

JOURNEY IN... YEAR ONE

COMMUNITY SCIENCE

This lesson's Big Ideas:

- In a Beloved Community, every individual both brings to and takes from the community something unique and valuable.
- We are more together than we are separately.

Lesson Materials

- Copies of gifts and talents surveys
- Pencils
- Wall posters for making bar charts
- Dot stickers
- TV/DVD player
- Videos about ants and bees

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

Unity is not something we are called to create; it's something we are called to recognize.

- William Sloan Coffin

The moving finger of God in human history points ever in the same direction. There must be community.

- Howard Thurman

Our lives extend beyond our skins, in radical interdependence with the rest of the world.

- Joanna Macy

...it starts when you say We and know who you mean, and each day you mean one more.

- Marge Piercy

- What do you bring to your church community? What parts of yourself do you offer up?
- What do you take away when you leave church? What are the blessings of this place and its people?

GATHERING AND FOCUSING

🕒 5 minutes

- Sharing of skills—Going around the circle, ask each child to share a skill that they're mastering. How have they learned it? When might it come in handy?

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

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**PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE
GIFTS AND TALENTS: A DOT POLL**

🕒 15 minutes

- This activity will poll the children about their gifts and talents. Each week, a new class will add their data to a bar graph that reflects the entire population of Sunday School.
- To prepare for this activity, make sure that the bar graph charts are on the walls. These blank bar graph grids (copies will be in your room) have the same categories as the survey. We'll make the "bar" with stickers.
- Begin by distributing the Gifts and Talents survey. Give the kids five minutes to read and check their talents off. When everyone is finished, hand each child a sheet of 10 stickers. These dots represent their top 10 interests and talents. Give the kids five minutes to distribute their dots. An extra empty grid with spaces for write-ins talents and interests can be used, too.
- Take a few minutes to discuss the results. Allow kids to share the stories behind their dots if you have time.

Wondering Together

- When people become members of our church, they fill out a grown-up version of this kind of gifts and talents survey. I wonder how that could be helpful to the church to know what people's gifts and talents are?
- I wonder how people with singing talents could serve their church?
- ...how people with fix-it skills could serve their church?
- ...how people with listening skills could serve their church?
- ...how YOU could serve your church?
- I wonder if you can guess how *I* serve my church?

**PRIMARY ACTIVITY TWO
THE ANT COLONY AND THE BEE HIVE:
COMMUNITIES IN NATURE**

🕒 30-40 minutes

- By watching a video about ants or bees and observing their behaviors, we'll reflect on the qualities of a successful community.
- Pair the kids up. With younger children, the Workshop Leader or Guide will want to do the writing on a flip chart. By 5th and 6th grades, the kids will be ready to think and write on their own. Supply each pair with an Idea Sheet of their own and then transfer the information to the flip chart when
- Now we're ready to learn and observe. The timing for the clips to

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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be screened will be posted on the television in your classroom. Watch the short clips and then lead the children in Wondering Together.

Wondering Together

- I wonder how healthy human communities are a little like ant colonies?
- I wonder how human communities are different?
- I wonder if we have queen ants or bees in our church? Who are they?
- I wonder if we have worker ants or bees?
- I wonder how ants and bees know they're a worker or a queen?
- I wonder how people know what role they can fill in a community?
- I wonder if living things have to be really smart to have healthy communities?
- I wonder being in community better than being alone?
- I wonder if every individual in a community has to be the same to fit in?
- Do you think that young individuals—eggs or baby animals or children—have a role in communities?

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

🕒 2 minutes

Hold hands, forming a circle. Have the children repeat each line after you, chorally.

In this community, we give and we receive.
May we go forth, now,
to share the bounty of our love.

- Sydney Kay Wilde