

Working for Justice



Workshop: Art

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God's creation. To work for justice we imagine God's *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus' lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.

- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6:1–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Art is creative expression that allows for interpretation and contemplation. There is no right or wrong way to be artistic. The artist is free to create works that may expose feelings, express ideas, document an event, describe a person or thing, promote an idea, or simply project an image. In this workshop learners will use scripture and issues of justice to inform their unique artistic expressions. Mixed media, such as paint, pastels, crayons, pencils, food and unusual items, will be incorporated to encourage artistic endeavors in working for justice.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Romans 13:8–14;
Ephesians 2:11–22;
Amos 5:18–24,
Psalms 34:15–22;
Jeremiah 14:7–10,
19–22

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Who Is My Neighbor? (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14 and consider that all people are created in the image of God. Jesus imagined a world rooted in the love and justice of God for all creation. Reread verses 9–10: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” This activity encourages a fun examination of our neighbor’s unique characteristics as well as our differences. Learning about one another breaks down barriers and helps us to love one another for our unique qualities. Gather supplies and prepare the space.

Supplies:

- Bible
- 1 dinner-size paper plate per person
- markers
- skin tone crayons, if available
- space for learners to sit in a circle on the floor

Leader Preparation

Consider where and when art has influenced your life: through magazines, on television, in museums, public buildings, parks, your workplace, church, or home. Art has the power to create lasting impressions for good or ill. Working for justice challenges Christians to

Welcome learners and invite them to sit in a circle on the floor. Read Romans 13:9–10 and ask:

- What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?
- In what ways are people’s faces alike (noses, eyes, ears, and so on)?
- In what ways are they different (eye color, shape of face, color of hair, skin, and so on)?
- Who made us?
- We are all made in God’s image. Since we are both alike and different, what does that tell us about God?

use artistic expression to share God's righteousness with the world.

Prayer: *Holy God, our Creator, help me to see your amazing artistic beauty in everything around me. As I seek to guide these learners, open my eyes to new expressions of your love in our world. Amen.*

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from "Exploring and Engaging," at least one from "Discerning and Deciding," and at least one from "Sending and Serving." The first activity in each category is designed for "easy preparation" (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Pass out one paper plate and one marker per person. Ask them to put their name on the back of the plate. Talk about different face shapes: round, square, heart, oval. Have the learners draw a large shape of their face on the plate, filling the whole plate. Provide crayons so that the learners may shade the plate according to their skin tone. (Crayola makes multicultural skin-tone crayons.) Each plate will be his or her face. Have each participant pass the plate to the right.

Look at your neighbor on your right, and draw his or her nose on the plate you now hold. Now pass that plate to the right. Look again at the neighbor on your right; draw his or her hair on the plate you now hold. Continue this process, passing the plates, drawing your neighbor's feature on each new plate they hold until you have covered eyes, ears, mouth, nose, eyebrows, hair, eye lashes. In the end, return each plate to its rightful owner.

There should be laughter and amusement. Discuss how differences and likenesses make all people uniquely beautiful. We are all wonderful in God's eyes. Remind them that we should love one another as God loves us, no matter what we look like.

2 Bounty of Earth Bean Mosaic

Leader preparation: Using an Internet search engine or other resource, familiarize yourself with mosaic art. Reflect on Micah 6:8. Consider what symbols might be used to show the acts of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God. Consider symbols that represent Christianity. Learners will be creating Christian symbol mosaics using beans. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bible
- glue, paintbrushes, 10" squares of cardboard or other rigid backing (one per person)
- variety of dried beans of different colors and sizes: kidney, navy, pea, lentil, lima, pinto, and so forth
- pencils
- spray varnish or polyurethane
- newspaper or other table covering

Invite learners to sit at a table carefully covered with newspaper. Distribute the paper squares. Read aloud Micah 6:8. Ask: *What some symbols or word pictures do you "see" in the scripture passage. What might we draw to describe this scripture (heart, hands, footprints, "Micah 6:8")? What other symbols help us think of Jesus (cross, rainbow, butterfly)?* Invite them to draw a simple design of one of these symbols/images in the center of the cardboard sheet. This will be the focal point of their mosaic.

Explain that mosaics are ancient art forms that have been around since Jesus' time. If you have time and your church has stained glass, you might go look at that; or if you have pictures of mosaics from the Internet, you could show them. Mosaics are usually bits of tile, glass, pottery, or other materials arranged in designs and set in plaster, glue, or cement to create an image on a wall, floor, or ceiling. Mosaics can be made from other materials. Our mosaics will be made of dried beans to remind us that God provides food for all people. Beans are a universal source of nourishment throughout the world.

If they are old enough, the participants can use a paintbrush to spread the glue



inside the design on the cardboard. (If they are not, you will have to help.) Next, have them choose beans to press into the glue. Repeat the process of drawing a design and gluing on beans. Provide direction encouraging participants to fill in the entire space. Have an adult spray the mosaics with varnish and let them dry.

3 Completing the Picture

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8 and think about ways that one might “do justice, love kindness, or walk humbly with God.” Look through magazines, and cut out full page color or black and white pictures that suggest either an act of justice or a place where justice is needed. To prepare for the session, cut most of these pictures in half, reserving one or two complete pictures.

Prayer: Dear God, may these pictures bring new understanding of your loving, caring presence in our lives. May these pictures inspire us to work for justice. Amen.

Supplies:

- 8" × 11" pieces of tag board
- glue
- crayons or colored pencils
- several magazine pictures cut in half and 1 or 2 complete (uncut) pictures

As the participants gather, invite them to sit at the table. Explain that magazine pictures can tell a story about an event. Invite them to look in magazine pictures for examples of justice work or places where justice is needed. Share a complete picture. *What do you see? Who is in the picture? What are they doing? How is justice happening?* Repeat this process with the second picture.

Invite participants to choose a “half” picture. Pass out tag board, glue, and crayons. Instruct them to glue the half picture to one side of the tag board leaving room for the other half of the picture. Their task is to complete the picture, drawing in the missing parts. As they draw, invite them to think about how God’s justice is being revealed in the picture. When the drawing is complete, invite participants to show their pictures and share how they perceive justice is being represented.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Crayon Relief (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 and reflect on the passage using the questions below. God created a world full of bounty and opportunity for all. People often abuse, neglect, or take advantage of God’s gifts. Metaphorically, we might say, God gives beautiful colors and we paint over them with dark hiding colors. Joni Mitchell sang “paved paradise and put in a parking lot.” Beneath the darkness and shadows of life, there is always new opportunity because God loves us and desires good for all. When we smile, a frown turns upside down; when we treat others with kindness, it comes back to us; when we clean up the trash in a vacant lot, new plants can grow. Over and over God gives new opportunities to follow the path to righteousness and justice. In this activity, learners may discover how God’s love comes shining through even in the darkest of times, just like bright colors show through a darkened canvas. Having the foundation of God’s love gives us courage to work for justice even in the darkest days.

**Supplies:**

- Bibles for all learners
- white drawing paper
- variety of bright crayon colors; at least one black crayon per person
- large paper clips

Read Amos 5:18–24 together. *What is going on in this passage? Why is God mad? Have one person reread verse 24. What is the difference between this verse and the rest of the passage? Reflect on the final verse. What does it mean to let justice flow down like water and peace like an ever-flowing stream? What words come to mind when you think about justice? What are some symbols that might represent these words?*

Pass out paper and brightly colored crayons. Ask learners to cover the paper randomly with different bright colors; encourage them to press hard and not leave any paper showing through. The bright colors represent God’s love for us. Pass out black crayons. Tell learners to color over the bright colors with black, again pressing hard and covering every space so that the entire page now becomes dark. The black represents times when we do things that make God sad. Pass out paper clips. Have learners open the clip so that one end becomes an etching tool. Instruct them to etch a symbol or picture and explain their symbols. The etching in the black will let the bright color underneath show through. As the colors are revealed, remind them that this is like God’s love for us: Even in the darkest, saddest times, God’s love can shine through just like these hidden colors. Have learners share their pictures and talk about what their creations are and mean.

5 Listen to the Wind Collage

Leader preparation: Locate a copy of the book *Listen to the Wind: The Story of Dr. Greg & Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and Susan L. Rogh. It is available in most libraries, book stores, and online booksellers. Read the story until you are comfortable enough to read it or tell it orally. Read the “Korphe Scrapbook” and “Artist’s Note” at the end of the book. Go back through the story once again this time focusing on the collage illustrations created by the artist. In this activity, children learn how one person can make a difference for many people while working for justice. Learners will create art collages from scraps of material readily available at the church.

Supplies:

- book: *Listen to the Wind: the Story of Dr. Greg & Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and Susan L. Roth (Dial Books, 2009)
- various scraps of paper, fabric, yarn, string, and so on from around the church (check recycle bins)
- glue, scissors

Welcome learners and invite them to sit around a table where they can listen to the story and create collages. Read the story aloud. Invite listeners to take careful note of the pictures as well as the story. Discuss: *How did Dr. Greg come to Korphe, Pakistan? What happened there that changed his life? What challenges did he face in building schools there? What is your favorite part of the story? How would you illustrate your favorite part?* Explain that all the pictures in the book were made of scraps of materials that the artist found. Before Dr. Greg and the new school, the children of Korphe had to use whatever materials they could for their books, artwork, and learning activities. Susan Roth, the illustrator, honored the children by making her pictures out of various materials she could find and recycle. This beautiful art form is called collage.

Direct learners to be seated around the table. Using glue and scraps of material, have each participant create his or her own collage to explain a favorite part of the



story. Close the session with each child sharing his or her creation and sharing why this part of the story was meaningful.

6 Experiencing “Kopf”

Leader preparation: Read Ephesians 2:11–22. What does this passage say to you? This is a difficult scripture for children. Highlight passages that teach about Christ’s love. For example, in verses 2:14, 2:17–22, we read that In Christ we are made whole and holy. Through Christ we draw close to God. God’s love is for all of us—for all humanity. In our sorrow and in our joy, God is with us in Christ. In German, the word *kopf* means “head.” Christ is the head of the church. We all have a head that helps to define who we are as individuals. In this activity, learners will view “Kopf” by Joan Miro and then draw or paint a picture of themselves. Contemplate the painting. Read about the author online (optional).

Supplies:

- copies of verses to share with learners
- artwork: “Kopf” by Joan Miro, <http://tinyurl.com/FPArt18>
- art paper for each participant
- tempera paints and brushes or pastels
- clothesline and clothespins

Welcome learners and invite them to sit where they can all view the artwork. Read selected verses from Ephesians 2:11–22 and discuss Christ’s love for us. Tell them that God loves us in the good times and bad times. God loves us when we are happy and when we are sad. We can always be honest with God. Sometimes Jesus was sad, and other times he was happy. View the artwork together. Explaining that the painting is called “Kopf.” Tell them that *kopf* is a German word meaning “head.” We don’t know whose head this is in the poster. We call Jesus the head of the church; maybe this is Jesus, or maybe it is someone else. All people have heads. Ask: *How does the poster make you feel? What do you see in this picture? Is it happy or sad? Why? How many colors do you see in this picture? How do the colors influence how you feel? How are you feeling right now? What expressions can we make with our faces?* Practice making a few together. *What do facial expressions tell us?* Tell them that when we work for justice, we are sometimes happy, sad, angry, or disappointed. God works through us in all our different emotions.

Pass out art supplies. Tell learners to choose just five colors to use to paint a picture of a face that describes how they are feeling today. There is no right and no wrong choice of color or facial expression. Invite learners to hang finished pictures on the clothesline in the “Gallery of Kopfs.”



Sending & Serving Activities



7 Color a Prayer (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14 and consider Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself. Prayer is one way Christians practice neighborly love. Christians are called to pray without ceasing. In this activity, children use color to draw prayers for someone or something they are concerned about. You could use the church prayer list as a resource. Praying for others, praying for inequities, and praying for our enemies are ways to work for justice. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bibles for all learners
- drawing paper and crayons
- (optional) prayer chain list
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- (optional) CD or iPod with quiet classical music

Invite learners to sit at tables. Read Romans 13:8–14 together and talk about what the passage means. *What does Jesus ask? How do we love our neighbor?* Tell learners another way we show our love for neighbors is by praying for them. *Who are our neighbors?* List their suggestions on newsprint or a whiteboard. Be sure to include others they might not know: children around the world, victims of hurricanes or natural calamities, animals facing crisis, such as polar bears, victims of war, soldiers, health care officials, those in prison, those considered enemies, and so on. Tell children to pick one person, animal, or group of people to pray for.

Pass out paper and crayons. Instruct learners to write the names of those for whom they plan to pray in the center of the paper. Using different colors, fill the page with images, symbols, and pictures, connecting each idea to the next. Tell them to use pictures, not words, letting one image lead to a next. Encourage them to work silently as this is a time of prayer. If possible, play quiet music while the children draw their prayers. Give them 7–10 minutes. Hang completed prayers in a hallway or fellowship hall for public view. Encourage learners to teach family members how to pray in color at home.

8 The Prayer Tree

Leader preparation: Read the scripture passages below. Contemplate the questions. The prophets tell us that God is watching us and listening to us. They also tell us that God is speaking to us and wants us to pay attention. Prayer is a way to show our devotion to God and to work for justice. In this activity, learners will create a prayer tree to which people may tie prayers for justice. The prayer tree is a visible sign of the invisible trust we place in God as we pray.

Supplies:

- a tree, preferably on the church grounds where children can tie prayer ribbons on the branches
- (optional) bare tree branch anchored in a bucket of sand or cement in a prominent location
- 1" × 12" pieces of rainbow colored fabrics (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet)
- permanent markers in various colors



- basket for extra ribbons to be added by congregational members and the public
- poster board for instruction sheet to be made by the learners
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Welcome children to the “Prayer Tree Workshop for Justice.” Read each of these passages. Ask learners to listen for the common message.

- Micah 1:1—“Hear what the Lord says: ‘Rise, plead your case before the mountains, let the hills hear your voice.’”
- Psalm 34:15—“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.”
- Psalm 34:17—“When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.”

Ask: *What did you hear about God?* Prayer is something like a phone call to God. God listens to our voices and our hearts. God hears spoken and unspoken prayers. *What are other ways we pray?* Tell learners that today they are going to share their prayers for justice with others. Think about things going on in the world. *What are some things you would like to pray for today?* List these on newsprint or the whiteboard. Direct learners to choose one or more pieces of cloth. On each piece they write a prayer using a permanent marker. Together go to the prayer tree, and tie prayers on the branches. Return to the activity room. Ask learners to help you make a poster of instructions so that others may add to the prayer tree.

Suggested instructions:

Offer prayers for justice to God. God listens and desires our prayers. Come! Add your prayer to this tree. May our prayers inspire others to pray and work for justice. Write your prayer on a piece of fabric, and tie it on the Tree of Prayer. Thank you! Thank God!

Ask for volunteers to make an announcement about the prayer tree during worship. Make the prayer tree available for a few weeks.

9 Marching for Justice

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8 and focus on verse 8. God desires that we seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. In this activity learners create posters and banners to walk for justice around the church and/or neighborhood. God desires our witness in the world. God requires action in working for justice. Think about current events in the world. Where do you see the need for the kind of justice God desires? Arrange for a march in the church with the pastor or worship leader. Take the march outside and share your witness with the neighborhood. Invite other adults to serve as chaperones, if necessary.

Supplies:

- Bible
- poster board, markers
- additional chaperones, if necessary
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Welcome the learners to the Marching for Justice Workshop. Read Micah 6:1–8 together, emphasizing verse 8. Ask: *What does God require of us?* We cannot simply do nothing; we must act for God. *Where are some examples of injustice in our world today? In our town?* List these examples on the newsprint or whiteboard. Keep



brainstorming until you have a long list. Encourage learners to pick one or two examples of injustice that they would like to illustrate and witness about. Pass out poster boards and markers. Guide learners as they make their posters for justice. When everyone is ready, take your posters on parade chanting over and over again, “Seek justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.”

Reflect

Reflect on the art activities you and the children shared. What colors come to mind? How has their creativity inspired you? How does their art reflect their desire to work for justice? Ask God to bless these learners that they might continue to use their creative abilities in sharing Christ’s message of righteousness and justice with the world.

Working for Justice



Workshop: Computer

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About this Workshop

Technology gives Christians a way to interact with others learning about God's continuing presence in our world. This workshop invites learners to a deeper relationship with God as they use the computer to study, research, visit new places, and interact with others working for justice throughout the world. Computers are a necessary part of communication system for our children. This workshop encourages computer use as a method of Christian interaction that is holy and pleasing to God. Computers are outstanding tools in working for justice.

FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES

Amos 5:18–24;

Luke 4:14–21;

**Proverbs 22:1–2,
8–9, 22–23;**

Isaiah 1:1, 10–18;

**Jeremiah 14:7–10,
19–22;**

**John 10:11–18; Psalm
34:15–22;**

Ephesians 2:11–22

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Children of the World (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read and reflect on Micah 6:1–8, focusing on verse 8. God requires us to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Learning about God's people around the world helps us to understand the complexities involved when working for justice. Peruse the "Build a Better World Children's Curriculum" from Church World Service. Meet Imani the Giraffe in the story called "Journey to Ghana." Be prepared to guide children through the site to the story.

Supplies:

- computers with Internet access
- Church World Service "Build a Better World Children's Curriculum," http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=resource_betterworld
- pencils, paper
- (optional) print copies of the Worksheet Activity at the end of the story (at the bottom of page on the website)

Leader Preparation

Sit at your computer. Place your hands gently on the keyboard. Imagine the hands of countless others using their computers right now throughout the world. Consider the amazing gift the

Ask: Who created all the people in the world? Do all God's people live in name of your state? Today our computers will help us meet some of God's children who live around the world far away from us. What animal is the tallest in the world? Tell participants that they are going to visit Ghana, where a giraffe named Imani will be the guide. Let's go!

Internet provides in working for justice as it connects us with people far and near. All the activities in this computer rotation require access to computers with Internet connection.

Prayer: Holy God of infinite ministry and the World Wide Web, guide me as I seek to help these learners discover new and evolving ways to work for justice using this incredible technology. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Direct the children to the Church World Service website, and read together the “Journey to Ghana.” End the session with time for writing the prayer to take home for their family to share before their next meal.

