



## WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR SUMMER 2007

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### **Parables of Jesus: Looking for God in unlikely places**

The parables of Jesus provide a wonderful theme for the summer months. In his introduction to the Summer 2007 sessions, Tom Yoder Neufeld writes, “Parables invite the hearer to make connections, to figure out the puzzle, to ‘catch on.’ Jesus was a master at telling stories with a twist and a hidden meaning. But...a parable requires hearers who are ready to understand and live into a deeper meaning. They are ready not to laugh but to look for God in unlikely places, to orient their lives in light of God’s kingdom, to follow Jesus.”

### **How to use this guide**

Use this guide to integrate summer worship with Gather 'Round themes. If worship time precedes education, these resources will provide the worship element to the theme and the education hour will give more time for connecting and responding to the story. If you have Sunday school first, invite classes to participate in worship leading by preparing contemporary skits to go with the parables, prayers, litanies, and special music. If your church doesn't have summer Sunday school, use this guide to bring Gather 'Round themes to worship time.

### **“Parables packets” for families**

Extend the learning and nurture faith in children and parents all summer, by giving each family a summer Talkabout (Parable cards), *Connect* (the Parent/Caregiver guide), *Together* (the Multiage student book), and *My Bible Storybook* (the Preschool student book). Attach a letter, encouraging them to enjoy learning together about the parables of Jesus at home or away.

### **Materials used or recommended in this guide:**

- *Connect* – the Parent/Caregiver book with Gather 'Round (Summer 2007)
- *Together* – the Multiage student book (Summer 2007)
- Talkabout Parable cards (Summer 2007)
- Multiage Teacher's Guide (Summer 2007)
- Preschool Teacher's Guide (Summer 2007)
- Selected books for Children's Time (See list at the end of this guide)
- *Hymnal: A Worship Book*
- *Sing the Journey. Hymnal. A Worship Book Supplement 1* or
- *Hymnal Supplement*

### **Visuals**

Each Sunday add an item to the worship table, or make a banner with symbols of each parable.

### **Memory Text (Psalm 78:1-4)**

Teach the whole congregation how to sign this very significant Bible passage. The American Sign Language signs are pictured on pages 5-7 in *Together* and on a colorful chart in the Classroom Pack (Summer 2007).

### **Advance Preparation**

- Immerse yourself in each session's parable by reading the daily devotionals in *Connect*.
- Read through the excellent articles in the weekly "Bible Insight" by Tom Yoder Neufeld, as well as "Connect to the Story" and comments in the side bars.
- Find items for the worship table.
- Think of including families with children in worship leading.
- Find ways to use the parable cards in children's time or as a response to the sermon.

## **Session 1: Old and new**

**Text:** Luke 5:36–39

**Faith focus:** Jesus teaches us new ways to live.

**Other texts:** Psalm 96:1 and 2 Corinthians 5:17

**Visual:** Two backpacks- one torn and tattered, another brand new.

**Memory Verse:** Read Psalm 96:1–4. Do signing for Psalm 96:1–2a  
(Refer to *Together* or the classroom poster)

**Call to worship:** Listen, *Together*, 10

**Prayer:** Make us new, *Together*, 8

### **Music:**

New earth, heavens new, Hymnal: A Worship Book, 299

In the bulb there is a flower, HWB, 614

Move in our midst, HWB, 418

O Breath of Life, *Sing the Journey*, 35

We are searching, *Preschool Teacher's Guide*, 13

### **Children's time options:**

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or *Preschool Teacher's Guide*

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### **Sermon:**

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Jesus does things differently, by turning social expectations upside-down. God cannot be contained in old ways. God's spirit brings forth new fruit – even on old vines! We need new wineskins the gospel enters new times and situations. Where do we need to change? What new challenges are we trying to squeeze into old structures? Living in new ways and doing things differently requires trust in God and each other. God's unchanging love is always with us, even in the challenges of making God's message fit our world today.

### **Sending:**

As disciples, eager to share the blessings of God's kingdom in new ways, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen

## Session 2: Wise and foolish builders

**Text:** Matthew 7:24–27 (See choral reading in *Connect*, 22)

**Faith focus:** We build a strong foundation by acting on Jesus' teachings.

**Other texts:** Psalm 46; Romans 1:16–17; 1 Corinthians 3:11–15

**Visual:** Blocks or rocks in a heap and others in the form of a structure

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78: 1–4 (Sign verses 1–2a)

### Call to worship:

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,

The Lord of hosts is with us.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear.

