



Section 9: Programs

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Sharing My Thoughts

Objective

To allow girls to know each other better.

To encourage a feeling of community within your group.

Preparation



Give "I'm a Me" poem to one of the girls to read. Photocopy the sharing questions and cut them out. Put questions in a hat or basket for passing around. Have paper and pencil for each girl. Cut out pictures of different emotions from magazines.

Opening

Play the Concentration game (using people's names) and/or put cutouts of emotions on floor (pictures). Each person picks a picture to portray her present emotion and explains why she is feeling that way.

Read "I'm A Me" (below)

Theme Game

Have girls sit in a circle.

Explain method of sharing answers to questions in the basket. Each person will draw a question, read the question out loud, and then give an answer to the question. Then, she passes the basket to the person beside her who does the same thing. (After reading the question, they put it back into the basket.)

If a question labeled "ALL PLAY" is pulled, each person in the circle answers the same question. Then the question is taken out of the basket.

Continue the game for a good length of time. Each girl should have the chance to answer about five questions.

Silent Partner Prayer Writing

Put girls into partners. Each partner then writes a prayer of praise for that person citing positive perceptions they have gained from tonight's game. It may begin with: "Thank you God for _____ ." or "I am grateful for _____ because_____."

Each member takes a turn reading her prayer about another group member.

Closing

I'm A Me!

Lord, isn't it great that you made only one of each of us!

I mean - that's real planning.

And it also tells me a little more about You -- and me.

For example, it tells me that You think I'm pretty important, Since there's only one of me around

and it tells me that You must expect some great things from me. Because you haven't made any substitutes for me.



It makes me feel kind of important, Lord;
You know, knowing
that I didn't happen but that You made me as an individual.
Lord, let me be able to look at others the way
You look at me -as a person made by You for purpose in Life.



**Share Your
Thoughts**



Sharing Questions - Photocopy and cut apart

ALL PLAY: What is the hardest thing about being this age? (The age you are now)

What is something you wish you would have already done in your life?

If you were the mayor of _____, what improvement would you make?

ALL PLAY: If you could change one thing about yourself - what would you change?

ALL PLAY: What is one of the best things about school?

If you could ask God one question - what would you ask?

ALL PLAY: If you were a parent of a girl your age, would you have a curfew for your daughter? Why or why not?

ALL PLAY: What is your idea of a great date?

What do you like about the personality of the person sitting immediately to your right?

What is something that annoys you about your family?

What is one thing you are working in improving?

What is something neat you have done with your parent(s) lately?

Name a person who has really influenced your life. How or why?

What is one thing that you fear?

What is one thing that makes you happy?

What is one of the most enjoyable times you have had in the last year?



The Hats We Wear

Objective: To assist the girls in seeing that they play many roles each day. To help girls ascertain which roles are the most constructive and which are the least satisfying.

Resources: Flip chart paper, one for each participant Markers

Activity: In the middle of the page at the bottom draw your own face and head. Now see how many hats you can create on your head. You are allowed one hat for each role you play. Look at your hats.

Which hats (or role) do you like best? Why? Which hat do you value the most? Why? Which hat takes the most energy to wear? Why? Which hat would you like to take off? Why? Can you do it? Which hat would you like to wear that you don't now? What would you have to do to earn that hat? Did you remember "church goer", "Christian"? If not, why not?





Prayer and the Daily News

The following program was taken from the Torch, Fall 1984.

Objective: To design a worship service that reflects the needs and concerns of your community.

Resources: Current newspapers

Activity: Divide girls into groups of four or five. Go through newspapers, list on a separate piece of paper what is happening in your community and your concerns for the people involved, (eg. unemployment, pollution, people needing help, etc.) Allow 15 to 20 minutes. On another piece of paper list the things, people, or situations that you wish to thank God for. (15-20 minutes) Sort through the newspapers to find photos or articles that correspond or represent concerns of those you are thankful for. Put together a collage that represents your prayer. (20 min.)

As a group decide on the wording of your prayer. Share the prayers with the rest of the group. (20 minutes)





Mother Daughter Relations

Objective: This program will encourage girls to understand the difficult decisions a mother must make and allow girls to dream of the type of mother they will be.

Preparation: Photocopy ten role play situations, and cut out. Paper and pens for each member

Opening: Indicate that the following letter was found in the Ann Landers' column many years ago. Read it to the group.

The Meanest Mother in the World

—I had the meanest mother in the world. While other kids had candy for breakfast, I had to eat cereal, eggs and toast. While other kids had Coke and junk food for lunch, I had a sandwich. As you can guess my dinner was different from other kids' dinners, too.

