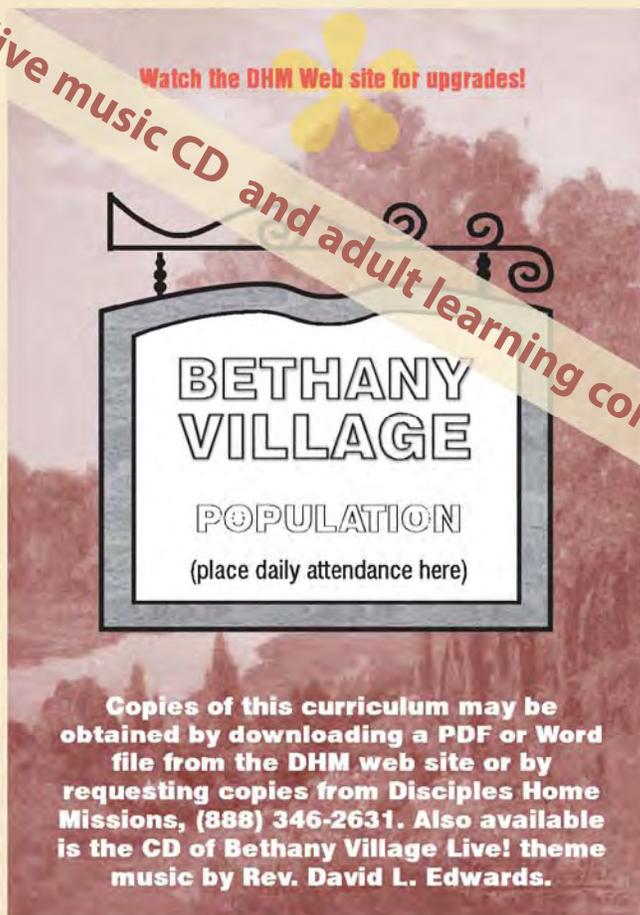


Bethany Village Live!

A Vacation Bible School Curriculum

Includes live music CD and adult learning component



Web site: www.discipleshomemissions.org/ChristianEducation/VBS.htm

Summary

Bethany Village Live! VBS Curriculum, designed for elementary age children through adults, re-visits the basic aspects of the history and theology of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in an experiential environment.

Our denomination grew along the American frontier in the first part of the nineteenth century. The name of the curriculum, Bethany Village Live! refers to the home of Alexander Campbell, the village of Bethany, Virginia (now West Virginia). In Bethany Village Live! your church will create a nineteenth century village that will evoke the early days of the movement that became the Christian Church (Disciple of Christ).

Each day kids will be exposed to a central Disciple value and an important historical figure from Disciple history. There are five learning stations, utilizing a variety of different learning methodologies, which enable the curriculum to meet the needs of all kinds of learners. The interactive, experiential nature of the curriculum reinforces the basic daily lessons.

An African proverb says "It takes a whole village to raise a child" and this curriculum brings together the village of past heroic persons with the present day village of nurturing adults in your congregation to encourage the faith journey of a new generation.

About the Authors

Bethany Village Live! is written by Disciples for Disciples, in covenant with Disciples Home Missions. The writers, local Disciple ministers, are Barbara Blaisdell (Honomu, HI), René Rodgers Jensen (Omaha, NE), and Diane Zehr (Florence, KY). Arnold Nelson, President, Jane Lawrence, Executive Vice President, and Billye Bridges, Christian Education Director of Disciples Home Missions, sincerely thank the writing team for their commitment, creativity and hard work as well as the graphic artist for the project, Sarah D. Adams (Florence, KY).



of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in the United States and Canada

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE!

A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM



<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/>
(888) 346-2631

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! **A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM**



OVERVIEW

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PREPARATION

As you prepare to use the VBS curriculum, you need to communicate in your congregation how children do or do not participate in the Lord's Supper, and whether children are considered as members before they are baptized. Please make any changes that are necessary in the content of the curriculum, as it relates to your congregation's practice.

In addition, please be aware of the "Two Adult Rule," which states that two people who are 18 years or older, must be with groups of children at all times.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bethany Village Live! is written by Disciples for Disciples, in covenant with Disciples Home Missions. The writers, local Disciple ministers, are Barbara Blaisdell (Honolulu, HI), René Rodgers Jensen (Omaha, NE), and Diane Zehr (Florence, KY). Arnold Nelson, President, Jane Lawrence, Executive Vice President, and Billye Bridges, Christian Education Director of Disciples Home Missions, sincerely thank the writing team for their commitment, creativity and hard work as well as the graphic artist for the project, Sarah D. Adams (Florence, KY).

INDEX

A New Five Finger Exercise	7
Learning Stations	8
Opening and Closing in the Meeting House	11
Mission Project	12
Scheduling	12
Suggestions for Organizing Your <i>Bethany Village Live!</i>	13
Day One: Bible – Believe It!	15
<i>The Meeting House – Opening</i>	15
<i>Granny’s Kitchen</i>	18
<i>The Mill</i>	19
<i>The Town Square</i>	20
<i>The Barn</i>	22
<i>The Meeting House – Closing</i>	23
Day Two: Bread – Taste It!	24
<i>The Meeting House – Opening</i>	24
<i>Granny’s Kitchen</i>	27
<i>The Mill</i>	28
<i>The Town Square</i>	30
<i>The Barn</i>	32
<i>The Meeting House – Closing</i>	34
Day Three: Baptism – Feel It!	35
<i>The Meeting House – Opening</i>	35
<i>Granny’s Kitchen</i>	38
<i>The Mill</i>	39
<i>The Town Square</i>	40
<i>The Barn</i>	41
<i>The Meeting House – Closing</i>	42
Day Four: The Brain – Use It!	43
<i>The Meeting House – Opening</i>	43
<i>Granny’s Kitchen</i>	47
<i>The Mill</i>	48
<i>The Town Square</i>	49
<i>The Barn</i>	50
<i>The Meeting House – Closing</i>	52
Day Five: Body of Christ – Live It!	53
<i>The Meeting House – Opening</i>	53
<i>Granny’s Kitchen</i>	56
<i>The Mill</i>	57

<i>The Town Square</i>	58
<i>The Barn</i>	60
<i>The Meeting House – Closing</i>	62
Adult Component – Overview	63
<i>Background on the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)</i>	63
<i>Teacher Helps</i>	63
Adult Component Day One: Bible – Believe It!	65
<i>Getting started</i>	65
<i>Disciples and the Bible</i>	65
<i>The Restoration of New Testament Christianity</i>	66
<i>The Role of the Laity</i>	67
<i>The Authority of the Scripture</i>	67
Adult Component Day Two: Bread – Taste It!	69
<i>Getting started</i>	69
<i>The Disciples and the Lord’s Supper</i>	70
<i>Thomas Campbell Story</i>	71
<i>Alexander Campbell Story</i>	71
<i>Barton Stone Story</i>	71
<i>Distinctive Disciple Practice</i>	71
Adult Component Day Three: Baptism – Feel It!	73
<i>Getting started</i>	73
<i>Disciples and Baptism</i>	74
<i>The Meaning of Baptism</i>	75
<i>Believers’ Baptism</i>	75
<i>Open vs. Closed Membership</i>	76
Adult Component Day Four: Brain – Use It!	78
<i>Getting started</i>	78
<i>Disciples and the Brain</i>	78
<i>Reasonable, Empirical, Pragmatic</i>	79
<i>Faith and Reason</i>	80
Adult Component Day Five: Body of Christ – Live It!	81
<i>Getting started</i>	81
<i>Disciples and the Body of Christ</i>	82
<i>A Passion for Unity</i>	83
<i>Divisions Amid a Call for Unity</i>	83
<i>A Diverse Body</i>	84
Additional Resources	86
<i>Other Ideas</i>	87
<i>Appendix 1 – Music of David L Edwards</i>	88

Appendix 2 – Copies of Brain – Use It! Puzzles 91
Appendix 3 – Copies of Symbols 95
Appendix 4 – Pictures of the Hand, Foot, Eye and Ear 98
Appendix 5 – Bible References 102
Appendix 6 – 1800’s Slang and Everyday Speech 108
Appendix 7 – Musical Ideas 110
Bibliography 114

A NEW FIVE FINGER EXERCISE

Walter Scott (1796-1861) was considered the greatest evangelist in the early days of the church. Scott was famous for his “five finger exercise” that described the plan of salvation. While the children will meet Walter Scott and learn his classic five finger exercise on Day 3, *Bethany Village Live!* offers a new five finger exercise that will help the children quickly and easily learn (and more importantly remember) the daily lesson points. These daily lesson points capture essential values of who we are as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



Day One Bible – Believe It!

This lesson point introduces the teaching that the Bible is authoritative for us as members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)—that we are a “people of the book.”

Day Two Bread – Taste It!

This lesson point teaches the centrality of the Lord’s Supper for Disciples.

Day Three Baptism – Feel It!

This lesson point teaches the meaning of baptism for Disciples.

Day Four Brain – Use It!

This lesson point emphasizes one of the distinctive values of Disciples—the value of a thoughtful, reflective faith.

Day Five Body of Christ – Live It!

The final lesson point lifts up the historic Disciple value of Christian unity. It will also talk about the importance of being the Body of Christ in the world.

LEARNING STATIONS

The Learning Stations offer a variety of learning styles that will enable each child to learn in the way each child learns best. No activity stands alone; the activities of each Learning Station will reinforce the daily lesson point.

The Learning Stations are decorated to suggest a nineteenth century village. The “set” of *Bethany Village Live!* provides a living history and a total learning environment.

There are usually more activities suggested in the Learning Stations than can be completed in the 20 minutes allowed for each station. This gives Learning Station leaders a choice of activities.

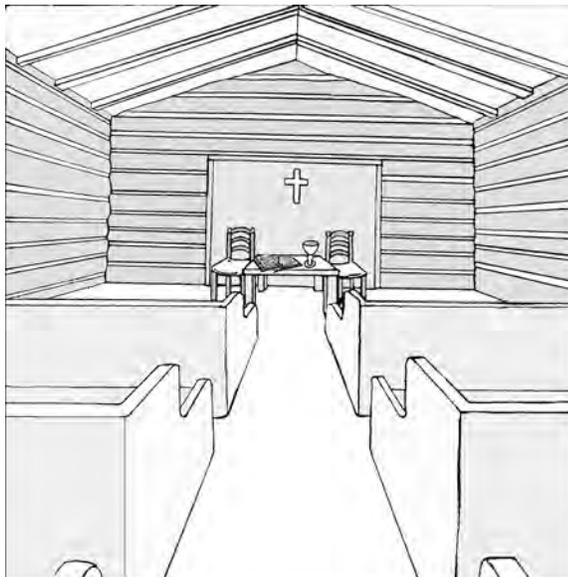
The Meeting House - Each day’s session will begin and end in The Meeting House. This is the gathering space for the children as they sing, learn the daily lesson point, and meet some of the great figures from Disciple history.

Raccoon John Smith, one of the most colorful figures from the early days of the Christian Church, will be the consistent figure each day and each day he will be joined by a variety of other figures from Disciple history, who will offer their own stories to reinforce the daily lesson point.

Set - The Meeting House may be your church sanctuary. If so, you will want to strip away paraments and other contemporary hangings. On the communion table, place the oldest Bible you can find and a single chalice. If your sanctuary has a LCD projector, project a visual of the Cane Ridge Meeting House. (See Additional Resources section of curriculum for website)

You could also utilize a large classroom for The Meeting House. Use concrete blocks and wooden planks as benches. In front place a simple table as the communion table, and include the Bible and chalice as described above.

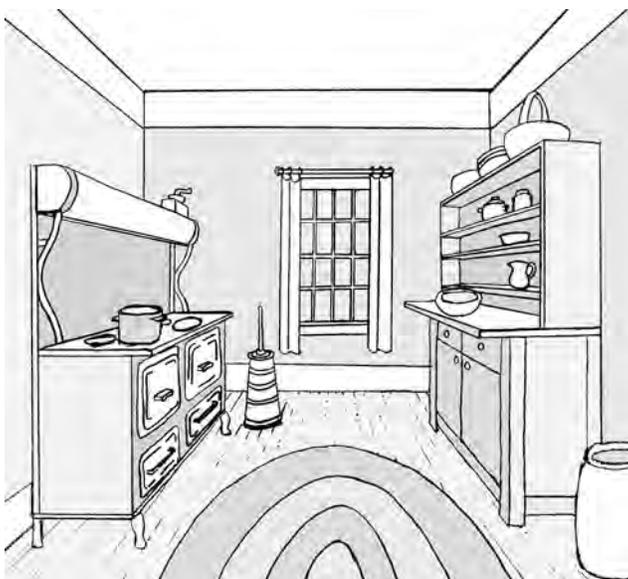
In The Meeting House strive to re-create the simple, unadorned worship spaces of the American frontier.



Costuming – Raccoon John Smith should wear black pants and a white shirt, with a simple string tie. You could add a simple vest, or get ambitious, and rent a frock coat. Of course, he must wear the raccoon skin cap that gave him his nickname!

Granny's Kitchen – Granny's Kitchen is both the snack and the storytelling Learning Station. The leader of this Learning Station should be a "grandmother" or "grandfather" (or Uncle Charlie or whatever fits the culture of your particular congregation). The idea is the beloved senior adult who lovingly teaches the children about the church's history and tradition.

Set - A false Victorian exterior of canvas or balsa wood set in a corner of the fellowship hall or as a false front in one of the Sunday School Rooms. Borrow an old fashion cook stove. Bring in a rocker and cover a table with a pretty tablecloth. Put a mailbox outside the door and some terra cotta pots of flowers to give the space a homey feel as the children enter. Involve the whole church by asking them to bring in Great Grandma's butter churn or Aunt Mary's stone crock or an old braided rug.



Costuming - Granny should be in a simple blouse and long skirt, with an apron. (If it is Grandpa, he could be in overalls or other clothes that suggest a bygone time.)

The Mill – This Learning Station will offer opportunities to explore simple science and other concepts related to each day's lesson point.

Set – Paint a water-driven grist mill on canvas and place it outside the space. Inside fill fabric flour sacks with polyester pillow stuffing. Grains of various kinds can be placed in clear glass containers and labeled appropriately. If available, stalks of wheat or other grain can be placed in the space.



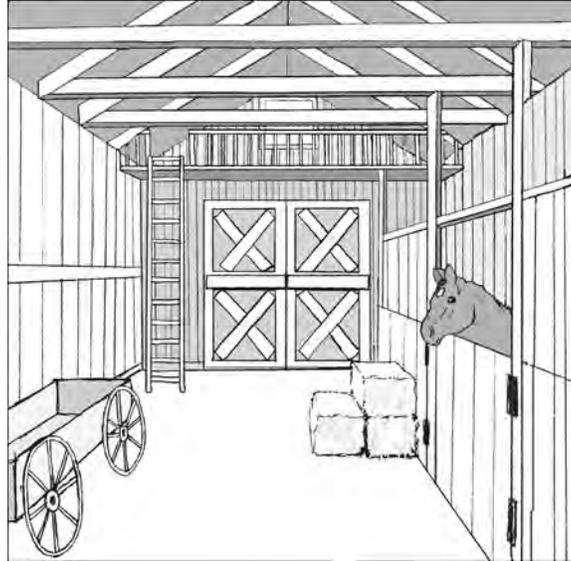
The Town Square – The Town Square is the place for games and recreation. It is also an alternative place for opening and closing. Some of the games in The Town Square will reinforce the daily lesson point, while others will be the kinds of games that children would have played on the American frontier. The Town Square can be the fellowship hall, the church courtyard, or some other large open place.

Set – If The Town Square is inside, create a park-like feeling. Collect several undecorated Christmas trees. Bring in plants from different areas in the church building. Set up some benches for Mom and Dad to relax and watch for a while. Put up a sign with the “population” of Bethany Village and the “Mayor’s” (VBS Director) name.



The Barn – The Barn is the craft area for Bethany Village. Most of the crafts will reinforce the daily lesson point, but some of the crafts will teach about pioneer days.

Set - Create a front of canvas or balsa wood painted to look like old barn wood. Decorate the inside with plank tables supported by saw horses and bales of straw (they could even provide the seating!)



OPENING AND CLOSING IN THE MEETING HOUSE

Each day the children will be introduced to key figures in Disciple history. Raccoon John Smith, one of the more colorful characters in our history, will be the consistent figure who each day introduces the “guest” for the day as a part of the opening. Increase the interaction by having both Raccoon John Smith and the guest of the day wander around Bethany Village to interact with the children.

All guests should be dressed in a simple costume that suggests their background and time period.

- Day One** Barton Stone
- Day Two** Thomas and Alexander Campbell
- Day Three** Walter Scott
- Day Four** The Other Alexander Campbell, Preston Taylor and Sarah L. Bostik
- Day Five** David Kagiwada

Use the daily lesson point from the new five-finger exercise as a call and response each day as a part of the opening and closing, and encourage the leaders of each Learning Station to do the same.

The leader says “BIBLE” and the children respond “BELIEVE IT.” The leader says “BREAD” and the children respond “TASTE IT” and so on.

Each day introduce the new lesson point, and review the previous days' points. At the conclusion of VBS, have everyone recite the five daily lesson points.

MISSION PROJECT

For a VBS Mission Project, go to the Disciples Home Missions website www.discipleshomemissions.org. Click on Ministries, then click on the link to Kids to Kids. Choose a Kids to Kids project for your congregation. If your project involves the children collecting items, you could select an area in The Meeting House or The Town Square and using masking tape, make quilt squares. Challenge the children to fill the squares for their project. You could place quilts around the "mission quilt" and talk about how pioneers relied on quilts to keep them warm.

SCHEDULING

Each day the children visit five Learning Stations. Each day or evening's session begins and ends in The Meeting House for the opening and closing sessions. The other Learning Stations operate simultaneously. The leaders of the Learning Stations repeat their activities four times, for four different groups. When it is time to move to the next station, walk through the Learning Stations and blow a train whistle (or use some other attention-getting device).

At registration, assign each child to a Camp Crew of 6 to 8 kids. Each Camp Crew should have an adult leader. Assign the Camp Crews to four different groups. Each group consists of one fourth of the total VBS enrollment. Use colors, letters, or some other creative way to identify the four groups. The groups rotate among the Learning Stations as indicated in the sample schedules below.

If you have a large group, you will need to have double Learning Stations for The Barn, The Mill, The Town Square, and Granny's Kitchen.

