

# Episcopal Curriculum for Youth

## **PEOPLE OF THE PROMISE**

### **Leader's Guide**



Copyright 2009 by Virginia Theological Seminary

All rights reserved.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

*Developed by*  
Virginia Theological Seminary  
Center for the Ministry of Teaching  
3737 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, VA 22304

Amelia J. Gearey Dyer, Ph.D., Editor-in-Chief

Dorothy S. Linthicum, Managing Editor

George J. Kroupa, III, Associate Editor

Consultants for *People of the Promise*  
The Rev. Paul Board  
Mrs. Marty Cottrill  
The Rev. Claudia Gould

ISBN: 0-8192-6050-9

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS**

Teaching Youth in Episcopal Churches .....	1
Understanding Younger Youth .....	3
Who Are Leaders? .....	7
The Episcopal Curriculum for Youth .....	11
Using the Curriculum .....	12
People of the Promise .....	14

### ***PEOPLE OF THE PROMISE: SESSION TITLES***

Benedict: Establishing a Rule.....	16
Martin Luther: Reforming the Church.....	20
Absalom Jones: Courage to be Free .....	24
Thomas Gallaudet: Apostle to the Deaf .....	28
Kamehameha & Emma: Crowns of Glory .....	32
William Muhlenberg: Compassion for the Poor .....	36
Florence Nightingale: Nursing the Sick.....	40
Joseph Schereschewsky: Missionary to China .....	44
Madeleine L'Engle: Sharing the Story.....	48

# BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

## TEACHING YOUTH IN EPISCOPAL CHURCHES

The aim of Christian education in Episcopal Church parishes and congregations is to assist every member in living out the covenant made in Holy Baptism (*The Book of Common Prayer*, page 304). Hence, the common ministry of leaders and youth focuses on matters of both faith and practice:

- **Faith** in God who made heaven and earth, in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and in the Holy Spirit who is Lord and giver of life.
- **Practice** of worship and prayer, of repentance and obedience, of loving service to all persons, and of active pursuit of God's justice and peace in the world.

The content of our faith and practice is continually re-examined and corrected as we search Holy Scripture and the preserved tradition of the Church.

In the words of the Baptismal Covenant, we promise to “continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers” (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 305). Holy Eucharist, the central act of worship for Christians, unites us with Jesus Christ our Lord. Again and again, as we partake of this sacrament, we remember and celebrate the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

We are called to follow Jesus, the Son of God, who lived among us as teacher, preacher, and healer. Through his powerful example, Christians have come to understand that the act of teaching is fundamental to our faith.

### Teaching Is a Ministry

All Christians are teachers. Our daily lives bear witness to what we believe and treasure. Youth and leaders in the church are poised to share a singular experience that goes beyond the facts and activities of the moment. The aim of Christian education is to assist all members of the Church to discern the signs and spirits of the age and to bring sound theological judgment to bear upon what we observe and experience.

The educative task in a parish or mission is a joint effort of clergy, parents, leaders, and others in the congregation. We cannot rely solely on organized classes for the instruction and nurturing of individuals. With the help and support of the whole congregation, by word and example, by prayers and witness, we seek to bring up young people in the Christian faith and way of life.

### Guidelines for Youth

The teenage years can be a time of special opportunities for encountering the invigorating challenge and abiding hope of the Christian gospel. Adolescents are continuing their journeys as full members of the Church, capable of taking part in all aspects of its governance and mission in the world. Within the Baptismal Covenant, this means worshiping and learning in the Christian community, resisting evil, proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ, seeking to serve Christ in all persons, striving for justice and peace, and respecting the dignity of all human beings.

The scriptural teachings of our faith should be affirmed in programs for adolescents. Faith fosters a personal relationship with God and enriches every human relationship. Youth need the Church's encouragement to think

critically and independently as they mature in faith.

The ongoing process of faith formation takes on particular relevance for adolescents who are coming up against questions of personal identity and life choices. That is why churches need to focus on welcoming and including young persons in every possible way.

**Gifts of Youth.** Adolescence is a time of questioning, debating, and searching. The faith of young Christians thrives when they are enabled to use their own talents and abilities in pursuit of the Church's mission, working with their peers alongside experienced adults.

Among the gifts adolescents bring are spontaneity, ebullience, vision, creative energies, and the ability to challenge existing structures and habits of the institution. As their convictions find focus and voice, earnest young Christians provide windows into God's presence and sometimes offer surprising perspectives for viewing the nature of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.

**Counter Culture.** An increasingly diverse, secular society tends to foster discrete groups with a variety of life styles. There are ever-changing forms of music, art, dress, language, and behavior. Adolescents are particularly susceptible to the societal influences of media presentations, advertising, and marketing. They manifest and live in what is popularly termed “youth culture.”

The Christian faith, at its best, has always been a counter culture with a corrective and saving message for all who seek purpose and meaning in their lives. Christian educators strive to be fully informed about where youth are “coming from” in order to explore with mutual respect the claims of God in Christ.

Christian education can help youth to identify the tugging forces in their world. Many teenagers search for strength to handle difficult issues of theology, family life, relationships with friends, peace and justice, and ethics. The challenge is to find appropriate and respectful ways to interact with the vernacular of young people. If, in our ministry with adolescents, we try too hard to speak the language of youth culture, we run the risk of failing to share plainly the Church's good news.

**Distinctiveness.** Rapid physical, emotional, and intellectual changes occur during the teenage years. Sexual maturation proceeds rapidly. Social awkwardness and self-consciousness are often apparent. The role and timing of developmental changes may vary greatly among boys and girls throughout adolescence.

The challenge of ministry with youth is to meet the specific needs of youth with varied and appealing programs. Education for adolescents necessarily takes on a different look and style from programs for younger learners. An appropriate balance is necessary between active involvement of youth and lecture and instruction.

**Continuity.** It is desirable that people who work with youth have a mutually developed sense of purpose. Formal, integrated programs of teaching and learning, using suitable curricular resources, are needed.

At the same time, it is essential to maintain a sense of continuity in Christian education for the entire congregation as one people of God. At all age levels, we have a common need to know who we are as Episcopalians in the worldwide body of Christ.

**Flexibility.** Episcopal congregations schedule teaching and learning in different ways and at different times. Realistic assessment of the time demands on youth is essential in planning programs for adolescents. It is important to take into account young persons' commitments within their families and the wider community.

The principle of flexibility is particularly appropriate for developing study materials for use in the Church's ministry with adolescents. Especially desirable are themes study that can be adjusted to varying lengths of time, with modules designed to be arranged in a variety of sequences.

**Groupings.** Experience in general education suggests a workable approach for grouping adolescents: *Younger Youth* (ages 12-14, Junior High or Middle School grades) and *Older Youth* (ages 15-18, Senior High grades). In congregations where multiple groups are not feasible, a single youth group is best supported by flexible resources, adaptable to a range of developmental levels and interests.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUNGER YOUTH

Who are the younger youth we teach? The key to understanding this age group lies in a heart-felt, enduring respect for youth as individuals. Such respect, accompanied by knowledge of the differences among us, shapes all our efforts as teachers.

Look closely at any group of young people, and it is readily apparent that on physical characteristics alone, there is considerable diversity within the group. Reflect further on the impact of different social and ethnic backgrounds, economic circumstances, schooling opportunities, skills and interests, and it becomes quite clear that narrow descriptions do not reflect the dizzying array of social and cultural diversity present among youth of the same chronological age. To teach youth as individuals requires that we first see them as individuals. We can turn to important sources of information:

- **Developmental theory** offers insights for the teaching task. Customarily, educators have looked primarily to such theories for help in understanding the growth and development of children. Younger youth are well past the early stages of development, however, and no single developmental viewpoint appears to be adequate by itself to provide a comprehensive basis for planning instruction.
- **Literature** is another source. Stories of youth enable adults to reconnect with adolescents and to experience, vicariously, radically different life-shaping situations.
- **Experiences** of teachers themselves can contribute much reliable information, including memories of their own journeys as young people.

Taken in combination, these three sources—theory, literature, and experience—contribute to a distinctive multi-dimensional perspective on the lives and learning of young people. This blend of insights will be especially helpful for teachers in church school settings.

### Theory—A Source of Information

Developmental theories help us to see the expected, sequential patterns of change from birth through maturity. All theories of development hold that

increasing maturity brings a general increase in the complexity of behavior. Children move away from self-centeredness toward more social autonomy. Regardless of whether a theory uses ages or stages, the emphasis is on general expectations. No theory can completely predict the behavior of an individual.

Most of the mainstream theories were formulated without particular regard for the effect of gender. Today, we are living (and teaching) amidst a greater sensitivity to issues of developmental differences between girls and boys. (See Carol Gilligan's book, *In a Different Voice*, for an enlightening discussion on this topic.)

**Thinking.** We owe much to the Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, for underscoring the fact that the ability to think and forms ideas changes as one matures and develops. Using cognitive stages, which may be loosely associated with ages, he defined the ways of knowing that move from sensing to concrete knowing to abstract thinking. According to Piaget, younger youth have just begun to use increasingly complex mental operations and are no longer constricted by what they can see. They can think about situations from more than one point of view, handle several ideas at once, and can move back and forth in relation to a particular idea. Around age eleven, the most advanced level of cognitive functioning may be reached. At this point, youth (and presumably, all adults) can imagine possibilities, reason abstractly, and think across time—past, present and future. All individuals move back and forth in these stages when new and unfamiliar concepts are encountered.

A note of caution: Cognitive theories do not specify *what* content students should be thinking about. And, perhaps more critically, Piaget's stages of knowing do not uniformly apply to youth from different social-cultural environments. Many observers feel that variations in life experience can dramatically alter the ages at which various types of cognitive functioning are likely to emerge.

**Social context.** During the adolescent years, youth increase and consolidate previous developmental gains in the context of an enlarging social group—family, friends, and community. Personal interests dictate much of what they are most likely to do. Parental supervision is giving way to self-supervision and independence.

Erik Erikson's work postulates a view of development that interweaves the powerful impact of social context with ongoing biological maturation. According to Erikson, at each of eight stages in life a major psychosocial crisis must be resolved in order for development to proceed. In Stage V, the teenage years, the dominant developmental crisis revolves around identity versus role-confusion. It is a period of confusion, searching, and experimenting with a variety of roles for future choices. A sense of loyalty for different groups often causes conflict within an individual.

Work by Lawrence Kohlberg, related to moral development, has melded ideas from both social and cognitive theory. With maturation, experience, and expanding strategies for thinking, youth and adults approach and resolve moral dilemmas in more complex ways.

Each of these theorists gives us a broader insight into the complicated interactive processes of development. While none of them specifically addresses the growth of religious thought, their work has underscored recent efforts to depict faith development for children and adults.

## **Literature—A Source of Understanding**

Literature helps to expand our awareness of the wide variety of experiences of adolescents. Whatever the circumstances of our own youth, literature offers a credible opportunity to “walk in someone else’s moccasins.” Teachers of younger youth will be enriched by reading some of the novels about the struggles of young people.

Contemporary writers such as Madeleine L’Engle, and Cynthia Voigt introduce us to a modern generation of youth with complex issues, fantasies, struggles, and challenges which reflect still another generation’s efforts to deal with the universal themes. David Elkind and Michael Warren have written prophetically about the stressful and hurried lives of youth today.

## **Experience—A Source of Connection**

The teen-age years are for most people traumatic. Very few individuals would wish to relive their teen years.

Ask yourself: In seventh grade, who were your friends? Your neighbors? Your favorite teachers? In the eighth grade? Ninth grade? How did you spend your time outside of school? Lastly, how many times have you said to a young person, “When I was your age, I . . . .”

Our own youth—with all the glories and all the miseries—generally becomes a subjective yardstick for measuring the events in the lives of our students. On a rational level, we know that students today have vastly different experiences at school, in the community, and with friends. The textures of their daily environments, both physical and economic, are critically different. Space missions are routine, and viewers literally watch in real-time as wars are televised.

Nevertheless, certain aspects of adolescents remain virtually unchanged across the years. Successes, failures, feelings, doubts, joys, and struggles remain a vital part of students’ daily lives. Universal themes are evident in the questions youth ask and the answers they seek: “Who am I? Whose am I? Why am I here? What should I do? Where am I going?” It is essential to acknowledge that these themes exist. They were part of our own youth and now become a powerful link with today’s students.

## **Faith in the Classroom**

Faith is a gift from God.

We are people of faith.

These two premises underlie all that we say and do in church school classrooms. It is faith that gives church school its unique mission. We do not teach faith. We can surely hope that our work as teachers will nurture faith in the hearts and minds of our students.

## **Structure of faith**

Teachers can interpret the actions and responses of their students better by knowing that faith is personal, always changing and growing. A widely-discussed model of faith development uses a pyramid framework of ages and stages to illuminate modal characteristics of faith across the life cycle.

According to James Fowler, younger youth are literalists (Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith), looking primarily beyond the family to other spheres. Faith provides a basis for identity.

In contrast, John Westerhoff uses the image of concentric rings to portray how faith grows and matures within the web of relationships in a faith community. In his model, the faith of adolescents is one of belonging to a

faith community (affiliative faith) yet moving beyond to question the faith of our parents (searching faith). The title of Westerhoff's book, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (1976), still resonates among leaders in Christian education.

### **Who are Youth?**

Volumes have been written on adolescent development. The purpose here is to give leaders of this program some key pointers about the characteristics of younger youth to enable leaders to become effective teachers. This is not an exhaustive list and must be generalized. It is, however, important to be aware of these qualities and needs.

#### **Characteristics of younger youth:**

- **They like to have fun.** Fun is not the opposite of learning nor should fun be seen as something to be avoided. On the contrary, people learn best when they are having a good time. When youth are having a good time, they often make a lot of noise. Don't be afraid of a little commotion if most of the group are on task. Encourage your teens to have fun in your class and see how much they will learn.
- **Seek identity.** Younger youth are in an energetic process of seeking who they are, while at the same time, fearing that they may find out. Two key words for the wise leader are: accept and affirm. Accept each person as he or she is; look for qualities in each that you like. Don't try to change them. Affirm the skills, talents, questions, concerns and uniqueness of each person in an intentional way.
- **Like-making choices.** Many adults believe that younger youth should not be allowed to make decisions for themselves because they are too immature. Some people teach without seeking input or options from those they are teaching. Youth make decisions all the time. Our gift to them to help them to develop their abilities to make good decisions and to treat them as capable human beings.
- **Need to be heard.** One of the best tools you can provide for younger youth are opportunities to speak out and be heard, and to listen to others in the group with respect. It is important to set the example not by what you say but by what you do. Your ability to listen to youth and respond to their ideas and comments will be a model for their own listening skills. Being heard for even a moment can be a powerful experience.
- **Seek approval.** Approval from peers and adults is essential at this age. This need for attention and approval can lead to various expressions of behavior. Some youth will be over-achievers, trying to please by standing out above the rest. Others will seek attention by how they dress, or by the language they use. The skilled leader looks for ways to offer appropriate approval, acceptance, and affirmation while still providing guidelines, boundaries, and expectations.
- **Want to be valued and significant.** How you treat the younger youth in your class is much more important than what you teach. If youth feel important and significant, they are more likely to learn something from the class. It is also crucial to pay attention to how the

teens treat each other. The atmosphere of the classroom can enliven or poison the whole experience. Encouraging youth to behave in respectful ways to adults and to one another may be the most important lesson you can teach. Many youth in today's church school classes come from different schools, belong to different clubs and organizations, inside and outside of their schools. Building a successful group that reaches out in hospitality to newcomers and those on the fringes is one of the main goals of working with younger youth. It is also the message of the gospel.