2 All God’s Creatures

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 and imagine a world where justice reigns and where every person and every animal have just what they need to survive and thrive. Working for justice encompasses the entire world and all its inhabitants. Today children will consider how birds and animals are impacted by human intervention. Peruse the Audubon website and become familiar with the activities presented. Be sure to visit the live webcam presentation; the hummingbird video is excellent.

Prayer: Holy God of all life, bless our time together today that we may learn just ways to live within and care for your blessed creation. Thank you. Amen.

Supplies:

- Bible
- computers with Internet access
- website: Audubon, <http://www.audubon.org/education> (click on the “Education” tab and then click “Just for Kids” in the education section)
- (optional) printer and paper to print worksheets

Invite participants to sit at the computers. Read Amos 5:24. Open with discussion about what a just world looks like, helping them to understand that God wants everyone and everything to be healthy and well. Then ask: *Who and what lives on planet earth? What things do we all need in order to live here? What happens to animals when they drink water from a polluted river?* Working for justice means helping to create safe spaces for all of God’s creatures. Invite the children to use the computers to learn about some birds that share the planet with us. Direct the children to the Audubon website and, click on the activities you have chosen to do together.

3 Cascades of Justice

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 and contemplate verse 24. Imagine justice rolling down like a stream cascading through rocks; imagine righteousness flowing as a river that never goes dry. Amos uses this metaphor to symbolize God’s never-ending love and all-encompassing righteousness. This scripture challenges God’s people not only to visualize, but also to actively work toward creating a just and right world. Today learners will use the computer to complete an online puzzle of a waterfall. Prepare for discussion using the following questions. Navigate the website to become familiar with the puzzle activity.

Supplies:

- Bible
- computers with Internet access
- “JigZone,” www.jigzone.com/puzzles/03055D550362

Invite learners to sit at the computers. Tell them that you are going to read Amos 5:24. Explain that in this story, people are trying to please God by bringing gifts even as they continue to treat one another badly. God is angry. God wants them to treat one another fairly. Finally God says that instead of their bad behavior, they are to let justice flow like a stream and righteousness like a river that never goes dry. Ask learners to visualize pictures to go along with the verse. *What does a flowing stream look like? How is God’s love like a river that never goes dry?* God wants people to love one another as God loves us.



Direct the learners to the website and invite them to use the computer to complete a jigsaw puzzle of flowing water." Direct them to the puzzle on the website "Jig-Zone." As they work the puzzle, invite them to think about the Bible verse and how God's love is like a waterfall that never ends.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Online Labyrinth (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Go to the "Labyrinth" website, <http://www.gracecathedral.org/visit/labyrinth/>. Spend time in meditation there. Become familiar with the site so that you can be of assistance to the learners in your group if necessary.

Supplies:

- computers with Internet access
- (optional) headphones or ear buds for each child

Discuss with the children times when they have had difficulty praying. Ask them to think about times when other thoughts may have intruded on their prayers. Tell the children about labyrinths. Explain that labyrinths are one way of centering our thoughts. They are winding paths that are designed to take a walker to the center and back out again, without the dead ends or side paths found in mazes.

Guide the children to the "Labyrinth" website. Tell them that this labyrinth design is a replica from the floor of the Chartres Cathedral in France and was created there around 1200 C.E. Instruct the children how to set up their labyrinth using the following directions.

- Click on ICONS on the left of the labyrinth and choose an icon (bird, dot, hand) to use during your walk.
- Click on TEXT and then "On." Read aloud the explanation about labyrinths.
- If headphones or ear buds are available, click on MUSIC and select HI-FI or LOW-FI based on computer capabilities.
- Click on INERITA and select LITTLE for more control over guiding your icon through the labyrinth or MUCH for more free movement of the icon.

When everyone has set their preferences, guide the children in the following short centering exercise.

- Take a deep breath in. Think to yourself, "How am I going to use this labyrinth walk? Will it be a time to experience a new form of prayer? Will I pray for someone or something specific?"
- Take another deep breath and begin your labyrinth walk.

When everyone has gone to the center and returned to the beginning of the labyrinth, discuss the experience using the following questions.

- What feelings did you have while walking the labyrinth?
- How did your body react to the walk?



- Did your breathing slow down or speed up?
- Did you feel your muscles relax or tighten? Why do you think that was?
- How would you feel about using a labyrinth as a prayer tool again? Why?



5 Prophets in Our Time

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8 and focus on verse 8. What does it mean to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God? There are many prophets in the Bible. God sent prophets to teach people God’s ways. Sometimes the prophets boldly speak out against the rulers of the day to challenging unjust laws and social structures. In this activity learners will choose a modern-day prophet to research and report upon.

Using the “Modern-day Justice People” worksheet, write names of modern-day prophets on slips of paper, and place the slips in a basket.

Supplies:

- Micah 6:8
- “Modern-day Justice People” Attachment: Activity 5
- basket with names of modern-day prophets on slips of paper
- computers with Internet access

Welcome learners and invite them to sit at a computer. Read Micah 6:8 and discuss what it means to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Tell them the Bible is filled with prophets. Prophets are people whom God sends to do God’s work in the world. We, too, can choose to work for God and be a modern-day prophet. There are many people who work to make the world a better place. Invite the children to use the computer to research a modern-day prophet. Invite each learner to draw a name from the basket. Direct them to an Internet search of that person, and then ask each to prepare a short report to share with the group.

6 Building Generosity

Leader preparation: Read Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23, and focus on verse 9. God wants us to be generous and desires that we share what we have with one another. Everyone has an opportunity to share regardless of where we live or how we live. We share in different ways. For example, we can share material goods, ideas, skills, and faith. In this activity learners will visit the Habitat for Humanity website for youth to learn how Habitat works with people around the world sharing resources, materials, and ideas to build safe housing. Peruse the website, focusing on the age-specific activities for your group.

Supplies:

- Bible
- computers with Internet access
- website: “Habitat for Humanity,” <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/default.aspx>

Welcome learners. Invite them to sit at a computer. Read the passages from Proverbs. Ask: *What does God want from us?* Reread verse 9. *What do generous people do?* Tell them that sharing bread is only one way to share. *What are other ways of sharing?* Explain that Habitat for Humanity is an organization that helps people rebuild lives by helping them build houses. Direct learners to the Habitat website and their respective age-specific area. Learners can explore the site and take part in a variety of activities including games and videos. They can even visit with similar-aged children around the world.



Close with a brief sharing time: *What new things did you learn today? How did you see God at work in the activities? Where did you see generosity enacted?* Thank the learners for the time spent together.

Sending & Serving Activities

7 Justice Word Search (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–21. Consider the words carefully. Make a list of the words and phrases that speak particularly to you. Go to <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com> and use your list of words and phrases to practice creating a word search. In this activity learners will make and complete word searches based on Luke 4:14–21.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- paper, pencils
- computer with Internet access and a printer
- Word Search engine: <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com>

Welcome children. Invite them to be seated at a computer. Pass out Bibles, paper, and pencils. Direct learners to read Luke 4:14–21 slowly and to pay close attention to the words and phrases. Invite them to read the scripture a second time and to write down at least twenty words that have meaning for them. Direct them to the puzzle maker website to create a word search. Print the word searches. Have learners exchange puzzles with a neighbor and complete.

8 Works of Justice Power Point

Leader preparation: This activity summarizes the messages of working for justice in the scripture passages. Become familiar with the scripture selections as presented in the attachment. Learners will take pictures of justice scenes and activities to create a power point presentation to share with the congregation. This activity may deepen the learners' appreciation and understanding of the biblical mandate from God to work for justice. If you are going outside or leaving church grounds to take pictures, you may want to ask another adult to help chaperone. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- "Works of Justice," Attachment: Activity 8
- digital cameras and/or cell phones for picture taking
- computers for learners working in pairs
- PowerPoint software
- projector for congregational viewing
- (optional) CD burner

Welcome learners to the Working for Justice computer lab. Invite them to create a special PowerPoint program to be used in worship or at a gathering of the congregation. Distribute copies of the handout. Review the scripture selections together. Explain that the purpose of making the PowerPoint presentation is to show how God's justice is either being denied or is unfolding in our world today. Brainstorm about pictures they might find to represent each passage. Decide who will take pictures for respective passages. Practice using the cameras or cell phones to take a few pictures. Be sure that all learn how to save them. After all the photographs

have been saved, have the group go on the picture file and choose which pictures will illustrate which works of justice.

Download the scripture references and pictures into a PowerPoint presentation. Add music if desired. Establish a time and place to share the presentation with the congregation.

9 Stand Up! Take Action! Make Noise!

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–21. Jesus stood up in the synagogue to read this compelling scripture. Working for justice requires God’s people to follow in Jesus’ steps to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, to open the eyes of the blind, and to set the oppressed free (Luke 4:14–21). Consider how God must feel when we fail to act in support of defenseless people and animals. World hunger is an increasing crisis. People die every day from lack of food. God expects better of us. God doesn’t only want our praise, God wants our action. The World Hunger Education Advocacy and Training (WHEAT) organization strives to build awareness of the hunger crisis. Learners will watch the video and then create a plan to stand up, take action, and make noise in church and community as advocates for an end to poverty.

Supplies:

- Bible
- computer with Internet access
- website: “WHEAT,” <http://www.hungerhurts.org/Default.asp>
- poster board and markers
- paper and pens

Read aloud Luke 4:14–21 to the participants; if necessary, re-read verses 14–19. Ask participants to recall what Jesus said he must do. *Where did Jesus read this scroll? Why did he choose that place? How does worship help us to do God’s work?* Direct learners to the website on hunger, and ask them to watch the video “Stand Up/Make Noise/Take Action,” paying careful attention to the statistics identified there.

After the video, encourage suggestions for taking action in the church. Pass out poster board and markers. With Jesus as their model and the video to guide them, invite learners to prepare a short presentation on hunger for the congregation. Write a petition to congressional representatives demanding an end to poverty now. Invite the congregation literally to stand up during the presentation and have a table where people may sign the petitions to end poverty and world hunger.

Reflect

Remember the time you have spent with learners in this workshop. How was God revealed as you worked together in the quest of justice? Think about specific activities. How did the children respond? What were the most precious moments for you? What were the most challenging? Thank God for this experience and for the opportunity to serve.

Attachment: Activity 5

Modern-day Justice People

Bono	Julia Butterfly Hill
Dorothy Day	Dorothea Dix
Ruby Bridges	Lemuel Haynes
Bill Wilson (AA)	Geoffrey Black
Osar Romero	Greg Mortenson
Ebo Patel	Father Damien
Bishop Gene Robinson	Bill and Judith Moyers
Jimmy Carter	Margarethe Cammermeyer
Roslyn Carter	Mattie J. T. Stepanek
Ruth Ellis	Mel White
Ella Josephine Baker	Bernie Whitebear
Harvey Milk	Bayard Rustin
Desmond Tutu	Troy Perry
Cezar Chavez	Nelson Mandela
Bernice Reagon Johnson	Phyllis Wheatley
Al Gore	Dorothea Dix
Millard and Linda Fuller	Martin Luther King, Jr.
Phillis Wheatley	Dr. Paul Farmer

Attachment: Activity 8

Works of Justice
PowerPoint Presentation

Working for justice is a mandate from God. Throughout this Workshop Rotation, scriptures are used to emphasize God's directive. Take 4-5 photographs to represent each scripture passage. Then download the photos into a PowerPoint presentation to share with the congregation. Place verses of scripture with each respective group of pictures. Music may also be added to enhance the presentation.

Follow these steps for each scripture passage chosen.

1. Read the scriptures as a group.
2. Discuss the meaning of each scripture to decide what illustrations might work.
3. Divide into pairs or small groups of three or four. Walk throughout the building, grounds or neighborhood to gather pictures.

Micah 6:1-8

- "Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills Hear your voice." What is an example of someone pleading God's case to the world?
- "God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice." What does it mean to do justice? Where can we find examples in the church or neighborhood?
- "God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to love kindness?" What examples of loving kindness can you photograph?
- "God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to walk humbly?" What does it mean to be humble? What examples of can you photograph?

Amos 5:18-24

- "But let justice roll down like waters." Examples of water to photograph?
- "And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Other examples of water flowing?

Isaiah 1:1, 10-18

- "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean." Examples of people washing?
- "Remove evil from your doings before my eyes, cease to do evil." Pictures of see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil?
- "Learn to do good; seek justice, recue the oppressed." Examples of someone doing good? Someone being rescued?
- "Defend the orphan, plead for the widow." Photos of someone helping an orphan or widow?

Luke 4:14-21

- "Jesus stood up to read from the book of the Prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found where it is written. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Ideas for this? Pulpit Bible?
- "To preach good news to the poor." Someone preaching?
- "To proclaim release to the captives." Who might be captive? How to illustrate them?
- "Restore sight to the blind." Might be to remove blindfold from someone's eyes or picture of a Leader Dog?
- "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." What year is it? How to illustrate this?

Attachment: Activity 8 (continued)

Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22

- “Truly God’s people have loved to wander they have not restrained their feet.” Examples of wandering and restrained feet?
- “Can idols of the nations bring rain or can the heavens give showers?” Pictures or symbols representing rain. Umbrellas opened and closed?
- “We set our hope in God.” Photos of a person communicating with God?

John 10:11-18

- “Jesus said, ‘I am the door; if any one enters by me, they will be saved, and will go in and out and find pleasure.’” Examples of Jesus, doors, going in and out?
- “I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and they know me. I lay down my life for the sheep.” What words can be illustrated here?
- “There shall be one flock, one shepherd.” Examples of other kinds of flocks and shepherds?

Psalms 34:15-22

- “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, God’s ears are open to their cry.” Words to highlight and illustrate?
- “When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and rescues them.” Words to highlight and illustrate?
- “God keeps all their bones, none of them will be broken.” How to illustrate?
- “God redeems the life of his servants none of those who take refuge in God will be condemned.” What does it mean to redeem? To take refuge? How to illustrate?

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

- “A good name is to be chosen rather than riches, favor is better than silver or gold.” Examples for pictures?
- “The rich and poor have this in common; the Lord is the maker of them all.” How to show rich and poor equal?
- “Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.” How to illustrate generosity? Sharing bread?

Ephesians 2: 11-22

- “Christ is our peace who has made us both one and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility.” Words to highlight? Dividing wall, Christ, made us both one?
- “Jesus preached to you who were far off and to those who were near; for through him we both have access to one Spirit in God.” How to illustrate far off and near. Access to God?
- “You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” How to illustrate strangers, sojourners, citizens and saints in house of God?

Romans 13: 8-14

- “Owe no one anything, except to love one another.” How to illustrate debt? Loving one another?
- “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Ways to illustrate?
- “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Another way to illustrate?

Working for Justice



Workshop: Drama

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, one another, and all of God's creation. To work for justice we imagine God's *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus' lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, that is, the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.

- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 1:6–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

People learn through experiences. This workshop enables participants to imagine ways they can make a difference in the world as they work for justice. Role play, dramatic interpretation, script writing, play acting, and puppetry are some experiential methods used in this workshop.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORY:

John 10:11–18;

Luke 4:14–21;

Isaiah 1:1, 10–18;

***Jeremiah 14:7–10,
19–22;***

Amos 5:18–24;

Psalms 34:15–22

Leader Preparation

Working for justice requires courage and commitment. Helping learners become justice workers requires prayer and creative planning. In these activities, you will help children learn how God desires just actions from all people—and what they can do to partner with God to bring about God's peace.

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Follow the Leader to Justice (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: If you have time, look up various definitions of *justice*; if you don't have the time, consider writing your own definition after reading Micah 6:1–8. Think about times you have received justice. Think of a time you have been denied justice. God desires righteousness and justice for all people. As Christians, God calls us to work as a community for justice. In this activity, you will guide learners in a simple game of follow the leader to reinforce ways that groups of people work together for justice.

Supplies:

- Bible
- open space large enough for group to move freely and safely
- ideas for motions: marching, washing, crying, singing, comforting, hugging, writing, raising fist, carrying, planting, stopping motion with hand, climbing, hammering
- ideas for chants: "Clean air now!" "No justice, no peace." "Stop the war!"

Read aloud Micah 6:8. Ask the learners what these words mean to them. Explain that God wants all of us to work to provide basic freedoms and necessary things for all people such as food, water, clean air, and a safe place to live. Invite the children to play a game of follow the leader, using motions that might be used in working for justice. After playing for awhile, stop and discuss what the motions, chants, actions might mean. Hammering, for example, could mean building houses. Writing could be about sending editorials to newspapers and letters to congressional leaders. Start again, but this time invite learners to take turns as leaders. Discuss actions as before. Encourage learners to share the game with their family and friends,

Prayer: *Holy God, help me to guide these learners that they may comprehend that while working for justice is sometimes uncomfortable for us, it is one thing that God requires of us; it is something we must do. Amen.*

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

2 Grab Bag Drama

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–24 and John 10:11–18. Become familiar with the stories. Think about how these stories might be performed in a dramatic presentation. Consider how each story informs the reader about justice. Gather supplies and prepare a space for learners to work in separate groups.

Supplies (per group):

- 1 paper grocery bag filled with:
 - 2 empty paper-towel or toilet-paper rolls
 - roll of masking tape
 - section of newspaper
 - roll of crepe paper
 - 3 feathers
 - plastic garbage bag
- Bible (*Today’s English Version* or *The Message*)

Divide learners into groups of four to six, and assign one of the scriptures (Luke 4:14–24 or John 10:11–18) to each group. Direct each group to read their assigned scripture. Explain that they will use the props in the bag to prepare a short skit to act out the scripture. They may use everything in the bag, including the bag, to create the needed props or costumes. Each person must have at least one speaking part. Allow 15 minutes preparation time. Then invite each group to perform its skit.

3 Paper Plate Prophets

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–21 and ponder the discussion questions below. Read Micah 6:1–8. The prophetic call of Micah 6:8—to love justice seek kindness and walk humbly with God—resonates throughout Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and other prophets. Prophets were messengers chosen by God, speaking as God’s voice against injustice, oppression, and exclusion. Prophets were sent to remind those in power that God desires righteousness and justice for all, especially for the poor and outcast. Jesus stood in his home synagogue and read from the scroll of Isaiah staking his claim as God’s chosen messenger and messiah. Just like parents get angry when children do wrong, God sometimes gets angry, too, though God always loves us and desires good for us. The prophets speak words of anger to bring people back into a right relationship with God. Since the learners will make prophet puppets to speak God’s truth, you need to make some advance preparation: Make copies of the scripture passages, gather supplies, and glue the paper plates to tongue depressors ahead of time so that they are dry.