My mother insisted on knowing where we were at all times. You'd think we were on a chain gang or something. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing. I am ashamed to admit, but she actually had the nerve to break the child labour law.

She made us work. We had to wash dishes, make the beds, and learn how to cook.

That woman must have stayed awake nights thinking up things for us kids to do. And she always insisted that we tell her the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

By the time we were teenagers, our life became even more unbearable. None of this tooting the car horn for us to come running; she embarrassed us no end by insisting that the boys come to the door to get us. I forgot to mention that most of my friends were allowed to date at the mature ages of 12 and 13, but our old-fashioned mother refused to let us date until we were 15. She really raised a bunch of squares. None of us was ever arrested for shoplifting or busted for drugs. And who do we have to thank for this? You're right, our mean mother.

I am trying to raise my children to stand a little straighter and taller and I am secretly tickled to pieces when my children call me mean. I thank God for giving me the meanest mother in the world. Our country needs more mean mothers like minell.

Role Play: Put girls in groups of two or three. Brainstorm:

- all the things they like about their mothers.
- all the things that BUG them about their mothers.
- things about their moms that they will remember twenty years from now.



Have ten role play situations photocopied and then cut out. Put girls into pairs; one to act as a mother and one to be a daughter. Give each group a situation - give them time to work out TWO skits - one for what they would NOT say in twenty years and one skit showing what they WOULD say in twenty years.

Act out the roleplays and then discuss each as a group. Relate the situations to ones in their lives and their relationships with their mothers right now. Do members agree with the roleplayers?

Closing: Girls can be given a choice of writing a thank-you letter to their mothers OR imagine she is a mother right now and is writing a letter to her daughter twenty years from now.

*Mothers come in many sizes, full of love and sweet surprises,
Some bake cookies, others sew, some tell tales of long ago.*

*Some play games - but rarely win, others let stray kittens in, Whatever else your own may do, she
does it out of love for you!*





Role Play Situations

Photocopy and cut apart:

Your daughter's best friend ditches her for someone else.

You catch your daughter coming home from a party and you can smell liquor on her breath.

Your daughter has been told she has to repeat a grade at school.

You are a smoker and you catch your daughter smoking in her bedroom when she thought you were out.

Your daughter is supposed to be babysitting. You go for a walk and a van goes past you driving very fast, full of kids. You see your daughter through the back window.

Your daughter and her boyfriend are in the family room - a little too close when you walk into the room. They jump apart - but not soon enough.

Your daughter walks in on you and her father yelling angrily at one another.

Your daughter has started wearing tons of makeup and you think she looks cheap.

You hate the music your daughter loves.

You really don't like, or trust, the boy that your daughter is dating.



Mass Media and the Family

- Objective:**
- To provide an opportunity for girls to examine their own thoughts and feelings surrounding the issues of mass media and the family.
 - To provide information on how mass media impacts girls' lives.
 - To give girls a chance to voice their ideas on the impact of mass media on the family.

Resources: Flipchart Felt Pens Value Statement Sheets (Copy for each girl)

Defining

Mass Media

Time – 10 minutes

Brainstorm using a flipchart to list different ideas of what "mass media" is. You may want to use a web, or mind map instead of a straight list. As a group, come to a consensus on a brief definition of mass media.

The Gage Canadian Dictionary gives the following definition for mass media:

"The various modern means of communication that reach a vast audience, such as television, radio, motion pictures and the press."

The definition may also include things like video games, music and computer bulletin boards, social media.

Mass Media Values

Time - 1 hour

Give each girl a value sheet to fill out. Instruct them to do this on their own.

When everyone has finished, have the small group break into pairs and discuss 3 or 4 of the value statements.

Bring the group back together and as a whole, discuss each of the value statements. This may help the girls see a different point of view. NOTE - With value statements, there are no right or wrong answers. The idea of this exercise is to get everyone thinking and voicing their opinions on mass media and the family.

Value Statements: Agree or Disagree



- Mass media has a negative effect, especially on teens.
- TV is the most powerful of the various media available.
- Advertisers and broadcasters are more concerned with making money than being socially responsible.
- Freedom of choice is the most important basic right.
- Children are less imaginative because of their access to mass media.
- There is no relationship between violence on TV and behaviour.
- Watching cartoons makes children aggressive.
- Teens today are influenced more by the media than they are by their families.
- Media has a greater influence on teens than their parents.
- Teen role models now come from the media as opposed to the family.
- Media presents ideals of men and women that are almost impossible to achieve.
- What children see on TV causes them to become ashamed, angry or disappointed with their own situation.
- Children don't discriminate between what is real and what is not.
- The average teen spends more hours a day under the influence of mass media than they spend in school.
- Mass media has made us all world citizens.
- All TV is educational.
- A child will spend more time watching TV than engaging in any other single activity except sleeping.
- Families spend more time together due to the influence of mass media.

