

## **Faith Trek Training Centers: Strength for the Journey**

This activity is designed to explore God's provisions for nurture and support as God's people journey together in faith. They will realize the importance of daily Bible reading and ongoing faith community to uphold and surround them as they venture forth in their calls to leadership and service.

Faith Trek Journey Packs introduced and distributed in the First Steps gathering activity will be used to integrate the content of this program for future reference. A Faith Trek theme design is provided for you to make a banner, poster or PowerPoint slide. A "Faith Trek" sign design (PDF file) is also provided to identify the location for each activity.

The Leaders Notes for this activity, along with the necessary preparations, equipment and supplies are outlined below. A Program Planning Grid (PDF file) is available to assist you in coordinating some of the details and tasks involved.

Scan through the activity outline and adapt it to honor your own schedule and intent. You might also consider using this activity to enrich other intergenerational or age specific events through the year.

**Approximate time:** 10 minutes

### **Equipment and Supplies:**

- Inuksuk Construction sheet (PDF file)
- Travel Tip #6 reference sheet (PDF file)
- Faith Trek Travel Pack and Travel Tips (PDF file)
- Faith Trek theme design (PDF file)
- CD or Music video: "Take Me to the Cross" by Al Denson
- Several smooth river stones for each family or participant (Discount Store Craft Departments)  
Other Options: Recipe for Rocks (See recipe for necessary ingredients)  
Use clay to form "stones"
- A glue gun or craft glue
- Church newsletters or bulletins
- Optional: Individual bags of Trail Mix or other snack

### **Leader's Notes:**

Scan through the activity outline and adapt it to honor the time you have scheduled for your overall event.

Purchase or package individual servings of trail mix or small crackers to share with your participants as you talk about how food nurtures our bodies. You might also provide juice or water bottles to accomplish the same objective.

Consider purchasing Al Denson's "Take Me to the Cross" CD or music video at [http://www.aldenson.com/music\\_02/multimedia.html](http://www.aldenson.com/music_02/multimedia.html). The video provides a moving visualization of the song as it celebrates the significance of introducing the cross and/or the church as a lifelong comfort and strength for life's journey. The video is about 5 minutes.

Display a cross chain, and one to hang or display. Gather a few recent newsletters and church bulletins. You might also consider creating a promotional flyer to highlight your provisions for Christian education in your congregation.

Scan the Activity notes to become familiar with the inuksuk as an arctic artifact. The internet will also provide additional information.

Gather 6-10 rocks for each family/participant to make an inuksuk. Make a sample inuksuk, using the rocks you've gathered or made. You might consider preparing packets for participant use - with 1 round rock for the head, two chunky rocks for the legs and 4-5 flatter rocks for the body, shoulder and arms. The Inuksuk Construction sheet provides directions for assembly.

Note: The stones might also be made from clay or, try the following recipe.

#### RECIPE FOR ROCKS

1 c.	flour	$\frac{1}{2}$ c.	salt	Water to moisten
1 c.	used coffee grounds	$\frac{1}{4}$	sand	

In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients, adding only enough water to make soft dough. Remove the dough and knead it on a floured surface.

Pinch off pieces of dough to design stone shapes similar to the illustration on the Inuksuk Construction sheet. Allow the rocks to dry in a warm place for two or three days (longer in areas of high humidity). When dry, the dough will look and feel like a rock.

Reproduce copies of the Inuksuk Construction sheet. Cut the sheets in half to separate the directions from the Inuksuk visual and the "Jesus is the Way" place card. Cut along the dotted line to separate the place card from the visual. The visual can be used as a ready reference for participants. Fold the place cards in half, horizontally, so they will be ready to set in front of the inuksuks.

Display the Travel Tip #6 reference sheet and a Faith Trek Travel Pack. If you haven't already imprinted and assembled a pack, the pattern and guidelines for imprinting and assembly are outlined in the First Steps gathering activity along with the entire collection of Travel Tip sheets. Make sure you have a few extra packs available for participants who haven't received one.

Use the Faith Trek sign design to identify the title of this activity in the space provided. You might also download the Faith Trek theme design to enlarge and display in your program area. Many professional printers have the ability to enlarge B & W designs to 3' x 4'. You might also consider projecting the design. This option however is dependent upon the availability of Microsoft PowerPoint, a projector and a large screen. You will also need to know how to download the design and save it to an appropriate file for presentation.

#### Activity:

Introduce this activity by Identifying common issues of concern that arise when families travel long distances, e.g., "How long until we get there?" "I'm hungry." "When's the next rest stop?" Option: Distribute snack packets or water bottles as you model the satisfaction of being renewed and refreshed along the way.

Point out the significance of road signs that give direction and identify location of towns, restaurants, service stations and hotels along cross country freeways and other roadways.

Display your inuksuk and refer to it as man-made construction in the North Arctic that was used to relay vitally important information to travelers who were crossing the vast arctic tundra. Use the following information to shape your characterization.

An inuksuk is a stone structure that was built to communicate knowledge essential for survival when traveling in the North Arctic. They are found throughout the Arctic areas of Alaska, Arctic Canada and Greenland. The cold climate and vast, rugged terrain can make the Arctic lands a challenging place to travel. Many who venture forth are guided by these landmarks that stand along the way. They were constructed by people hundreds of years ago to relay messages to other travelers, to give direction, identify good places to rest or hunt and fish areas and convey dangerous terrain. Some look like people and others are more generic vertical formations. Many of them are ten-to-fifteen feet high.

Inform participants that they will each have the opportunity to make an inuksuk. They may be used to represent people who have provided direction, strength and support along their faith journeys.

Point out that Christians have a structure that they treasure as they journey in faith, Display the crosses you gathered and invite participants to define the messages it conveys. Display the place card and point out the scripture text.

Discuss the significance of placing crosses on the top of church steeples. Comment on the fact that it is the most known symbol in the world. Refer to bulletins and newsletters that describe programs for nurture and support often known to be associated with churches.

Option: Play the musical or video recording of "Take Me the Cross" by Al Denson. It characterizes the significance of the cross throughout our lives as a symbol of grace, hope and life-giving faith community.

Refer to the Travel Tip #6 reference sheet and Travel Tip #6 in the Faith Trek Travel Pack as you identify one of several verses that often provide inspiration, refreshment and support for people of all ages as they journey in faith.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge God and God will direct your paths. Proverbs 3:6

If time permits, you might also invite participants to share other Bible stories, verses and quotations that are particularly meaningful to them.

Distribute the inuksuk Construction sheets and display your sample inuksuk as you invite participants to make an inuksuk. Distribute "Jesus is the Way" place cards for them to set in front of their inuksuks.

Remind them that there are many signs, people places and structures today that provide and promote comfort and support, but the cross is the only one that points to the love, grace and peace that only God can provide.