

SESSION 1

Choral Reading

Copy this choral reading from Isaiah 25, Jeremiah 31, and Amos 9 for each youth to use during Explore (Peace Pursuit).

Readers: Leader; Isaiah 1, 2, and 3; Jeremiah 1, 2, and 3; Amos 1, 2, and 3

Leader: What will the world look like when God makes it new? When God comes to save us, what will it be like?

Isaiah Group: Listen to what the prophet Isaiah said:

Isaiah 1: The Lord will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear.

Isaiah 2: Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of God's people will be taken away from all the earth.

Isaiah 3: It will be said on that day, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited, so that God might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in God's salvation."

Jeremiah Group: The prophet Jeremiah put God's words like this:

Jeremiah 1: See, I am going to gather my people from the farthest parts of the earth.

Jeremiah 2: They shall come and sing aloud, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil; their life shall become like a watered garden.

Jeremiah 3: Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy.

Amos Group: And don't forget what God said through the prophet Amos:

Amos 1: The time is surely coming, says the Lord, when the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.

Amos 2: I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them.

Amos 3: They shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.

All: This is God's dream for our world made whole.

SESSION 3

Jesus Raises Lazarus: A Dramatic Reading

Copy this reading for each character to use during Encounter.

Characters: Narrator 1 and 2, Mary, Martha, Jesus, Crowd (read by all except Jesus)

Narrator 1: Now a certain man was ill:

Narrator 2: Lazarus of Bethany.

Narrator 1: His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent a message to Jesus:

Mary & Martha: Lord, he whom you love is ill.

Narrator 2: But when Jesus heard it, he said,

Jesus: This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

Narrator 1: So even though Jesus loved Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Narrator 2: After two days he said to the disciples,

Jesus: Let us go to Judea again.

Narrator 1: When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

Narrator 2: Martha heard that Jesus was coming and went to meet him, while Mary stayed at home.

Martha: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.

Jesus: I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

Martha: Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.

Narrator 1: When Martha had said this, she went back and told her sister Mary,

Martha: The Teacher is here and is calling for you.

Narrator 2: Mary got up quickly and went to him.

Narrator 1: Those who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up and followed her.

Narrator 2: When Mary reached Jesus, she knelt at his feet and said,

Mary: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

(continued)

SESSION 3

Jesus Raises Lazarus: A Dramatic Reading (*continued*)

Narrator 1: When Jesus saw Mary and those who came with her weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

Jesus: Where have you laid Lazarus?

Crowd: Lord, come and see.

Narrator 2: Jesus began to weep.

Crowd: See how he loved him!

Narrator 1: But some of them wondered,

Crowd: Couldn't the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?

Narrator 2: Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb.

Narrator 1: It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

Jesus: Take away the stone.

Martha: Lord, it already smells in there. He has been dead four days!

Jesus: Martha, didn't I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?

Narrator 2: So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said,

Jesus: Father, thank you that you have heard me. I know that you always hear me, but I am saying this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.

Narrator 1: When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice,

Jesus: Lazarus, come out!

Narrator 2: The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to the crowd,

Jesus: Unbind him and let him go.

SESSION 3

"Weeping Art" Instructions

Use these instructions for Explore (Respond).

1. Have youth tear colorful crepe paper streamers into small pieces. As they do, encourage them to think about things that Jesus might weep over today.
2. Have youth arrange pieces of different colors of torn streamers on a sheet of white paper to make their own designs. The design may be abstract or one that reminds them of something Jesus might weep over today or something they have shed tears over themselves.
3. Have each youth mix 1 tsp / 5 ml of salt into a cup of water to create "tears."
4. Using an eyedropper, drip "tears" across the torn crepe paper, coating all fragments well. If you do not have eyedroppers, youth can use their fingers or small paintbrushes to drip the tears.
5. Once the paper is dry, youth can peel away the pieces of crepe paper one by one, seeing what colors have been left behind. How does this art compare with their initial design?

SESSION 3

"I Am" Cards

Copy and cut apart for use in Explore (Collaborate).

John 6:35	John 8:12
John 10:9	John 10:11
John 11:25	John 14:6
John 15:5	

SESSION 4

John 13 Game Variations

Copy these two variations of the game Rock, Paper, Scissors for Explore (Collaborate).



Version 1: Robe, Table, Bread

Face your partner. Say together, “Robe, table, bread, go!” On “go,” both of you choose a position like one of these objects: robe, hands folded across chest; table, hands held flat like a table; bread, hands clasped together. The winners are as follows: The robe covers the table. The table smashes the bread. The bread gets crumbs on the robe.