Option: Younger children make Jesus puppets. You will read the scripture and learners can repeat words for the puppet show.

Supplies:

- *The Message* by Eugene Peterson, with copies of Luke 4:14–21, Jeremiah 14:7–10, 19–22; Isaiah 1:1–20; Amos 5:18–24; Micah 6:1–8 for learners
- small snack-sized paper plates each glued to one tongue depressor
- gray, brown, and black yarns
- markers
- fabric scraps and paper scraps
- staplers and staples

Read Luke 4:14–21 together. Ask: *Why did Jesus go to the temple? What is Jesus called to do? Why did Jesus speak in the synagogue?* Explain to the learners that God sent many other prophets before Jesus and that both men and women were prophets.



Today there are certain prophets we will hear from: Micah, Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Jesus. We don't know what they looked like, but they were real people with different skin, eye, and hair colors. Prophets were old and young, rich and poor.

Invite each participant to choose a prophet to create. Hand out respective copies of scripture references. Instruct learners to create a paper plate puppet of their chosen prophet. They can use yarn for hair and beards and markers for skin color, eyes, nose and mouth. Encourage different facial expressions. Fabric scraps may be added for clothing or as head pieces. Be creative and be sure to allow some to be women prophets. Invite the learners to use their puppets for emphasis as they read scriptures to the entire group.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

4 Putting on Faces of God (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Think about what the commandments stated, and focus on Jesus' words to "love your neighbor as yourself." Every person is created in the image of God. God loves all people—our neighbors and us. God gives expressions as ways of communicating. In this activity learners practice making facial expressions and body postures that exhibit specific emotions. Understanding one another's emotional state and well-being is an integral part of working for justice. When we understand our neighbors and empathize with them, we can work together to bring God's justice on earth. Read the following explanation for learners to prepare for the activity.

Supplies:

- Bible
- (optional) 1 piece of drawing paper per learner
- (optional) crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Invite the learners to be seated. Read aloud Romans 13:9b, Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. Ask: *Who does God love? Does God love us or our neighbors more? How do we show people we love them?* Drama is one way people express themselves creatively to one another. Drama is a way to share an emotion or feeling. Sometimes drama is acted out by people wearing costumes in a play or movie. Other times drama is expressed through the use of masks. *By looking at a person's faces, how can you tell if that person is happy?* Have the children demonstrate a happy face or posture. *How can you tell if someone is mad or angry?* Have the children demonstrate a mad or angry face. *How can you tell if someone is sad?* Have the children demonstrate a sad face or posture.

Everyone has a variety of emotions. Our moods change. Ask learners to share some things that make them happy, sad, frightened or excited. Emotions are given by God to help us communicate. Professional actors learn how to express different emotions. Tell learners you are going to call out different life situations. Invite them to use facial expressions and body language to act out silently the emotion they feel. Encourage them to be as creative as possible in their expressions, but to be absolutely silent.



Here are some possible life situations to use. You may think of others.

- How you look when you see a new puppy.
- Opening a birthday present that is exactly what you wanted.
- Asking your parents to please let you do something .
- How you look when you say your prayers.
- How you look when you are really, really, sad.
- How you look when you are very angry.
- How you look when you are extremely disappointed.

Option: Invite learners to take turns suggesting life situations to dramatize their emotions.

In conclusion, remind learners that emotions are gifts from God that help us to communicate with one another. God loves us when we are happy or sad, angry or satisfied. We can use our emotions to work for justice when we take time to understand one another. Thank learners for their participation today.

Option: Invite each learner to draw a picture of her or his face with an expression that she or he is feeling today.



5 Echo Pantomime of the Good Shepherd (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Reflect on “About this Rotation” in the introductory material to this Exploration. Read John 10:11–18, the story of the Good Shepherd. Consider how Jesus uses metaphor in this scripture to compel us to care for others.

An “echo pantomime” is a fun way to tell a biblical story. There is no absolute right or wrong way to do these motions that are meant to enhance the story, so feel free to make them your own. Some motions are based on American Sign Language, but, again, feel free to experiment and make the motions that will work best for you. Practice saying the words with the motions a few times so that you will be comfortable doing it with the children. You will say words as you make the motions, and then the children will echo your words and pantomime your actions. Place the script on a music stand or table where you can see it as you guide the children. Have fun!

Prayer for preparation: *Holy God, you call to us across the ages and you call us today. As I lead these children, let your holy words inspire us to love one another as you love us. Help us to practice justice in all we do. Amen.*

Supplies:

- “Echo Pantomime,” Attachment: Activity 5
- space where everyone is comfortable to act out the motions without knocking into one another
- music stand, desk, or wall pace to post the echo pantomime so that you can lead the exercise hands free

Questions for discussion after the echo pantomime:

- Who is the good shepherd in this story?
- What do good shepherds do with their sheep?
- How does Jesus take care of us?
- How can we help take care of one another?



- Sometimes people tell us we shouldn't believe in Jesus. They want to take away our faith. How are they like thieves or bandits?



6 “Shotgun, Third Ward #1” Playwrights

Leader preparation: Reflect on “Shotgun Third Ward #1” by John Biggers. Read information about the artist on the website listed below. The third ward of Houston was the inspiration for this art. “Shotgun” refers to the long narrow architecture of the row houses. Using the questions below, carefully ponder each character. In this activity learners will write a short play to bring the poster to life.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Shotgun, Third Ward #1” by John Biggers, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=17101&store_id=1401
- website: about John Biggers, http://americanart.si.edu/search/artist_bio.cfm?ID=414
- pencil and paper
- a copy machine for producing rough drafts

Invite the learners to study the painting. Tell them it was inspired by a neighborhood in Houston, Texas. Describe a shotgun house. Invite them to think about the characters as you point to each one. Ask: *What might that person be thinking? What might that person be feeling? What time of day is it? How is color used to draw you into the scene? Where is your focus? What are the children playing? How does this art inspire or inform one who is working for justice?* Invite the learners to write a short play about this picture. Assign characters to be scripted. You may work together as a group, or divide into smaller groups.

Suggested groupings for script:

- Woman in blue dress and hat watching children: What is she thinking as she looks on? Does she say anything to children?
- Man in blue shirt in background watching children: Where is he coming from? What does he say?
- Woman in red dress: Talks to man with candle.
- Man with candle: What is he saying?
- Woman with baby: What is she thinking? Is she talking to a child?
- Children playing game. What game is it? Are they singing or chanting? What do they say?
- Narrator (optional): What happened right before this picture? Discuss how the art relates to justice.

Come together and read through suggestions, each group adding their character. Decide upon an order. Put the script together and make copies. Read through the play as a group with character voices being read by different children. Tell them that the script will be finalized and copies will be available at a later date.



Sending & Serving Activities

7 Walk in Jesus' Shoes (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. Think about a time when you were needy and someone helped you. What sacrifice did they make in order to be there for you? Consider a time when you helped another person. What sacrifice did you make? Working for justice requires that we engage with local issues or problems in our community and world. Engagement for justice is often uncomfortable or inconvenient stretching us to grow in new ways. This activity may help learners understand what it means to work for justice—to take up the cross for Jesus.

Prayer: Holy God, help me to guide these learners that they may comprehend that while working for justice is sometimes uncomfortable for us, it is one thing that God requires of us and it is something we must do. Amen.

Supplies:

- scraps of paper: preferably newsprint, but regular printing paper or construction paper can be used
- Bible

Give everyone a small piece of paper. Have them rip the paper in two and then crumple the pieces into two small balls. Ask them to take off their shoes, place one of the wadded pieces of paper in each shoe and then put their shoes back on with the paper still inside. Have them walk around for a few minutes feeling the foreign objects in their shoes. Invite them to sit down.

Read aloud Micah 6:1–8. *What does this passage say to us? What are some things that you heard?* Reread Micah 6:8. *What does God want us to do?* Explain that sometimes working for justice can be like having a wad of paper in your shoe—uncomfortable. Doing justice often requires that we be willing to do things outside our daily comfort zone. *What are some examples of working for justice? How does it feel to have the paper in your shoe? How can you get rid of the discomfort?* Point out that doing justice requires that we do something to make life better for others. When we work for justice, it is making someone's life better, happier and more comfortable—just like a wearing a comfortable pair of shoes.

Pray together: Dear God, help us to be willing to be uncomfortable as we help others. Help us to remember that Jesus always worked to make life better for all people. Help us to walk in Jesus' shoes as we work for justice. Amen.

Ask the learners to remove the paper from their shoes or leave it there for awhile as a reminder to “walk with Jesus.” Invite them to share this exercise with their families or friends, helping them to understand that working for justice often requires the sacrifice of being uncomfortable.

Option: Invite the learners to carry the small wad of paper in their pocket, purse, or backpack to remind them about working for justice.



8 Reader's Theater of Luke 4:14–21

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–21. Reflect on the discussion guidelines below. Read the script for the Reader's Theater on the attachment. Read each part out loud, using three different inflections of voice. Consider how each respective voice might be performed by the participants. Become familiar with the script. Schedule a time when the Reader's Theater can be shared with the congregation. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- "Reader's Theater," Attachment: Activity 8
- highlighters for participants to mark respective parts
- Bible

Tell the learners that the scripture you will read is one in which Jesus is just becoming known as an authority in the synagogue. The priests, the scribes, and the congregation are startled by his claim that he is sent by God as the Prophet Isaiah said. Have learners listen for the who, what, where, when, and why in the passage. Then read aloud Luke 4:14–21. Discuss their answers. Ask: *What would your minister do if Jesus came? How would you know it was Jesus?*

Pass out scripts. Explain that Reader's Theater is an ancient form of dramatic presentation. Scripts are used, and actors read during the performance. As a group, read the script. Then divide learners into three separate groups and assign voices. Have them highlight respective parts. Rehearse several times. Encourage clarity of voice and appropriate expression for each part. Each group must speak as one voice. Present this in the group, and talk to the pastor about the group presenting the "Reader's Theater of Luke 4:14–21" as part of a service of worship.



9 Antiphonal Reading of Scripture

Leader preparation: *Antiphona* is Greek for antiphonal reading. It is a form of a call to worship presented by two groups; it dates back to the ancient times. Read Micah 6:1–8 and Psalm 34:15–22 carefully, slowly, and out loud. Listen to each word. In this activity, learners will practice this ancient antiphonal form of worship. If possible, make arrangements to share this reading in worship with the congregation. (With younger learners, you may read each line and have learners repeat verbatim in echo form.)

Supplies:

- Bible
- "Antiphonal Reading of Scripture," Attachment: Activity 9

Explain that scriptures teach us God's ways. In reading, hearing, and sharing scripture, we come closer to God and determine God's plan for us. Invite the learners to discover an ancient way of reading scripture. If this antiphonal reading is going to be shared in worship, inform the learners of the date and time. If shared in worship, have one group stand in the front of the sanctuary with the other group standing in the back or in the balcony.

Reflect

Holy God, you call to us across the ages and you call us today. Let your holy words continue to inspire us to love one another as you love us. Help us to practice justice in all we do. Amen

Attachment: Activity 5

Echo Pantomime

John 10:11-18

Directions for the leader:

An echo pantomime is a fun way to tell a biblical story. There is no absolute right or wrong way to do these motions; they are just meant to enhance the story, so feel free to make them your own. Some motions are based on American Sign Language, but, again, feel free to experiment and make the motions that will work best for you. Practice saying the words with the motions a few times so that you will be comfortable doing it with the children. You will say words as you make the motions, then the children will echo your words and pantomime your actions. Place the script on a music stand or table where you can see it as you guide the children. Have fun!

Directions for the children:

Today we are going to learn the story of Jesus the Good Shepherd. We will do an echo pantomime together. An echo repeats. You will repeat what I say as if you were my echo. A pantomime is an echo for actions. You will copy what I do and say. First, I have a few motions to teach you and then we will begin.

Motions to teach before you begin. (Whenever you say these words, these same motions will be used.)

- *Jesus:* Start with hands flat together as if in prayer. With the middle of one hand point to the palm of the other hand. Then repeat switching hands. Move hands back and forth using middle finger to point to where nails would have pierced his hands. This is one motion—right and left.
- *Sheep:* With the left hand make a fist in front of your waist. Form a V with first two fingers of right hand and move them over the left hand while making a scissor motion as if cutting the wool of imaginary sheep.
- *God:* Point right hand up to heaven.

Script for Echo Pantomime

Jesus is talking. (*Motion for Jesus, point to your mouth.*)

“Truly I tell you,” (*Cup hands around mouth, point to participants.*)

Anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, (*Make roof over head, swing right hand out as if opening gate.*)

but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. (*Alternate hands going up as if climbing a rope, circle hands around eyes to make bandit mask.*)

Attachment: Activity 5 *(continued)*

The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. *(Swing right hand out as if opening gate, hold right hand high above head in a hook, sign for sheep.)*

The gatekeeper opens the gate, and the sheep hear her voice. *(Swing right hand out as if opening gate, make sign for sheep, cup hand to ear as if listening.)*

She calls her own sheep by name and leads them out. *(Place both hands around mouth as if calling, make sign for sheep, stretch out right hand and pull toward self as if leading an animal on a rope.)*

When the shepherd has brought out all the sheep, *(Hold right hand above head in a hook shape, make sign for sheep.)*

The Shepherd goes ahead of them, *(Hold right hand above head in a hook shape, walk in place as if going ahead.)*

The sheep follow because they know the voice of the shepherd *(Make sign for sheep, point to mouth, right hand in hook above head.)*

The sheep will not follow a stranger, but they will run away *(Make sign for sheep, shake head no, and run in place.)*

They do not know the voice of strangers. *(Shake head no, point to mouth, throw hands up as if surprised.)*

Jesus' friends did not understand this story *(Sign for Jesus, shrug shoulders as if confused.)*

So Jesus said to them, *(Sign for Jesus, then point to mouth.)*

"Truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. *(Cup hands around mouth, point to others, make gate motion with right hand, sign for sheep.)*

All who came before are thieves and bandits; *(Point away as if at someone in the distance, put hands around eyes as if making a mask.)*

But the sheep did not listen to them." *(Make sign for sheep, shake head no, cup right hand to ear.)*

Jesus said, "I am the gate for the sheep. *(Sign for Jesus, swing right hand as if opening a gate, sign for sheep.)*

Whoever enters by me will be saved. *(Use right hand in beckoning motion as if calling others to come, cross arms and hug self as if safe.)*

Attachment: Activity 5 *(continued)*

The thief comes only to steal and destroy. *(Put hands around eyes as if making mask, make fist with hands and pound together.)*

I come that you may have life and have it abundantly. *(Point to self, then rub tummy smile and nod head yes.)*

I am the good shepherd. *(Point to self, nod head, put right hand up in a hook motion.)*

The good shepherd loves the sheep. *(Put right hand up in a hook, cross hands over heart, make sign for sheep.)*

I am the good shepherd. *(Point to self, nod head yes and put right hand up in hook motion.)*

I know my own and my own know me, *(Point to self, hug self and rock back and forth, point to self.)*

Just as God knows me and I know the God *(Sign for God, point to self, sign for God.)*

I lay down my life for the sheep. *(Put hands together under right side of head as if sleeping, sign for sheep.)*

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. *(Point to self, sign for sheep, make roof over head.)*

I must bring them also, *(Point to self, make beckoning motion as if inviting others to come.)*

They will listen to my voice. *(Cup right hand to ear.)*

There will be one flock of sheep and one shepherd. *(Hold up one finger for one, make sign for sheep, hold up one finger for shepherd, hook right hand up.)*

For this reason God loves me, *(Sign for God, cross hands over heart.)*

Because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. *(Put hands together under right side of head as if sleeping, sweep both hands over head and reach to heavens.)*

I have received this command from God. *(Point to self, point to mouth, sign for God.)*

Amen. Amen. *(Bow head in prayer.)*

Attachment: Activity 8

Reader's Theater

Luke 4:14-21

Directions: This reader's theater is designed for three voices or three sets of unison voices. The first voice simply reads the text; this is the formal. The second voice acts as the modern-day interpretation; a more casual voice. The third voice is animated and expressive with some comedic relief; utilizes motions and actions. Several preparatory readings and rehearsals should occur before the performance.

Staging: Three groups stand separately in front of the congregation. Each group has at least one music stand to hold the script as they read.

Leader Introduction: Today you will experience the words of Luke 4:14-21 presented in Reader's Theater style. Listen for the message of love and inclusion offered by God through Jesus. As you listen, consider how Jesus' words encourage working for justice.

The Script

Then Jesus went to Nazareth
In other words, Jesus returned to his hometown,
Jog in place: **Off he went as fast as he could.**

Where he had been brought up
Where he had lived with his mother, father, sisters and brothers.
Wave hands to each and say: **Hi Mom! Hi Dad! Hi everybody! I'm home!**

On the Sabbath he went as usual to the synagogue.
On the day of worship he went to church as he always did.
Sing: **"Goin' to the Chapel, 'cause I worship my God there. Yes I'm goin' to the chapel, 'cause I worship my God there, goin' to the chapel in Nazareth."**

He stood up to read the scriptures . . .
He went to the pulpit to read from the Bible.
Clear throat a few times : **Ahem . . . ahem . . . ahem.**

And was handed the scroll of Isaiah.
They gave him a Bible opened to the book of Isaiah.
In loud commanding voice: **Hear ye, hear ye these are the words of the Lord.**

He found the place where it is written.
He chose the passage he wanted to read.
With right hand index finger point to palm of left hand, say: **I'll start here.**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.
The Spirit of God has sent me to you.
Open arms wide, say: **I am here for you and for everyone.**

Because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor,
God selected me to share news of God's love with those who live in poverty.
Sing: **Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so . . .**

Attachment: Activity 8 (*continued*)

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives . . .
God has compelled me to free those held in bondage.
Jump up and down with elation: **Free at last, free at last, come on—I'm free at last!**

And recovery of sight to the blind . . .
I will help you to see how God loves you.
Make goggles with hands, sing: **"I can see clearly now the Lord has come . . ."**

To set free the oppressed,
No longer will people be held unfairly against their will . . .
Jump up and down with elation: **Free at last, free at last, come on—I'm free at last!**

To proclaim the year of the Lord, . . .
To tell all the people that God's moment of truth has arrived.
In loud commanding voice: **Hear ye, hear ye these are the words of the Lord.**

When the Lord will save his people.
When God's love will be made known to human beings.
Sing: **"I love to tell the story, sent from heaven above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love . . ."**

Jesus rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down.
Jesus closed the Bible and returned to his place in the pew.
Clap hands shut. Say, **"That's enough for today."**

All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him.
Everybody in the church stared at him.
Hold up hands making motions as if taking picture on a cell phone: **Let me capture this...**

He said to them, . . .
Jesus started to talk again, . . .
Shhh, Shhh... listen up! What is he saying now?

