suggestions:
  1. Feel the tree bark. Smell the flowers. See how many different sounds you can hear.
  2. If Internet is available, use the free app at [www.inaturalist.org/](http://www.inaturalist.org/) to identify plants, trees, and animals.
  3. Take pictures of interesting findings.
  4. As a service opportunity, invite participants to pick up trash as they walk.

Send

1. When all groups return, teach and say together the prayer above in “Topics and activities for younger children.”
2. As an alternative or addition, sing a verse from “For the Beauty of the Earth”

## **One in Christ Jesus**

### **Scripture**

- Galatians 3:26-29

### **Materials**

- Bible for each participant
- sheets of easel paper
- markers and/or crayons

### **Set Up**

- Read the session outline thoroughly.
- Read Galatians chapter 3.
- Spend time in prayer with Galatians 3:26-29 and for the Bible study participants.
- Set out a large piece of paper and markers, crayons, or colored pencils in the meeting space so participants can doodle during the session.

### **Session Outline**

#### Welcome

1. Welcome the group. Give any instructions for where participants should sit.
2. Invite participants to share with one other person one thing that makes them unique.

#### Listen

1. Introduce Galatians 3:26-29 as part of Paul's letter to the people of Galatia. There was some disagreement among the people about who could claim to be a child of God – those who had faith in Jesus Christ or those who acted according to the laws given in the Hebrew Scriptures.
2. If Bibles are available, invite participants to locate Galatians 3:26-29. Older participants can help younger participants.
3. Invite two participants to read Galatians 3:26-29 for the whole group as follows:
  - a. Invite reader 1 to share the verses with enough volume for all to hear, while inviting participants to listen for anything that stands out to them.
  - b. Invite participants to share anything that stood out to them.
  - c. Invite reader 2 to share the verses with enough volume for all to hear, while inviting participants to listen, again, for anything that stands out to them.
  - d. Invite participants to share anything that stood out to them on the second reading.

## Respond

1. Determine groups for Scripture reflection. Choose topics to discuss using the following suggestions:

### Topics for intergenerational groups or older children:

- Invite participants to share what stood out to them, whether on the first reading or second reading. Invite participants to look for others who had the same thoughts. In those groups, invite participants to share about baptisms they have seen.
- Wonder together about what this Scripture tells us about how we should live and move in this world. Share ways to put these ideas into practice.
- Wonder together about how to be “one in Christ Jesus.”

### Topics for youth and adults:

- Invite participants to share what stood out to them, whether on the first reading or second reading, and why it was important.
- Share stories about people who live and move in this world according to this Scripture.
- Wonder together about what it means to be clothed in Christ.
- Share the story of your own baptism or a baptism you witnessed.
- Wonder together about what it means to be “one in Christ Jesus.”
- Wonder together about what it means to “belong to Christ.”

Topics and activities for younger children:

- Share Galatians 3:26-29 with a helper reading each phrase and the children repeating it.

“You are all God’s children  
through faith in Christ Jesus.  
All of you who were baptized into Christ  
have clothed yourselves with Christ.  
There is neither Jew nor Greek;  
there is neither slave nor free;  
nor is there male and female,  
for you are all one in Christ Jesus.  
Now if you belong to Christ,  
then indeed you are Abraham’s descendants,  
heirs according to the promise.”
- Invite conversation appropriate for their ages using these ideas:
  1. Have you ever seen a baptism? If so, what happens in a baptism?
  2. Think about these words, “you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Does that sound like some of us belong to Jesus and some of us don’t?
- Lead children in repeating this phrase three times, “We are all one in Christ Jesus.”

2. One in Christ

- a. Divide into intergenerational groups of 6 to 8 people. Give groups a sheet of easel paper and markers and/or crayons.
- b. Invite groups to brainstorm ways to illustrate the phrase, “We are all one in Christ Jesus” and then draw their creation.
- c. Post the pictures where they can be seen by all.

Send

1. As a closing prayer:
  - a. Invite groups to take turns sharing about their pictures.
  - b. Then, the leader says, “Thanks be to God! And all God’s children say”
  - c. All say, “Amen!”
- As an alternative or addition, sing “They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

## **Shine Like the Stars**

### **Scripture**

- Philippians 2:14-16a

### **Materials**

- Bible for each participant
- paper and writing implements
- construction paper, scissors, contact paper, tape, star template (example of star template here [www.firstpalette.com/printable/stars.html](http://www.firstpalette.com/printable/stars.html)), tissue paper, cardboard, hole punch, string

### **Set Up**

- Read the session outline thoroughly.
- Read Philippians 2.
- Spend time in prayer with Philippians 2:14-16a and for the Bible study participants.
- Make a copy of the Scripture script below. Choose readers ahead of time so that they can practice before the Bible study session starts.
- The art activity needs to be done at tables. One way of making sun catchers can be found here: [creativefamilyfun.net/stained-glass-stars/](http://creativefamilyfun.net/stained-glass-stars/).
- Cut out cardboard star templates.

### **Session Outline**

#### Welcome

1. Welcome the group. Give any instructions on where participants should sit.
2. Invite participants to think about someone they know who always brightens their day, someone who makes the world a little lighter. Invite participants to share with one other person.

#### Listen

1. Introduce Philippians 2:14-16 by sharing that Paul has heard that churches are struggling with what it means to live 'in a manner worthy of the gospel' (1:27).
2. If Bibles are available, invite participants to find Philippians 2:14-16. Older participants can help younger participants.
3. Invite five participants to read Philippians 2:14-16a using the script below. Invite readers of different ages or generations. Space the readers out among the group and encourage

them to read with volume and energy. Share with all participants that they will hear the Scripture two times.

Reader 1            “Do everything  
Reader 2            without grumbling and arguing  
Reader 3            so that you may be blameless and pure,  
Reader 4            innocent children of God  
Reader 5            surrounded by people who are crooked and corrupt.  
Readers 2           Among these people  
Readers 3, 4, 5    you shine like stars in the world  
Reader 1            because you hold on to the word of life.”  
*Wait 3 seconds, then repeat.*

### Respond

1. Reflect on Scripture. Determine groups for Scripture reflection. Choose topics to discuss using the following suggestions:

Topics for intergenerational groups or older children:

- Paul writes, “Do everything without grumbling and arguing.” Share topics that people grumble and argue about.
- Paul says the Philippians are surrounded by people who are “crooked and corrupt.” Wonder together about groups that might be considered crooked and corrupt.
- Share stories about people who shine like stars in the world.
- Wonder together about what this Scripture tells us about God.

Topics for youth and adults:

- What did you hear in this Scripture? What words or phrases seem important?
- Wonder together about what this Scripture teaches us about God.
- Wonder together about what it means to be “crooked and corrupt.”
- Share stories about people who shine like stars in the world.

Topics and activities for younger children:

- Share Philippians 2:14-16a from The Message with a helper reading each phrase and the children repeating it. Invite the children to use their face to show the phrases in italics (you may need to go over the phrases before reading). Do the reading and actions twice.

“Do everything readily and *cheerfully*—  
no *arguing*, no bickering,  
no second-guessing allowed!  
Go out into the world uncorrupted,  
a *breath of fresh air* in this squalid and polluted society.  
Provide people with a glimpse of good living  
of the living God.  
*Carry the light-giving Message*  
into the night.”

(Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from THE MESSAGE, copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, a Division of Tyndale House Ministries.)

Invite conversation appropriate for their ages using these ideas:

- Wonder together about stars. When do we see stars? What do they look like?
- Share about things you like to do that make you really happy. Share that when we show others that we love them, that can make us really happy, like stars shining in the sky.
- Wonder together about people we know who might need our love right now.

## 2. Create Stars

- a. Hand out materials for star suncatchers.
- b. Invite participants to cut out a large star from construction paper using the cardboard templates. Cut around the inside of the construction paper stars to create a star outline with an empty middle.
- c. Stick the star outline to contact paper and use pieces of tissue paper, cut or torn, to fill in the middle.
- d. Place another piece of contact paper on top and cut around the outside of the star.
- e. The stars can be taped on windows or hung up with string for worship.

Send

1. Choose one person to say the closing prayer, an adaptation of Philippians 2:14-16a from The Message.

Loving God, help us to live and move in this world readily and cheerfully without arguing, without second-guessing.

Be with us as we go out uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air.

Guide and direct us as we carry the light-giving Message out into your world.

Amen.