We come to worship Jesus Christ, our firm foundation.

(based on Psalm 46)

### Music:

Come and see, HWB, 20

Built on the rock, HWB, 309

My hope is built on nothing less, HWB, 343

How firm a foundation, HWB, 567

The Wise One Built a House upon the Rock, *Together*, 14

Don't be afraid (Gather 'Round CD and *Sing the Journey*, 115)

### Children's time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher's Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Jesus' words come with new authority and depth. The listeners are expected to take these words seriously and live in ways that reflect his teachings. When we face the storms of life, we can trust that God is our secure foundation. Consider the places we tend to put our trust (status, finances, or family). How do we decide what is wise and what is foolish? Sometimes we don't listen and sometimes we choose to ignore good advice. Share an example of a time when taking advice made a huge difference.

### Sending:

Use the litany from *Connect*, 22 or this sentence: Go now and build your lives upon the Rock of Jesus Christ. Stand secure. Live in faith. Amen.

## Session 3: Wisdom and foolishness

**Text:** Matthew 25:1–13

**Faith focus:** We can be ready to help with God’s work in this world.

**Other texts:** Matthew 25:31–46; Luke 17:21; Ephesians 5: 15–20

**Visual:** Three oil lamps (See *Connect*, 28)

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78: 1–4. Sign verses 1–2a.

**Call to worship:** HWB, 664

### Music:

Sleepers, wake! HWB, 188

Guide my feet, HWB, 546

I want to walk, *Sing the Journey*, 95

Give Me Oil in My Lamp, *Together*, 17

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*

There are multiple meanings for this parable: God’s kingdom is here and yet to come and be fulfilled; grace is a gift, not to be taken for granted; we cannot be a part of God’s kingdom on the coattails of others. We can stay ready for God’s reign by being right with God and caring for those who need help now. How do we keep alive the hope of God’s reign, particularly in a world full of pain? What are the consequences we will face if we don’t tend to our own relationship with God and the needs of others?

### Sending:

As you leave this place, renew your commitment to hold together God’s love for you and your love for God’s world. Live in hope, for Christ will come in all of his glory! Watch and be ready! Amen

## Session 4: Hidden treasure

**Text:** Matthew 13:44–50 (Use different readers for each parable.)

**Faith focus:** We can discover God’s kingdom and risk everything for it.

**Visual:** Small treasure box, coins, string of pearls, net

**Other texts:** Psalm 105:1–7; Deuteronomy 4:29–31; Acts 17:27; 2 Corinthians 4:7; Philippians 3:8

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Do signing for verses 1&2.

**Call to worship:** Psalm 105:1–7

### Music:

Jesus, priceless treasure, HWB, 595

I love thy kingdom, Lord, HWB, 308

God moves in a mysterious way, *Sing the Journey*, 104

There is more love somewhere, *Sing the Journey*, 109

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Introduce the sermon using the reader’s theater in *Connect*.122 -23.

This group of three short parables emphasizes the great value of the God’s kingdom. Three themes emerge – surprise, joy, and judgment. The kingdom of God is here now. What are we willing to give all in order to find it and become a part of it? Are we too busy and pre-occupied to be surprised by joy? What might be mistaken for treasure that prevents us from growing or remaining faithful to God?

### Sending:

Refer to the prayer by Thomas a Kempis, *Connect*,39

## Session 5: The unforgiving servant

**Text:** Matthew 18:23–25

**Faith focus:** Forgive because God has forgiven you.

**Other texts:** Psalm 19:12–14, Colossians 3:12–15 (HWB, 856), Ephesians 4:29–32

**Visual:** A “broken” heart and/or praying hands

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Sign verses 1–3

### Call to worship:

Leader: We gather in the awareness of God’s love for all people everywhere.

People: Praise the Lord. All that is within me praise God’s holy name.

Leader: Praise the Lord and remember all his kindness:

in forgiving our sins;  
in curing our diseases;  
in saving us from destruction;  
in surrounding us with love.

People: Because we are forgiven, we too can forgive.

All: The Lord is full of mercy and compassion.  
The Lord is slow to anger and willing to give us gifts of love.  
Praise the Lord!  
Oh, praise the God of endless grace.