"This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read."
I am the messenger God has sent. I am the way, the truth and the light.
Cheer: **He is the one! He is the one! Jesus is the one from God!**

This is the word of the Lord, thanks be to God.
The words of scripture as preserved for us through the generations.
Sing: **The B-I-B-L-E . . . that's the book for me! The B-I-B-L-E . . . that's the book for me.**

Amen.
Amen.
Sing: **Aaa-men, Aaa-men, Aa-men, Amen, Amen.**

Attachment: Activity 9

Antiphonal Reading of Scripture

Invite learners to imagine they are living in ancient biblical times. There are two groups of Old Testament Hebrew people standing outdoors. Each group is situated on a small hill facing each other. As one group chants and almost shouts, the words of the scriptures come across the valley to the other. As we practice this antiphon, let us remember this is an ancient, sacred way to honor God and learn about what the scriptures teach.

Selected Scriptures: Micah 6:1–8 and Psalm 32:15–22

Group 1: Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

Group 2: The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and God's ears are open to their cry.

Group 1: The face of the Lord is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth

Group 2: When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,
and rescues them from their troubles.

Group 1: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.

Group 2: Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord rescues them from them all.

Group 1: God keeps all their bones, not one of them will be broken.

Group 2: Evil brings death to the wicked,
And those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

Group 1: The Lord God redeems the life of the servants;
None who take refuge in god will be condemned.

Group 2: God has told you, O mortal what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you

All: But to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Working for Justice



Workshop: Food

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God’s creation. To work for justice we imagine God’s *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus’ lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.

- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6:1–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Food is integral to survival. Every person needs quality food and water for a productive healthy life. Justice in “food speak” means each person gets an equal share. Healthy food is not always available in equal measure. Agricultural practices, food production, and location impact how food is distributed and the quality of food provided. This workshop teaches the importance of food for all God's creation.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Romans 13:8–14;

Amos 5:8–24;

Isaiah 1:1, 10–18

Leader Preparation

Contemplate different foods of the world and the people who eat them. Do you ever think of your own food habits? What standards do you have for the purchase of food? Do you think mostly about cost? Do you think about where the food comes from and/or the conditions that people who provide our food work and live in? God loves all creation and provides an abundance of food.

Prayer: Holy God, may I guide these learners with compassion and grace, teaching them of your loving justice for all creation. Amen.

Exploring & Engaging Activities



① Water Enough (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:8–24. Focus on verse 24. Pour yourself a tall glass of fresh water. Reflect on its origin, using the questions from this activity. Think about regions of the world where fresh water is not readily available.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for the gift of clean water. As I guide the learners, help them to understand how drinking water is a matter of justice in our world. Amen.

Supplies:

- pitcher of clean cold water (preferably in a clear pitcher or jar)
- a cup for each participant

Lift up the pitcher of water. Lead a conversation about water with questions such as these.

- What do I have here?
- How can you tell?
- Where did this water come from before it reached the tap?
- How has it been transported here?
- Do you know of any current water quality issues in our community?
- How is fresh water being polluted in our area?
- Where do the wild animals get water to drink?
- Have you ever been thirsty and not been able to receive fresh water?

Explain that there are places in the world where fresh water is not easily available. Some people have to walk many miles every day just to get water to drink. God

Workshop Development

or each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

created all people and animals; everyone needs water to survive. Helping to be sure that everyone gets safe, clean drinking water is one way to work for justice.

Pass out empty cups and pray together, with the learners echoing each sentence /phrase after you: *Dear God, bless this empty cup. Help us to remember that everyone needs good water. Help us make other people aware of the need for clean water for all your creation. Amen.*

Pour some water into each cup. Explain that you will pray again and then drink the water together (repeat echo praying): *Dear God, bless this cup of fresh water. Each time I drink water, help me to remember that water is a gift from you to all the earth. Help me to use only the water I need and not be wasteful as I remember others that need fresh water, too. Help me to learn more about clean water for all your creation. Amen.*



2 The Food Seller

Leader preparation: Using the questions suggested for the learners, reflect on the poster “Vendedora de Piñas” (“The Pineapple Seller”) by Diego Rivera. Display it where all can easily view it. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Vendedora de Piñas” by Diego Rivera, <http://www.art.com/products/p10381686-sa-i797560/diego-rivera-vendedora-de-pinas.htm?>
- large piece of newsprint or poster board (18” × 36”) for each child
- crayons or pastels
- a brown bag of fresh fruit or vegetables grown in your region

Invite learners to sit quietly and reflect on the poster. Ask the first two questions before you tell them its title. *Who is in the picture? How old do you think she is? What food does she have?* Explain that the picture is called “Vendedora de Piñas” in Spanish, or “The Pineapple Seller” in English. *Where do pineapples grow? Is she in a store or on the street or at a farmer’s market? What do you think she is feeling? What is she thinking about?*

Display samples of local fruits and vegetables. Ask learners to name them. *Where do we get this food?* Have each child chooses a fruit or vegetable that he or she would like to sell. Ask them to draw eight pieces of the food they like along the bottom of the paper. Across the top have them write “The _____ Seller,” putting in the name of the food. Have each child draw a picture of the top half of his or her body using the poster as an example.

As the children draw, ask them to talk about why it is important to eat the food grown near where you live. Encourage thoughts about transportation, local jobs, freshness, and quality. *Why are different foods grown in different areas of our world? What does this tell us about God? Why should we care if everyone has good food to eat?* Working to ensure that there is enough food for everyone is one way to work for justice. Hang the finished portraits around the room. Tour the “Gallery of the Food Sellers.” Together, thank God together for the diversity of food and the people who eat it.

③ A Recipe for Compassion

Leader preparation: Gather supplies. Review Romans 13:8–14. Focus on the Golden Rule: love your neighbor as yourself. Have the supplies in the order needed by the recipe so you mix them as you go. Ask God’s blessing on the food and your time with the children. (It may be helpful to have another kind of cookie to share for any children with chocolate allergies.) If time is short, have one batch of cookies already baked to pass out.

Supplies:

- pre-measured ingredients in separate containers for chocolate chip cookies
- 2¼ cups sifted flour, 1 tsp. baking soda, 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup solid shortening
- ¾ cup granulated sugar mixed with ¾ cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 12 oz. chocolate chips (2 cups)
- mixing bowl, wooden spoon
- (optional) small plastic spoons for tasting
- baking sheet, oven preheated to 375°F
- sandwich bags for cookies to take home

Gather children around the table. Pour the flour into the bowl. Ask: *Would anyone like a taste of this? No? How about baking soda? Or shortening? It doesn't seem like anyone likes these ingredients. I wonder what would happen if we put them together.* Mix the ingredients calling them by name, but saving the chocolate chips and eggs for last. (If you omit the raw eggs, children can taste the dough using individual plastic spoons). *Who would like a taste now?* After taste tests, add the eggs and chocolate chips, and drop by tablespoonfuls onto greased cookie sheets. Bake for 10 minutes. Then say this to the children.

We didn't want to taste the items on their own, but mixing them all together made something delicious. God's world is like that. We don't always see each person as special, but God does. Each person has talents, but we all are not good at everything. We need to share our resources and gifts to work together. Everyone matters because God made all of us. In scripture, Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. We need to love the people who are different from us and to love the people who are like us in just the same way. God wants us to love one another so the whole world comes out sweet and good, just like these cookies.

Serve the baked cookies, one per person, as you say that loving our neighbors as ourselves is one way to work for justice.

Today you may each wrap one cookie to take home to share with a neighbor. When you share these cookies, tell your neighbor about justice and God's love.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

 4 Food Group Bounce (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Focus on verse 9b—to “love your neighbor as yourself.” Contemplate the importance of food to daily living. Think about food groups: fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy, and grain. If necessary, consult a cookbook or Internet resource to refresh yourself with the groups and suggested daily portions. God blesses each person with a body that has nutritional needs. Having necessary portions of all food groups contributes to a healthy life. Consider those who may not have enough food today, or those who have an inadequate or unhealthy diet. Through participation in this activity, learners may gain a better understanding of the nourishment required for all human beings. God desires that all have healthy food to eat to live healthy lives. God desires that we help one another.

Supplies:

- copy of Romans 13, verse 9b: “love your neighbor as yourself.”
- rubber playground ball (kickball) or pieces of wadded paper taped together to create a ball
- space for participants to sit in a circle on the floor
- (optional) food pyramid chart from the Internet (searching for “food pyramid” shows a variety of images)

Invite participants to form a circle sitting on the floor. Invite them to play a game about food categories. All foods belong to a certain category or food group. If available, show a food pyramid chart. For example, an apple is a fruit. To live healthy lives we should eat foods from different categories. *What are other food categories?* Give one player the ball. That player selects a food category, such as “vegetables.” He or she then bounces or tosses the ball to another player in the circle, who must catch the ball, name an item from the category, such as “broccoli” and keep the ball moving to the next player. If the player cannot name an item, holds the ball too long, or repeats an item, he or she is out until the next round begins. Play a few rounds using a different food group each time.

Play the game again. This time participants may help anyone who is “stumped” by calling out the name of a fruit or vegetable. In this version no one is “out.”

After the game, discuss what kinds of food God wants us to have. *What kind of food does God want for other people? How did it feel to be “out”? How did it feel when everyone worked together to help their neighbors so that no one would be “out”?* Explain that working for justice means helping to make sure that there is enough food of good quality and right portions for all people. Working for justice is helping to be sure that no one is left “out” and that there is enough for everyone.

Pray together: Dear God, as we eat our meals, help us to eat healthy to take care of the body that you have given us. As we take care of ourselves, help us to care for others, too. May everyone have healthy food to eat. Amen.



5 Fruits of the Orchard

Leader preparation: Read Isaiah 1:1, 10–18. Focus on verses 16–20. Wash your hands; as you do, consider mistakes that you have made and times when you have needed forgiveness. Thank God for the gift of second chances and new life. With the Isaiah scripture in mind, contemplate the poster “The Sower” using the questions from the activity below. Gather the supplies and prepare the cooking space.

Supplies:

- Bible
- artwork: “The Sower” by Vincent Van Gogh, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=15625&store_id=1401
- ingredients for fruit kabobs: choose at least 5 different varieties of fruit
- napkins, plastic serrated knives, sharp knives for adults, cutting board
- bamboo skewers
- (optional) cups of potting soil

Invite participants to sit around the table. Show the poster of “The Sower,” and invite them to contemplate the picture as you read Isaiah 1:1, 10–18. Ask: *How would you describe God’s feeling in this scripture? What is happening in Isaiah? What is God telling the people to do? How does God want us to live?* Explain that the very next verse says: “If you will only obey me, you will eat the good things the land produces” (Isaiah 1:19, TEV). Discuss the painting.

- What do you see?
- What is the person doing?
- Tell them the painting is titled “The Sower.” What does sowing mean?
- Ask them to name ways that the picture relates to the scripture.
- Is the sower rich or poor? A man or a woman? How can you tell?
- Imagine that the sower is planting an orchard. What kinds of seeds might he or she need?
- Orchards take a long time to grow, but they will produce fruit for many years to come. How is planting and maintaining an orchard an act of justice?

Invite the learners to prepare orchard fruits for a snack. As they do, remove the seeds noting the differences in them.

Fruits of the Orchard Kabobs

Supplies:

- oranges, grapefruits, peaches, plums, apricots, pears, apples
- cherries, grapes
- bamboo skewers (purchase at any grocery store; soak in water a few minutes before use)
- knives (plastic for learners, sharp knives for leaders)
- plate for each fruit

Directions: Wash hands thoroughly. Wash and cut fruit removing seeds. Learners may use plastic knives. Adults should use sharp knives to help. Arrange the fruit on the table in different plates. Let the children choose some fruit to place on a skewer. Set seeds aside.



Pray together: *Dear God, thank you for the fruits of the orchard. Thank you for the sowers who planted the seeds that we might eat this food today. Thank you for the farmers who tended the orchard and picked the fruits. Help us to remember those who do not have fresh fruit. Help us to learn how to share our food so that all have enough. Amen.*

As children eat their kabobs, discuss differences in the seeds and the respective fruits they come from.

Option: Invite learners to plant various seeds to take home. Apple or pear will work best. Or, prepare extra fruit kabobs to share with the congregation at a fellowship hour.

⑥ Flour Tortilla Crisps

Leader preparation: Read carefully Micah 6:1–8 and focus on verse 8. In this activity, children will make crispy snacks of flour tortillas to remind them of God’s command from Micah to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Tortillas are a form of bread that comes from Mexico. Make patterns of hand, heart, and foot to fit on tortilla shape. Have a gluten free treat such as a rice cake treat for any child that might have allergies. Gather supplies and prepare space for cooking.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- flour tortillas (enough for 3 per person)
- sugar and cinnamon mixture, colored sugar sprinkles
- patterns of hands, feet, and heart
- cookie sheets
- plastic serrated knives
- toaster oven or oven
- (optional) extra treats to share at fellowship hour

Read Micah 6:1–8 together, and then reread verse 8. Discuss what it means to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Show patterns of hand, heart, and foot. Ask which of these symbols might be used to represent justice (hand), kindness (heart), and walking humbly (foot). Invite learners to make crispy treats using the patterns to remind them of God’s commands. The flour tortillas are Mexican in origin and remind us that God gives us food from all regions of the world.

Invite children to choose three flour tortillas. Have them trace one pattern on each tortilla with the serrated knife, and then continue cutting out each pattern with the knife. (With very young children, have shapes already cut out. They can then choose shapes to decorate.) Place new shapes on cookie sheet and sprinkle with cinnamon and colored sugar mix. Bake at 350 degrees for 2–4 minutes. These toast quickly. Watch that they don’t burn! Enjoy!

Sending & Serving Activities

**7 Washing Hands (Easy Preparation)**

Leader preparation: Read Isaiah 1:1, 10–18. The focus for this activity is washing hands. God desires that we have clean bodies and clean hearts. Wash your hands slowly and thoroughly. Sing one of the suggested songs as you wash. Imagine that God is cleansing your soul even as you clean your hands. Thank God for the gift of clean water, soap, and clean hearts. Food preparation requires careful cleansing practices. Assuring that food is properly prepared is a justice issue. Learners will review and practice mindful hand washing.

Supplies:

- Bible
- soap, water and sink or basin for washing hands
- paper towels
- songs: “Jesus Loves Me,” “Happy Birthday,” “This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands”
- “The Mayo Method of Hand Washing,” Attachment: Activity 7

Ask: Did you know that God wants us to wash up? Read Isaiah 1:16 together. Invite the children to practice washing hands. Why is hand washing important? When should we wash our hands? How is washing hands a way to work for justice? Explain that doctors and health officials suggest that we take 20–30 seconds to wash our hands. One way we can be sure that we spend enough time is to sing a song as we wash. Demonstrate hand washing (technique recommended by Mayo Clinic) and singing. See the handout.

Give every child a copy of the handout, and direct the learners to take turns washing and drying hands.

Option: Laminate several copies of “The Mayo Method of Hand Washing” and post them in the bathrooms throughout the church.

8 Popcorn Hands

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Focus on verse 9b–10. Think about the neighbors you know, those who live near you, those whom you know from work, and so on. Churches are unique places where strangers and people who often have little in common become special communities in Christ. Christians are often invited to “pass the peace of Christ” during worship to help to remind us of this special relationship. In this activity participants will practice sharing the Peace of Christ. Participants will also create popcorn hands: one to eat and one to share. Gather supplies and prepare the learning space.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- plastic gloves used in food preparation
- twisty ties
- large bowl of popped popcorn
- candy corn or jelly beans to represent fingernails

Have someone read Romans 13:8–14. Emphasize 9b–10. *Ask: What does it mean to be a neighbor? When are neighbors far away? What does Jesus mean when he says to “love your neighbor as yourself”? There is a special greeting that Christians use in worship called “passing the peace of Christ.” The purpose of passing the peace is*

to demonstrate that we are members of Christ's body. Invite learners to take turns shaking hands with one another saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and answering, "And also with you."

Invite the learners to make popcorn hands to remind us of God's desire to have us reach out in friendship and in Christ's love. Have learners wash their hands. Pass out plastic gloves (one pair per participant), candies, and twisty ties. Have learners place one piece of candy in each finger of the glove. Invite learners to pass the bowl of popped popcorn, using a scoop to fill their gloves with the popcorn and tying the gloves with the twisty ties when finished.

When the activity is completed, tell the learners that one popcorn hand is for them to enjoy and one is for them to give away. Encourage them to give one popcorn hand to a neighbor as they offer the "peace of Christ" and share Jesus' commandment to love one another.