- **More interested in who's there than what is taught.** The friendships that already exist and the friendships that develop are often the motivating factor for attendance and learning. The skilled teacher supports and encourages these relationship while trying to avoid cliques that exclude others. A key word here is inclusiveness.
- **Growing and changing.** Everything about this time in the lives of younger youth calls them to growth in mind, body and spirit. The hunger to grow (often subconscious) is a great ingredient for learning. Youth want to know more about the things that affect their lives. This includes God and knowing Jesus Christ. However, they also change constantly which makes them unpredictable. Accept these deep down longings and ever-changing attitudes as gifts.
- **Looking for a faith of their own.** Younger youth are seeking their own opinions, values, and faith. Their identity comes from becoming their own person. Youth often reject much of their parent's faith. This is an important sign that new values and a stronger faith are being formed. Embrace the searching process and affirm the importance of the ability to question, doubt and think. Your response to their doubts will encourage or discourage their journeys to spiritual knowledge. Their questions will ultimately lead to faith.

## WHO ARE LEADERS?

Leaders of youth are more than teachers. To foster effective teaching and learning among its adolescent members, the Church needs adult leaders who are grounded in their own faith and identity as Christians. Effective leaders are excited about growing and learning and enjoy working with youth in a team relationship. They have high energy, genuine enthusiasm, and a passionate interest in youth.

Because church leaders are expected to have a unique relationship with youth, the teacher/student relationship does not work well on Sunday morning with younger youth. Teens have been in that role all week and want something different. While it is important to share knowledge, it is more important to develop a group that can share their faith. Here are some characteristics commonly found in effective youth leaders.

- **Rooted in their faith and committed to Jesus Christ.** Who leaders are speaks loudly to teens. This doesn't mean that leaders have to be biblical scholars or perfect Christians. It also doesn't mean they no longer have any doubts or are at the end of their own spiritual journey. Good leaders have a strong relationship with God and are

comfortable with their faith.

- **Is Willing to be a part of a team.** Helping a young person to grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord is an overwhelming task. It is essential for leaders to understand that they do not have sole responsibility for this task. Wise leaders know that they are not only part of a teaching team but also part of a network of people in the church who care about and support young people.
- **Is fun and enjoys being with young people.** A key phrase to help leaders is “relax and enjoy.” Effective leaders know how to have fun and to share joy with young people without giving up expectations of them. Leaders must find their own balance of fun and seriousness. Affirming joy and excitement with the group, however, is essential for the leaders' full participation.
- **More concerned about people than facts.** The ECY provides an excellent base of information to learn more about God, scripture and the Church. The sessions incorporate this learning with the issues that effect young people's lives. Effective leaders are aware of issues that are unique to their groups and look for ways to include these ideas in their presentations. When leaders give priority to what youth are thinking and feeling, the content follows.
- **Has a long-term commitment to the group.** Good leaders are committed and consistent. There will be ups and downs, and successes and failures. Some weeks the youth may be impossible to reach, but the steadfastness of faith and commitment to the class will make a real difference in the long run. Focus on the overall success of the program and not on any one moment, hour, or week.

### **Building the Team**

The *Episcopal Curriculum for Youth* is designed to be used with a team approach. Having more than one leader allows young people to have a variety of models of Christian faith. Young people relate to different adults in unique ways. This range of relationships and friendships is important. Also, the team approach allows for mutual support of the adult leaders.

Sometimes an adult leader will see an issue raised by a youth as a challenge to authority. Another leader may have a different perception of what is causing the conflict and be able to step in to maintain the relationships. It is also essential for reasons of safety and protection to have teams of adults working together at all times. Finally, each person has different gifts. When each of the gifts are given together they far exceed the gifts of one individual.

The best way to function well as a team is to spend a block of time together before the year begins. It is ideal to have eight to ten hours for this purpose. The team may decide to meet several times or go on retreat somewhere for this purpose. The team should decide which setting works best for them.

Suggested activities to help the team plan their strategies are outlined below:

- **Begin with social time** together, including sharing basic facts about each other.
- **Share faith stories.** A simple way to do this is to ask people to make a chart from birth to the present showing the highlights and low moments of their faith journey. Allow time for everyone to finish before sharing so each person can listen to each presentation.
- **Make a list of each person's gifts** and identify the gifts, talents or interests that he or she would like to contribute to the class.
- **Working Together.** Discuss how the team will work together including roles, tasks, and schedules. Be sure to include in your discussion how young people will be used as leaders in this program (see section on youth as leaders).
- **Review the curriculum materials** together and discuss the best ways for the team to use them.
- **Planning.** Draw up a plan for the year with clear responsibilities for each team member.
- **Leaders need information and training.** Any effective leadership program begins with the sharing of information and the training of skills. This is no less true for Christian leaders. The ECY offers materials to provide a strong base of information about scripture, theology and the Church.
- **Teamwork does not mean just rotating Sundays.** A true team requires blending-together time, talents, skills and gifts. The team should discuss and clarify the ways they will work together before beginning. The team should feel both energized and excited as they initiate this venture.

### **Youth as Leaders**

Young people are able to assume responsibility for their own learning. As leaders they help to plan and to carry out programs. It is imperative that adolescents develop a sense of real ownership and personal investment in the Church's life and mission. They need assurance that their decisions and contributions are respected and valued.

A basic premise of this curriculum is to not only teach students but also raise up Christian leaders. Many young people have outstanding leadership qualities. These qualities can be used to develop an exciting program of learning and growth. Often adult leaders overlook or ignore the leadership capabilities of younger youth who have so much to offer. Do not make this mistake. The following list will help you to recognize, build, and utilize the youth leadership of the group.

- **Sharing Information.** In order for youth to participate effectively in planning for and leading a group, they must have the basic information available to leaders and be able to make choices of their own.

- **Training usually involves practice.** Allowing the teens to try out new ideas, theologies and skills in a safe environment is a great way to train them for leadership roles. Giving them opportunities to lead the group is a way to practice the gifts and talents that God has given them.
- **Young people are not “blank slates.”** The youth in the group come with a richness of ideas, thoughts, opinions, and experiences. They are not empty, inexperienced human beings just waiting to receive facts and gems of wisdom. They have as much to teach as they have to learn. Often they are so used to being treated like “blank slates” that they are reluctant to share all that they have to offer. When they trust that their experiences and opinions are valued, a whole new world of information, learning and sharing will open up. Encourage this process, and be patient if it takes some time for it to develop.
- **People deserve input into decisions that affect their lives.** Youth in your program deserve to have input into their learning process. Often adult leaders plan the sessions with little or no involvement from those they are trying to reach. This often leads to apathetic learning. Also, the adults miss the benefit of the wisdom and understanding of the youth about their needs, desires and insights. Although the process will be different in each situation, be intentional about learning from the youth both before beginning and then during the sessions.
- **Young people should be responsible for their own learning.** One way to value the participants in the group is to allow them to take responsibility for their learning. This means agreeing ahead of time what will be learned and how the learning will be carried out. A contract or covenant should be established with the group, and the adult leader should hold people accountable to what they have agreed. It will take time to develop the trust for this to happen, but the benefit is enormous.
- **Leadership skills apply to all facets of life.** If adult leaders are successful at lifting up youth leaders, the skills developed will affect other areas of the youth's lives. Youth group members will find themselves involved in leadership roles in their schools, families, churches and other organizations. They will have discovered tools that will last them the rest of their lives. These skills along with their Christian faith will make an impact on all with whom they come in contact.
- **Forming a youth leadership team.** Although a youth leadership team will have many variations depending on each situation, it is recommended that one is formed. This may be as simple as gathering a few young people ahead of time to review the materials and make suggestions on how best to use this curriculum. A team of youth that meet with the adult team regularly and share in planning for the sessions can be developed. Certain sessions or projects could be given to a small group of youth to let them “run with it.” It is important that the adult leaders build in some time to plan the role of young people as leaders of this curriculum.

### Developmental Resources

- Ames, Louise Bates, Ilg, Frances L., & Stanley M. Baker. *Your ten to fourteen-year-old*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1988.
- Dillard, Annie. *An American childhood*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Elkind, David. *All grown up and no place to go*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1987.
- Erikson, Erik H. *Childhood and society*. (2nd ed.) New York: W. W. Norton, 1963.
- Gilligan, Carol. *In a different voice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Kozol, Jonathan. *Death at an early age*. New York: Plume/Dutton, 1985.
- Kuhmerker, Lisa with Uwe Gielen & Richard L. Hayes. *The Kohlberg legacy for the helping professions*. Birmingham: R.E.P., 1991.
- Singer, Dorothy G. & Tracey A. Revenson. *A Piaget primer: How a child thinks*. New York: Plume/New American Library, 1978.
- Stevens, Richard. *Erik Erikson: An introduction*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.

### Resources on Faith

- Aleshire, Daniel O. *Faithcare*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988.
- Fowler, James W. *Stages of faith*. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.
- Hyde, Kenneth E. *Religion in childhood and adolescence*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1990.
- Stokes, Kenneth. *Faith is a verb*. Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications, 1989.
- Westerhoff, John H., III. *Will our children have faith?* New York: Seabury Press, 1976.

### Episcopal Resources

- The Book of Common Prayer*. New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1979.
- The Book of Occasional Services*. (2nd. ed.) New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1988.
- Booty, John E. *What makes us Episcopalians?* Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1982.
- Holmes, Urban T., III. *What is Anglicanism?* Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1982.
- The Hymnal 1982*. New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1985.
- Lesser feasts and fasts*. (1991 ed.) New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1991.
- Molrine, Charlotte N. & Ronald C. Molrine. *Encountering Christ in the Episcopal Church*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1992.
- Sydnor, William. *More than words*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990.
- Wall, John S. *A new dictionary for Episcopalians*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985.
- Westerhoff, John H. *A people called Episcopalians*. Atlanta: St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 1993.
- When in our music God is glorified*. (disks or cassettes) New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, undated.
- Wolf, Barbara. *Journey in faith: An inquirer's program*. (rev. ed.) Minneapolis: Seabury Press, 1982.
- Zinser, Henry A. *Continue thine forever*. (2nd ed.) Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1985.

## THE EPISCOPAL CURRICULUM FOR YOUTH

The Curriculum uses a cumulative framework of twelve modules to be used over a period of years. Designed for Younger Youth who may be in Middle School or Junior High, it provides choices for leaders and youth to compose their own unique sequence of lessons. Three of the modules focus on Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures), three on the New Testament, and three on Contemporary Times. Within each stream are the archetypes of **Call, Covenant, and Community**. In addition three modules are on the basics of *Sacraments, The Episcopal Church Year, and Spiritual Life*.

### A Tool for Teachers

The aim of the *Episcopal Curriculum for Youth (ECY)* is to sustain and strengthen the ministry of teaching in the Episcopal Church. The curriculum's focus on classroom-based efforts does not deny the importance of youth groups, confirmation classes, retreats or other patterns of Christian

education in a local congregation. It does reflect an intentional decision to affirm the act of teaching and spotlight the respective roles of teachers and learners.

The curriculum is a tool for teachers. It serves as a resource to help teachers formulate answers to three pivotal questions:

- **What do I teach?** The curriculum offers a series of modules on twelve different topics. Leaders using the materials are expected to pursue actively an adult-level understanding of the content of the session outlines, taking seriously their own roles as learners.
- **Whom do I teach?** Leaders are challenged anew to adapt to both the developmental characteristics of the group as well as the particular interests of each individual. The ECY addresses issues of developmental differences from two important perspectives. Content is developmentally appropriate, using Scripture as a basis for exploring issues with younger youth. Within each session provisions are made in activity suggestions for varying degrees of skill and learning styles among students.
- **How do I teach?** The curriculum was written for leaders by clergy and laity who work with youth. Options and guidelines are included to help leaders make adjustments to fit local circumstances. Embedded in the kaleidoscope of optional activity suggestions given for every session are practical comments and specific tips for guiding the process of learning.

It is hoped that leaders who use the ECY will be nurtured, inspired, and enriched personally as they prepare to teach and learn and as they reflect on their efforts.

Teachers will find that the session outlines in this guide provide support and structure for the inexperienced and both challenge and flexibility for the more confident. It is highly recommended that every leader have ready access to a Bible (NRSV), *The Book of Common Prayer*, and *The Hymnal 1982*. Each session includes the following:

- **Objective** statement, to state the concepts along with objectives.
- **Background for Leaders and Personal Views**, to provide factual background and personal inspiration.
- **Tips on the Topic**, to offer useful information about working with this age group.
- **Weavings**, to prompt thinking about how this session fits into the year, vocabulary, and current events.
- **Look For**, to provide thoughts on follow-through of the session.

## USING THE CURRICULUM

### Planning Class Sessions

Planning sets the stage for teaching and learning. In preparation for meeting with students, teachers need to *select* a set of activities, and then put these activities into an *order* for each class meeting. The session outlines of the Episcopal Curriculum for Youth offer three sets of activity categories that can be used to compose a class session. These are:

**Teacher Supports**—six sections directed at helping teachers prepare.

**Essential Activities**—Coming Together, Engaging, and Going Forth are the three core experiences for each session.

**Optional Activities**—a variety of different suggestions of activities, which teachers may choose to do in a given session. *No teacher or class is expected to use every optional activity in any session outline. The stress is on choice.*

The session categories function as the building blocks for planning. There is no single, “right” way to plan a class session. Teachers can construct an activity/time schedule for each class session that fits the time available, builds on their own skills, and meets the needs and interests of youth.

Teachers facilitate classroom activities through interactive planning with youth. Teens will be able to exercise leadership roles in choosing and implementing what they wish to explore. Students' interests will strongly affect the direction of theme exploration and conversation.

**Teachers understand their students.** Students deserve attention, affirming experiences, and reasonable challenges. To nurture and guide the faith journey of another person demands a personal relationship. Bonds of trust, respect, and affection grow where caring and understanding prevail.

**Teachers are interpreters.** Students can expect honest answers to their questions—including the response, “I don't know.” In classroom situations, what students talk about, question, explore, and wonder about reflects their teachers' ability to mediate and interpret faith and heritage. Often the simplest of questions can evoke profound discussion.

Youth can be intensely interested in wrestling with “real-world” ethical issues. As teachers and students engage in conversations of faith, they are sharing feelings and values, as well as words and facts. In a very real sense, teachers expose their beliefs when they engage in conversation with youth.

### **The Learning Environment**

The setting where the group meets is crucial to the success of the program. In short, the less like a classroom it is, the more you will be able to facilitate learning, sharing, and growth. Pay attention to the environment you are providing, as this will make a great impact on the learning process.

Consider three possibilities to create the desired environment.

- **The youth room.** One good alternative is a room at the church designated for young people and arranged with comfortable chairs, couches, etc. This provides a comfortable and inviting atmosphere.
- **Meeting in a home.** Holding meetings at someone's home who lives nearby the church can be a great asset. This provides a casual, comfortable setting that usually enhances the process. This may provide some logistical problems for younger youth but it is well worth investigating. Also, people may be more open to making their homes available if it is done on a rotating basis. Don't rule out this possibility without carefully considering it.
- **Gathering in a restaurant.** A restaurant can provide a wonderful opportunity for a meal, fellowship, and learning. Often young people

who wouldn't come to the church will feel comfortable in this setting. Of course, this will raise some financial considerations, but these are not insurmountable. You could also consider meeting at a restaurant on an occasional basis as a way of promoting outreach and for celebration.