-adapted from *Words of Worship*, 111 (Herald Press, 1996)

**Prayers:** Matthew 6:12 from *Connect*, 46

Confession: HWB, 701

### Music:

Forgive our sins as we forgive, HWB, 137

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, HWB, 151

Where charity and love prevail, HWB, 305

Lord, speak to me, HWB, 499

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Imagine a world without forgiveness (See Yancey’s quotes in *Connect*, 47, 49). God’s grace is not something we are entitled to. No one can owe us, emotionally or materially, what we owe God.

What if God were to forgive us as much as we forgive others? Forgiveness is not easy. Invite some persons share their testimonies of giving and receiving forgiveness.

**Sending:** As you have been washed in God’s forgiveness, be witnesses of that forgiveness.

Offer mercy even when it is difficult.

## Session 6: The vineyard workers

**Text:** Matthew 20:1–16

**Faith focus:** God cares for everyone equally.

**Other texts:** Psalm 106:1–8, 48; Matthew 21: 33–41

**Visual:** Weight scales symbolic of the scales of justice, or a pack of fair trade coffee from Ten Thousand Villages, small snacks to give out to everyone (option).

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Sign verses 1–4, through “children”.

### Call to worship:

Leader: Let us rejoice together in the God of justice and righteousness.

People: For we are all God’s children through faith in Jesus Christ.

Leader: Let us speak today of God’s surprising grace.

People: Let us trust together in God’s surpassing grace.

All: Thanks be to God.

### Music:

God loves all his many people, HWB, 397 or Gather 'Round CD

For we are strangers no more, HWB, 322

We are people of God’s peace, HWB, 407

En medio de la vida , HWB, 537

There’s a wideness in God’s mercy, HWB, 145

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

How many times have you heard a child – or teen, say, “It’s not fair!?” This parable reminds us that with God there is justice, in relationships, and even in economics. But this is also a story of God’s love and grace, both of which are unmerited and given to everyone equally, even those who are part of God’s kingdom for only the final days or hours of their lives. Are we willing to share God’s grace and love with those we think don’t deserve it?

### Sending:

God’s grace be with you all. As you leave this place, open yourself to God’s “just” love and look for opportunities to share it unconditionally.

## Session 7: The rich fool

**Text:** Luke 12:13–21

**Faith focus:** We can store up true treasures with God.

**Other Scriptures:** Matthew 6: 19–21, 25–34; Psalm 107:1–9; Colossians 3:1–11; Luke 12:13–21

**Visuals:** I-Pod or designer clothing, and a Bible

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Sign verses 1–4, through “children”.

### Call to worship:

Leader: O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good:

People: For God’s steadfast love endures forever.

Leader: God calls us in the midst of our busy lives,

People: Be still, and know that I am God.

Leader: God calls us from our grand ambitions, greediness, and fascination with things.

People: Be still, and know that I am God.

All: For where our treasures are, there are where our hearts will be.

(Based on Psalm 46:10, Psalm 107:1, Matthew 6:19)

### Prayers:

HWB, 730

Colossians 3: 1-11

### Music:

When all thy mercies, O my God, HWB, 72

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, HWB, 324

God of grace and God of glory, HWB, 366

Be thou my vision, HWB, 545

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

We live in a society that crassly communicates that we need more things to be happy. With this parable of Jesus, Luke reminds us that greed is destructive and hoarding does not guarantee bliss. Money and power are logically equated, but both can be taken away quickly. Neither can replace a rich relationship with God that lasts forever. As God’s people it is our responsibility to share what we have with those in need. What we do with our money reflects our relationship with God. Invite people to think of a typical day of school or work, family, house maintenance, and other activities. What would you do differently if you knew that tomorrow a hurricane or tornado would destroy everything?

### Sending:

As you have been blessed, share these blessings in love with those in need. Let the love of Christ be the measure of your wealth.



## Session 8: Giving up possessions

**Text:** Luke 14:28–33

**Faith focus:** There is a cost to following Jesus.

**Other texts:** Luke 4:18–19, Jeremiah 18:1–11

**Visual:** A paper contract with lines to sign signatures.

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Sign verses 1–4 through “Lord”.

### Call to worship:

Leader: We are here because Jesus said, “Follow me.

Jesus calls us to the cost and joy of discipleship.

People: We don’t know what that journey holds.

Leader: With the call comes the promise of grace and courage.

People: God is our helper. We are not afraid. What can anyone do to us?