9 Neighbor's Lunch

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14 with a focus on verse 9b–10. When have you served a neighbor? When has a neighbor come to your aid? Are you more comfortable serving or being served? In this activity, participants will prepare and serve lunch to a partner in the group. Each one will have an opportunity to serve and be served, practicing humility and sharing. To expand the activity, participants may make sandwiches for a congregational lunch, which also means that the learners do all the serving and cleaning up. A third option would be making box lunches to deliver to shut-ins. Gather supplies and set up a table where learners may prepare the lunch.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- enough food for the entire group: cheese, ham, turkey, mayonnaise, mustard, bread, potato chips, juice, fruit, cookies
- paper plates, napkins, cups and utensils for preparing food
- (optional) food for the congregation or shut-ins
- hymn: "Sister, Let Me Be Your Servant"; lyrics, <http://www.pine-net.com/~joanbab/servsong.htm>; video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OL3vStmoMDw>
- hymn: "For the Fruit of All Creation" (tune: Ar hyd y nos, All through the night) East Acklam, <http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/f/f211.html>

Welcome learners to the Neighbor's Lunch. Have someone read aloud Romans 13:8–14. Lift up 9b–10. Ask: *What does it mean to be a neighbor?* Tell them there are times when the proper thing to do is serve our neighbor with no expectation of the favor being returned. In another passage Jesus said, "I came not to be served, but to serve. If you are my disciples you will do the same." Working for justice means being willing to serve others in Jesus' name. Serving is one way of showing Christ's love. Invite the children to prepare lunch to serve to one another. During this lunch no person can prepare or ask for food for him or herself. You can only feed yourself if someone else prepares the food for you. These rules will be strictly enforced. Select one hymn to sing or read as grace. Divide the learners into pairs. Invite them to proceed with the activity.

When the activity is completed, discuss the following questions:

Reflect

How has this workshop on food and justice strengthened your understanding of God's abundant blessings for all? God provides enough for every living creature. As God's people we are required to ensure that the abundance is shared with all.

- Are you more comfortable serving or being served? Why?
- Who might God be calling you to serve this week? Explain your answer.
- Who do you need to let serve you?
- Why is being served also important?

Attachment: Activity 7

The Mayo Method of Hand Washing

- Wet your hands with running water.
- Apply liquid, bar, or powder soap.
- Lather well (turn off tap to conserve water as you lather).
- Sing a song as you rub your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds. Some song suggestions include: "Happy Birthday," "Jesus Loves Me," or "This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands."
- Remember to scrub all surfaces: the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Rinse well.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel.
- In a public restroom, if possible, use a towel to turn off the faucet and open the bathroom door.

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Working for Justice



Workshop: Games

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God’s creation. To work for justice we imagine God’s *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus’ lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.
- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.

- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6: 1–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Children are active learners. This workshop invites them to be themselves engaging in activities that utilize their innate sense of movement and play as they learn of God's command to work for justice. Participation in games will give learners active ways to encounter the kinds of justice God desires. God's love is not static; it is ever moving through creation. As God is active, learners will be active. Come! Move, laugh, play, as we work for justice together!

BIBLE FOCUS STORIES:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Isaiah 1:1, 10–18;

Amos 5:18–24

Leader Preparation

Consider a game that you have played and enjoyed in your life. What made it special? What made it safe? What made it fun? Do you still have plenty of play in your life? Children love to play. This workshop will tap into the child in everyone as learners participate in a variety of games that teach concepts related to working for justice. Let your inner child loose as you prepare to play!

Prayer: *Holy God, you moved over the waters and playfully created this diverse world. Help me to enjoy a time of play with these learners as we discover meaningful ways to work for justice in the world today. Amen.*

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Handshakes for Peace (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. Focus on verse 8. Consider how peace and justice are demonstrated when we greet one another. What are some welcoming postures or actions? Which can discourage—which can encourage—interaction or discussion? Working for justice requires creating a safe space for all. In this activity, learners may develop different handshake practices that invite peace and encourage interaction. Read through the activity. Prepare the space.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- open space for learners to move about safely

Welcome learners, and invite them to take a seat. Read Micah 6:8 together. Explain that this activity is related to justice. As the Old Testament prophet Micah says, God requires justice. Justice means being thoughtful of others and creating a safe place for everyone. How we welcome others is one way that we can create peace and invite conversation and interaction. *What are some rituals or actions we use when we meet others?* Explain that different cultures have different welcome rituals. In Japan, people bow to each other. In some countries, people kiss each other on both cheeks. Invite the learners to work in pairs to create a new ritual—a handshake for peace.

Divide learners into pairs. Invite them to take several minutes to come up with a new handshake for peace together. This could be quite playful and creative and noisy. Invite pairs to teach handshakes to the entire group. Encourage everyone to try the new handshakes. Tell learners to share this activity with their family and friends, reminding them that God desires that all people to get along.



Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

2 Big Foot Relay

Leader preparation: Reflect on John 10:11–18, the story of the Good Shepherd. Consider how Jesus loves the sheep; each one is important to him and to the whole flock. Each individual requires care and consideration. Sometimes in life, the playing field is not equal. Working for justice requires giving everyone equal opportunities and equal rights. This activity helps learners experience what it feels like to be advantaged and disadvantaged. They also experience the success of having everyone win. Gather supplies. Prepare the shoe boxes as described in the Supplies list.

Supplies:

- 2 shoe boxes each for half of the participants (in advance, tape the lids onto the shoe boxes, then cut a 1" × 4" slit in each top)
- enough space to allow for a relay with two teams
- parking cones, chairs, or other markers to define relay turn
- tape or drawn line to mark starting and ending place
- whistle or noise maker for starting the relay

Invite the learners to participate in a relay. Divide the group into two teams. One team will have special shoebox shoes on their feet. (Have one team slip their stocking feet into the slits of the shoebox shoes.) The other team will race in their regular shoes. After the first race is finished, learners will switch shoes—the first team runs in their own shoes; the second team wears the shoe boxes. Blow the whistle to start the relay.

At the end ask each team to explain what it was like running in their respective shoes. *What was fair about the relay? What was unfair? How could we make the game more fair?* Have each player on both teams wear one shoebox shoe and one regular shoe. Have each partner hold the hand of his or her respective opponent and rerun the relay. This time, everyone wins!

In our lives some people get more advantages than others. God wants us to help everyone to have an equal chance and an equally good life. Working for justice means finding ways to help everyone be winners.



3 We're in This Together

Leader preparation: Read Psalm 34:15–22. Use the questions from the activity description for your personal reflection on the passage so you can better lead the others. Creativity and cooperation are necessary attributes when working for justice. This activity helps children understand the dynamic of working together for the good of all. Gather supplies. Prepare the rope circles as described in the Supplies list.

Supplies:

- 4 ropes of different lengths, 5', 10', 15', 20' (in advance, tie the ends of each rope together making four differently sized circles)
- large open space (indoors or out) to play the game
- “Psalm 34:15–22,” Attachment: Activity 3

As the participants arrive, welcome them to sit in a circle. Read one of the versions of Psalm 34:15–22 from the attachment. Ask the children to tell you what they hear in this psalm.



- Who does God listen to?
- How do you think God feels about people who are mean?
- If you are ever sad or discouraged, do you think God will listen to you when you pray?

Explain that God wants all of us to work together so that everyone can be safe and happy in life. Invite the learners to rescue one another by helping everyone in the group. Place the biggest rope circle on the floor, and ask the learners to get inside the circle formed by the rope, without a single body part being outside the circle. Tell them that when they are inside the circle, they will be safe. Once they have achieved that successfully, ask them to get inside the circle formed by the 15-foot rope, and so on, until they get into the smallest circle. As the circles get smaller, it gets increasingly difficult for them to get inside, and they will need to be creative and cooperate to complete the task.

Invite reflections on the experience.

- What happened when the rope ring got smaller?
- What did we have to do to get everyone in the smallest circle?
- How is a rope ring like our planet?

Working for justice means loving God and helping one another to live and thrive.

Choose one of the ropes for your closing prayer. Invite everyone to stand outside the rope, facing in, and to hold onto the rope as you pray. Ask each person to offer a prayer for someone in the room or in their world as you go around the circle. Close with this or your own prayer: *Dear God, help us to make the world a welcoming place for all your creation. Today we promise to work for justice as we remember [the people in Haiti, the victims of hurricanes, the polar bears in the arctic, the homeless, and so on]. We want to live as your faithful people. Amen.*

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 We All Stand Up (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Focus on verses 9–10. Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors; God requires this of us. Working for justice means reaching out in new ways to meet and be friendly with our neighbors. In this activity learners will need each other in order to accomplish the usually simple task of standing up. Prepare the room to create open space for the activity.

Supplies:

- Bible
- open floor space

Welcome the learners. Invite them to sit on the floor. Read Romans 13:9b–10. Ask and talk about:

- Who is your neighbor?
- Why is it important to know our neighbors?
- What is a good neighbor?

Invite the learners to be good neighbors to one another by playing a game called “Standing Up Together.” Divide the group into pairs. Have partners sit on the



floor, back-to-back. Tell them to link arms and try to stand up, keeping their arms linked at all times. After a pair has succeeded, join them to another pair, each twosome sits back-to-back with arms linked and the four work to stand up together. Keep adding pairs until all are in one large group and they stand up together. Ask: *What does this game teach us about friendship and working together?* Thank the group for being good neighbors for Jesus Christ.

5 Water Carry Relay

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 and focus on verse 24. Fill a gallon plastic jug with water. Hold it, and walk around the room carrying it. Americans are 5 percent of the world’s population, and the average American uses 159 gallons of fresh water per day. About 50 percent of the world’s population uses only 25 gallons per day. For them, clean fresh drinking water is a scarce commodity. Looking at the jug, think of the times you have wasted water. This exercise may help learners discern ways in which they have taken water for granted and help them decide new practices of water use and conservation.

Prayer: Dear God, bless this water and all water on the planet. Help me to guide these learners to new understandings of the precious value of clean water for all. Amen.

Supplies:

- 1 plastic gallon jug per team filled with water (½ gallon jug for younger learners)
- 2 empty plastic grocery shopping bags per team (yes, the flimsy ones)
- construction cones, chairs, or some other markers to define the turn for the relay
- relay area of at least 20’ to run, make turn around marker and return to start
- starting line of tape or chalk
- starter whistle, or other noisemaker
- if playing inside, a mop to clean up any spilled water

Explain that when you see pictures of the earth, the color of most of the planet is blue. *Why is that?* Most of the earth (72 percent) is covered with water. Only a small part of that blue, though, is fresh water (2.5 percent). *What kind of water do we drink? Where do we get our fresh water?* Point out that most of us are able to have as much water as we need any time we want it. In fact, each American uses about 159 gallons (hold up the gallon jug). We each use about 159 of these every day! In many parts of the world, water is scarce and many people have to get water from a place outside their home—sometimes a long way from their home. Invite the children to play a game that shows different ways people carry water. Be prepared to discuss the game after you play. There will be two parts to the game. Do one round at a time.

Round One: Each team forms a line. When the signal is given, the first person in line picks up the gallon of water and runs to the marker, makes a turn, and runs back handing the gallon jug to the next person in line until everyone on the team has had a turn. The first team to finish is the winning team. (Adjust the amount of water to fit the age level; younger learners carry less.)

Round Two: Put two plastic bags together, one inside the other, and ask the first person in each line to hold them up to be filled. Fill the bags as full as possible, using the water from the gallon jug. (Be sure each team gets an equal amount of water.) This game is played the same way as the first round, except the water will be measured at the end. The group with the most water left will win. The first person will run the relay course



carrying the plastic bags of water trying not to spill any. After making the loop, she will hand off the bag to the next person, and the relay will continue to the end. At the finish, compare the water left. Announce the winning group, if there is one. It is quite possible there will be no water left in the bags.

Ask: *Why did this team have the most water left? Which relay was easier? Why?* Explain that in many areas of the world, children have to carry water long distances in vessels like these because that is the only way they can get water home. Children carry the water because their parents are doing other jobs. The plastic bags are more common than the jugs. *Why do you think that is true?* Bags are free and easily found as trash or litter. Lead a conversation with questions such as these.

- What do you think it would be like to only be able to get your water this way?
- How many trips might you have to make to get enough water?
- Knowing fresh water is this hard to come by, what can we do differently?
- What are some changes we could make to use less water?
- How is saving water and changing our rate of consumption one way that we can work for justice every day?

Close by asking the children to hold hands while you pray: *Holy Spirit God, you created the earth and all the water. Help us to remember that every drop is needed and precious. Help us make wise choices in how we use water every day. Amen.*



6 Embracing in Peace

Leader preparation: Take personal time to reflect on the painting “Embrace of Peace.” Look carefully at the exposed faces. What are they thinking? Does this picture make you feel happy or sad? Why? Using the website below, become acquainted with artist George Tooker. In this activity, learners will study the poster, share comments, and discern personal meaning. The session will culminate with a group hug of peace.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Embrace of Peace” by George Tooker, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1801449515?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=15626&store_id=1401
- website: about George Tooker, the painter of “Embrace of Peace,” a justice and spiritual minded painter, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:r8PsRUoPBXAJ:www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm%3Farticle_id%3D11276+Embrace+of+Peace+II+who+or+what+is+the+painting+about&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us
- open space for group hug

Welcome the learners to sit where they can view the artwork. Give them time to contemplate the picture. Ask for initial impressions. *What is the picture about? Who are the people? What are they feeling?* Tell learners the painting is called “Embrace of Peace.” Ask: *How does knowing the name change how you view the poster? What might have happened to initiate this embrace of peace? Why do people hug? When do people hug?* Working for justice means creating situations where people can connect in peaceful encounters. Close with hugs.

Hugs are an intimate expression of human contact. Today we will close with a group hug of peace demonstrating our relationship as members of God’s Christian community. Invite learners to stand in a line, placing



their arms around the shoulders of the people on either side of them. Instruct the person at one end to begin to roll in toward the rest of the group with his arms still around his neighbors—like a cinnamon roll. When the group is tightly wound up, yell one, two, three, hug! Everyone hugs at the same time creating one giant squeeze! Say Amen!

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Who's My Neighbor? (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Reflect on Romans 13:9b–10, using the questions below. It is sometimes hard to love people we don't know. In this activity, learners will play a simple game of introduction.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- space for learners to sit in a circle on chairs or the floor

Gather participants in a circle. Discuss what it means to be a neighbor. Read Romans 13: 9b–10. Tell them Jesus wants us to love our neighbors. One way to love our neighbors is to listen to them and get to know them. Today we will play a game that helps us get know our neighbors. Divide learners into pairs where they sit. Tell them you will ask a question, each person responds by telling their partner the answer. Tell them they will do this for three questions. If time allows, have participants change partners and ask three new questions.

- What is your favorite season of the year? Why?
- What present would you like to receive?
- What is your favorite television show? Why?
- What was the best vacation you ever had? Why?
- What is something that really bores you?
- If you could be granted one wish, what would it be?
- If you could have any job, what would it be?
- Where would you like to move to live? Why?
- What do you like best about yourself?

8 Names in a Hat

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Focus on verse 9b–10. Jesus desires that we love our neighbor as ourselves. Read Micah 6:8. God desires that we seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Working for justice involves putting these commandments into action. In this activity, learners will affirm the unique gifts and qualities of each person in the group. Learners will practice Christ's compassion by praying for another throughout the coming week. Prepare the space so that learners sit comfortably in a circle, either on the floor or on chairs.

Supplies:

- slips of paper, a hat, and pencils
- space to sit in a circle

Invite the learners to come in and sit in a circle. Read Romans 13:9b–10. *What is the message that we might take away from Romans?* Read Micah 6:8 together. *What is the message here?* Say that today we are going to show our compassion and love



for one another by honoring one another. Listening to one another and affirming one another is one way to work for justice, as we follow the commandments of scripture.

Pass out pieces of paper. Ask each person to write his or her name on one piece, then fold it in half and fold it again. Pass around the hat. Each person places the folded name in the hat. Make sure to include your name and the name of any other leader/helpers. Tell learners that you will pass the hat to one person who will draw one piece of paper and read the name. Then the person shares something positive that he or she appreciates about the person named on the paper. After sharing, pass the hat to the person who was just affirmed. Repeat the process until all have been affirmed. Instruct everyone to keep the name they have drawn and to pray for that person each day in the coming week. As they pray for each other they are practicing Christian love.

Option: For younger learners, write their names on the papers, and let the learners fold them. As each name is drawn, the leader offers the affirmations.

9 Neighborhood Earth

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Contemplate the scripture using the questions below. In this activity, learners will consider the world as their neighborhood. Purchase an earth ball or inflatable globe (available in educational supply stores and from the website listed below). Inflate the ball and become familiar with all the regions of the world. Hold the earth in your hand and say a prayer for God's blessing upon this miraculous, yet fragile planet. To share this activity in worship, arrange the date and time with the pastor or worship leader.

Supplies:

- earth ball or inflated globe (www.geographystore.com)
- Bibles for all learners
- (optional) time to share activity in worship

As learners arrive, welcome them to neighborhood earth. Ask them to sit wherever they like. Pass out Bibles and read Romans 13:8–14 together. Ask:

- What is the message here?
- In verses 9–10, what does Jesus specifically ask us to do?
- What is a neighbor? Where do they live?

Bring out the earth ball and say: *This is God's neighborhood. Who lives here?* Encourage names of different peoples and animals, such as Chinese, Peruvians, camels and polar bears and so forth; be sure they name themselves. Point to a specific region on the globe and ask who might live there. Pray for the penguins in Antarctica, for example.

Tell learners that you are going to bounce the inflated globe. Whoever catches it, holds it, and says a prayer for someone or something in some area of the world. That person then bounces the globe to another and so forth. Continue until all have had a chance to bounce the globe and say a prayer.

If possible and you have worked it out with the pastors, take the earth ball to worship. Have the children demonstrate the prayer format and then toss the ball into the congregation. Allow for the ball to pass around the sanctuary several times before closing with the following prayer.



Prayer: Holy God, father and mother of all creation, thank you for the gift of this magnificent planet home: the earth. Bless all the people who reside here. Bless all the animal and plant life that reside here with us. Help us to remember you have created all life and declared it good. Help us to remember that each one has a role to play in protecting and preserving earth. We promise to do our part to work for justice on earth. Thank you God for loving us, help us learn to love as you love us. Amen.

Reflect

Reflect on your experience in game-playing. In what ways were you changed? How did the learners respond? How does a playful attitude and joy-filled laughter help us as we work for justice? Ask God to continue to bring joy, laughter, and play into this world that we may recognize the happy presence of the Holy Spirit in each one. Amen.



Attachment: Activity 3

Psalm 34:15–22

Contemporary English Version (CEV)

If you obey the LORD,
he will watch over you
and answer your prayers.
But God despises evil people,
and he will wipe them all
from the earth,
till they are forgotten.
When his people pray for help,
he listens and rescues them
from their troubles.
The LORD is there to rescue
all
who are discouraged
and have given up hope.
The LORD's people
may suffer a lot,
but he will always
bring them safely through.
Not one of their bones
will ever be broken.
Wicked people are killed
by their own evil deeds,
and if you hate God's people
you will be punished.
The LORD saves the lives
of his servants.
Run to him for protection,
and you won't be punished.

