

Parables to Ponder

for Children

By

Clare McBride

SERIES: 1

Illustrations by Angela Pisaturo

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR SERIES 1

PAGES:

1) Accomplishment	3-8
2) Change	9-14
3) Dahlia ~ The Banana Eating Dolphin	15-20
4) From Seed to Seed	21-26
5) Fruit Salad	27-32
6) Greyville	33-39
7) Growing	40-45
8) Inner Guidance	46-53
9) Jack In The Birthday Box	54-59
10) The Book Worm	60-65
11) Uniqueness	66-72

ACCOMPLISHMENT

LEARNING INTENTION: Wally overcame his fear of a new adventure by telling himself he could. This parable teaches children to have courage and to express friendliness to others. We can overcome our fears by telling ourselves we can and helping others to do the same. This is called the power of positive thinking. By teaching children to have confidence in their abilities they are learning to be a positive person.

- A) Children will learn to face their fears instead of running away from them.
- B) Also, to realize things are not as frightening in real life as they are in our imaginations.
- C) Unity youth principle #2 states, “I am naturally good because God’s Divinity is in me and everyone.”

BIBLE VERSE:

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through the Christ who strengthens me.”



ACCOMPLISHMENT

“I can do this. I can do this.” Wally kept repeating this line from his favorite story about a tiny engine as he clung to his mother’s hand. Wally was about to go to his first day in kindergarten. He would have to leave his mother and the daily world they shared and be all alone in a room full of children he did not know.

“I think I can, I think I can, I think I can,” Wally repeated over and over to himself as his mother opened the door to the classroom and walked Wally inside, still clinging to her hand. Once inside, Wally looked around and was surprised by what he saw. There was a room full of boys and girls all clinging to their mothers’ hands just as scared as he was about this new adventure.

“I know I can, I know I can, I know I can” Wally laughed to himself as he let go of his mother’s hand and ran to a pile of toys in the middle of the room. “Hey everybody,” Wally called out to the other kids, “come play with me.”

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What was Wally afraid of?
- 2) How did he overcome his fear?
- 3) How do you overcome your fears?
- 4) What did Wally do for the other children to help them overcome their fears?
- 5) **YOUNGER CHILDREN:** What do you think you would have done if you

were Wally? Have you learned how to overcome your fears? How?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #2 states “I am naturally good because God’s Divinity is in me and everyone.” How did Wally use this principle?

- 6) Jesus teaches us to love one another and to see the good for everyone in all situations. How did Wally show this lesson that Jesus taught?
- 7) Do you think of others before you act so you show your love and concern for them?
- 8) Do you have the courage to face your fears?
- 9) When you are afraid do you use the power of positive thinking and tell yourself you can do what it takes to overcome your fear?
- 10) Are you ready to try being courageous and to think positively the next time you fear something?

(Reread Accomplishment)

- 11) Name some areas in your life where you are afraid. How can you work through them like Wally did?
- 12) Jesus taught fear is useless, faith is what is needed. Are you willing to practice having more faith when you want to give into fear?
- 13) What are some times in your life when you were in a group thinking you were the only one afraid and then discovered so where others in the group?
- 14) Have you ever talked to a buddy about your fears?
- 15) Why do you think Wally wanted things to work out?
- 16) Why do you think it is important to think positively to overcome fears?
- 17) What do you think might have happened if Wally had given into his fears?
- 18) In your daily life do you act in a negative, fearful way when you are faced with a challenge?
- 19) If so, how can you turn that negative into a positive?

- 20) What happens when you respond in a positive way to a new situation?
- 21) Younger Children: What challenges have you faced? (ex. starting a new school, dealing with a sibling, friends who are mean)
- 22) Older Children: How do you act when faced with something out of your comfort zone? (ex. giving a speech, trying out for the football team, cheerleading squad, being in a debate, standing up for yourself)
- 23) Which ones of the 5 basic Unity principles for children help in these situations? (Review these 5 principles with the children before they answer.)
- 24) The next time you see a kid being left out of a game or group activity will you step out of your comfort zone and invite them in? By being nice to that person being left out you are acting without fear of the crowd and bringing about a positive response from others.

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and think of a recent time you were scared. How could you have shown courage instead of fear?

(PAUSE)

When you are ready to share open your eyes.

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's go inside and think of an experience you have had when you were with some of your friends that frightened all of you. How could you have shown courage that would also have helped your friends show their courage?

(PAUSE)

When ready let's share our thoughts.

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I face my fears with courage

I use positive thinking to replace my fears

I use my courage to help others overcome their fears.

I practice Jesus' teaching to see the good in all situations for everyone.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Construction paper, glue, markers

Make a train out the construction paper that consists of three cars. Attach them with a chain loop of paper, like the kind of homemade garlands you see on Christmas trees.

Name the first car "I think I can". On the second car write something you want to accomplish (sports, art). On the third car write one thing you are afraid of (graduating into a higher grade).

Activity 2:

Draw a picture of yourself doing that frightening thing from activity 1.

Older Children Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: pencil, paper

Rewrite the Wally story putting yourself in Wally's place. Write about something you are frightened of and then handle in a way that Wally would.

Activity 2:

Supplies: Poster board, glue, scissors, magazines

Cut out pictures from the magazines of things you would like to try, things you want to learn and what you would like to be. Now make a collage of them and name it "I Think I Can".

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, Thank You for Your constant presence in my life guiding me through the rough spots during the day when I get lost and frightened. I know through my faith all is well and my life is a positive experience.

Then do the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The Presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.



CHANGE

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches children not to fear changes in their lives but to look forward to the new adventures they bring. As a child grows, they go through many stages, changing as they develop into adulthood. Each stage is an important one. If a child learns early in life that within them is God’s guidance to see them through each experience, their growth will be positive. To learn to go within to their Christ selves and trust the guidance they receive and to act from that guidance will assist them in creating a life of meaning and purpose.

- A) When a child knows “this too shall pass” each experience can have positive meaning for them.
- B) Following their own inner guidance will build their confidence in themselves.
- C) Unity youth principle #4 states, “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life.”

BIBLE VERSE: 1 Corinthians 15:51 “Behold I tell you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment.”

CHANGE

Did you know that butterflies start out as caterpillars? They go through their early lives living the life of a caterpillar. They crawl around on the ground, over and through obstacles of all kinds. Then one day Mother Nature calls and they crawl onto a branch and weave a cocoon all around them; it is like wrapping themselves up in a blanket.

While in the cocoon an amazing thing happens. While there they turn from a caterpillar into a butterfly. Slowly the cocoon opens and gradually the new butterfly starts to stretch its wings. When the butterfly has stretched all the way out of the cocoon, it flies away to find a new home for itself amidst the flowers and leaves and sky.