### **A Final Word**

Remember that this is a process of helping young people grow in their knowledge and love of the Lord. There will be ups and downs, successes and failures, joys and frustrations. Often you will never know the impact you have made on a young person's life. So much happens intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually at this time in their lives that they themselves are not aware of the people who have had a direct impact. Share the love of Christ with your young people. Remember that God has called us not to be successful but to be faithful. Thanks be to God.

## **PEOPLE OF THE PROMISE**

The content of this module focuses on the lives of people in a faith community as they struggle to discover the answer to the question: "Who and Whose are they?" It tells of stories of people who have dedicated their lives to do God's work in the world. *People of the Promise* examines the work of monks, priests, royal leaders, and ordinary people who have demonstrated what being Christian and following God will mean to them and to others. Youth today are also faced with defining who they are as Christian people in a world where that is increasingly difficult to do. Discussing others who have lived in equally difficult times can help them respond to God's call to live out the promises of the Baptismal Covenant which is the desired outcome of this course of study.

The Episcopal Curriculum for Youth provides materials for both leaders and youth.

### **For Teachers**

#### ■ **Leader's Guide** (this volume)

Contains 9 sessions of material. The sessions are:

*Benedict: Establishing a Rule*  
*Martin Luther: Reforming the Church*  
*Absalom Jones: Courage to be Free*  
*Thomas Gallaudet: Apostle to the Deaf*  
*Kamehameha & Emma: Crowns of Glory*  
*William Muhlenberg: Compassion for the Poor*  
*Florence Nightingale: Nursing the Sick*  
*Joseph Schereschewsky: Missionary to China*  
*Madeleine L'Engle: Sharing the Story*

#### ■ **Poster Pack**

Offers 6 large sheets of color posters or black-and-white resource posters. Intended for use as a classroom resource.

The Guide and Packet are undated and can be reused. We recommend that congregations have one Leader's Guide for each teacher along with one Poster Pack for each group of youth.

## For Students

- **Session Leaflets** (student leaflets—one for each session)  
In attractive, colorful format, each leaflet includes:  
Scripture  
Commentary and prayer by youth  
Illustrations  
Voices: thoughts from various authors, politicians, theologians, and others on the session topic  
Prayers and words to remember  
Bible reflections to read during the week
  
- **Bibles and Prayerbooks**  
Special editions of the Holy Bible and *The Book of Common Prayer* have been created for the *Episcopal Curriculum for Youth*. It is recommended that each youth have their own copy of these important books of our faith.
  
- **Additional Gear**  
Backpacks, patches, bookmarks, and bookplates are also available to give youth a sense of belonging and common purpose.

## Teaching Resources

- Bowman, Locke E., Jr. *Teaching for Christian hearts, souls, and minds*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990.
- Farnham, Suzanne G., et. al. *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*. Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1991.
- Little, Sara. *To set one's heart: Belief and teaching in the Church*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983.
- Harris, Maria. *Teaching and religious imagination*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Kujawa, Sheryl A. and Sibley, Lois. *Resource Book for Ministry with Youth and Young Adults in the Episcopal Church*. New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1995.

## Music Resources

- Gather, Volume 1 and Volume 2*. GIA Publications, Inc. 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60638, 1994.
- Baptist Hymnal*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1975.
- Glory and Praise, Vol. 2*. Phoenix: North American Liturgy Resources, 1982.
- Glory and Praise, Vol. 3*. Phoenix: North American Liturgy Resources, 1982.
- Lift Every Voice and Sing II*. New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1993
- Songs for Celebration. Church Hymnal Series IV*. New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1980.

# Benedict: Establishing a Rule

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session focuses on Benedict, a monk who believed that God could be found through simplicity and daily routine. Youth will be able to retell the story of Benedict, define a rule of life, and discuss the implications for today.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the life of Benedict and the rules he set down that became the foundation for future monastic orders. Key people are Benedict and Scholastica; key places are Rome, Nursia, and Monte Cassino. For spiritual preparation, think about your daily routine and the rules that govern your behavior.

### Commentary

Benedict of Nursia is regarded as the father of Western monasticism. Monasticism is a way of life for those who chose to live in seclusion from the world in religious orders or communities. Many people today follow the simplicity of Benedict's rule while living ordinary lives.

Benedict was born in Nursia in central Italy about 480 CE. While being educated in Rome, he became disgusted by the lifestyle and morals of the city. He sought seclusion in the hills about forty miles west of Rome.

A community of followers who were also troubled by the sinful behavior of people in Rome gathered around him. They were attracted to his simple and disciplined lifestyle. Sometime after 525, he and some of his followers went south to Monte Cassino and established a monastic community.

It was here that Benedict composed his "Rule," a series of disciplinary rules which governed the lifestyle of the members in the community. He died between 540 and 550. His sister Scholastica established a convent for women following Benedict's Rule.

Benedict was never ordained, and he did not see his community as an official "order." However, his Rule and community became the foundation for Western monastic orders in the centuries to follow. Many religious orders in the Anglican Communion today are influenced by Benedict's Rule.

The Rule was built around prayer, study, work, and rest in the community. The average day called for about four hours to be spent in liturgical prayer; five hours in spiritual reading; about six hours of work; one hour for eating; and about eight hours of sleep. The *Book of Psalms* was recited once every week.

The Rule also concentrated on the way the monks were to behave with one another, requiring vows of obedience that often changed their lifestyles. Benedictine orders in England influenced *The Book of Common Prayer*, especially the inclusion of the daily offices such as Morning and Evening Prayer.

### Personal Views

Routine is an important part of our daily lives. Whether we like it or not, we live by rules that govern our behavior on a regular basis. We go to work and school at certain times and function in certain ways. We

---

## SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Benedict*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. . . .*  
—Proverbs 2:6
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., Leo Tolstoy, Carl Jung, Basil Hume
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Benedict (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, July 11)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; if you indeed cry out for insight, and raise your voice for understanding; if you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures—then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly, guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his faithful ones. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path.*

Proverbs 2:1-9

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Youth often do not see the necessity for rules. Help them identify the rules they impose, such as “no one can enter my room,” or “no one can play my CDs.”
- Some youth might get frustrated playing games during the Coming Together activity. Help them understand that rules can make life more fair and safe.
- **Discussion Starter:** What is one rule you would like to impose on your family that they would be required to follow?

eat, rest, and entertain ourselves according to specific patterns. We interact with other people according to rules of conduct established by customs and laws. For many of us, the routine becomes comfortable and is itself a discipline for living.

Benedict emphasized the spiritual relationship with God as the focus for the rules and routines which governed his monastery. Everything the monks did, from working, studying, praying, worshipping, eating, and sleeping, was centered on God and on each other in their lives in Christ. In their attempt to escape the immorality and corruption of Rome's city life, they discovered peace and solace in the daily routine of their monastic community.

The benefit of Benedict's Rule for us today is not limited to monks and the monastic life, although there are monasteries in the Episcopal Church. The Rule reminds us that we can also focus on God in our own daily routine. Our routines, and the rules which govern them, can be used to bring us closer to God when we put Christ at the center of our lives. Do you have rules or disciplines you follow on a daily basis? Do you exercise regularly? Do you have a time of day set apart for prayer and Bible study?

The obedience and the change in lifestyles which Benedict sought in his Rule can help us develop a healthier spiritual life in our own communities. The goal of the Rule is to honor God and our neighbors rather than our own self-interest. Do you have rules that help you put others first?

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in

tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Ordination of a Priest  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 528

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Before youth arrive, set up several board games, or put out several decks of cards. Encourage each person to play a game with someone else. Suspend the rules or change the rules to confuse the players. For example, in checkers, give the person with the red markers three less than the person with the black ones. Then change the rules mid-game by crowning all the red checkers and taking away any black checkers that are crowned.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Proverbs 2:1-9* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Dear Lord, please help us understand the rules of our parents and Saint Benedict. Help us follow the rules even when we don't understand them. Thank you for forgiving us when we break the rules. Amen.*

Mike, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from Proverbs, chapter 2, verses 1 through 9.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Hang in a prominent place Resource Poster No. 2 of excerpts from Benedict's rule. Discuss how the youth felt during the Coming Together activity.

- Was it fun to play the game without rules?
- Was it frustrating?
- What was it like to have some people follow the rules and others not? Was it fair?
- Why are rules important in games? In our lives?  
Tell the story of Benedict and his Rule. Be sure to include:
  - Simplicity and discipline were the cornerstones of community life with Benedict.
  - The Rule was built around prayer, study, work, and rest.
  - The influence of Benedict's Rule on *The Book of Common Prayer*.
 Pass out paper and pencils and ask the youth to write down three rules they must live by in their families. Share them with the group.
  - How many of the rules are the same?
  - Are the rules fair?
  - Did the youth have any input making the rules?
  - Should the rules be obeyed?
  - What are the consequences of not obeying the rules?
  - What happens when we don't obey God's rules?

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **My rules:** Look at Resource Poster No. 1 of Benedict's Rule. Make a poster of your own rules to live by, a list of rules for your family, or rules for a church youth group. Decorate it by highlighting the rules you like, such as being nice to friends, and the rules you don't like, such as taking turns

doing the dishes. As you think of rules to include, think back to conflicts you may have had with your parents or other adults recently. Would a rule about listening or compromise have made the situation better?

- **Role play:** Design a role play with one youth playing a parent and another playing the teen. Give them scenarios about rules, such as curfew, using the telephone, watching television, or going to the mall alone with friends. Reverse roles to let every youth play the role of a parent or authority figure.
- **Top ten:** Pretend you are the parent of a teen in middle school or junior high. Write down the top ten rules you would impose for safety and for respecting the rights of others.

### Games

- **Red light, green light:** Play a game of red light, green light outside if possible. Ask one person to be the light signal, at one end of the room or playing field, while the others line up on the opposite side facing the signal. When the signal says green light, everyone can run forward. However, when the signal says red light, everyone must freeze. Those who move during a red light must go back to the starting point. The object of the game is to tag the person giving the signals. After a brief time, complicate the rules so that the game is no longer fun. For example, when it is red light, everyone must be standing on one foot with hands on hips. Are simple rules sometimes better than complicated rules?

### Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational

### WEAVINGS

- If you schedule this session early in the year, use it to set norms for the group. Encourage the youth to set rules that are reasonable and simple.
- Benedict found the *Book of Psalms* to be an important guide for living. Sometimes the *Psalms* are referred to as the Psalter, also a name for a collection of biblical psalms used in worship. *The Book of Common Prayer* has a section called the Psalter beginning on p. 581. There it is defined as "a body of liturgical poetry . . . designed for vocal, congregational use, whether by singing or reading" (BCP, p. 582). Our use of the Psalter is related to the influence of Benedict on Anglican tradition.
- One of the tensions in any democracy, including the United States, is over rules. On one hand, we want to have the "freedoms to" live our life as we each see fit. However, we also want the "freedoms from" things that are harmful. Some people, for example, believe we should give up the "freedom to" buy and own guns in order to have the "freedom from" one of the highest homicide rates in the world. Youth will soon discover that their encounter with rules is only just beginning.

### RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)  
Display this poster of drawings of people featured in this module during your study of People of the Promise.
- Benedict's Rule (No. 2)

norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch *Freaky Friday* about a teen (Jodie Foster) who changes places with her mother in an out-of-body experience.
- **Print:** Bring in newspapers and pass them out to small groups. Ask the youth to find examples of stories about rules being broken. What happened to the people who broke the rules? Did they hurt anyone besides themselves?

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Sing or read together "Take up your cross, the Savior said" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 675).
- Sing the hymn "Day by day" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 654) using the tune from *Godspell*.
- Listen to "Yakkety Yak . . . Don't talk back."

## Service

- **Monastic life:** Contact a local convent or monastic order in your region. To find one near you, contact the diocese or call a Roman Catholic church. Find out if youth can be a part of the service projects sponsored by the orders.

## Sharing

- **Parent appreciation:** Plan a parent appreciation night at the church. Invite parents and youth to come for dinner or dessert. After eating, perform a series of role plays about family life, such as bringing home a poor report card or asking for a raise in allowance, with the teens and parents exchanging roles.

## Study

- **Episcopal orders:** Find out more about monasteries and convents in the Episcopal Church. If an order is located nearby, plan to visit it as a group. Or invite a member of a religious order to speak to your group.
- **Benedict's Rule:** Look at a complete set of rules by Benedict at a library. All of the rules take up only about fifty pages of a book. Compare the rules with other writings from that time, such as those of Augustine.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

The rule of joy and the law of duty seem to me all one.  
—Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

For us, with the rule of right and wrong given to us by Christ, there is nothing for which we have no standard. And there is no greatness where there is not simplicity, goodness, and truth.  
—Leo Tolstoy

Where love rules, there is no will to power; and where power predominates, there love is lacking.  
—Carl Jung

[Benedict] gave them a new way of looking at life precisely because they were to learn to put God at the very center of their lives.

—Basil Hume

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for July 11 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.  
Almighty and everlasting God, your precepts are the wisdom of a loving Father: Give us grace, following the teaching and example of your servant Benedict, to walk with loving and willing hearts in the school of the Lord's service; let your ears be open to our prayers; and prosper with your blessing the work of our hands; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for Benedict  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, July 11

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to identify with Benedict and define a rule of life? Can they describe how Benedict's Rule can apply to their lives today? Are youth able to list ways rules can be positive factors in their lives?

# Martin Luther: Reforming the Church

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session focuses on the changes sought by Martin Luther to bring the Church closer to the teaching of Christ. Youth will be able to outline the events in Martin Luther's life.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes Martin Luther's life and the events that led to his call for change in the Church. Key people are Martin Luther and Frederick of Saxony; a key place is Wittenberg; key events are Luther's discovery of God's grace and Luther's call for an academic debate about the Church's misuse of power. For spiritual preparation, think about your own feelings of God's unconditional love.

### Commentary

Martin Luther was born November 10, 1483, in Germany. Though his father wanted him to enter law school, Luther sought a vocation in ministry and teaching. This decision was due in part to rebellion against his father who beat him severely as a child. More importantly, it was the result of Luther's own quest for salvation. In 1505, he entered a monastery and was ordained a priest two years later. After receiving his doctorate, he became a professor of biblical studies at the University of Wittenberg.

Throughout this time Luther struggled to reconcile his intense feelings of unworthiness of God's love. If God was anything like his father, Luther also questioned why he should love God rather than hate God. However, while teaching a course on Paul's *Epistle to the*

*Romans*, Luther discovered an answer to his dilemma.

According to Church teaching, "the justice of God" meant punishment meted out to sinners. But Luther realized that salvation cannot be earned. Rather, it is given freely by God to sinners who live by faith. Therefore, God's justice is a gift and not a punishment.

As a result of this insight, Luther felt free to criticize the Church's corruptive practice of selling indulgences, primarily used to raise funds for St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Indulgences were prayers which could be purchased on behalf of loved ones to insure their passage from purgatory (a kind of waiting room) to heaven. On October 31, 1517, he posted notice of an academic debate on indulgences on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. The notice listed ninety-five theses condemning indulgences. In response, the Pope ordered Luther's superiors to silence him.