The Message

GOD keeps an eye on his friends,
his ears pick up every moan and groan.

GOD won't put up with rebels;
he'll cull them from the pack.

Is anyone crying for
help? GOD is listening,
ready to rescue you.

If your heart is broken, you'll
find GOD right there;
if you're kicked in the gut, he'll
help you catch your breath.

Disciples so often get into trouble;
still, GOD is there every time.

He's your bodyguard, shielding every bone;
not even a finger gets broken.

The wicked commit slow suicide;

they waste their lives hating the good.

GOD pays for each slave's freedom;
no one who runs to him loses out.

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Working for Justice



Workshop: Music

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God’s creation. To work for justice we imagine God’s *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus’ lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.

- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.
- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation’s overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6:1–8. More than one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Music inspires, encourages, and teaches. Through songs we learn stories and histories. Through dance we express ourselves and learn of different cultures. Instruments, recordings, songs, and dance will be utilized to broaden the learners’ understanding of justice in God’s world. In this workshop the learners will experience a wide range of musical expressions to help them explore and express the faith practice of working for justice.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Isaiah 1:1, 10–18;
Amos 5:18–24

Exploring & Engaging Activities

1 Making Music Together (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Locate a piano or keyboard with space for the children to gather around. Spend time just tinkering with various keys, notes, and sounds. Reflect on this important truth: God gives each one a unique voice. Like keys on the piano, all voices are needed in God’s world.

Supplies:

- piano or keyboard
- (optional) an accompanist (if you need help)

Gather the children around the piano as you sit on (or stand near) the bench. Invite them to just look at all the parts; if possible, let them look inside at the strings and hammers. Then invite them to look specifically at the keyboard. *What do they notice about the keys? How are they alike? How are they different?* Responses may include some are light, some are dark; some sound high and others low. Explain that every key is important to the piano. Ask how piano keys are like people. Responses might be people have different voices or different skin colors.

Invite each child, one at a time, to play a key somewhere on the piano. Note that even though keys look alike, no two sound the same. Slowly play some notes high, low, and all around the keyboard. Play one note over and over and over, several times. Ask: *If I were playing a song, which would be more interesting—a song with one note or many notes?* If you can, play a short song such “Jesus Loves Me,” or invite a pianist or a child who knows piano to share a short song.

Leader Preparation

Think of a favorite hymn. Hum the tune and reflect on the words. Music is an ongoing presence in the church and world: armies rise in response to a song, anthems inspire courage in revolutions, lullabies sooth the weary and the wounded, ballads tell epic tales, dances encourage expression, hymns praise God and teach biblical truths. In all these ways, music has an important role to play when working for justice.

Prayer: *Holy God, open my ears to the music of the spheres. Let my heart listen to the universe that sings in glorious harmony around me. Help me to guide the learners to new understandings of the beauty and power of music in working for justice. Amen.*

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

Like the keys on the piano, God gives each person a special voice. We do not sound the same, but each voice is important. Justice is like giving each person an equal chance to speak and sing in life.

2 “Dream God’s Dream” Memory Collage

Leader preparation: Listen to “Dream God’s Dream” by Brian Sirchio. A memory collage is a collection of colorful images inspired by music. Consider a dream that you would offer for the world. What colors would it be? What symbols would you use? Read through the activity and gather supplies.

Supplies:

- song: “Dream God’s Dream” by Brian Sirchio for listening, <http://www.sirchio.com/index.php?page=songs&display=179>
- computer, iPod, or other music playing device
- 2 pieces of white art paper for each learner
- water color paint sets, brushes, cups of water, glue
- (optional) crayons and/or colored markers

Invite children to sit at the table you have prepared to create the memory collages. Invite them to create a memory collage based on a song. As they listen, they are to think about what they see in their mind’s eye. Play the song. Discuss what words they heard. *What colors did you see?* Encourage several responses.

Explain that you will replay the song. This time they are to paint colors on paper as they listen, using any colors—a few in big splashes or many colors in small dabs, whatever—until the entire page is covered with colors. When the music stops, invite them to again consider what pictures came to mind. (You may have to allow time for the painting to dry before you can do the next step, so plan another activity with music; or you might substitute crayons or colored markers.)

Have each learner now take the painted piece of paper and gently rip it into several different shapes that tell a story about what she or he heard. These can be specific shapes, such as a heart, or abstract shapes. Finally, learners glue these shapes to another piece of paper to form a collage. If time allows, invite learners to share their “Dream God’s Dream” memory collages.



3 Chanting God’s Rhythm

Leader preparation: Read Isaiah 1:1, 10–18. The prophet has harsh words for those who have turned from God’s ways. Focus on the command phrases beginning with “hear,” “listen,” “cease,” “learn,” “seek,” “rescue,” “defend,” and “plead.” Prophets come to deliver God’s often difficult to hear message. Working for justice includes bringing God’s message forward in today’s world. In this activity learners create rhythm instruments to accompany chants speaking God’s truth. Gather materials and prepare space. Make a sample set of rhythm sticks.

Supplies:

- wooden dowels ½” or ¾” diameter, cut into 15” lengths, two per participant
- colored markers
- “Chanting God’s Rhythm,” Attachment: Activity 3
- Bible



Invite learners to sit at the table. Explain that God wants everyone to work to spread truth and justice. Music is one way to speak for God. Invite each person to make a matched pair of rhythm sticks by using markers to decorate the wooden dowels.

When the sticks are completed, practice doing some group rhythms together. Invite different children to lead rhythms. Pick one final rhythm to use for chant. Show the children Isaiah 1 in the Bible, which is the verse printed on the attachment. Invite them to chant a line from the attachment, and then play the rhythm. Keep sticks quiet during the chant and active for the rhythm. Chant each line, repeating the same rhythm until all the verses have been used.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



4 Micah Was His Name—O! (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8 with a focus on verse 8. Prophets were God’s messengers, often delivering difficult messages to wayward leaders and people. It was not an easy job, but the messages prophets brought are still important today. Micah’s message to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God transcends all time. In this activity learners will celebrate the prophet Micah by singing a simple song. Become familiar with the children’s song “B-I-N-G-O.” You can listen to this song on the website listed under Supplies.

Supplies:

- Bible
- comfortable space conducive for singing
- (option) music and words for song “B-I-N-G-O,” <http://www.songsforteaching.com/folk/BINGO.php>

Invite learners to sit in a circle. Read Micah 6:8 together, and explain that prophets were important messengers for God. Sometimes they had to deliver difficult words to people who had strayed from God’s ways. Even though it was sometimes hard to accept the truth of the prophets, the people respected them as God’s chosen leaders. Today we will celebrate the prophet Micah with a fun song.

Sing the song through, inviting children to join in. First time through spell out entire name M-I-C-A-H. Second time through clap hands on M, and then sing I-C-A-H. Continue until fifth time when no letters sung.

There was a prophet worked for God
And Micah was his name—oh!
M-I-C-A-H, M-I-C-A-H, M-I-C-A-H
And Micah was his name—oh!

5 Singing for Our Lives

Leader preparation: Watch the video of “We Are a Gentle Angry People.” Sing along with the verses to learn the song. Determine which segments to watch with your group. Consider having the learners hum along and repeat the first verse at the end, as shown in the film. Gather supplies.

**Supplies:**

- song: “We Are a Gentle, Angry People,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcT3JKNggH>
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- paper and pencil for each participant (older children)

View the video with the group and talk about the words. Replay the video encouraging learners to join you in singing along. Then discuss what it means to be a gentle and angry people. *Why would someone be singing for their lives?* In the same way, consider the words of any additional verses heard in the video

Explain that the song arose out of a time of injustice—a time when some people were trying to exclude or even hurt others. Someone decided to write a song so that people could sing it to remember sharing their story so that the violence might never happen again. This song is a gentle response to deep anger. *What are some things that have happened or are happening in our world today that might make us angry? What do you think makes God angry?* List those items on the newsprint or whiteboard. Examples for younger children might include not sharing with friends, hitting a brother or sister, taking a toy away from someone else. Examples for older children might include war, pollution, gang violence, segregation, and so on. Help the participants to be as specific as possible. Responding to anger with anger is another form of injustice. Responding to anger in a positive way, such as this song, is an act of justice. Then say:

Songs like this are meant to live on in new ways throughout the years. People are encouraged to use the tune to write new verses that can be added to those that already exist. Today we are going to write at least one new verse to this tune. This will be our gentle response to an anger we have.

Note: With younger children, write the new verse as a group activity. Older learners could be divided into groups of two or three and encouraged to write verses to bring back to the group after five to seven minutes.

End the session by singing the song with all the new verses.

Option: Let the participants know that these verses may be used in a computer workshop where the singing may be videotaped and uploaded to the church website.

⑥ Hammer, Ring, Sing

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. Consider Micah’s answer to the question “What does God require of us?” Listen to the song written by Pete Seeger and sung by Peter, Paul and Mary, “If I had a Hammer.” Reflect on the relationship between Micah’s words and this song using the suggested questions below. In this activity, learners will create a justice mural to share with the congregation. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bible
- song: “If I Had a Hammer,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0DPyqg59TA&feature=related>
- computer, iPod, or other device to play or watch the song
- large sheet of paper for mural
- colored markers, paints, or pastels



Welcome learners to this activity on working for justice. Read Micah 6:8 together. Discuss briefly what the words mean. *What are examples of seeking justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God?* Play “If I Had a Hammer” once or twice. Ask: *What would Micah think about this song? Why? How would God feel? Why?* Explain that inspiring music is one way to share a message of justice. This song has been a popular justice song for years. Tell learners you will play the song again. Invite them to consider things they would want to hammer, ring, and sing about. Discuss their ideas (racism, classism, bullies, war, greed, pollution, tar sands, oil spills, and so on).

Spread out mural paper. Write “Seek justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.” across the top. Write three subheadings: “hammer,” “ring,” and “sing.” Invite learners to add under the subheadings pictures, words, or symbols of what they think helps to describe what they would hammer out, ring for, and sing about. Hang the mural in a prominent place for members of the congregation to view.

Sending & Serving Activities



7 Kitchen Pan Band (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. The prophet speaks about God’s disappointment with people. God doesn’t want treasures. God desires faithfulness and commitment. Focus on verse 8. Memorize the words “do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.” Check out the church kitchen. Gather various pans and wooden and metal spoons. Working for justice sometimes means being willing to be the prophetic voice that speaks to the world. Learners will form a kitchen pan band and march through the church chanting the words of the prophet: do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God. Think about who you need to warn about this prophetic procession.

Supplies:

- Bible
- various pans, kettles, and spoons from the kitchen
- pre-arranged place to march and chant
- soap and dish washing materials

Welcome the children to the kitchen area. Read Micah 6:8 together. Practice saying the words together several times: “do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.” *What do they mean?* Explain that God often sent prophets like Micah to help people know how to live a better life. It was Micah’s job to speak loud enough and often enough so that people would listen and learn.

Set up a display of pans, kettles, and spoons. Discuss normal uses for the dishes. Ask if they have ever seen kitchen items played as instruments. Through the ages people have used whatever they had available to make music. Washtub bands and the playing of spoons were common in the Appalachian Regions. Ask if anyone has been to a parade. *What did you see? Besides marching bands, were there any other marchers making noise? (drum and bugle corps, drill team, clowns with kazoes) Has anyone ever been to a political march or rally? What did you hear?*

Noise or music is often used to make a point. The right kind of noise is inspiring. Invite the children to march for justice using words from Micah. Have the children choose kitchen pans that they would like to play. Practice doing a few simple rhythms together. (Older children will enjoy challenging rhythmic patterns.)



Practice starting and stopping together. Explain that silence is as important as noise in music. Everyone must know when to stop and when to play. Count to three to begin, start with a few people at a time playing until everyone is playing. Raise hand to stop and so on. Try different patterns before adding the words. When everyone is ready, march through the church to spread Micah's message. Be sure to return to the kitchen, wash the dishes, and put them away.

8 Guide My Feet

Leader preparation: This activity continues the exploration of Micah 6:8. Read the verse and consider the words “walk humbly with God.” What do they mean for you? Listen to the hymn “Guide My Feet.” God desires that we walk for justice, but we do not walk alone. God—and others—always goes with us; we are never alone. In this activity, learners determine ways to walk humbly for justice as they lead the congregation in a portion of worship. Arrange the presentation time and date for worship with worship leader or pastor

Supplies:

- Bibles
- song: “Guide My Feet,” African–American traditional (tune: Guide My Feet), <http://tinyurl.com/FPSong20>; words and music, <http://www.hymnsite.com/fws/hymn.cgi?2208>
- computer, iPod, or other device for playing the music
- various colors construction paper, pencils, scissors
- hymn copies for congregation (if not in the hymnal)
- (option) arrange for choir to sing as anthem where congregation joins in

Gather the children and tell them you are glad you will be working together for justice in this workshop. Invite learners to listen for what the singer is asking for. Play the song “Guide My Feet” and discuss:

- What is the singer asking?
- What does she mean “while I run this race”?
- How is working for justice like running a race?

Ask learners to suggest ways people work for justice. Then pass out construction paper, pencils, and scissors. Have learners trace their feet and hands and cut them out, making several copies, as many as one for each member of the congregation. Direct learners to write their name on one cut out. Collect blanks and those with names on them.

On the designated Sunday, have the children distribute the cut out feet and hands while the congregation sings “Guide My Feet.” After the singing, have the children recite Micah 6:8. Invite the congregation to write something on their cut out that is either a race they are running or a way they will seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Collect the cut-outs, and then display them somewhere in the church, such as in the sanctuary, the narthex, the fellowship hall, on in a main hallway.



9 Dancing Micah's Circle

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8, Amos 4:18–25, and Isaiah 1:1, 10–20 and become familiar with these prophetic voices. What is the common theme? What does God desire? When we turn aside from righteousness, God is angry. The prophets speak for God to leaders and people who stray from God's ways. The prophets bring words of hope to help God's people to return to righteousness and faithfulness. In today's activity, learners will write new words to an old hymn and then join in a simple circle dance as they share the message of Micah 6:8.

Supplies:

- Micah 6:8
- music for "Jacob's Ladder" (recorded or have someone play it on the piano), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40U0URLnXIQ>
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- song: "We Are Dancing Sarah's Circle" (same tune as "Jacob's Ladder"), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kkb63JFE40>

Music has long been an important part of worship. Music and dance are used to tell the sacred stories of scripture. There is an old tune called "Jacob's Ladder." It is an African American tune that tells the story of Jacob from Genesis 28. Later this tune was used to tell another Bible story about Sarah from Genesis 17 and 18. Today we are going to use the same tune to tell the message of the prophet Micah. Read Micah 6:8 together. *What is the message? What does God want us to do?* Explain that one way to work for justice is to share God's message so that others will know God's desire for us. Play the tune "Jacob's Ladder" and sing or share the words to the first verse of "We Are Dancing Sarah's Circle."

Ask what words we could use to change the song so that we are dancing Micah's circle. (If the learners struggle some with this, here is one example: "We are dancing Micah's circle (*repeat three times*) seeking justice all." The second verse might be: "Seeking justice, loving kindness (*repeat three times*) hearing Micah's call." Write learners' ideas on newsprint or a whiteboard, and practice singing them until the rhythm is right. You may have one verse that you will repeat several times during the dance or have a few verses. Print final words on the newsprint or whiteboard so all can read.

Have the dance:

Learners form one large circle holding hands. Walk clockwise while singing three stanzas (Example: "We are dancing Micah's circle" 3x). On the final line ("Hearing Micah's call") learners step toward center of circle raising hands toward ceiling, then bring hands down and step back to large circle formation. On second verse, move in counter-clockwise direction, stepping to center and raising hands on final line. Repeat for as many verses as you sing, switching from clockwise to counter-clockwise. Keep words simple so that they can be easily repeated during the dance. If time allows, let learners suggest additional movements for the dance.

Practice the dance several times, and perform it for another group or for the congregation in worship or fellowship hour.

Reflect

Reflect on the time with learners. Think about the music you made together as you sought to discern and deliver God's message of working for justice. What were the most memorable moments? How did the learners inspire you? Were you changed? How? Thank God for the gift of music in the life of the church. May music continue to inspire and teach God's will for the world. Amen.

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Attachment: Activity 3

Chanting God's Rhythm

The following chants come from Isaiah 1:1, 10–18. Chant each line, and then play accompanying rhythm with rhythm sticks (*Rhythm refrain*).

Hear the word of the Lord!
Rhythm refrain

Listen to the teaching of our God!
Rhythm refrain

Make yourselves clean!
Rhythm refrain

Cease to do evil! Learn to do good!
Rhythm refrain

Seek justice and rescue the oppressed!
Rhythm refrain

Defend the orphan and plead for the widow!
Rhythm refrain

Hear the word of the Lord!
Rhythm refrain

Listen to the teaching of our God!
Rhythm refrain

Working for Justice



Workshop: Science

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God’s creation. To work for justice we imagine God’s *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus’ lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

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Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6:1–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Millions and millions of years ago, God created the world and all life. Human beings share earth's space with insects, plants, fish, sea creatures, birds, animals, multiple microorganisms, and others. The world is constantly evolving and changing as God's creative power continues today. Some life forms become extinct as other life forms arise. God desires that human beings work for justice as stewards, that is, caretakers of the earth. As stewards for God, people have a significant role to play in the health and well-being of earth while interacting with the other life forms that coinhabit the planet with us. Through experimentation, observation, classification, and exploration participants in the science and nature workshop will discover how understanding the environment and the ecological makeup of earth is necessary to living out their role as caretakers of God's great blue marble: earth.