SAMPLE MORNING SCHEDULE*Allow five minutes to travel between Learning Stations***9:00 AM to 11:20 AM**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	<u>Group C</u>	<u>Group D</u>
9:00-9:20	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House
9:25-9:45	Granny's	Barn	Mill	Town Square
9:50-10:10	Barn	Mill	Town Square	Granny's
10:15-10:35	Mill	Town Square	Granny's	Barn
10:40-11:00	Town Square	Granny's	Barn	Mill
11:05-11:20	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House

SAMPLE EVENING SCHEDULE*Allow five minutes to travel between Learning Stations.
If pinched for time, shorten the travel time.***6:30 PM to 8:50 PM**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	<u>Group C</u>	<u>Group D</u>
6:30-6:50	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House
6:55-7:15	Granny's	Barn	Mill	Town Square
7:20-7:40	Barn	Mill	Town Square	Granny's
7:45-8:05	Mill	Town Square	Granny's	Barn
8:10-8:30	Town Square	Granny's	Barn	Mill
8:35-8:50	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House	Meeting House

SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZING YOUR BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE!

Since *Bethany Village Live!* is based on Disciple history and beliefs, it will be helpful for leaders to have some background knowledge. Look at the section on "Additional Resources" for resources either written or web-based that can offer a quick overview of Disciple history and beliefs.

Make *Bethany Village Live!* a project for your whole congregation. It will offer the entire "village" of your congregation opportunities to nurture a new generation of Disciples. Some people who can help:

Builders can be recruited to construct simple sets. (Your sets can be as elaborate or as simple as you choose to make them)

Artists or Crafters can paint the sets. Almost anyone can be an artist—find a drawing of a mill, barn, etc. and copy it onto a transparency. Use an overhead projector to project the drawing onto the canvas of the set, and just color within the lines!

Antique Lovers – People who love antiques can be recruited to help find old items from within the congregation to dress the set.

Actors are needed to play the different parts. Acting ability is a plus, but more importantly is someone who loves children. Be sure to recruit people who can talk clearly and loudly enough to be easily heard. Don't worry about memorizing the script, but encourage people to be familiar enough with it to sound spontaneous.

Learning Station Leaders

Meeting House – For the Meeting House you will need the following staff:

- Opening and Closing Leader – a high energy person who will provide leadership for the opening and closing
- Song Leader – can be the same as the Opening and Closing Leader or a separate person
- Raccoon John Smith – will play the role of Raccoon John Smith each day. Needs to be comfortable creating a character role and able to capture the humor of this colorful character
- Special Guests each day as indicated in the curriculum

Granny's Kitchen

A beloved senior adult who can be a grandparent figure for the children

The Mill

Leader(s) who enjoy making messes and aren't afraid to experiment.

The Town Square

High energy person(s) who enjoy playing games

The Barn

A perfect place for the crafters in your congregation to use their gifts. The suggested craft activities are easy enough for the inexperienced.

DAY ONE BIBLE – BELIEVE IT!

Scripture: *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)*

Disciple Value – *No book but the Bible, no creed but Christ.*

THE MEETING HOUSE - OPENING

(Ahead of time – place a stump suitable for an adult to stand on at the front of the Meeting House)

Opening Singing

Leader says: **We are so glad you are here at Bethany Village. I'm (your name) the mayor of Bethany Village. We are going to have such a GREAT time together this week!**

Did you know that our church (your church's name) is joined together with lots of other churches? Churches in our city (if appropriate) and in our state, and all across the country, and even all around the world! All of these churches together make up our denomination. All together we are the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). (Have the children repeat the name.) All this week at Bethany Village, we will be learning about the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and what makes us such a very special church.

Every day we will have a lesson point that teaches us about what we believe in our church. Today our point is BIBLE – BELIEVE IT! When I say BIBLE – you say BELIEVE IT! (practice this a few times with the children)

Open a Bible to Psalm 119:105 and read, This is one of the things the Bible says about how the Bible can help us. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”. This

means that the Bible shows us the way. Sometimes trying to figure things out all by yourself is like being in the dark, but the Bible, God's word, is like a light that shows us the way.

In our church we are a "people of the Book" and that book is the Bible. We believe that God wants us to love and study the Bible to learn how to live our lives. So let's practice our lesson point a few more times. (do call and response BIBLE – BELIEVE IT a few more times)

Have you ever wanted to travel in a time machine? Bethany Village is like a time machine that will take us back to the time when the Christian Church was starting two hundred years ago. Bethany Village is like the towns of a long time ago during the pioneer days. This week we get to pretend that we have gone in a time machine back to pioneer days.

When we go on an adventure like this we need a guide, and our special guide all week is a gentleman who was there when the Disciples were just getting started.

His name is Raccoon John Smith—let's give him a big hand.

Raccoon John Smith enters, smiling and waving.

Leader: **Welcome to Bethany Village, Mr. Smith.**

Raccoon John Smith: **Call me Brother Smith. That's how we addressed each other back in my day. My goodness, what handsome boys and girls you have here at (church name). I want to tell you a little bit about myself. I was born in Tennessee in 1784. Can any of you count in your head how old that makes me? I liked to wear a coonskin cap, so everybody started calling me "Raccoon" John Smith.**

I didn't go to school very much when I was growing up, but I have read and studied lots of different books. But of all the books I have read, the one I loved to study the most was the Bible.

When I was studying the Bible, I decided that lots of the ways we were doing things in the church back then were wrong 'cause they were different than what the Bible taught. Christians were always fussing and fighting with each other. Everybody thought that THEY were right and everybody else was wrong. But when I read the Bible, it seemed to me that God wanted all Christians to be one family, to be as close to each other as if they were one body. All the most important things I ever learned I learned from the Bible.

So you see, boys and girls, the Bible can teach you all kinds of lessons to get you through life. Studying the Bible can make you a mighty smart person—and a mighty good person!

Now I want to introduce you to a friend of mine, a very important person who helped in starting our church. Please meet Brother Barton W. Stone.

Barton Stone enters.

Raccoon John Smith says: **Brother Stone, welcome to Bethany Village. Why don't you tell the boys and girls about how you got things rolling down in Kentucky.**

Barton Stone says: **I'm sure glad to be here in Bethany Village. Like Brother Smith said, back then lots of Christians were fussing and fighting with each other. Churches had these things called creeds. A creed was something written by human beings to say what people ought to believe. But I studied the Bible, and I thought the Bible told us everything we needed to know. We didn't need creeds to tell us what to believe about God. We just needed the Bible!**

I was a Presbyterian minister in a place called Cane Ridge, Kentucky. We decided to hold a big camp meeting for all kinds of Christians to come together. This was back in 1801, so it was more than 200 years ago. More than 20,000 folks came to that camp meeting. They came in their wagons and they pitched their tents. The camp meeting went on for seven days.

There were all kinds of preaching, not in a church building, but just right out in the middle of the woods. Instead of a pulpit, preachers would get on a stump like this one (gets on stump) and just start preaching about the word of God. It was wonderful to see those thousands of people, all different kinds of Christians, coming together as one to worship God, just the way the Bible says we should.

When I looked around at all those people loving and praising God as one, I decided to stop being a Presbyterian. I began to preach and teach that the churches should be like the church in the New Testament. We decided the church should be called Christian Church, because that is the name from the Bible. That's why your church is called (church name) Christian Church.

Raccoon John Smith: **Thank you, Brother Stone, for telling us your story. Boys and girls, I will see you again. Now, there're some Bible points I'd like to talk to Brother Stone about.** (Smith and Stone leave, but encourage them to visit the Learning Stations for further interaction with the children)

Leader says: **Brother Smith and Brother Stone, thanks so much for coming to Bethany Village and telling us about how important the Bible is for us. So kids, remember our lesson point. BIBLE – (kids respond – BELIEVE IT!)**

Leader should make any announcements, explain the schedule, and make sure that everyone is assigned to a Camp Crew.

Close with prayer: **Thank you, God, for the Bible, your word for our lives. It shows us the way to live. It truly is a light for our paths. Be with us today. Help us to have fun and to learn. Most of all, help us to grow closer to you. Amen.**

If you are doing a mission project, this may be a good time to explain it.

If time permits, additional singing, then dismiss children to learning stations.

GRANNY'S KITCHEN

Ahead of time: Ask someone in the congregation who teaches Bible classes (pastor or an adult Bible Study or Sunday School) to talk about why he or she thinks learning about the Bible is important.

Supplies

Several squeeze bottles of honey
 Large plastic plates, one per child
 Plastic spoon and cup per child
 Pitcher of water
 Crackers with long, narrow shape
 Napkins



As the children gather in Granny's Kitchen, introduce the speaker for the day. Ask the speaker the following questions. (You can copy the questions and give them to the children to ask.)

- What do you like about teaching the Bible?
- How long have you been teaching?
- What is the best thing that ever happened in one of your Bible study classes?
- What is your favorite Bible story? Can you tell it to us in your own words? Why is this your favorite story?

When the question time is done, Granny and her helpers can pass out the plates and squeeze bottles of honey (children can share the bottles).

Ask the Bible teacher for one word that best describes all that she or he has learned from studying the Bible. The word could be Love, or Jesus, or God. Then have the children use the honey to write that word on their plates. (You may need to help younger children) Study the word and talk about its meaning.

After the children have written the word in honey, dip the crackers in the honey and enjoy.

OR

Have the children write the word directly onto the crackers, and then eat them.

After the children have eaten the crackers and honey, say that just as the food we eat becomes a part of our bodies, that the Word of God needs to become a part of our hearts and spirits.

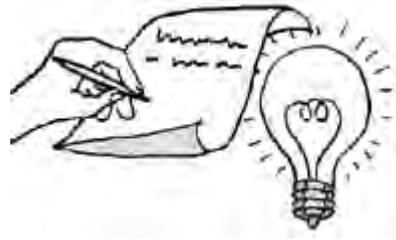
THE MILL

Mystery Messages

Explain that the children will be writing secret messages, but the Bible is not a secret—the message of the Bible is there for all of us to read and learn for ourselves.

Supplies

Paper
Candle and Candle holder OR uncovered light
Bulb
Match
Lemon Juice
Toothpicks



What to do

Have the children use the toothpicks to write a mystery message on the paper. Let it dry. Carefully warm the paper over a candle flame or the uncovered light bulb. The “secret message” will magically appear.

Archeological Dig

Explain that one way we know about the people in Bible times is through the work of archeologists. Archeologists carefully dig through the sand and dirt looking for hidden artifacts that will tell about those who went before.

Supplies

One or more 16 X 24 X 5 plastic storage tubs
Sand
Polymer clay
Other items such as old jewelry, coins, pieces
of cloth (optional)
Plastic spoons



What to do

Ahead of time: Roll out the polymer clay on a cookie sheet until it is about ½ inch thick. Using a plastic knife, cut the clay into irregular pieces. Bake the clay according to package directions. Use fine tipped permanent marker to write the day’s Bible verse on the fragments, putting a few words on each fragment.

Put the sand in the tubs. Bury the fragments in the sand. You can also bury the optional items if you choose.

Have the children use a spoon to carefully dig for what is buried in the sand. Explain that archeologists have to dig very carefully so as not to damage the fragile artifacts they might find.

When all the clay fragments have been found, put them all together to form the Bible verse. Explain that long before there was paper, the scripture was written on stone tablets.

THE TOWN SQUARE

Bible Balloon Play

Supplies

10 large round balloons
 Permanent magic marker
 CD
 CD Player



What to do

Blow up 10 balloons. Use a permanent marker to write the Bible verse on the balloons.

Your/ word/ is a/ lamp/ to my/ feet/ and a /light/ to my/ path.

Play lively music from a CD. Ask the children to keep the balloons in the air as long as the music plays. When the music stops, have them work together to arrange the words of the verse in order.

Bible Verse Ball Toss

Supplies

Beach ball



What to do

Have the children get in a circle. Remind them of the Bible verse for today. Encourage them to repeat the verse after you several times. Have them toss a beach ball to one another. Each time they catch the ball they have to say the next word in the Bible verse.

Bible Baseball

Supplies

Sheets of Paper
 (Write 1, 2, 3 and Home on them)



What to do

Follow the rules of a baseball game. Designate home plate, first base, second base, third base. Divide into two teams. Ask the following questions, and *add your own*. Every correct answer is a hit. Every hit is a single. Three incorrect answers is an out and the next team is up to bat.

Suggested Questions

The first book in the Bible is...?

The last book in the Bible is?

Where was Jesus born?

What was the name of the king when Jesus was born?

What did Jesus ride on Palm Sunday?

What did the people lay on the road for Jesus to ride over?

Who did David kill?

Who was Peter?

What was the name of Jesus' mother and father?

Name one of the gospels.

Who built the ark?

What went on the ark?

What sign did God give after the flood?

Do we read about Jesus in the Old or the New Testament?

Who were the first man and woman?

What was the name of the garden where they lived?

What did Jesus' father Joseph do for a living?

Who baptized Jesus?

What do we celebrate on Easter?

How did the women know Jesus was raised from the dead?

What did Jesus and his disciples eat at the Last Supper?

How did they kill Jesus?

How long was Jesus in the tomb?

THE BARN**Bible Book Marks***Supplies*

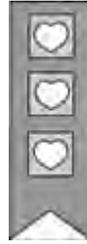
Felt squares cut into rectangles 2 ½ inches wide and 7 ½ inches long

Glue

Ribbon

Sequins

Fun Foam pre-cut shapes

*What to do*

Have the kids choose what they want to decorate their book marks and glue it on. Let dry.

Scroll

Explain that in Jesus' day, the scriptures would have been written on scrolls.

Supplies

Brown paper bags or brown wrapping paper

Dowel rods

Glue

Markers

*What to do*

Cut brown paper into lengths 6 inches by 12 inches. Help the children glue dowel rods on the ends of the paper. Let the children copy the Bible verse for today on the scroll. Show them how to roll up the scrolls.

THE MEETING HOUSE – CLOSING

Singing

Call and Response with daily lesson point – BIBLE – BELIEVE IT!

You can use the closing time to teach about the history of your church and/or community. Invite the church historian, long-time members, or the pastor each day to tell a little bit about the history of the church. They can show different artifacts from the history of the church – old photographs, old communion ware, old newsletters or church bulletins, a Bible, etc.

Closing announcements – Reminder about Mission Project

Closing prayer

DAY TWO BREAD – TASTE IT!

Scripture: *The Lord Jesus Christ...took a loaf of bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is broken for you."...In the same way he took the cup after supper saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)*

Disciple Value – *"In the house of God there is always the table of the Lord." Alexander Campbell in The Christian System*

THE MEETING HOUSE – OPENING

Opening Singing

Leader: **Welcome back, everyone. Do you remember our lesson point from yesterday? BIBLE** (kids respond –BELIEVE IT) **Our lesson point today is BREAD – TASTE IT! I say BREAD and you say TASTE IT!** (practice call and response a few times) **This lesson point will help us remember how important the Lord's Supper is in our church.**

One of the very special things about our church is how important the Lord's Supper is for us. We share together in the Lord's Supper every week. Some churches only have it once a month, or even just once every three months, but we think it is so important we have it every single week.

Another thing that is special about our church is that we say that *anyone* who believes is welcome to the table. You don't have to believe a certain way, or be baptized a certain way—you just have to believe that Jesus is your savior. We call this *open* communion,

because it is open to all believers. These two things—weekly communion and open communion—make our church special and different from other churches.

Let's see what the Bible says about the Lord's Supper. One of Jesus' followers called Paul wrote in a letter about it. This is what he said (take Bible and read I Corinthians 11:23-25). Do those words sound familiar to you? We say them every week when we take the Lord's Supper.

Raccoon John Smith enters. Leader says: **Brother Smith, welcome back to Bethany Village! I wonder if you can tell us about the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Lord's Supper.**

Raccoon John Smith says: **I think that instead of me telling you about it, I will let my two friends Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander Campbell tell you, because a lot of how we do communion started with them.** Thomas and Alexander Campbell enter.

Thomas Campbell says: **My name is Thomas Campbell. I was born in Ireland and educated in Scotland. I think my friend Brother Barton Stone told you yesterday that back in our day, Christians were always fussing and fighting with each other. I was a minister of the Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church. Did you ever hear such a long name for a church! It had such a long name because we split into so many different groups, and none of them got along with anybody else!**

When I came to this country, I was a preacher in Pennsylvania. Back 200 years ago, there weren't very many towns, or people, and not very many churches or preachers. So I started letting all kinds of Christians—Methodists, and Baptists and Congregationalists, and even New Light Presbyterians— come to church and take part in the Lord's Supper. This made the folks in charge of the Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church so mad they threw me out of the church. But I knew from the Bible that the Lord's Supper belongs to God, and not to human beings, and it wasn't up to us to decide who was welcome at God's table and who wasn't.

Alexander Campbell: **While my father Thomas was in America, I was back in Scotland, but I was having some of the same problems with the Presbyterian Church. In our church back then, we only had communion a few times a year. Before you could take communion, the elders of the church had to examine you to make sure you were "good" enough to receive the Lord's Supper. If you passed, they gave you a little token that looked about like this (Alexander holds up a trinket about the size of a coin). When you went to communion, you had to present your token before you could receive the bread and the cup.**

When the time for the communion service came, I met with the church elders. They said I passed and gave me my communion token. But I was thinking and praying about all this and it just didn't seem right to me. When the time came for me to go forward and receive communion, I went up. But instead of giving them my token, I threw it down (throws token down on the floor) and turned around and walked out, and I never went back. I decided God's table is not just for people who can pass some human test, it is for everyone!

When our family joined up with my father Thomas, we learned that we had been thinking along the same lines about communion. Since my father had been thrown out of his church, we began a new church. We called ourselves "Disciples" because we wanted to be like the disciples in the Bible. We decided the best way for Christians to stop fussing and fighting with one another was to be like the church in the New Testament. In the Bible, the book of Acts tells us about the early church in the years right after Jesus. So we took the book of Acts as the model for how we were supposed to be the church. We read in the book of Acts

that the disciples had communion whenever they came together, so we decided that we should have communion every week—and that anybody who loved Jesus was welcome!

Thomas Campbell says: **I wrote down my thought about what the church should be like in a paper called “The Declaration and Address.” That was back in 1809. I’m proud to say that even today, members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) still look to what I wrote as important in saying who we are as a church.**

Raccoon John Smith says: **Those are mighty fine stories. You were both very brave to stand up for what you believed. I hope that all of us will be brave like you and stand up for what we think is right. Thanks for telling us your stories. Boys and girls, I will see you tomorrow!**

Leader: **Wow! Did you know how much Christians used to fuss with each other? How sad when Christians can’t even share the Lord’s Supper together. I’m glad in our church we are willing to share the Lord’s Supper with all kinds of Christians. And now I know why we have communion every week instead of just once a month or less—it’s because we want to be like the disciples in the book of Acts. So remember BREAD – (children respond TASTE IT) When we taste the bread and drink the cup, we remember God’s table is for *everyone* not just a few.**

Let’s pray: God, we thank you for people like Thomas and Alexander Campbell, who believed that your table is for everyone. Thank you for the Lord’s Supper, which help us remember that you love everyone, and ask everyone who believes to come to your table. Be with us in Bethany Village today. Amen.

Announcements and housekeeping details

Additional singing, if time permits.

