

EarthCare (K-6th Grade): Understanding

Power Points for Teachers:

- God is all good and active in everything, everywhere.
- I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe.
- I do my best by living the Truth I know. I make a difference!

Pre-session Activities (20 min):

Name Tag Station – Invite the children make their own name tags when they come into the room.

Mindful Coloring Pages

Supplies:

- Coloring pages: <https://iheartcraftythings.com/earth-day-coloring-pages.html>
- Crayons/Markers
- Plants for circle time/ large cups for watering

Lesson Materials

photos, slides, or posters of wonders of the world, both “natural” and human-made (for example - old calendars could be a good source)

Opening

Welcome children and invite into a circle

Song

Begin with a joy song

Down in my heart

I have the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart, (where?)
Down in my heart, (where?)
Down in my heart,
I have the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart, (where?)
Down in my heart to stay.

Sacred Circle:

- **Breathe: (Facilitator)** Remind the children to breathe. Ask them if they can see their breath as the deeply breathe. To center in breath, take a deep breath, then do the same thing again and have them sigh it out really heavy where they can hear themselves. The next breath have them laugh it out and then one last time where it is calm.

- **Opening Prayer: (Facilitator)** As we take a deep breath, we raise our hands high into the skies. Then when we release our breath we move our hands out like in a big circle. Let's do this three times and on the third time we rest our hands in prayer pose. We continue to breathe and feel the air moving in and out, the rise and fall of our stomach. This breath is our power, allowing our legs to stand and hold us up. We close our eyes and we breathe again, affirming it is God as us breathing now. This is power to do all that we must we do. We take another deep breath and we feel the release of the breath wash over us as a blanket of love, a powerful blanket of love. We breathe again and we open our eyes. Taking another breath, we bow to the person in front of us, then to those that are on each side of us, saying, "I see you. I feel you. I love you. I am grateful for you. AMEN."
- **Light the Christ Candle:** Ask one of the children to light then Christ candle. Remind the students that we light the Christ candle to remind each of us that we have the power to live a life of love like Jesus!
- **Who is Jesus for us in Unity?** Ask one of the children to share who Jesus is. Remind the children Jesus is our way-shower, the great master of love. The candle reminds us that we are the light as Jesus was the light. (If there is conversation redirect and remind, we focus on how Jesus lived, not on how he died.)
- **Affirmation:** God love fills my mind and heart. (Invite the children to repeat this.)
- **Heart Agreements:** Ask each child to take one of the heart agreements and share what it means. Then sing the song together.

Gentle Hands,
Open Hearts,
Walking Feet,
Listening ears,
Kind Words
- **Love Offering:** Divine Love, Blesses and multiples, all that I have, all that I give and all that I receive. And I am joy-filled and grateful. *(FYI: the children may place lots of things besides money in the love offering basket: joy, friendship, peace, love, etc. Ask the children to share what they are placing in the basket.)*
- **Watering of plants:** Giving back to the plants which create the air we breathe (all children should have a chance to place their hands on the water cups).

Discussion & Experience: Understanding

Scripture –

Spiritual understanding is when we are listening to a still small inner voice. Sometimes we cannot explain and the heart just knows it is right.

Have the pictures placed all around the room of the wonders of the world, both “natural” and human-made before the lesson time begins.

Take a moment to share what you brought and ask children to point out what they like, or maybe have each one go find a picture that they are drawn too and bring it back to the circle. For discussion take a picture and model sharing why you chose this picture, what is it that you were drawn to and what you saw that was particularly wonderful, beautiful. What is it you love and how are you connected? This wonderful or beautiful feeling is like that of spiritual understanding. It is when the heart is so drawn and just knows this is right.

For example: The picture could be of some wolves running thru the snow. You might share the wolves have a grace a beauty as they race through the wide-open snowy field. There is a feeling of freedom and of joy. The heart may even beat a little faster. We can imagine the wolves excitement in the open spaces. We can imagine here the voice of God as the feeling of wonder and resilience.

Go around the circle and help the children articulate what they see, what they feel and how this relates in the power of spiritual understanding. Spiritual understanding is a deep connection to source and as we are drawn in this way to nature, what we love about the photo and the wonder we can express shares an appreciation of the environment, the animals and landscapes within it. Understanding our connections can deepen our desire to protect and care for the world and all of its inhabitants -- human, animal, plants and trees.

Stretch

Butterfly Stretch

- Sit on the floor, keep your back straight, and bend your legs in front of you.
- Bring the soles of your feet together.
- Push down your knees to the sides.
- Rest your hands on your feet or ankles and use your elbows to gently press your knees towards the floor.
- Hold for 25 to 30 seconds.
- Return to the starting position gently and repeat as you wish.

Child's Pose

- Kneel down with knees spread apart and toes touching each other.
- Bend forward to the floor and keep your forehead on the mat.
- Stretch your arms forward with the palms extended in front of the head.
- Move the lower half of your body such that the buttocks touch the heels.
- Inhale and exhale slowly.
- Hold the stretch for about 30 seconds.
- Return to the original position.

Downward Dog

- Start off on all fours and make sure your knees are slightly behind your hips.
- Keep your hands shoulder-width apart and spread your fingers out wide.

- Press your hands gently into the mat and tuck your toes under.
- Take a deep inhale and exhale.
- Lift your knees off the floor, keep your leg straight and strengthen as much as possible to create an inverted “V” shape.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds to one minute, then release and repeat as desired.

Bow Pose

- Lie on your belly with the head towards one side and hands alongside the body.
- Turn the head to touch the floor with the chin.
- Exhale, fold your knees, and grab the right ankle with the right hand and the left ankle with the left hand.
- Inhale, slowly lift the chest, and raise the knees while continuing to hold the ankles with your hands.
- Exhale and slowly lower chest and feet.
- Hold the stretch for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Return to the original position.

Cobra Pose

- Lie on your stomach on your yoga mat with your legs extended behind you.
- Keep your palms flat on the mat by your ribcage.
- Press down into your palms and lift your chest and head off the mat as you inhale and use the strength of your back muscles.
- Keep your shoulders down and away from your ears, and gaze forward or slightly upward.
- Hold the pose for a few breaths, then slowly release and lower your chest and head back down to the mat.

Cat Cow Stretch

- Start in the tabletop position with your wrists under your shoulders and knees under your hips.
- Drop your belly toward the mat and lift your head and tailbone as you inhale to an arch in your back. This is the cow pose.
- As you exhale, round your spine up toward the ceiling and tuck your chin to your chest, bringing your tailbone and head toward each other. This is the cat pose.
- Continue to alternate between cow and cat pose for 15 to 30 seconds, moving with your breath and allowing your spine to move freely.

Meditation

Ask the children to close their eye, take a deep breath and listen to this Navajo prayer.

Today I will walk out. Today everything negative will leave me. I will be as I was before. I will have a cool breeze over my body. I will have a light body. I will be happy forever. Nothing will hinder me I walk with beauty before me , and I walk with beauty behind me, and I walk with beauty above me, and I walk with beauty around me. My words will be beautiful. In beauty all the day long, may I walk. Through the returning seasons, may I walk. On the trail marked with pollen, may I walk. With the dew about my feet, may I walk. With beauty before me, may I walk. With beauty behind me, may I walk. With beauty below me, may I walk. With beauty above me, may I walk. With beauty all around me, may I walk. In old age

wandering on a trail of beauty, lively may I walk. In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, lively may I walk. My words will be beautiful.

Closing Prayer

It is with an inner eye I see the blessings unfold all around me. All week long I will practice an awareness of my connection to the world around me. We are all blessings and we are all important in this world. Thank you, God! Amen.