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6:1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Amos 5:18–24;

Romans 13:8–14

Leader Preparation

Remember a meaningful and joyful experience with nature: a walk in the woods, a beautiful sunset, a view of the ocean, or the excitement of a summer storm. Consider creatures that have been important to you: wild birds, trout, favorite pets, spiders and their webs, or others. Now remember when nature seemed out of control and frightening: a tsunami in Thailand or Japan, an earthquake in Haiti, a hurricane in New Orleans, a forest fire, or a flood in your own town. All nature is a part of God's creation; God desires our

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Caring for the Earth (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. Consider how Micah's words relate to our natural world. Working for justice includes putting things right in nature. In this activity children identify ways that the earth's resources are abused by human beings. Next, children can suggest positive actions that create solutions for conservation of natural resources. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bible
- black and red markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- paper and crayons

Welcome learners to this workshop. Read Micah 6:8 together. Ask: *What is God asking us to do?* The answer is to work for justice we have to be able to identify places that are imperfect and need change. Invite the children to focus on ways that human beings abuse the earth and its natural resources.

With a black marker, divide the newsprint into four quadrants, each labeled with one of the headings: Land, Water, Air, and People. Ask the children to provide examples of abuse for each category. Write their suggestions in each respective quadrant. With the red marker, draw a circle around the words in each quadrant putting a diagonal cross mark (the international sign for "no") through them. Now invite children to share examples of ways that these abuses can be corrected. Write these examples in red. Examples might include: utilize solar power or wind energy instead of burning coal or oil; turn off the water while brushing your teeth; take shorter showers; plant grass or grain to prevent soil erosion; plan

help as stewards of the earth. We have a responsibility to learn how to be good caretakers working in concert with God and nature. Carefully read and prepare for each activity remembering that God is with you in the process.

Prayer: Holy and mysterious God, I am but one humble person in the midst of your amazing creation. Help me to guide these children to new understandings of their roles as caretakers of this planet. May we encounter your loving presence in unexpected and surprising ways as we study the incredible gifts of science and nature. Amen.

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

for green space when building a city; plant more trees; recycle; take your own reusable bags when shopping.

Pass out paper and crayons. Invite each child to choose one area and draw a picture representing one way she or he can work for justice by conserving and preserving natural resources.



2 Planting the Trees of Home

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14 and consider the world, so large and yet so small. Think about people around the globe and how they are God’s beloved people, too. In this activity children will learn about one woman’s dream to reforest her homeland. They will plant seeds of local trees. Locate a copy of *Planting the Trees of Kenya: the Story of Wangri Maathai* by Nobel Laureate Claire A. Nivola, available from a local library or through online book sellers. Read the story a few times until you are familiar enough that you can easily read it to the group.

Supplies:

- Bible
- globe or world map
- book: *Planting the Trees of Kenya: the Story of Wangri Maathai* by Claire A. Nivola (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008)
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- “Ten Reasons Trees Are Important,” Attachment: Activity 2
- (optional) seedlings from a local nursery, the Department of Natural Resources, or the Arbor Day Foundation, and instructions for planting seedlings

Read or tell the story of the book. Talk about it:

- What happened to the trees in Kenya?
- Do you remember how many years it took for the trees to disappear?
- We call this deforestation. What problems did deforestation create?
- How did Claire decide to solve the problem?
- What kinds of trees grow in our area?
- Why are they important to us?
- What if our trees disappeared?
- What is global warming?

Invite the children to name reasons trees are important. List their ideas on newsprint or a whiteboard. Then distribute copies of the handout. How many of these reasons did they name? How many other reasons did they name? One way to work for justice is to help the earth to grow as God intended. One way we can work for justice is by planting trees that are native to the area in which we live.

Option: Give each learner a native species seedling to take home to plant. Seedlings provided by the Arbor Day Foundation or Department of Natural Resources come with instructions for planting and growing. Be sure to provide a copy of these instructions for each learner. A local nursery provider should be able to give instructions as well. It is important to choose seedlings that are native to the area in which you live thereby enhancing the natural environment.



③ Water Pollution and Restoration

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:8. In this activity learners will focus on the words “seek justice” as those words pertain to water use. Practice the experiment below as you ponder the way you use water every day. How might you be a better water steward? Gather supplies, and prepare the experiment table.

Prayer: Dear God, let me be a living example of positive stewardship as I guide the learners entrusted to me. Thank you for the bountiful blessing of water. Amen.

Supplies:

- Bible
- ¼ cup of dirt or soil
- ¾ cup of water
- a large cup, wooden spoon
- some gravel, some sand
- a large funnel
- a clear glass quart jar

Read Micah 6:8. *What does God require of us?* Invite the children to consider how helping to preserve clean water is one way to seek justice. *Who needs water to live? How do we help preserve clean water?* Invite learners to participate by performing steps in the experiment. Have all the items ready on a prepared table.

First, pour water into the large cup. Add the soil. Using a wooden spoon, stir well to mix. Starting with larger pieces of gravel at the bottom, alternate layers of gravel and sand in the funnel. Have one learner hold the filled funnel over the mouth of the clear jar. Another participant can slowly pour the dirty water from the large cup through the funnel. Discuss: *What do you notice about the water flowing into the clear glass jar?* (The water should be cleaner.) Repeat by taking this same water and pouring it through the natural filter again. God provides ways for nature to clean and filter water. Wetlands are nature’s filtering funnels. By preserving wetlands, we are working for justice by helping to create clean water.

Discerning & Deciding Activities



④ Nature Detective Scavenger Hunt (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 carefully, focusing on verse 24. Consider the metaphorical use of nature in the passage. Nature is something all human beings live within. We are interconnected with nature and cannot live without trees, plants, air, or water. Today learners will participate in a simple scavenger hunt, finding and recording as many examples of nature surviving as possible. Walk the church grounds or local neighborhood to determine the best place for the activity; plan on being outside about 10 minutes. If need be, invite another adult to join you as chaperone. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bible
- pencils and paper
- place to walk
- additional chaperones, if needed
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard



Read Amos 5 together. Ask: *What is God upset about? Who did God create? Why do we need nature? How do we abuse nature?* Invite the learners to look around the church for examples of nature surviving. Nature is one way God continues to create. Nature survives against great odds because God desires a diverse planet. Have the learners take a piece of paper and a pencil to make a list of all nature items they see. Tell them to be sure to look up, down, and all around for any example of surviving nature. Direct them to stay within the chosen area and to be prepared to return to the learning area when the time is up. Encourage them to be nature detectives, looking for unusual clues to nature's struggle to survive. They may work with a partner on this scavenger hunt. Some examples might be dandelion or other weed growing in a pavement crack, or nature's quiet presence in a breeze ruffling a flag.

After returning to the learning space, invite learners to share their lists as you write the items on newsprint or a whiteboard. Encourage learners to look for signs of God's amazing nature throughout the coming week. Invite them to continue the activity at home with family members or friends to see how large a list of nature survivors they can make exploring their home environment.

Option: Take a nature survivor walk with the learners, showing them examples of nature existing in challenging environments.



5 Tree? What Tree?

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24. Think about God's love for all creation. Take a walk outside to collect a variety of leaves and pine branches native to your area—the more variety the better. Take the leaves with you to your learning space and display them on a table. Consider each leaf, noting that no two are exactly alike. God creates a world of variety. Diversity is needed for the good of the whole. Taking care of our natural habitat is one way that we can work for justice. In this activity learners will use a website to identify the names of local trees.

Supplies:

- Bible
- variety of leaves and pine branches for learners to identify
- website: "Arbor Day," www.arborday.org/trees/whattree (or a tree identification book from the library)
- "Ten Reasons Trees Are Important," Attachment: Activity 2
- (optional) lightweight paper or tracing paper, crayons

Read Amos 5:24. Explain that God loves all creation, and that taking care of creation is one way to work for justice. Invite the children to be tree detectives. How many tree names can they identify? Ask:

- Why are trees important to us?
- What do we get from trees? (You might refer to the attachment.)
- Why do certain trees grow best in certain areas, such as palm trees, aspens, cherry trees, and so forth?
- How are trees alike? Different?

God blessed this world with many kinds of trees. As we've just shared, trees are important to our lives. Each learner should choose a leaf to identify. At the end of the activity, invite them to show their leaf and provide its name. Direct learners to the glossary of tree terms and discuss the components of the leaves they identified. Learners may trace their leaves, labeling the parts. If using the website, tell the learners to enter benefits of trees section. Invite them to share their findings.



They could also make a rubbing of the leaf or pine branch. Lay the leaf or a collection of leaves on a table. Cover them with paper. Using the side of a crayon, rub across the leaves. Be sure to capture the pattern in the leaves veins and stem.



6 “Tar Beach II”

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14, and use the questions below for reflection. Hang “Tar Beach II” in a prominent and visible location. Visit the artist’s website for further background information. In this activity learners will create a mural of their neighborhoods. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- artwork: “Tar Beach II” by Faith Ringgold, <http://tinyurl.com/FPArt16>
- artist’s website: www.faithringgold.com
- Bible
- mural paper
- crayons, markers, pastels or tempura paints, and brushes

Invite learners to be seated so that all can view the poster. Read the scripture together. Invite the children to consider their own neighborhood.

- Who lives there?
- What kinds of residential buildings are there?
- What are some examples of science in your neighborhood? (Electric lines, running water, roads, sunshine, rain, and so on)
- What are examples of nature? (Sunshine, rain, night, day)
- Where is God at work in your neighborhood?
- What colors do you see out your window during the day? At night?
- Do the colors change throughout the seasons of the year?

Direct learners’ attention to the poster “Tar Beach II.”

- What do you see here? (Read the words in the heavens.)
- What are examples of home?
- What are examples of transportation?
- What things are human made?
- What are bridges for?
- Where do you see science in this poster?
- Where do you see nature?
- What would you add to the scene?
- Where do you see God?

After discussion, direct the learners to the mural paper and art supplies. Invite them to work together to create a colorful scene of their neighborhood. Include everyone’s home somewhere in the mural. Encourage them to put in examples of roads and bridges and telephone lines that connect people to one another and the world. Working for justice means creating places where people can live together with one another and with all creation. When finished, display the mural in a prominent location.



Sending & Serving Activities



7 Web of Creation (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14. Consider the world as God’s neighborhood that includes all life—human and nonhuman. The earth is a magnificent web of interrelated life forms. In this activity learners will form a web stating ways that all are connected to one another.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- large ball of yarn
- space for children to sit in the floor in a circle

Have learners sit in a large circle on the floor. Read Romans 13:9b–10. Ask: *Who is your neighbor?* Encourage them to think about what they would include not only people, but also animals, even plants, and trees.

Tell them that you are going to pass the ball of yarn to one person, while you hold the end. The person that receives the yarn must name one example of God’s creation (can be a person, plant, animal, or so forth). As the leader, you may define what the learners are to name during each web activity, or leave it open ended. After naming one, the holder continues to hold on to part of the ball of yarn and tosses the ball across the circle to another person. Each person catches the ball of yarn, names one example of God’s creation, holds on, and tosses the ball to another. When everyone has participated, note the giant web that you created.

Continue to hold the web as you pray together: *Eternal God, thank you for the intricate web of life that connects every being to another on earth. Help us remember that each action we take affects another part of creation that you also love. Help us make wise choices so that your earth may be healthy and that all may live in peace. Thank you, God. Amen.*

8 Neighborhood Clean Scene

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14, and then take a walk through the neighborhood near the church. Consider the people who live here. Think about what constitutes being a good neighbor. In this activity, learners will participate in a competitive walk to clean up litter and debris from a local neighborhood or park. Determine the best place for the activity. Invite other adults to serve as chaperones. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- rubber gloves for each participant
- plastic garbage bags
- bathroom scale
- (optional) cookies or candy treats
- additional chaperones, if necessary

Welcome learners and ask them to read Romans 13:8–14. Discuss what makes a good neighbor. *What makes a good neighborhood?* Invite learners to participate in an activity to improve the local neighborhood. Explain that they will be divided into teams to collect litter and debris. Pass out gloves and garbage bags. Divide into teams, and assign chaperones. Remind them that they are to work as a team, staying in their respective groups as they sweep the assigned area for trash.



When you return, have participants place their gloves and collected items all in one bag. Have them wash their hands. Weigh each bag. Talk about the experience. *What was easy? What was hard? What kind of difference did we make? How will this activity affect you in the future? Where did you see God in our work today?* Taking care of the neighborhoods in which we live is one important way to work for justice.

9 Bright and Beautiful Procession

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24. The prophet seeks a world where justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Scriptures are filled with metaphors of nature to help people understand the beauty, glory, and power of God. In this activity, learners will illustrate a hymn and take part in a procession during a prearranged time in worship to share the message of God’s love for all creation. Consult with the pastor or worship leader to arrange a time for the procession. You may wish to make one banner ahead of time as an example. If possible, invite someone who is comfortable with movement to help design a dance or liturgical movement to enhance the procession. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- hymn: “All Things Bright and Beautiful” (tune: Royal Oak)
- (optional) CD or iPod download of hymn: <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/html/a/1/allthing.htm>
- poster board, colored markers, staple gun, or packing tape
- yardsticks or dowels, different colors of crepe paper

Welcome the learners. Pass out copies of the hymn and read through it together. Ask: *What images/pictures are presented in the hymn? How could we draw symbols of these words?* If possible, sing the hymn together. Ask the learners to describe a procession. Explain that pageantry and processions have been a part of worship since ancient days. Remind them of Jesus’ procession into Jerusalem where people sang, shouted, Invite them to create posters and banners for a special procession in worship. As a group, decide who will work on which images from the hymn.

Pass out poster board and markers. Encourage learners to illustrate both sides of the poster board. When the posters are finished, attach them to the wooden poles. Invite learners to add colored streamers of crepe paper to their banners. Line up in order of the verses and the presentation of images. Practice processing while carrying the banners. If there is someone to choreograph the hymn, practice the movements. If possible, leave the banners in the sanctuary as visual art for the service. If not, process out after the hymn taking the banners with you, and display them in another prominent area of the church. Sharing God’s love of creation is an important way to work for justice.

Reflect

Reflect on your time together. What did you learn about God’s presence in science and nature? Where did you encounter God in the activities with the children? Thank God for the sacred time you shared with the learners. Pray for God’s blessing on each child you have met and on all children in the world. Thank God for the miracles present in both science and nature.



Attachment: Activity 2

Ten Reasons Trees Are Important

1. **Trees Produce Oxygen:** A mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year. The forest also acts as a giant filter that cleans the air we breathe. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people."
2. **Trees Clean the Soil:** Trees can either store harmful pollutants or actually change the pollutant into less harmful forms. Trees filter sewage and farm chemicals, reduce the effects of animal wastes, clean roadside spills, and clean water runoff into streams.
3. **Trees Control Noise Pollution:** Trees muffle urban noise almost as effectively as stone walls. Trees, planted at strategic points in a neighborhood or around your house, can decrease major noises from freeways and airports.
4. **Trees Slow Storm Water Runoff:** Flash flooding can be dramatically reduced by a forest or by planting trees. One Colorado blue spruce, either planted or growing wild, can intercept more than 1000 gallons of water annually when fully grown. Underground water-holding layers of rock, sand, or gravel (aquifers) are recharged with this slowing down of water runoff.
5. **Trees Are Carbon Sinks:** To produce its food, a tree absorbs and locks away carbon dioxide in the wood, roots, and leaves. Carbon dioxide is a global warming suspect. A forest is a carbon storage area, or a "sink" that can lock up as much carbon as it produces. This locking-up process "stores" carbon as wood and not as an available "greenhouse" gas.
6. **Trees Clean the Air:** Trees help cleanse the air by intercepting airborne particles, reducing heat, and absorbing such pollutants as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. Trees remove this air pollution by lowering air temperature, through respiration, and by retaining particulates.
7. **Trees Shade and Cool:** Shade from trees reduces the need for air conditioning in summer. In winter, trees break the force of winter winds, lowering heating costs. Studies have shown that parts of cities without cooling shade from trees can literally be "heat islands" with temperatures as much as 12 degrees Fahrenheit higher than surrounding areas.
8. **Trees Act as Windbreaks:** During windy and cold seasons, trees located on the windward side act as windbreaks. A windbreak can lower home heating bills up to 30 percent and have a significant effect on reducing snow drifts. A reduction in wind can also reduce the drying effect on soil and vegetation behind the windbreak and help keep precious topsoil in place.
9. **Trees Fight Soil Erosion:** Erosion control has always started with tree and grass planting projects. Tree roots bind the soil, and their leaves break the force of wind and rain on soil. Trees fight soil erosion, conserve rainwater, and reduce water runoff and sediment deposit after storms.
10. **Trees Increase Property Values:** Real estate values increase when trees beautify a property or neighborhood. Trees can increase the property value of your home by 15 percent or more.

From "Top 10 Reasons Why Trees Are Valuable and Important," http://forestry.about.com/od/treephysiology/tp/tree_value.htm

Other important reasons trees are important:

1. Trees provide materials for medicine, shelter, and tools.
2. Trees provide food.
3. Trees bring birds and other wildlife into our town environments.
4. Trees can hide unpleasant sights.
5. Trees are beautiful and majestic.
6. Trees help record history—through their rings, through historic events, through emotional connections.

Working for Justice



Workshop: Video

About this Rotation

Working for justice is putting things right. It is building right relationships with God, each other, and all of God’s creation. To work for justice we imagine God’s *Shalom* and stay focused on the world as God intends it to be. Justice is a universal value that, within the biblical story, is required of people of faith. Following Jesus’ lead, we seek wholeness and reconciliation through both systemic and individual change. Working for justice is a way of life that is different from doing charity. Charity is a compassionate response to a need; justice works to repair the root cause of need. Justice is not a one way street—it requires active partners. It heals both the oppressed and the oppressor. Come, work for justice!

About Workshop Rotation

This method of education is informed by Dr. Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences, or the many individual ways learners apprehend and incorporate information into their own understandings and ways of being in the world.

For those new to Workshop Rotation, a little vocabulary:

- *Multiple Intelligences*: ways of incorporating information, including visual spatial, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and naturalist.
- *Rotation*: the overarching story or concept that will be explored through a number of workshops focusing on different intelligences.

- *Workshop*: primary site of learning; workshop plans focus on one or two of the intelligences while incorporating others in a secondary way to give learners various experiential ways of understanding the Rotation's overarching concept(s).
- *Workshop Leader*: the one who uses this curriculum to plan the workshop, adjusting each workshop to best meet the needs of learners, i.e., age range, size, disabilities, or any other special needs of the group.
- *Shepherd*: leaders who stay with and support a specific group through all the workshops in any rotation as they develop relationships with the learners.

