

2021 OGHS Activities for Children and Youth

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Children's activities:

Water prayers

a. Water is an important resource for all of us. This week see how many times you can give thanks for the gift of God's love in the water that helps sustain us. Each night at dinner, invite each family member to recount how they used water that day. Examples might be "taking a bath", "doing laundry", "drinking water" or "cooking." When everyone has had a chance to contribute, use the prayer below or one of your own in thanksgiving. Remember those who do not have enough clean water in your prayers and in your actions. You may use this with your OGHS coinbox, which you might keep on the dinner table during this time!

b. (Option: include a "blessing card" with space for Sunday-Saturday listing of the blessings of water.)

c. Prayer:

"Praise God who makes the water flow, it washes us and helps us grow.

God bless the waters here below, and all who help God's love to flow. Amen!"

At Home Mural

a. A mural is a large picture that shows many things at once. You can use many sheets of paper by taping them together, or you can use a large roll of butcher paper to draw the way One Great of Sharing helps people and lets God's love flow. Here are some things you might want to include in your pictures as we think about the blessing of water!

i. God sending rain, making lakes and rivers, and even aquifers (underground water).

ii. The ways water helps us: watering gardens, washing dishes, taking baths, cooking food, and many other ways!

iii. The ways people all over the world get water: some have taps in their houses, some get water from wells; others carry it long distances from lakes and streams. How many can you draw?

iv. People helping each other get good water! Can you draw a picture of friends helping to drill a well or putting in taps (plumbing) inside a house? These are all things that One Great Hour of Sharing does to help make God's love for all of us flow everywhere it is needed!

b. When you're finished, share your mural with your church family and send a picture of it to [<https://www.facebook.com/onegreathourofsharingucc>] You can find many stories there about how the offering helps families both near and far.

Youth Activity

Know the Flow!

a. How much water does it take to run your household? Let's find out! With your parent or guardian, see if you can find a water bill. It will show you the number of gallons or liters your house used last month. Divide that by the number of days in the month. The average U.S. family uses about 300 gallons (1200 liters) per day. How does your family compare? In many places where One Great of Sharing is helping love to flow, families have to walk more than 3 miles and carry every gallon. Each gallon of water weighs 8.5 pounds. With a friend, test to see how many pounds you can carry in a backpack. Can you carry 10lbs? 20lbs? Once you think you know, calculate how many trips you would have to make to get your family's daily water usage. Wow! It could be a lot of trips, even if other members of your family helped! That's why supporting OGHS water projects makes such a difference! When we help provide a water source for a community, the people who live there can safely access water much closer to home. They don't have to spend so much time traveling and carrying water, so they have time for other things: like going to school and spending time with their family.

b. Now that you know how many trips it would take, with your family or friends consider making a contribution based on that number to your OGHS offering. You could make an offering based on:

i. Your average usage of gallons per day. Could you give a penny, nickel, dime, quarter or even a dollar for each of those gallons? What a difference it would make!

ii. The number of trips you would have to make to meet your household needs if you carried all your water yourself. Pick an amount that's right for your gratitude and that will help others!

iii. Money isn't the only way to "let love flow:" people around the world, including in the U.S. and Canada are living with water supplies that are unsafe or not affordable. Could you write a letter to the congressperson or senator in such an area asking them to make sure there is clean water for everyone? Your letter might make a difference for a family in need.

Intergenerational Activity:

Community Water Awareness: Church, Home, Community:

a. In this activity, adults and children can connect gratitude, stewardship, and awareness of God's blessings in the form of our water. The more we know, the more Love can flow! Too often we do not know how to be good stewards of the sources that provide for us. For this project, a group of any size

can organize a "water tour and clean up." It could be of your house, your church or even a neighborhood. The time can be adjusted to include an actual clean up (e.g., 2 hours) or for a shorter time consider an "inventory project," where participants tour, observe, and respond. Here are the steps and a short prayer that can be used at each stage:

i. Gather your group and plan your time, adjusting to the ages, needs, and size of your investigation! Make sure to consider the youngest and oldest members of your team. Consider how will you help everyone participate meaningfully, even if they cannot participate equally?

1. Prayer meditation: "Lord, thank you for this community, sustained by your gifts. Help us care for each other! Amen."

ii. In your house, church, or neighborhood, identify all the sources of water. If possible, go to these sources.

1. Prayer meditation: "God, you breathed on the face of the water and brought forth all that was good. Like water at its source, love flows from you to sustain us. Help us sustain others in your name. Amen!"

ii. Water is a flowing, moving resource. Even water in lakes is constantly evaporating, being used by people, or flowing into rivers and streams. Where does the water go in your neighborhood? What about in your building? Make a list of how the water is used and/or flows to the next place. If you have a map or can use one on the computer, trace the route your water takes. Which ocean does it eventually meet?

1. Prayer meditation: "Every drop of water connects us to each other and to you, God of all the earth. Remind us of our connections to those near and far and let flowing love be our legacy in your name. Amen."

ii. How can we steward these resources? Loving God is about loving what God loves and caring for those gifts that sustain us and all people. As you investigate your house, your church building or neighborhood, how could you improve the water usage?

1. In a house, note and then if possible, repair any leaks or corroded fixtures. Are there ways you could use less water? (Check into low flow faucets, showerheads, toilets, etc.) Young people can help older participants with writing down needs and assisting with repairs.

2. At church you might find similar needs. Write them down and make sure you offer to help the people in charge of the property. Make a list of what would steward God's water best in God's house!

3. In the neighborhood: Many waters are polluted because of the trash that gets thrown into water supplies. In multi-generational teams with adult supervision, tour the neighborhood. Could you safely clean up the banks and paths that lead to water? Banks of streams, gutters, and yards are all good places to start: removing this debris keeps the water clearer and helps us recognize how precious and how fragile a resource water is, even in places where it is easy to access. Make sure you work in teams,

have gloves and trash bags, and don't pick up anything sharp that might cut you. If you cannot do a full clean up, make note and send pictures to your local utilities or water management agency. Ask them to help you keep the waters clean! You might also want to consider other groups or organizations in your community that are working to make the water safe. How can you work together in partnership to make sure everyone has what they need?

4. Prayer meditation: "God, We don't always do all we can to keep your people and world safe. Help us now as we recommit to caring for our house, our church, our neighborhood and our world as stewards of your ever-flowing grace and love. Amen!"