As we grow, we all go through changes as big and challenging as the caterpillar to butterfly change. If this scares us, we need to realize as the caterpillar does that change is a part of life. Instead of resisting and fearing the change you need to let it unfold and look for the good in it.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What happened to the caterpillar?
- 2) Was it a good change?
- 3) What was good about it?
- 4) What change have you gone through lately?
- 5) Did you fear it?
- 6) What were those fears?
- 7) What good came from the change?

8) When you are upset over a change that is happening to you do you turn to God in prayer?

9) Do you know that God will guide you through all your experiences in life?

10) YOUNGER CHILDREN: The caterpillar knows change is a part of life. Do you know that? Do you know that you can turn within and ask God for guidance? Are you willing to do that in times of change?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #4 states “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life.”

Can anyone share a time of change in their life where they asked God for guidance and received it?

11) Have you gained confidence as you have gone through changes?

12) Are you flexible enough to flow with your changes?

(Reread Change)

13) Do you know what kind of butterfly you would like to become?

14) Do you see any obstacles in your way to becoming that butterfly?

15) Do you fear them?

16) Do you know how to overcome them and turn them into good for you?

17) Do you go within to your Christ self and ask for guidance when you don't know what to do?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Pretend you are wrapped up in a blanket. Think about a change you have gone through. An example is I am taller than I was a year ago. Or, I am stronger than I was a

year ago. Or, I am smarter than I was a year ago. Now you fill in the blank I am
then I was a year ago.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share what they filled in the blank?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Gandhi said “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Think about a change you would like to see in your world right now. Ask God for guidance on what you should do to make that change.

(PAUSE)

What guidance did you receive?

Read the Example Statements aloud, one by one, and have the children repeat them after you.

Example Statements: Read aloud

I am flexible with change in my life

I am guided by God through the changes in my life

I am patient with change

I am willing to change

I see good in the change I am going through

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children’s Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, colored pencils, crayons,

Separate the children into pairs and have one draw the cocoon and one draw the caterpillar.

Activity 2:

Have each pair show their pictures to their classmates and act out what has happened to the caterpillar changing into a butterfly. Then have them explain to the class how that will happen in their own lives as they get older.

Older Children's Activity

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, pencils

Pair up the children in twos. Have one choose to be a caterpillar and one choose to be a butterfly. Then have each pair write a short story of a couple of paragraphs telling how the caterpillar turned into the butterfly. Make it a personal story between that caterpillar and the butterfly it becomes. What happened, what changes occurred?

Activity 2:

Have the children stay in their pairs and read to the class their version of their caterpillar becoming their butterfly.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, as I grow please help me through my life's changes. May I seek your guidance through each change and follow your Way for me to unfold in the unique life you have created me to be.

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God unfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

DAHLIA ~ THE BANANA EATING DOLPHIN

LEARNING INTENTION: In this parable children are taught the joy of both giving and receiving and that they are two sides of the same coin. Through giving and receiving we have a way to show God's love to another. It is a win/win situation; we make another person feel good and we feel good by doing it. If you want to receive the most good in your life from others start by giving good to others through your words and actions. As we learn in this parable give onto others as you would have them give onto you. Also remember it is more blessed to give than to receive. Become a giving person and watch the love pour into your life.

- A) When a child learns to lesson of giving love to all they will experience that love coming back into their lives.
- B) Being a loving, giving person will help a child to have a more positive experience with Life.
- C) Unity youth principle #2 states, "I am naturally good because God's Divinity is in me and in everyone."

BIBLE VERSE: Hebrews 13:16 "But do not forget to do good and to share for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

DAHLIA ~ THE BANANA EATING DOLPHIN



Once upon a time there was a dolphin named Dahlia. One day as Dahlia was swimming and leaping around some rocks that jutted off the coast of her island, she heard a lot of frantic chatter coming from one of the rocks. She swam over and found her friend Michael the monkey running back and forth on the rocks.

“Hey Michael,” Dahlia called, “what is the matter?”

“I found a bunch of bananas on the beach and brought them over here to eat and as I was pulling one off, I dropped them in the water. Do you think you could dive down and find them for me Dahlia?”

“Sure thing,” Dahlia replied and dove into the water. Before long up she came with the bananas in her mouth and deposited them at Michael’s feet. Michael beamed with delight.

“Here, let me give you one to say thank you.” Michael peeled a banana for Dahlia and tossed it into her open, waiting mouth. Dahlia tasted a banana for the first time in her life and beamed with pleasure.

“That is a wonderful tasting piece of food. Thank you so much for sharing it with me.”

The two of them hung out by the rocks enjoying the bananas together. Michael was very pleased to share his bounty with his friend because she had helped him. Dahlia was happy filling her stomach with this new taste delight.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who is Dahlia?
- 2) What did she hear as she was swimming around some rocks?
- 3) Who is Michael?
- 4) What had he lost?
- 5) What did Michael ask Dahlia to do for him?
- 6) Did she show helpfulness to Michael?
- 7) How did Michael thank her?
- 8) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Can you remember a time when you asked a friend for help and they helped you? How did that make both of you feel? Is this what Jesus means when he tells us to love one another?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #2 states “I am naturally good because God’s Divinity is in me and in everyone.” How does helping someone show that giving and receiving are two sides of the same coin? How does it show that God’ Divinity is in all of us?

(Reread Dahlia ~ The Banana Eating Dolphin)

- 9) Do you enjoy helping others?
- 10) Do you like it when someone helps you?
- 11) Do you like to share?
- 12) What will you share that is yours to share, including yourself?
- 13) What won't you share that is yours to share, including yourself?
- 14) Why are you not willing to share those parts of you?
- 15) Do you share only with certain people and not others?
- 16) Why is that?
- 17) Are you willing to open your heart and start sharing with everyone?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

When was the last time you helped someone or someone was by helped you?

How did you feel towards one another when you did this?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Think of a time when you helped someone. Did they thank you? Where you glad to help them? Now think of a time when someone helped you. How did it make you feel?

Did you thank them?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share a time they experienced giving and receiving with another person and how it made you feel?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am a caring person

I show loving kindness to others

I am generous to others

I am helpful to others

I am thankful when people help me

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Paper, colored pencils

Have each child draw their version of Michael tossing Dahlia a banana and Dahlia ready to receive it with a big grin on her face.

Activity 2:

Gather the children together in a seated circle with their pictures of Michael and Dahlia.

Lead them in a discussion of the joy of giving and the joy of receiving that they are showing in their drawing. Have them relate how this kind of giving and receiving blesses them in their daily lives. An example could be how they and their parents share love through acts of sharing love with one another.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, pencils

Have the children break out into small groups, about 3 per group depending on the class size. Have them create a scene of true giving and receiving using the paper and pencils to write down key ideas. Then they are to end their presentation with a lesson on the results of this act of kindness.