Small Talk

Time - 40 minutes

Some discussion questions follow. You don't need to use all of these questions. If the group gets into a good relevant discussion on one of these questions, let them discuss that one. If they have exhausted a question, have them move on to another question.

Questions for Discussion

- Who, if anyone, should be responsible for censorship, the family, or the system (i.e. government)?
- What options do we have if we are concerned about the messages being delivered by the media?



- How can we make the best use of the strengths and positive effects of the media?
- How much exposure to the media is appropriate? What other activities are being sacrificed when families spend a lot of time with TV, videos, etc.
- How can parents have greater influence in helping their children choose positive values, attitudes, and role models?
- Are the images that people are exposed to through the media having a positive or negative impact on their understanding of the points of view of others?
- Does the environment we are living in reinforce the violence that they see on television? If so, what can we do to change this?
- How do you distinguish fantasy from reality?
- What factors should influence a parent's decision about what children should be exposed to through the media?
- What is the role that media distributors can play to ensure that children are not negatively influenced by media messages?
- How can we become more discerning media consumers?
- Are you more influenced by your parents or by people on social media?
- How can we develop critical thinking skills to help us make appropriate decisions regarding media consumption?



Laugh it Up, Ladies

OPENING: Laughter is easy and fun.
It is beneficial—healthy and improves memory.
Laughter is world wide.
Smiles are universal.

BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS:

Humour definition from the Oxford Canadian dictionary: the condition of being amusing or comic; the ability to perceive or express what is funny, amusing or ludicrous; humour--a mood or state of mind; gratify or indulge; expression of humour.
One can also be humourless, or out of humour; displeased.
One does not need to have a sense of humour to laugh.
Only 10% of humour is in response to jokes. 90% is laughing about relationships:
Who doesn't have a funny relative?? Caught in a sticky situation?? Ended up on your butt?

Start here, choose what is most appropriate for your group:

Laughter is healthy: *Have you ever laughed so hard you have cried?* Tears carry away toxins found in cells under stress.

Have you laughed until you gasped for breath? Laughter increases respiratory activity and oxygen is exchanged, reducing chronic respiratory conditions, and increases antibodies to protect you against respiratory infections.

Have you had to hold you stomach because it hurts to laugh so hard? Laughter secretes an enzyme that protects the stomach from forming ulcers, massages internal organs, improves digestion, conditions the abdominal muscles, relaxes other muscles; releases endorphins which provide natural pain relief, reduces blood pressure.

Have you ever looked your friends in the eye while laughing only to burst into a fresh bout of giggles? You have reached a unique level of consciousness, your brain is working quicker and at a higher level. (Now is a good time to tackle the homework—it will be done quicker and better.)
How can you NOT laugh??



Humour acts as a major coping mechanism, relieves anxiety and tension, serves as an outlet for hostility and anger, provides an escape from reality, lightens heaviness related to illness or trauma.

Humour puts individuals on the same level, establishes equality, opens the door to communication.

Humour is personal. —Funniness is subject to culture, language, intelligences, preferences, values and the mood of the moment!

Humour makes people feel more involved. Everyone is connected.

Humour shifts our perspective, it makes the impossible seem more possible.

Black humour is used to trivialize events in order to allow the person(s) to deal with a difficult situation more easily—emotionally and intellectually. It is situation specific and is rarely acceptable outside of the circle of those involved. eg emergency rooms.

Humour can be CONSTRUCTIVE or DESTRUCTIVE

It is destructive when it lowers self-esteem, excludes someone, stimulates laughter AT someone, creates barriers, belittles someone, creates tension, creates defensiveness, focuses on the negative.

Can you give any examples???

Humour is constructive when it raises self-esteem, includes everyone, is supportive, relaxes people, stimulates laughter WITH someone, creates a positive atmosphere and energy, reduces tension, stimulates new ideas.

Do you know of any situations that fit these descriptions??

Did you know that a sense of humour is the #1 romantically attractive trait??

It helps if the person smiles, doesn't it?

Form a circle, leaders join in. (Better that you set the example in the first place!)