Version 2: Water, Towel, Basin

Face your partner. Say together, “Water, towel, basin, go!” On “go,” both of you choose a position like one of these objects: water, hands held flat, palms-down, and fingers spread; towel, hands gripping opposite elbows; basin, hands upturned and cupped together like a bowl. The winners are as follows: The water soaks the towel. The towel covers the basin. The basin holds the water.

SESSION 11

Switching Sides

Read statements as directed in Connect to Each Other.

Switch sides if you . . .

- have a pet (tell someone what kind of pet you have)
- play an instrument (tell someone what kind of instrument)
- have been to a beach
- have traveled to another state or province
- have flown on an airplane
- like to eat broccoli
- like mint chocolate chip ice cream
- play a sport (tell someone what sport you play)
- are wearing your favorite color (tell someone what color)
- have lived in a different country
- have made bread
- like to sing
- are afraid of spiders
- have ridden a horse
- like pie more than cake
- have a brother or sister

SESSION 5

"Words for Weeping" Strips

Copy and cut out strips for use in Explore (Wrestle). End the discussion by reading the following quote:

Please: don't say it's not really so bad. Because it is. Death is awful. If you think your task as a comforter is to tell me that really, all things considered, it's not so bad, you do not sit with me in my grief but place yourself off in the distance away from me. Over there, you are of no help. What I need to hear from you is that you recognize how painful it is. I need to hear from you that you are with me in my desperation. To comfort me, you have to come close. Come sit beside me on my mourning bench.

—Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Lament for a Son*

Job 19:25–27

Psalms 23:4

Psalms 46:1

Psalms 121:7–8

Matthew 5:4

John 14:1–3

Romans 8:38–39

Romans 14:8

1 Thessalonians 4:13–14

Revelation 21:3–4

SESSION 6

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene: A Dramatic Reading

Copy this reading for each youth to use during Encounter.

Characters: Narrator, Mary, Peter, Other Disciple, Seated Disciples, Angels, Jesus

Narrator: Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed. *(Mary shows surprise, then turns and hurries back to Peter and the Other Disciple.)* So she ran and went to Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved.

Mary: They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

(Peter and Other Disciple hurry toward the tomb. Mary follows them.)

Narrator: Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

(Peter and Other Disciple return to the Seated Disciples. Mary stays at the tomb, weeping.)

Narrator: But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. *(Angels place themselves in the tomb.)*

Angels: Woman, why are you weeping?

Mary: They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

(Jesus moves to stand behind Mary.)

Narrator: When she had said this, Mary turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus: Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?

Narrator: Mary assumed that this man was the gardener.

Mary: Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus: Mary!

Mary: Rabbouni! Teacher!

Jesus: Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

(Mary runs back to the Seated Disciples.)

Mary: I have seen the Lord!

SESSION 7

"On the Way to Emmaus" Readers Theater

Characters: Apostle, Cleopas, Jesus

(Cleopas and another apostle are walking.)

Apostle: I still can't figure this out. Why would Mary and Joanna and the others tell us that Jesus' tomb was empty?

Cleopas: And this talk of men in dazzling clothes saying that Jesus has risen. What can this mean?

Apostle: And Peter found the tomb empty too. There must be something to all this, but it doesn't make any sense.

Jesus: *(coming up to walk alongside Cleopas and the Apostle)* Hello. What are you two talking about?

Cleopas: *(looking down, shaking his head)* Are you the only one in town who doesn't know what has happened?

Jesus: What happened?

Apostle: Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet of God. He did amazing things and taught us God's word. But our chief priests and leaders sentenced him to death on a cross. We had hoped that he was the one we'd waited for, the one who would save our people.

Cleopas: It's now the third day since he was killed. And some women have confused us. They went to Jesus' tomb this morning and didn't find his body there. They told us angels told them Jesus is alive. Some of the apostles went to check the tomb, and they found it empty too.

Jesus: Don't be foolish! Can't you believe what the prophets said? Didn't the Messiah have to suffer and then enter into his glory? Let me start way back with the story of Moses and explain what the prophets said about the Messiah.

(The characters talk and walk some more. Eventually, Cleopas and the Apostle stop walking, but Jesus keeps going.)

Apostle: Wait, sir! We've reached Emmaus, and it's almost dark. Join us for supper and stay with us tonight.

(Jesus returns and the characters sit down together.)

Jesus: *(holding a loaf of bread and looking up)* Father, I thank you for this bread *(breaks the bread and gives Cleopas and the Apostle a piece)*.

Cleopas: I can't believe my eyes! It's you, Lord!

Apostle: Jesus!

(A sheet is put in front of or tossed over Jesus.)

Apostle: He's gone! We should have known who he was. Weren't our hearts on fire while he talked to us on the road? Who else could explain everything to us like that?