Activity 2:

Have each group present their scenarios, acting it out for their classmates. End the presentation sharing the results they came up with from this exercise. Afterwards the class can give feedback on other possible results.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for giving us a heart that is a heart of love. Help us to learn how to share that love the best we can with others every day in every way we can. Also please help us to be open to receive and be grateful for the love and sharing we receive from others.

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us. Wherever we are God is and all is well.



FROM SEED TO SEED

LEARNING INTENTION: What is true of Tommy is true of everyone. As we grow with the sun and storms of life, we out grow our “skins” and new seeds from within us are released to become new growth for us. This parable teaches children to turn within to their own Christ self. There they discover their self-worth. They learn their life has meaning. Also, this lesson is about not being afraid to let go of who we are right now so we can grow into becoming more. This is important to young children so they grow into their future unafraid and with a positive attitude.

- A) Children will learn to trust themselves
- B) That there is always more to life to experience.
- C) Unity youth principle #4 states, “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life.”

BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 17:20 “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed nothing will be impossible for you.”

FROM SEED TO SEED

Tommy Tomato silently hung on his stem in the warm sunshine. He was in deep thought about his life as a tomato from seed to seed. He knew that he and his fellow tomatoes that were all hanging from the same plant, had started out as a single seed. Tommy was thinking, “And look at what that one seed has made...this big plant with all of us tomatoes growing from it.

All of a sudden, the sun was covered by big black storm clouds. It started to rain hard and fast. Then Tommy felt himself being dropped from his parent plant to the ground. He hit the ground hard and he felt his skin split open. As Tommy lay on the ground being rained upon, he knew his life was over. But Tommy smiled to himself as he thought. He also knew that inside of himself were new seeds. thought. As these seeds left his body, they would become one with the earth and become new plants with new Tommy’s on them.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Where did Tommy come from?
- 2) Where did you come from?
- 3) Do you know that we all come from God? That we are all unique, individual seeds of God?
- 4) What things in your life have gone and been replaced with something new?

- 5) How do you feel about some part of you ending and a new part of you beginning?
- 6) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you know what “let go and let God” means? That is what Tommy did when the rain made him fall to the ground. Can you let go and let God with the sun and storms of your life?
OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #4 states “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life”. Do you turn within during the sun and storms in your life and use prayer and meditation to let go and let God show you the good of what is next?
- 7) Jesus wants you to discover the value of who you are. Have you started to discover that yet?

(Reread from Seed to Seed)

- 8) Do you experience a theme to your life? How are your different experiences helping you to define who you are?
- 9) How did Tommy show a positive attitude about what he was experiencing?
- 10) How did that positive attitude help Tommy face his future?
- 11) How do you feel when you are going through a change in your life?
- 12) Do you know how to turn within to your Christ self to stay focused in a positive way?
- 13) Do you look forward to living your life as a wonderful adventure?
- 14) If so, why?
- 15) If not, why?

16) Do you know that you are not alone, that you are part of God's world with a purpose for being here?

17) Can you take Tommy's lesson and use it in your life to live the life you are here to live?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and turn to our Christ within and see the good in a recent change that has happened in your life.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share a good they see in their life?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and ask our inner Christ to show us a recent experience we have had where we experienced a change that involved ourselves and others. How has that experience been good for all of you?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share their realization?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I experience the reverence of Life.

I experience the unity of Life.

I can "let go and let God".

I welcome the flow of my life and its changes

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Paper and colored pencils

Have the children draw a picture of themselves going through a recent change in their life. Have them draw themselves before and after the change. Perhaps they could be a plant like Tommy or an animal of some kind.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit in a circle and tell the other children about what they have drawn and why.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Paper and colored pencils

Have the children draw a picture of who they want to be when they grow up. Have the picture show themselves now and as that future person.

Activity 2:

After the children are finished with their drawings have them take turns explaining to the other children who they see themselves becoming and how they will get there using a positive attitude.

Activity 3:

Supplies: Small seed pots, potting soil, a packet of dill seeds and a packet of mint seeds, spoons for each child, water, a plastic tablecloth.

Set out all the supplies on a covered table. Have each child fill one of the seed pots with potting soil. Then let each child select either a dill seed or a mint seed and plant it in their pot and press it gently down in the pot a little bit. Next have them cover the seed with

some of the soil in the pot and lightly water them. As they are doing this activity explain to them that they will take their pots home and care for them daily. Tell them to put the pot in a sunny spot and to keep it moist. In a few days the seed will sprout. Teach them that growth happens in stages ~ first a little seed and then into full bloom. With good loving care of their seedling they will see the seedling grow; with good loving care of themselves they will grow into the person they are meant to be.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, as I go through life's adventures keep me mindful of staying open to Your lessons for me within these experiences. May I always be aware You are there with me guiding me forward into my good. Help me to let go of the old me and embrace the new me as I change through these experiences of growing into my greater good. Amen

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is, and all is well.

FRUIT SALAD

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches children the joy of life and to be thankful for that joy as it shows up in their daily lives. It also teaches children that it is not the quantity of life but the quality of life that is most important. Through this parable children will learn that no matter how young they are, they can bring joy to others as well as find joy in that bringing and change the world, one person at a time.

- A) The issue to explore with this parable is what things can they do in their own life to bring joy to themselves and the world around them.
- B) Unity youth Principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know, I make a difference.”

BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 6:31: “Therefore do not worry, saying what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear? For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your Heavenly Father knows you need all these things.”

FRUIT SALAD

The Apple said to the Banana, “Honey you are a real peach to me.”

The Banana said to the peach, “You are the apple of my eye.”

The Peach said to the Apple, “I’m bananas about you” as they were all happily mixing it up in a fruit salad together. They were new and fresh that spring and feeling really hearty and delicious. “I sure hope Eddie and Lucy like us as much as we do,”

Apple laughed as a bunch of grapes came to join them.

“Our lives might be short and sweet” Peach noted, “but we make people happy



and healthy and that is a good life to live.”

Before they all knew it, they were covered with yogurt, all mixed up together and ready to be served. Out into separated bowls they were all scattered. Eddie and Lucy’s eyes were filled with delight. “Yummy, yummy, yummy, I have got fruit for my tummy,” they sang together. The fruits giggled all the way down their throats. The next time you have a piece of fruit, or a fruit salad, thank the fruit for the nourishing and delicious self it offers up to you.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What were the apple, banana, and peach feeling joyful about?
- 2) What were they created for?
- 3) What were you created for?
- 4) What in your daily life brings you joy?
- 5) How do you express that joy?
- 6) What in your daily life are you grateful for?

- 7) How do you express your gratefulness to others?
- 8) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus taught us that if we love one another and seek good for everyone our heart will be filled with joy. Do you love the people around you such as your family, friends, and classmates? Do you try to always treat them nicely? If you do these things you will live a life of gratitude which will bring you joy.