GRANNY'S KITCHEN**Ahead of time**

Ask an elder and/or deacon to talk to the children about their responsibilities in preparing and serving communion.

Supplies

Bread makers or home-made bread (enough to provide one slice per child)

Home-made type jams and jellies and/ or honey

Butter or margarine

Bread

Grape juice



Ahead of time, bring in bread makers and turn them on so that by the time VBS starts Granny's Kitchen will be filled with the smell of fresh-baked bread.

If you use the bread makers, use the bread for snacks. Have jams, jellies, honey, and butter to spread on the bread. If you don't use the bread makers, have home-made bread for the kids to eat. Provide grape juice to drink.

As the children are eating, Granny will introduce the elder and/or deacon. The elder and/or deacon will talk about their responsibilities in preparing and serving communion. Some points to cover –

- How long they have been an elder or deacon
- How do they feel when they serve communion
- Have they ever made a mistake in serving? How did they feel?
- What do they like best about serving communion

If there is time, have the children go to see where communion is prepared in your church.

THE MILL

Yeast

Have yeast available for children to handle and smell. Show leavened and unleavened bread. Explain that yeast makes bubbles of gas, and these little bubbles are what make bread rise. Yeast is actually alive—it is tiny one-celled organisms, and there are billions of them in a single package of yeast.

Tell the children that Jesus says that we are supposed to be like yeast. Just as yeast makes bread rise, so we as yeast can make the world better. Do one of the following experiments to show the power of yeast.

Learning Tip – Be sure to try this experiment ahead of time to make sure everything works!

Steam Cone

Supplies:

strip of lightweight cardboard, 3x8 inches
 small container (spice jar or vitamin bottle)
 flat tray or pan
 1/2 tablespoon quick-rising yeast
 1/2 cup hydrogen peroxide
 scissors
 paper clip or tape
 spoon



What to Do:

With the cardboard strip, form a cone shape that will fit over the mouth of the small container and fasten it with the paper clip or tape. Cut the end corners off so the cone will stand upright in the tray or pan, with the narrower end of the cone up and the larger end down. Place the small bottle or jar in the tray and get ready for action.

The jar or bottle should be large enough to contain the hydrogen peroxide but fit under the cardboard cone or extend slightly above the cone's mouth. With the cone over the small container, pour in the hydrogen peroxide followed by the quick-rising yeast. Stir the mixture thoroughly. (If easier, you may place the cone over the bottle after stirring, but you must be quick!) Continue to stir the mixture, for best results, until the experiment is finished.

What Happens:

The mixture of hydrogen peroxide and yeast causes foam, steam and a hissing noise to come from the cardboard "volcano".

CAUTION! Throw away all chemical solutions and thoroughly wash out all containers when finished.

Grinding Wheat

Supplies

Raw or toasted bulgar wheat (available from health food store) ¼ cup per child

Wheat stalks or pictures of wheat growing in field



Choose from one or more of the following to grind the wheat:

Mortar and pestle

Spoon and pie plate

Smooth stone (sized to have children comfortably hold it) and pie plate

2 cups whole wheat flour or two cup measuring cup

What to do

Explain that flour to make bread comes from wheat—show wheat stalks or pictures of wheat. In pioneer days, farmers brought their grain to a mill and it ground the grain between very large stones called mill stones. The mill would have been operated by water power from a small river or stream. Say that in Jesus' day, grain would have been hand-grown between two stones.

Give the children some wheat and have them grind it, using one or more of the methods above. You can have them try different methods of grinding. Is it easy or hard?

Show them the flour or the measuring cup. Explain that this is about how much flour it takes to make a loaf of bread. How long do they think it would take them to grind this much wheat?

THE TOWN SQUARE

Loaves and Fishes Relay

Explain that bread is very important in the scriptures. In addition to the stories about communion, another story about bread is the story of the feeding of the 5000. There was a big hungry. Jesus asked his disciples to feed the crowd, but the disciples didn't know how to feed so many people. So a little boy gave Jesus his lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish to feed 5,000 people.

Supplies

Large basket
Fish-shaped crackers
Pretzels
Serving spoon for Camp Crew per session
Basket for each Camp Crew per session



What to do

Establish a large playing area. Place a large basket of "fish and loaves" at the center of the playing area using fish-shaped crackers and pretzel. Give each team a serving spoon and a basket. Divide players into teams of 4-6 players.

Have teams line up at the four corners of the playing area with players on each team standing one behind the other. At the go the first players from each team must walk fast with their spoon to the "fish and loaves" basket, scoop the "fish and loaves" into their spoon and return to their team lines to dump the "fish and loaves" into their team's basket. Players then hand the spoon to the next player in line. Play continues as such until the large "fish and loaves basket" is emptied.

The team with the most "fish and loaves" wins. However, the winning team must share their extra bounty with the other teams so that all teams have an equal amount. Dropped food stays on the ground. Then have the teams sit down and eat.

Pioneer Game – Marbles

Explain that marbles would have been a common game during pioneer days.

Supplies and Set-Up

A flat, smooth area of ground, about 10'
(3 meters) across
Chalk (or masking tape if inside)
A large shooter marble for each player,
about $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9 centimeters) in
diameter
4-6 smaller target marbles, about $\frac{1}{2}$ "
(1.3 centimeters) in diameter



What to do

- Draw a circle that is 7' (2 meters) across in the center of the playing area.
- Each player places an equal number of target marbles in the center of the circle. You can decide on the number of marbles. The more marbles played by each player, the longer the game will last.
- Decide who will shoot first. Shooting a marble is like flipping a coin. Hold your shooter marble in your curled index finger, and tuck your thumb behind the marble. Flick the marble as hard as possible. Practice shooting the marble a few times away from the target marbles until it feels comfortable.
- Most players kneel on the ground to shoot. You must “knuckle down” when you shoot. At least one knuckle of your shooting hand must be touching the ground until you have shot the marble. Lay your curled up hand on the ground just outside of the circle with your knuckles down and thumb on top. Flick your shooter marble with your thumb toward the target marbles.
- If you knock any target marbles out of the circle, set them beside you and shoot again. Knuckle down wherever your shooter marble stopped. If you did not knock any marbles out of the circle, pick up your shooter marble, and the next player shoots.
- Continue to take turns shooting until all of the target marbles are cleared from the center ring. The player who knocked the most marbles out of the ring is the winner.

THE BARN

While the children work on their crafts, remind them of the daily lesson point: BREAD – TAKE IT. Just as we need to eat every day to keep our bodies strong, so we eat the bread and drink the cup every week to keep our spirits strong.

Wheat Weaving:

Supplies

Wheat on a stalk (available from craft stores or local farmers)

Ribbons



What to do

- Soak wheat on the stalk in a tub of water for an hour or so.
- Holding three seed heads together, braid the stems of the wheat stalks.
- Curve the ends around to make an oval loop, a circle wreath, or even bend it a bit to make a heart shape.
- Tie with brightly colored ribbon. As the stalks dry, they'll hold their shape.

Learning Tip: This craft may be too challenging for younger children.

Bread Basket Liners

Supplies

Squares of plain colored cloth

Fabric paint

Inexpensive baskets (optional)



What to do

Have the children decorate the cloth with fabric paint to make bread basket liners.

Chalices

Explain to the children that this is the sign or logo of our denomination. Talk about places in your church where the children would have seen the logo. Explain that the logo is a chalice because the Lord's Supper is so important to us. The sideways cross is the cross of St. Andrew. This is the sign of Scotland, because some of the people who started our church came from Scotland. Also, Andrew was one of the twelve disciples. He was famous for telling his brother Peter about Jesus. So the cross of St. Andrew reminds us that we need to be like St. Andrew and tell others about Jesus.

Supplies

Picture of Disciple Logo – Chalice with St
Andrew Cross
Plastic wine glasses (one per child)
Red and white tissue paper
Scissors
Decoupage glue
Brushes



What to do

Have the children cut or tear the tissue paper. Using the decoupage glue, cover the bowl of the glass with white tissue paper. Then with the decoupage glue use the red tissue paper to make the cross of St. Andrew.

THE MEETING HOUSE – CLOSING

Singing

Call and Response with daily lesson point – BREAD – TASTE IT! (Also review previous day's lesson point – BIBLE – BELIEVE IT!)

If you are using this time to talk about your own church's history, introduce the day's speaker.

Closing announcements

Closing prayer

DAY THREE BAPTISM – FEEL IT!

Scripture: *When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. (Colossians 2:12)*

Disciple Value: *Through Baptism into Christ, we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God. -The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

THE MEETING HOUSE – OPENING

Singing

Leader: **Welcome back, everyone! Can you remember our lesson points from our first two days? Let's see! BIBLE** (kids respond BELIEVE IT!) **Wow, that was great. How about BREAD** (kids respond TASTE IT!) **You guys are amazing. Let's try that a few more times.**

Today our lesson point is BAPTISM – FEEL IT! You know what to do – BAPTISM (kids respond FEEL IT!) **Let's try it a few more times.**

Baptism is not just about being washed on the outside, it is about being changed on the inside. We FEEL God's love for us when we are baptized.

How many boys and girls here today have been baptized? (have kids raise their hands – you may want one or more children to say something about their baptisms) **In some churches, they baptize babies by just pouring a little water on their head. We call that kind of baptism *sprinkling*. Some of you may have been baptized like that, or maybe your mom and dad were baptized like that. That’s a good way to be baptized, but in our church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) we don’t baptize babies and we don’t baptize by sprinkling. We baptize by *immersion*, which means we go ALL the way under the water. And we baptize people when they are old enough to make up their own minds to follow Jesus, not when they are babies.**

The New Testament has lots of stories about baptisms, including stories about Jesus getting baptized himself. In the book of Colossians in the New Testament, it says this about baptism. (Read Colossians 2:12). Being *buried* in baptism means that the old person we used to be is gone, and that God is making us brand new. When we go *all* the way under the water, it is like the old person is buried, and a new person comes back up.

Did you ever wonder why in our church we baptize by immersion, and don’t baptize babies? I bet Brother Raccoon John Smith can tell us.

Raccoon John Smith enters and says: **So you are talking about baptism today. It’s true that we don’t baptize babies. We figure that people need to make up their own mind about following Jesus, and not have someone else, even their mother or father, do it for them.**

Walter Scott enters: **Hello, thanks for asking me to come to Bethany Village. Like my friends Barton Stone and the Campbells, I used to be a Presbyterian. Presbyterians also baptize babies by sprinkling. But by studying the Bible, I came to believe that the Bible didn’t teach infant baptism. So for a while I was a Baptist, because Baptists practice baptism by immersion. The Baptists I belonged to were called the “kissing Baptists” because we used to greet each other with a kiss instead of a handshake. Would you like to do that in your church?**

Later I met Brother Alexander Campbell. I was so impressed by his ideas that I joined up with his movement and started preaching about what he was teaching, especially how we needed to be like the church in the Bible.

I was an evangelist back in the early days of our church. Being an evangelist meant I traveled all over, preaching in many different towns. I preached in towns a lot like Bethany Village. Sometimes, if there was a church building, I would preach in the church. But lots of times, I would preach in a barn or someone’s home or even outside in a field. I baptized many people in my days as an evangelist. Like Brother Smith said, most of those baptisms were outside in a river or a pond. Sometimes, I would baptize folks at the end of a long day of preaching, so we would baptize them by the light of the moon, or if the moon wasn’t bright enough, then by the light of torches. It was a beautiful sight to see.

Yesterday Brother Thomas Campbell and Brother Alexander Campbell explained that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) tries to do things the way the church in the New Testament did things. In the New Testament, they baptized by immersion. That’s the way Jesus was baptized. And they didn’t baptize babies, but only people old enough to decide for themselves. So that’s the way we decided to baptize folks.

That’s what I taught when I was an evangelist, traveling around and preaching to people. I think you should make things easy, so I came up with a simple way for people to remember what they need to do to be saved. I called it the “Five Finger Exercise.”(See Appendix 1 for song written about the “Five Finger Exercise”) It goes like this—you kids repeat after me. One, have faith. Two, be sorry for your sins. Three, get baptized. Four, know that

you are forgiven. And Five, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (have the kids repeat the Five Finger exercise again). **These five easy steps helped people remember what they had to do to be saved. You can see that baptism is a part of being saved, but not everything. You also need to believe in God, to be sorry for the bad things you have done, to know that God forgives you, and to trust that God will give the Holy Spirit to help you to make good choices and live a good life.**

Raccoon John Smith says: **Thank you, Brother Scott. I always did like that Five Finger Exercise of yours. Good-bye, boys and girls. I will see you tomorrow!**

Leader: **Good-bye, Brother Smith and Brother Scott. Thanks for telling us about baptism. And Brother Scott, thanks for showing us your Five Finger Exercise. I was thinking—we have five lesson points. Maybe we can make our lesson points a new “five finger exercise! Do you remember what our first three points are? (take children through lesson points for first three days).**

Let us pray: Dear God, thank you for teaching us about baptism. Thank you for the new life you give to us in baptism. Thank you for people like Brother Scott, who tell others about you, so they can become your followers. Be with us today as we learn more about following you. Amen.

Announcements

Additional singing, if time permits. Dismiss children to learning stations.

GRANNY'S KITCHEN

Ahead of time

Invite a long time member of the congregation and a brand new member of the congregation to come and talk about their baptisms.

Supplies

Big pitchers of ice water with fruit slices

Salty snacks: popcorn, pretzels, chips

Big bowl of water and a wash cloth



Before the children arrive, set each place with a variety of salty snacks and no water. When the children are settled and have greeted Granny, have them eat the snacks. Then have Granny introduce today's guests, one of the oldest and one of the youngest members of the congregation.

Invite the elder member to go first, telling of her/his baptism. Some questions to help them tell their story:

- Where were you baptized? In a river or church building or some other place?
- Were you baptized at this church or another church?
- How were you baptized? By immersion or sprinkling or some other method?
- How old were you? What made it special?

Ask the younger member the same questions. Encourage the children to ask any questions they have about baptism.

By the end of the question time, ask the children if they are thirsty. Pour them each a big glass of water. Talk about how good the water tastes. Let each child wash their hands with the bowl of water and the wash cloths. Let the guests talk about Jesus as living, refreshing water and baptism as a cleansing from all our mistakes and sin.

THE MILL

Stages of Water

Remind the children that as water can be changed into different forms, so we are changed when we are washed in the waters of baptism.

Supplies:

Water

Ice

Electric tea kettle or tea kettle and hot plate



What to do:

Talk about the different stages of water—how water is changed. Have fun with it. Melt ice in the tea kettle, boil water and watch it turn to steam.

Washed Clean

Explain that as we wash our dirty clothes to get them clean, the waters of baptism cleanse us of our sins.

Supplies:

Container of water

Laundry detergent

Dirty cloth



What to do

We've all seen the "Cheer" commercial where the gentleman washes a dirty cloth. Let the kids wash the cloth clean. Instead of one container, you could have a container of water and dirty cloth for each child. Talk about the cleansing power of water. What would our world be like if nothing could be washed clean? What would our lives be like if the bad we did could not be forgiven?

Bright as a New Penny

Use this experiment as an opportunity to talk about how we are made new through the act of baptism.

Supplies

Dull pennies (preferably one for each child)

Water

White vinegar

Salt

Glass jar

Measuring spoons

Towel

What to do

Mix 6 tablespoons of vinegar and 2 tablespoons of salt in a jar. Put the dull pennies in the jar and stir them around for a few minutes. Rinse the pennies in water and dry them with a towel.



Baptistery

Visit your church's baptistery. Talk about how people are baptized. Kids usually have lots of questions about baptism and unless they have been baptized themselves have not seen the baptistery close up. (Check to see if the kids will be decorating the baptistery during their stop at The Barn, and make sure that you don't have a scheduling conflict.)

THE TOWN SQUARE

If your Town Square is indoors, you may want to move outside for some or all of the water games.

Water Bucket Relays

Supplies

Buckets (2 per team)
Water
Cups or sponges



What to do

Line the teams up. Place a bucket of water beside them and an empty bucket at a distance. On the empty bucket, draw a line to mark the winning fill amount. One by one the players fill their cups with water and carry them to the bucket at a distance. The first team to fill the bucket to the line wins (you can also do this with sponges so that everyone gets a little wet, or punch holes in the carrying cup to make it a little more interesting)

Jump Rope Splash

Explain that jumping rope would have been a common game during pioneer days. The water adds a little twist.

Supplies

Long jump rope
Cup of water for each child



What to do

Give each child a plastic or paper cup full of water. While two players twirl a large jump rope, jumpers one by one attempt three consecutive jumps. They are to do this while holding onto their cup of water and trying to not let any water spill. The child that has the most water left is the winner. You can keep playing until only one person has water left in their cup.

Decorate the Box

Through baptism, God “decorates” us with beauty.

Supplies

1 or more large boxes
Spray bottles with tempera paint diluted with water
Paint Smocks

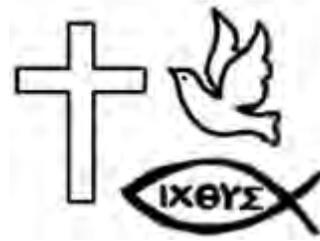


What to do

Let the kids decorate the box with the spray bottles of paint.

THE BARN**Decorate the Baptistry***Supplies*

Pictures of various Christian symbols
 Tempera paint
 Brushes
 Water for cleaning brushes

*What to do*

Let the children decorate the baptistry with the paint, using the Christian symbols as a guide. Explain that in some churches, particularly older ones, these symbols are inlaid in the baptistry with beautiful mosaics.

Use this as an opportunity to talk about the symbolism of baptism. We are “buried” in baptism, according to the Bible verse for the day. So when we are baptized, we go all the way under. This means that our old self dies and our new self is born out of the waters of baptism.

Wet Chalk Drawing

By dipping your chalk into wet paint, you can create wonderful works of chalk art that won't smudge like regular chalk.

Supplies

Paper (any color).
 Colored chalk (either chalk pastels or blackboard chalk)
 White tempera paint (liquid)
 A dish for the paint.

*What You Do:*

Put a small amount of white tempera paint into a dish.

Dip the tip of chalk into the paint.

Have the children draw on their paper. The drawing marks made will show not only the color of the chalk but also an edge of white paint. If the children draw on dark colors, the white will show up very nicely. They could also use a dark tempera paint with a light color paper. The possibilities are endless.

In this activity the paint "seals" the chalk so it won't smudge on the paper.

Have the children draw a picture of a river, lake, or stream. Explain that in pioneer days people got baptized outside in a river or lake—even when it was very cold!

Water Color Painting

Supplies

Water color or diluted tempera paint in blues,
greens, and other watery colors
Large sheet of paper
Drinking straws



What to do

Drop small amounts of paint on paper. Explain that they will make a picture of water together. Have the children use the drinking straws to blow the paint to form a picture. Be sure to tell them NOT to inhale! Explain that in pioneer days people got baptized outside in a river or lake—even when it was very cold!