As an alternative or addition, sing “Lord, I Want to Be A Christian” or “This Little Light of Mine”





## **PLAYING TOGETHER**

### **Goals**

1. To play and laugh together
2. To grow relationships with others through movement activities
3. To invite faith storytelling
4. To have fun!

### **Introduction**

Playing and laughing together levels playing fields and breaks down barriers. In the moments we are laughing, it does not matter who is old or young, tall or short, rich or poor. We are all in this life together. Knowing each other a little bit better, having funny memories to share, and hearing each other's stories opens us up to seeing God in one another. Our laughter opens up the lungs and makes room for the spirit of God to enter. When we play together, our guard is lowered and Christ-centered relationships grow. It is in this setting that we truly treat each other as children of God.

Playing Together offers a variety of recreation experiences, from large and small group games to a campfire to dancing. Also, use specialized recreation activities available at your camp/conference center.

When choosing activities for the retreat, consider the following:

1. Available spaces: Will all recreation be outside, inside, a combination? How will the particular retreat location be utilized? How long will it take for participants to travel to/from the recreation location? What set up will need to take place for the chosen activities?
2. Age and abilities of participants: What accommodations will be made for participants with mobility challenges? If young children or older adults are present, how will they be included in the recreation plans?
3. Energy levels: Are all activities high energy? What quieter types of recreation will be included? What is the noise level for planned activities?
4. Sound: Does the leader need to use a microphone to give directions?
5. Practice: Games are more likely to be successful if the leader has practiced the game with family or friends before leading.

As Playing Together time comes to a close, offer prayers of gratitude for those who played and laughed together, and for the wonderfully creative and abundant love of God.

---

## Activities



### **Campfire Stories and Prayers**

Campfires are a great way for all ages to get to know one another through fun activities and stories. Hearing one another's stories helps us understand and appreciate each other a bit more. When we understand and appreciate each other, it is easier to treat one another as a child of God.

This activity is appropriate for all ages. If young children are present, the helpful phrase, "big ones help little ones" may be used. It is always fine for young children to partner with a parent.

If an outdoor campfire is not possible, meet indoors in front of a fireplace or use a circle of chairs with a pretend campfire in the middle.

Leader chooses from the activities listed to encourage storytelling.

As participants arrive, divide them into small intergenerational groups of 8 – 10 people to participate in the chosen activities. Afterward, leader gathers back together for sharing.

### ***Tell Us A Story***

#### Materials

- Campfire Conversation Topics, one per group (in the Resources section)

In small groups, invite participants to choose a number between one and ten, referring to the numbered Campfire Conversation Topics. As a number is chosen, the topic is shared with that person, who may share about their topic. Allow for passing on a topic and choosing another number if the topic seems too challenging or uncomfortable for the participant.

### ***Conversation Starters***

#### Materials

- Conversation Starter Questions, one per group (in the Resources section)

In small groups, invite conversation using the Conversation Starter Questions, inviting all participants to respond. Make sure to include all participants.

### ***26-Sentence Story***

In small groups, tell a story using each letter of the alphabet as the first letter of each sentence. The first person begins the story using the letter A to start their sentence. For example, “A long time ago there lived a giant.” Participants take turns adding to the story continuing through the alphabet. Try to finish the story in 26 sentences.

From [101 Games That Teach Storytelling Skills](#) by Anthony and Mike Burcher with permission.

### ***One Word at a Time***

In this storytelling game, each person in the small group adds one word at a time. Establish the order, so each person knows who goes before them. Then, each one may add a word. For example, person one says, “Once,” person two says, “upon,” person three says, “a,” person four says, “time,” and so on. Have fun with the story!

From [101 Games That Teach Storytelling Skills](#) by Anthony and Mike Burcher with permission.

***Closing***

Materials

- Words to the chosen song, guitar or other musical instrument to accompany the song
- Candles may be used.

Gather back in the big group around the campfire. If using candles, light them now.

Invite small groups to share something from their group.

Ask for prayer concerns by inviting participants to raise their hands to share.

The leader prays for all that was shared.

Close by singing a favorite camp song that is easy for the group.

## **Dancing the Night Away**

This is a fun night of easy, non-threatening movement for everyone. No dance skill is necessary. Participants are encouraged to have fun being together with upbeat music.

This activity takes place in a space with a smooth floor, clear of debris and other items that could get in the way of great fun. Provide limited seating on the sides of the room. Because everyone can easily be included in this event, all ages should be encouraged to participate.

### Materials

- microphone
- sound system appropriate for the space
- appropriate music for each of the dances and the means to play the music

## ***Limbo***

### Materials

- limbo pole, broomstick, or rope

### Music

- fun, upbeat music, like “Twist and Shout”

Invite two people, preferably adults, to hold a limbo pole, broomstick or rope horizontally, up high and straight. Invite participants to form a line and go under the limbo stick, one person at a time. After the first person goes under the limbo pole, they circle around to the back of the line. Take turns going under the limbo pole until the first person is at the front of the line. Lower the pole slightly, and start the line again. Continue until nobody is able to go under the pole.

### **Leaders Change**

#### Music

- upbeat music, like “Old Time Rock and Roll” by Bob Seger

Divide into groups of 8-12. One idea for breaking into groups could be the day of the month of the participants’ birthday. Group 1’s birthday day of the month is 1- 7, group 2’s birthday day of the month is 8- 15, group 3’s birthday day of the month is 16 -23, and group 4’s birthday day of the month is 24 - 31.

Invite groups to spread out a bit and form circles. Leader should make sure groups have a mix of generations.

Invite one person in each small group to go to the middle of each circle. The leader could say that the tallest person or the person wearing the most blue (or some other designation) should go to the center of the circle.

Leader starts the music. The person in the middle moves (dances!) in any way while staying in the middle. Everyone else in the small group follows that person. After 16 - 20 seconds, the leader says, “Leaders Change,” which means the person in the middle of each circle points to someone new in their circle, and that person goes to the middle and leads more moves, which the small group copies.

### **Arches**

#### Music

- fun, upbeat music works well

Form one big circle. Invite everyone to put out their left thumb and point it to the left; that is the direction to face and walk. Choose two people to form an arch, one on the inside of the circle, one on the outside of the circle, holding hands up high, so people are walking underneath the arch, like London Bridge.

When the music starts, the circle moves single file, walking to the left in time to the music. When the music stops, the arch lowers (arms are lowered) to close one person in the arch. This person goes to the middle. The music starts again. When a second person is caught, this person and the first one caught form a second arch. Keep playing going at a good pace. Once there are several arches, the first arch can dissolve and walk around the circle. Continue adding the dissolving arches as long as time permits.

### ***Spiral***

#### Music

- moderate tempo music, modern tunes, children's songs or a lively folk tune

Form one big circle with everyone holding hands. The leader is a part of the circle. The leader drops hands with the person holding their right hand. Now it is a broken circle. The leader gently winds the dancers around in a spiral motion towards the center of the circle, moving to the right. When the spiral is tight, the leader turns to the right and gently unwinds the circle until all are back in one big circle formation. Repeat with another leader. Continue as long as time permits.

### ***Dance a Hymn – This Little Light of Mine***

#### Music

- recording of "This Little Light of Mine"

Form one big circle with everyone holding hands and facing the center of the circle. Leader teaches the motions below to the song before playing the music.

1. "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine" – circle left 8 steps
2. "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine" – circle right 8 steps
3. "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine" – walk into the center 4 steps raising hands, and back out 4 steps lowering hands
4. "Let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine" – drop hands and turn around in 8 steps; while turning, raise the right hand with the index finger pointing up to represent a lit candle.
5. "Hide it under a bushel, no!" – join hands and walk into the center and bow
6. "I'm going to let it shine" – straighten up and walk back out
7. Repeat 5 and 6.
8. Repeat 5 and 6.
9. Repeat 4.

### ***Closing***

Form one big circle.

Share: "Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us "there is time for everything under heaven...a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance."

When we dance, laugh and play together, it helps us know one another and be present with one another when we mourn and weep.

---

Children of God, care for one another. It is who we are and whose we are.  
Know our creative God loves you deeply.  
Go in peace.”

***Bonus***

Two easy dance activities, perfect when there are lots of young children, are the Hokey Pokey and Bingo. Music is available online for both dances. With children leading in a circle, adults and youth will happily jump in.

## **Small Group Activities**

Small group activities are designed for ages four and up. Before starting, divide into intergenerational groups of 8-10 participants. See the “What Is an Intergenerational Retreat?” for suggestions on dividing into groups. Instructions for games are the same for all small groups.