OLDER CHILDREN:

Unity youth principle # 5 states “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know; I make a difference.” How did the apple, banana, and peach apply this principle? How did they show love expressing goodness and thankfulness? Did they experience joyfulness in doing this?

- 9) What is your uniqueness and how do you express it?
- 10) How can you express more thankfulness in your life?
- 11) How can you bring more joy into your life?

(Reread Fruit Salad)

- 12) Why was the fruit happy to be eaten?
- 13) What was their response to giving of themselves?
- 14) How do you feel when someone asks for your help? with chores? homework?
- 15) Do you do it with joy or reluctance?
- 16) How does this joy of giving of oneself show up in your life through your parents, friends, and teachers?
- 17) How do you bring your joy into your world? (ex. Donating things you don't need any longer to someone who does; visiting a sick friend)

18) Younger Children: Do you see this kind of joy around you? If not, what can you do to bring it about?

19) Older Children: If you have a friend who is hurting or is sick, what joy can you bring them?

20) Do you see the glass as half full of half empty? The next time you are down in the dumps over something find the good in the situation. Does it teach you a lesson? Are you now a better, stronger person?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Jesus teaches us that through love and thankfulness we bring joy into our daily lives. Let's get still for a moment and think about what Jesus taught. Ask yourself ~ how can I bring joy into my life today through love? Through thankfulness?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share the way they will do this today?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's sit quietly for a moment and reflect on something joyful in our daily lives. How are you practicing Jesus' message on loving one another and being thankful that brings joyfulness to you?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share how they express their joy?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

My joy comes from loving others.

My joy comes from being thankful.

My joy comes from enjoying my life on a daily basis.

My joy comes from sharing it with others.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Watercolor paints, paper and brushes

Paint your favorite fruit. Now give it a name and a personality. How does your fruit act?

Does it make everyone happy? Is there joy in you when your Mom brings it home from the store?

Activity 2:

What fruit do you think you are? Are you a sour grape or a sweet strawberry?

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Paper and pencil

Draw what the qualities of a joyful person are to you.

Draw what the qualities of a negative person are to you.

Activity 2:

Dialogue play: Break children into groups of three. Then have them compare their answers from the first activity. When the discussion is over have them write a three-way dialogue to act out this scenario:

Two fruits are joyful and one is sad. They discuss why the one fruit is sad. And what they can do to bring back its joy.

Example:

“No one loves me.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Because I never get picked to be eaten.”

“Maybe you aren’t ripe enough yet.”

Ask the children to see themselves in this dialogue and how it can have a positive effect without it being a threat to them.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, thank you for Your JOY of life. May I experience this JOY daily in my own life and share it with my world. Teach me to appreciate and be grateful for the people, places and things that bring joy into my life.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The Presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

GREYVILLE

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches children how the power of their thoughts creates their daily experiences. It also teaches them not to judge by appearances the people, things, or events in their lives Things are not always the way they seem at first.

- A) Greyville helps children to learn to handle negative thoughts and feelings and turn them into positive ones.
- B) Unity youth principle #3 states, “I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe.”
- C) They will learn how to handle their emotions through positive thinking. Also, to not judge by appearances or first impressions.

BIBLE VERSE:

Proverbs 23.7 “For as he (man) thinks in his heart, so is he.



GREYVILLE

Welcome to Greyville where years ago people here lived in a land of bright colors. Then one morning the sun rose on a land of all grey. The people decided the world was grey and so it stayed.

Today the dawn broke on another grey day. Everyone went about their day in a grey mood. At noon a stranger appeared in town wearing a BLUE suit; everyone stopped and stared. Johnny, a curious ten-year-old, asked, “What is the color of your suit and why isn’t it grey?”

“My suit is BLUE because I want it to be. I like colors so I open my mind to all the colors available”, replied the stranger.

Johnny decided to try this. He imagined a world of color and suddenly there was color everywhere. He told the villagers what the man had taught him and asked them to try this. They did and their world became bright with color. Change your thinking, change your life.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What happened in Greyville to make it such a sad place?
- 2) What was different about the man in the BLUE suit?
- 3) Johnny tried seeing things differently after meeting the man in the BLUE suit.

How did this change affect his life?

- 4) What did Johnny try after talking to the man in the BLUE suit?
- 5) What happened next?

- 6) What thoughts do you have daily regarding your family, your friends, yourself?
- 7) What kinds of seeds are you sowing with these thoughts?
- 8) Are your thoughts happy ones or sad ones?
- 9) Do you know that you can change your thoughts? What areas in your life do you need to change?
- 10) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Have you ever had a sad thought and wished it were a happy thought so you would feel better? You are in charge of your thinking. How would you like it to be? By seeing through the eyes of the Christ within you, you start to make different choices by seeing things in a positive light.

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states “I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe.” How did Johnny apply this principle after he talked to the man in the BLUE suit?

(Reread Greyville)

- 11) What did Jesus teach us about our thoughts and feelings? About not judging by appearances?
- 12) Moods are contagious and you can be a vessel for positive thoughts. How can we apply this in our daily lives? With our family? At school? With our friends?
- 13) Why do you think everyone was willing to follow the grey mood?
- 14) No one should dictate the way others feel or think. Are you learning to think for yourself instead of allowing others to rule your thoughts and actions?

- 15) How did Johnny feel about what was happening in his town?
- 16) How did the man in the BLUE suit help Johnny to see things differently?
- 17) Do you see situations in your life where one person's negative thoughts and/or feelings are dominating the entire group?
- 18) How can that bad feeling be changed?
- 19) Why do you think the man in the BLUE suit came to town?
- 20) Have you ever experienced peer pressure?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

One of Jesus' teachings is that you reap what you sow. What that means is that with positive thoughts you have positive experiences and with negative thoughts you have negative experiences. Have you ever experienced bullying on the playground? Did you tell a teacher or did you keep it to yourself? Sit for a minute and think about a negative thought you have about something in your life. Then see through the eyes of the Christ within you and change your thinking about the same situation to a positive outcome.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share what they discovered?

OLDER CHILDREN:

One of Jesus' teachings is that you reap what you sow. Sit quietly and think about a person, an event, or a situation in your life that you have negative thoughts about. For example, have you ever experienced peer pressure? How did this experience make you feel? Now see that same person, event or situation in a positive light through the eyes of the Christ within you. How do these thoughts make you feel?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share the difference they discovered by using their Christ eyes?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

“Seeing” someone you don’t like in a positive way

“Seeing” someone who has hurt you in a positive way

“Seeing” something you have failed at in a positive way

“Seeing” being disciplined in a positive way

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children’s Activity:

Activity 1

Supplies: paper and colored pencils

Pick an activity to act out. Example:

1) Children are playing tag and one of them is being a bully, hitting everyone.