Cleopas: *(jumping up)* Let's go tell the others! I don't care how far it is back to Jerusalem. It's really true—our Lord has risen from the dead! We have to get going—now!

SESSIONS 8, 9, 13

Responding with Art

Use for Explore (Respond) in session 8, Explore (Collaborate) in session 9, and Explore (Respond) in session 13. Create an area that offers a variety of ways to explore Bible stories in an open-ended way that is unique to each person. Youth who are not able to express themselves through words are often able to express themselves by using clay, fabric, items from nature, paper, paints, or pastels. Set up this area for session 8 and keep the materials ready for later sessions. The art response area can be used throughout the quarter but is specifically mentioned in sessions 8, 9, and 13.

Invitation to Creativity

1. Provide a variety of craft supplies and art supplies.
2. Review the themes of the scripture passages used in the session.
3. Encourage a creative environment. Have youth use the materials as they wish. Play a recording of quiet music as they work.
4. Relate quietly and affirmatively to people working in the art response area. Ask open-ended questions or affirm something about how each person is working. Use a soft voice when answering questions or talking about their work.
5. Some youth may be frustrated if their art doesn't turn out as they hoped. Remind them that the process of creating is more important than the outcome.

Craft Supplies

- Fabric scraps in a variety of colors and textures
- Items from nature
- Yarn
- Small boxes or containers in various sizes
- Wallpaper samples
- Cardboard tubes
- Tissue paper
- Ribbon
- Cotton balls
- Roundhead clothespins
- Craft sticks
- Toothpicks
- Chenille stems (pipe cleaners)
- Additional possibilities: glitter, craft foam, sequins, confetti, buttons, beads, lacing, paper doilies, wooden chopsticks or dowels

Art Supplies

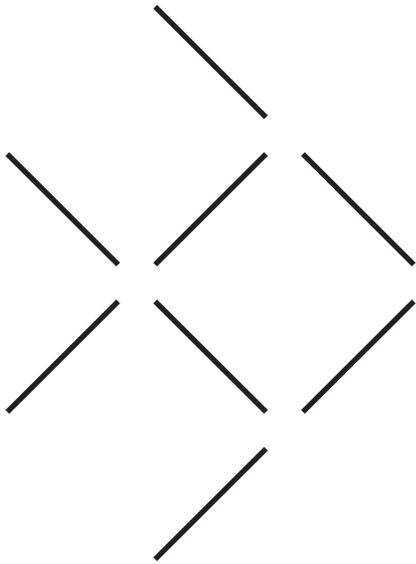
- Plain paper
- Construction paper
- Shiny paper
- Pastels
- Chalk
- Glitter pens
- Finger paint
- Tempera paints
- Watercolor paints
- Brushes
- Glue sticks, white glue
- Tape
- Scissors, staplers, hole punches

SESSION 8

"Toothpick Fish" Instructions

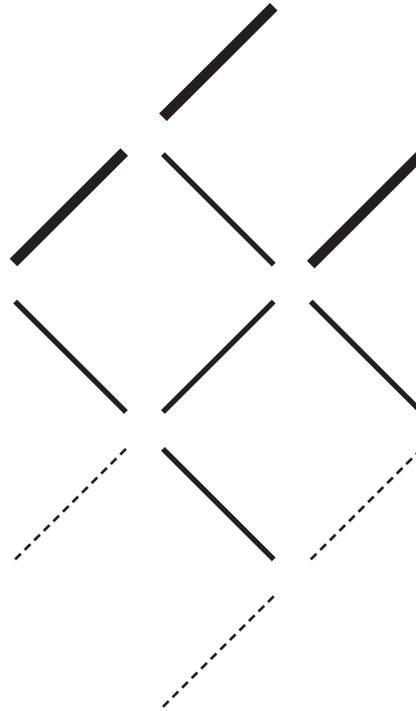
Use during Connect to Each Other.

How to set up toothpicks to begin:



How to solve:

Move dotted toothpicks one at a time to position shown by bold toothpicks.



SESSION 7

"Road Trip" Questions

Make enough copies for pairs of youth to receive each set of questions for use in Explore (Go).

Set 1

- If possible, share one thing the other person doesn't know about you.
- What is one exciting place or event you have been to recently?
- Talk about someone you miss or don't see as often as you would like.
- Talk about a time when you felt let down, abandoned, or disappointed. Who was with you during this time?

