

United Church of Christ Connections in Gather 'Round Winter Quarter, 2007–08

For all ages

Those who desire an inclusive language version of Psalms used during this quarter may wish to use the Psalter in *The New Century Hymnal*, pages 621–731.

Multiage

Session 8

Responding, singing the blessing

Children in this group will find a song about being salt or letting their lights shine. What does the song say about living faithfully? Have them create movements or a dance to go along with the song. This could be a song they know from memory. Or, they could search in a hymnal. (For example they might use “You Are Salt for the Earth, O People” in *The New Century Hymnal* number 181.) If your hymnal has an index of allusions to scripture have them look for what is listed under Matthew 5:13–16.

Ending and sending, #4

Sing “The Jesus Way” from the Gather 'Round CD. The words for this song are found on page 6 in *Together*. Another option is to sing “Lord, Make Me More Holy” (*The New Century Hymnal* number 75).

Session 10

Ending and sending, #3

Sing a simple prayer song. “Prayer is the Soul’s Sincere Desire” (*The New Century Hymnal* number 508) is a good choice. The translation of these Spanish words is “Hear us, my God.” You may choose a more familiar song from the Gather 'Round CD if you prefer.

Session 12

Ending and sending, #4

Sing a sending song from your church’s hymnal. (“Camina, Pueblo de Dios [Go Forth, O People of God]” *The New Century Hymnal* number 614 is one possible choice.) You may choose a favorite sending song from the Gather 'Round CD if you prefer.

Middler

Session 1

Ending and sending, #2

Sing “Come Now, O Prince of Peace” with the Gather 'Round CD as the children begin to leave their Responding choices. Lyrics are on page 3 of *Grow*. Another song choice could be “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” in *The New Century Hymnal*, number 478.

Ending and sending, #4

Open your Bible to Psalm 29:11 and read the blessing as you prepare to leave. (There is an inclusive language version of Psalm 29:11 in *The New Century Hymnal*, page 638.)

Session 2

Ending and sending, #2

Sing an Advent hymn from *The New Century Hymnal* such as "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (perhaps just one verse), number 116, or "Comfort, Comfort O My People," number 101. Or sing "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" with the Gather 'Round CD as the children begin to leave their Responding choices. The words are on page 3 of *Grow*.

Session 3

Gather 'round, #3

As you find the track for "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" on the Gather 'Round CD, ask the children to find Korea on the world map in *Grow*. This Korean song is beautiful with a finger cymbal or triangle sounding on the first beat of each measure. (Another good song option is "There's a Voice in the Wilderness Crying" in *The New Century Hymnal*, number 120, or "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" in *The New Century Hymnal*, number 116.)

Session 4

Ending and sending, #2

Sing "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" with the Gather 'Round CD. The lyrics are on page 3 in *Grow*. (Or sing the chorus of "O Come, All You Faithful," number 135 in *The New Century Hymnal*.)

Session 5

Hear the Bible story

Be sure that all of the children are familiar with the chorus to "O Come, All Ye Faithful" in the hymnal. Open to number 135 in *The New Century Hymnal*, or to the appropriate number in another hymnal. Practice the chorus once, if needed. Keep the hymnals open to sing the chorus again on the cue in the story.

Session 10

Ending and sending, #2

Invite the children to sing "Peace Before Us," another choice from the Gather 'Round CD, or a hymn in your church's hymnal (such as "Lord, Make Me More Holy," number 75 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Junior Youth

Session 1

Gather 'round, #3

Sing "Be Now My Vision" (*The New Century Hymnal*, number 451) or "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (number 116).

Session 2

Gather 'round, #4

Sing a prayer song of preparing for God's new way such as "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," number 506 in *The New Century Hymnal*.

Responding, Prepare the musical way

Invite the youth to play Advent hymns (such as "In Solitude," number 521, or "Comfort, Comfort O My People," number 101 in *The New Century Hymnal*). They will note phrases that talk about God's new way in these hymns. They will discuss the best instrumentation to use for each verse and then, using the instruments available, proceed to play and sing.

Ending and sending, #2

Sing a song of choosing God's new way. (One possibility is "Over My Head," number 514 in *The New Century Hymnal*.) Sing the song together, allowing those who brought musical instruments to join in if they wish.

Session 3

Gather 'round, #3

Sing "O Come, O Come, Immanuel" (number 116 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Responding, Who would have thought

Books such the series *Hero Tales* (volumes 1–4), by Dave and Neta Jackson, *Kids with Courage: True Stories about Young People Making a Difference*, by Barbara A. Lewis, or *Lighting Candles in the Dark: Stories of Courage and Love in Action*, Eds. Marnie Clark, Elinor Briggs, and Carol Passmore.

United Church of Christ stories may be found on the UCC web pages:

Hidden Histories (<http://www.ucc.org/about-us/hidden-histories/>)

What Matters (<http://www.uccvitality.org/information/what-matters-to-you.html>)

Ending and sending, #3

Sing a song based on the Beatitudes, which people are memorizing. (If you have *The New Century Hymnal*, have them turn to number 180, "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit." The tune to this hymn is a little difficult, so you may wish to read the words.) Or listen to the first three verses of "Sermon on the Mount" on the Gather 'Round CD.

Session 4

Gather 'round, #4

Sing a Christmas carol such as "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (number 133 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Responding, Huron caroling

The youth will analyze the song "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" to see how Jesus' birth was portrayed by the Huron, a North American aboriginal culture. (The hymn is number 151 in *The New Century Hymnal*.) Words and music recording are also available online. Youth will begin learning a little of the hymn's background by reading a short section in *Call*.