Nobody steps up to stop the bully.

2) Children are playing tag and one of them is being a bully, hitting everyone. The group bands together and confronts the bully and his behavior.

3) Now have the children describe the scene at the playground and discuss which one had the more positive outcome.

Activity 2

Have each child draw a picture with colored pencils of a playground with kids playing on it. Draw a bully hitting the other children. Each child then draws themselves being a

positive solution to stop the bully. Use colors to suggest the moods of everyone in the picture, i.e. red for anger, yellow for fear, green for peacemaker.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Two students act out a scenario. One student is depressed because of a negative thought they have about themselves and they can't seem to get rid of it. Examples could be she or he feels that they will never make the cheerleading squad or the varsity team in their favorite sport. Another could be the girl or boy they like doesn't like them. Have the second student console and help them to see the positive side of the situation. Then have the whole class discuss when they have felt that way. How can they react better in the future such as reach out to a friend, teacher, or parent or perhaps to work on changing their own thoughts?

Activity 2:

Supplies: paper and colored pencils

Take time to think of a life situation that you need to change into a positive one and how you can do that. Ask for help if you need it from others in the class. Always know there is hope. Then do a drawing based on how you feel after taking this class. Use colors to express that mood.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank You for our lesson on positive thinking today. Please guide us in using our minds in positive ways that bring positive results to us and the people, places and situations in our lives. Thank you. Amen

Then do the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us

The presence of God watches over us

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

GROWING



LEARNING INTENTION: Life is constantly changing in both our personal lives and the world around us. This parable teaches about letting these changes unfold naturally and to use them to grow by doing your best with what they bring you. By being able to be in the flow of your life you will see the good in what is happening. Within this good are opportunities to move forward in a positive way. Being able to see the good in your life also helps you to see that your life has purpose, meaning. This helps to build your confidence and self-esteem.

- A) This parable teaches a child that through growth they will discover the value of who they are.
- B) The children will learn that as they grow through change, they have what it takes to master life.

C) Unity youth principle #1 states, “God is good and active in everything, everywhere.”

BIBLE VERSE:

Isaiah 46:28 “Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth neither faints nor is weary.”

GROWING

Nicholas sat on his front porch step and watched as the colorful fall leaves fell from the trees in his front yard. He was remembering sitting on the same step six to seven months ago, watching those same leaves starting to come out all over the branches on the trees. Nicholas was ten years old now and could remember this happening in the years before this one.

Nicholas’s father was sitting on the step next to him and had just finished his yearly lesson about the changing seasons. He always finished the lesson with the fact that life was like the seasons; always changing and not to get too attached to anything because it would change sooner or later. “Let life unfold for you and do the best you can with what it brings you” would always be his father’s final words on the subject.

Now that Nicholas was old enough to remember the past few years, his father’s words were making more sense to him. Each season would bring its own fun; skating in winter, planting a vegetable garden with his mother in the spring, swimming in summer, and raking leaves with his father in the fall. Nicholas enjoyed each one and happily moved from season to season looking forward to what was next in life.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What changes do you see happening in your life?
- 2) Do you notice the seasons as they come and go throughout the year?
- 3) What fun ways do you enjoy each season?
- 4) What is your favorite season of the year and why?
- 5) What growth have you noticed within yourself as you have gotten older?
- 6) What are some major changes that have happened in your outer world?
- 7) How have these changes helped you to grow?
- 8) Has your relationship with God grown over the years?
- 9) How has it grown?
- 10) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you have trust in God to help you grow through change? How have you shown patience through a growing period in your life?
- OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #1 states “God is good and active in everything, everywhere.” Using your Christ within can you see God in the growth you experience both within yourself and in the outer world?
- 11) How has growth in your life helped you become the person you are today?
- 12) In times of growth can you be thankful for what you receive from that growth?

(Reread Growing)

- 13) How do you see your future? In a positive or a negative way?
- 14) Can you give your life to God and live out your Divine Life’s purpose?
- 15) Do you know how to do that?

16) Do you have joy in your life?

17) Where does it come from?

18) Are you ready to listen to your Christ within you and follow its guidance for your life?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and think about your life right now. How is it different from your life a year ago? How have you grown?

(PAUSE)

Let's share some of your thoughts so we can all see that change and growth are natural parts of life for all of us.

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and think about a growth that you have gone through that you had a difficult time with. Now see that same event from your Christ within. Can you see God's good in that event from this perspective?

(PAUSE)

When everyone is ready let's share how seeing from the Christ within showed you the good in a difficult growth period.

Example Statements: Read Aloud

Through growth I discover the value of who I am.

Through growth I learn I have what it takes.

Through growth I learn to believe in myself.

Through growth I learn to be guided from within.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, colored pencils

Through a series of three pictures have each child draw a picture of themselves as a baby, now, and how they want to be when they get older.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit in a circle with their 3 pictures and share with the rest of the class what has happened to them as they become their mature self.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: pen, paper

Have each child make a list of all the changes in their lives ~ past, present, future. After each change have them write their reactions to those changes.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit together and share their lists and reactions with one another. Have the other children offer ways to overcome reactions that are negative.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God as I grow into my life please show me who I am and what my life's purpose is. May I forever turn to You for the guidance along my way. I open to Your infinite possibilities for my life and rejoice and am glad to be me.

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us

The presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.



INNER GUIDANCE

LEARNING INTENTION: “Inner Guidance” is a parable about how birds use their natural instincts to fly great distances from one spot on Earth to another. This introduces the child to using their God given instincts or inner guidance. Ask the children to think about what natural instincts they have like knowing danger and staying away from it. More instincts will come as they state and share examples and how these play out in their lives.

- A) You can live a productive, happy life by using your inner guidance system. It is your GPS ~ **God’s Positioning System.**
- B) Unity youth principle #3 “I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe”.

C) They will learn that thoughts are living things and have power over their lives.

They will learn the Bible principle that you reap what you sow; negative thoughts bring negative results; positive thoughts bring positive experiences. They will understand they have power over their thoughts. After taking this class they will be able to get in touch with their inner guidance and apply it to the circumstances in their lives

BIBLE VERSE: John 8:14 “I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but has the light of life.”

INNER GUIDANCE

Do you know that birds can fly great distances from one spot on Earth to another? They do this without maps, written directions, or asking for directions along the way. Even first timers know the way to their destinations every year.

It is a regular habit that some birds have at the same time each year. One morning they wake up and just know “Aha, it is time to take to the air and head out; I can feel it in my bones.” Then they gather together in their flocks and take off. They can travel great distances over a long period of time. Each day as they travel, they will stop somewhere along the way, fuel up on worms and seeds, and rest for the night. Next day it is back to the skies striving to reach their appointed destination. Every year they return to the same place on Earth and spend the season there.