After a series of hearings, Luther refused to deny his views and began to fear for his life. He was excommunicated, or banned, from the Church on January 3, 1521. He escaped an arrest order with the help of a local prince, Frederick of Saxony, and took refuge in the prince's castle. While in hiding he translated the Latin Bible into German and wrote many papers condemning various practices of the Church, such as the misuse of power by the clergy, the use of Latin in services, and withholding wine from the laity at communion.

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Martin Luther*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*  
—Romans 5:1
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Milan Kundera, Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—For all Baptized Christians (BCP, p. 252-3)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*

Romans 5:1-5

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- When discussing Luther's childhood, be sensitive to youth who may be abused themselves. Be ready to get outside help if warranted.
- It is important to distinguish between the Catholic Church of the sixteenth century and the Church today. Even though Luther chose to leave Catholicism, the Roman Catholic Church continued with its own reform and is very different today.
- Be sure youth do not confuse Martin Luther with the famous civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr.
- **Discussion Starter:** Have you ever been in a situation in which someone has abused his or her power? What did you do?

Luther's actions became the catalyst for a wider movement that resulted in the Protestant Reformation.

## Personal Views

The beginning of the Protestant Reformation is generally regarded as the day Martin Luther posted his ninety-five theses on the church door at Wittenberg. However, he did not set out to organize a new church. His goal was to reform the Church by condemning its worst practices, especially the misuse of power by the Pope in Rome.

There is a striking parallel between Martin Luther's relationship with his abusive father and his perception of the Roman Catholic Church as it existed in the sixteenth century. Luther saw the Church as oppressive and corrupt. He felt that many of the Church's traditions, such as the use of indulgences, were not grounded in scripture and therefore should be discontinued. His commitment to the scriptures turned the Church in Western Europe upside down.

For Martin Luther, justification by faith meant there is no work or effort on our part which can guarantee God's love for us. God loves us because God chooses to, not because we deserve it.

Do you ever try to "buy" God's love by doing good works? Do you find it difficult to believe that God loves you in spite of your sin? Take a few moments to be with God in silence, accepting the love God showed through Jesus Christ.

In your wisdom, O Lord our God, you have made all things, and have allotted to each of us the days of our life: Grant that we may live in your presence, be guided by your Holy Spirit, and offer all our works to your honor and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Season for all Things  
The Book of Occasional Services, p. 41*

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

As youth enter, pass out blank index card or pre-printed cards that say "Get into Heaven Free," modeled after "Get Out of Jail" cards in Monopoly. Give each person several cards to decorate with markers, stickers, or crayons. Collect them for later use.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Romans 5:1-5* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Dear God,*

*Give me the courage like Luther had to be able to keep my beliefs in you strong, no matter what others may do or say. May I have faith in your Son to know that believing in you is what will get me into your kingdom and nothing else. May I have strength to carry this out, and the power to love and serve you forever. Amen.*

Mara, Grade 9

**Lector:** *A reading from Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 5, verses 1 through 5.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Pass out play money, making sure everyone has the same amount. Ask everyone to line up at a table where someone who has been named a "church authority" is sitting. Beforehand, make up certificates or slips of paper that say "Ticket to Heaven," or "Pew Purchase." Take turns buying the indulgences to get a seat or to buy entry into heaven for friends and family. Set the price so that you can either get to heaven or sit down. Ask the youth who chose heaven to stand at the back of the room.

Take a few minutes to talk about buying your way into the church.

- How do we get into heaven?
- Does God keep a tally of our good deeds?
- Does God check financial records before granting admission to heaven?

Reread *Romans 5:1-2*, and invite the youth who are standing at the back to sit down. Tell the story of Martin Luther and how his discovery of God's love led to his insistence that the Church not charge for the gifts God freely gives. Be sure to include:

- The reason Luther entered the monastery.
- His discovery that God loved him even though he was unworthy.
- His criticism of the Church and how he posted ninety-five complaints on a church door.
- The use of indulgences and the misuse of power by the Church.
- His role in the Protestant Reformation.

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **Eternal life:** Luther believed that we get into heaven free through our faith and God's love. Ask the youth to visualize heaven. Set out different art supplies, including paper, markers, crayons, colored tissue, and glue. Ask the youth to make an artistic expression of heaven through art or in words and poetry. Discuss the images.
- **Lyric update:** Read "From deepest woe I cry to thee" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 151), written by Martin Luther. Rewrite the words, capturing his ideas in modern prose.

### Games

- **Kingdom come:** Based on the game Rock/Scissors/Paper, the youth act out three characters: Giants, Elves, and Wizards. In this game sometimes the weakest factor can defeat what seems to be the stronger factor, just as a single man was able to stand up and ultimately change the Church. Divide into two teams. Before facing off, let each team decide which of the three they will portray. The teams then face each other. At one end of the room or field, designate a free zone. Everyone says the three characters' names, then the word "go." Every person in the team assumes the agreed-upon pose. Wizards beat Giants, Giants beat Elves, and Elves beat Wizards. The team with the winning stance chases the other team as it races to the free zone. Any player who is tagged becomes part of the opposing team. The game is over when one team is left.

### Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch a movie about a person willing to take a stand for beliefs, such as *Norma Rae*, *A Few Good Men*, or *Silkwood*. Use scenes from the movies that are appropriate for your group.
- **Print:** Bring in several biographies about Martin Luther. They should be available in the children's section of the local

### WEAVINGS

- If possible relate this session to the national holiday for Martin Luther King Jr. in January.
- A famous American, Martin Luther King Jr., was named for the rebellious man of God from the sixteenth century. Like his namesake, King stood up for his beliefs even though he faced ostracism and imprisonment. They both were fighting for people who were victims of the misuse of power. Think of other ways these two leaders from very different times in history were alike.
- It is important to recognize that the misuse of power by the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century does not continue today. In fact, Pope John Paul II has publicly reconciled Martin Luther to the Church, agreeing that Luther was right in many of his criticisms and that the Church did misuse its power. As Episcopalians, we enjoy a Protestant heritage which is influenced by Martin Luther and many other reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

### Resource Poster

- People of the Promise (No. 1)

library, such as *The Monk Who Shook the World: The Story of Martin Luther*, by Dyril James Davey; *Martin Luther*, by Sally Stepanek, or *A Man Called Martin Luther*, by Kathleen Benson.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Read or sing "A mighty fortress is our God" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 687) by Martin Luther. He wrote this hymn about the faithfulness of God in 1527 when the Black Plague struck Wittenberg and he became severely depressed.
- Sing a song about God's grace called "Grace Greater than Our Sin" (*The Baptist Hymnal*, 329).
- Listen to "One Tin Soldier Rides Away" or "Do You Know Where You're Going To?"

## Service

- **Shelter:** Martin Luther was abused as a child. Plan a service project to help abused children, such as collecting clothes and toys for a shelter for abused spouses and their children.

## Sharing

- **Free passes:** Make additional "Get into Heaven Free" cards like those created during the Coming Together activity. Pass them out to people in the parish as they enter or leave a worship service.

## Study

- **Biography:** Find out more about Martin Luther and his impact on the Protestant Reformation. Visit the library or find information through the Internet.
- **Roman Catholic Church:** Visit a Catholic mass and compare it to the Eucharist service at your church. Find out before you go if you are invited to take communion.
- **Famous men:** Compare the lives and accomplishments of Martin Luther King Jr. and his namesake, Martin Luther.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

The only reason people want to be masters of the future is to change the past.

—Milan Kundera

You say you want a revolution  
Well you know  
we all want to change the world.

...

But when you talk about de-  
struction

Don't you know that you can  
count me out.

—Paul McCartney

The order is  
Rapidly fadin'.  
And the first one now  
Will later be last  
For the times they are a-  
changin'.

—Bob Dylan

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the prayer on page 252 of *The Book of Common Prayer* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*Grant, Lord God, to all who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, that, as we have put away the old life of sin, so we may be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and live in righteousness and true holiness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

For all Baptized Christians  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 252-3

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are the youth able to outline the major events in Martin Luther's life? Can they relate the key discovery that changed Luther and led him to challenge the Church? Can they describe how the misuse of power can destroy even the powerful?

# Absalom Jones: Courage to Be Free

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session centers on the life of Absalom Jones who insisted that African Americans be a part of the Church. Youth will be able to state that Absalom Jones had the courage to stand up for the freedom of his people to believe in and worship God.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the life of Absalom Jones from his birth into slavery to his ordination as the first black priest in the Episcopal Church. Key people are Absalom Jones, Richard Allen, and Bishop William White; the key place is Philadelphia; the key events are the refusal of black worshippers to be segregated from others and the formation of the St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. For spiritual preparation think about injustices in your life and your willingness to welcome all people to your church.

### Commentary

Absalom Jones was born into slavery in 1746 in Delaware. Despite obvious hardships, he learned to read from the New Testament. When he was 16, he was sold to a store owner in Philadelphia. After working for his owner during the day, he attended a night school operated by the Quaker community. In 1770, he married another slave, Mary, and purchased her freedom with his earnings. He bought his own freedom in 1778.

Absalom Jones served as a lay minister and guest preacher for black members at St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church. With the help of his friend, Richard Allen, they greatly

increased the membership of black Americans at St. George's. This alarmed the vestry who voted in secret to segregate black members to an upstairs gallery of the church. Black members were not told of the vestry's decision. When ushers attempted to move black members upstairs during a Sunday service, the black members walked out in protest.

Absalom Jones and Richard Allen then organized the Free African Society in 1787. The society built a church in 1792 and applied for membership in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. The society made several demands: that they be accepted as an organized body; that they have control over their local affairs; and that Absalom Jones be ordained as minister. In 1794, the church was admitted to the diocese as St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. During its first year, it grew to over 500 members.

Absalom Jones was ordained deacon in 1795 and priest in 1802 by Bishop William White.

Absalom Jones must have been a powerful preacher. He frequently spoke out against the social injustice of slavery. At the same time, his quiet nature endeared him to his congregation and community. Through his insistence that African Americans be included, Absalom Jones made a major contribution to the Episcopal Church.

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Absalom Jones*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners. . . .*  
—Isaiah 61:1
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Paine, Ghandi
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Absalom Jones (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, February 13)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.*

Isaiah 61:1-4

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Help the youth put Absalom Jones in the correct historical context. He formed his church soon after the Revolutionary War, about seventy years before the Civil War.
- Be open to discuss the prejudices and injustices that may be a part of the youth's lives. Help them find appropriate responses based on the life of Absalom Jones.
- **Discussion Starter:** Describe injustices you have observed among your friends, at school, or at the church.

## Personal Views

While slavery was clearly at the forefront of his ministry and life experience, we also honor Absalom Jones as a man who overcame incredible resistance to preach God's love to all people in a society which was oppressive and unjust.

Through his courage and persistence, Absalom Jones overcame injustice and faithfully served his church and its people. Because of his efforts, black Americans in Philadelphia had a place to worship even though they were unwelcome in every other parish.

The work of Absalom Jones is not yet complete. Racism, as well as sexism and other oppressive prejudices, still exist in our society. However, his ministry serves as an example to us today because of his courage to speak out against injustice to the oppressors who were responsible for it.

Absalom Jones can serve as an advocate for social justice, inspiring us to be courageous in exposing the injustices that permeate our society. Where have you encountered injustice? Have you ever been the victim of injustice? How did you respond?

Absalom Jones's ministry reached beyond slavery to call us to love all people in the house of God. Does your church welcome all people? How are you a part of a welcoming presence at your church?

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one

of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For the Oppressed  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 826*

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

As the youth enter the room, pass out M&M candies to each of them. Be very deliberate about giving unequal portions. Some should receive many, while others receive very little, or perhaps none at all. Observe their reactions.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Isaiah 61:1-4* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Dear God,*

*Help me to stand up for freedom like Absalom Jones did. Help clear the world of racism and hate so that everyone can live in peace. Help peace find its way into everyone's heart so that the world will be a better place to live in.*

Erin, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from Isaiah, chapter 61, verses 1 through 4.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Discuss how the youth felt during the Coming Together exercise.

- Was it fair that some people got more candy than others?
- If you got more, did you share any candy with those who had less?
- Is it easier to be the one who gets more or the one who gets less?
- What did the scripture passage say about people who get less than others?

Tell the story of Absalom Jones, an example of the "oaks of righteousness" described in *Isaiah*. Be sure to include these points:

- Born into slavery thirty years before the Revolutionary War.
- Sold to a store owner in Philadelphia at age 16.
- Bought his wife's freedom in 1770 and his own eight years later.
- Refused to accept a segregated status at St. George's Church.

At this point stop the story. Divide into two groups to debate the dilemma faced by the black members of St. George's. One group will argue that they should stay a part of the church; the other will argue to leave. Be sure youth understand the status of black people during this time in history, and the perils of going out on their own.

Complete the story, including these points:

- St. Thomas was formed by Absalom Jones in 1792.
  - The church was accepted into the Diocese of Pennsylvania.
  - Bishop William White ordained Absalom Jones as priest in 1802.
- Discuss other directions this story could have gone.

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **Comics:** Illustrate a cartoon or comic strip showing an unfair situation youth have been a part of or observed. Share the cartoons and discuss the situations they portray.
- **Skit:** Devise a skit based on the debate during the Engaging activity. Include the scene at the church when all the black members refuse to sit upstairs.

- **Role play:** Act out a scenario of an unfair situation the youth might find themselves in. For example, a youth observes his or her friends continuously picking on another person. When this person reports these actions to a teacher, the friends deny it. What happens next?

### Games

- **Standing up for your side:** Move chairs aside to make an open space. Put a piece of masking tape on the floor, the length of the room. Mark it off in regular intervals, clearly designating the center. Say two words or phrases that evoke opposite responses. For example, beach and mountains; Cadillac and Volkswagen; morning person and night owl. Take a stand on the line that shows your feelings about the words. You must be able to defend your position. Did anyone change their minds? Did you keep your place even if you changed your mind?

### Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch all or parts of *The Power of One* about a young man's fight against prejudice in South Africa. Point out the help he received from two mentors, one black and one white.
- **Print:** Look through newspapers and news magazines for stories about social injustice today. Compare issues you find with the issues of slavery and racism experienced by Absalom Jones.

### WEAVINGS

- February 13 is the day the Church celebrates the life of Absalom Jones. Perhaps a special display or presentation could be scheduled then.
- The story of Absalom Jones coincides with the birth of the Episcopal Church in America. A man closely identified with the formation of the national Church is William White, bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. While his rationale for accepting Absalom Jones's church into the diocese might have been rooted in the desire to segregate black Americans in separate churches, he is still noted for being the first bishop to ordain a black priest in the United States.
- Other people in American history have made courageous stands to fight oppression and injustice. Just as the black members of St. George's protested segregation within the church, black people during the civil rights movement protested the injustice of unfair voting practices and the segregation of schools, churches, and public facilities. Absalom Jones was the first of many Americans to stand up for justice and an end to oppression.

### Resource Poster

- People of the Promise (No. 1)

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Sing or read "O day of God, draw nigh" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 601), especially verse 3.
- Sing or read all the verses of "Blessed Absalom" (*Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, 44). The hymn describes Absalom Jones's life and his teachings.
- Listen to a recording of "We Shall Overcome" (also in *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, 227). This anthem, used extensively during the civil rights movement, could have been sung by the black members of St. Thomas who refused separate seating.