Session 5

Gather 'round, #3

Explain that you will eat the cake together after reading the Bible story then say, "The surprise is that the magi recognized and worshiped Jesus as the true king." Sing or read the words of a song that mentions the coming of the three kings. "What Child Is This" (number 148 in *The New Century Hymnal* is a good choice.)

Session 7

Gather 'round, #3

Sing the first verse of "Jesus the Christ Says," number 48 in *The New Century Hymnal*.

Connect to the story, #1

Read the verses of "You Walk Along Our Shoreline," number 504 or "Tu Has Venido a la Orilla," number 173 in *The New Century Hymnal*. Have people take turns reading the verses with emphasis on the rhythm, then repeat the chorus together rap style.

Session 10

Gather 'round, #2

Sing a hymn about peacemaking (such as "O God of Love, O God of Peace," number 571, or "O for a World," number 575 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Session 13

Gather 'round, #3

Choose and sing a hymn that speaks of the needs of those who are hungry, homeless, or oppressed (such as "Jesu, Jesu," number 498, or "Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant," number 539 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Responding, Fair music

The youth will listen to the U2 song, "Crumbs from Your Table." They will play a rhythm instrument along with the recording. They may sing along, if they like. Encourage them to discuss the song and its meaning. If you are unable to obtain the U2 album, you may have the youth sing a hymn of discipleship from your hymnal, such as "Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?" number 539 in *The New Century Hymnal*, and discuss that.

Ending and sending, #2

Choose and sing a hymn that shows concern for other people in need from your hymnal, such as number 541 in *The New Century Hymnal*, "They Asked, 'Who's My Neighbor?'"

Youth

Session 1

Ending and sending, #3

Find "The Lord Lift You Up" on the Gather 'Round CD. Play it softly as a sending song. Dismiss with the words, "May you seek God this week." Or sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," number 116 in *The New Century Hymnal*.

Session 2

Ending and sending, #3

Sing an Advent song that refers to John the Baptist. "Comfort, Comfort, O My People," is a good choice. (It is number 101 in *The New Century Hymnal*.)

Session 3

Ending and sending, #2

Sing "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" along with the Gather 'Round CD. If your group is very small or does not enjoy singing, listen to the recording rather than singing it. Or sing number 136, "Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child," in *The New Century Hymnal*.

Session 4

Responding, Huron carol

The youth will read the song "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" to see how the wonder of Jesus' birth was portrayed for the Huron, a North American aboriginal culture. The hymn is number 151 in *The New Century Hymnal*. Lyrics and music recording are also available online. This song was written in 1643 by Jean de Brébeuf, a Christian missionary to the Huron people. The song uses images from the lifestyle of the Huron people at the time. Ask youth to read through this Christmas song and find the parts that specifically fit Huron culture. Why might this have made it easier for the Huron people to experience the wonder of Jesus' birth? What clues do you have that the Huron lived close to nature.

Ending and sending, #1

Gather the group together. Read or sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (number 133 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Session 5

Ending and sending, #3

Read or sing the last verse of "Silent Night, Holy Night" (number 134 in *The New Century Hymnal*).

Looking Ahead

If you have youth who enjoy playing guitars, invite them to prepare a song for next week's session. The session is about Jesus' baptism and time in the wilderness being tempted by the devil. One good choice for a song is "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" (number 120 in *The New Century Hymnal*). Whatever song they choose should include some mention of our faith journey or a wilderness theme. The youth's rehearsed hymn will be the closing prayer for session six.

Session 6

Ending and sending, #3

Sing together whatever faith journey song you decided on last week. Ask the people who prepared to provide guitar accompaniment. "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" (number 120 in *The New Century Hymnal*) is a good choice because refers to the wilderness.

Session 10

Ending and sending, #3

Sing a prayer song such as "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" (number 292 in *The New Century Hymnal*). Then pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Session 11

Ending and sending, #3

Sing a sending blessing. "Thuma Mina" (number 360 in *The New Century Hymnal*) is a good choice.

Session 13

Ending and sending, #3

Sing together a song of caring and service such as "Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?" (number 539 in *The New Century Hymnal*). If anybody brought guitars, invite them to lead the singing.

Parent Caregiver

Session 1

Gather 'round, #3

Sing a song about light. One choice might be "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus the Light of the World)" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 160).

Session 2

Gather 'round, #4

Reflect in silence about entering into God's presence as you study the Bible together. Then sing a song about John the Baptist's call to repentance such as "Comfort, Comfort O My People" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 101).

Session 3

Gather 'round, #2

Sing an Advent hymn. One possible choice is "Watcher, Tell Us of the Night" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 103).

Session 5

Gather 'round, #5

5. Sing a hymn about needing God's leadership such as "Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 18).

Session 7

Ending and sending, #4

Sing a song of calling such as "Tu Has Venido a la Orilla" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 173).

Session 8

Gather 'round, #4

Sing a song of blessing such as "We Praise You, O God" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 420).

Ending and sending, #1

1. Sing "We Praise You, O God" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 420) again.

Session 9

Ending and sending, #3

Sing "You've Got a Place" again with the Gather 'Round CD. The words are on page 116. Or sing a song about peacemaking. One good choice is "Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 590).

Session 10

Ending and sending, #1

Sing "Amen, We Praise Your Name O God" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 760).

Session 11

Gather 'round, #3

3. Sing "Thuma Mina" (number 360 in *The New Century Hymnal*) or "Camina, Pueblo de Dios" (*The New Century Hymnal* number 614).