Then, sure enough, after about 6 months, their natural instincts kick in again and back they fly to where they came from.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS

- 1) What happened in this story?
- 2) What is guiding the birds to their destination?
- 3) Where do you think birds go each spring and fall after they leave your neighborhood?
- 4) What is a GPS? How is a GPS used?
- 5) What is inner guidance and how is it used?
- 6) What in your life comes and goes each year? Ex. Holidays, school, vacations, tree leaves, flowers, warm weather, cold weather.
- 7) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you know what a GPS system in a car is? Do you know that you have one inside of you? Have you ever had the experience of just knowing what to do? Do you know how that happens? It is because you have a GPS system inside of you. Your inside GPS system is **God's Positioning System.**
- OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe" What do you do when you have a question for God? What happens when you get quiet and still? Remember God is good and active everywhere. How could this principle relate to our internal GPS, **God's Positioning System? What do you want to become when you get older? How can you use your inner guidance to help you achieve it? What can you do to remove something from your life you do not want to happen?**

(Reread Inner Guidance)

- 8) What do you think the birds had in common?
- 9) What goal did they share?

- 10) How did they reach their goal?
- 11) Did they go it alone or did they help each other reach the shared goal?
- 12) Why do birds leave their neighborhood each year and where do they go?
- 13) What things do you share in common with other classmates, family?
- 14) How do you work together to achieve those goals?
- 15) Do you know what a GPS is? It is a guidance system that leads you to your destination. Perhaps your parents have one in their car.
- 16) What does the Christ within you mean to you?
- 17) John 8:14 states “I am the Light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but has the Light of Life.”
- 18) How does this guidance system work like a GPS?
- 19) Does it guide you to your right destination?
- 20) Do you listen to that inner guidance when it tells you not to do something?
- 21) What experience have you had going within for guidance for the questions you have in your life? The more you practice seeking inner guidance the easier it becomes.
- 22) Are you willing to practice inner guidance in your life?
- 23) How does Unity principle #3, “I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe” help you?
- 24) What are some simple steps you can try to start the process?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's try going within and asking for guidance right now. I invite you to take 3 deep breathes and release them. This helps to quiet the body and mind. When you are

ready silently ask your inner Christ self for guidance with something in your life. For example, ask for guidance on whom you could help and how you could help them. When you are ready open your eyes.

(PAUSE)

Now who would like to share?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's try going within and asking for guidance right now. (Read the example statements below to give them ideas) I invite you to take 3 deep breathes and release them and become quiet in mind and body. Silently ask your inner Christ self for guidance about one of the following items. (Slowly state the following) Ask for guidance for someone to show your love to and how to show your love. Ask for guidance on whom you could help and how to help them. Ask for guidance about a problem in your world. Ask for guidance about your future. When you are ready open your eyes.

(PAUSE)

Now who would like to share?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

Ask for guidance for someone to show your love to and how to show that love.

Ask for guidance on whom you could help and how to help them.

Ask for guidance about a problem in your world.

Ask for guidance about your future.

THE CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: drawing paper and color pencils or crayons

Re-read the story “Inner Guidance” for ideas.

Draw a picture about the birds migrating to the south.

After the children have finished their drawings, have each student tell the others why they drew the picture the way they did.

Activity 2:

Have the children act out the play below. Before doing the play, let them each make a costume, some bird that is their favorite. In the play are three main characters and then a bunch of baby birds and one narrator.

Scene setting: Birds sitting in a tree as the leaves are falling because of autumn.

Wise Bird: I think we will have to go to our summer home soon.

Nice Bird: Yeah, the leaves are starting to fall and soon it will be winter.

Busy Bird: Let's start to prepare, the kids have to rest and be strong for the trip.

Wise Bird: Yes, that is good because they can't go such great distances without proper nourishment.

Nice Bird: Okay, so we will get together with our families two days from today.

Busy Bird: Sounds like a plan. We can get all the food we need.

Narrator: So, for the next few days the adult birds busied themselves getting ready for the flight, while the children rested and got nourishment. Wise Bird was put in charge of the flight destination because his GPS was top-notch. He was experienced in using it and listening to it and the others knew he could bring them safely to their destination. When the day came, all the birds and their families gathered at the big tree.

Wise Bird: Remember we need to stay in formation for strength. We will fly until midday and then stop for the night and fuel up.

Narrator: So, they continued their journey until mid-day when Wise Bird spotted a good place.

Wise Bird: This is a good place to rest and the ground seems to be filled with seeds and worms. We will rest here for the night and leave at daybreak.

Narrator: So, they went to sleep with full bellies, ready for the next day. The next day by noon time, the children grew restless.

Nice Bird: (to Wise Bird) The kids are tired, maybe we should stop here for the night.

Wise Bird: No, it's only noon we can make it all the way by nightfall, if we keep going.

Busy Bird: I see a pond over the horizon.

Wise Bird: I see it too! We can stop to refuel and then continue.

Narrator: So, they rested for a while, eating yummy things from the ground and drinking from the pond and then they travelled on.

Little Bird (Wise Bird's son): Lookie, Daddy, I see palm trees!

Wise Bird: Yes, yes we are home, my son.

How did Wise Bird know what to do?

Do you think he made good decisions?

Why did the others trust him?

How do you know you can trust your inner guidance?

Older Children's Activity:

Supplies: Watercolors, brushes, canvas, or paper

Do an abstract painting, putting yourself in it, using your inner guidance.

Now let each child explain their painting to the class.

After this have the kids get in a circle, sitting on the floor and practice breathing techniques Tell them to clear their mind of all thoughts. (Continue with your explanation of how to get in touch with inner guidance)

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank You for our lesson on inner guidance today. Starting today may we practice daily turning within and seeking Your divine inner guidance for all our questions and decisions. Thank You for always being with us to show us Your way.

Then do the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is.

JACK IN THE BIRTHDAY BOX

LEARNING INTENTION: Through this parable children learn about being patient and allowing things to flow and events to happen in their own way. When we learn to flow through our daily lives and the different events each day brings, we tap into our good that God intends us to have. Sharing our good and the happiness it brings us with others is a gift we have to give to one another. Begin sharing your good with others and see what a difference it makes.

- A) If you share your good with others you will receive more good back.
- B) Do what you can each day to bring a smile to someone's face.
- C) Even in difficult situations look for the good in it.
- D) Unity youth principle #5 states, "I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know, I make a difference."

BIBLE VERSE: Luke 8:15 "But the ones that fell on good ground are those who having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience."

