

Building our Faith Together
Christ Church All Church Retreat
Ocean Grove, NJ
Sept 30 - Oct 2, 2016

FRIDAY NIGHT

Gathering: *Building Our Name Tags

Supplies: plastic name tag holders, stickers, scissors, markers

Music: If you have a song leader on your retreat this is a good time to sing or learn some new songs.

Welcome:

Explain retreat logistics.

Invite people to introduce themselves with name, grade (if in school) and where they are from.

Opening Prayer

“Getting To Know You” Ice Breaker

Supplies: Legos®

Ahead of the retreat divide the group into groups. The number of groups and their size will depend on how many people are attending the retreat. Try to form groups with a mix of ages. It is OK to separate families but keep young children with at least one parent.

Invite the members of the group to pick a plastic brick out of a tub of many Legos® with their eyes closed. The color of the brick will determine what information that person will share with the group.

BLUE - Share one fun thing you did last summer.

RED - What is one of your favorite foods?

GREEN - What is one of your favorite books or movies (or recent favorite)?

BROWN/ORANGE or YELLOW - What is something that you are afraid of?

BLACK - Who is one of your best friends and how did you meet?

Any Other Color! - If you had a free day what would you do with your time?

Ask teams to create a team name, and a Lego® logo/mascot/symbol.

When teams are finished ask them to share their name and logo/mascot/symbol with the whole group.

Lego® Icebreaker Handout

BLUE - Share one fun thing you did last summer.

RED - What is one of your favorite foods?

GREEN - What is one of your favorite books or movies (or recent favorite?)

BROWN/ORANGE or YELLOW - What is something that you are afraid of?

BLACK - Who is one of your best friends and where did you meet them?

Any Other Color! - If you had a free day what would you do with your time?

Closing Devotions:

1) Show this video on practicing faith: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eMJ6ZDCAp4>

2) Discuss how we just practiced our faith together in prayer, and in play and in sharing with each other. Just like when we play a sport or when we learn to sing a song, we have to practice our faith. We can do little things every day that add up.

Introduce the theme (Building Our Faith Together) to the group.

Choose a meditative, quiet song as your closing song.

Closing Prayer

SATURDAY

Participants should sit around round tables (if available) and may sit wherever they like.

Opening Group Activity: (25-30 minutes)

Gather the large group together in an opening prayer & opening song (of your choice).

1) Show the “Lego® Bible Movie” of the story of the Wise and the Foolish Men.

“Wise and Foolish Builders”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjoqMrFXx-k>

2) After the video ask someone to read from Matthew 7:24-28.

3) Break up into small groups around you and discuss the following questions: (print out questions for each group)

*What do you think it means to “build your house on a rock?” Why is that a wise thing to do? And what things in your life are like rocks? What do you think the rain and the storms stand for in the story? What things in your life are like sand – the things in your life that don’t have much staying power?

4) Close with a large group discussion sharing the highlights of what you discussed in small groups, sing a song & say a prayer. Break up into family groups – the groups you formed on Friday evening.

Transition to the prayer stations. Explain to the groups how much time is allotted to each station and how they will be signaled to move to the next station.

(The retreat leaders can ring a bell or set a timer to alert the groups so that they know when to rotate to the next station after a set period of time. We recommend 12 to 15 minutes at each station.)

Prayer Station #1: Prayer Sticks

1) **Pick out a “prayer stick”** that your group will decorate together. Invite each person to find yarn or ribbon to wrap **around** the stick. Each end of the ribbon or yarn should be secured to the stick with glue or by tying the yarn together.

2) As you are wrapping your ribbon **take a few moments of silence as a group to silently pray for the concerns and the joys in your life.** Think about the people who need peace and healing and say a prayer for God to help them. Think about the things that give you joy. And, say a prayer to God thanking God for these blessings in your life. Make sure that everyone has a chance to wrap yarn around the stick.

3) After about 3-4 minutes of silent prayer, someone in the group can invite the group to **share these prayer requests out loud.** After the stick is covered in ribbon & yarn the group can **close with a prayer to bless their prayer stick** and all of those who have been prayed for while your group was making your prayer stick. These prayer sticks will be used in a future activity so take the stick with you when you have finished.

Prayer Stick Materials:

*Long bamboo sticks (one per group)

*Brightly colored yarn & ribbon

*White glue

*Scissors

Prayer Station #2: Stormy Prayer Stations

PART ONE

1) Sometimes storms come in our lives & sometimes we get upset when things go wrong or when our feelings are hurt. And other times people that we love get hurt or experience loss.

2) **Talk about a time in your life** when the storms came and you went through a hard time. As you are sharing **shake up a glitter jar**, put it on the table and as the glitter settles at the bottom of the jar share the things that helped you make it through the storm.