THE MEETING HOUSE – CLOSING

Singing

Call and Response with daily lesson point – BAPTISM – FEEL IT! (Also review previous days lesson points)

If you are using this time to talk about your own church's history, introduce the day's speaker.

Closing announcements

Closing prayer

DAY FOUR THE BRAIN – USE IT!

Scripture: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.* Mark 12:30

Disciple value: *“Think, always think.”* - Barton W. Stone

THE MEETING HOUSE–OPENING

Opening Singing

Leader: **Welcome back to Bethany Village! Yesterday Brother Walter Scott taught us about his Five Finger Exercise, and we decided that we could have a Five Finger Exercise with our lesson points. Let’s see how well we remember what we have learned so far.**

BIBLE (BELIEVE IT)

BREAD (TASTE IT)

BAPTISM (FEEL IT)

Today our lesson point is BRAIN – USE IT! Let’s practice that a few times.

In the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we think that it is very important to use our brains. Using your mind is one important way to love God. This is what the Bible says. (Read Mark 12:30). This is called the Great Commandment. Jesus means that we are to love God with everything that is in us, including our minds.

In some churches they tell you how to think and what to believe, but in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) we think you should use your minds to figure out what to believe. We figure this out by reading the Bible and studying together in Sunday School and Bible study.

Let's see what Raccoon John Smith has to say about why we think using our brains is so important.

Raccoon John Smith enters: **Hello, boys and girls! Yes, in our church we have always believed that using your brain is important. You know, back in the old days, when I was your age, it was hard for boys and girls to go to school. Sometimes there weren't any schools close by. Or sometimes kids would have to work on the farm instead of going to school. In my whole life, I only went to school for four months! But I always loved to learn. I went to school long enough to learn how to read, and from then on I read everything I could get my hands on.**

Even though I couldn't go to school, I could use my brain. It was using my brain and reading the Bible that helped me figure out the things that we've been talking about, things like baptism and the Lord's Supper. My friend, Barton Stone, who you met on our first day together, used to say, "Think, always think!" That meant don't let someone tell you what to believe, especially if it goes against the Bible as you understand it. Sometimes it might be easier to let someone else do the thinking for us, but in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) we believe that God wants us to use our brains.

Now I have to tell you we didn't always use our brains, or our hearts, as well as we should have. Back when I was preaching and teaching, when our church was just getting started, the whole society treated black folks very badly, and I'm sad to say that the church also treated them badly. Church members, including myself, had slaves. Most of the time, black folks weren't welcome at white churches. This was a terrible sin. But God worked in a mighty way, and raised up great African American leaders in the church. Here is (introduce the one or more persons who will be speaking) to tell us about the black church.

Choose one or more of the following characters to address the children.

The Other Alexander Campbell¹

This is the story of the earliest black congregation on record and its gifted pastor. If at all possible, please have a distinguished and respected African American man play this role. If this is not possible, any respected man in your congregation might play the role. Please do not attempt to "color" the actor's skin, for this will be offensive. (You wouldn't worry about dying hair or eye color, and skin is no more important in the eyes of Jesus or children.) The gentleman who plays this part might wear the closest thing you can find to a 19th century black suit.

"Hello. My name is Alexander Campbell. Oh, I'm not the old Alexander Campbell. But I was named for him and I am the pastor of the very first black Disciple congregation. It was called the Colored Christian Church of Woodford County, Virginia. Well, I know those are fighting words today but that's the way we talked way back then. It was established back in 1834, when the Women's Missionary Society bought me out of slavery. They did, from old Mr.

¹Many thanks to the Rev. Billye Bridges, for her help and guidance on these rich and important biographies of history important to us all.

Buford, for a thousand dollars. They set me free and then gave me my theological education and then I was ordained for Christian ministry and became the pastor of that church. We grew to over 300 members while I was the pastor. What do you think of that? From a slave to a pastor of over 300 people. Now, don't you think my Mamma was proud!"

Preston Taylor

This key lay pastor in Disciples' history is a perfect character for the Civil War historian in your church to play. If at all possible, please have a well-respected African American man play this role. If that is not possible, please do not attempt to "color" the actor's skin, for this will be offensive. (You wouldn't worry about dying hair or eye color, and skin pigmentation is no more important in the eyes of children or Jesus.) Have your gentleman dress up in a black suit with a string tie. Below is a suggested monologue for your use, or use one of the marvelous biographies of Mr. Taylor available from *The Untold Story*² or materials available at the Disciples Historical Society³ to create a monologue of your own.

"Good morning (evening). My name is Preston Taylor. I was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1849, the son of slaves at a time when there was growing trouble over slavery. By the time I was a teenager, the country was at war and I went to war with it. This war was called the Civil War. I served my country as a drummer-boy. Now you might not think that was very important. But it was. It was. The men needed to hear their captain's orders, especially over gunfire in battle. They didn't have any radios or computers in my day--no, no. So they needed me and my drumming signals in order to know what to do, where to turn, where to go. We won that war. Won our freedom. Then the hard work began.

After the war, I was a skilled stonecutter and engraver on marble but I could find no one who would give me work, because of my color. They didn't want to hire a black man, you see. So I went to school to get more training. I became a train porter on the Louisville and Chattanooga Railroad and joined the Christian Church under Elder Samuel Buckner and there received a call to ministry. That eventually led to me serving High Street Christian Church in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky.

During that time, it was hard for black men to find jobs, even though the railroad was being built, right through Mt. Sterling. White contractors were reluctant to hire black men. So I put in a bid for two sections of the work and got the bid. I was able to hire the children of former slaves and give everyone involved a sense of dignity. Well, we went on to do many other things. I could keep you here all day (night) and maybe I should for I went on to serve other churches and do many other things. I was honored to be elected the president of the National Christian Missionary Convention in 1917 and was re-elected to that office every year until God took me home in 1931. At the 4th National Convention, in 1920, I spoke these words:

**Realizing that God hath made all nations of the earth of one blood,
and, that we are brethren**

²CMF/CWF Studies 1976-77 (This may be in your church library or in the archives of one of your CWF or CMF members.)

³Disciples of Christ Historical Society Archives

**and, hold to God as our Supreme Head
and, Jesus, His Son, as our Brother, Friend, and Mediator, let the slogan of this meeting be pushed and pulled until the fullest realization of our work is realized. Pray God that the Kingdom of this World may become consolidated into the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be honor and glory forever.”⁴**

Sarah Lue Bostik

Pictures of this ordained black woman show her to be beautiful, with high cheek bones and her lovely long hair tucked neatly in a bun. She is wearing the floral and lace of the educated woman of her day and has the bearing of a woman of confidence, accustomed to public speaking and much accomplishment. That she was. If at all possible, please have a well-respected African American woman play this role. If that is not possible, please do not attempt to “color” the actor’s skin, for this will be offensive. (You wouldn’t worry about dying hair or eye color, and skin pigmentation is no more important in the eyes of children or Jesus.) The person who plays her should speak in cultured tones, with great presence. A long, floral dress with a lace collar would be the most appropriate costume for Rev. Bostik.

“Good evening (morning). My name is the Rev. Mrs. Sarah Lue Bostik. I am a graduate of Southern Christian Institute and also studied at Shorter College in Arkansas. I am the widow of the Rev. Dr. Mancil Bostik and the proud mother of one son, who, God rest his soul, preceded me in death. I spent my life, in the late 1800's and early 1900's preaching in both white churches and African American churches in Arkansas and Texas.

But my proudest achievement, my highest calling from God was to build a school for African Americans in Texas. Perhaps you have heard of it. It is known as Jarvis Christian College and it is still educating young black men and women today.

That was my dream, along with my friend, Bertha Mason. By the grace of God and the work of a lot of good people, that school became a reality. I came here to tell you today that whoever you are, you need to be listening to what God is calling you to do. And however impossible it seems, however big the problems, believe me, it couldn’t have seemed more impossible than for two black women in 1902 to build a black college in the wilds of Texas. God bless you.”

Raccoon John Smith: What wonderful work our African American brothers and sisters did for the Lord. And today they continue to be great examples for the whole church. Did you know that our largest churches are African American? God continues to send great black leaders, and praise be to God for that! Now I’d like to visit with our guests to learn a little bit more about their wonderful ministries. Raccoon John Smith and others leave.

Leader: What a great history we have! And what wonderful stories of faith, and using your mind to love God we have. Remember BRAIN~ (USE IT)

Let us pray: Dear God, thank you for the great examples of African American Disciples, who overcame racism and prejudice to teach your word. Help us to be faithful followers as they were. Be with us today and show us how to use our brains to learn about you and love you. Amen.

More singing, if time permits. Then dismiss children to learning stations.

⁴As quoted in the Black Disciple Legacy Series of the National Convocation of the Christian Church, James Blair, author

GRANNY'S KITCHEN

Ahead of Time

Invite a thoughtful (as in thinking) member of the congregation (who has also shown an ability to relate to children) to come and talk to the children about why he or she was attracted to the intellectual freedom of the Disciples of Christ tradition, (e.g., our right and responsibility to use the minds that God has given us to think well about our faith.)

Supplies

“Brain” Food, such as cheese, peanut butter (be mindful that some children have severe allergies to peanuts) nuts and crackers



Drinks

Once again as the children gather, Granny will welcome them and introduce them to today's guest. She might point out how this guest is respected in the congregation for being very smart, very wise, very knowledgeable. Granny then might ask the guest to tell the children what is special about our church, the Disciples of Christ, in that we have no creed but Christ. That is, we are expected to think well and hard about what we believe instead of being told what to believe. The guest for this session is encouraged to find a compelling but simple way to convey his or her faith to the children.

THE MILL

Open Space Exercises

Explain that in our church, we value the importance of using your mind. We don't have to all think alike, as long as we disagree with love.

Ask the following questions, have the kids go to different places depending on their choice:

Would you rather eat pizza or a hamburger (cheeseburger)?

Would you rather go to the mountains or to the ocean?

Would you rather play video games or ride your bike?

Would you rather go the movies or play on the computer?

Which do you like better in school – reading or math?

Which do you like to drink better—juice or milk?

What do you think is more important – to be smart or to be kind?

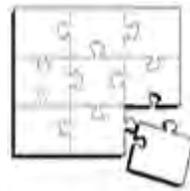
Add questions that are pertinent to your church and/or community.

Brain Puzzles

Supplies

Copies of Brain – Use It Puzzles (Appendix 2)

Pencils



What to do

As the kids work the different puzzles, remind them that God gave us our brains to use to think about our faith.

THE TOWN SQUARE

Explain to the kids that all the games for today are about using your brains.

Concentration (for young children)

Supplies

Copies of symbol cards (See Appendix 3)

Poster board

Glue

What to do

Make copies of the symbols. Each one must be copied twice. Glue to poster board. Turn each card face down. The first person turns up 2 pictures and tries to match them. If they do not match, they turn both back over and the next person tries to find a matching pair. When someone finds a matching pair, they remove these from the playing board. Keep playing until all pairs are removed. This can be played as individuals or as teams.

Cooperative Bible Trivia

Using a children's Bible Trivia game, play the game. Have the children work together to come up with the answers.

Scavenger Hunt

Hide the clues in the appropriate location.

Location

Clue

By the door in the classroom

As a **DOOR** turns on its hinges, so does a lazy person in bed. (Proverbs 26:14)

In the coat closet

They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their **CLOAKS** on it. (Mark 11:7)

By the biggest tree on church property

And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every **TREE** of the garden (Genesis 2:16)

In the chalice

Then he took a **CUP**...and said, "This is my blood poured out for you." (Matthew 26:27)

In a crib in the nursery

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the **BABY** lying in a manger. (Luke 2:16)

In the pulpit

He commanded us to **PREACH** to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. (Acts 10:42)

By a sink

Let a little water be brought, and **WASH** your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. (Genesis 18:4)

Meet by the baptistry

I have **BAPTIZED** you with water; but he will **BAPTIZE** you with the Holy Spirit." Explain that while it is the end of the Scavenger Hunt, when we are baptized it is just the beginning of our life with Christ.

THE BARN**Making a Writing Slate**

Explain that in pioneer days, the time nearly 200 years ago when our denomination began, children often used a slate (a small chalkboard) instead of pens and paper because paper was considered expensive and hard to get.

Supplies

A thin piece of plywood or craft wood, cut 8" x 12" (1 per child, cut ahead of time)
 Sandpaper
 Cloth Rag
 Masking tape, 1" wide
 Newspapers
 Blackboard-finish spray paint

*What to do*

- Use the sandpaper to sand all the edges of the wooden board until it is smooth. Be careful of splinters. Lightly sand the top and bottom of the board.
- Wipe all surfaces of the board with the rag to remove any loose sawdust.
- Place strips of masking tape in a border along the outside edges of the board. Make sure the edge of the masking tape is flush with the edge of the board so the tape does not fold over the edge.
- Spread out 2-3 layers of newspaper on a firm surface. Place the board with the taped side up in the center of the paper.
- Following the directions on the paint can, lightly spray the surface of the wood. Allow it to dry completely. (You may need to apply additional coats that evening or the next day)
- The next day give the children their slates. Let them write on them with chalk.

Silhouette Portraits

This project will help the children learn a little bit more about life in the early 1800's, a time when only the very wealthy could afford to have their portraits painted (and, of course, before photography). Silhouette portraits were a very popular substitute for true portraits. The cost for silhouette portraits was very low and the subjects could be easily identified. Those without much money would use the light of the brightest mid-day sun to cast their silhouette onto a wall. Then a partner would sketch onto paper the image that was cast upon the wall.

Supplies

Straight back chair
 Blank wall for back drop
 Bright light (spotlight, desk lamp, flashlight)
 2 sheets of white typing paper
 Masking tape
 Pencil
 Scissors
 Sheet of black construction paper
 White glue



What to do

- Divide the children into pairs
- Place the chair close to the wall. Have one child sit in a comfortable position, with his or her side next to the wall.
- Position the light to shine on the child. Darken the room and adjust the light so that the shadow cast by the light makes a sharp profile on the wall.
- Position a sheet of white paper on the wall so that the profile is now on the paper. Tape the paper in place. Experiment a little until the light is right and the profile is the size you want.
- Have the child remain perfectly still while the other child carefully traces the outline of her shadow onto the white paper (Camp Crew leaders will need to help younger children with this)
- Cut out the profile and then tape it onto the sheet of black construction paper.
- Trace around the profile with a pencil and cut out the black silhouette.
- Center the black silhouette on the 2nd sheet of white paper, then glue the silhouette to the paper.

Make Mobiles*Supplies*

Poster Board, cut into squares and rectangles

Magazines

Glue

String

Dowel rods or sticks

Tape

Paper punch

*What to do*

Ask the children to look through the magazines for pictures of people making wise choices. Cut them out and glue them to the poster board.

Use the paper punch to punch holes in the poster board. Have the children tie the string or yarn through the holes and tie the string to the dowel rods or sticks.

Talk about how God wants us to use our minds to make wise choices in our lives.

THE MEETING HOUSE – CLOSING

Singing

Call and Response with daily lesson point – BRAIN – USE IT! (Also review previous days' lesson points).

If you are using this time to talk about your own church's history, introduce the day's speaker. Or, you may choose to have one of the characters who did not speak in the Opening talk to the children.

Closing announcements

Closing prayer

DAY FIVE BODY OF CHRIST – LIVE IT!

Scripture: *Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27)*

Disciple Value: *The Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one. - Thomas Campbell in "Declaration and Address"*

Christian unity is our polar star. - Barton W. Stone

THE MEETING HOUSE – OPENING

(Ahead of time, make copies of the pictures of the hand, foot, eye and ear found in Appendix 4. Make enough copies so that each VBS participant, including adult leaders can have a picture of a hand, eye, foot or ear.)

Singing

Leader: **My goodness, here it is the last day (night) of Bethany Village. How quickly this week has gone by! I have learned a lot about our church, and I hope you have, too. Let's see how well we remember our "Five Finger Exercise" so far—**

BIBLE (BELIEVE IT)

BREAD (TASTE IT)

BAPTISM (FEEL IT)

BRAIN (USE IT)

Today our lesson point is **BODY OF CHRIST – LIVE IT!** Let's practice that a few times.

Now what does it mean to be the Body of Christ? One way we can think of it is that the church is like a body. A body has arms and legs and eyes and a nose and feet—all different parts, but that make up one body. Let's see what Jesus' follower Paul wrote about the Body of Christ in I Corinthians.

But before I read what Paul wrote, all of you have a picture of a hand, eye, foot, or ear. When I say the part of the body that you are holding, you stand up and hold up the picture. But when I say *body*, you *all* stand up. (Read the following passage from I Corinthians 12 slowly, pausing for everyone to stand at the designated places).

12 For just as the **BODY** is one and has many different parts, and all the different parts of the **BODY**, though many, are one **BODY**, so it is with Christ. **13** For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one **BODY**—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. **14** Indeed, the **BODY** does not consist of one part but of many different parts. **15** If the **FOOT** would say, "Because I am not a **HAND**, I do not belong to the **BODY**," that would not make it any less a part of the **BODY**. **16** And if the **EAR** would say, "Because I am not an **EYE**, I do not belong to the **BODY**," that would not make it any less a part of the **BODY**. **17** If the whole **BODY** were an **EYE**, where would the **EAR** be? If the whole **BODY** were **EAR** where would the sense of smell be? **18** But as it is, God arranged the different parts of the **BODY**, each one of them, as he chose. **19** If all the parts were just alike, where would the **BODY** be? **20** As it is, there are many different parts, yet one **BODY**. **21** The **EYE** cannot say to the **HAND**, "I have no need of you," and the **HAND** cannot say to the **FOOT**, "I have no need of you."**26** If one part of the **BODY** hurts, the whole **BODY** hurts together with it. **27** Now you are the **BODY** of Christ and individually all the different parts of it.

Leader says: **The church is like the Body of Christ—some of us are Sunday School teachers, and some of us are elders, acolytes, and some of us mow the lawn, and some of us sing in the choir. We are all different kinds of gifts and abilities, but one church.**

Let's see what Raccoon John Smith has to say about being the Body of Christ.

Raccoon John Smith enters and says: **You are studying one of my favorite Bible passages today! We've talked about how back in my day there was all this fussing and fighting among Christians. My friends Barton Stone, the Campbells, Walter Scott, the Other Alexander Campbell, Preston Taylor and Sarah Lue Bostik thought the church should be like the Body—maybe different ways of believing, but still one Body, to be all together. Thomas Campbell said that the church of Jesus Christ is meant to be ONE. And Brother Barton Stone said that "Christian unity is our polar star." He meant that figuring out how to bring all different kinds of Christians together as one was the most important thing.**

That's why I worked to bring together the people who were following Barton Stone (they were Stone-ites) and the people who were following Alexander Campbell (they were called Campbell-ites) together to become one church. In 1832, in Lexington, Kentucky, we finally shook hands to become one church. But the Stone-ites insisted the name of the new church should be the Christian Church, and the Campbell-ites said that it should be Disciples of Christ. So we took both names, and that is why we are called the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Back when I was preaching our church was made up of white folks and black folks, but today I'm proud to see that the church is made up of all different colors of people. Lots of our

newest churches are Hispanic and Asian. I would like you to meet Rev. David Kagiwada, who was Japanese.

