

## For Children and Youth Leaders/Teachers

### WARM UP:

**Exercise:** Cartoon Character for Creative Introductions. (2–3 min) Everyone introduces themselves as a cartoon character with the reason they chose it.

**Holy Manners-** Share the expectations of group dynamics, respect and confidentiality.

### WORSHIP:

**Hymn:** MV 156 Dance with the Spirit

**Lambeth Bible Study:** (abbreviated methodology) Matthew 18:2-5

*This Bible study method was introduced at the Lambeth Conference...It is known by both names: "Lambeth" and "African."*

**Opening Prayer:** O God as we share this scripture together, grant that we may so hear it as to draw closer to you and your purposes for us and this world. Amen.

- One person reads passage slowly. (Matthew 18:2-5)
- Each person silently identifies the word or phrase that catches their attention ( 1 min ).
- Each shares the word or phrase around the group ( 3-5 min, NO DISCUSSION ).
- Another person reads the passage slowly from a different translation.
- Each person silently identifies where this passage touches their life today ( 1 min ).
- Each shares ( 3-5 min, NO DISCUSSION ).
- Close with the Prayer of Jesus / Lord's Prayer and SILENCE.

### DISCUSSION

**Print and read aloud** (*volunteers each reading one paragraph aloud*) the article:

[http://www.childtheology.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Emerging\\_Kids\\_Blogspot\\_July\\_2009.pdf](http://www.childtheology.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Emerging_Kids_Blogspot_July_2009.pdf)

#### Discuss in small groups

Does the suggestion that the Reign of God is revealed through children suggest anything to the way we undertake our ministry with children/youth? What does it mean to 'set a child in the midst of us' when we make our decisions and plans in this ministry? Other thoughts?

### A FUN ACTIVITY OF SOME KIND WOULD BE WELCOME HERE

### CLOSING VIDEO OR STORY

**The Star Thrower** – original story by Loren Eiseley in 1969

**Video versions:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SiH0cg2xy0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkV0jvmBLOc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wuSaNCIde4>

**Written versions:** <http://www.ncsr-md.org/Starfish1.htm>

[http://hopefulhealing.com/Starfish\\_Poem.html](http://hopefulhealing.com/Starfish_Poem.html)

**OR** if you want something different or that goes deeper you might try one of the Dewitt Jones videos (see Retreat for Church Boards). "Juice" is a three minute short film clip from *Celebrate What's Right with the World* in which a child is a central actor to his experience.

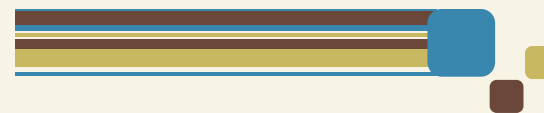
**Debrief** – It may be helpful to debrief the video or the retreat, or it may feel as if it has come to a logical conclusion at this time.

**Close:** MV 145 Draw the Circle Wide

# Toward Daring Discipleship

September, 2015

Two simple one– two hour **leadership retreats** with which to start the church year, orient, get to know new members, and energize the group.



Lorna MacQueen  
Hamilton Conference Minister  
Faith Formation for Discipleship

**Retreat leadership** is important. Not all leaders are good retreat leaders. Good facilitation is a must.

Recognize who in your midst might bring the gifts needed to create a space of trust, humour and openness, while facilitating conversation, diffusing tension and handling resistance with grace and strength.

You may wish to invite someone from outside your group for the facilitation. You may wish to offer to exchange leadership with a neighbouring congregation so that local leadership can be a participant.

Theoretically, nothing terribly controversial will arise during the retreats as they are designed, but if your church or group is in particular tension this may be a place that tension will emerge. Be aware of this, plan carefully, choose whether this is the time for such a retreat, and choose leadership with this in mind.

## For Church Boards or other leadership teams/groups

### WORSHIP

**Hymn:** VU 661 Come to My Heart

**Holy Manners-** Share the expectations of group dynamics & safe space

**Centering Scripture:** John 15:13-17

**Prayer –**

L: *No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends.*

P: **You have loved us with this great love, O Jesus, teach us your way.**

L: *I don't call you servants, instead I call you friends.*

P: **As we seek to be your friends in the world, O Jesus, help us to love your world.**

L: *You did not choose me, I chose you and appointed you to bear fruit.*

P: **The calling is daunting, but you are with us. May the fruit we bear be that of love, compassion, justice and hope. AMEN.**

### WARM UP

Give people a few minutes to think about, and a minute or less each to share their name and their happiest earliest memory of church. (Allow them to pass if they do not wish to share)

### THINKING ABOUT FAITH/SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

**Who are you?** *If the group is larger than eight people divide into small groups of 4 or 5. Introduce the two part exercise and emphasise that there is no right or wrong response. This is not a place for debate or disagreement. Emphasise the richness in diversity of experience and viewpoint.*

*Have some images available including images related to nature, justice, religion, service, worship and fun. Have Bibles and Hymn books available and opportunity for people to wander around the sanctuary and look at symbols if it is helpful to them.*

#### 1. For individuals

**What reflects your faith or spiritual identity as an individual?**

The facilitator might share a bit about their own identity here in order to help people understand the question *and invite Individuals to take 10 minutes to reflect upon this question for them-selves while seeking a picture, symbol, hymn, or scripture to represent this identity*

For example someone might say: *I relate to 1 Corinthians 13 as the root*

*of my faith identity and my search to live my life based on love.*

These images, symbols etc. are shared in the small group with no discussion, debate or questioning. They are received by the group as a gift as people get to know each other better. Each person has an opportunity to share uninterrupted. The facilitator will inform the groups when it is time for the next person to share so that no group gets stuck on one person.

**2. For the Small Group:** *(if there is only one group adapt to allow for multiple expressions of faith and spiritual communal identity)*

**What reflects your faith or spirituality as a community?**

Invite the small groups to together reflect upon the identity of their local faith community using a hymn, symbol, scripture or image to help respond to this question for 10 minutes. Small groups seek consensus around some identity characteristic to present to the larger group.

These are shared with the larger group knowing that no image/symbol/scripture can reflect all aspects of identity but can help us think about what is meaningful to us as a community.

### FOCUSING

What is your church context? Choose a video that speaks to your local congregational context. Would it be helpful to talk about creativity? vision? celebrating the good things in your midst? Show one of the videos available from AVEL by Dewitt Jones:

- *Celebrate! Change Your Lens, Change Your Life*
- *Celebrate What's Right with the World*
- *Everyday Creativity*
- *Focus Your Vision*
- *For The Love of It*
- *Juice*
- *More Than One Right Answer*

*These videos are also available online for viewing for \$8 U.S./view (20-25 minutes) \$3 U.S./view (3min) if live-streaming is available.*

<http://dewittjones.com/training.htm#celebratechange>

**View Video and Discuss:** Use free-flowing discussion, pop-corn responses or a question such as "Was there anything in this video that spoke to you about living our call as a church?" Choose small group or plenary, perhaps initially discussing in the groups and then pop-corn sharing in plenary.



**Closing:** VU 519 We Are Pilgrims