All: Thanks be to God who strengthens us to be kingdom people.  
(refers to Hebrews 13:6)

### Music:

Take my life, HWB, 389

Heart and mind, possessions, Lord, HWB, 392

Have thine own way, HWB, 504

Who now would follow Christ, HWB, 535

Take up your cross, HWB, 536

Jesus, you have called us, *Sing the Journey*, 70

### Prayer:

Jeremiah 18:1–11 and HWB, 504

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Know what you’re getting in for. Plan ahead. Calculate the cost. Those attracted to the love and power of Jesus may not recognize the true cost of being a disciple. Do we deny or betray Jesus when we are identified as Christian disciples? Share stories of believers who are being persecuted for their loyalty to Christ. In a parent/child dedication service, parents commit themselves and their children to faithfulness to God. Sometimes that commitment is put to the test. We are encouraged to read the fine print before signing on to active membership in God’s kingdom.

### Sending:

God calls us to difficult missional activities in order to bring God’s realm into our midst. Claim God’s courage as you strive to be a faithful follower this week.

## Session 9: Two roads

**Text:** Matthew 7:13–14

**Faith focus:** It can be hard to follow Jesus' way, but it leads to life.

**Other texts:** Deuteronomy 30:15–20a; Matthew 19:23–30

**Visual:** Map of hiking trails or a road sign of a Yield or “One Way”.

**Memory verses:** Read Psalm 78:1–4. Sign verses 1–4 through “Lord”.

**Call to worship:** Shepherd God, *Together*, 11 or a choric reading of Deuteronomy 30: 15–20a.

### Music:

Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us, HWB, 352

Move in our midst, HWB, 418

Guide my feet, HWB, 546

He leadeth me, HWB, 599

I'm pressing on the upward way, *Sing the Journey*, 96

### Children's time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher's Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Refer to *Connect*, 77 to explain why early Christians were called people of the Way. Today we think of lifestyle as our way of walking with Jesus. Incorporate Robert Frost's poem, “The Road Less Taken.” Choices can make all the difference. Tell the story of how one small community made a significant choice during World War Two (*Connect*, 124). Give contemporary examples and/or invite someone share a testimony of a hard ethical decision that led to greater blessing. How can we encourage each other in these decisions?

### Sending:

Leave this place with the assurance that you are not alone. Choose to walk the road that leads to life.

## Session 10: The mustard seed and the yeast

**Text:** Luke 13:18–21

**Faith focus:** We grow together in God’s kingdom.

**Other texts:** Matthew 17:20; Mark 4:26–27

**Visual:** A jar of mustard seeds and a mustard plant or a packet of yeast and rolls

**Memory verses:** Read and sign Psalm 78: 1–4.

### Call to worship:

Leader: Have you heard the good news? The reign of God is near!  
People: Mustard seeds are being scattered by the breath of the Holy Spirit.  
Leader: Let us work together to tend these plantings.  
People: We will encourage each other in the work of the God’s realm.  
Leader: With God, what seems insignificant can produced a mighty harvest.  
All: Praise the Lord!

### Music:

The kingdom of God, HWB, 224

The church of Christ is every age, HWB, 403

God is working his purpose out, HWB, 638

Let us break bread together, HWB, 453 – Use alternate words in *Connect*, 125

Sizohamba naye, (We will walk with God), Sing the Journey, 78

### Children’s time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher’s Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

These parables portray images of growth and transformation. Sometimes these phenomena happen and we aren’t aware of it until we see the outcome. One kind word or deed can make a difference. There is power in what seems small and invisible. Challenge people to the “simple” discipline of regular personal time with God. Encourage them to allow the power of God to work through them to bring about growth and transformation.

### Sending:

As you go in the transforming love of God, look for ways that the seeds of God’s planting are taking root in unexpected ways and places. Trust that the Holy Spirit will harvest the fruit of your labors.

# Session 11: A barren fig tree

**Text:** Luke 13:6–9

**Faith focus:** God cares for us and expects us to bear good fruit.

**Other texts:** Psalm 1; Hosea 9:10; Jeremiah 8:13; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13; Galatians 5:22

**Visual:** A dish of figs or fig bars, or a bowl of fruit.

**Call to worship:** Psalm 103: 8–11, 17–18 and Hebrews 13:15–16.

## **Music:**

There's a wideness in God's mercy, HWB, 145

Thou true Vine, that heals, HWB, 373

Lord, I want to be a Christian, HWB, 444

What mercy and divine compassion, HWB, 524

How bless'd are they, HWB, 525

## **Prayer:**

Lord, forgive us when we are quick to judge and cut down others. Give us your mercy to extend to others a second chance. Prune us as needed so we can allow persons time to bear your fruit.