Rev. David Tamotsu Kagiwada (1929-1985)

As in the case of our African American characters, if your congregation is privileged to have an Asian American man, ask him to play the role of Rev. Kagiwada. If you do not have an Asian American, do not worry or attempt to make anyone “look” Asian. Simply ask one of your finest men to appear as this 20th Century Disciple hero of the faith.

“Hello. My name is David, David Kagiwada. I am a native of Los Angeles and a second generation Disciple. My mother was a graduate of the Disciples sponsored Margaret K. Long School (Joshi Sei Gakuin) in Tokyo, Japan. Some of you may have read about or even visited that school on a mission trip.

During World War II, my family was put in a concentration camp in Arizona with other Americans of Japanese ancestry. We were American citizens, but because our country was at war with Japan, our government put everyone of Japanese ancestry in concentration camps. They did this even though many of us had sons or brothers or husbands fighting in the U.S. Army. I never forgot this terrible injustice. I realized that I had a call to fight injustice in all its forms, not just for Asian Americans but for all people.

I decided that God was calling me to bring people together, to help people of all colors and races and backgrounds become friends. I was called to do that as an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Throughout my ministry I tried help people who were fighting with each other to make peace with each other. I also supported and encouraged persons of all colors and backgrounds, and women. I helped our church learn that people of all colors and all different heritages had special gifts from God, and that the church could learn from them.”¹

Raccoon John Smith: So you can see that another way we celebrate the Body of Christ is that the church is made up of people of all different colors and races and backgrounds, but we are still ONE church.

Leader: You know, Brother Smith, I was thinking that being the Body of Christ also means that we have to be Christ’s body in the world. Jesus Christ needs our hands to help others, our hearts to love others, our mouths to tell the good news. To be the Body of Christ means that Jesus uses us to do his work.

Raccoon John Smith: That’s right. The Body of Christ means that we are ONE church, and it also means that we are the Body of Christ in the world. Boys and girls, thank you so much for having me come to Bethany Village this week. I’ve sure enjoyed telling you about our church, and can see that with boys and girls like you, the future of our wonderful church is in good hands. Smith leaves.

Leader: Good-bye, Brother Smith. Well, to be the Body of Christ means some different and important things. It means to be one church, and it means to be Christ’s body in the world. So BODY OF CHRIST (LIVE IT)

If time permits, additional singing. Then dismiss children to learning stations.

¹Information taken from the Kagiwada Memorial Scholarship Fund Brochure of NAPAD

GRANNY'S KITCHEN*Ahead of Time*

Invite behind the scenes persons who share their gifts in your congregation (for example, the person who sends cards, mows the lawn, cleans the church, bakes the cookies, etc.) Ask them to come and tell the children what they do, how long they've done it and why.

Supplies

Ice Cream

Various toppings



On this last night of Vacation Bible School, after each child is served ice cream with his or her favorite topping, introduce the special behind the scenes guests who do many things that the children may not even know need to get done. While the children are eating ice cream with different kinds of topping, each person describes the different things they do to make this wonderful church work. The church, like a Sundae, needs all kinds of flavors and kinds and colors to make it a delicious offering to God.

The Mill

Church Puzzle

Supplies

Group picture of church members (NOT the building) blown up
Cardboard or wood



What to do

Ahead of time mount picture on cardboard or wood. If using cardboard, use exacto knife to cut into jigsaw-shaped pieces. If using wood, use jig saw to make puzzle.

Mix up the pieces and have the children put the puzzle together. Talk about the different people who make up the church, and how they all have to work together. Take away a piece of the puzzle. Have the kids work the puzzle again. What does it look like with one piece missing? What is the church like when someone is missing?

The Body of Christ in the world

Supplies

Paper
Pens or pencils
Envelopes
Stamps
Globe or world map



Ahead of time

Go to the website for the Division of Overseas Ministries www.disciples.org/dom/ or call the Division of Overseas Ministries at (317) 713-2575. Look up information about missionaries and the countries where they are serving.

Share some of the information with the children. Explain that we work with other kinds of churches when we minister in other countries. Show them on the world map or globe some of the places our missionaries are at work. Tell the children that we are the Body of Christ working in the world. Have them write thank you notes to the missionaries.

More about the Disciples

Supplies

Video about Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
TV and VCR



Ahead of time –Check to see if your church has a video that talks about the larger ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) If not, you may order one. Go to the website for the denomination www.disciples.org. Click on General Ministries, then on Communication Ministries. Click on Resources, then on Video Resources. Choose one of the videos listed.

Show the video, or select a portion that fits your time frame.

THE TOWN SQUARE

All the games for today's session are cooperative, without winners and losers, to emphasize the cooperative nature of the Body of Christ.

Parachute Games

Supplies

Parachute
Balls, if applicable



Play cooperative games with a parachute. Play your favorite games or see the games below:

Tortoise – The chute becomes a giant tortoise shell with everyone underneath on hands and knees. The idea is to make the tortoise move about, but remain all in one piece. Once it starts to move well, the tortoise can tackle an obstacle course, appropriate to the ability of the participants.

Change Over - MUSHROOM the chute and call out a command, e.g. "Change over if you are wearing red". Everyone wearing red has to run under the chute to the opposite side, before the chute lands on them (although that is part of the fun).

Musicless Chairs - Number the children by threes around the chute, so that you have an equal number of ones, twos and threes evenly spread out. Mushroom the chute, then call out a number and also a description of who you would like them to act as.

For example, if you call out: "Mushroom... Number ones are ballerinas", all of the number ones have to cross under the chute, acting like ballerinas on the way.

Chute Ball - This game is best played with an earthball (a large beach ball). You simply place the ball in the middle of the chute and by pulling upwards and outwards, throw the ball as high in the air as possible.

Popcorn - Start with everybody holding the chute stretched out. Throw as many soft balls as you can find on to the chute. Then see how quickly you can bounce them off with out letting go of the chute.

Tug of Peace

Read the poem below by Shel Silverstein. Talk about how in our bodies every part needs to work together. In the church, we have to work together. We also work with other churches in our community and around the world.



Supplies

Long rope

What to do

Have the children sit in a circle holding onto a rope placed inside the circle in front of their feet. The ends of the rope are tied together to make a huge loop. If everyone pulls at the same time, the entire group should be able to come to a standing position. The Tug of Peace can also be played by stretching the rope out straight and having children sit on either side of it, facing each other in two lines. If both sides pull on the rope evenly, they can help each other up.

After the game, talk with the children about how it felt to cooperate together. Do they like games where everyone wins?

Hug O' War

by Shel Silverstein

I will not play at tug o' war.
I'd rather play at hug o' war,
Where everyone hugs
Instead of tugs,
Where everyone giggles
And rolls on the rug,
Where everyone kisses,
And everyone grins,
And everyone cuddles,
And everyone wins.

Blanket Squish*Supplies*

1 large blanket for each Camp Crew in the group

*What to do*

Spread the blanket on the grass or floor. Have the children all try to fit on the blanket (standing, sitting, kneeling) without allowing any body part to touch the grass or floor beyond the blanket. Once this has been achieved, fold the blanket in half and try again. Repeat the above process for as long as possible. As the blanket gets smaller and smaller, it will become more important for the group to work together.

Floor Clap*Supplies*

None

What to do

Have the children kneel together in a circle leaning forward with their arms outstretched. Neighbors cross arms at the wrist with right hands crossing over left hands. The hands touch the floor.

One child starts by clapping simple rhythm on the floor with their right hand. The clap passes counter-clockwise to the next hand (not to the next person).

After a clapped rhythm has moved all around the circle, a new participant starts a rhythm and sends it around the circle again.

THE BARN

Paraments

Supplies

Burlap, cut to fit communion table and pulpit as paraments
 Tempera paint
 Paper plates



What to do

Pour different colors of paint in the pie plates. Have the children place their hands in the paint and make hand prints on the burlap.

Throughout the session, have each group add their hand prints to the burlap. On Sunday, use the paraments on the communion table and pulpit.

Spiritual Gift

Supplies

One box for each Camp Crew
 Stuff to decorate box with – pieces of cloth, glitter, sequins, markers, etc.
 Piece of paper for each child
 Pen or pencil for each child



What to do

Explain that the children are making a gift for God. Have them work together to decorate the box as beautifully as they can.

Say that God has made each one of us very special. This is God's gift to us. When we use our gift, we make God happy. This is our gift to God. We are not all alike, just as an arm is different from a leg is different from an eye is different from an ear. All parts of the body are important, and we are all important.

Talk with the children about what makes them special and how they can use their special gift to please God. Have them write that on the piece of paper. Put all the pieces of paper in the gift box. Have the Camp Crews present their gifts to God during the Closing.

Taffy Pull-Aparts

Ahead of time: You will want to test the recipe to see about how much you need. Earlier in the day prepare Taffy until the stage where it is cooled.

Ingredients

1 ½ tablespoons butter or margarine for greasing
 1 cup sugar
 1 tablespoon cornstarch
 ¾ cup light corn syrup

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
 2/3 cup water

1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons vanilla
¼ teaspoon food coloring



Directions

- Use a paper towel dabbed with 1 tablespoon butter to lightly grease the bottom and sides of an 8 x 8 baking pan. Set aside.
- In a saucepan, combine 1 cup sugar and 1 tablespoon cornstarch. Stir well.
- Add ¾ cup light corn syrup, 2/3 cup water, 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, and 1 teaspoon salt to the sugar mixture. Stir well.
- Clip a candy thermometer to the side of the pan. Make sure the tip does not touch the bottom of the pan.
- Over medium heat, stir the mixture constantly until it begins to boil. Stop stirring once the mixture begins to boil.
- Continue to cook the mixture until the temperature on the thermometer reads 256°F, for about 30 minutes.
- Remove saucepan from heat. Stir in 2 teaspoons of vanilla. And ¼ teaspoon food coloring if desired. Pour the mixture into baking pan and let cool.

After the children wash and dry their hands, use ½ tablespoon butter or margarine to lightly coat their fingers and the palms of their hands. Divide into twos, pull and stretch the taffy until it looks light in color and becomes shiny and stiff. Pull the taffy into strips (about 6 inches) wide. Use kitchen scissors to cut the strips into bite-sized pieces.

Wrap the taffy pieces in waxed paper or plastic wrap to send home with them.

While the children are pulling the taffy, explain that a taffy pull would have been a common fun activity during pioneer days. Talk with them about how it takes working together to pull the taffy.

THE MEETING HOUSE – CLOSING

Singing

If the Camp Crews did the Spiritual Gift as their craft during the Barn, be sure to include the presentation of those gifts as a part of the closing.

Review the complete “Five Finger Exercise.”

Hear from the final speaker about your church’s history, if you are doing this.

Closing prayer

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! ADULT COMPONENT

By
René Rodgers Jensen

OVERVIEW

These adult lessons are designed to be used in conjunction with the children's Vacation Bible School program Bethany Village Live! Each session will feature the same theme as the children's curriculum, and the adult study will parallel what the children will be learning. Leaders of the adult component are encouraged to be familiar with the children's curriculum.

The adults will meet with the children for the opening and closing in the Meeting House each day. The opening in the Meeting House will include information about the theme of the day. It is the expectation that the adults will participate in all the activities in the opening and closing in the Meeting House. This is a time to get in touch with your inner child, and enjoy the fun of journeying back to the early days of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

BACKGROUND ON THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Each day of Bethany Village Live! will introduce a central Disciple value. A helpful thumbnail of Disciple history and beliefs can be found on the denominational website www.disciples.org. For history go to www.disciples.org/discover/history/ and for core beliefs go to www.disciples.org/discover/believe/. At the beginning of the first session, it will be helpful to review some of this information with your study group, or to reproduce it to hand out to them. In particular, the group needs a basic familiarity with the four founders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)—Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, and Walter Scott. When the curriculum refers to “the founders,” it is referring to these four first-generation Disciples.

Each day's session includes a “Disciple Value”—one or more quotations from Disciple history that captures that day's central theme. We Disciples have from the beginning rejected creeds as authoritative formulations of faith, but we do have a number of “mini-creeds,” mottos or slogans that reflect our fundamental beliefs. Find a creative way to share these with your group. You might print them on bookmarks to be given out each day, or make posters of them and put up a new poster each day.

Teacher Helps

In most Disciple churches, people come with all levels of knowledge about the scripture. People are often embarrassed about their ignorance with the scriptures. It is best to presume that at least some in your group are unfamiliar with the scriptures and avoid putting people on the spot by assuming familiarity with the Bible. For instance, when you ask someone to read a scripture passage, you may want to indicate where that passage can be found.

Your primary role as a teacher is to facilitate the conversation among group members, not to be the “expert” on scripture, Disciple history, or Disciple theology. Most of the questions are deliberately open-ended, so that there is no one “right” answer. Rather, they are designed to encourage participants to reflect on their opinions and to struggle with their own understanding of

faith. Because Disciples have historically honored the ability and responsibility of believers to make up their own mind about matters of faith, the curriculum is deliberately designed to reflect that value. Thus the very structure of the curriculum intended to be a part of learning about who we are as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Before each session, read the material carefully and review the questions. You may find it helpful to check your church library for additional resources on Disciple history and beliefs.

Finally, while the curriculum is intended to be used in conjunction with the children's curriculum, it could, with some minor alterations, be used as a stand alone curriculum for an adult study.

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! Adult Component

DAY ONE BIBLE –BELIEVE IT!

Scriptures:

Psalm 119:105-112

2 Timothy 3:14-16

Disciple Values:

- *We have no book but the Bible, no creed by Christ.*
- *Where the scriptures speak, we speak. Where the scriptures are silent, we are silent.* Thomas Campbell

Supplies

Bibles

Copies of “Disciples and the Bible” for each participant

Getting Started

Have everyone introduce themselves. You might have them share how long they have been a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and/or your congregation. How they would rate their knowledge of the history and teachings of our denomination? What are they most interested in learning?

Bible Study

Have one of the group members read Psalms 119: 105-112.

Ask:

1. Can you recall a time when you have looked to the scriptures as a guide, when the scriptures were a “lamp to your feet and a light to your path”?
2. The psalmist says that God’s decrees are his “heritage forever.” In what sense are the scriptures the inheritance of persons of faith?

Have someone read 2 Timothy 3:14-16

Ask:

1. What are the similarities between the way the psalmist sees the role of the scriptures and the writer of 2 Timothy?
2. Both passages pre-suppose that knowledge of the scriptures is fundamental to a faithful life. Would you agree or disagree with this assumption? Why?

Disciples and the Bible

Hand out a copy “Disciples and the Bible” for each member of your group. Read the background information and discuss the questions that are included. Depending on how talkative your group is, you may have much more material than you can easily cover in the allotted time. You may need to cover only some of the questions, or to gently encourage the group to move along at certain points.

Remember the questions are deliberately open-ended, with no one “right” answer.

Conclude in time to join the children for the closing in the Meeting House.

The Restoration of New Testament Christianity

From the beginning, members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have prided themselves on being “a people of the book.” As we saw in the opening at the Meeting House, the founders of denomination insisted that the Bible was to be the sole authority for the church. Creeds (such as the Nicene Creed, the Apostles Creed, and the Westminster Confession of Faith) were rejected as human formulations that served only to divide the Body of Christ.

For our founders a return to the Bible—specifically New Testament—was the only way to overcome the divisions in the church.

Thomas Campbell wrote the *Declaration and Address* in 1809. This 56-page pamphlet is one of the most influential documents in Disciple history, and indeed in the history of the ecumenical movement. In it Thomas Campbell advocated Christian unity based on “the Bible alone” using “the original pattern found in the New Testament.”

Our desire, therefore, for ourselves and our brethren would be that, rejecting human opinions and the inventions of men as of any authority, or as having any place in the Church of God, we might forever cease from contention about such things; returning to and holding fast by, the original standard; taking the divine word along for our rule; the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide, to lead us into all truth...without attempting to inculcate anything of human authority, or private opinion, or inventions of men...

The founders looked in particular to the book of Acts, which recounts the development of the early church, as a template for Christianity. Many of our Disciple practices, such as communion every week, baptism by immersion, and the prominent role of the elders, are rooted in what our founders perceived to be the model of the early church found in the book of Acts. This emphasis on the *restoration* of New Testament Christianity gave the early movement the name the Restoration Movement.

Questions for Reflection

1. Thomas Campbell said that “where the scriptures speak, we speak. Where the scriptures are silent, we are silent.” But in reality, the scriptures are silent on many issues that pertain to modern life. The scriptures say nothing about technology. Some of the most troubling ethical questions we deal with today have to do with when life begins and when life ends. The scriptures are silent on this. How can we look to the scripture for guidance on these and other troubling ethical issues?
2. Thomas Campbell wrote that we should reject “human opinions...as of any authority or having any place in the Church of God.” Yet he himself, in writing the *Declaration and Address*, is offering a human opinion. Campbell and the other founders were often oblivious to this apparent contradiction. They also took for granted the hundreds of years of Christian tradition on which their own theology was based. Is it truly possible to read the scriptures without imposing a “human opinion”? For instance, we read the scriptures from the perspective of 21st century Americans, shaped by our own cultural, economic, and political perspectives. How might these and other hidden assumptions shape our reading of the scripture?

The Role of the Laity

The founders of our denomination emphasized that the task of biblical understanding was the role—indeed the duty—of every believer, not just the clergy or biblical scholars. This emphasis on the role of the individual Christian, free from churchly and governmental authorities, resonated with the frontier culture which formed the cradle of our denomination. With the American Revolution scarcely a generation behind them, the founders claimed the freedom of the individual to read and interpret scripture on their own.

The founders had great confidence in laypeople. (Indeed they had more confidence in the laity than in the “hireling” clergy, as Alexander Campbell stigmatized professional pastors.) All of the founders were biblical scholars and expected their followers to know the Bible well. And they were not simply talking about a superficial knowledge of the scriptures, but an intentional and deeply reflective study of the Bible. Alexander Campbell, in particular, believed that lay people could master critical scholarly methods for biblical study.

However, with all the emphasis on the role of the individual believer, the founders also believed that the community of the church was the context for biblical interpretation. As Eugene Boring notes in his book *Disciples and the Bible*, Barton Stone believed that the common man or woman, using common sense, could understand the Bible. “The ‘common’ in ‘common sense’ is to be emphasized. As practiced by Stone, the phrase represented not only the good sense that every individual had by nature but the sense that they shared as a community.” (Boring, p. 25)

Questions for Reflection

1. Would you agree with our founders that the task of biblical understanding is the *duty* of every Christian? Why or why not? If this is our duty, what sorts of obligations does it impose on us to know the scriptures?
2. What do you believe is the role of faith community, particularly the local church, in helping us understand the scriptures?