JACK IN THE BIRTHDAY BOX

Jack was sitting in the dark inside his box. He had to be patient and wait his turn. He could tell from all the noise outside the party had started. Jack worked hard not to let his excitement make him act out his part before the right time so he wouldn't spoil everyone's fun, especially Elle's mom. She was the one making all the fun happen.



Jack had been a present to Elle way back last Christmas time and the two of them had spent countless hours having fun together. Elle would crank Jack's handle and sing "pop goes the weasel" to the music coming from Jack's box. Sure enough, all of a sudden, Jack's lid would spring open and out Jack would pop. Elle and Jack went to show & tell at Elle's school just after Christmas and they were the hit of the class. Often, they were invited to birthday parties of her friends to come and entertain. The two of them became inseparable. Now it was Elle's birthday and Jack had been chosen by Elle's mom to be a high point at the birthday party. Elle's mom had rehearsed Jack's part with him numerous times and Jack knew that after the "Happy Birthday Elle" song was sung it would be his turn to wish Elle happy birthday.

Finally, his big moment came. He could feel Elle's mom cranking his box to play his music. Jack's box was all decorated with ribbons and bows for the festive occasion. He got ready and sure enough right on cue Jack's box top flipped open and Jack sprang up and bounced back and forth waving his HAPPY BIRTHDAY ELLE sign that was attached to his hat. Elle screamed with delight, "Oh Jack you have made my birthday

extra special.” Elle’s mom beamed with pleasure; happy everything had turned out so well.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who was Jack?
- 2) Who was Elle?
- 3) What was Jack and Elle’s relationship like?
- 4) Was it a happy relationship?
- 5) Why?
- 6) What was the special occasion that Jack was a part of?
- 7) What was Jack’s role in that special occasion?
- 8) Did Jack do his part?
- 9) What virtue did Jack use to make his part a success?
- 10) YOUNGEER CHILDREN: Have you learned to be patient and wait your turn like Jack did? Can you get still and let God show you your way in a situation?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference.” How would you apply patience to this principle?

(Reread Jack in The Birthday Box)

- 11) How was Jack helpful to Elle’s Mom?
- 12) How did Jack display trust as he waited in his box?
- 13) Do you see the good in your life?
- 14) What are some ways your good shows up in your life?

15) When you are having a difficult time or in a difficult situation are you willing to start looking for the good in it?

16) Do you know how?

17) Do you share your good with others?

18) Do you like to make people around you happy?

19) Are you glad to share your good with others?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Think of a recent time in your life where you had to be patient and trust that everything would be ok.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share their thoughts?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Think of a time when you were all eager and ready to do something but nobody else was and you had to be patient and wait.

(PAUSE)

How did you handle the situation? Did you trust the process and practice patience? Do you have enough patience to let go and let God show you the way?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am patient

I am helpful

I trust God to show me the way

I do my best to live the Truth that I know

I am flexible

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Colored pencils, paper

Give each child a piece of paper and have lots of colorful pencils available. Then have them each draw their version of "Jack in the Birthday Box". Ask them to be creative with the expression they want on the top of Jack's hat as he springs out of his box.

Activity 2:

Gather the children together with their pictures. Go from child to child having them share their drawings. Have them tell the class what their sign on Jack's hat says and why they choose that message.

Older Children's Activity

Activity 1:

Supplies: Markers, paper

Pair the children up. Have each pair choose between the two of them who is going to be Jack and who is going to crank their "imaginary" box. Next have them select a favorite song to sing as the box is being cranked. Then have them select a one- or two-word message for Jack to repeat when he pops out of the box. Write out the message on the paper with the marker.

Activity 2:

When the pairs are ready have each pair in turn do their little skit of one child cranking the box singing their song and Jack crouched down and at the appointed time jump up

and declare the message that he has. After the skits are all done have the children sit together in a circle and discuss what to do when their act of kindness to someone else is rejected. This is a good opportunity to have them sit quietly in meditation, center in their Christ selves, and realize one can always come from kindness regardless of the other person's reaction. When you bring them out of meditation lead them in a discussion of how to stay centered in kindness regardless of a situation. Do a little role playing if you like.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God please help us to see the good in each day. May we bless that good so it multiples in our lives. Teach us to share that good with all the people in our lives. By recognizing our good we are recognizing Your presence in our lives.

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me.

The presence of God watches over us.

Where ever we are God is and all is well.



THE BOOK WORM

LEARNING INTENTION: To teach children to never limit themselves physically, mentally or spiritually. This parable helps children to learn to use their mind and imagination to move boldly forward in life. In the eyes of God everyone is a perfect creation just the way they are. We are all unique and within that uniqueness are the gifts we have to bring to the world. The first step is to accept ourselves just the way we are. With this acceptance comes confidence and self-esteem. When we are strong within ourselves, we can overcome any limitation we have and have a rich and fulfilling life.

- A) Children will learn they have the ability within themselves to overcome all limitations.
- B) We are all perfect just the way we are
- C) Unity youth principle #3 states, “I create my experiences by what I choose to think about and what I feel and believe.”

BIBLE VERSE:

Psalms 139.14 “I will praise you because I am fearfully and wondrously made.”

THE BOOK WORM

Pricilla was a nine-year-old little girl and a special needs child. From birth Pricilla’s legs had been misshapen. She could not walk on them and so she was confined to a wheelchair during her waking hours. Because she had always been this way, Pricilla considered herself normal. Yes, she could not run and play and be outside like the other kids, but she had her own way of getting out and getting about. You see, Pricilla was a bookworm and early in her life her mother read to her very often during the day and always at bedtime. In Pricilla’s mind she would become the story and live through her tales in glee. Soon she started to read on her own and seemed to always have her nose in a book. For hours, she would happily entertain herself through her reading going wherever the story took her.

Pricilla might not have been able to run and play outside, but in her imagination, she was limitless; even to the point of running and playing, if she wanted to.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What was Pricilla’s challenge in life?
- 2) How did she deal with this challenge?
- 3) What is a challenge in your life?
- 4) How do you deal with it?
- 5) Do you accept yourself just as you are?
- 6) Do you accept others just as they are?

- 7) Do you practice Jesus' teaching that God loves you just as you are?
- 8) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Pricilla showed courage by using her imagination through the books she read to enjoy her life. How do you show courage in your life to overcome a challenge?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe." Can you think of an incident in your life where you used determination to overcome a challenge?
- 9) Did your overcoming of a challenge build your self-confidence?
- 10) Do you know anyone with a handicap?
- 11) Do you accept them just as they are like Jesus taught us to?
- 12) Do you know that you are a unique and perfect expression of God and so is everybody else?

(Reread the Book Worm)

- 13) What do you admire most about Pricilla's attitude about herself?
- 14) What are some limitations you have due to physical, mental, social issues in your life?
- 15) Do you have Pricilla's positive attitude about them?
- 16) How do you maintain your positive attitude in regards to limiting aspects of your life?
- 17) Do you have a positive attitude about other people's limitations?
- 18) Our limitations can make us stronger. How have your limitations strengthened you?