## **Children's time options:**

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher's Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

## **Sermon:**

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

This is a story of repentance and fruitful living. We are challenged to change how we think and how we act. The tree did not bear fruit - it just didn't happen. In our world of instant results, do we offer grace and patience for people to change even as we may offer prayer and care? Share examples of God's grace and patience in our attempts to bear the fruits of peace, justice and other fruit of the Spirit, not always successfully. We are grateful for second chances with God, too.

## **Sending:**

Rest in God's mercy and offer it to those who need help to bear fruit. Or read HWB, 766.

## Session 12: Ask, seek, and knock

**Text:** Luke 11:5–13

**Faith focus:** Be persistent in your prayer.

**Other texts:** Matthew 7:7–11; John 15: 7–8

**Visual:** Door knocker, praying hands

**Memory verses:** Sign Psalm 78:1–4

**Call to worship:** Ask, search, knock, *Together*, 9

### **Music:**

Brothers and sisters of mine, HWB, 142

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, HWB, 324

What a friend we have in Jesus, HWB, 573

If you believe and I believe, *Sing the Journey*, 32

Siyahamba, *Together*, 4, or Gather 'Round CD, using alternate verses in Multiage Teacher's guide, 79.

### **Children's time options:**

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher's Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### **Sermon:**

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

This parable follows Jesus' teaching on the Lord's Prayer. Even though other themes could be brought out, the placement in the passage indicates that it is related to prayer. Reflect on the importance of prayer as part of the congregation's role. We rely on each other to pray on behalf of those who wait or those who are too overwhelmed to pray.

Sometimes we are irritated by interruptions. But God is graciously available to us at any time. God wants to give what is best for us, even though it is not what we may want or when we want it. How do we handle requests on our time? How do we know what pleases God? How do we respond to God's knocking on the door to our hearts?

### **Sending:**

"Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him." 1 John 3:21–22

## Session 13: The unjust judge

**Text:** Luke 18:1–8

**Faith focus:** Persistently seek the justice of God's kingdom.

**Other texts:** Exodus 22:21–24; Isaiah 10:1–4; Luke 20:46–21:3

**Visual:** Judge's gavel, large paper cup, smaller paper cups to hand out (option)

**Memory verses:** Sign Psalm 78:1–4

**Call to worship:** Psalm 119: 137–144 or HWB, 711

### Music:

For the healing of the nations, HWB, 367

Where cross the crowded ways, HWB, 405

What does the Lord require, HWB, 409

Come, walk with us (Hamba Nathi), Gather 'Round CD, *Together*, 2 or *Sing the Journey*, 2

Longing for light, *Sing the Journey*, 54

How can we be silent, *Sing the Journey*, 61

### Children's time options:

Read a book from the suggested list at the end of this guide.

Use an idea from the Multiage or Preschool Teacher's Guide

Collaborate with the Sunday school teachers in choosing an activity or story for this time.

Create your own talk by connecting with the visuals on the worship table.

### Sermon:

Read the Bible Insight and Connect to the Story for this parable from *Connect*.

Resist the temptation to only expounding on the injustices of a political system. As members of God's kingdom, we are called to speak for and minister to the vulnerable. Focus on ways your congregation can defend those in need. How can you be persistent in bringing about God's justice in homes, church, and community? How can persistent prayer change things? Read the story, *Cups Held Out*, as part of the sermon or children's time. Distribute paper cups for people to collect their spare change to give to a local cause or a project designated by the congregation.

### Sending:

*Sing the Journey*, 157

## Books to use in children's time

*Am I Praying*, Jeannie St. John Taylor, Kregel Publications, 2003.

Young child goes through the events of the day talking to God and is reassured by her parent at the end of the day that indeed she was praying. (*Prayer*)

*Beatrice's Goat*, Page McBrier, Atheneum, 2001.

A young girl's dream of attending school in her Ugandan village comes true when her family is given an income producing goat. Based on a true story about the work of the Heifer Project. (*Sharing, kindness, Service to others*)

*Cups Held Out*, Judith L. Roth, Herald Press, Scottsdale, 2006.

A girl and her father drive from South Dakota to Mexico where they encounter poor children and beggars. They ponder their feelings of guilt and their responsibility to those who live in poverty. An excellent resource to begin a discussion on how responsible we are and what we can do to help.

*Even If I did Something Awful*, Barbara Shook Hazen, Aladdin Books, 1992.

Before revealing the awful thing she did, a child tries to get her mother's assurance of love, no matter what. (*Forgiveness, unconditional love*)

*Feathers and Fools*, Mem Fox, Harcourt Brace, 1996.