## Service

- **Learning from others:** Visit another church with a different ethnic population than your own for worship. (It doesn't have to be an Episcopal church.) Invite the youth from that church to attend worship at your church. Plan a social time to get to know each other better.

## Sharing

- **Teaching others:** Perform the skit created for the Expressions activity at an adult forum or for a children's class. Discuss the issues faced by Absalom Jones and black people at that time in history.

## Study

- **What others say:** Write the Diocese of Pennsylvania for a copy of the curriculum recently developed about Absalom Jones. Find out if your church would like to use the curriculum to learn more about Absalom Jones.
- **The early Church:** Find out more about the early history of the Episcopal Church. Which states wanted to form a national Church? Which ones were reluctant to be a part of the movement to set up such a Church?
- **The prophets:** Look up the word oppression in a concordance and see how many references you can find in books of the prophets in the Old Testament.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must . . . undergo the fatigue of supporting it.

—Thomas Paine

It is my certain conviction that no man loses his freedom except through his own weakness.

—Gandhi

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for February 13 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for Absalom Jones  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, February 13

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to describe the courage of Absalom Jones? Can they tell how he stood up for the freedom of his people to worship God in the Church? Are youth able to identify current injustices and name ways they can stand up against them?

# Thomas Gallaudet: Apostle to the Deaf

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session centers on the life of Thomas Gallaudet and how he welcomed the deaf into the Church. Youth will be able to tell how Thomas Gallaudet spread the gospel to deaf people.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the life of Thomas Gallaudet and his work with the deaf. Key people are Thomas Gallaudet, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Sophia Fowler Gallaudet, and Elizabeth Budd; a key place is St. Ann's Church for the Deaf in New York. For spiritual preparation, think about how most of us take the gift of hearing for granted.

### Commentary

The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet was a pioneer in ministry to the deaf. His father, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, had established the first free school for the deaf in the United States. His mother, Sophia Fowler Gallaudet, had been one of the school's first students.

Sophia was an energetic, capable mother whose experience was nonetheless limited by her deafness. Soon after Thomas was born, Sophia dropped a book on the floor next to him: the baby cried, and Sophia rejoiced—he had not inherited her curse of deafness! But from birth young Thomas witnessed the frustrations of being deaf and the potential unleashed through his father's caring leadership. He felt called to share God's love with those who lived in the silent world of deafness.

Thomas Gallaudet married Elizabeth Budd, a former student at the New York Institute for the Deaf, where he taught. He led a Sunday school class for the deaf, sharing the good news in sign language. Eventually his calling led to ordination as an Episcopal priest. One of the first to use sign language in religious services, he realized this language itself was a healing tool, enabling the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.

Gallaudet founded St. Ann's Church for the Deaf in New York, the first church for the deaf in the United States. He also was instrumental in establishing All Angels' Mission to the Deaf in Baltimore, the Home for the Aged and Infirm Deaf in New York, and an organization called Church Missions to Deaf Mutes. In addition, he supported hands-on educational opportunities that would enable young deaf people to find productive work and live more independently.

### Personal Views

Most of us have not experienced profound deafness, and we take the gift of hearing for granted. What would a typical day be like if you suddenly couldn't hear? Imagine your feelings as you try to follow your usual routines. What kind of alarm clock would you use? What morning sounds would you miss? Sounds can give valuable clues about danger. What are some ways that silence might make you less secure, more fearful?

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Thomas Gallaudet*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."*  
—Mark 7:37
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Patrick Henry, Helen Keller, Emery Edwin Vinson
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Thomas Gallaudet (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, August 27)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*They brought to [Jesus] a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."*

Mark 7:32-37

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Be sensitive to youth with hearing or speech impediments or those with family members who are impaired. Let them share their experiences only if they feel comfortable doing so.
- While the Engaging activity can be lots of fun, be sure to stress the importance of experiencing hearing or speech limitations, not making light of those who have these limitations.
- **Discussion Starter:** Do you know anyone who is deaf or hard of hearing? How do you communicate?

For some of us, a day of silence would seem a blessing, a chance to just be, without all of the noisy demands of the day. If you had a chance to experience a silent world, how long would you want it to last? What is a good balance for you between silence and sound?

Many people live fully in spite of their deafness. However, most schools, churches, and businesses operate as though all of us can hear. If you lost your hearing, when would you feel left out of activities that are comfortable for you now? How could others be helpful to you? How can you open doors of communication with those who have hearing problems?

What sounds of faith are important to you? Think of the words of the Eucharist, encouraging words from others in your faith community, hymns, or prayers you love to hear. What have you learned from these sounds about the love of God? Consider possible ways for experiencing and sharing God's love with people who cannot hear these sounds.

How often are you "deaf by choice," tuning out voices you don't want to hear? Parents and teens often feel they are not heard by each other. Why? Think of ways to explore this aspect of hearing with your class.

O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, on God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

For stewardship of creation  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 259*

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Set up a television or video player with a show that is a favorite for your group, but keep the volume down to a hum. (Use a radio tuned to a popular teen station if you have no access to a TV or VCR.) Be sure no one adjusts the volume. Observe any frustrations created by not being able to hear the music or the show.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Mark 7:32-37* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Thank you, God, for letting me hear my family and friends. I'm thankful that Thomas Gallaudet had the idea of signing for a Sunday School class for the deaf so they could understand more about God. Thank you for people who sign the sermon and prayers and hymns for deaf people in church so they can know that God loves them. Amen.*

Cindy, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from Mark, chapter 7, verses 32 through 37.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Spend a few minutes talking about the Coming Together activity. Then tell the class about Thomas Gallaudet, being sure to include these points:

- His father was an educator of the deaf, and his mother was deaf.
- Though Thomas could hear, he had compassion for those who couldn't.
- He felt called to show deaf people that God loved them.
- He was a pioneer in using sign language in Sunday school and in worship.
- He encouraged deaf people to see their gifts and reach their potential.

Give each person in the group a copy of *Mark 7:32-37*, two jawbreaker candies, and a pair of wax earplugs—cotton balls can be used, but earplugs are more effective. Ask students to place the earplugs in their ears and the candies in their mouths—no chewing!

First read the scripture to the group. Then sing together one of the suggested hymns, with the jawbreakers and earplugs in place. Next, form pairs and take turns reading text to each other.

Using hand signals, gather the group into a circle. Turn to the person on your right to begin “healing” as Jesus did. Gently remove the plugs, hand the person a bowl, and ask him or her to spit out the jawbreakers. That person repeats the actions to the next person, continuing around the circle. After everyone has been “healed,” ask each person to share their feelings about the experience.

- How does a deaf person feel living with people who can hear and speak more clearly?
- Why did Jesus touch the man in the course of healing him?
- How did the deaf and mute people Jesus healed respond?
- How would you respond to hearing a bird for the first time or a loved one’s voice?

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **Do you hear what I hear:** Pass out pencils and paper to each person. Go outside if possible, or find a place outside your meeting room. Ask everyone to listen and

write down every sound in a two- to three-minute period. Ask the group to keep silent during the timed period. Compare lists and discuss the variety of sounds heard by different people.

- **Deaf dances:** A favorite activity in deaf communities is dancing. If you are in a space where noise will not bother others, put a boom box or speakers on the floor, and turn the volume up loud. Take off your shoes and try to feel the beat from vibrations in the floor. Clap your hands to the beat and dance!

### Games

- **Charades:** Divide into two teams and play a game of charades. Remember, there is no talking!
- **Pictionary:** Play a game using Bible Pictionary or make your own game. Divide into pairs. Give one partner in each pair the name of a Bible story, such as the good Samaritan or the prodigal son. That person will begin to draw the story while the other partner guesses the story. The picture will become more elaborate if the correct answer is not given.

### Media

Today’s youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch scenes appropriate for your group from *Children of a Lesser God*. In several scenes, the two main characters, one hearing and one

### WEAVINGS

- Thomas Gallaudet’s feast day is on August 27. How can you connect this lesson to that date?
- Early in his ministry, Thomas Gallaudet told a young deaf schoolboy, Henry Syle, that he thought it was possible for a deaf man to be a priest. Syle had been a sickly child, deafened by scarlet fever at age 6. But he was intelligent, and Gallaudet’s words encouraged him. Syle persevered and eventually became the first deaf Episcopal priest, a symbol of the possibilities opened up for deaf people by Thomas Gallaudet.
- In 1995, Heather Whitestone was crowned the first deaf Miss America. She lost her hearing when she was 18 months old, due to a reaction to medication. During the competition Heather Whitestone won the preliminary competition in the talent contest where she performed a ballet. For that performance she wore a hearing aid to help her hear the beat of the music. She explained that she had memorized the music and moved to the beats she counted in her head. Heather Whitestone is a role model not only for the deaf, but also for those of us faced with limitations. We can choose to either be defeated or to rise above those limitations by using the gifts God has given to each of us.

### RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)
- Sign Language (No. 3)

deaf, face the frustrations of trying to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

- **Print:** Bring in books about other deaf people such as Helen Keller or Heather Whitestone, Miss America 1995.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Read or sing "Where true charity and love dwell" (*The Hymnal* 1982, 606).
- Sing together "Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door" (*Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, 100).
- Play a version of "Let It Be," originally by the Beatles.

## Service

- **Ministry:** Explore opportunities for lay ministry among the deaf in your community, or look for ways your youth can open doors of communication between hearing and non-hearing people. Does your church provide any services for the deaf? Would deaf people come to your church if services were provided?
- **Visit:** Arrange a visit to a local facility such as a nursing home or veteran's hospital where residents may be hard of hearing or deaf.

## Sharing

- **Signing:** Learn to spell your name in sign language using Resource Poster No. 3. Invite someone from your church or

community to teach the group to sign "Jesus Loves Me" or "The Lord's Prayer." Perform it at a worship service, and teach it to younger children in the parish.

## Study

- **Look it up:** Check a concordance for other Scripture references to "deaf" or "hear." Do some of the citations refer to those who can hear being deaf to God?
- **Gallaudet University:** Learn more about Gallaudet University using library or Internet resources. Read about the university's first deaf president in *The Day the World Heard Gallaudet*.
- **Laws:** Obtain and study a copy of the Americans With Disabilities Act. How well does your community serve those who are hard of hearing? Do government offices have telephone systems for the deaf?

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2). Are we disposed to be the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

—Patrick Henry

The mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, joy, set it free!

—Helen Keller

God grant that I may know  
Such little use for sound  
That I shall lightly hear  
The chain by which I'm bound. . . .

God, since I cannot hear,  
Grant Thou this boon to me;  
A vision strong and clear  
The way of life to see. . . .

—Emery Edwin Vinson

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for August 27 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*O Loving God, whose will it is that everyone should come to you and be saved: We bless your holy Name for your servant Thomas Gallaudet whose labors with and for those who are deaf we commemorate today, and we pray that you will continually move your Church to respond in love to the needs of all people; through Jesus Christ, who opened the ears of the deaf, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for Thomas Gallaudet  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, August 27

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to recount the story of Thomas Gallaudet's life? Can they tell how he help spread the gospel to deaf people? Can they describe the difficulties faced by the deaf?

# Kamehameha and Emma: Crowns of Glory

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session focuses on the actions of a king and queen in Hawaii, many years before it became a state. Youth will be able to describe the ministry of Kamehameha and Emma in establishing the Church in Hawaii and their good works.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the reign of Kamehameha and Emma during the 1800s. Key people are King Kamehameha IV, Queen Emma, and Dr. Robert Wylie; the key place is Hawaii. For spiritual preparation think about the power you wield in your home and community though you may not have the titles of power.

### Commentary

Alexander Liholiho was crowned King Kamehameha (Ka·m\_a·m\_a) IV of Hawaii in 1854, when he was 20 years old. A bright, witty, perceptive young leader, he brought hope to his people in a time of tumult.

The young king met Emma Rooke, an intelligent, energetic beauty, at the elite Chiefs' School, established for children of Hawaii's ruling class. They were married in an Anglican ceremony.

Kamehameha knew about the Anglican Church through his mentor, Dr. Robert Wylie, an Anglican from Scotland who had adopted Hawaii as his home. Soon after becoming king, Kamehameha appealed to Queen Victoria to establish the Anglican Church in Hawaii. He and Emma saw Anglicanism as a branch of Christianity that was sufficiently traditional and orthodox to offer stability and hope to their people

during a bewildering time of change. To them, the stately beauty of the liturgy complemented the simple beauty of their Hawaiian culture.

During the reign of Kamehameha IV, Hawaii struggled to survive. Tribal wars and smallpox had decimated the native population, and the number of native Hawaiians had decreased to 70,000 from 300,000. Surviving islanders strove to preserve their culture amid the influx of foreigners who were settling in this earthly paradise.

Kamehameha and Emma believed that churches, schools, and hospitals were needed to sustain their beloved Hawaii, which was being reorganized and modernized at an alarming rate. The king and queen became known for their altruism, putting aside many royal luxuries, living a simpler life than earlier monarchs and actively soliciting funds for a much needed hospital.

In addition, Kamehameha authorized the founding of Saint Alban's College and Saint Andrew's Priory (a school for girls) and established several other schools with Anglican clergy as tutors. He also authorized the translation of *The Book of Common Prayer* into Hawaiian.

The death of their only son at age 4 almost paralyzed Kamehameha and Emma. A year later the king himself died, overwhelmed by the young prince's death, his own severe asthma, and the burden of state affairs.

Though the political climate did not support Emma as the reigning monarch after her husband's death,

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Kamehameha and Emma*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and shield.*  
—Psalm 33:20
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—St. Francis of Assisi, Talmud, Proverb
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Kamehameha and Emma (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, November 28)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all humankind. From where he sits enthroned he watches all the inhabitants of the earth—he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes all their deeds. A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.*

Psalm 33:12-22

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- To help youth remember where Hawaii is located, bring in a map of the world. What is it near?
- To get more personal responses from youth in making the shields, make them in private. Don't insist youth share responses, but give them ample opportunity to do so.
- **Discussion Starter:** What is one thing in your school you would like to add, delete, or change if you had the power? Would it be beneficial for everyone?

she continued to faithfully serve the Hawaiian people by supporting the institutions they had established and traveling extensively to raise funds for the poor and sick. She remained a symbol of dignity to the people of Hawaii.

## Personal Views

Not many of us wear crowns in this lifetime, but most of us have more power than we realize. What kind of power do you have? What kinds of decisions do you make? Though many of our decisions seem to be personal, they often affect others in ways we hadn't anticipated. When has this happened in your life?

*Psalm 33:20* says, "Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and shield." As they faced the challenges of leadership and the pain of their people, Kamehameha and Emma may well have sought solace from *Psalm 33*. What challenges or pain have you experienced? Have you found ways that God can help you deal with these? A shield can give protection in battle. What protection has God given you for the battles you face?

Power can be used to coerce and to manipulate people. But it can also be used to transform people, to give them new hope for themselves and the world. Have you seen a leader use power in a transforming way?

There are many movements in our world that are designed to empower people who feel powerless. Have you ever felt empowered to act in a new way? What gave you the confidence to do that? How can you empower the young people you teach?

Power turned out to be a heavy cross for Kamehameha, an intelligent young man who cared deeply for his people and had been well educated for his royal role. Was he successful?

The Archbishop of Canterbury was impressed by Emma's "almost saintly piety." What makes a person saintly? Do you know anyone you would describe as saintly? What special characteristic or quality of life does that person have?

