

“Touch the Water, Taste the Bread”

Christ Church All Church Retreat
Grove Hall, Ocean Grove, New Jersey

Fall 2013

Opening Session:

Materials: Communion & Baptism symbols on half sheets of paper (grapes, bread, water & dove), play dough, markers, trays for the dough, tape, worksheets for sculpture story time, copies of stories from a children’s Bible of the story of Jesus’ Baptism and the story of the Last Supper for small group time, lyrics for song.

Possible Icebreaker - Share your favorite teacher and your name and your grade (if you are in school)

Get into Groups: Everyone gets a paper with a symbol taped to their backs. No one is allowed to look at the symbol. And without talking the participants have to form groups based on their matching symbols.

The symbols are grapes, bread, & water, dove (each symbol is on a separate sheet of paper).

In each small group they receive a tray with the dough and a story (Jesus' Baptism for the water/dove symbols & The Last Supper for the grapes/bread group) and a worksheet with instructions and a few questions about the story. Each group finds a quiet place to work and they read the story and questions aloud. Then they use the play dough to make a scene together of the story or perhaps the symbol they were given. Then gather in the main room to place the sculptures on the altar & share.

Closing song: **Waves of Mercy** by David Crowder

Close with prayer

WORKSHEET: (Use in the opening session)

Jesus' Baptism: (Water & Dove Groups)

*Have a volunteer read the story. Listen and raise your hand when you hear your group's symbol in the story. Then answer these questions.

- Can you think of a time when you felt really loved?
- Why do you think Jesus wanted to be baptized?
- How do you think Jesus felt when he was baptized?

*Use the play dough to make the scene described in your story! You can also use the play dough to make your group's symbol.

The Last Supper: (Bread/Grapes Groups)

*Have a volunteer read the story. Listen and raise your hand when you hear your group's symbol in the story. Then answer these questions.

- What is your favorite meal to eat with your family?
- How does eating together with your family and friends make you feel?
- Why do you think that Jesus wanted his disciples to remember this meal?

*Use the play dough to make the scene described in your story! You can also use the play dough to make your symbol.

Session Two: Water play, outside

Materials: flip chart, markers, large plastic tubs for water play, buckets, assortment of bath toys, baptism liturgy from your church.

Begin with the flip chart inside. Ask the group to brainstorm the question

“How do we use water in our lives?” List the answers on the flip chart.

Share and talk about the baptism liturgy that you use at your church. Ask these questions: What does baptism mean to you? What does baptism tell us about God?

Read the baptism storybook – “Water Come Down” by Walter Wangerin Jr. (Copyright 1999 Oxburg Fortress)

Go outside and invite participants to play with the water & bath toys in the tubs in the center of a circle. Ask the group to share meaningful stories of baptism, either their own or someone else's baptism.

Short Break

Bring the group back together: Go on a group walk or an individual walk to find an object that reminds one of God's love - come back and share about the object and put it on the altar.

Free Time

Third Session: Baking

Materials: Copy of Communion Liturgy from your church, soap to wash hands, a chunk of pre made pizza dough for each participant, a large box of raisins, butter, cinnamon, sugar, pans for baking, ingredients for baking a loaf of bread (3 cups flour + extra for dusting, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon yeast, $1\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons salt, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water), plastic wrap, parchment paper if desired, heavy pot with lid for baking bread, measuring cups and spoons, hot pad, cooling rack

Before you begin have everyone wash their hands since you will be baking.

Gather around tables and have a leader pose these questions for each table to discuss and then share with the larger group. Discussion on

Communion: What does it mean? What does your communion liturgy say?

What does it tell us about God's love?

While discussing these questions have small groups around tables make "sculpture bread" with pizza dough and raisins, cinnamon and sugar. While sculpture bread is baking, read a story, such as Bread is for Eating by David and Phyllis Gershator. (Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1995.)

Have a lay leader at the front of the room make the bread for closing worship the next day / or during the closing session. Here is a good recipe for no knead bread that you can mix and leave to rise overnight and then bake in the morning in time for communion:

<http://www.simplysogood.com/2013/03/artisan-no-knead-bread.html>

The leader can call up table groups at different times to help measure & combine the ingredients. Set the bread in a warm place to rise overnight and bake it during breakfast the next morning. (Bread will take about an hour to bake after oven is pre-heated.)

Close with **Waves of Mercy** & a prayer

Break

Fourth Session: Closing Worship

Materials: Plastic “pony” beads (with larger holes), some colored, others with letters so that you can spell out the word “Remember” for each person, yarn or lanyard for stringing beads in order to make necklaces.

Call to worship, bowl with water, communion elements (use freshly baked bread that group made the night before,) Bible Story book,

Bread that was baked earlier (Try to time it so that bread is still warm)

Worship Set up

(Need: Call to worship, big bowl filled with water, communion elements and liturgy, a Bible storybook, candle and lighter) Set up an altar with the big bowl of water, a lit candle, and the communion elements. Ahead of time, learn the sign language for the phrase, “We remember Jesus” so that you can teach it to the group.

Say to the group: “Baptism and communion are both sacraments that help us to remember Jesus. Today, we’re going to make necklaces that also help to remind us of Jesus and his love for us.” Make necklaces together.

Teach the group sign language for the phrase, “We remember Jesus.”

Sing song together with motions: **Waves of Mercy**

Call to Worship, “We Remember Jesus” with sign language

Echo prayers (say an opening prayer and have the group echo each phrase)

Story of Baptism read from a Bible storybook (we used Desmond Tutu’s Story Bible)

Touching the water to remember our baptism - invite each person to come forward and touch the water to help them remember their baptism and the fact that they are beloved children of God.

Story of Communion/Last Supper read aloud from a Bible storybook.
Tasting the bread to remember Jesus and his love for us (celebrate Communion together)

Closing prayers – go around circle and share one thing that you’re grateful for.

Christ Church All Church Retreat 2013

A retreat on prayer for all ages at Ocean Grove, NJ

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If you have questions!