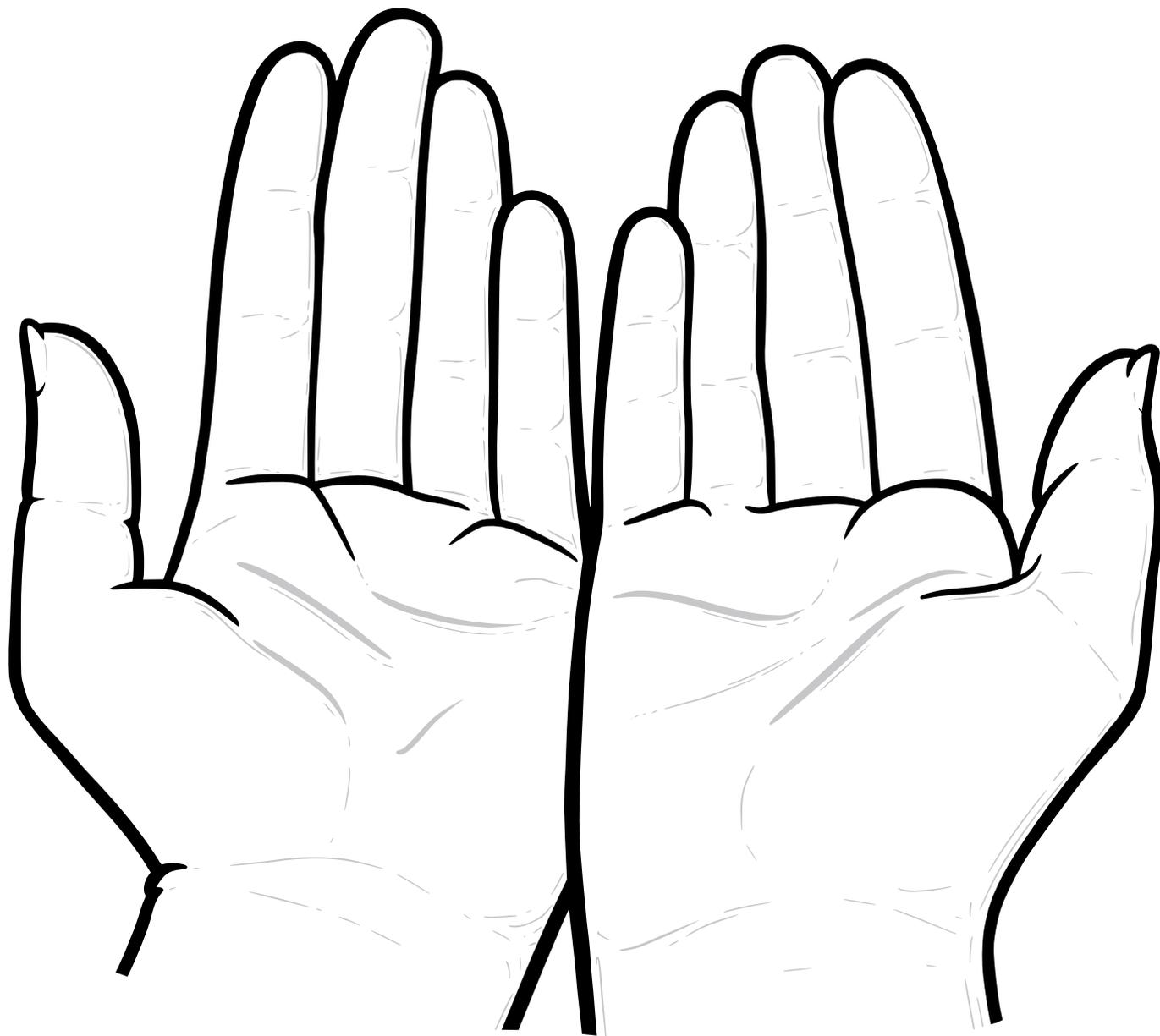
Set 2

- If possible, share one thing the other person doesn't know about you.
- Share about a special meal you had recently (or your favorite food).
- Talk about a time when you were surprised in a good way.
- Talk about places or activities that can help you "see" or experience God's presence (*nature, other people, music, church services*). If you want, share about a specific time when you felt like God was with you.
- In what places or situations is it hard to feel like God is with you? What can you do to remind yourself of God's presence?

SESSION 12

And Be Grateful

Readers are told to be grateful three times in Colossians 3:12–17. When we appreciate our blessings, we can act in love toward others. As an act of prayer, write or sketch things you are grateful for in the open hands.



SESSION 12

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

SESSION 12

"Choosing Forgiveness" Cards

Copy and cut apart each square. Use in Explore (Peace Pursuit) as directed.

<p>When someone hurts my feelings, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone takes something from me, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone is mean to me, I can ...</p>
<p>When someone bumps into me, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone lies to me, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone doesn't keep their promise, I can ...</p>
<p>When someone yells at me, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone doesn't include me, I can ...</p>	<p>When someone doesn't listen to me, I can ...</p>