Almighty God, you proclaim your truth in every age by many voices: Direct, in our time, we pray, those who speak where many listen and write what many read; that they may do their part in making the heart of this people wise, its mind sound, and its will righteous; to the honor of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For those who Influence Public Opinion  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 827

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Create a Hawaiian atmosphere. Hang Resource Poster No. 4 showing an Hawaiian sunset along with travel posters or other large pictures of Hawaii. Change the usual arrangement of furniture. Bring in leis, play Hawaiian music, and serve tropical fruits for snack. Welcome each person by placing a lei around his or her neck.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Psalm 33:12-22* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Dear Lord, help us think about others when we make decisions. Help us take time to stop and think whether our decision is good. Forgive us when we make greedy or unjust decisions.*

Jordan, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from the Book of Psalms, chapter 33, verses 12 through 22.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Ask the youth to imagine that they've each been given the chance to be king or queen of a tropical island. Discuss the following questions, recording ideas on a chalkboard or newsprint for later reference.

- How would you rule this island?
- What would you do first? What would be important for you to do?
- What would you want to be known for?

Tell the story of Kamehameha and Emma, being sure to include the following:

- Kamehameha was only 20 when he was crowned king.
- He and Emma focused on working for the good of their people instead of living in luxury.
- Kamehameha established many Anglican churches and schools in Hawaii.
- Both king and queen actively raised funds to build a hospital.
- They faithfully worked at doing good in spite of setbacks and tragedies.

Look back at the answers the youth gave earlier. Write down answers to the same questions based on Kamehameha's and Emma's leadership. Compare the two sets of answers.

- How would Jesus answer the questions?

## Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

## Expressions

- **Personal shield:** *Psalm 33:20* talks about God being our help and shield. Give each youth paper and markers. Each will design a

banner or shield by illustrating in words or pictures four main categories: something you do well or enjoy doing; something you like about your family; something that helps you keep going or makes you strong; and something you do or want to do to help others. Share the shields with the group.

- **Rap song:** Use the lyrical sound of Kamehameha and Emma to write a rap song about Hawaii and how the royal couple helped their people.

## Games

- **Psalm shout:** Add descriptive actions for *Psalm 33:20* for the group to act out in a responsive reading of *Psalm 33:12-22*. For example, when the word "waits" is read, tap your feet impatiently; when "Lord" is read, say several other names used for God such as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer; when "help" is read, raise arms as if drowning, calling "HELP"; when "shield" is read, hold up your shield or extend your arms across your front.

## Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch early scenes of *Jack*, starring Robin Williams, about a boy who has power because of his size who stands up for others.
- **Print:** Find articles in magazines or newspapers that show good use of power by political and governmental leaders. Discuss where the strength or encour-

## WEAVINGS

- If you are using this session in the fall, note that November 28 is the feast day for Kamehameha and Emma. If bookmarks are made, pass them out near this date.
- The meanings of the lyric names of Kamehameha and Emma parallel their life experience. Kamehameha means "the very lonely one" or "the one set apart." His illnesses, the death of his only child, and his decision to live a more austere life set him apart. The name Emma means "excelling," descriptive of this woman who put personal disappointments aside to serve her people.
- A year before the young King Kamehameha IV was crowned, the residents of Honolulu, especially native Hawaiians, had been infected by smallpox. The disease, brought by Europeans who conquered lands all over the world, proved to be more deadly than any war. Fifty years ago, smallpox was still deadly enough that all children were required to be vaccinated. Today, however, smallpox has been eliminated throughout the world. Through science and public health, the high contagious disease has been defeated.

## RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)
- Hawaiian Sunset (No. 4)

agement to do good deeds comes from.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Read or sing "Lord, whose love through humble service," (*The Hymnal 1982*, 610).
- Sing the folk hymn "Pass It On."
- Find a recording of "Mele Kalihi-maki," which is Hawaiian for "Merry Christmas," and teach it to the group.

## Service

- **Visit and shout:** Visit the children's wing or floor of a local hospital. Take the leis as a greeting, and perform the *Psalms* shout, encouraging the children to join in with the youth.

## Sharing

- **Pass it on:** Use markers to print WWJD for the question "What Would Jesus Do?" on bookmark-sized strips of tag board or firm paper. Decorate the bookmarks, making enough to distribute to everyone at a parish gathering or worship service.

## Study

- **Power:** Find illustration in the Bible where power is used properly.
- **History:** Find out what happened in Hawaii between the end of Kamehameha's and Emma's reign in 1863 and when Hawaii became a state in 1959.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

You are our protector,  
You are our guardian and defender.  
You are courage.  
You are our haven and our hope. . . .  
You are our eternal life,  
Great and wonderful Lord.  
—St. Francis of Assisi

He who has more learning than good deeds is like a tree with many branches but weak roots; the first great storm will throw it to the ground. He whose good works are greater than his knowledge is like a tree with fewer branches but with strong and spreading roots, a tree which all the winds of heaven cannot uproot.

—Talmud

I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.

—Proverb

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for November 28 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*O Sovereign God, who raised up Kamehameha and Emma to be rulers in Hawaii, and inspired and enabled them to be diligent in good works for the welfare of their people and the good of your Church: Receive our thanks for their witness to the Gospel; and grant that we, with them, may attain to the crown of glory that never fades away; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Redeemer, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for Kamehameha and Emma  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, November 28

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to describe the ministry of Kamehameha and Emma in Hawaii? Can they list the difficulties faced by the royal couple and how they responded? Are youth able to identify the power they have and how to use it to help others?

# William Muhlenberg: Compassion for the Poor People of the Promise

## Objective

This session focuses on the social outreach and vision of William Muhlenberg, a priest who made his dreams a reality. Youth will be able to recount the deeds of William Muhlenberg and his dedication to the Church.

## Background for Leaders

The Commentary recounts the story of William Muhlenberg and his life of service to others. The key name is William Muhlenberg; key events are his entry into the Episcopal Church, his role in establishing public schools, and the founding of the Church of the Holy Communion. For spiritual preparation, think about your own life and church and the role social ministry has in both.

## Commentary

William Augustus Muhlenberg, an enthusiastic supporter of Christian social action, was born in Philadelphia in 1796. Although he was born into a prominent Lutheran family, Muhlenberg was drawn to the Episcopal Church because of its use of English, instead of the German used in the Lutheran Church.

William Muhlenberg was ordained a priest in 1820. During the next several years, he wrote hymns and worked in education, helping to establish a public school system. Later he joined local businessmen to found the first Episcopal church school and to become its first headmaster. He was one of the first to emphasize educating the “whole child,” an idea that would eventually develop into the progressive education of the next century.

William Muhlenberg also was very active in the Sunday school movement, and his hymns expanded the range of music in Episcopal churches. His emphasis on the colors of the Church year brought new beauty into the heart of the worship. However, he saw the need to broaden the ministry of the church and to express Christian ideals through social service.

It was distressing to Muhlenberg that only those of the upper socioeconomic groups seemed to be a part of Episcopal congregations. His strong belief that the Church should minister to all people led him to bold action for his time. At the Church of the Holy Communion in New York City he established a place where both rich and poor could worship. His innovations included free pews (not rented or purchased, as they had been earlier), a parish school, a parish unemployment fund, and trips to the country for poor city children.

The parish provided medical care for the poor, needlework for unemployed women, and holiday dinners for those whose income limited them to a survival level of existence.

In addition, William Muhlenberg cofounded St. Luke's Hospital, a charity hospital where he was the pastor-superintendent, ensuring that all patients were respected as children of God. In contrast to the impersonal approach he witnessed in other hospitals of his day, Muhlenberg considered the patients as guests and faithfully ministered to them and their needs in Christ's name.

---

## SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*William Muhlenberg*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.*  
—Psalm 84:3
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Victor Hugo, Rainer Maria Rilke, Evelyn Underhill
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for William Muhlenberg (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, April 8)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.*

Psalm 84:1-5

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- The programs initiated by William Muhlenberg at his New York City church may not seem radical to youth today. However, in the mid-nineteenth century, Episcopal churches rarely ventured into social ministry.
- If your parish is not involved in many outreach programs, the youth may run into some resistance when they plan projects. Plans need to be flexible, depending on the parish's willingness to support them.
- **Discussion Starter:** Describe one service activity to help others that you have done. What was it like? Would you do it again?

## Personal Views

William Muhlenberg's social action was deeply rooted in his Christianity. Because he believed the Church should minister to all social groups, he worked toward establishing a church where both rich and poor could worship. Where do you see the need for social action today? Would you be willing to support that action in some way?

William Muhlenberg was part of a "reform" enthusiasm that swept the United States during the early 1800s. He saw poor people without jobs or adequate medical care, and he became involved in finding a solution. What reforms do you think are needed now? Do you see ways that you or your young people can become involved in solutions—or at least in small steps that move in a needed direction?

Hospitals in William Muhlenberg's time were places where only the poorest people went, and they were treated by many physicians who looked down on them because of their poverty. At St. Luke's Hospital, Muhlenberg took a different approach, serving the patients as guests, ministering to them and their needs in Christ's name. Is there a place in your life where you can minister to others and their needs in Christ's name?

The Church still struggles with how to welcome and serve both rich and poor. Is it easier for you or your congregation to extend hospitality to the rich, the poor, or those somewhere in between? Why do you think that is true? How can you and your parish be more welcoming to those you perceive as richer or poorer than yourself?

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick,

and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For the Poor and the Neglected  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 826

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Post sheets of newsprint with these headings: Food, Shelter, Clothing, Health, Finances, Other Help. Set out several phone books. As youth enter, invite them on a phone book scavenger hunt. Ask them to locate agencies, organizations, or support groups that help meet people's needs in the areas on the newsprint. List the agency name and telephone number on the newsprint in the appropriate category.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Psalm 84:1-5* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*God, help us remember that we cannot buy love. Please give us strength and courage to love others, regardless of how poor or rich they are. Help us welcome those who are rejected because of where they live or what they wear. Show us how we can help others to see and feel your love. Help us to not forget or overlook those who need our help and your love. Help us share the good news.*

Annah, Grade 9

**Lector:** *A reading from Psalms, chapter 84, verses 1 through 5.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Rip down the newsprint sheets of agency names compiled in the Coming

Together activity. Be as dramatic as possible. The empty walls reflect the number of support agencies existed at the time of William Muhlenberg, the person you'll be talking about today. Tell his story, including the following:

- He was an ordained priest who promoted music and the use of liturgical colors.
- He was an educator who helped start a public school system and the first Episcopal day school.
- He believed the Church needed to be a welcoming, hospitable place for both rich and poor.
- His innovations included free pews, a parish unemployment fund, trips to the country for poor city children.
- With his encouragement, his parish provided needlework for unemployed women, medical care for the poor, and holiday dinners for those in need.

Discuss William Muhlenberg's story and how he influenced the Church.

- If you were homeless or hungry today, where would you get help?
- Where did people in William Muhlenberg's time go for help?
- Does our church minister to those in need? How?
- How can youth be a part of that ministry?

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **Service for others:** Make a list of things you've done for the community as an individual or as a member of a group. Remind

youth to include activities sponsored by their schools, scouting programs, or other organizations. Compare lists. Could you do more?

- **Welcome:** Make posters to advertise your church as a welcoming place. What will you say on the posters? What kind of pictures will you use? If you use people, do they represent the diversity found in the community? Display the posters where visitors can see them.

### Games

- **Being served:** Beforehand make slips of paper with several scenarios of different kinds of "service," such a person serving a tennis ball to another, getting self-service gas, or waiters and waitresses serving food. Pass out the slips to individuals or groups to act out while everyone else guesses what they are doing. When all the scenes are complete, ask the group to find the "common denominator." When they correctly say "service," ask them if this was the kind of service Jesus talked about.

### Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch *Martin the Cobbler*, based on a short story by Leo Tolstoy. It tells of a cobbler who has lost all that is dear to him. In a dream, he hears the Lord promising to visit him the next day. By evening, his special guest has not come, but several needy people have come to his door,

### WEAVINGS

- William Muhlenberg's feast day is on April 8. If possible, relate this session to that day in some way.
- Compassion means "to suffer with." The dictionary adds that this feeling is often accompanied by a desire to alleviate someone's distress. William Muhlenberg showed his compassion for the poor by being with them enough to notice their pain and respond to it. How do you feel when you are called to be with someone who is suffering? What strengths do you show in such circumstances? What helps you to be compassionate?
- After leaving school, William Muhlenberg became the assistant of Bishop William White in the Diocese of Pennsylvania for three years. William White is the bishop that ordained Absalom Jones, the first black Episcopalian priest. William Muhlenberg was obviously influenced by those he worked with to a life of service.
- William Muhlenberg's last major project came from his dream of a Christian city. Started on Long Island after the Civil War, St. Johnland was designed as an experiment in Christian social living. William Muhlenberg envisioned it as a refuge for poor families. The city never materialized, but programs to provide a home for aged men and crippled children survived.

### Resource Poster

- People of the Promise (No. 1)

seeking and receiving his help. Martin's life is given new hope when that night a vision assures him that in caring for these others, he has met Jesus.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Find *The Hymnal 1940* and look up "Shout the glad tidings, exultingly sing," written by William Muhlenberg.
- Sing "Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh on Me" (*The Tune Book Songs*, 87).
- Listen to "Man in the Mirror" by Michael Jackson. The lyrics tell about some of the worst of society. Then they challenge people to begin fixing the world by fixing themselves.

## Service

- **Fresh air camps:** Plan a fundraising event to earn money for a camp for underprivileged children. If a camp is nearby, volunteer to clean up before the camp opens or after it closes.
- **Soup kitchen:** Find out how youth can help at a local soup kitchen, either by preparing or serving food, washing dishes, or mopping floors.

## Sharing

- **Service by others:** Interview people on their way into coffee hour or at another convenient time about volunteer activities parishioners participate in. Write

out questions beforehand to help interviewers. Compile the responses and write an article for the parish newsletter or make a poster to display.

## Study

- **Social services:** Using the results of the scavenger hunt in the Coming Together activity, find out about specific social services in the community that will accept youth volunteers.
- **History:** Research agencies that serve people in different ways such as the Salvation Army, the YMCA, or the YWCA. Find out when and how they started, and the specific services they offered in past and those they offer now. How many organizations existed during William Muhlenberg's time?

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

. . . Creation calls thee God;  
[Humanity] names thee Father;  
but Solomon names thee Compassion,  
and that is the most beautiful of all thy names.  
—Victor Hugo

If your everyday life seems poor to you, do not accuse it; accuse yourself, tell yourself you are not poet enough to summon up its riches; since for the Creator there is no poverty and no poor or unimportant place.  
—Rainer Maria Rilke

Half an hour spent with Christ's poor is worth far more than half a million spent on them. It is necessary to a sane Christianity.  
—Evelyn Underhill

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for April 8 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*Do not let your Church close its eyes, O Lord, to the plight of the poor and neglected, the homeless and destitute, the old and the sick, the lonely and those who have none to care for them. Give us the vision and compassion with which you so richly endowed your servant William Augustus Muhlenberg, that we may labor tirelessly to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for William Muhlenberg  
*Lesser Feasts and Fast*, April 8

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to recount the events and deeds of William Muhlenberg's life? Can they relate his social ministry to the Church? Are they able to list ways they can help others through service?

# Florence Nightingale: Nursing the Sick People of the Promise

## Objective

The focus of this session is Florence Nightingale and her fierce determination to fulfill a call from God to serve those who were sick and suffering. Youth will be able to describe Florence Nightingale's ministry of nursing in spite of opposition by her society.

## Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the obstacles faced by Florence Nightingale as she pursued a life of service to the sick and suffering. The key person is Florence Nightingale; the key events are her call to service at age 17, her appointment as superintendent of a London sanatorium, and her work during the Crimean War. For spiritual preparation think about negative and positive influences in your life.

## Commentary

Florence Nightingale, called "The Lady of the Lamp" because of her tireless presence among the sick, was born in Florence, Italy in 1820 into an affluent English family. Her family soon returned to England where she was raised and educated at home by her father. An extremely attractive and accomplished young woman, her future as a prominent gentleman's wife seemed assured. But at the age of 17, to the dismay of her family, she heard God's call to a lifetime of service rather than to marry and raise a family, the only respectable option for women of her social and economic class. Her choice of service was delayed as she encountered a series of obstacles including the social barriers of her class, her family's objections, the

lack of adequate training, and even her own sense of inadequacy and self-doubt.

When Florence Nightingale began to focus her attention on nursing, she discovered that it was dominated by a strange mix of people: rough men able to sustain the hard physical demands, women with less respectable backgrounds and reputations, and nuns in religious orders. She also discovered that hospitals were the last resort for the chronically ill and the poor, because the more affluent people received care from private physicians and nurses in their own homes.

After studying nursing through religious orders in France and Germany, Florence Nightingale used her family's connections to be appointed superintendent of a London sanatorium in 1853. She found herself gifted not only in nursing, but also in hospital administration as well.

News about the Crimean War and the deplorable conditions of army hospitals prompted Florence Nightingale to respond to a call to service. She took great risks reaching out to the injured and dying soldiers on the front lines of battle. In 1854, she led a group of thirty-eight hand-picked nurses to create a nursing program that ultimately served over 10,000 wounded soldiers. The program also improved both medical and sanitary conditions in the hospital.

Within a few years, her family's fears came true, and Florence Nightingale became ill. She was a semi-invalid for the next fifty years

---

## SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Florence Nightingale*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.*  
—Matthew 25:36
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Finley Peter Dunne, Florence Nightingale, Susan Sontag, Hippocrates
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Florence Nightingale (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, May 18)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

“. . . for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

Matthew 25:35-40

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Youth may see Florence Nightingale as a two-dimensional, cartoon-like character. Help them see her real-life struggles in fulfilling her calling to serve God in a new and radical way.
- The prayer lists may evoke in the youth a powerful need to talk about the person or an equally strong desire to keep details private. Honor both needs.
- **Discussion Starter:** Has anyone ever kept you from doing the “right” thing? How?

of her life until her death in 1910. However, she persisted in her efforts to improve and reform health care for all people.

## Personal Views

Most of us have encountered opposition to something we wanted to do that was bad or negative or dangerous. Because of family, friends, school, church, and other people and institutions, we may have felt or heard the disapproval and decided against a certain path. How are we opposed when we are trying to do the “right” thing?

By limiting our understanding of Florence Nightingale to the image of “The Lady of the Lamp,” dedicated, serene and confident in her work and mission, we lose sight of the personal and social obstacles she overcame. Her energy, enthusiasm, and perseverance in the face of repeated opposition to “do the right thing” make her a down-to-earth, real-life role model for all of us, and especially for today’s youth who encounter daily challenges in our culture.

Has anyone tried to influence you to make the wrong choice? What resources, personal or spiritual, did you use to overcome those obstacles? Were those resources sufficient to guide and sustain you as you struggled with this decision?

Florence Nightingale’s life also provides an opportunity to reflect on the risks involved in living out the Gospel message to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the imprisoned. What are the risks? While it may be easy to paint Florence Nightingale’s family and friends as bad influences, they had real fears and concerns for her safety.

Each person must weigh the risks in serving our neighbors. Florence Nightingale’s willingness to take on new challenges and her

personal compassion for the sick and suffering shine like a candle of hope to all of us struggling to follow in the steps of Christ.

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love’s sake. *Amen.*

From Compline  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 134

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Put up newsprint on the walls with the following headings: The Sick, The Lonely, The Scared, The Anxious, The Sad. Invite the youth to write the first names of people they know under the headings.

After everyone has gathered, stand in a circle around a lighted candle. Pray in silence for the people on the lists. End by reading the prayer for the Personal Views, For the Poor and the Neglected (BCP, p. 826).

Ask the youth to find *Matthew 25:35-40* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Dear Lord,*

*We ask that we may only do things that are pleasing in your sight, and that you may help us to find the strength to accomplish our goals, individually and as a community. And we ask that you help us to stay on the path that we know is right, and if we stray, grant us the courage to get back on track. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

Peter, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from Matthew, chapter 25, verses 35 through 40.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Bring a variety of newspapers and news magazines and give them out for youth to look through. Clip out articles about places in our society where God's work is not yet done. Look for situations, events, and people that relate to *Matthew 25:31-40*: the hungry, the thirsty, the strangers, those without proper clothing or shelter, the sick, and the imprisoned. Create a collage with the clippings around the key verse, *Matthew 25:36*.

Ask youth to relate any fact they know about Florence Nightingale. Tell her story from information in the Commentary, referring to her depiction in Resource Poster No. 1. Be sure to include:

- She heard God's call at age 17.
- She faced opposition from friends and family.
- She successfully ran a London hospital.
- She changed wartime nursing care during the Crimean War.
- She was an invalid the last fifty years of her life.

Relate her story to the clipping in the collage.

- Can you do anything about the needs identified in the collage or the people in the prayer lists?
- Do you see yourself as a messenger of God's love at school, at home, or at church?
- What are some of the risks in reaching out to those in need?

## Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

## Expressions

- **Prayer book:** Make your own collection of prayers for others.

Look through *The Book of Common Prayer* for appropriate prayers to include with ones the group writes. Make copies of your "Prayer Book" and use it each week to pray for the needs of others.

- **God's works:** Read *Sirach 38:6-8* from the Apocrypha section of the Bible. Respond to what you hear, either through poetry, drawing, music, or some other artistic format. Share your creations.

## Games

- **Relay:** Assign a person on each team to represent God's call in *Matthew 25:31-40* to serve the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned (these can be combined or modified depending on the number of youth). Randomly call out one of the six "afflictions." The appropriate team member runs to the end of the room, takes strips of old cloth or toilet paper and tape, and bandages the part of the body represented in the passage. That person runs back, and another "affliction" is named. The game is over when everyone is bandaged and back with the team.

## Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch a film about Mother Teresa's work in India among the poor and the sick, and the struggles she overcame to fulfill her mission to spread God's love.

## WEAVINGS

- If you are studying this material during the spring, note that Florence Nightingale's feast day is on May 18.
- During Florence Nightingale's lifetime, sanatoriums were more prevalent than hospitals. A sanatorium is an institution for rest and recuperation or a place for the treatment of the chronically ill. Often sanatoriums were designed to treat those with specific illnesses, such as tuberculosis. Because conditions were so poor in many sanatoriums, only those who were very ill or near death were admitted. As reformer such as Florence Nightingale improved conditions, sanatoriums for the dying became hospitals for curing and caring for the sick and infirm.
- There is much discussion in both the Church and the medical community about the difference between "curing" and "healing" and the role that each plays in the lives of those who are sick. Often those who are seriously ill experience healing from the power of God's love that has little or nothing to do with their overcoming their illness. Can you name areas in your life that need "healing?"

## RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)

- **Video:** Watch a videotape of parts of a television drama, such as *ER* or *Chicago Hope*, that show modern medical care. Compare medical conditions and the challenges faced by doctors and nurses in the nineteenth century with present-day medicine.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Read or sing "From thee all skill and science flow" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 566)
- Sing "Witnesses" (*Glory and Praise Vol. 3*, 274). The third verse is based on *Matthew 25*.
- Listen to "One Day at a Time" by Sandi Patti, and discuss challenges each person faces.

## Service

- **Visit:** With their permission, accompany clergy or a pastoral care giver on a hospital or home visit. Share the experience with the group, and consider continuing the relationship through additional visits or correspondence.

## Sharing

- **Display:** Print the works of *Sirach 38:6-8* on a poster board. Surround it with the artistic responses created for the Expressions activity, and display it in the church.

## Study

- **Resource list:** Investigate different opportunities in the community for youth to serve those who are sick in hospitals, nursing homes, or geriatric centers. Publish a list as a resource for youth who want to help others in the community.
- **Wartime medicine:** Find out more about changes in medical procedures on the battlefield from the Crimean War to the present.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

I don't see why any man who believes in medicine would shy at the faith cure.

—Finley Peter Dunne

It may seem a strange principle to enunciate as the very first requirement in a Hospital that it should do the sick no harm.

—Florence Nightingale

Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick.

—Susan Sontag

Wise [people] should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings, and learn how by [their] own thoughts to derive benefit from illness.

—Hippocrates

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the collect for May 18 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on p. 3 of the Session Leaflet).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*Life-giving God, you alone have power over life and death, over health and sickness: Give power, wisdom and gentleness to those who follow the example of your servant Florence Nightingale, that they, bearing with them your Presence, may not only heal but bless, and shine as lanterns of hope in the darkest hours of pain and fear; through Jesus Christ, the healer of body and soul, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for Florence Nightingale  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, 4th edition, May 18

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to describe Florence Nightingale's ministry of nursing? Can they list the opposition she faced in fulfilling her call from God? Are youth able to name the people or things that influence them?

# Joseph Schereschewsky: Missionary to China

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session focuses on the journey of a man who traveled the world to find and serve God. Youth will be able to tell of Joseph Schereschewsky's contributions to the spread of the gospel, particularly in China.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary traces the physical journey of Joseph Schereschewsky from Germany to the United States and eventually to China. The key name is Joseph Schereschewsky; key events are his immigration to the United States and his call to spread the gospel to China; key places are Beijing, Shanghai, and Tokyo. For spiritual preparation think about the inward journey of Joseph Schereschewsky that paralleled his outward journeys.

### Commentary

The life of Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky tells the extraordinary story of an unexpected and challenging journey, both physically and spiritually. Born into a Jewish family in Lithuania on May 6, 1831, Joseph Schereschewsky grew up and began training to become a rabbi. While studying far from home in Germany, he was exposed to the gospel message in a New Testament Bible which had been translated into Hebrew, a language he knew well.

In 1854, he immigrated to the United States to pursue his study of Christianity and prepare for ministry. After a year of study, he decided that the Anglican faith paralleled his own faith more closely than other Protestant beliefs. At that time he

transferred to the General Theological Seminary in New York City.

Soon after graduation, Joseph Schereschewsky heard and answered the call from an Episcopal bishop for missionaries to travel to China. Using his innate talent for languages, he learned to write Chinese on the long voyage to his new home.

During his thirteen years in Beijing, Joseph Schereschewsky translated the Bible and parts of *The Book of Common Prayer* into Mandarin Chinese so that those who believed in the gospel might be able to read both books in their own language. Soon after the completion of this monumental task, he was elected Bishop of Shanghai. During this time he continued to seek new ways to share the gospel with the local people, translating the Bible and other works into the Wenli dialect and establishing Saint John's University in Shanghai.

Bishop Schereschewsky's journey took yet another unexpected turn when, in 1883 at the age of 52, he suffered a debilitating paralysis which left him with the use of only one finger on one hand.

While many devoted and determined people would have taken this setback as a sign to quit, Bishop Schereschewsky could not be dissuaded. He resigned his position as bishop, and, with the help of his wife of many years, he continued the work he had begun long ago. Using a cumbersome typewriter with Chinese characters, he typed

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Joseph Schereschewsky*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*  
—II Corinthians 4:15
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Matthew Henry, Spiritual, John W. Work Jr., Joseph Schereschewsky
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—Collect for Joseph Schereschewsky (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, October 14)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*

II Corinthians 4:11-15

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Be prepared to define terms such as "mission," "missionary," or "mission church." Are all Christians called to be missionaries?
- In discussing Bishop Schereschewsky's disability, be sensitive to youth who are disabled or have a family member who is disabled. The game is designed to help them experience the difficulties faced by Bishop Schereschewsky, not to make fun of him.
- **Discussion Starter:** Have you ever done something or gone somewhere that affected your whole outlook on life? Describe this event.

the last 2,000 pages of translation himself with the one remaining finger he had to use.

Bishop Schereschewsky died at the age of 75, and is buried in Tokyo, Japan.

## Personal Views

God leads many of us along unfamiliar pathways and on unexpected journeys. Yet many of us plan our lives with confidence that we are always in control of the outcome. Bishop Schereschewsky's life reveals not only a physical journey of great surprise and wonderment (from Lithuania to Germany to the United States to China to Japan), but also a spiritual journey from Judaism to Christianity. He showed great determination, hard work, and hope, even in the face of unexpected cultural, religious, and physical challenges.

Though most of us will never travel the kind of demanding journey that Bishop Schereschewsky did, God still leads each of us through an inner journey. The route may be unclear, but the final destination is sure—we are intended for a home with God. Are we willing for God to lead us on that journey? What obstacles do we throw in God's way to try to change the direction in which God may appear to be sending us? In what ways does God lead us back to the path when we have strayed?

Bishop Schereschewsky's work reminds us also of our gospel directive to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (*Matthew 28:19a*). In spite of great cultural differences, not the least of which were significant language barriers, Bishop Schereschewsky covered three continents in his effort to seek out and share the good news of Jesus Christ. We may not travel as he did, and yet within our own communities there are differences

that keep us from thinking of each other as "neighbor." Think about people in your own community and what it might take to "travel" to where they are in order to share God's love more fully.

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Proper 24

*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 235

## Coming Together

(Time: 10-15 min)

Hang a map of the world at the front of the room. Trace the path of Bishop Schereschewsky's life journey from his birth in Lithuania to his death in Tokyo using a marker or colored yarn. As youth arrive, ask them to mark on the map the places they have lived with markers or colored pushpins. For smaller groups, let them identify where their parents are from or trips they have taken.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *II Corinthians 4:11-15* in their Bibles. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Almighty God, we ask that you give us all the strength to spread your word, even when we are challenged by the harshest obstacles. We ask that you help us to use Joseph Schereschewsky as an example, so that we may go into your world and spread your love to all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Matthew, Grade 9

**Lector:** *A reading from II Corinthians, chapter 4, verses 11 through 15.*  
(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time: 15-20 min)

Hang Resource Poster No. 5 showing the Chinese phrase. Ask the youth to list the difficulties they might encounter if they chose to move to a place like China, such as language, culture, religion, customs, distance from home and family, and food.

- Would you be willing to move someplace on the other side of the world?
- What would you miss most about living here?

Provide a simple snack of flavored rice for youth to eat with chopsticks. You can get chopsticks at Chinese restaurants or substitute popsicle sticks. While they try this new method of eating, tell the story of Bishop Schereschewsky's life and work, his physical journey as well as his spiritual one. Include this information:

- Born in Lithuania of Jewish parents (point this out on the map);
- Studied to be a rabbi in Germany;
- Converted to Christianity by reading New Testament and emigrated to the United States to study theology;
- Volunteered as missionary to China;
- Translated Bible and *The Book of Common Prayer* into Mandarin;
- Suffered severe paralysis in 1883;
- Continued translation work with the use of only one finger.

Discuss their experience using chopsticks. Relate their frustrations to the difficulties faced by Bishop Schereschewsky.