No materials are needed for these activities, though some may take place around tables.

### ***Famous for Two Minutes***

Form a circle. Invite one person to be famous for two minutes. This person goes to the middle of the circle. The rest of the group takes turns asking random, funny questions, like “What movie did you star in?” “Do you like camping?” “What designer are you wearing?” “What is your favorite game?” After two minutes, a new famous person goes to the center of the circle. Play continues until all have had a turn to be famous.

### ***Blurt***

For this game, small groups may need some distance between them as this game can be very noisy.

When the leader says, “Go!,” participants, together, blurt out a word. The group challenge is to try to end up with the whole group saying the same word. Participants continue to blurt out words until everyone says the same word. If needed, the leader can help participants to get the idea because the goal is for everyone to say the same word.

### ***Silly Vegetables***

Invite each participant to choose a fruit or vegetable. Participants stand in a circle, and, one at a time, share their fruit or vegetable with the group. Everyone in the circle needs to be familiar with all the fruits and vegetables, so go around a couple of times with participants saying their vegetable.

Participant A starts the game by saying their fruit/vegetable twice followed by choosing another participant (participant B) and saying their fruit or veggie twice. Then, participant B says their fruit/veggie twice followed by saying participant C’s fruit/veggie twice. Continue until all have

had a turn. Always begin with your own fruit/veggie and then say someone else's fruit/veggie without pausing in between.

For example, participant A chose apple, participant B chose cucumber, participant C chose banana, and participant D chose corn. So, participant A says: "apple apple cucumber cucumber." Participant B says: "cucumber cucumber banana banana." Participant C says: "banana banana corn corn." Participant D says, "corn corn apple apple" (going back to the beginning).

Once the group is successful, invite them to repeat the whole activity, repeat the activity speaking with their top and bottom lips over their teeth. Get ready for lots of giggling!

### ***Motions***

Invite one person to either leave the room or hide their eyes. While this person is away or their eyes are covered, the group silently chooses a leader. This person moves in subtle ways that the group follows. The person who was out of the room or had eyes covered stands in the middle of the circle, watches the movements and tries to figure out who the leader is. They get to make three guesses. Whether they are successful at choosing the leader or not, the group picks a new person to leave the room and a new person to lead the motions.

### ***Countdown***

Participants take turns counting from the number of participants who are in the room (ten perhaps) to zero. If two or more participants say a number at the same time, the counting starts over. If participants are tempted to strategize, invite participants to close their eyes during the counting. If the group is successful at counting down to zero, then count from zero to as high as they can count without two people speaking at the same time.

### ***This Is My Nose***

One participant starts by saying another participant's name, followed by, "this is my [body part]" while pointing to another body part. For example, Jim starts and Lisa is second. Jim points to his *ear* and says, "Lisa, this is my nose." Lisa responds by pointing to her *ear* and saying "Lee, this is my elbow. Lee goes next, repeating the actions with different body parts. Other players may use their fingers on one hand to countdown from five to zero before the person speaking says their whole line.

### ***On Pon Clap***

Leader teaches these words and motions to the group:

- On = fingers (of either hand) flat on top of head pointing right or left
- Pon = fingers (of either hand) flat pointing right or left under chin
- Clap = fingers together with a flat hand clap with hands pointing across the circle to the next person who then begins with the ON and starts the process over again. The person clapping must make eye contact with the next person.

Designate the starting person who says and does the motion for ON (pointing either left or right). The person pointed to says PON and “points” with their motion to the person on either side of them. This person CLAPS and points with their hands to a new person, but they do NOT say “clap.” Do a couple of practice rounds! Participants who make a mistake become hecklers who try to get others to mess up. Hecklers can say ANYTHING to heckle with three conditions: it must be “G” rated, they cannot obstruct any views, and they cannot TOUCH anyone!

Alternate version:

Play as a name game by calling out a person’s name with the clap.

### ***Pass Your Own Name Game***

Small group forms a circle. The youngest participant goes first by pointing a straight arm at a participant across from them in the circle. With the point, the pointing player must call out their OWN name, not the name of the person they are pointing at. Participants repeat the motions when others point to them.

### ***Machine Charades***

(A good way to end small group activities) Small group thinks of a machine and “displays” the machine by doing the actions and making the noises of the machine. Everyone in the small group should participate. After some practice time, all small groups come back together and share the actions and noises for their machine while the other groups guess the machine.

***These Shoes Have Been***

Invite groups to sit on the floor or in chairs in a circle. Participants take turns sharing stories about where the shoes they are wearing have been. Participants can be as specific as they wish about one certain place, or try to actually think about all of the places that the shoes have been.

***Closing***

Invite all to give a round of applause!!

Make any announcements about the schedule.

Invite participants to thank four people for playing and laughing with them today.

## **Large Group Activities**

Large group activities are designed for ages four and up to be done together in the same space either inside or outside. Through these games, relationships grow while laughing and enjoying each other's company.

### Materials

- paper and markers, one of each per person
- One of a Kind Questions page (in the Resources section)
- deck of cards (If there are more than 52 people, use two decks. Divide decks into four piles by suit and four copies of the question sheet. Do this for each deck. Have the question sheet and the piles of cards (one suit per group/ one question sheet per group) ready for one person from each group to come up and get the group materials.

## ***Four Corners, Four Choices***

### Materials

- categories for the leader

Participants gather, standing, in the middle of the room. Leader calls out a category along with four choices of response and the corner of the room that represents each choice. After participants hear the category and choose their favorite response, they go to the appropriate corner for their choice. If participants are unable to make a choice, they should either stand in the middle of the room or make a random choice.

### Categories:

1. Favorite season of the year (fall, spring, winter, summer)
2. Favorite sport (basketball, football, soccer, volleyball)
3. Favorite holiday (Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, your birthday)
4. Favorite time of day (early morning, late night, lunch time, sunset)
5. Favorite kind of vacation (beach, mountains, staying home, seeing family)
6. Quarter of year in which their birthday falls: January-March, April - June, July - September, October - December

After participants have moved, invite them to meet others in their group and share one thing they like related to the category. After one minute, call out another category and response choices. Repeat as time allows.

### ***Cheerleader Rock Paper Scissors***

Invite participants to form a large circle around the leader.

Share that participants are going to play Rock Paper Scissors with a twist. The twist will be that once participants have played a round against someone, the winner goes to find someone else to challenge. The person who lost the round, from now on, become their supporter. The supporter must follow the winner around the space chanting their name, and clapping and cheering for them.

Whenever someone loses a round, that person's followers also must now follow the new winner. This will result in fewer and fewer active players as the game goes on, while more and more people are clapping and cheering. An active player cannot challenge someone who has already been beaten.

Play several rounds.

Before playing, clarify when to show their rock, paper or scissors. The easiest way is to say, "rock, paper, scissors, show" where participants show their hand as they say, "show."

Note: This is a noisy game, so consider those for whom loud noises may be problematic.

### ***Giants, Wizards, Elves***

This game involves two teams who will act as one of three characters: giants, wizards, and elves. Participants make the specific hand motions and noise associated with the character they are portraying.

- Wizards crouch slightly, as wizards are a bit shorter, wave their fingers as though they are casting a magical spell, and make a magical noise: "Shaazaam!"
- Giants stand on their tippy toes, raise their arms like a giant, and make a menacing growling noise: "Rarr!"
- Elves crouch down very low, cup their hands around their ears, and make a high-pitched elf noise: "Eeeee!"

Giants beat elves, because giants are able to "squash" elves. Elves beat wizards because they outsmart them and chew at their legs. Wizards beat giants because they are able to zap them with a magic spell.

Invite participants to practice the actions several times before starting the game.

Divide into two teams with each team on a separate side of the room. Teams huddle together

---

and choose a character for their team. When ready, both teams line up and stand facing the other team, about five or six feet apart. When ready, the leader says, "Three, two, one, go!!"

At this point, each team acts out their character. As soon as they do this, the winners try to grab the losers and bring them to their side. The losers try to retreat back to their own side to be safe for that round. If captured, a person now belongs to the other team.

If both teams show the same character, no one wins. Rounds keep repeating until one team wins (the other team is completely captured).

### ***Build a Dance***

Music

- upbeat dance music

Invite participants to find a partner. If someone does not have a partner, the leader may need to be a partner or have a group of three.

Each pair creates a dance move that has three parts or movements. Pairs should practice their dance enough to teach their dance to someone else.