The Authority of the Scripture

Alexander Campbell was the most formative thinker among the early founders. Indeed, one of the old-time names for Disciples was “Campbellites.”

Campbell had a highly rational approach to biblical study, insisting that the Bible must be read as a whole, rather than cherry-picking certain passages. He also taught that scriptures should be read with an understanding of the historical circumstances of the book.

While Campbell never compromised on the authority of the scriptures, it was for him fundamentally a collection of human documents. He distinguished between the historical facts of the Bible, which were the biblical author’s own observations and thus subject to error, and God’s divine revelations. (Boring, p. 63) Campbell was a famous debater, and in one of his debates he made this point:

There is one assertion...from which we must dissent—‘that the scripture claim for every jot and tittle of themselves the same plenary and verbal inspiration.’...Any such claim...would greatly impair the reasonings of the most able defenders of the inspiration of the Bible. It would be a great reproach upon the four Evangelists [gospel writers]...when not any two of them narrate the same parable, conversation, sermon or aphorism in the same words...(*Millennial Harbinger*, 1837:397)

For Campbell, the apparent contradictions to be found in every little “jot and tittle” of the scriptures did not undercut the authority of the central message of the Bible.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you agree or disagree with Alexander Campbell that it is important to understand each scriptural passage as a part of a whole—the whole book, the whole Bible, the whole context in which it was written? Why or why not?
2. Campbell argues that not every part of the Bible shares the same inspiration. Some of it is genuine divine revelation and some it is human history. Do you agree or disagree? Why? How do we tell the difference?
3. Do you believe that God dictated every word of the Bible, or that is a collection of human documents that communicate a divine truth? In what sense, if any, is the Bible divinely inspired? If every word is not divinely inspired, can we still speak of the Bible as authoritative? Why or why not?

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! Adult Component

DAY TWO BREAD – TASTE IT!

Scripture:

1 Corinthians 11:23-33

Disciple Values:

- *“In the house of God there is always the table of the Lord.”* Alexander Campbell in *The Christian System*
- *At the table of the Lord we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ.* Preamble to the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Supplies

Bibles – different translations

Copies of “Disciples and the Lord’s Supper” for each participant

Getting Started

If there is anyone new to the group, welcome them and make sure they know everyone else.

Ask members of the group to recall a time when the Lord’s Supper was especially meaningful to them. What made that experience so meaningful?

Bible Study

Background – Paul was writing to the church at Corinth which was extremely conflicted. The church had divided into a number of factions, each claiming to be right. One of the problems the church was experiencing was around the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. In the early church the Lord’s Supper was much more like a church pot-luck dinner than the symbolic meal that we are accustomed to sharing today. Some members of the church would arrive early and greedily eat most of the food, leaving little for those who came later.

After you have explained the context of the scripture using the background material above, have one of the members read 1 Corinthians 11:23-33.

Questions for Reflection

1. Why do you think Paul begins this section of his letter by saying, “For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you...”? What do these words suggest about how the tradition of communion comes to us, and our responsibility to pass it on?
2. Paul warns against participating in the Lord’s Supper in an “unworthy manner.” What do you think would constitute an unworthy manner?
3. Paul says we should examine ourselves before we participate in the Lord’s Supper. Do you include self-examination as a part of your preparation for communion? Should we encourage worshipers to be more intentional about this? How? Have you ever abstained or considered abstaining from communion because you did not feel spiritually ready?
4. Verses 23-26 make up the Words of Institution that are used in most Disciple congregations most Sundays. Read these familiar words in a variety of different translations. If possible,

include a very contemporary translation such as *The Message*. Do you hear anything different in the varying translations?

Disciples and the Lord's Supper

Hand out a copy "Disciples and the Lord's Supper" to each member of your group. Read the background information and discuss the questions that are included. Depending on how talkative your group is, you may have much more information than you can easily cover in the allotted time. You may have time to cover only some of the questions.

Thomas and Alexander Campbell told their stories in the Opening Session at the Meeting House, but those stories are repeated in the material along with the addition of Barton W. Stone. You may choose to read the stories in the material or simply discuss the stories as presented in the opening.

Remember, the questions are deliberately open-ended, and there is no "right" answer. Conclude in time to join the children for the closing in the Meeting House.

Thomas Campbell's Story

Thomas Campbell emigrated from Ireland in 1807, settling on what was then the frontier of western Pennsylvania. He was a pastor in the Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church. The very name suggest how divided the church of his time was. Thomas Campbell was deeply troubled by those divisions, particularly because many of them seemed to be over relatively trivial matters.

Soon after his arrival, Thomas was asked by church officials to visit some of the scattered Old Light Anti-Burgher Presbyterians and conduct worship. On the frontier, Campbell found that there were members of other branches of the Presbyterian Church, as well as members of other denominations, who had not seen a pastor for a long time. Because Presbyterian polity, like that of most other Christian denominations, dictated that only an ordained pastor could preside at communion, this meant that most believers had not taken communion for a very long time. Thomas let everyone, regardless of their Presbyterian affiliation, participate in the Lord's Supper.

The Presbytery censured Thomas for his deviation from Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian orthodoxy and suspended him from ministry indefinitely. At this point, Thomas irrevocably broke with the Presbyterian church.

Alexander Campbell's Story

Meanwhile, young Alexander Campbell, studying in Glasgow, had a similar experience. It was the custom in those days for the elders of the church to rigorously examine those who came for the semi-annual communion service. When the congregant had been passed by the elders, he or she would be given a communion token. This communion token had to be presented before one could receive communion.

Alexander had received his communion token, but he, like his father, had become increasingly disturbed by the divisions in the Body of Christ, particularly around the Lord's Table. When the time came for him to receive the elements, Alexander threw his token on the communion table. Though unaware of what had been happening to his father, Alexander, too, had broken away from the Presbyterian Church.

Barton Stone's Story

For some American Presbyterians, the semi-annual communion service was associated with what we would call a revival. Barton Stone hosted a holy communion revival at Cane Ridge in 1801. More than 10,000 Christians of many different denominations participated in this revival, but only 700 were found worthy to receive the Lord's Supper. Stone, deeply moved by the unity of faith seen elsewhere at the Cane Ridge Revival, was saddened that this unity could not extend to the Lord's Table. Soon after, Stone and some other colleagues withdrew from the Presbytery. They began leading services of worship, inviting all baptized believers to come participate in communion.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What do these stories tell us about the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the importance of the Lord's Supper?
2. What do you know about the practices of other denominations regarding who could participate in the Lord's Supper?
3. Have you ever been excluded from taking the Lord's Supper in a church? Discuss your feelings?

Distinctive Disciple Practice

There are two distinctive marks of Disciples and the Lord's Supper. One is the weekly (or more often) observance of communion. Desiring to be faithful to the New Testament church, Alexander Campbell noted that in Acts, the practice was that of weekly "breaking of the bread" (see Acts 2:42, Acts 20:7), and therefore Disciple churches have from the beginning observed weekly communion. So while much of Disciple worship is a part of the free church (non-liturgical) tradition, its emphasis on the centrality of the Lord's Supper means we also share something in common with liturgical churches such as Roman Catholic and Episcopalian..

A second distinctive mark of Disciples and the Lord's Supper is the prominent role of the laity. With his emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, Alexander Campbell asserted that any Christian "may of right preach, baptize, and dispense the supper..." (*The Christian System*, p. 63) Where other denominations require that an ordained member of the clergy must be present to celebrate the Lord's Supper, Disciples have no such requirement. Indeed, we are just the opposite, feeling uncomfortable if there is no layperson at the Table.

Questions for Reflection

1. Contrast the way you take communion in your congregation with what you may have experienced in churches of other denominations. What, if anything, makes the practice in your congregation distinctively Disciple?
2. Sometimes non-Disciples charge that taking communion every week diminishes its meaning. Do you find this true? If not, how would you respond to this charge?
3. Discuss your congregation's practices regarding communion. Who presides? Who offers the invitation to communion? The words of institution? When does it occur in the service? How do you take communion? Do you know why your congregation observes communion the way it does? What do you most appreciate about the celebration of the Lord's Supper in your church? Is there anything you would like to see changed?

What does it mean?

The meaning of the Lord's Supper is virtually inexhaustible, but there are several biblically-based themes taught by Disciples (and other churches). James Duke and Richard Harrison note the following themes in their booklet on the Lord's Supper. (Duke and Harrison pp. 19-24)

Thanksgiving – Jesus gave thanks at the Supper. Many Christians refer to the Lord's Supper as the Eucharist, from the Greek word for thanksgiving. At the Table, we give thanks for God's redemptive work in Jesus Christ.

Remembrance – The kind of remembering we practice in the Lord's Supper is the kind of remembering that brings the past forward, quite literally to re-member or re-present. Jesus said, "When you do this, remember me." In our reverent remembering, Jesus Christ is present with us.

Sacrifice – Jesus said, "...[T]his is the blood of my covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Mt 26:28) In partaking of the bread and the cup, we recall Christ's sacrifice upon the cross.

Feast of the Reign of God – In the scripture read earlier, Paul said, "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." The remembrance of Christ's death is also an anticipation of Christ's return, when God's kingdom will have come on earth. The Lord's Supper anticipates that future, and we celebrate it as if that future reality were present here and now.

Unity – As the stories of the founders and the Lord's Supper reveal, for Disciples the Lord's Table is a sign and symbol of Christian unity. It is not surprising that World Communion Sunday was the brainchild of Disciples pastor Jesse Bader.

The Presence of Christ – Christians have long quarreled over exactly how Christ is present in the act of communion. Roman Catholics have maintained a real presence—the bread and cup are the actual body and blood of Christ. Disciples have tended toward a symbolic understanding—the bread and cup symbolize Christ's body and blood. Christ is spiritually present as the host who invites his believers to join him in his meal.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Discuss the above themes. Which of these speak to you most deeply? Why?
2. Which of these themes is most often present in the elders' prayers at the table or in the invitation to communion in your congregation?

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! Adult Component

DAY THREE BAPTISM – FEEL IT!

Scripture:

Selected New Testament scriptures (see below)

Disciple Value:

- *Through baptism into Christ, we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God. The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

Supplies

Bibles

Copies of “Disciples and Baptism” for each participant

Getting Started

Ask members of the group to remember their baptisms. If they were baptized as an infant, did their parents tell them any stories about their baptism, or can they remember their confirmation?

Bible Study

Background There are many texts in the New Testament that refer to baptism and which shape Disciple understandings of baptism. Like the Lord’s Supper, it is impossible to talk of a single meaning for baptism. Today’s Bible study will look at different texts which suggest baptism’s different meaning. Have someone read the selected scriptures aloud and then discuss the questions.

Baptism as inclusion in a new community

Read:

Acts 9:17-19 (*This passage follows immediately upon then Saul’s, soon to be Paul’s encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus.*)

Galatians 3:27-29

- In what way does baptism mark becoming a member of a new community in these passages?
- How does baptism mark inclusion in community in our church today?

Baptism as a sign of repentance and forgiveness

Read:

Mark 1:4

Acts 2:37-38

- How do we see baptism functioning as a sign of repentance and forgiveness in these passages?

Baptism as a sign of death and resurrection, both of Christ and the believer

Read:

Romans 6:3-5

Colossians 2:12

- Why is baptism by immersion particularly powerful as a symbol of death and resurrection?

Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit

Read:

Acts 19:2-6

- Other than speaking in tongues, how can we understand baptism as associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit?
- Of the above themes, which of them are most central to your own understanding of baptism? Why?

Disciples and Baptism

Hand out a copy “Disciples and Baptism” to each member of your group. Read the background information and discuss the questions that are included. Depending on how talkative your group is, you may have much more material than you can easily cover in the allotted time. You may want to choose only some of the questions, or some of the topics.

Remember, the questions are deliberately open-ended, and there is no “right” answer. Conclude in time to join the children for the closing in the Meeting House.

DISCIPLES AND BAPTISM

The Meaning of Baptism

The church has historically regarded both baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments, but Alexander Campbell rejected the word "sacrament" because it was not found in the Bible (one of the founders' values was "Bible names for Bible things"). Though Campbell affirmed that the Lord's Supper and baptism were outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace, which is the classic definition of a sacrament, he suggested instead that they be called "ordinances" because they were *ordained* by God through Jesus Christ.

Some key understandings of baptism for Disciples are:

- Baptism is a sign that the believer is committing him or herself to Christ and to following him
- Through baptism, the church receives the believer into the covenantal community. Disciples have historically held that baptism is not into a particular church, or even into a specific denomination, but rather into the whole Body of Christ.
- The act of baptism is a witness to Christ by both the believer and the church. Campbell spoke of baptism as "the gospel in water."
- Properly understood and received, baptism is a channel of God's grace. (Hyatt, p. 285)

Questions for Reflection

1. Which do you prefer to describe the Lord's Supper and baptism: sacrament or ordinance? Why?
2. Do you believe that baptism is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace"? Why or why not?
3. Why are symbols such as baptism important to us?
4. What is your own understanding of the meaning of baptism?

Believers' Baptism

New Testament practice was, of course, the point of origin for the founders' understanding of baptism. Based on the New Testament, they rejected infant baptism as non-scriptural. It is important to remember the founders were only a generation removed from the American Revolution, and even closer to the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and its prohibition against the establishment of a state religion.

Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott had all grown up in Great Britain, with its established church. For all the founders, but particularly Alexander Campbell, infant baptism had political as well as religious meaning. In Europe, one's nationality was synonymous with one's religious affiliation. Where a person was born determined one's religious affiliation. Instead the founders insisted that the decision to become a follower of Christ belonged solely to the believer—not to the child's family and certainly not to the government. Campbell wrote, "no one can believe, repent, make confession, or be baptized by proxy, or upon another person's confession...[Christianity] is personal; it is neither family nor national." (Williamson, p. 37)

Instead, Alexander Campbell and the other founders taught believers' baptism. Believers' baptism is not adult baptism. The criteria for baptism is not age but the individual's own spiritual yearning. As Clark Williamson notes in his booklet on baptism, Alexander Campbell argued that the proper subjects of baptism are "penitent believers—not infants nor adults...but professors of repentance towards God and faith in Christ, are the proper subjects of this ordinance...." For

Campbell baptism...is a sign of God's grace toward us and a way of our saying "yes!" to that grace." (Williamson, pp. 36, 37)

Campbell did not believe that the act of baptism in and of itself was what saved. That is to say, baptism by itself is not a work of righteousness, but rather is the *means* of receiving forgiveness of sin and release from sin.

Walter Scott preached a similar teaching in his famous "Five Finger Exercise." Baptism by itself was not enough for salvation. The five-step process was (1) Have faith (2) Repent of one's sins (3) Be baptized (4) Receive forgiveness (5) Gift of the Holy Spirit and Eternal Life.

Barton W. Stone also understood that baptism was a sign of God's grace, writing that "baptism saves us, not the water, but the grace and power of God through this act of obedience."

Questions for Reflection

1. Williamson says that for Campbell, baptism is a sign of God's grace toward us and a way of our saying "yes!" to that grace. Reflect on this statement.
2. How do you think baptism is related to salvation?
3. What do you think of infant baptism? Do you agree or disagree with the founders that it should be rejected?
4. How old are most of those baptized in your congregation? What sort of preparation, if any, do you require of them?

Open vs. Closed Membership

The founders also insisted (and are supported by modern biblical scholars) that immersion was the practice of the New Testament church and so should continue to be the practice of the church. Alexander Campbell was so emphatic on this point that when he made his translation of the New Testament, he translated John the Baptist as John the Immerser!

There were distinct differences among the founders. Alexander Campbell was the most rigid in his advocacy for immersion as the only acceptable form of baptism. At one point he even said that "whoever has not been immersed in water...has never received Christian baptism." (Williamson, p. 38) Even his father Thomas protested this stance, pointing out that would exclude all the faithful throughout history who had not been immersed.

Barton Stone took a much more inclusive view than Alexander Campbell. Though he himself believed that baptism by immersion was the preferred form of baptism based on New Testament practice, he also believed that Christian unity was the higher value. For Stone, the basis of Christian unity was not the "forms and practices of the New Testament church" but the bond of love in the community which reflected the true spirit of the early church. (Gardner, p. 150)

This tension between Campbell's position and Stone's position has continued to prove divisive in the church. Some Disciple congregations, though increasingly fewer, following Campbell's teaching, practice "closed membership." This means that anyone desiring to unite with the church who has not been immersed must be baptized by immersion.

Other congregations, faithful to Stone's leading, welcome into membership anyone who has undergone Christian baptism in any form.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Does your congregation practice open or closed membership? If it is open membership, was it ever closed membership? Do any in the group remember when the change happened? What was the discussion?
2. If your congregation has closed membership, has there been any discussion about changing it? Has anyone in the group had to be baptized by immersion in order to join the church?
3. The tension between Campbell and Stone is between two competing values. On the one hand, Campbell is right in insisting that believers' baptism by immersion was normative for the New Testament church. On the other hand, Stone is correct that a rigid insistence of a single form of baptism is a bar to Christian unity. The struggle is between the *restoration* of the New Testament church and the *unity* of the Body of Christ. Where do you come down? Why?

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! Adult Component

DAY FOUR BRAIN - USE IT!

Scripture:

Mark 12:28-34

Disciple Value:

- “Think, always think.” Barton W. Stone

Supplies

Bibles

Copies of “Disciples and the Brain” for each participant

Getting Started

One member of a Disciples congregation remarked to his pastor, “The Disciples of Christ are like the graduate school of churches. No one will tell you what you *have* to believe, you have to figure it out for yourself.”

Ask the group to comment on this statement.

Bible Study

Background – This passage contains what is commonly called The Great Commandment. For Jesus, the Great Commandment has two parts: to love God and to love one’s neighbor. Jesus is quoting two biblical passages, Deuteronomy 6:6 and Leviticus 19:18. It is important for Christians to remember that when Jesus offers the Great Commandment, he turns to his own Jewish heritage.

Read Mark 12:28-34 aloud. (If time permits, you may want to also read the Deuteronomy and Leviticus passages cited above.)

Ask:

1. Why do you think Jesus cites this as the greatest commandment?
2. The scribe replies by agreeing with Jesus, saying that to love God and neighbor is more important than “burnt offerings and sacrifice.” What are the “burnt offerings and sacrifice” that we substitute for loving God and neighbor today?
3. The Great Commandment explicitly states that we are to love God not just with heart, soul, and strength, but with all our minds. What does it mean to love God with one’s mind?