A modern fable about peacocks and swans that allow the fear of their differences to become so great they destroy each other, but out of the ruins two eggs hatch. A small peacock and a small swan look at each other with curiosity and trust and decide to become friends and face the world together. (*Peace*)

*Growing Strong Inside*, Jennie Davis, The Dandelion House, 1983.

This simple text suggests how a child can grow in sharing, caring, and polite ways that are pleasing to God. (*Sharing, caring, Bible teaching*)

*I'm Sorry*, Sam McBratney, Harper Collins, 2000.

Even best friends fight and when that happens, "I'm sorry" is the hardest thing to say. A sensitive picture book. (*Forgiveness*)

*It's Mine!*, Leo Lionni, Alfred A. Knopf, 1996. (Paperback)

Three frogs argue about everything until a crisis teaches them to work together. (*Cooperation, peace*)

*Let's Make a Garden*, Tamara Awad Lobe, Herald Press, 1995. (Paperback)

Creative illustrations bring alive this story of hope, sharing, and peace, as garden items from many countries are planted cooperatively by children from those countries. (*Sharing, peace, multicultural*).

*The Hating Book*, Charlotte Zolotow, Harper & Row, 1969.

A misunderstanding between two friends is resolved when they talk about it. (*Peace, emotions-hate, friendship*)

*The Honest-to-Goodness Truth*, Patricia C. McKissack, Atheneum, 2000.

Libby learns that even though it's always wrong to tell a lie, there's a right and wrong way to tell the truth. (*Honesty, kindness*)

*If Jesus came to my house*. Joan Gal Thomas, Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1951.

A little boy imagines what it would be like if the little boy, Jesus, came to spend the afternoon with him. The story in rhyme offers the Golden Rule in concepts easily grasped by small children and indirectly suggests some ways to carry them out. (*Bible Teaching*)

*Ivy's Icicle*, Gary & Jan Bower, Tyndale House, 2002.

Ivy is very upset when her brother accidentally breaks the doll Grandmother gave her for Christmas but she eventually learns how to forgive him. (*Forgiveness*)

*The Jacket*, Andrew Clements, Simon & Schuster Books, 2002.

An intriguing story about making judgments, racial bias, and the need for forgiveness. (*Forgiveness, racial bias*)

*Little Tom Meets Mr. Jonah*, Philip Dale Smith, Pat Day-Bivins, Golden Anchor Press, 2000.

A tale blending a Biblical character with a fictional cat. A charming tale of disobedience and second chances. (*Forgiveness*)

*The Giving Tree*, Shel Silverstein, Harper and Row, 1964.

The simple plot depicts the relationship a child has with a tree from childhood through adulthood. The tree loves the boy and gives him whatever he needs at the different stages of his life. This tale has become a classic over time. (*Sharing*)

*The Lord's Prayer*, Tim Ladwig, ill., Eerdmans, 2000.

A young girl and her father spend a day helping an elderly neighbor. The love and guidance the child experiences in her relationship with her dad reflect the heart and will of our Heavenly Father in ways children understand. (*Family relationships, parent and child, helping others, prayer*)

*The Parables of Jesus*, Tomie dePaola, Holiday, 1995.

Seventeen of the best-known parables are retold accurately and simply. Full page illustrations in warm colors. (*Bible teaching*)

*The Parable of the Vineyard*, Helen Caswell, Abingdon Press, 1991.

Simple text and vibrant illustrations help children understand this parable.

*The Quarreling Book*, Charlotte Zolotow, Harper & Row, 1963.

Story shows how quarreling is contagious. (*Peace*)

*The Quiltmaker's Gift*, Jeff Brumbeau, Scholastic, 2000.

A quilt maker agrees to make a quilt for the greedy king, but only if he will give away his treasures to make others happy. (*Sharing*)



*Stories told by Mother Teresa*, Edward LeJoly, Element, 1999.

Warm, inspiring stories illustrating that the smallest acts of kindness and sharing make the world a better place. (*Kindness, sharing*)

*Uncle Jed's Barber Shop*, Margaret King Mitchell, Simon and Shuster, 1993.

Against all odds, a black barber pursues his dream of opening his own shop even though he continually shares his money with those who are needier. (*Sharing, kindness*)

*Walking with Jesus*, Mary Clemens Meyer, Herald Press, 1992

A collection of stories about real people who returned good for evil. (*Peace, love*)

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