

Exploring *Seasons of the Spirit* Resources For Youth (ages 12-18) (45 minutes)

Preparing the Space (before people arrive)

To introduce the *Seasons of the Spirit* resources for youth you will need:

- Sample *resource materials* for both youth age levels. This design is based on a session in Pentecost 2 (September 1, 2002). The design may be adapted to work with any session.
- Copies of the photocopyable resource sheets for the session you have selected. You may want to make copies of each age level for each participant, or at least enough so that each participant may have a copy of one age level.
- A copy of *Behold: Arts for the Church Year*.
- The seasonal posters for youth (for Pentecost 2: “Chilean Arpillera,” “The Banquet,” and “Living in Community”).
- For the worship centre: a small table (low if possible), a length of fabric in the color of the liturgical season (green for Pentecost), a Bible open to the focus scripture, candle and matches, and any other object(s) mentioned in the sample session you choose. (See “Before the session” in the **Prepare** section of the resource.)
- A CD player and the *Seasons* music CD.
- Materials for chosen activities (see **Respond** section of **Prepare**). (For the Sept 1, 2002 session bring fabric scraps and fabric glue or paper scraps and glue sticks), squares of fabric or paper [20 x 20cm/8 x 8 in.]
- *Option*: computer station with internet access.

Arrange the worship centre in a central location. You may wish to place it at the front of your gathering space or in the centre, with chairs arranged around it. Set the CD player conveniently close to you. Have the CD on as participants arrive. (Suggestion: the selection “How Then Shall We Live?”)

A. Welcome

Welcome participants and introduce yourself.

B. Walk through the resource materials (10 minutes)

Invite participants to look through their *Resource package* and review briefly the components of each package: *This Season; This Season, So...;* *Weekly session materials; Music resource section; extra resource sheets, articles.*

Review the components of the weekly session materials:

- **Biblical background**: provides background material for the focus passage and connections with other passages for the day. This material is common to resources for all age levels.
- **Prepare**: provides devotional preparation and information regarding getting the room ready, and lists materials, actions, and resources needed for all of the options in each section of the

session. Space is provided in the left margin for the leader to list the particular materials chosen for that day. Reference is also made to the *Seasons* website and resources that can be accessed from there for that session.

- **Focus statement:** a phrase that invites leaders to enter into a biblical account from current-day experiences.
- **Gather:** offers suggestions for creating a worshipful and inviting environment to welcome youth into the learning setting; includes a worship experience and an activity to help youth make an initial connection with the focus of the session.
- **Engage:** offers a variety of ways to involve youth with the chosen scripture passage(s), providing opportunities to encounter its mystery and meaning; incorporates a variety of methods for engaging the text through the written word, art, music, drama, and technology; actively encourages questioning and wondering about the text and provides ways to connect to the life experiences and the learning characteristics of the age level of the youth.
- **Respond:** invites youth to respond to the focus scripture through a variety of activities—imaginative, artistic, active, and cognitive; leaders can choose the options that best suit their group.
- **Bless:** provides an opportunity to celebrate the learning and transformation experienced in the session, and sends the youth out into the world, empowered by God and the community.
- **Reflect:** invites leaders to reflect on the learning experience for themselves and for the group members.

C. Experiencing elements of Prepare (10 minutes)

Invite participants to imagine that they are preparing to lead this session. Invite them to settle comfortably in their chairs as a volunteer reads the focus scripture passage for today (*Matthew 16:21-28*). Spend a few moments thinking about the passage as you listen to the meditative selection, *Kootenay Sunrise*, on the *Seasons* music CD. Read over the biblical background material and read in unison the devotional prayer written in the margin.

Review the information about the Chilean *arpillera* movement (on the resource sheets “Creating an Arpillera” and “Using the Interactive Arpillera” (pp. 91-93). Spend a few moments looking at the poster “Chilean Arpillera” and thinking about the community represented here, and about the community of youth that you will be leading. Reflect silently on the following questions:

- What are some of the challenges the youth face as followers of Jesus?
- What might be some of the things they need from their church community?

Spend a few moments discussing together:

- What was helpful about the Biblical background material?
- What struck you about the seasonal poster “Chilean Arpillera”?
- How will these elements of the curriculum assist you as a leader?

D. Experiencing elements of the session flow (20 minutes)

Invite participants to experience some of the activities of the sample session to better understand the flow of each section: *Gather, Engage, Respond, Bless*.

- 1) **Gather:** play one of the “getting acquainted” games from the resource sheet “Activities for Group Building”
- 2) **Engage:** participate together in the activity “Making Choices” for several minutes; have a

volunteer read **Matthew 16:24-25** dramatically as the rest of the group looks at the image *The Cross Tryptich* in *Behold* (p. 6); discuss together what it means to be a cross-carrying community.

- 3) **Respond:** have each participant use fabric or paper scraps to create their own little *arpillera* (review instructions on p. 91).
- 4) **Bless:** place each person's *arpillera* in a circle around the worship centre; listen to the song "How Then Shall I Live?" on the *Seasons* music CD; invite a volunteer to close your session by reading the poem "Matins" in *Behold* (p. 3).

E. Odds and Ends and Questions (5 minutes)

In conclusion share these observations:

- Note the use of the resource sheets within the session itself.
- Note the music available in both the Music resource section and on the music CD.
- Note the use of art images and text from *Behold*.
- Note that sometimes activities are shared across both the youth levels, and occasionally youth groups are invited to join together on projects. The session material for the older youth engages participants at a more complex level, and often includes readings from other scripture passages for that day.
- Encourage leaders to try to never leave out one of the sections in the session flow. Explain that if time is going to be an issue, they might consider simplifying one or more sections instead of eliminate a section such as **Respond** or **Bless** for lack of time. The flow of the session forms a complete piece for both theological and educational reasons.
- Mention the additional resources that can be found on the *Seasons of the Spirit* web site: www.spiritseasons.com. If time permits and you have access to the Internet visit the site, click on the "Interactive Arpillera" on the *Action Zone* and review what is available in this activity. Also visit "Ask the Rabbi" (also on the *Action Zone*—gives background information for some of the sessions) and *Spirit Sightings* which provides links between current events and each session's focus.

Respond to any questions.