

## **Spirit Play Story Lessons**

### **Families All Matter 1**

#### **Materials:**

- Green felt circle underlay
- Church figure
- People figures

#### **Presentation:**

I wonder what this might be?

*Lay out a green felt circle.*

Hmmm.

*Place a church in the center.*

Oh, look. Here is a church. What does this church look like inside?

*Try to look in the windows or into the church piece.*

Well, hmm. I think we are going to have to use our imagination. Wait! We are inside a church. Let's look around. I see a circle of people here today. Every Sunday people come to church to be together, and to learn and grow together. Sometimes when we talk about church, we call it a "family of families." Sometimes when we talk about church, we talk about people like they are our family. If that's true, then we are a family in our Spirit Play class, too.

*Open your arms to the whole class.*

Our Spirit Play family is part of a larger Unity Church family.

*Hold your hands in a circle around the church.*

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Did you know that our Unity Church family is part of an even larger family called Unitarian Universalists?

*Move hands out to hold a larger circle around the church.*

We think of ourselves as belonging to an even larger human family that includes everybody in the whole world.

*Move hands out again to hold an even larger circle, maybe indicating holding a circle around the whole earth on the carpet.*

That's a big family!

I think one of the reasons we come to be part of a church family is to practice love and learn how to love. In our church, we have lots of different people learning about love in lots of different ways. Some people become teachers in our church.

*Place a person in a line.*

And they come to class to love and learn about love.

*Place a person in a line.*

Some people make food for gatherings at church or for people who are sad or hurting.

*Place a person in a line.*

Some people go to protests to try to change laws to make our world a more loving place for everyone.

*Place a person in a line.*

Some people sing in the choir to sing about love and be love.

*Place a person in a line.*

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Most of all, we come to church to try to love ourselves and love one another so that we can live our best lives and help others to live their best lives.

*Place the people as a group or circle around the church.*

At our church, love takes on many different actions and ways of being. How wonderful that we can love in so many different ways and still be one family! And there's an important question we practice asking: **Who is missing from our family and how can we love them too?**

Just as love can look like all the different ways that people love, and underneath still be love, the families we live with can look different too. It's wonderful that families can look different, just like love. When things are different from one another, we have the gift of new ideas and bigger hearts. And it's really a celebration when many different people, and different ways of being, gather in one place to learn about love!

Let's visit some of the families that make up our church family.

*As you introduce different kinds of families, rearrange the people.*

I know some families at Unity Church that are made of two moms and kids.

I know some families at Unity Church that have two dads and kids.

I know some families at Unity church that have two grown ups and no kids.

In some families, kids live with one parent at a time, or two parents, or with their grandparents.

Some kids are adopted and live with parents who have become their family.

Some families have pets.

In some families everyone looks like each other.

In some families everyone has their own look.

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There are so many different ways of being family here that I can't even name them all! Even when families look the same, we know that they are made of unique people. So really all families, in some ways, are different than every other family.

This makes each family—no matter what it looks like—special and wonderful. This means that when all these different families come together, we get to celebrate the wonderfully different things families bring to our church family.

Most especially, each of our families are special because we belong to each other in a wonderful way. We love each other and we get to practice loving each other better and better. We come with our family to Unity Church to worship and learn with other families, about opening our hearts to a bigger love that comes in such wonderfully different ways.

#### **Wondering questions:**

**I wonder what was the best part of the story?**

**I wonder what was the most important part of this story?**

**I wonder what we could leave out of this story and still have all the story we need?**

**I wonder if you were someone or something in the story, who or what would you be?**