Have each person clap and say HO HO HO to the claps. Now HE.... HE--HE, or HE HE HE, clapping at different rhythms. Try HA HA HA. Put emphasis on the last HA-AAA!



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Now have the girls turn to the person on their left. Repeat one of the laughs above.

Imitate a Santa Claus laugh HO HO HO. Put your hands out around that tummy! Turn to your partner and Santa laugh with each other. Move around in the circle until you have _laughed' with each person.

Now a giggle—HE HE HE, Put one hand on your hip and the other in the air. Turn to your partner and exchange laughs and pantomime. Move around the circle again.

Try laughing like an angry crow, a witch, a pig, a monkey. Move around the circle for each one.

(This will take on a life of its own, Watch out!!) If the leader is brave enough, ask for suggestions from the group.) Allow 15 minutes.

You can pull the group back together by asking them to sit on the floor in the circle. Ask them to close their eyes and gather their feelings. Do they feel happy? breathless? sweaty? relaxed? What does their brain tell them? Ask them to remember how this feels and store the feeling in their memory bank. You will ask them to retrieve it at another time. It is important to become aware of their moods and be able to monitor them.

When you can retrieve the good feelings, you are more positive and self-confident. You can face problems more easily. Friends can do the same. It helps everyone to have this part of you to keep for special times, when you need it, or when you can help someone else. Try it once a day, greet someone else with a smile. Pass it on, and you can improve life for someone else.

Open eyes. This may be a logical break point, or you may wish to discuss feelings and how to be aware of their own moods. Can they make the feelings come back again? What can alter their moods? How can they be aware of the changes, and how can they return to good feelings or mood?



Good Hearted Living Prevents Hardening of the Attitudes.

Add more laughter to your life—it is easy and fun! Here are seven easy steps to be more cheerful and optimistic:

MONDAYS are for Compliments: Our tendency to criticize and be judgmental of others robs us of laughter. Look for the good in others, tell them about it, and you just might end up laughing together.

Monday thought: “A kind word often goes unspoken, but never goes unheard.”

TUESDAYS are for Flexibility: There is no laughter in being stubborn. We all get set in our ways, or sometimes have ‘a bee in our bonnet’. It is a good thing to be open to new ideas. It can be more fun than being stubborn in a circle of one. An open mind lets the laughter in.

Tuesday thought: “The tree bends in the wind does not break.”

WEDNESDAYS are for Gratitude: A good way to feel miserable is to always think you need more to make you happy. An attitude of gratitude brings serenity and laughter.

Wednesday thought: “As you go through life, keep your eye upon the donut and not upon the hole!”

THURSDAYS are for Kindness: Think of all the ways you can make a person’s life a little easier. Simple kindness may be the best way human beings can live with each other in peace and care properly for this planet we all share.

Thursday thought: “The practice of kindness creates healthy relationships and community connections, pass the kindness on to others.”

FRIDAYS are for Forgiveness: Forgiveness means letting go of anger. Find a way to look at those who have hurt you in a new light—of compassion. Releasing anger makes you healthy, it opens up room in your heart for good things, like happiness.

Friday thought: “Never hold a grudge--while you are angry, the other guy is out dancing!” (Buddy Hackett)

Weekends are for chocolate: Remember to eat some chocolate--or any other favorite food. Remember to take time for pleasure and relaxation. There is a time for all things. Enjoy the now, with gratitude!. “Enough is as a feast”

Whenever you are mindful of any of the practices and the pleasant feelings they bring, tell yourself: —This is great!! I feel happy now. Right now, I am storing this good feeling in my brain



with other moments of serenity. It will be in my memory bank to access whenever I want to feel like this again!!!

Soon you will be amazed to find you laugh more and are more cheerful and optimistic.

Your daily actions will become habits, and the habits will become a natural and positive way of life for you.

ATTITUDE is so important---pick a good one!!
CELEBRATE WITH GRATITUDE, your attitude will thank you!





Families

The following exercise can be used in a discussion of families, and to understand the girls' values and attitudes about parenting.

Resources: Pencil/pen for each girl
Handout: "If I Were A Parent", one for each girl

Allow about 15-20 minutes to complete the handout.

Discussion: Ask the girls to share their answers with the group, have them explore the beliefs and attitudes which governed their answer.

i.e. Why would you have your son home by midnight—why would you be different from your parents...how different?

