



Children's Resources Sharing Enough

Young Children and Families

Hide-And-Go-Sneak

Paul thanked the Philippians for the gifts they gave him. He also offered the Philippians a gift, a letter with words about his reliance on Jesus Christ. Giving and receiving were hallmarks of ancient friendship. Young children easily find the same joy in giving and receiving. You might read out loud Philippians 1:3-5 and 4:10-14 as the biblical basis for this activity.

At home you can play a sort of "Hide-and-Go-Sneak" giving game. Players close their eyes while one person sneaks off to do a secret good deed for someone in the family. For example, they could make a bed or pick up some toys. Then everyone goes looking to discover the gift. (As children grow older, they can practice secret good deeds for other members of the family that don't get immediately noticed.)

Sunday school students can also play this game. A child can deliver a snack to the table, pick up coats, or even pat kids on the back while others are hiding their eyes. The fun is in the giving, and the joy it brings others.

God Has Enough for Us All

Take kids outside and ask them to take some deep breaths. Is there enough air for everyone? God gives us enough. Invite the kids to form their hands into two capital L shapes and bring the tips of their thumbs together. Now they have a pretend camera. Invite kids to take "pictures" of the sky and share them with others. (Make sure they get to make camera noises.) Is there enough sky for everyone? Is there enough dirt for everyone? Stretch out your arms and let kids each put a hand on your arm. Is there enough teacher for everyone? God created us. Jesus taught us. All of us!

Surprise!

Bring a special treat to church, like fresh juicy grapes or freshly-baked cupcakes. Preschoolers can wrap each of the treats in a special wrapper, such as a nice napkin or decorated lunch bag. Then deliver the treats to unsuspecting recipients at church—for example, another Sunday school class of any age. Go back to your class and draw pictures of how the faces of the children or adults or older adults looked when the preschoolers delivered the surprise. Share more of the treats in your class and take a class picture. Post all the pictures—drawn and photographed—on a bulletin board at church or on your congregation’s Web site. God teaches us to give!

Lower Elementary

Coin Stacking Olympics

There’s nothing like competitive coin stacking to increase offerings. Form teams, enlist the help of family and friends, and gather up those coins. Bring them to Sunday school and start stacking. Two goals for this activity: First, see who can make the biggest tower and second, see how much you can give to a charity of the kids choosing. Divide kids into groups that present the various giving options in the most creative and convincing ways possible.

How Do We Let Go of Our Money?

Play a silly game about how hard it can be to let go of our money. Children write dollar amounts on small sticky notes and then cover a classmate with this pretend money. The money-covered kid tries to remove all the sticky notes, without using his or her hands. Play again in teams of two. One child is covered and the other child can use his/her hands to remove the money and put it in a basket. Which team is neatest?

On the board, list children’s answers to this question: “Why/how do we help each other be generous?”

Welcome to God’s Economy

Make a short class video or play showing what Paul wanted to teach us about God’s economy. Read Philippians 4:12-13. Kids can brainstorm how they could act out this passage in a video production or as a play for another class. The text already suggests a simple script: A narrator reads the text, clause by clause. Now the other students plan how to act out the ideas of need, plenty, and God’s strength. Kids this age will have fun with this if they work in small groups and try to make the drama or video very concrete. Allow time to develop their ideas and practice their actions. Repetition will help them remember these verses and their implications. Share the resulting video or drama with other classes, including adults.

Upper Elementary

Play Telephone

Fourth, fifth, and sixth graders can extend their understanding of a portion of God's economy by learning about the Grameen Bank (www.grameen-info.org/) or studying some of the principles in *Taking Root: Hunger Causes, Hunger Hopes*.

(<http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger/Resources.aspx#takingroot>)

Challenge these older kids to name ways in which the Grameen Bank model mirrors the kind of sharing and “enough” that Jesus lived and preached. One way to make this activity fun is to use bananas as “cell phones” and pass along basic information about the Grameen Bank from child to child. When you hear what comes back, have a laugh, and then use the opportunity to share the point again, perhaps on the board.

I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens Me

There are lots of tests in the world that measure physical strength and mental strength. How do we measure spiritual strength? Invite a series of guests to your home or classroom to talk about this question, “When does your spirit feel strongest?” Upper elementary children can listen carefully and talk about the similarities/differences they hear among their guests.

Be sure to invite people who talk about the strength they feel when they are volunteering and people who have been through hard times. It will be fascinating to hear a young person's reflections on this question. Invite children to begin to notice in their own lives when they feel spiritually strong. Is it a feeling that God is close by? What does that seem like? Write about it!