After practicing, the leader invites pairs to reach out to another pair to make a group of four. After making introductions, pairs teach each other their dance moves and then put the two dances together in order to form one longer dance move. Foursomes practice the new dance enough to teach it to another group.

After the foursomes have practiced, they reach out to another foursome to create a group of eight, who learn each other's dances and create one dance.

All groups share their dances with the whole group.

### ***Copy Cat***

Invite participants to silently pick someone else to be their “personal leader.” Once choices are made, invite participants to close their eyes while the leader says, “When I give the signal, open your eyes, slyly look at the person you’ve chosen, and start imitating their every move and posture, but without letting them know that you have chosen them.” Continue for a few minutes, then invite participants to choose a new “personal leader.”

### ***2 Truths and 1 Lie***

Give participants a few minutes to think of two truths and one lie about themselves. Taking turns, participants share their three statements and others try to determine which statement is the lie.

### ***Blind Drawing***

Materials: paper and marker for each person

Invite participants to place their marker in the middle of their paper, look up at the ceiling until instructed to look down, and draw on their page according to the instructions given.

Alternatively, participants may place the paper on their heads until they are instructed to remove it.

Instructions:

1. Draw a tall office building on the left side of your page.
2. Draw a flag on the top of the building.
3. Draw a bus on the street in front of the building.
4. Draw a bird flying by the tenth story window.
5. Draw a lady walking her dog on the other side of the street from the bus.

Alternatively, change instructions for drawing something different, perhaps a meal theme for the day.

Invite participants to look at their picture and proudly share their drawing with others. Flip the page over and do another.

Post the pictures so they can be enjoyed throughout the retreat!

### **One of a Kind**

#### Materials

- decks of cards, divided by suit
- One of a Kind Questions, one set per group (in the Resources section)

Divide into four groups. Groups sit in a circle. Give each group a single suit of cards and a One of a Kind Questions page. If there are more than 52 participants, use two decks. Invite participants to draw a card from the cards for their group. Participants take turns drawing a card and answering the question that corresponds to the number on their card. Participants hold their card until all in the group have had a turn. The oldest person draws first, the person to their left goes next and continues around the circle. Return cards to the group's stack and shuffle the cards.

After one round, invite all participants with face cards (A, K, Q, J) to move to another group. Repeat the activity in new groups. Continue playing, choosing different cards to move to new groups.

### **Service Project**

#### Materials

- as determined for the project

Beforehand, plan a service project that participants can do for the camp/conference center. Determine materials needed and directions for the project.

### **Closing**

Invite participants to stand in a big circle. Make any announcements about the next activity and other news.

Share "Psalm 150 reminds us 'Let everything that breathes praise the Lord' and that we do indeed praise God when we all play and create together. Everyone at the same time, when I count off 1, 2, 3, name one thing or person for which you are grateful. Ready??!! 1, 2, 3! *(participants respond)* Amen. Go in peace."

(Visit [www.facebook.com/RecreationWorkshop/](http://www.facebook.com/RecreationWorkshop/) for information on the Arts, Recreation and Worship Conference.)



## **BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER**

### **Goals**

1. To share a meal together
2. To build or deepen relationships
3. To feel affirmed as a beloved child of God
4. To share our gratitude to both God and those who prepared the meal
5. To have a time of fun and joy around the table

### **Introduction**

Sharing a meal together was a centerpiece of Jesus' ministry. We continue this relationship-building practice today not just in our homes, but in our churches and during retreat experiences as well. The time spent breaking bread among generations allows for getting to know one another on a deeper level and affirming being unique and loved children of God. Sharing a meal provides an opportunity to serve one another, bond over commonalities, and explore differences, regardless of our ages. Mealtime is also a great opportunity for older participants to model child of God living, while younger participants can model and support expressing childlike faith.

In Breaking Bread Together, multiple generations gather for a shared meal that is intentionally designed to celebrate one another, have meaningful discussion, and share laughter. It usually takes place in the dining hall or other location close to the kitchen or, for some meals, in a special location, like outdoors around picnic tables. Breaking Bread Together is intended for all ages to eat together at the same time. Participation may be tailored to the ages and abilities of the group.

Each meal is centered around a fun theme that is intended to make the meal an extra special time to be together and grow relationships. The theme connects all elements of the meal together. Theme-related details are included in the Themes section.

The leader guides participants through the mealtime routine.

There may be times when other groups, not participating in the retreat, are in the same space for meals. Special attention should be made to not disrupt these groups.

## **Meal Outline**

The following outline shows the routine for Breaking Bread Together. This routine is followed for each meal. Themes, following the Meal Outline, may have additional information for parts of the routine.

### **Arriving**

Breaking Bread Together is an excellent time to form new relationships. If space and seating allow, invite participants to sit in smaller groups of 6-8 people, keeping young children with parents. As participants arrive in the dining space, the leader directs them to their seat by using a variety of ways to form small groups, like:

- Sit with someone who is new to you.
- Sit with people born in three different decades.
- Only sit with one other person from your own family.
- Count the number of tables and, as participants come into the dining room, give each person a number for their table. The first person in line goes to table 1, the second person goes to table two, etc. Once all the tables have one person, the next person goes to table one, the next person goes to table 2, etc. until everyone is seated.

### **Welcome and Celebrations**

Leader welcomes everyone to Breaking Bread Together. Leader may highlight any birthdays, anniversaries, or special accomplishments of the group. Leader shares the theme of the meal.

The leader shares guidelines for when participants can move around the dining hall, rather than everyone moving around during the meal. This way, participants can grow relationships with others while seated during the meal.

### **Serving and Cleaning Up**

Most camp/conference centers had specific mealtime instructions. Whether the food is served cafeteria-style with a serving line or family style around tables, make sure participants are acquainted with the method of serving and the procedures for cleaning up.

### **Hopper**

One way of treating others as a child of God is to look for opportunities for participants to serve others. This can happen at a table when one person is the designated hopper. Their job is to retrieve whatever is needed by someone at their table and leading the clean-up of the table after eating. Each meal theme has a fun way to choose the hopper. (A partner is always welcome to help.)

### **Grace**

Thank God for providing this meal and time together. In each theme, there is a singing option and a spoken word option. The spoken word option could be done by everyone reading in unison or by a single participant. For ease of learning, either print out the words and place on each table or plan a few moments at the beginning to teach the words to participants.

### **Table Conversation Starters**

To help facilitate discussion and help participants get to know one another while they eat, the leader can share questions from the Table Conversation Starters or print them ahead of time and place a copy on each table. Even family members might be surprised by what they learn!

### **Thanking the Cooks**

Those who prepare the food and clean up afterwards are worthy of great respect and gratitude. So, it is important to thank these children of God, the kitchen staff, who use their talents for service. When participants are almost done with their meal, the leader shares the plan for thanking the cooks using either the singing or spoken options provided. Leader teaches the thanks in a quiet practice followed by an invitation for the kitchen staff to join the participants in the dining space.

### **Activity**

No meal is complete without dessert, and no shared meal is complete without a little fun and silliness. Leader should pick an activity for participants to enjoy after the meal. Some activities may be played at individual participants' own pace, while other activities involve the whole group playing together. Activities are not competitive and are designed to be enjoyed by all ages, so the leader should gently encourage all to play. Leader should note materials and preparation needed for each activity.

### **Dismiss**

When Breaking Bread Together is over, the leader may gather participants together to give pertinent information about the next activity and invite participants to join in a closing song or prayer.

---

---

## Themes



### Animals

Arriving

Welcome and Celebrations

Serving and Cleaning Up

Hopper      The tallest person at the table (like a giraffe)

Grace

1. Sung to the tune of “Mary Had A Little Lamb”  
Let’s join voice and give our thanks,  
Give our thanks, give our thanks  
Let’s join voice and give our thanks,  
Give thanks unto our God.
2. Spoken  
Thank you, God, for gathering us together today. We give you thanks for your creation that surrounds us - from animals to the landscape to the people who gather around these tables with us. May you bless this meal that is before us and those we share it with. In your name we pray, Amen.

Table Conversation Starters

1. What is your favorite animal and why?
2. Have you ever had any pets? If so, tell us about them.

Thanking the Cooks

1. Sung to the tune of “Home on the Range”  
Oh, give me a cook  
And a kitchen crew too  
Who have chopped and stirred all that food  
They have baked up a storm  
Served the food while it’s warm  
And now we must bid them adieu

Thanks, thanks for our cooks  
You're a blessing to each of us here  
We love you it's true  
And so this is our cue  
To lift up our hands and give a cheer

2. Stampede of Thanks

Tell the kitchen staff that you have a Stampede of Thanks to share with them. On the given cue, participants start clapping with simple clap, followed by the leader directing them to get louder and louder, add in stomping, and end with a downright thunderous clapping and stomping cheer. When the leader gives the sign to end, everyone stops.