Faith is learned experientially and in relationship. Shepherds are the key relational component, since they move through workshops with the learners. Workshop leaders can work with Shepherds to gear each workshop to the particular group of learners they will have this week.

The focus story for this rotation is Micah 6:1–8. At least one activity in each workshop is developed around this story. Each workshop will also have activities based on other scriptures that help us understand the importance of encountering scripture.

About this Workshop

Technology is a given experience, a pervasive reality, in the lives of children today. Television, cell phones, IMAX theaters, and Internet are all media through which they navigate comfortably. In this workshop, video selections are carefully chosen to expand and broaden the understanding of working for justice as God's people of faith. After participation in this workshop, children may be encouraged to engage in justice activities in their church, home, neighborhood, and world. God is ever speaking in new ways—even on YouTube!

BIBLE FOCUS STORY:

Micah 6: 1–8

SUPPLEMENTAL STORIES:

Romans 13:8–14;

Luke 4:14–21;

Amos 5:18–24;

Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9,

22–23;

John 10:11–18

Leader Preparation

Consider how your life has been enhanced—or damaged—through television, movies, and Internet. In what ways have these experiences changed your thinking, your life view, or your actions? In this Workshop, video will be utilized to teach about God's presence and God's desire for justice in the world. Become familiar with the video cameras, projectors, computers, televisions, and other video equipment that you will use during this work-

Exploring & Engaging Activities



1 Justice Is Personal (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Spend time reading and reflecting on Micah 6:1–8. In this activity, learners will make a list of possible ways to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God in their everyday lives. Each learner will then be interviewed, stating one way that he or she will honor Micah's words in the coming week. Gather supplies and prepare the space.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- video camera
- interview location (chair or desk where interviewees sit during filming)
- television, computer or projecting device
- paper and pencils

Welcome learners. Invite them to open their Bibles to Micah 6:1–8. Read the passage out loud together. Then ask:

- Who is God talking to?
- What is going on here?
- How can people please God?
- What are some ways we can seek justice?
- What are examples of loving kindness?
- What are examples of walking humbly with God?

Pass out paper and pencils. Ask the learners to write their name at the top of the paper. Next, ask them to write down one way they will strive to do each of these in the coming week:

shop. Enjoy using video as you expand horizons in working for justice!

Prayer: *Holy God, we have communicated with you since the beginning of time. Now, in our highly technological world, we sometimes can't hear your voice. Help us stop and listen for your voice that still calls us to work for justice using all available resources. Amen.*

- I will seek justice by . . .
- I will show that I love kindness by . . .
- I will walk humbly with God by . . .

Encourage learners to be creative and think of activities beyond those they have already talked about. Invite each learner to come to the interview chair, state his or her name, and share the examples written on the paper. Video record each one. When all have been interviewed, watch the video together. Encourage learners to follow through during the coming week on what they promised. Thank them for participating in the work of God. (Think about how to share these resolutions with a wider body, perhaps, during worship.)

Workshop Development

For each workshop leaders may choose from nine activities that help learners engage the practice of faith. It is best to select at least one activity from “Exploring and Engaging,” at least one from “Discerning and Deciding,” and at least one from “Sending and Serving.” The first activity in each category is designed for “easy preparation” (able to be done with minimal preparation with supplies normally found at the church). Using all nine activities could take 90–120 minutes.

- To plan a session of 30–45 minutes, choose three activities using one activity from each category.
- To plan a session of 45–60 minutes, choose four or five activities using at least one activity from each category.

② Who Is Important? (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:1–8. What does God require of us? In this activity, learners will view a segment of *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss to learn about working for justice. It may also help them create a prayer to pray together. Review the questions below, and be sure to watch the film clip so that you can set it up well and start it at the right point in the story. Write the words to Micah 6:8 on newsprint or a whiteboard. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- words of Micah 6:8 printed on newsprint or a whiteboard
- video: *Horton Hears a Who* DVD, Scene 4: “A Yelp for Help” (minutes 6:00–12:06) (available in the library or from a family in the church)
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard

Welcome learners to the video workshop. Read Micah 6:8. If you have been working through all of the Micah 6:8 activities, your learners might have it memorized by now. Rather than the leader reciting it, invite all the participants to recite it in unison. Otherwise, after hearing it read, ask: *What does God require of us?* Spend time to be assured that participants are clear about what those words mean. Ask learners to look for examples of Micah 6:8 as they watch a clip from *Horton Hears a Who*. Ask: *How did Horton seek justice? What made him go after the speck to save it? How did Horton show kindness? How did he walk humbly? What obstacles did Horton face?* Explain that working for justice is like Horton trying to save the speck; sometimes working for justice means going against what others think. Other times working for justice means going against community standards or rules to do what is right.

At the top of a piece of newsprint, write the children’s answers to this question: *Who are some people or animals that might need our help?* Invite learners to come forward one at a time and write ideas on the paper. Turn to another page of newsprint, and on that page write their answers to this question: *What are some things we can do for them?* Again, encourage learners to come forward and write their ideas on the paper. Tell learners that their ideas form a prayer that they will now pray together.

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for this marvelous world in which we live. Like Horton, we want to do good by helping others. Today we especially pray for [read together the list from the answers to the first question above]. We know that there is much work to be done as we work for justice. Help us to [read together the answers to the second question above]. Guide us to learn other ways that we may serve you as we seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly together with you. Thank you for characters like Horton who help us learn about taking risks to save others. Amen.*



③ Building a Global Village

Leader preparation: Read Romans 13:8–14 and reflect on the passage using the discussion questions. In this activity, learners will meet two women who were strangers who are now soul sisters. Habitat for Humanity continues to build bridges around the world. After viewing the video, learners will have an opportunity to write a letter to someone living in a location somewhere else in the world.

Supplies:

- Bible
- video: Habitat for Humanity, <http://www.habitat.org/videogallery/FlaVideo/VidPlayer640x480.aspx?video=DawnandNubia.f4v>
- projector for viewing the video
- (optional) information about a Habitat house

Read Romans 13:9b–10 together, and then say, “God wants us to love our neighbors.” Invite the participants to think about the neighborhood in which they live. *Who are some of your neighbors? What are their names? What do they look like? Are your homes similar or different? How do you show love to your neighbor?* Invite the children to watch a video from Habitat for Humanity. Describe the ministry of Habitat for Humanity. If a Habitat has been built in your community, share about that. As you watch the video, listen for the ways that the lives of these two women, Dawn and Nubia, are similar and different. View the video and then ask: *What did the women learn about each other? What did they learn from each other? How were the lives of each one changed? What do you think happens next?*

Close the activity with a prayer such as this: *Holy God, thank you for the diversity of our world. Help each of us to remember that you love every person in this world. Help us to learn from the story of Dawn and Nubia so that we may love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.*

Discerning & Deciding Activities



④ “You Were There” Interviews (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read Luke 4:14–21. Ponder what it was like to be in the synagogue when Jesus stood up to speak. Reflect on the passage using the questions below. In this activity learners will travel back in time to imagine what it was like to be there as witnesses when Jesus taught. Learners will each take on a role such as old man, old woman, Jesus’ brother, Jesus’ sister, young child, and so forth. As their respective characters, learners will be interviewed to share their experience of that moment. The video will then be viewed by the entire group. Gather supplies and prepare the space.

Supplies:

- Bibles for participants
- one or more video cameras
- projection equipment, computer or television
- paper and pencils or other writing tools
- (optional) biblical costumes

Invite learners to come in and be seated. Pass out Bibles. Read Luke 4:14–21 together. Then ask:



- What is going on here?
- How do you think the people in the synagogue respond?
- Who might be there in addition to Jesus?
- Who worships in our church on Sunday?

Many different kinds of people went to synagogue in Jesus' day, just as many different kinds of people come to church today. Some might be old, young, sick, healthy, and so on. Why would some people be happy to hear Jesus? Why would synagogue leaders be upset or angry? Invite learners to pretend to be someone who was in worship that day when Jesus spoke.

Suggestions for characters include: Mr. and Mrs. Simeon; Jesus' mother; Jesus' sisters and brothers; Peter, Andrew, and James and John Zebedee (brothers); the synagogue rabbi; scribes. Invite learners to choose a character to portray. Pass out paper and pencils and give them a few minutes to write the kinds of questions or responses they imagine their characters might have. These notes will serve as their script. If possible, invite learners to dress up as their characters as they think about their respective roles. Then make a video as you interview learners in character (some may come in groups, such as, husband/wife, sisters and brothers). Replay the video for the group when finished. Have learners put away costumes. Thank them for their participation today.

5 Video Scavenger Hunt

Leader preparation: Read Micah 6:8 and Romans 13:8–14. Reflect on these scriptures using the group questions below. In this activity learners will take a walk in order to video record examples of justice, kindness, humility, and neighborliness. This activity may be done as a group or as a challenge among two or more teams. Invite other adult chaperones to join you, if needed. Determine where the video scavenger hunt will take place. Set location guidelines such as church, church yard, across the street, and so forth. Reminder: there are legal ramifications to video recording people without their consent. Learners are to video record items and settings, not people—unless the people are ones they know and from whom they receive permission. Set a time limit of 10–15 minutes. Gather supplies.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- video cameras (if you plan ahead, you can ask learners to bring cameras from home—with parental permission, of course)
- computer, projection system, or television for playing completed videos
- (optional) church website
- (optional) additional adult chaperones

Welcome learners and invite them to open their Bibles to Romans 13:8–14. Read it together, and reread verses 9b–10. Ask:

- What does it mean to be a good neighbor?
- What does it mean to love one's neighbor as oneself?
- Read Micah 6:8 together. What does it mean to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God?
- How does the Micah scripture relate to the command to love your neighbor as yourself?

Invite the learners to go around the church, church grounds, and immediate neighborhood to video record items or scenes depicting justice, kindness, humility, and good neighbors. There is no set list to follow and no set number of correct



responses although items to video may include such things as: handicap parking space, pedestrian crosswalk traffic light, accessible curb ramps, yield sign, No Turn on Red sign, and so forth. Each team determines what to record. Remind participants that they are not to record people without their permission. This activity is about video recording examples on inanimate objects that demonstrate justice, kindness, humility and neighborliness. It is not about recording people, but rather what people have done to create a better environment for all. When teams return after the set time limit, show the video(s) for all to view. Each team must be prepared to explain how a particular picture shows justice, kindness, humility, or neighborliness. Have fun!

After the videos have been shared, pose these questions for discussion: *What did you learn today? What surprised you? How does this activity help you to think differently about the church or neighborhood? What did this activity teach you about God?* Invite learners to share their experience with family and friends. If appropriate, put the videos on the church website with a caption such as: God's justice at work in our neighborhood.

6 Trees for Life

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24 and focus on verse 24. The nature metaphor in this passage envisions a world that is clean, healthy, and hospitable for all. Global ecological health is a critical issue today. Trees are an important ingredient in any sustainable ecosystem. In this activity, children will learn about the Arbor Day initiative to encourage planting trees and about a program called Tree City USA. Visit the website “Arbor Day” (www.arborday.org) to find out if your city is part of Tree City USA and how to join. Gather supplies and prepare videos for viewing.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- video: DVD of “It’s Arbor Day, Charlie Brown” or “Little Rascals’ Arbor Day” (both can be purchased online or checked out of your local library)
- Arbor Day information: <http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/index.cfm>
- (optional) a seedling or tree, shovel, peat moss, water

Welcome children. Invite them to be seated where they can see the video screen. Read Amos 5:24 to them. *What images come to mind? What do they see? God created a world that is beautiful and a healthy. God wants us to keep the world a good place to live. Trees are part of God’s creation. What are trees good for?* Trees are also necessary for photosynthesis, the process by which air (CO₂, carbon dioxide) is turned into the oxygen we breathe.

Play the video you have chosen and, then discuss Arbor Day. *Why is this good for the planet?*

Go outside and count the trees on or near the church grounds. Hold hands around the base of one tree and pray together a prayer such as: *Dear God, thank you for this tree and all trees in the world. Thank you for groups like the Arbor Day Foundation that seek to keep the earth alive with healthy trees. Bless this tree. May it grow strong and healthy, may we think of your great love for creation whenever we see a tree. Thank you, God, for life! Amen.*

Option: Plant a tree. Follow the directions provided by the nursery or Arbor Day Foundation.



Sending & Serving Activities

7 I Am the Good Shepherd (Easy Preparation)

Leader preparation: Read John 10:11–18, the story of the Good Shepherd. Contemplate the passage using the questions below. In this activity children learn that Jesus uses metaphors to teach about himself and God. A metaphor is a figure of speech whereby a term is transferred from the object it normally describes to another object that it designates by comparison or analogy. Some examples are: Jesus, the Good Shepherd; Jesus saying, “I am the vine and you are the branches”; a man described as “strong as an ox”; a girl described as “pretty as a picture.” In this activity, learners will come up with other ways of naming themselves using metaphor.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- video camera
- television or computer to play back video of learners

Invite learners to sit around the table. Pass out Bibles and read together John 10:11–18. Ask: *Why does Jesus say he is the Good Shepherd? What does a shepherd do?* Jesus is speaking in metaphor. That means he is trying to teach people how God loves them and cares for them. A metaphor is a way of explaining something or someone in a new way; it is a way of making something that is difficult to understand easier to understand. *Who is Jesus talking about when he uses the metaphor of sheep? For whom are the wolves and bandits metaphors?* Jesus often uses different metaphors, such as a hen who gathers her chicks, or a woman who searches for a lost coin, or a grapevine. There are also different images for God: a rock, an eagle who gathers her young, an anchor for those who are lost, and so on. Metaphors help us to think of God in new ways.

Invite learners to think of something they like to do or do well. Tell them they are going to introduce themselves using their skill, hobby, or favorite activity as a metaphor. For example: “I am Jane Doe. I am the choir singer because I like to share God’s story in music.” “I am John Doe. I am the soccer player because I like to play with others in a healthy way.” Tell learners that you will video record each one as he or she offers a metaphor of introduction. Tell them to be sure to include a way that their metaphor honors God and Christ.

When all have spoken, view the video together. Invite learners to share their knowledge of Jesus as the Good Shepherd with their family and friends.

Option: Use this activity as a get-acquainted exercise with each person repeating all that has been said before his or her turn. This will take a bit longer.

8 Heifer Project International

Leader preparation: Read Amos 5:18–24. Think about the beauty of the world exhibited in nature. Focus on Amos 5:24. Working for justice includes creating a sustainable living environment for all of God’s creatures. Visit the website of the Heifer Project (www.heifer.org) website to learn about it. Download one or two short videos to view with the learners or, if you have time, order a Heifer Project video or DVD. In this session, learners will organize a campaign in support of Heifer Project International. Work through appropriate church leadership to approve this fund-raising activity. Gather supplies. Prepare an art table with art supplies for posters. This is a good activity for



church mission conventions or for special offerings at Christmas. Some people give a heifer as a present for special days such as a birthday or Christmas.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- video: Heifer Project video, such as: “Animals Need Help, Too,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wO4b7rTOuCI&NR=1>
- computer and projector or VCR and television
- poster board, construction paper, markers, crayons, paints, glitter, glue, and so on
- (optional) mission moment to share in worship and photos for the church website

Invite learners to be seated as they arrive. Read Amos 5:18–24 together. *What is going on in this passage? What does God want?* There are people in the world who devote their lives to working for justice every single day. Show video of Heifer Project International. As a church, we can support Heifer Project efforts to create justice through helping people practice sustainable farming throughout the world. Discuss a list of animals and places that Heifer supports: water buffaloes in India, bees in Brazil, and so on.

Invite learners to create a poster to place somewhere in the church to advertise “The Heifer Project International Offering” to be taken on [specific date]. Encourage learners to draw different animals for different areas of the globe. Posters may include the cost per animal or the number of certain priced shares per animal for the more expensive ones. (Example: Buy a Pig! Only \$25 dollars per quarter section!) Ask for a volunteer or group of volunteers to provide a mission moment during worship. Photograph some of the posters and put them on the church website. Follow-up the activity by informing the learners and the congregation of their success in the project. Heifer Project International will send you information about the animal(s) purchased and where the animal(s) will be raised. Publish this information on the church website including the amount of money raised by your congregation. Thank learners for their effort in helping to create a more just world.

9 Winged Migration

Leader preparation: Read Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23. Consider God as the creator of all life—the rich and the poor, humankind and animal kind. Focus on verse 9: the generous are blessed because they share their bread with the poor. This activity is about sharing our planet with other creatures and taking care of planet earth. Following the video and discussion, learners will patrol the church grounds and environs to pick up litter. Preview the DVD selection from the beginning quotation to minute 6:45. Be prepared to pause the DVD to read the opening script aloud with the learners.

Supplies:

- Proverbs 22:9
- video: DVD of *Winged Migration* by Jacques Perrin on Sony Classics (available through your local library or for on line purchase)
- trash bags, plastic gloves

Welcome learners. Invite them to sit where they can see the film. Read Proverbs 22:9. Tell them that God expects us to take care of the poor. Usually, “the poor” refers to people, but today we are going to think about other animals that need our help. Play the selection from *Winged Migration*, pausing to read the opening script. Discuss:



- What is the promise of migration?
- What migrates?
- What were some of the other birds in the film?
- What was wrong with one of the geese?
- How did the boy help him?
- How would God feel about that?
- How can we do our part to help nature survive with us?

Choose from the following to continue:

- If you invited a guest speaker, invite that person to make a presentation.
- If the church belongs to an organization or is going to join an organization to combat pollution, describe that now.

Pass out gloves and trash bags. Take a walk around church grounds and immediate neighborhood to pick up litter.

Close in prayer such as: *Holy God, thank you for this amazing planet. Help us to work for justice in keeping our planet clean and safe for all life. Let us be generous in caring for the earth and one another. Amen.*

Option: Have the church “Adopt a Highway” or local watershed organization to help combat litter.

Option: Invite a local naturalist or Audubon Society member to speak about migration patterns in your area. Visit the website of the Audubon Society, www.audubon.org.

Reflect

Reflect on your time with the children. What were their favorite activities? Why? Where did you see God at work in your time together? How did the medium of video help you share God’s desire for justice? Picture each child as you pray: Holy and mysterious God, thank you for this time spent with learners in the video workshop. May they continue to grow healthy in the light of your love and through the lens of your grace. Amen.