Disciples and the Brain

Hand out a copy “Disciples and the Brain” to each member of your group. Read the background information and discuss the questions that are included. Depending on how talkative your group is, you may have much more information than you can easily cover in the allotted time. You may have time to cover only some of the material.

Remember, the questions are deliberately open-ended, and there is no “right” answer. Conclude in time to join the children for the closing in the Meeting House.

DISCIPLES AND THE BRAIN

Reasonable, Empirical, Pragmatic

W. E. Blakemore wrote an article entitled “Reasonable, Empirical, Pragmatic.” for the Panel of Scholars Report, a three volume assessment of Disciples theology issued in the 1960’s. Blakemore asserts that for Disciples, “conservative, middle-of-the-road and liberal alike—there has never been any question regarding the sole validity of a reasonable and empirical approach to all the questions of religion.” (Blakemore, p. 161)

Blakemore goes on to write that from the beginning the Disciples of Christ were noted for having a “head religion.” The sermons of early Disciples preachers rejected the emotionalism of much of frontier preaching, and instead were characterized by sober, reasoned approach. (Blakemore, p. 178) Alexander Campbell was a noted debater whose widely known debates did much to spread the knowledge of the Restoration Movement. One of his debates, against a Roman Catholic bishop, lasted for eight days! In his debates, Campbell argued for the eminent reasonableness of Christianity.

All of the founders were well educated and shared a commitment both to learning and to the idea of a reasonable and reasoned faith, as well as to an educated laity. This commitment led to the publication of a variety of journals aimed at educating the laity, as well as to the establishment of more than 400 institutions of learning along the American and Canadian frontier, a number of which continue to flourish today.

Just consider twenty-two year old Alexander Campbell studying for the ministry under his father’s guidance on the western frontier of Pennsylvania. His diary gives his daily schedule as follows, beginning with rising at 4:00 a.m.

Commit ten verses of the Scriptures to memory each day, and read the same in the original languages, with Henry and Scott’s notes and practical observations. For this exercise we shall allow two hours. Being intended for everyday, these exercises will not be dispensed with.

One hour to read Greek—from 8 to 9 in the morning

One hour to read Latin—from 11 to 12 in the morning

One half hour to Hebrew—between 12 and 1 p.m.

Other reading and studies as occasion may serve. Church history and divers other studies, are intended to constitute the principal part of my other literary pursuits. These studies in all require four and a half hours.

Campbell observed these scholarly disciplines throughout his life. (Boring, p. 57)

As noted in Session 1, the founders rejected creeds as divisive and non-biblical, insisting that each believer, using common sense, was free to discern “the plain meaning of the scripture.” This understanding placed a high value not only on the role of reason in the life of faith, but great trust in the competence, preparedness, and insight of the individual believer.

Questions for Reflection

1. Blakemore says that Disciples espouse a faith that is “reasonable, empirical [and] practical”? Would you agree? If yes, what about this kind of faith is attractive to you?

2. Comment on Alexander Campbell's daily schedule. What does this tell us about him, and about the founders in general? How does this extraordinarily rigorous schedule challenge you to look at your own commitment to the study of the scriptures?
3. The founders placed a high value on an educated laity as well as a great deal of trust in competence of the laity to decide matters of doctrine for themselves. Do you think this trust is still warranted? Why or why not? How would you rate your congregation in educating the laypeople of your congregation? Brainstorm some ways that it could improve.

Faith and Reason

The founders were heavily influenced by the seventeenth century philosopher John Locke, who wrote a number of influential essays including "The Reasonableness of Christianity," which insisted that the dictates of Christianity are harmonious with human reason. Thus Walter Scott could say that faith is "the experience of one person transferred to the mind of another" and "The Christian faith, like all other faith, belongs to the science of inference—reason—logic, and depends for its reception in society on proof." (Boring, pp. 37-38)

Even the role of the Holy Spirit, usually associated with the more mystical side of faith, was understood as highly rational. Alexander Campbell taught that the one came to understand the testimony of the scriptures through faith; and faith was ordinary human perception heightened to an extraordinary degree through the power of the Holy Spirit. (Sprinkle, p. 32)

Yet, with all the emphasis on a reasonable faith, Disciples have historically recognized the need to maintain a creative tension between faith and reason, between the head and the heart. Scott, for all his regard for the eminent reasonableness and orderliness of faith, also wrote, "The religion of Christ is indeed a religion of feeling as well as of faith...[Faith must be] a remedy that reaches the heart." (Boring, p. 43) In the tradition of medieval theologian Anselm's maxim of "faith seeking understanding," the founders believed that one could not think one way's to faith. One *begins* with faith, and *then* strives to understand.

Yet it must be acknowledged that in this tension between head and heart, the founders were most likely to err on the side of the head. There is little room in such a rational understanding of faith for the role of mystery, that which transcends human reason. There is no room for mysticism, an experience of God which defies rational explanation. And, despite the emphasis on baptism through immersion and weekly communion, there is little regard for the power of ritual and other non-verbal ways in which the faith is communicated.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is your understanding of the relationship between faith and reason? Would you agree with the founders that faith is entirely reasonable?
2. How does one come to faith? Is it by reason? By a gift of God? By the action of the Holy Spirit? Or something else?
3. If the founders are correct, and that the model for Christianity is "faith seeking understanding," discuss the characteristics of a faith in that seeks understanding. Assuming that humans can never perfectly understand God, does this undercut striving to seek to understand?
4. What are the problems with a faith that is too rational? With one that is not rational enough?
5. What, if any, is the role of mystery, ritual, and mysticism in faith, particularly your own faith?

BETHANY VILLAGE LIVE! Adult Component

DAY FIVE BODY OF CHRIST – LIVE IT!

Scripture:

Selected New Testament scriptures (see below)

Disciple Values:

- *The Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.* Thomas Campbell in “Declaration and Address”
- *Christian unity is our polar star.* Barton Stone

Supplies

Bibles

Copies of “Disciples and the Body of Christ” for each participant

Getting Started

The final section in “Disciples and the Body of Christ” lifts up new church ministries, and in particular the rich diversity of our new church starts. You may want to contact the Office of New Church Ministry to get the latest information on new congregation starts, as new churches are added almost daily. The website is www.newchurchministry.org.

Ahead of time, discover the ways your congregation is involved in working with churches of other denominations. It may be through a food pantry, homeless shelter, or other justice ministry. Perhaps your congregation participates in community Thanksgiving services or ecumenical Good Friday worship. Don’t forget that programs such as CROP walk and Church World Service are ecumenical.

Inform the group about these different ecumenical ministries. Discuss together the benefits of working with other denominations.

Bible Study

The founders looked to a number of New Testament scriptures as the foundation for their plea for Christian unity. Have someone read each scripture aloud and then discuss.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Ask:

1. What do you think “the same mind and the same purpose” that Paul urges the Corinthians to adopt is?
2. The Corinthians were divided because they were looking to Paul and other leaders, rather than to Christ. What are the sources of division in the church today?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

Ask:

1. How does Paul’s passage on the church as the Body of Christ address the problem of conflict in the church?

2. How do you see the need for both unity and diversity in your congregation? What happens when a congregation has too much unity? Too much diversity? How do you hold these two poles in creative tension with one another?

Read Ephesians 4:4-6

Ask

1. Why is there such a disconnect between the “one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism” that Ephesians describes and the reality of the church?
2. The epistles of the New Testament are frank in their discussion of divisions in the early church. Does this undercut the founders’ appeal to the New Testament as a model for Christian unity?

Read John 17:20-21

Ask

1. Jesus prays that those who believe in him “may all be one.” How well is the church doing in embodying Jesus’ desire for unity among his believers?
2. Jesus says that the foundation for this unity is to be in him as he is in God. What does he mean by this?

Disciples and the Body of Christ

Hand out a copy “Disciples and the Body of Christ” to each member of your group. Read the background information and discuss the questions that are included. Depending on how talkative your group is, you may have much more information than you can easily cover in the allotted time. You may have time to cover only some of the questions or may need to omit a section.

Remember, the questions are deliberately open-ended, and there is no “right” answer. Conclude in time to join the children for the closing in the Meeting House.

DISCIPLES AND THE BODY OF CHRIST

A Passion for Unity

At the heart of who we are as Disciples is a deep commitment to the oneness of the church. As we saw in earlier sessions, the founders were all motivated by a passion for Christian unity. All the other core Disciple beliefs we have discussed—our understanding of scripture, baptism, the Lord's Supper, even the duty of private judgment—flow from this passion for unity.

The two seminal documents for the Disciples of Christ are Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address* and Barton W. Stone's *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*. Both articulate the ideal of Christian unity.

In the *Declaration and Address*, Thomas Campbell asserted that “the Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one, consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the scriptures...” In this brief statement Thomas summarizes a key—perhaps THE key—belief of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): the unity of the church is a given fact that human bickering and sectarianism cannot negate.

Five year earlier, Barton W. Stone and several other Presbyterian ministers wrote *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*. In this whimsical document, they said, “We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one Body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.” Stone believed that all sectarian divisions should be put aside, that every denomination was called to “sink into union with the Body of Christ...”

For both Stone and Campbell, the essence of the church was unity in Christ. But, at the same time, they rejected the idea that unity was the same as uniformity. The unity they sought was a unity that made room for diversity. Here the Disciple watchword has been a statement by Rupertus Meldenius, “In essentials unity, in opinions, in all things love.”

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you experience the Disciples' historic passion for Christian unity as a present reality in your congregation? If yes, in what ways? If no, does this passion need to be revived?
2. Would you agree with Thomas Campbell that the church is “essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one”? What does this oneness mean to you?
3. What is the difference between unity and uniformity? Is it possible to have diversity in opinions and unity in essentials? Do you see this in your own congregation? Where?

Divisions Amid a Call for Unity

The founders believed that they were starting a movement that would unite Christians, not starting yet another denomination. For a movement that was and is passionately devoted to Christian unity, some might say we have been remarkably unsuccessful. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have not united with anyone since the followers of Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone agreed to come together in 1832.

Indeed, today the Campbell-Stone movement has been more successful in dividing than uniting. By the beginning of the twentieth century, churches associated with the non-instrumental Church of Christ separated from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) over the issue of using

instrumental music, such as organs, in worship. Maintaining a strict adherence to the restoration principle, the Church of Christ insists that since organs and pianos are not mentioned in the New Testament they should not be used in worship.

The Independent Christian Churches disaffiliated from Disciples over several decades in the twentieth century. One of the key issues was again over the restoration principles. The Independents wanted to maintain a strictly congregational form of church, while Disciples were establishing the cooperative societies that would eventually grow into our denominational structures.

In these divisions we see the consequences in the unresolved theological conflict between Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone. Campbell emphasized the restoration of New Testament Christianity as the model for Christian unity, but for him the primary emphasis tended to be on restoration. The Churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Church have been most profoundly shaped by the restoration principle. Disciples' theology has been more heavily influenced by Barton Stone, who proclaimed, "Christian unity is my polar star." For Stone, restoration was a means to unity, not an end in itself. As we saw in the discussion on baptism, in Stone's theology, restoration of the New Testament church was very much secondary to Christian unity.

But despite the fact that we have been more successful at dividing than uniting, Disciples have maintained a strong commitment to Christian unity. We have been at the forefront of every ecumenical movement, and contributed many significant leaders to the modern ecumenical effort.

And, in many ways, the church of today has come a long way toward realizing some of the unity envisioned by our founders. As church historian Ronald Osborn noted, "The pragmatic temper of the early Disciples impelled them not toward grandiose schedules for the unification of Christendom, but toward removing the scandal of division in their local communities..." (Osborn, "One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church," p. 313) Every grassroots cooperative venture among local congregations of different denominations is a vindication of the vision of the founders.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is your understanding of Christian unity? Is it organic union with other denominations? Or is it cooperation with other denominations?
2. Campbell put the restoration of the New Testament church first; Stone put Christian unity first. With whom do you agree? Why?
3. We began the session by talking about the ways your church cooperates with other denominations. Brainstorm some ways to strengthen and expand this part of your church's ministry.

A Diverse Body

So far we have been discussing Disciples' historic commitment to Christian unity. But there is another way that our denomination is experiencing unity and diversity. We are becoming a much more diverse racially and ethnically diverse denomination.

In 2000 former General Minister and President Richard Hamm challenged the Disciples to start 1000 new churches by the year 2020. As of this writing in June, 2007, over 500 new congregations have been started. Twelve per cent of all Disciples congregations have started since 2001! And of these more than 500 new congregations, 79% are racial/ethnic minorities, including Hispanic, Asian, Haitian and African-American. These new congregations are full of new Christians who want to become Disciples.

This means that, quite literally, the face of our denomination is changing, and changing rapidly. This change partly reflects the demographic shift in our country as a whole, where the United States

is moving toward becoming a “majority of minorities,” where no one single racial or ethnic group is in the majority. But this marvelous diversity also reflects the diversity of the Kingdom of God, where every tongue, tribe and nation is invited to God’s welcome table.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Where is there diversity in your congregation?
2. How comfortable would someone of another racial or ethnic background feel in your congregation?
3. How do you feel about the increasing racial and ethnic diversity in our denomination?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

It may be helpful for leaders to read up a little about the history and beliefs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Some suggestions for additional information:

- Check your church library and see if it has any books about the denomination.
- Check with your pastor to see if she/he has any books you can borrow.
- Christian Board of Publication offers a number of helpful publications. Be sure to check out their website at <http://www.cbp21.org/>. Some books and resources you may want to look at:

Disciple Thumbnail Sketches – these helpful pamphlets describe in brief core beliefs and history

A Conversation with Alexander and Barton by Scott Kilgore – a clever dialogue between Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone

A Handbook for Today's Disciples in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by D. Duane Cummins - offers concise information on Disciples heritage, thought, worship, mission, and structure,

Heritage Trek – a children's curriculum about Disciple history and practice

Some useful websites:

<http://www.disciples.org/> – The homepage of the denomination, this has a huge amount of information. Be sure to look at the section on *Who are the Disciples?* which contains information on history, beliefs, and practices.

Under General Ministries, be sure to check out the links to

- *Central Office of Hispanic Ministries*, for information about the Hispanic Ministries within the church
- *National Convocation* of the Christian Church (DOC) for more information about African American Disciples
- *North American Pacific Asian Disciples* (NAPAD) for more information about the growing number of Asian Disciples.
- *Communication Ministries* – for video and other resources
- *Disciples Home Missions* – for information about Kids to Kids
- *Division of Overseas Ministries* – for information about the church around the world

<http://www.dishistsoc.org/> – The homepage of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. In particular, check out the links to other websites. The links to the Restoration sites have biographies and pictures.

Be sure to click on the links to

- Historic Bethany
- Cane Ridge Meeting House
- The Ballad of Walter Scott (audiotape)

<http://www.cbp21.org/> – The website of the Christian Board of Publication; check for Disciple resources

OTHER IDEAS

Kick off or conclude your *Bethany Village Live!* VBS with a carnival. Invite the whole church. Enjoy old-fashioned games like three-legged race, sack race, and so on.

Covenantal Bible Study – Use the Covenantal Bible Study as a follow-up for adults and children. Look on <http://www.disciples.org/> click on the link to General Assembly.

Use the dialogue *A Conversation with Alexander and Barton* by Scott Kilgore in lieu of the sermon the Sunday before or after VBS so that the whole church can focus on Disciple heritage.

Appendix 1

David L Edwards and the children of Greenfield Christian Church, Greenfield, IN, are recorded in the performance of two songs which can be played from the accompanying or available CD from Disciples Home Missions. The third song, This I Pray Today and shown below is original music composed by Rev. Edwards for this VBS package,

The discography of David L. Edwards includes:

The Greatest Things: Folk Songs for Children

What Will We Say to the Children

Come to the Water (songs, hymns, and psalms)

A Different Kind of Strength

For more information about Edward's music or about how you can obtain copies of the CDs, visit <http://www.davidledwardsmusic.com>.

This I Pray Today

Words and Music by
David L. Edwards

	D	A	Bm	G			
	<p>Liv - ing Word of God in scrip - ture and in Je - sus Bread of Life giv - en for us Wa - ter of new life Spir - it com - ing Mys - te - ry of God be - yond all of my Fam - i - ly of Christ do - ing what God</p>						
4	A	D	A	Bm	G	A	D
	<p>life. This I pray to - day help me to be - lieve. all. This I pray to - day help me taste and see. down. This I pray to - day give me a new heart. thoughts. This I pray to - day shine with - in my mind. wills. This I pray to - day guide me in your way.</p>						

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The Ballad of Walter Scott

1. Come list - en to my sto - ry a - bout a man of God, born two hun - dred
 2. He want - ed all the peo - ple to lis - ten and to see how God's love has

7 years a - go, his name was Wal - ter Scott. He tra - veled to this coun - try from
 come to help us live in u - ni - ty; so Wal - ter sad - dled up his horse and

12 far a - cross the sea. He taught a - bout the love of God so peo - ple could be - lieve.
 rode through - out the land. He liked to talk to chil - dren and teach them with his hand.

18 *Refrain:* He said, Be - lieve in Je - sus Christ, turn a - way from your sins, and

23 be bap - tized; God will for - give you, and give you the Spi -

29 rit and e - ter - nal life.

Words and Music by David L. Edwards, 1996
 Arr. by Phyllis Fitch

Children Welcome

Words and Music by David L. Edwards

Arr. by Phyllis Fitch

C G C F G C G dm

Chil-dren wel-come in the name of Je - sus. Chil-dren wel-come in the name of

G C G C F G C G

love. All are wel-come in the name of Je - sus. All are wel-come

dm G C am em F G C

in the name of love.

1. We have some-thing to give to chil-dren a
 2. Chil-dren of-fer us gifts for liv-ing with
 3. Seeds and flow-ers to make for a gar-den. The

am em D G am em F G

beau-ti-ful world where they can grow, heal-ing for hurt and hope for to-
 hearts open-ed wide, clear eyes can see, minds full of won-der, hands full of
 win-ter and spring to make one year. Hands small and large to join in one

C am em D G G7

mor-row, sto-ries to guide them as they go.
 help-ing, joy as we fol-low where they lead.
 cir-cle, wel-come-ing peo-ple far they and near.

Copyright © 2001 David L. Edwards

Appendix 2

Copies of Brain-Use It Puzzles

Letter Tiles

BRAIN - USE IT!

W	E	R	O	F	F	O	M	A	I	A	T	C	H	J	E
R	I	S	S	U	S	L	L	O							

Unscramble the tiles to reveal a message.