Fun and Games

1. Doodle Bug

Materials

- dice (one die per group)
- Doodle Bug sheet, one per person (in the Resources section)
- pen/pencil/markers (one per person)

Invite one person from each group to get the materials from the leader and share them with the group. Each person will draw a doodle bug on their own Doodle Bug page. Choose who will go first in each group. Take turns rolling the dice and drawing the part matching the number rolled. Doodle Bugs should be creative and unique. It is not a race!

2. Heads or Tails

Materials

- one quarter

Invite all participants to stand up and guess if the quarter, when flipped by the leader, will land with the head up or tail up. To guess heads-up, participants place their hands on their head. To guess tails-up, participants place their hands on their "tail." Once everyone is in position, the leader flips the coin. Play several times so everyone has a chance to make the right choice.

Dismiss

## **Ahoy! Matey!**

Arriving

Welcome and Celebrations

Serving and Cleaning Up

Hopper      Person with the birthday closest to today

Grace

1. Sung to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Thank, thank, thank you Lord  
For this tasty food  
You give us love and all we need  
How blest we are by you

2. Spoken

God is great and God is good,  
Let us thank God for our food;  
By His blessings, we are fed,  
Give us Lord, our daily bread.  
Amen

Table Conversation Starters

1. Have you ever been in a boat? If so, tell us about it.
2. Have you ever found a treasure?

Thanking the Cooks

Sung to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Thank, thank, thank the cooks  
For the tasty meal  
When we leave the dining room  
Full is how we feel!

## Activities

### 1. Spoon Hanging

#### Materials

- one clean spoon per person

First, invite participants to see if they can hang a spoon on their nose by placing the “scoop” part of the spoon on their nose. Once they have practiced a bit, find the best spoon hanger at each table. Invite everyone to start at the same time and see who can hang the spoon the longest. Up the challenge a bit by inviting people to try to stand, walk, sit, do deep knee bends, pat their heads and rub their tummies, etc. all with the spoon still hanging.

### 2. Who’s On My Ship?

#### Materials

- Who’s On My Ship?, one per person (in the Resources section)
- one pencil per person

Invite participants to look for others that match each item on Who’s On My Ship? Finding one person for each item. Younger children may need help from a partner.

## Dismiss

## **Space**

Arrival

Welcome and Celebrations

Serving and Cleaning Up

Hopper          Person with the most letter "S" in their full name

Grace

1. Sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

Thank you, thank you to our cooks.

We came here with hungry looks.

But you fed us everyone,

Our tummies filled, we had such fun.

Thank you, thank you to our cooks.

You should write your own cookbook!

2. Spoken

Heavenly Father, you have created each star in the sky and each of us gathered here together. We thank you for the blessings you have given. We ask that you bless this food prepared for us and that you bless those who prepared it. Amen.

Table Conversation Starters

1. Would you ever want to travel to space?
2. Have you ever been star gazing? Can you identify the constellations?

Thanking the Cooks

1. Sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

Thank you, thank you, awesome cooks,

We came here with hungry looks.

But you fed us everyone.

Our tummies filled, we had such fun.

Thank you, thank you, awesome cooks,

You should write your own cookbooks!

2. A Round of Applause

After thanking the kitchen staff, invite participants to give a round of applause by clapping their hands in a circular motion, as applause from around the galaxy.

### Activities

#### 1. Paper Rockets

Materials for each participant

- 6" x 3" white paper
- glue
- tape
- markers or crayons
- plastic straw

Decorate the paper using markers or crayons.

Lay a pencil along one long edge of the paper. To create a paper tube, roll up the paper around the pencil. Using small pieces of tape or glue, tape the end.

Close one end of the paper tube with the tape.

Insert a straw into the open end of the tube. Blow into the straw to launch the paper rocket.

More details here: [curiouskangaroos.blogspot.com/2011/07/paper-rocket.html](http://curiouskangaroos.blogspot.com/2011/07/paper-rocket.html)

#### 2. Hand Tap

Participants sit around the table and place their hands palms down on the table shoulder-width apart. Then, participants place their right arm over the arm to their right. Once everyone has their hands woven together, the starting person taps one of their hands on the table. The next hand – going clockwise – then taps. The hand tap continues around the circle as everyone gets used to where their hands are in the circle. Once the group can do this comfortably, they can add the double tap, which means the direction of the hand tapping changes to the opposite direction.



3. You're a Star

Materials:

- star shaped cut-outs (one per person)
- markers

This activity celebrates each person being made in God's image. Invite participants to write their name on a star shape. Pass the stars around, inviting each person to write a word or draw a picture describing the person named on the star. When everyone has added to each star, return stars to their owner or hang stars in the worship space.

Dismiss

## **Olympics**

Arrival

Welcome and Celebrations

Serving and Cleaning Up

Hopper        A team of the youngest and oldest people at the table

Grace

1. Sing to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?”

God who loves us, God who loves us,  
Once again, once again,  
We bow our heads and thank you,  
We bow our heads and thank you,  
A-men. A-men.

2. Spoken

Dear God, we thank you for the meal we are about to receive. We ask that you allow it to nourish us and sustain us as we go for the gold. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Table Conversation Starters

1. What is your favorite Olympic sport to watch?
2. If you had a chance to compete in the Olympics, which event would it be?

### Thanking the Cooks

1. Sung to the tune of “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”  
Salt and pepper, breads and meats... breads and meats.  
Fruit and veggies, drinks and sweets... drinks and sweets.  
Thank you Cooks for cleaning, serving too!  
Thank you Cooks for all you do...ALL YOU DO!
2. The Wave  
Thank the kitchen crew for the wonderful meal followed by participants giving them a Wave of Thanks. Groups are seated and, on cue, stand up to cheer – moving in groups from one side of the room to the other. The wave can move back and forth a few times before everyone ends in thunderous applause.

### Activities

1. Table Olympics  
Materials
  - Table Winter Olympics, one per group (in the Resources section)

Give each group a sheet of instructions. When the leader says, “Go!” groups work through the list at their own pace (likely very fast).

2. Dice Baseball  
Materials for each group
  - dice
  - pencil
  - Baseball Field (in the Resources section)
  - Dice Baseball Instructions and Score Card (in the Resources section)
  - four pony beads or small game pieces

Each group plays as one team. They are trying to score as many runs as possible before the end of the ninth inning. Each “batter” rolls the die and the number determines what happens “at-bat.” If they roll a 2 or 6, they roll a second time to see what kind of hit they got. Use the beads to represent the runners on base. Runners must be forced to move to the next base, so a runner on second does not move if the batter gets a single.

### Dismiss



## **WORSHIPPING TOGETHER**

### **Goals**

1. To glorify and give thanks to God
2. To worship God together through song, prayers, and liturgy
3. To proclaim God's Word

### **Introduction**

In worship, participants of all generations celebrate God's presence and new relationships with others using liturgy, creative expressions, music, and other actions learned and rehearsed during retreats. Retreat Scriptures are the basis for morning devotions, evening vespers, and full worship. Liturgy reflects understandings of living as children of God and treating others in the same way.

Plan each worship experience carefully considering the location, format, music, leaders, accompanists, seating, sound, use of Bibles, hymnbooks or song sheets, projection, and anything else necessary to ensure that worship focuses on God. Many plans need to be made well ahead of time, while other arrangements can be made once participants arrive.

Lean into the setting of retreats. Either worship outdoors or find ways to pull nature into the worship space. Strive to make worship feel like the rest of the retreat; warm, welcoming, and engaging. The arrangement of chairs/benches can play an important part in the worship setting. For example, having chairs/benches in a semi-circle fashion, with accompanists in the center of the semi-circle, helps all to see and hear others. Being able to see faces and hear others speak and sing makes worship engaging and intimate.

Worship can be one of the most spiritually fulfilling activities we undertake, but often our familiarity and comfort with it can cause us to unintentionally make excluding decisions. We run that risk, unfortunately, even more so in a retreat setting. The wonderful traditions, songs, and liturgy become so second nature that we start to assume everyone in attendance is as familiar with the routine as we are. The templates in this section are designed to be flexible so they can (and should) be modified to use what is familiar to the participants. However, a worship service should be planned for the least familiar participant. Teach songs, print or

project lyrics and responses, describe movements in detail. Think about worship as an act of hospitality and let that inform your service prep.