- Did you like using chopsticks? How would you feel if everything, even the language, were different?
- What do you find most interesting about Bishop Schereschewsky? Why?

## Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths

of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember, no one can do everything!

## Expressions

- **Chinese calligraphy:** With black markers or calligraphy pens and posterboard, replicate the Chinese characters illustrated in Resource Poster No. 5 that say "Jesus is Lord." Decorate the posters with other bright colored markers.
- **Missionaries:** Think about the one place you would go as a missionary. The place could be a nearby inner city, a rural area, or a foreign country. Write yourself a letter that includes the following information: the place, why they chose it, the challenges, the positive points, the obstacles, the difficulties, and the kind of work they would do. Address the letters to yourself, and give them to the leader who will mail them in one year.

## Games

- **Typing relay:** If possible bring in two portable typewriters. Divide into two teams. Ask each person to type one line of the Lord's Prayer (BCP, p. 364) using only one pinkie finger. Repeat as necessary until the prayer is complete. If only one typewriter is available, time each team as they peck out the words. The game is over when both teams have completed typing the prayer.
- **Trust walk:** Line up one person behind the other. Blindfold everyone but the first person in line. Follow that person around the room, church, or building by placing one hand on the shoulder of the person in front, and by listening for instructions from the leader. Stop often and

## WEAVINGS

- If you study this material in the fall, relate it to the feast day for Joseph Schereschewsky on October 14.
- Joseph Schereschewsky's emigration to the United States was sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. He entered the Western Theological Seminary, where he began to prepare for the ministry. However, as time passed, he realized that the Anglican Church mirrored his beliefs more closely. His decision to enter an Episcopal seminary was greeted with skepticism from both the Presbyterians and Episcopalians.
- Christians in China today face very difficult challenges. Prohibited by the government to meet in public, many gather secretly in homes. Many Chinese Christians and their families have been persecuted or ostracized for their beliefs. Pray for the Christians in China as they overcome obstacles to spread the gospel.

## RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)
- Chinese Phrase (No. 5)

let the youth guess where they are, and take turns being leader.

## Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Show a travel video about China or a documentary on Asian culture.
- **Print:** Bring in several picture books about China from the library for youth to look at. Find one fact that you did not know before today.

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Sing or read "God has spoken to his people" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 536). The tune is an old Hasidic or Jewish melody.
- Sing "Lord, Be Glorified" (*The Tune Book*, p. 8).
- Listen to "Love in Any Language."

## Service

- **Bibles:** Find churches in nearby communities with congregants whose first language is not English. Plan a fundraiser to buy Bibles in different languages for these churches.

## Sharing

- **Jesus is Lord:** Display the Chinese calligraphy created by

the youth at the church. Teach the children of the parish to say the phrase by using the phonetic spelling at the bottom of Resource Poster No. 5.

## Study

- **China today:** Go on the Internet or visit the library to find out more about Christians in China today.
- **Modern missionaries:** Find out how mission work has changed since the time of Bishop Schereschewsky by contacting your diocese. Discover what kinds of mission work your diocese is involved in.
- **Languages:** Call a local Bible society or Bible publishing firm to find out into how many languages the Bible has been translated.

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

It is good news, worthy of all acceptance! and yet not too good to be true.

—Matthew Henry

Get on board, little children,  
There's room for many a more. . .

The Gospel train's a-coming.  
—"Get on Board, Little Children"

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
Go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.

—John W. Work Jr.

. . . God knew best. He kept me  
for the work for which I am best  
fitted.

Joseph Schereschewsky

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Turn to the collect for October 14 in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (also on page 3 of the Session Leaflet). Read it in unison.

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*

*O God, in your providence you called Joseph Schereschewsky from his home in Eastern Europe to the ministry of this Church, and sent him as a missionary to China, upholding him in his infirmity, that he might translate the Holy Scriptures into languages of that land. Lead us, we pray, to commit our lives and talents to you, in the confidence that when you give your servants any work to do, you also supply the strength to do it; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for Joseph Schereschewsky  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, October 14

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to list Joseph Schereschewsky's contributions in spreading the gospel? Can they describe the obstacles he faced in taking the gospel to China?

# Madeleine L'Engle: Sharing the Story

## People of the Promise

### Objective

This session focuses on a storyteller who uses her gifts to tell the Christian story. Youth will be able to discuss the contributions of Madeleine L'Engle to Christian literature for people of all ages.

### Background for Leaders

The Commentary describes the life of Madeleine L'Engle and the literature she has created. The key name is Madeleine L'Engle; a key event is the publication of *A Wrinkle in Time*. For spiritual preparation think about messages you want to convey to others and how you can share your faith.

### Commentary

Madeleine L'Engle is one of the most prolific and admired writers of our time, publishing more than forty works of fiction. She has also written countless essays, articles, poetry, and plays. Her present position is writer-in-residence at St. John the Divine, the Episcopal Cathedral in New York City, where she continues to write. She is in great demand for lectures and retreats on issues of sharing faith stories.

Madeleine L'Engle was born in 1918. Her father had been gassed during World War I while working as a war correspondent and never completely regained his health. Her mother spend much of her time caring for him. While Madeleine L'Engle knew they loved her, she felt shut out from their world.

She filled an otherwise lonely childhood, punctuated by several miserable early school experiences, with imaginary characters. She

later recreated these experiences in her earliest stories. Themes of faith and family resound throughout her works.

Married to actor Hugh Franklin and the mother of three boisterous and creative children, L'Engle reflected on those in her immediate and extended family to illustrate her feelings on life and the power of human love. Her characters were created with a clearly defined spiritual core, which many have considered to be explicitly Christian in origin.

*A Wrinkle in Time*, published in 1962 and winner of the prestigious Newbury Medal, is considered a classic by many as it describes the spiritual battle between a family and the presence of Evil. While it was rejected by several publishers for being too complex, Madeleine L'Engle believed that new ideas excited children. This book and others like it have been credited with making science fiction an accepted part of children's literature.

**For further study:** If you have never read any of Madeleine L'Engle's works, select one of her books for children or one of her autobiographical books to read.

---

### SESSION LEAFLET

- **Art**—*Madeleine L'Engle*, by Bobbi Tull
  - **Key Verse**—*[The Lord] determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.*  
—Psalm 147:4
  - **Youth Commentary and Prayer**
  - **Voices**—Madeleine L'Engle, George Borrow, W. Somerset Maugham, Alain Robbe-Grillet
  - **Daily Reflections**
  - **Words to Remember**
  - **Prayer**—For Vocation in Daily Work (BCP, p. 261)
-

## LECTOR'S TEXT

*Praise the Lord! How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting. The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. The Lord lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre. . . . but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.*

Psalm 147:1-7, 11

## TIPS ON THE TOPIC

- Be prepared for a wide range of familiarity among the youth with Madeleine L'Engle's work. Some may have read a great many of her works while others have never heard of her.
- If you ask youth to read aloud some of Madeleine L'Engle's works, be sensitive to different skill levels or learning disabilities. Never force anyone to read publicly.
- Youth may have difficulty thinking of positive things about themselves. Be ready with several suggestions.
- **Discussion Starter:** Think about one important event in your life. How would you tell the group about this event? Would you use pictures and words?

## Personal Views

Most of us project an image of ourselves to others, whether we are conscious of it or not, through our actions, words, and the choices we make in our lives. Each of us "tells our story" by letting others know about the things we love, the things we cherish, even the things we doubt and question.

Few of us have had Madeleine L'Engle's wide audience with whom to share our faith story. And yet we are offered opportunities every day to share our story with family and friends, with people we know at work, and even with perfect strangers. What are the different ways in which we can share our story with others, short of publishing a book? Have you ever considered the subtle ways in which we convey kindness and love to other people? What do these actions say about you?

Consider the positive influences you had in your life. Did people communicate to you through words or actions? How did you know what they believed in?

What are some of the ways in which we cloud the message that we want to convey to others? Youth often are awkward about sharing their inner life with others. Why is this a difficult thing to do?

Madeleine L'Engle uses other voices and even other places in space and time to illustrate the fundamental battles we engage in daily over good and evil, love and hate. Her work is popular and meaningful because she shares so much of herself. By reading about her triumphs, her challenges, her failures and disappointments, we find our own voices speaking between the lines. We can then begin to experience that connection with God's creation of which she speaks so tenderly.

Lord God, make us worthy of your perfect love; that we may

rule ourselves according to your Word, and serve you with our whole heart; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Collect for Nicholas Ferrer  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, December 1

## Coming Together

(Time est: 10-15 min)

Place posterboard or newsprint on the wall with markers nearby. As youth enter, ask them to write down one positive attribute they see in themselves. Encourage them to be creative, using the letters of their word to illustrate the attribute. For example, the letter "i" in artistic could be a paintbrush.

After everyone has gathered, ask the youth to find *Psalm 147:1-7, 11* in their Bibles. Hang Resource Poster No. 6 of a night sky. Select a lector to lead the following prayer (Session Leaflet, p. 2).

**Lector:** *Let us pray.*

*Help us be mindful of our families, to love them and to help each other through life's adversities. Give us strength to love, even if it would be easier to feel scorn and hatred. Thank you for the gift of life, and let us use our lives for good, helping those who are less fortunate, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Timothy, Grade 8

**Lector:** *A reading from Psalms, chapter 147, verses 1 through 7 and 11.*

(Full text on p. 2)

**Lector:** *The Word of the Lord.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Engaging (Time est: 15-20 min)

Most stories include factual information about the outer self: what a person looks like, what a person does, and what a person has accomplished.

Look at the words written for the Coming Together activity.

- Are they attributes of the outer self or inner self?
- Is it easier to describe attributes of the outer self?

Pass out paper and pencils for youth to write an “Inner Biography” about family and themselves. They are to use positive adjectives or values that each person projects or esteems, such as honesty, courage, or kindness. Include an anecdote, if possible, that illustrates the qualities within each person described.

Share what is written only if the youth feel comfortable doing so. Listen carefully to each inner self that is described, picturing that person “from the inside.”

Tell how Madeleine L'Engle has shared her faith and her inner journey with thousands of readers for more than forty years. Include information about the loneliness she faced as a child, her marriage to an actor, and her family. Also mention her use of science fiction and her belief that complex ideas were appropriate for young people. Encourage those who have read Madeleine L'Engle's works to share additional insights.

### Optional Activities

The following activities offer groups a wide range of choices. Consider the interests and strengths of youth and leaders and select those activity options that seem best suited to local time and talents. Remember no one can do everything!

### Expressions

- **Faith stories:** List the ways youth could share personal faith stories without using words. Experiment with different methods (including drawing, drama, dance, or movement) to see which one the youth prefer.

- Read an excerpt from *A Wrinkle in Time* (such as the star-gazing scene), *Dance in the Desert* in its entirety, or *Psalms 147:1-7*. Look at Resource Poster No. 6 for inspiration. Illustrate what you felt as you listened by drawing a picture, creating a cartoon, making a mural, or writing a poem.

### Games

- **Human bingo:** Divide a piece of paper into a grid; the size of the group will determine how many boxes to make. In each box on the paper, list an attribute—either inner or outer, such as brown hair, courteous, kind, blue eyes. Leave enough space in each box for a name. Make copies for each person in the group. Ask the youth to circulate among the group to get signatures of people who have the attributes in each square. See who can fill all the boxes first.

### Media

Today's youth live in a media-rich culture that the Church cannot ignore. However, congregational norms about appropriate experiences vary and need to be respected. When choosing media activities consider local sentiments and prevailing laws covering public performances of copyrighted material.

- **Video:** Watch a science fiction film that offers positive values, such as *E.T.*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, or *Phenomenon*. Look for imagery or themes that embody the gospel message
- **Print:** Bring in book reviews from a Sunday newspaper or newsmagazine. Ask the youth to look for books that have positive messages. Talk about the kind of books that are on the bestsellers list. What do the books we read say about us?

### WEAVINGS

- Madeleine L'Engle believes that individual actions have universal implications. She calls this the “butterfly effect.” In essence, the death of a butterfly can effect a galaxy light-years away. Although she believes that randomness and chance pervade the universe, she also feels that everything is completely interdependent. She says, “To hurt a butterfly is to shake the universe.”
- A part of Madeleine L'Engle's daily discipline is reading Morning Prayer from *The Book of Common Prayer* each day. She admits that many days the prayers and scripture passages have little meaning. However, the beauty of the language eventually draws her back to God, breaking through the walls of a busy schedule and scattered thoughts. Do you have a daily discipline that draws you back to God?

### RESOURCE POSTER

- People of the Promise (No. 1)
- Night Sky (No. 6)

## Music

Music is important for today's youth and can be an integral part of youth experience in the context of Bible and Church activities. The music suggestions offered here reflect a broad variety of possibilities from simple listening to hearty music making. Seek out musicians within youth, church, and community groups to sing and play along.

- Sing or read "Earth and all stars" (*The Hymnal 1982*, 412). What connects everything mentioned in the hymn?
- Sing "Bless the Lord, My Soul" (*Gather*, GIA Publications Inc., 125), based on *Psalms 147*.
- Listen to "At Seventeen" by Janis Ian on *Between the Lines*. The song is about wanting to be someone else. Reread *Psalms 147* after listening to the song. What promises does God give us? What can we promise God?

## Service

- **Sharing stories:** Find books at home that you no longer read but loved as a child. Donate them places that serve children who have limited access to books, such as shelters, inner-city schools, or tutoring centers. Find the places in your greater community where the need is the greatest.

## Sharing

- **Getting to know you:** Make a new Human Bingo game that can be used by adults or the entire parish. Make multiple copies to pass out at a coffee hour, a newcomer's meeting, or church fair.

## Study

- **Book table:** Bring in as many Madeleine L'Engle books as you can find from a local library or

personal collections. Spread them out on the table, and ask the youth to identify the ones that they have read. Ask them to give an informal book review, identifying, if possible, the major themes.

- **The great thanksgiving:** Examine Eucharistic Prayer C, beginning on p. 369 of *The Book of Common Prayer*. How is it different from the other prayer choices?

## Voices

Read and discuss the following quotations (*Session Leaflet*, p. 2).

Although a writer of stories works constantly to train an observant and accurate memory, remembering is not necessarily a conscious act; it is often something which happens to me, rather than something I do.  
—Madeleine L'Engle

It is no easy thing to tell a story plainly and distinctly by mouth; but to tell one on paper is difficult indeed, so many snares lie in the way. People are afraid to put down what is common on paper, they seek to embellish their narratives, as they think by philosophic speculations and reflections; they are anxious to shine, and people who are anxious to shine can never tell a plain story.  
—George Borrow

In a story as in a play, you must make up your mind what your point is and stick to it like grim death.  
—W. Somerset Maugham

The true writer has nothing to say. What counts is the way he says it.  
—Alain Robbe-Grillet

## Going Forth

Gather the group for a closing prayer and dismissal. Read together the prayer on p. 261 of *The Book of Common Prayer* (also on p. 3 of the *Session Leaflet*).

**Leader:** *Let us pray.*  
*Almighty God our heavenly Father, you declare your glory and show forth your handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one who serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.*  
*Amen.*

For Vocation in Daily Work  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 261

**Leader:** *Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.*

**People:** *Thanks be to God.*

## Look For

Are youth able to list the contributions Madeleine L'Engle has made to Christian literature? Can they identify their own "inner" stories? Are youth able to recognize the inner attributes of others?