Cryptogram

BRAIN - USE IT!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
12																	22		26						

A		A		R		A		T		A											
12	23	13	12	8	4	9	19	22	19	12	16	8	26	6	5	21	15	19	12		
22	19	12	4	6	14	10	6	22	26	25	19	25	6	17	19	26	25	12	26	21	4
R	A	R	T	R	A	T	T	A	T	A	T	A	T	A	T	A	T	A	T		

21 14 8 6 2

Word Search with a Hidden Message

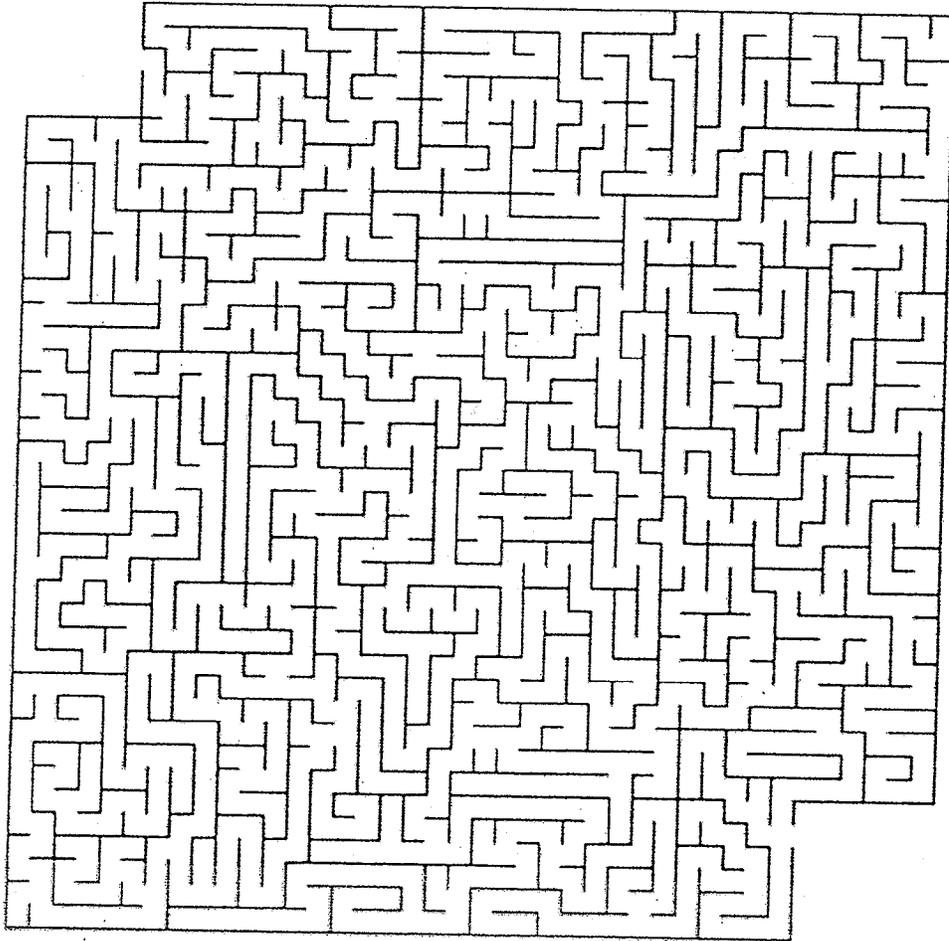
Brain- Use It

E V I E C E R L O D V E G T O
D E V E I L E B W I H T I A F
E T A R B E L E C S S O I E F
E C I L A H C T H C A A U O L
W T I R I P S L Y I V O R S L
H O E M A S R U R P E E I E E
T M R E M O C E B L V N A I L
A E N S Y D H N Y E G R R O C
P O V A H C V E R A N W V M D
Y G D I R I E L J Z R E R N E
N O G U L G P B N T C P E R K
T P H X N S T I Z H K I A F E
C C W A L K F B I V R H O N A
B C H E V I G L R F S G R O W
K C J B G H D C Y U M M F V E

BECOME
BELIEVE
BIBLE
CELEBRATE
CHALICE
CHANGE
CHILD
CHURCH
DISCIPLE
EAT
FAITH
FOREVER
FRIEND
GIVE
GROW
HOUSE
LEARN
LIVE
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RECEIVE
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WALK
WORSHIP

Puzzlemaker Maze

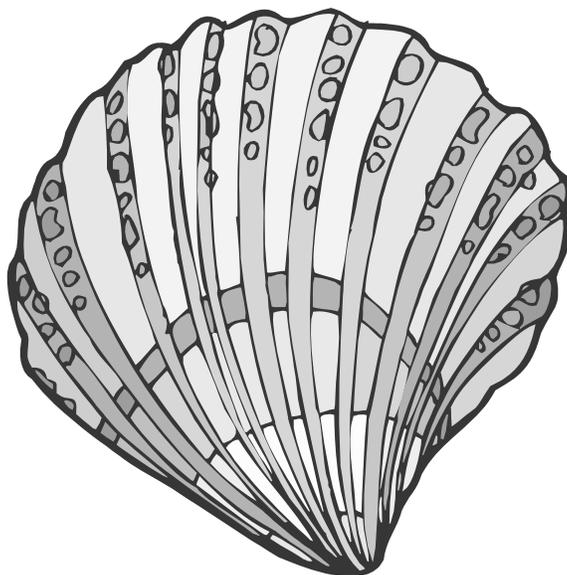
BRAIN - USE IT!



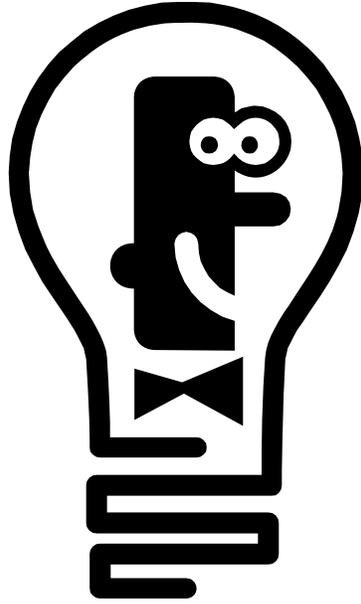
Appendix 3
Copies of Symbols



BREAD



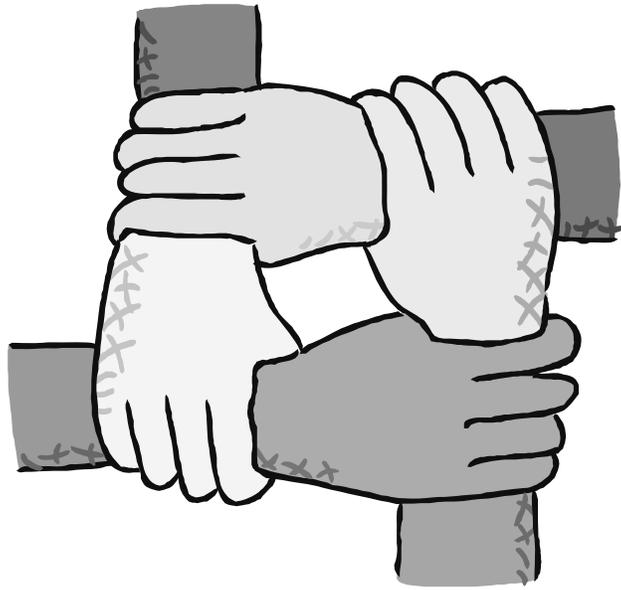
BAPTISM



BRAIN



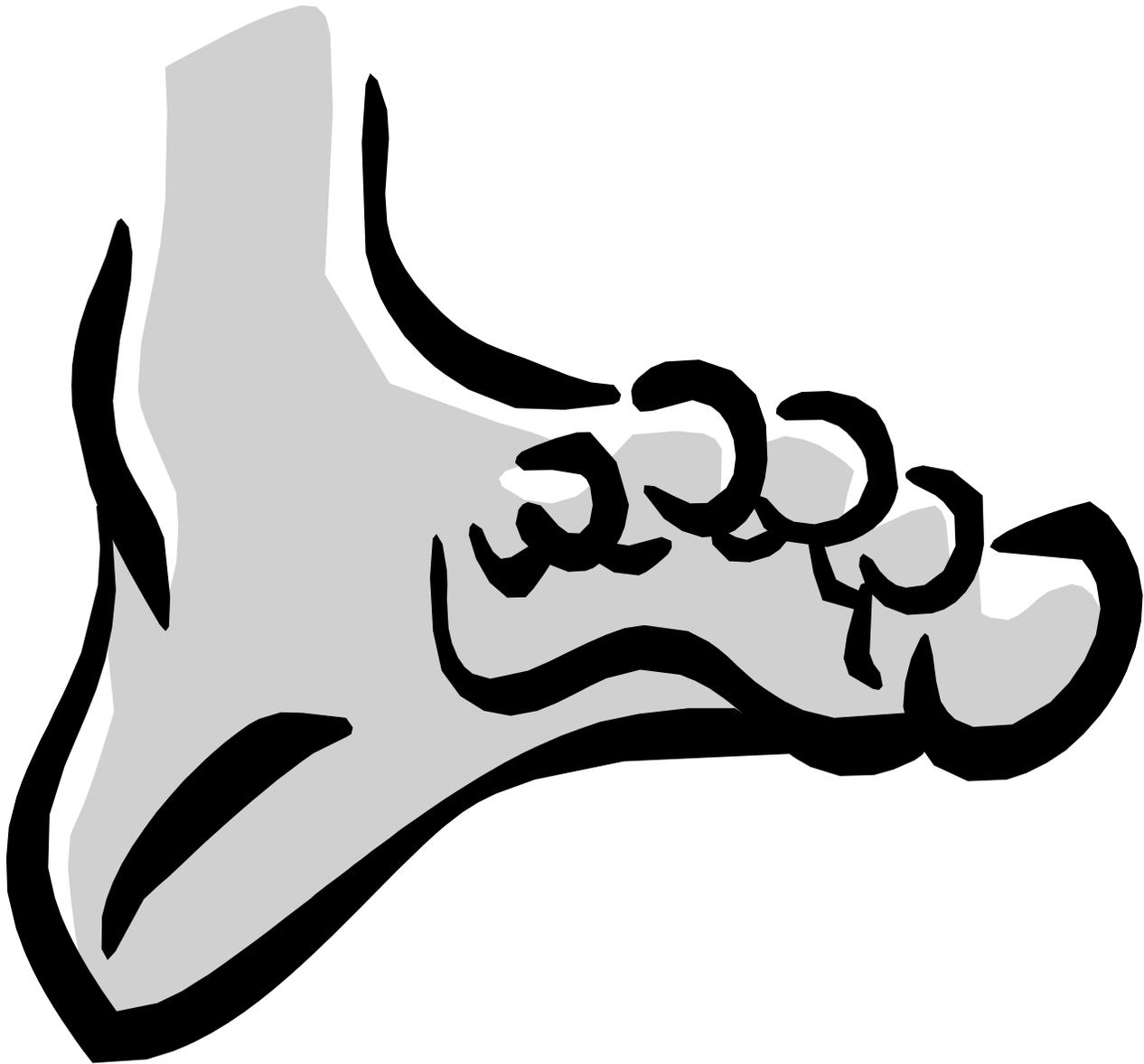
BIBLE



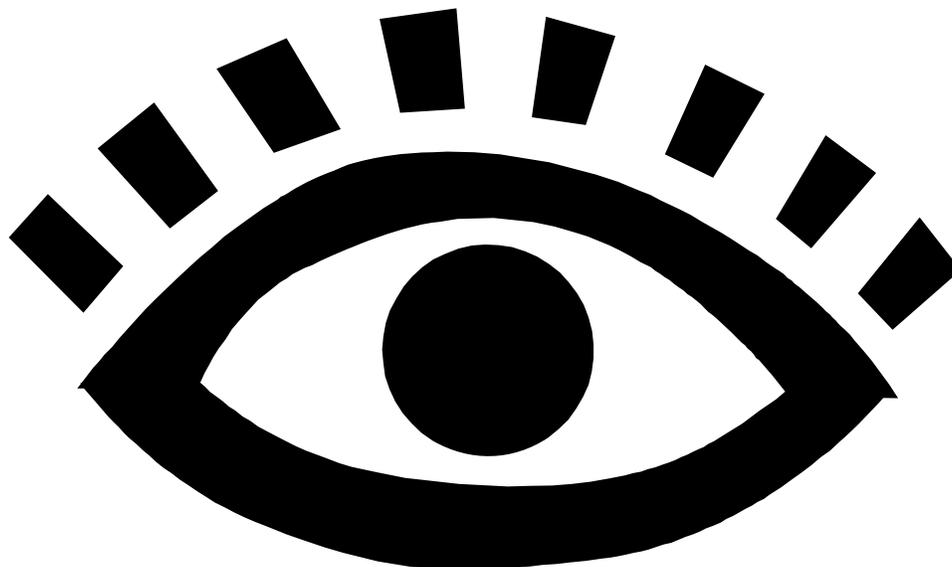
BODY

Appendix 4

Pictures of the Hand, Foot, Eye and Ear









Appendix 5 Bible References

Bible References for Bible – Believe It!

Luke 1: 1-4 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Luke 1: 1-4 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Luke 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 21:24-25 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

1 John 1: 1-4 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.

Bible References for Bread – Taste It!

Matthew 26:26-29 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."

Mark 14:22-25 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

Luke 22: 14-20 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

John 6: 35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."

Acts 2:42, 46 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

I Corinthians 10: 16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

I Corinthians 11: 23-26 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Bible References for Baptism – Feel It!

Matthew 28: 19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 1: 9-11 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Luke 3:21-22 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

John 1: 29-34 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Acts 2: 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 6: 3-6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Galatians 3:27-28 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Bible References for Brain – Use It!

Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD.

Matthew 22: 37-40 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Luke 24: 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

John 4: 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Acts 2: 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good and perfect will.

I Corinthians 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

I Corinthians 14:15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

Philippians 2:5⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

I Peter 3: 15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Bible References for Body of Christ – Live It!

Matthew 28:18-20 *Then* Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

John 17:20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

Acts 2: 38-39 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 2: 41-47 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Romans 12: 4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-14 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

1 Corinthians 12: 27-31 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Ephesians 4: 4-6 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4: 11-12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

Colossians 1: 15-20 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all

things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 3: 14-15 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Appendix 6

1800's Slang and Everyday Speech

Just for fun you may want to use some of these expressions.

balderdash: nonsense, foolishness, empty babble

born days, in all one's life: lifetime; since one was born

carryings – on: frolicking, partying, etc.

conniption fit: a fit of hysteria

considerable: no small specimen

coon's age: a long time

cotton to: to take a liking to, a popular expression throughout the South and West from early in the century on.

critter: creature, varmint, a contemptible person

do tell: a phrase used to expression fascination with a speaker's subject

fixings: trimmings, accessories, etc

go the whole hog: to go all the way

grit: guts, courage, toughness

hang up one's fiddle: to give up

hankering: a strong desire, used throughout the century

hoss: widely used for horse

knee-high to a: humorous description of short stature or youth

land sakes: socially acceptable alternative for Lord's sake, considered to be a profanity

powerful: great, extreme; a large quantity

quilting bee: a social event in which get together to make a quilt

rambunctious: rowdy, disorderly or boisterous

reckon: to think or guess

sake's alive: the equivalent of good heaven's or for God's sake

set store by, to: to set value upon; to appreciate

shakes, great: of great consequence

pshaw!: an expression of contempt or incredulity

skedaddle: to flee

squatter: one who settles on land without legal title, a widespread practice in the West

tuckered out: exhausted, worn out, tired, fatigued

vamoose: to leave quickly

varmint: a wild animal or objectional person

Appendix 7

Songs to go with the Bethany Live! VBS

The Children Welcome! Song would also be good to use and I can fax or mail a copy to anyone who does not already have this song.

There is a tape of children singing an original song called "The Ballad of Walter Scott." I think it is a great song and not just because my husband, David, wrote it. You can buy this tape from the Historical Society for \$8.00. There is a book of children's sermons on the Five Finger Exercise that comes with the tape. They do not sell the tape and book separately. You will have to call or E-mail them. They do not have it listed on their web site. The number is (625)327-1444; E-mail is pattersonml@dishistsoc.org.

Below is a recommended list of songs from the Chalice Hymnal that are good to use with children. I believe that you will find a lot of these songs lift up the theme of this VBS materials. Hope this helps. Perhaps others have suggestions?

Kaye Edwards

Anytime Songs

"Be Still and Know" (not in hymnal)

"O God, We Adore You" (not in hymnal)

"For the Beauty of the Earth" (stanza 1 only) No. 56

"Kum ba Yah" No. 590

Sing only first stanza, or others as time and need dictates.

"Lead Me, Guide Me" No. 583

Opening or closing.

"Halle-Halle-Hallelujah" No. 41

Good for opening worship. Sing happily, a couple of times.

"Santo, Santo, Santo (Holy, Holy, Holy)" No. 111

Spanish is very easily learned. Sing in Spanish, then English.

Good for the beginning of worship.

"Into My Heart" No. 304

"This is the Day" No. 286

Opening or closing.

"Go Now in Peace" No. 437

Good closing song. Can be sung in a round, as noted.

"Shalom Chaverim" No. 438

(Sha-lome kha-ve-reem...lay-heet-rah-ote)

A good closing song, sing in Hebrew and/or English.

"Blessed Be the Tie That Binds" No. 433

A good traditional closing hymn of the church.

Learn and sing the first verse alone.

"Thank You, Lord" No. 531

Opening or closing, or at the "feast."

Sing only the first stanza, or all.

"Live in Charity" No. 523

Opening or closing.

"Weave" No. 495

Opening or closing.

"Thuma Mina (Send Me, Jesus No. 447

("Too-ma mee-na...") Closing

"Jesus Loves Me" (stanza 1, or more) No. 113

Seasonal Songs

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

"When God Is a Child" (refrain only) No. 132

"Emmanuel, Emmanuel" No. 134

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" (refrain only) No. 148

"Glory to God" No. 34

Latin is easily taught. Sing Latin, then English.

EPIPHANY

"Glory to God" No. 34

"We Three Kings" No. 172

(First stanza and refrain, or refrain only, without "O-o...")

LENT

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (stanza 1 only) No. 344

"Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God" (stanza 1 only) No. 354

"Jesus, Remember Me" No. 569

Better if sung more than once.

"Through It All" No. 555

"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian" (stanza 1 only) No. 589

EASTER

"Jesus, Stand Among Us" (stanza 1 only) No. 283

"Christ the Lord is Risen Today" (stanza 1 only) No. 216

"Alleluia" (all stanzas) No. 106

"Sing Hallelujah" No. 32

PENTECOST DAY/SEASON AFTER

"Spirit of the Living God" No. 259

"Ask Your God" No. 302

"Seek Ye First" (stanza 1 only) No. 354

"Many Are the Lightbeams" (stanza 1 only) No. 492

"Live in Charity" No. 523

"I've Got Peace Like a River" (stanza 1 only, or all) No. 530

"Lead Me, Guide Me" No. 583

"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian" (stanza 1 or all) No. 589

"Go Down, Moses" (stanza 1 only) No. 663

"In Christ There Is No East or West" (stanza 1 only) No. 687

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