Songs are included in each template. Find song suggestions on page 74. Make arrangements for guitar players, other instruments or recordings to accompany the singing.

Gathering a small group of participants to share gifts of music can be a wonderful addition to morning devotions, evening vespers, or full worship. Set up designated rehearsal times for interested participants to practice songs they will lead.

Use the templates as written, combine sections of each for new templates, or use the templates as suggestions for creating a new worship layout.

Morning devotions are short services to start the day. They can be held before sunrise, at the start of breakfast, in a cozy, secluded spot, or any other time and place that reflects the welcoming of a new day.

Evening vespers are designed for the close of a day, around a campfire or other outside location in the beauty of God's creation where participants can be close together. Darkness may create difficulties for reading. The suggested songs are simple to learn and easy to sing. Use song sheets with flashlights or have a song leader "line out" the lyrics by saying them before each sung line.

Full worship reflects thanksgiving to God for all that has been experienced at the retreat, relationships that have formed and grown, laughter, ponderings, good rest, and fellowship. Use worship spaces at your camp/conference center or another special gathering place. Make accommodations for music, sound, words to songs and liturgy, and leadership for all parts of worship.

As devotions, vespers and worship are planned, create a list of and obtain the items needed.

## Worship Templates



### Morning Prayer 1

#### Welcome/Call

Leader: Children of God, good morning and welcome! No matter where you have come from, how you got here, or who you are, you are welcome in this place. We are all children of God, so come, let us sing to the Lord.

#### Song

Suggestion: "Here and Now"

#### Greeting

Play music (accompanied by guitars or a recording) and invite participants to mingle around the space. When the music stops, leader announces a number and participants form groups with that number of participants. Leader shares a question from Worship Questions below, and participants share their answers in their small group. If time allows, play several rounds with smaller groups first, moving to larger groups by combining groups as rounds progress. For example, use 2 to create pairs on round one, and 4 on round two where two pairs join together. Growing the groups rather than reforming helps participants to remember names; however, reforming groups causes a larger variety of interactions. The makeup of your group determines which is more important. When all participants are from the same church and know each other's names, the question to answer can help to deepen relationships. A group made of many churches probably won't even know names so that should be the emphasis. Allow enough time to answer questions, but don't let time get away from you with this activity.

#### Worship Questions

- Share about times you have experienced worship at retreats.
- Share about your favorite hymns or retreat songs.
- Is morning your favorite time of the day?
- What is the first thing you do when you get up in the morning?

### Scripture

Galatians 3:26-29

Ahead of time, invite three or four participants of various generations/ages to read the Scripture aloud simultaneously to the group. If not, consider projecting the scripture or sharing Bibles and reading the Scripture aloud collectively.

### Prayer

If possible, project prayer and invite participants to pray aloud together. To prepare for prayer, invite participants to enter a time of silence to center themselves before the prayer. If worship is outside, invite participants to focus on a particular sound in nature. Another option is to lead a breath prayer. As participants breathe in a deep breath, invite them to silently pray, "I am a child of God." As they slowly exhale, they can silently pray, "We are all children of God." Spend a minute or two on this centering prayer before inviting participants to pray the prayer below or another appropriate prayer.

"Dear God, we come together in this place from many different places. We carry different concerns and different joys, different fears and hopes, maybe even different ideas of who you are. Help us to remember that these differences, rather than separate us, should unite us. Show us that in Christ, we are all children of God, loved for all the things that make us unique. Help us to love and celebrate that uniqueness in others. Most of all, help us to be the light of your love in this world. Amen"

### Song

Suggestion: "Send Me Out"

### Dismissal

Leader shares logistics for the day's activities and then dismisses in a way appropriate for the setting.

## **Morning Prayer 2**

### Welcome/Call

Leader: Children of God, good morning and welcome! No matter where you have come from, how you got here, or who you are, you are welcome in this place. We are all children of God, so come, let us sing to the Lord.

### Song

Suggestion: "Here and Now"

If participants learned this song in the first morning devotion, use it again to help participants retain the tune and lyrics.

### Greeting

Play music (accompanied by guitars or a recording) and invite participants to mingle around the space. Explain that, when the music stops, the leader will call out a number and participants need to form groups of that number. Invite participants to introduce themselves to others in the group and answer a question, chosen by the leader, from the Ice Breaker Questions (in the Resources section) or a question of the leader's choosing. Start with small group so they can grow and the activity can be done two or three times. For example, groups of two for the first round, then groups of four and so on. Growing the groups rather than reforming helps participants to remember names, reforming causes a larger variety of interactions. The makeup of your group determines which is more important. A group all from one church might know each other's names but not know each other very well. A group made of many churches probably won't even know names so that should be the emphasis. Allow enough time to answer questions, but don't let time get away from you with this activity.

### Scripture

Philippians 2:14-15

Ahead of time, invite three or four participants of various generations/ages to read the scripture aloud simultaneously to the group. If not, consider projecting the scripture or sharing Bibles and reading the scripture aloud collectively.

### Prayer

If possible, project prayer and invite participants to pray aloud together. To prepare for the prayer, invite participants to enter a time of silence to center themselves before the prayer. If you are outside, invite participants to focus on a particular

sound in nature. Another option is to lead a breath prayer. As participants breathe in a deep breath, they silently pray, “I am a child of God.” As participants slowly exhale, they silently pray, “We are all children of God.” Spend a minute or two on this centering prayer before inviting participants to pray this prayer or another appropriate prayer.

“Dear God, in a world that seems designed to divide, show us the path to peace. In a world that seems crafted to cause comparison, show us the source of true contentment. Lead us from enmity and towards mutual forbearance. Help us to ignore the world that calls us to value opinions more than people. Show us how to seek what is truly right rather than being right. Walk with us daily and help us be a light that leads towards you. Amen”

**Song**

Suggestion: “Come! Live in the Light”

**Dismissal**

Leader shares logistics for the day’s activities and then dismisses in a way appropriate for the setting.

## **Evening Vespers 1**

The focus for tonight's vespers is that the God of all creation also chose to create each individual, and that the beauty of creation is echoed in each of us.

### Welcome/Call

Leader: "Children of God, as you gather here weary from your day, find rest. If you are troubled, find peace. Let us raise our voices together in worship."

### One or two songs

Suggestions: "Light the Fire," "Soon Love Soon"

### Scripture/Story

Genesis 1:26, Psalm 139:1-18 NRSV

Invite a younger participant to read both scriptures, at least the Genesis passage. Depending on group size and seating arrangement, two or three readers could be used.

After the Scriptures are read, leader can share the following meditation or one of their choosing. Rather than reading a meditation, memorizing parts of it makes the message more powerful. Think of it as telling a story about creation and God's love for us.

In the beginning, there was nothing. The universe was not just empty, it was...nothing. A voice from the darkness says, "Let there be light!" And the light was good. God calls out again and again as from nothing, everything is formed. Each atom and molecule being shaped by the voice of God, each star being called into existence by a Creator who looked around and decided that in all the majesty of the universe and swirling galaxies, what was missing was...you. And you aren't just some generic creation, you are created in the very image of our Creator. Our own galaxy holds between 100 and 400 billion stars, each placed by the same being that said, "We need a Tim, and a Sarah, a Rachel and a Stephen." Look at the wonder of this creation spread out before you and be reminded that we are intentionally created children of a God who loves us and believes that we each bring something special to this place. Remember that, when you start to doubt your place in this world, you were chosen. You are wanted. You are a child of God.

**Prayer**

Invite participants to prayer together, “Dear God, thank you for this day and all the blessings we have received. Thank you for the beauty of creation that is all around us in this place. When we look upon the beauty of that creation, help us to remember that we are a part of it. Help us to remember that we are all children of God. Amen.”

**Song**

Suggestion: “Give us Love”

**Benediction**

Leader shares logistics of activities after vespers or for the following morning.

Invite participants to depart in silence following the benediction, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.”

## **Evening Vespers 2**

The focus for tonight's vespers is how we recognize others as children of God and live accordingly, using the Good Samaritan as our example.

### Welcome/Call

Leader: "Children of God, as you gather here weary from your day, find rest. If you are troubled, find peace. Let us raise our voices together in worship."