Have the girls identify positive areas within their family relationships, and possibly an issue they have yet to resolve with family member(s). Alberta CGIT Association 2010 9-19



If I Were a Parent With Children of My Own

1. What three sentences of advice would you give your children at age 16:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What two things would you allow your children to do that you were not allowed to do?

a. _____

b. _____

3. What two things would you not allow them to do?

a. _____

b. _____

4. What three things would you not say to your children?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5. List three ways in which your children's lives might be different from yours.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



Plan a Soup and Bread Fundraiser



Hosting a fundraiser like this may be a way of providing exposure and visibility for the CGIT group. It may also help the girls in developing skills in planning and carrying out an event. Coordinate the menu for this fundraiser with either a CGIT or church theme. For example when working on a study of homeless people, the soup and bread may be very basic. If the fundraiser is happening near Easter, special Easter breads might be served.

Hosting a fundraiser will give your group exposure and visibility in the church. Once established, this may become an annual event.

Keep minister informed of your activities.

When doing the actual planning make sure you have access to a telephone to call and arrange shifts, food committees, etc. If you get a commitment the same night, it will keep the girls from forgetting.

Decide on a date, time and place (is church basement/hall adequate? Be aware of other events happening at the same time.

Does the church have kitchen facilities? necessary dishes? cutlery?



Who will make what? Quantities? (Have this info on hand, see "How to Estimate")

Who will do what:

1. Shifts (Make up schedules ahead of time, 30 minute shifts so that all girls can eat All girls have clean up duties—does your church charge for janitorial after events?)
 2. When will food arrive? (before/after church?)
- Cost (have float available to make change).
3. Be sure to consider vegetarians, nut allergies, other food allergies.



How to Estimate -- Quantities for 50:

- Bread for sandwiches 8-10 sandwiches per loaf
- Butter . 1.5 x 452 grams, creamed
- Sandwich filling suggestions - Egg salad, Chopped meat Salmon/Tuna
adding chopped onion, pickle, celery, apple will stretch fillings
- Soup.....Allow 300ml. per person
- Coffee 452 grams.
- Cube Sugar 452 grams.
- Cream.....250ml cereal cream, 250ml milk (1pint each)
- Tea 40 grams/20-25 teabags



Masks and Self Esteem

Objective:

1. To identify personal masks.
2. To list situations where we wear masks.
3. To discuss methods that may be used by participants to control how they are perceived by others.
4. To boost self confidence and self esteem of participants and allow them to "throw away their masks."

Facial Masks:

Define masks.

Describe ways to communicate, then focus on the faces we show for different situations.

- A. Individually draw a face of a strong feeling that you had during the last week. (i.e. facial expression of being scared of a new school year, tearful expression for sad news or angry expression from a fight with a friend or parent)
- B. Individually draw, on the other side of the paper, the mask you showed to others. Keep in mind that different masks may be used for family, friends and the general public.
- C. Share your masks with one or two people. Is your mask the same on both sides of the paper?
- D. Individually draw five masks you use.
- E. Break into small groups and discuss example situations to match the masks drawn. Remember the masks may not be displaying true feelings.
- F. Discuss which parts of the face are most expressive.

Body Masks:

- A. Trace one person of each group on a large sheet of paper. Fill in the characteristics of a typical CGIT girl showing the way she feels.
- B. Trace a person on the other side of the paper. Fill in the characteristics of the way she looks.
- C. Discuss the role of body language in communication. Approximately 80-85% of communication is done through body language, facial expressions included.



Self Esteem:

- A. Discuss in small groups, then as a large group, what we try to show by using masks (i.e. confidence, popularity, acceptance, happiness, anger, sadness, self control, cooperation, strength, security, jealousy, seeking attention).
- B. Discuss why we rely on masks (i.e. insecurity, to avoid conflict, or embarrassment, as coping strategy, as a subconscious reaction).
- C. Discuss in small groups the good and bad uses of masks.
- D. Identify ways to avoid using masks inappropriately, or as tools to avoid situations.

The Mask:

Identify ways that boost self confidence and self-esteem, short and long term (i.e. courage, money, support, boyfriend, independence from parents). Conclude with everyone seated in a circle. Each girl may offer one suggestion to overcome —masks!!.

Self esteem and confidence thrives with a good support system. Remember that you have a support system you depend on, but you are also part of a support system for others.





Angels Among Us

Angels have become a popular symbol and this program invites us to consider what angels are and how they live in each of us.

This program would take two evenings or could be used at a rally/sleepover.