3) After everyone has had a chance to share the storms in their life, **move on to the next table** which has another stormy jar prayer station.

Prayer Station #2: Stormy Prayer Stations

PART TWO

4) At this station you will have a big bowl of water. Take the scoop and put the water in two mason jars (leave some room at the top of the jar). Then ask a volunteer put the shaving cream on top of the water. (You may need to refill water in the kitchen)

5) Ask a few volunteers to put a few drops of food coloring in shaving cream & see what happens!

6) As the team is building the "storm jar" ask a volunteer to read the story about Jesus calming the storm from the story book. After everyone has finished with the storm jar, show the pictures from the story book.

7) **Spend some meditative time coloring or journaling.** Think more about the storms in your life and what spiritual resources helped you have peace in the midst of strife.

8) Here are a few journaling questions:

*What are some of the biggest storms that you have weathered?

*What were some of the faith & community resources that you tapped into to survive that storm?

*How can we pay attention & develop those practices even when we do not have “storms” in our lives?

*What is your spiritual life like when you are in a “stormy period?”

Materials

- Bottle of shaving foam (traditional foam!)
- Big bowl of water with scoop or pitcher of water
- Couple of different food colorings
- Water
- Glitter jars-see how to make here:
<http://jugglingwithkids.com/2011/10/mind-jar.html>
- Paper towels
- Plastic table cloth
- Coloring paper or worksheet for kids (of Jesus Calming the Storm)
- Journaling paper & pencils for adults/youth
- Story of Jesus calming the storm

Prayer Station #3: Spaghetti Earthquake Prayers

1) Work with your team to build the strongest & tallest structure using spaghetti & marshmallows. Make sure that everyone has a chance to help make the tower.

2) Nearby you should see two rectangle tables that are next to each other.

3) Put your structure on the “crack” between the two tables.

4) Have four volunteers stand on the edge of the tables and when the group counts down from 10, the volunteers will **create an “earthquake”** affect by **moving the tables back and forth**

(make sure that you don't make the distance between the tables too big that the structures fall through).

5) After a few minutes of earthquake time, spend some time discussing what happened to your tower. How well did it hold up? Is it still standing? Did it move from one position to another?

6) Ask two volunteers to read the scripture passages.

Psalm 46

Hebrews 10

7) Discuss how these scriptures relate to your earthquake exercise. What are some resources from these passages that we can rely on when things get "rocky" in our lives?

8) In one of the scripture passages it says "**let us hold on to the hope that we have**" – how can we hold on to hope when things are not going well?

9) If you have time at the end of your prayer station you can build another structure and try out another earthquake!

Materials

- Spaghetti
- Small marshmallows
- Two square or rectangle tables that are adjacent to each other

Prayer Station #4: 20 Things Prayer

- 1) Ask a volunteer to read both translations of **Philippians 4:8-10**
The MESSAGE & the New International Version
- 2) With your group come up with a list of “**20 things that you think people should say more often.**” After you write down your list – talk with your group briefly about why it is important that people say these things more often. Discuss why we might forget or sometimes avoid saying these things.
- 3) Play the “Kid President” video
- 4) Compare his list to your own and talk about which sayings from the video you might add to your list and why?
- 5) Close with a prayer. Practice saying some of the things that we should say more often in your prayer.
- 6) Roll up your list so the other groups can’t see it. We will tape it up on the wall after we finish.
- 7) If you have extra time you can **expand your list to 25 things!**

Materials

- TV or projector & screen
- Laptop
- Video Kid President
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5yCOSHeYn4>
- Paper & sharpies®
- Tape

Prayer Station #5: Jenga Prayers

- 1) With your team set up a Jenga Tower
- 2) Ask a volunteer to read the scripture two times and listen carefully.

1 Peter 2:5

- 3) As you begin, take turns pulling the blocks out. Notice that there are questions that have stickers by them. If you draw a block with a sticker, find the corresponding question & share your answer with the group. After you share your answer put your block on the top of the tower to make the tower taller.
- 4) Keep playing until the tower falls and if there is time – rebuild the tower and continue playing so that as many people as possible get to answer as many questions as possible. If you draw a color twice you can read the question below it.
- 5) Play until you hear the bell.

Jenga Prayer Questions

- *Name a person that you turn to when you need support or guidance? Why do you turn to that person?
- *How does your church family help people when they are in need? How have they helped you or your family?
- *What's your favorite thing about your church?
- *What is something that you do or your family does to help your faith grow?
- *What's one of your favorite Bible Stories and why?

Materials

- Jenga Set
- Stickers
- Question Sheet

Prayer Station #6: Rock Prayers

1) Ask two volunteers to read the scriptures aloud.