### One or two songs

Suggestions: "Sanctuary," "Amazing Grace"

### Scripture/Story

Philippians 2:14-15 and Luke 10:25-37

Invite a younger participant to read these Scriptures. A youth voice can be very powerful, especially set against the majesty of God's creation and a crackling fire. Depending on group size and seating arrangement two or three readers may be used.

After the Scriptures are read, leader can share the following meditation or one of their choosing. Rather than reading a meditation, memorizing parts of it makes the message more powerful. Think of it as telling a story.

Picture this, Ryan Gosling walks alone down a dusty road, dirty from his journey, but not too dirty, handsomely dirty. As he continues down the road, he's set upon by a roving band of ninja muggers, and he struggles valiantly to an appropriately upbeat and bass heavy soundtrack. Unexplainably, explosions are going off all around the hand-to-hand battle, and at least one dove flies by in slow motion...When the dust clears our hero lays badly beaten until...who is this shadowy figure emerging from the swirling smoke? It's Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as The Good Samaritan (said in a movie-trailer voice). So, this probably isn't a story that could be made into a big budget Hollywood epic, but the story certainly deserves the attention. Our Samaritan, a person who no respectable Jew would even speak to, let alone go out of their way to help, does the unthinkable and recognizes the humanity in another. We live in a world where we are told to group ourselves by many different criteria: political leanings, socio-economic status, generational affiliation, and a whole host of other meaningless tribal labels. But all we really need to see, all we need to know is

that Christ lives in the heart of each of us. We are all neighbors, and we are all children of God.

**Prayer**

“Dear God, thank you for this day and all the blessings we have received. Thank the multitude of peoples that live on this earth and all the different cultures we exhibit. In a world that would divide us up into warring factions, helps us remember that we are family. Help us to remember that we may not always agree, but we must always love one another. In your name we pray. Amen.”

**Song**

Suggestion: “Give us Love”

This song is recommended if this song was taught in the previous vespers or if it is a new song for participants.

**Benediction**

Leader shares logistics of activities after vespers or for the following morning.

Invite participants to depart in silence following the benediction, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.”

## **Worship**

### Welcome/Call

Friends! We are all beloved children of God. Let us join together in this place to worship.

### Prayer

God, be in this place as we learn, sing, and grow. Help us to feel your presence and to see your light in those around us. We give you thanks for the time we've spent together listening to your word and growing in our faith. As we come to worship today, fill us with your spirit and let it strengthen us to do your work. Amen.

### Songs

Suggestions: "Come Thou Fount," "How Much Longer"

### Confession and Assurance

#### Call to Confession

Leader: "Though we all strive to see others as children of God, we sometimes fall short. Despite our best intentions, our human nature can often get the best of us and cause us not to behave like children of God. Let us enter this time of confession together."

#### Prayer of Confession

Option 1: Use a printed prayer of confession, either projected or in a printed bulletin. There is a sample below, but original prayers of confession may also be used. When writing a prayer of confession, consider asking retreat leaders for particular insights that have been made about living as children of God.

"Dear God, we are far too often guilty of listening to the world's message of division. We watch and judge others based on how they look or speak. We are quick to criticize and slow to apologize. We spend more time looking for differences than for similarities. Show us that we are more than what divides us. Remind us to be patient and kind. Help us see that we are all children of God, created in your image. And, most of all, teach us to love one another the way that you love us. In your name we pray, amen."

Option 2: (or in addition) Pass out different colored strips of paper to all participants (cut regular 8½" x 11" paper into 3/8" x 11" strips or order

origami strips online). Invite participants to write a word that is used to label, differentiate, exclude. After words are written, strips are collected in baskets.

#### Assurance of Pardon

Leader: "Friends, believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven."

#### Passing Peace/Greeting

Invite participants to pass the peace of Christ to one another by sharing these phrases, "Peace of Christ be with you. And also with you." Participants may naturally share a handshake, hug, or other sensitive touch.

#### Anthem

"Be Thou My Vision" (choose from the many easy versions of this song)

#### Scripture

Galatians 3:26-29

#### Meditation in Scripture

Choose either option 1 or option 2 OR use both options with a shorter message in option 1.

Option 1: Invite a pastor to write a brief message for this service. For the retreat setting, the message should focus more on storytelling and less on exegesis. Questions that might be considered: How does it look when we are living as children of God? What impact can that have on the world?

Option 2: Share the Scripture by inviting one participant or a group of participants to read it aloud. Invite participants to gather in groups of four or five to reflect on the following questions:

1. The Scripture says, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female..." Wonder together about how these labels prevent us from seeing one another as children of God.
2. Wonder together about how we can be individuals and children of God at the same time.
3. Wonder together about what it means to be "clothed in Christ."

At the end of the reflection time, invite groups to share some of their thoughts with the larger group. Close in prayer.

### Communion (optional)

Breaking bread together around a table reinforces the Christ-centered relationships that have been fostered. Consider a setup for your Communion where participants serve each other. For example, have multiple Communion stations set up with a table and elements at each one. Small groups of participants gather around tables, receive the elements, serving one another. As the bread is shared, participants may say, “The bread of life.” When the juice/wine is shared, participants may say, “The cup of salvation.”

### Offering (optional)

If you choose to use an offering and communion, consider combining them by having stations set up so that, after a group of participants receives Communion, they may participate in the offering before returning to their seats.

Option 1: Take a monetary offering. Often in a retreat setting, an offering taken during worship is designated for a specific need or a ministry that is supported by the organization. Consider whether this may be appropriate for your group. If so, place baskets in visible locations so that participants can drop their offering in on the way back to their seats.

Option 2: (If option 2 was used in the confession earlier) Set up stations with the strips of paper and instructions on how to fold a cross from the strip of paper. (Consider having a leader at each station to help.) Invite participant to read their word, fold it into a cross, then say a brief prayer over it. Invite participants to keep their cross in their backpack, briefcase, purse, or pocket as a reminder that Christ sought out those who were marginalized and excluded, and brought them all into the family of God.

Photo instructions <http://make-origami.com/easter-cross/>

Song

Suggestion: "Here in this Place"

Benediction

Leader: "Friends, go forth in the world knowing that you are a child of God. Be the light of Christ in everything you do and everywhere you go. May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord's face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; may the Lord's countenance be upon you, and give you peace. Amen."

### **Song Suggestions**

The songs suggested for worship are listed below along with their source. This will be helpful for songs that may be new to leaders and participants. These songs are suggested, not required. Use worship songs that will work best for each retreat. If there are leaders adept at teaching new songs, consider balancing well-loved and oft-sung songs with new ones.

#### References:

GTG [Glory to God](#) published by Westminster John Knox Press

Common Hymnal [www.commonhymnal.com](http://www.commonhymnal.com)

1. "Amazing Grace" Traditional  
Amazing Grace has a very familiar first verse. If other verses are unknown, the music leader can line out the words as the song is sung. For a fun mix-up, the words can be sung to the tune of the "Gilligan's Island" theme song, "Peaceful Easy Feeling," "The Beverly Hillbillies" theme, or "House of the Rising Sun."
2. "Come Thou Fount" #475 GTG, Robinson
3. "Come! Live in the Light" #749 GTG, Haas
4. "Give us Love" Common Hymnal  
This song may be unfamiliar, but is worth learning especially if there are singers who quickly learn new songs. For groups reluctant to learn new songs, use "Soon Love Soon" or a more familiar song from our list or your own.
5. "Here and Now" Eddie Kirkland  
This song is about being a church that is welcoming to all people. To make time to teach the song, omit verse 2 and the bridge.
6. "Here in this Place" #401 GTG, Haugen
7. "How Much Longer" Common Hymnal
8. "Light the Fire" Bill Maxwell
9. "Sanctuary" John W. Thompson, Randy Scruggs
10. "Soon Love Soon" Vienna Teng  
This song works especially well because the chorus can be easily taught. The verses can be sung by a leader while the participants sing along.

## **RESOURCES**

on the following pages



### **Campfire Conversation Topics**

1. Tell about your first time away from home.
2. Tell about a time you were afraid.
3. Tell about a time you were lost.
4. Tell about a time you surprised someone.
5. Tell about a time you helped a total stranger.
6. Tell about a time you didn't get enough sleep.
7. Tell about a time you had a first impression that didn't turn out as you expected.
8. Tell about your first job or day at school.
9. Tell about a time you were supposed to be someplace and forgot.
10. Tell about the first time you had to speak in public.



