

Got Spirit?

Finding God in the Everyday!

Sunday School Suggestions

Sunday School Learning Center—create learning and exploring centers for Sunday School youth and their families. Here are some ideas

Cabin — use a large family style cabin tent, have a Bible study on *Got Spirit? Finding God in the Everyday*.

Lake — bring in a piece of blue carpet and a canoe, have someone demonstrate the proper way to enter a canoe, and show how to use the paddles.

Snacks — prepare the ingredients needed for s'mores. Layer graham crackers, chocolate bars, and marshmallows in s'mores fashion, heat them briefly in the microwave. Enjoy camp memories while eating yummy treats.

Craft Table — prepare a simple craft project.

- ◆ Create a Welcome sign — Encourage discussion about why it is important to make others feel welcome. Explain that many people put welcome mats in front of the doors to their homes or hang welcome signs by the doors.
- ◆ Make a Pinecone Birdfeeder — attach a fishing line or yarn to a large (open) pinecone. Spread out newspaper and have children cover pinecone with shortening or peanut butter. Then roll pinecone in birdseed. They can hang them around outside the church or take them home. Complete the activity by talking about how feeding the birds and other wildlife is a way to show welcome to God's creatures.
- ◆ Make Mobiles — Invite youth to collect two or three branches. Explain they will be using these for their "New Life" mobile. Bring branches to an area where all the supplies and materials are set up to create the mobiles. Demonstrate with several of the branches how balance is an important part of making a mobile hang correctly and rotate freely. Encourage them to be creative and cut out shapes of leaves, flowers, crosses, hearts, or other Christian symbols that express some of the ideas in the scripture about staying connected to the branch by abiding in Jesus through the life force of God. Branches can be wrapped in colorful yarn or pipe cleaners as well as hanging the shapes off the branches.
- ◆ Make Prayer Stoles — Introduce the idea of prayer stoles. Tell them that their history goes all the way back to Moses, and that wearing them is a way to be intentional about remembering our identify as servants of God as we worship. Explain that they will have a chance to make their own prayer stoles. Have each person make a prayer stole with his/her name on it. Have them decorate the stoles with images/words that are meaningful for them when they think of themselves at worship or at prayer. These can be as elaborate as time and materials allow. You may have them write affirmations on each other's prayer stoles, as an advanced or second activity with the stoles.
- ◆ Faux Batik — Read Luke 24: 13-35 and ask them to find one phrase or group of words that is particularly meaningful to them. Tell them they are going to use a form of batik to help them think about today's theme. Pass out paper and tell youth to use crayons to write the words they identified as meaningful on the paper so the letters look as if they are made out of vines, leaves, and branches. Encourage them to use bright, vibrant colors and press down on the crayons as they color. Have them crush the paper with their artwork up into a ball. Tell them to open the balls and repeat this process several times until the paper becomes soft. After several times, have them flatten out the paper and use black or blue watercolor paint to brush over the entire image. Allow the paint to dry. Watch the effects as the paint seeps into the cracks. Encourage them to take their batiks home and to hang them in their rooms.

Camp Games and Activities — if weather is favorable, move outside into a camp like setting and play games. Here are some suggestions.

- ◆ **Play Beachball Game** — Prior to the game, use a permanent marker to write discussion starters on a beach ball around camp or the camp theme *Got Spirit? Finding God in the Everyday*. Some suggestions might be: Name your favorite camp activity, Name your favorite camp food, Name something blue, Name a shape you see in the clouds. Name something tiny, Name your favorite movie, Cover the ball with as many statements as possible. Have the group stand in a circle and pass the beach ball quickly by tossing it back and forth. When you say, “Stop,” the person with the ball gives an answer to the statement under their left thumb. Continue tossing the ball until everyone has had a chance to respond. You can increase the excitement by tossing around two beach balls at once.
- ◆ **Play Amoeba Tag** — Select one person to represent Jesus (It) in a game of tag. Tell the rest of the group they are the lepers in the story, Luke 17:11–19 . They try to stay away from Jesus, since lepers were expected to keep their distance from other people. Although the lepers want to keep their distance and not be tagged, Jesus tries to tag them. Once “Jesus” tags a “leper,” that leper person will grab Jesus’ arm and join in tagging others. The game continues with more and more “lepers” joining the train of people connected to “Jesus.” When all have been tagged, invite them to talk about how Jesus showed God’s love by caring for and befriending those that others rejected. Ask: How might a person show gratitude for that experience of compassion?
- ◆ **Walk a Labyrinth** — Introduce the labyrinth as an ancient way to pray as they walk on a circle design. If there is no labyrinth at your church, make copies of the finger labyrinth found on page 3. Tell them that this is an activity done in silence. Invite them to pretend they are walking along the road with Jesus and that they can talk to him in prayer about anything they want. They can take the finger labyrinth home and use it to talk to Jesus any time they want. You can play music and invite them to let the music draw them into a place of prayer. Encourage them to quiet the rhythm of their breath and to notice its flow in and out. Invite youth, when they are ready, to place their finger at the beginning of the path and begin to trace it as slowly or as quickly as is natural. Explain that they can pause at any time, especially at turns in the path. Encourage them to rest their finger in the center of the labyrinth. As they are ready, invite them to use their finger to retrace the path back to the beginning. After they have moved through the labyrinth, they may find it helpful to continue their prayer time through drawing, sitting in stillness, or journaling for a while. You may also invite them to share with the group what they thought of during the activity.
- ◆ **Plant a Reminder** — Plan ahead of time a good place to plant some native flowers, bulbs, or a young tree. Purchase or seek donations of the seeds, plants, or trees that will be good for the property and ecology. Explain to youth that they have an opportunity to live out Christ’s love through ecological care by assisting in planting seeds, bulbs, or trees. Gather the needed tools and go to the place of planting. As they are digging soil, planting, and watering, discuss the care of God’s creation and how each of us can be good stewards of the earth in our own homes as part of showing Christ’s love for the earth there too.
- ◆ **Play “Hold On”** — Collect a variety of large and small objects that you might find around a camp, such as a kickball, rock, book, leaf, baseball bat, etc. Stand in a circle and give one item to each person. Tell them that when you say “Go,” they are to begin passing the items one at a time around the circle to the person standing to their left as quickly as they can. If a person drops an object, freeze the game as that person steps out, but the object stays in the rotation. Keep playing, eliminating players as objects are dropped, until only two or three players remain and try to keep passing all the items. Invite the group to think about all the tasks that need to be done to build up the community, whether it is the church, school, or world community. What happens when one of us “drops out” and doesn’t participate with the gifts we’ve been given to share?

Campfire — having Bible time around the campfire is always special at camp. Invite youth around a mock campfire and tell Bible stories and sing campfire songs.

◆ Finger Labyrinth