Joshua 4:21-24

Psalms 18:1-3:

2) Each group member has 5 minutes to walk around the retreat center to find a rock to use to build an altar. An altar is a tower of rocks that helps us remember when something important happens in our lives. Altars can help us remember when we were transformed by God. An altar may help mark the way through a difficult path. When the Israelites saw their rock altar by the Jordan River perhaps they thought “we were here, and we endured! God was with us then and God is with us now!” Our Altars that we will build today will serve as reminders to help us remember what we learned on retreat together this weekend.

3) When everyone has returned take a few minutes to take a sharpie and write or draw on the rock something that you have learned this weekend or something that you want to remember from this weekend that was special to you. **Please write your group number on the back of your rock.**

4) Hold the rock in your hand and say a prayer silently over your rock. Ask God to help you to take these lessons and gifts home with you. Ask God to help us remember what we learned this weekend to share it with our families and friends.

5) After the group spends a few minutes in silent prayer, work together with your team to build an altar on the table with all of your rocks.

Materials

- Rocks (you may need to “plant” the rocks around the retreat center/building in order to ensure that you have enough and the right sized rocks)
- Table

- Candles
- Sharpies®

Closing Prayer Station Exercise: Gather as a Large Group

(25-30 minutes)

- 1) Opening Song while people gather.
- 2) Debrief. Invite each group to have an individual share one quick highlight from the prayer stations. What was one's favorite station as an individual? What was the group's favorite as a team?
- 3) Invite each group to bring up their bamboo prayer sticks during a song. Use zip ties to tie together the prayer sticks to make a prayer room.
- 4) Sing a song while volunteers build the prayer room. Set some candles in the middle of the prayer room.
- 5) Explain after the prayer room is ready & you have finished singing, that we can spend some time in this prayer room this weekend. If we need a quiet time. If we need to say a prayer for someone we love. If we want to practice our faith in a quiet time of silence. You can come to this room to take that time that you need.
- 6) Closing with a Prayer Blessing over prayer room. Invite the group to stretch out their hands and pray over the prayer room. Close with the Lord's Prayer.

Saturday Lunch and Free Time

Saturday Night Dinner

Saturday Night Worship

Opening Song

Opening Prayer

*Bedtime Story - Read aloud Lord's Prayer Story from Desmond Tutu's Bible Storybook

*Table sharing - what does the Lord's Prayer mean to you? Stories of prayer rituals with your family - prayers that you repeat in your family - share with the group?

*Examen with your groups - share highs and lows - small group - joys and gratitudes, then close with prayer

*Lord's Prayer Song - Closing Song

Sunday Closing Worship: "We are the Body of Christ"

(Sit in Family Groups with your Lego Creation from Friday)

SETUP:

Speakers and Music

Oil (6 small bowls)

Rocks from Prayer Stations separated into groups

Lego mascots or logos for each family group from Friday night

Blessing Cards, one per table - index cards with the words:

"You are the Body of Christ. Go out to love and serve the world."

Readings

Body Mixer - Have everyone mingle around the room. One person yells out a body part - (i.e.toes) each person finds a partner and touches that body part (toe to toe) then have everyone say together "Thank you God for Toes" - Repeat with different body parts.

Opening Song

Opening Prayer

Ring the bell or the singing bowl

Call to Worship: Use “We Are the Body of Christ” by Ann B. Day. This can be found at: <http://www.welcomingresources.org/openingworship.htm>

SONG: While the song is being sung one person from each group brings up the mascot/logo made on Friday night. 6 people stay up front and connect the pieces together in a big piece - as a symbol of our connection and the community that we have built this weekend - & as a symbol of the body of Christ - each unique part contributes to the whole

(As scripture is read aloud, have each person stand and then sit back down when the word BODY is read, and touch or lift the other body parts as they are mentioned.)

Reading from 1 Corinthians Chapter 12

Celebration of Communion

Commissioning / Sending off Ritual (have the oil, rocks & blessing cards on each table)

Say: As you leave worship today - take your rock from the center of your table - bring it with you to remind you of the blessings/practices that you want to take with you from this weekend.

We will close our time in family groups with a time of blessing. We have a small bowl of oil for each table and we will anoint our neighbor and send them out to “Be the Body of Christ” to shine God’s love in the world to use their gifts in the world - to connect & serve -.

So when the music begins the first person will turn to your neighbor - make a cross on their hand with the oil - and say “You are the body of Christ - Go out to love and serve the world”

And then once your hand has been anointed turn to your neighbor and say “You are the body of Christ - Go out to love and serve the world”

Let’s practice now together! (Repeat a few times with the large group until everyone at your table has had a chance to be blessed.)

Benediction - As you go from this place, know that you are the Body of Christ. Go out to love and serve the world! Amen