### **Campfire Conversation Topics**

1. Tell about your first time away from home.
2. Tell about a time you were afraid.
3. Tell about a time you were lost.
4. Tell about a time you surprised someone.
5. Tell about a time you helped a total stranger.
6. Tell about a time you didn't get enough sleep.
7. Tell about a time you had a first impression that didn't turn out as you expected.
8. Tell about your first job or day at school.
9. Tell about a time you were supposed to be someplace and forgot.
10. Tell about the first time you had to speak in public.



### **Campfire Conversation Topics**

1. Tell about your first time away from home.
2. Tell about a time you were afraid.
3. Tell about a time you were lost.
4. Tell about a time you surprised someone.
5. Tell about a time you helped a total stranger.
6. Tell about a time you didn't get enough sleep.
7. Tell about a time you had a first impression that didn't turn out as you expected.
8. Tell about your first job or day at school.
9. Tell about a time you were supposed to be someplace and forgot.
10. Tell about the first time you had to speak in public.



### **Conversation Starter Questions**

1. How would you describe yourself to someone who doesn't know you?
2. What things are you grateful for?
3. Describe your perfect day, real or fictional.
4. If you could have one wish come true, which one would it be?
5. What is your favorite book?
6. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
7. Describe a favorite holiday memory.

### **Conversation Starter Questions**

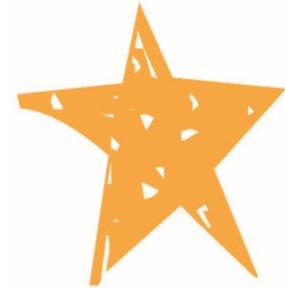
1. How would you describe yourself to someone who doesn't know you?
2. What things are you grateful for?
3. Describe your perfect day, real or fictional.
4. If you could have one wish come true, which one would it be?
5. What is your favorite book?
6. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
7. Describe a favorite holiday memory.

### **Conversation Starter Questions**

1. How would you describe yourself to someone who doesn't know you?
2. What things are you grateful for?
3. Describe your perfect day, real or fictional.
4. If you could have one wish come true, which one would it be?
5. What is your favorite book?
6. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
7. Describe a favorite holiday memory.

## **One of a Kind Questions**

- A = On a trip, do you prefer a hotel or camping out?
- K = If a friend were going to make you an omelet, what would be in it?
- Q = What is your favorite room in your home?
- J = A favorite restaurant to eat and what would you order?
- 10 = Last movie you saw and would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- 9 = Favorite pizza toppings
- 8 = What are you looking forward to?
- 7 = If Jesus sat down next to you on the bus, what would you ask him?
- 6 = Pancakes or waffles?
- 5 = Favorite vacation spot
- 4 = What are four words to describe your family?
- 3 = Do you like surprises? Why or why not?
- 2 = Two words that best describe God for you?



## **One of a Kind Questions**

- A = On a trip, do you prefer a hotel or camping out?
- K = If a friend were going to make you an omelet, what would be in it?
- Q = What is your favorite room in your home?
- J = A favorite restaurant to eat and what would you order?
- 10 = Last movie you saw and would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- 9 = Favorite pizza toppings
- 8 = What are you looking forward to?
- 7 = If Jesus sat down next to you on the bus, what would you ask him?
- 6 = Pancakes or waffles?
- 5 = Favorite vacation spot
- 4 = What are four words to describe your family?
- 3 = Do you like surprises? Why or why not?
- 2 = Two words that best describe God for you?



## **Doodle Bug**

Take turns with others in your group by rolling the dice and drawing the Doodle Bug part that matches the number you rolled. Each time you roll the dice, you draw a new part.

Wings, legs, and antenna get added one at a time. Be creative!

1 = Body

2 = Head

3 = Wing (you need 2 wings)

4 = Leg (you need 6 legs)

5 = Antenna (you need 2 antenna)

6 = Face

## **Who's On My Ship?**

Get to know the other crew members on your ship by walking around finding out what you have in common. Write their name down if they are a match!

1. Birthday in the same month
2. Wearing the same color shirt
3. First name starts with the same letter
4. Last name starts with the same letter
5. Is almost the same height
6. Has the same type of pet (or doesn't have a pet)
7. Wearing the same color shoes
8. Likes the same pizza toppings
9. Listens to the same kind of music
10. Has the same eye color
11. Feels the same way about snakes
12. Likes the same favorite ice cream flavor



## Dice Baseball Instructions and Score Card

Your group is working together as one team to see how many runs you can score before your innings run out.

### How to Play:

1. Each player takes turn rolling the dice.
2. Use the beads/markers as your runners and advance them around the field.
3. Keep track of your group's score on the score card.
4. Runners can only advance if they are forced.
5. three outs per inning.

### First Roll

- 1 = Ball (4 balls = walk)
- 2 = Hit
- 3 = Strike (3 strikes = out)
- 4 = Out
- 5 = Out
- 6 = Hit

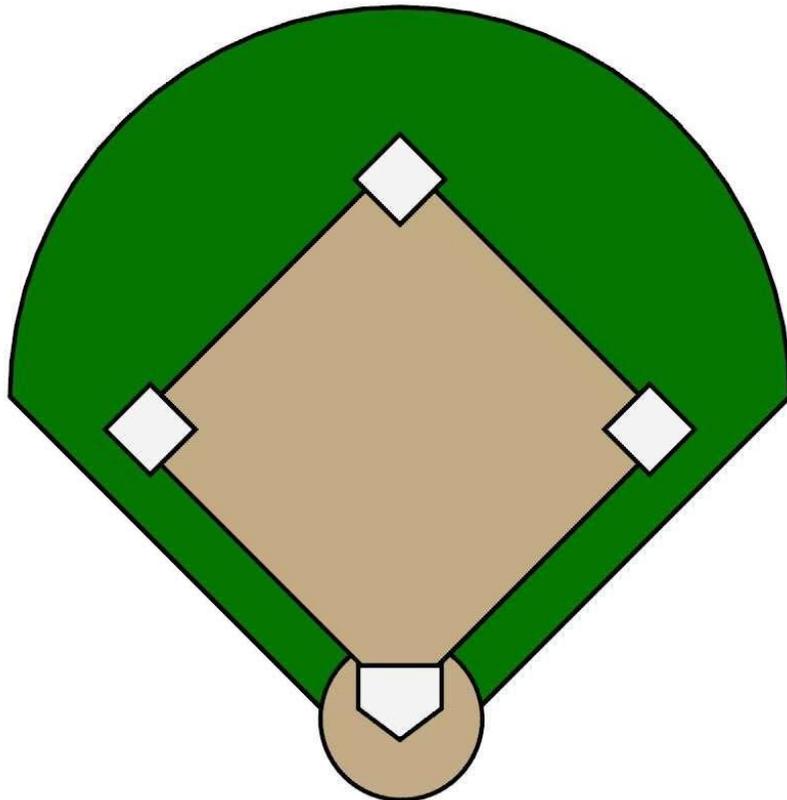
### Second Roll (if you roll a 2 or 6)

- 1 = Single
- 2 = Double
- 3 = Triple
- 4 = Double
- 5 = Single
- 6 = Homerun

### Score

Inning	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
RUNS									
OUTS	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3

## **Baseball Field**



## **Table Winter Olympics**

Do not start until the leader says "Go!"

1. One at a time, each person "speed skates" around the table. Be sure to lean into your turns.
2. Stand up together and wave to the crowd like you're entering the Opening Ceremonies.
3. Sit on the floor (or arranged chairs) in your bobsled and ride the course. Be sure to lean!
4. Take turns doing the ski jump. Hope you catch a lot of air!
5. Have each person yell "She shoots, She scores!"
6. Have your entire group participate in curling. Someone pushes the "Rock," Someone yells random "curling" phrases, and everyone else "sweeps" the ice.

## **Ice Breaker Questions**

1. What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?
2. What is your absolute dream job?
3. What does your favorite shirt look like?
4. What fictional family would you be a member of?
5. What sport would you compete in if you were in the Olympics?
6. What would your superpower be and why?
7. What's your favorite tradition or holiday?
8. What is your favorite dessert?
9. Are you a cat person or a dog person?
10. What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?
11. You can have an unlimited supply of one thing for the rest of your life, what is it?
12. If you could hang out with any cartoon character, who would you choose and why?
13. If you could be any animal in the world, what animal would you choose to be?
14. If you could rename yourself, what name would you pick?
15. If you could instantly become an expert in something, what would it be?
16. Would you rather live in the ocean or on the moon?

### Nametags