19) Can you turn to the Christ within you and experience God's love for you just the way you are?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and think of some challenge in your life that seems bigger than you are. How could you show a determination to overcome it?

(PAUSE)

When you are ready, let's talk about it.

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's go in and remember someone you know who is handicapped. How can you show them love and acceptance?

(PAUSE)

When you are ready let's share our experiences.

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I love and accept myself just the way I am.

I love and accept others just as they are.

I am a unique and perfect expression of God.

I can overcome all challenges with God's help.

I have confidence in myself.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Blind folds

Have the children partner up with another classmate. Have one of the members of each group blindfold their partner. Then carefully the one without the blindfold on guides the blindfolded partner around the room keeping them from hurting themselves. After they experience this for a few minutes have them switch roles and do the experience again for a few minutes.

Activity 2:

After activity 1 have the children sit together in a circle. Let each pair discuss their reactions to being both blindfolded and lead around and being the guide for their “blind partner”.

Older Children’s Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Hard stones, soft velvet, hot water bottle, cold water bottle, square box, round ball, rough sandpaper, tall glass, short glass, blindfolds for each child

Have the children put on their blindfolds and hand an item to them to explore and decide what it is. Emphasize feeling the different characteristics of each item and what makes it unique. Also explain to the children that they are “seeing” the item through their hands.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit in a circle and let each child have a turn at sharing their experiences of “seeing” items without their eyes. What did it feel like? Did they know what it was?

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for making me Your unique child. Teach me to see the perfection of Your creation as me. Teach me how to use my uniqueness to bring my gifts to the world throughout my life. Also teach me how to see the uniqueness of each person and honor Your creation as them.

Then repeat the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

UNIQUENESS

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches children that each one of us is a unique creation of God. We are to awaken to the story within us. In that story is our unique gift to the world. Children will understand that being unique and having special unique gifts are a blessing from God. Having discovered this, they will tap into their special gifts and be encouraged to develop them. What are their unique gifts? They will learn each individual gift has a purpose, one is not better than the other, and to embrace their own gift.

- A) They will learn from this parable that each gift and talent have its own importance to the whole community.
- B) They will learn to tap into their unique gift and then learn how to use it by sharing through examples. (i.e. One can bake, another share gifts with a sad to a sick friend, play music, share gifts with their Church community ~ ex. sing in the choir.)
- C) Unity youth principle #1 states, “God is good and active in everything and everywhere.”

BIBLE VERSE:

1 Corinthians 7:7 “For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one was his own gift from God; one in this manner and another in that.”



UNIQUENESS

Yesterday Sara went to the village of Raccoon, in the state of Woodland. There she attended the grand opening of the Raccoon Village Art Gallery. The opening show featured the works of many of the denizens of the Woodland community who wanted to exhibit. It was delightful and so full of talented artists. Some artists were exhibiting for the first time, and some were already established artists. Every medium was expressed from paintings to pottery, jewelry to sculpture. The originality was wonderful.

One squirrel artist had fashioned a necklace and earring set from a wide variety of seeds and nuts, that she had found throughout the Woodlands. A beaver had created a marvelous sculpture he had gnawed out of a fallen log near his pond. A flock of cardinals had made a beautiful dream catcher from their discarded red feathers. The spider artist had woven a masterful tapestry. The gallery was filled with beautiful Woodland creations.

The different pieces were as rich in diversity as the creatures themselves. Sara was very impressed by everyone's originality.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What were some of the unique talents expressed by the Woodland animals?
- 2) What are some of your unique talents?
- 3) How do you express them?
- 4) What motivates you?
- 5) What do you love to do that expresses your uniqueness?
- 6) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus taught that of himself he could do nothing; it is God within who does the work. Do you know what being in the flow means?
- OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #1 states "God is good and active in everything, everywhere." Do you feel God's good in you wanting to be expressed?
- 7) Jesus taught that we of ourselves can do nothing and it is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. What do you think this means?
- 8) What ways can you practice to get in touch with the God within you?
- 9) Do you ever get still and quiet and meditate and/or pray? God will meet you there in the stillness.

(Reread Uniqueness)

- 10) In this story Sara is pleased with the art exhibit. She finds a joy and sense of satisfaction. Do you find a sense of joy and satisfaction when you are using your talents to their full potential?

- 11) What happens when you hold back these gifts? How does that make you feel?
- 12) What is your motivation for using your gifts?
- 13) Is it to gain acceptance or applause?
- 14) Is it to bring joy and hope to others?
- 15) To please God?
- 16) Why did Sara feel joy and satisfaction about what was happening?
- 17) What are some of the ways the animals expressed their talents?
- 18) Why do you think they all had a different task to complete?
- 19) Name some of the different tasks people do each day ~ teachers, parents, you.
How are they expressing their uniqueness as they perform these tasks?
- 20) What gifts or talents do you share with others?
- 21) What happens when you do them with joy and a sense of giving?
- 22) What happens when you do them grudgingly?
- 23) Younger Children: What talents do you have and how can you use them for others (good with math, creative, good in sports)?
- 24) Older Children: What talents do you have and do they benefit the world around you?
- 25) Do you think you have a sense of responsibility to reach your full potential?
- 26) Are you willing to share your gifts/talents with others, even if you don't want to?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get still and ask the Christ within to reveal a talent you have to express.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share a talent they have?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Let's get still and ask our Christ within how God is active within you and what good you have to share with the world. Let God start to awaken you to the story that is within you.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share a talent, gift they have to share with the world?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I awoken to my unique talents.

I awoken to the story within me.

I awoken to God's unique gift within me to be expressed by me.

I awoken to what motivates me to express myself.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, pencil

Sit in a circle and have each child take their turn at asking the teacher and fellow classmates what they notice the child is good at. As the child is told, have them make a list of what the others offer. Then after everyone is done getting their feedback, have each child pick a talent from their list that they agree the most with (i.e. tap dancing, singing,

drawing). The teacher then asks each student to spend the next week developing that talent a little bit more, like learning a new song, do a painting, etc.

Activity 2:

Next week come to class and share it. If they did a painting, why did they paint it; if a song, sing it, etc.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, pencil

Define what your talent is and why you think this is your gift.

Activity 2:

Share with the class. If you are an artist, give a painting lesson, a musician plays a guitar, etc.

THE CLOSING:

Sitting or standing together holding hands eyes closed read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for the unique gifts we each have to offer to Your world.

May we respect these gifts and use them to serve others. May we also respect the unique gifts that others bring to this world and allow them to express them.

Then do the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us,

The power of God protects us,

The Presence of God watches over us,

Wherever we are God is and all is well.