Preparation: Gather the following materials:

- recording of Angels Among Us
- quiet, peaceful music for use as background
- paper, markers, glitter, fabric scraps, cotton balls or other 'creative' materials

Prepare for the scavenger hunt by:

- duplicating the Angel Scavenger Hunt sheet
- creating a badge for each team (you may wish to use the angel logo at the end of this program)
- arranging for one volunteer driver per team to take the girls from place to place
- Duplicate the lyrics to "Angels Among Us"
- Cut up the angel statements

Opening: "People who have seen angels are rare, and those who speak of them are few. The stories written about angels are almost always fictional. There are many people who claim a sense of Divine intervention in their lives, and many more who admit feeling the presence of angels guarding and protecting them. But for most people angels are still hidden in the shadows of religion, floating above us somewhere, quite invisibly. They are like secret friends watching over us, but rarely intervening...Still for those who do believe in angels....whether we remember them very often or not, just the thought of their presence, the very notion of them, is somehow comforting and adds a sweetness to our lives as nothing else ever could...There is an unmistakable and profound reason why every culture, every religion, every nation down through the ages and in every part of the world extols angels as fit representations of man's highest conception of love and goodwill. They affect our highest senses, inspire our noblest thoughts, reflect our greatest aspirations. It is because at the core of our humanity we are really all very much alike on this earth, not in our animal-ness and mortality alone, but in our spirit. When we get to the level where angels do exist, there's really no difference between any of us." (Goldman, 1992, p. 13-16)



Activity: Divide the girls into teams Divide the girls into teams and provide each team with a name such as: Peter's Angels, Gabriel's Angels, Seraphims, Cherubims. Provide each team with an Angels Scavenger Hunt sheet and explain the rules and the requirements. When everyone is ready, send them off!

When the time limit is up and the teams have returned, take time to share the "treasures" and the team cheers and add up the points for each team. Prizes, such as tiny angel pins, may be given out to the winning team.

Angel Vespers:

Play a recording of —Angels Among Us.

(You may wish to provide the lyrics so that everyone can follow along.)

Provide each of the girls with an angel statement and have them create a visual representation with the creative materials provided. Play quiet music to create a peaceful atmosphere.

When everyone has completed their representation move to a worship space for the vesper.

You may wish to arrange the space so that you can sit in a circle with a candle in the centre.

Read Hebrew 13:2:

—Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Have each girl share her angel statement and talk about the visual representation she created.

Play the song "Angels Among Us" and have everyone join in the chorus.

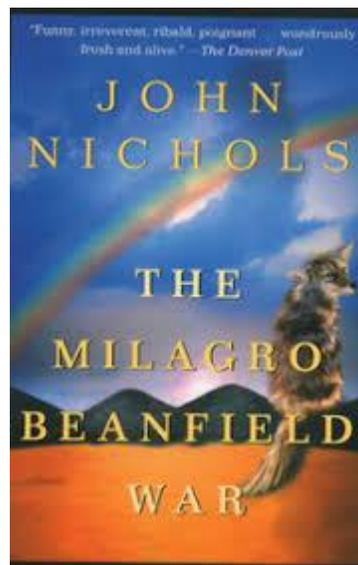
Read a story about angels—find one in your library, even a child's book.

Prayer: Thank you God for angels. Help us to be more aware of the angels among us, whether their presence is made evident by a special feeling or experience or through the angelic actions shown to us by others. Help us to be more angel-like in our relationships to each other as we strive to become the girls you would have us be. Amen.



Additional ideas:

1. Make Angels Among Us an on-going theme for the year by asking girls to watch for "angels" in their lives and then share their stories.
2. Become secret pals or secret angels by having each group member draw another member's name. Each secret angel will be responsible for anonymous acts of kindness towards their pal.
3. Create a bulletin board which profiles some of the angels within your church community.
4. Ask the minister or Outreach/CD Director if they know of any congregation members who might benefit from having a secret angel. The CGIT group might shovel the sidewalk, rake leaves, leave a card or think of some other angelic act which will brighten someone's day.
5. "Study the lives of great human 'angels' who have lived. See what made them tick - what their priorities were - what they cared about" (K.Goldman)
6. Rent the movie "The Milagro Beanfield War" and discuss the presence of angels.





ANGEL SCAVENGER HUNT

Requirements:

You will have one hour to complete the following tasks:

- *explain the significance of your team name,
- *collect as many items from the attached list as possible
- *create a team cheer, song, rap or poem which will be performed for the entire group during the judging.

Rules:

- *You may not spend any money to acquire these items.
- *Every team will have a driver. Please treat your driver with respect and courtesy. The driver may help the team if he/she wishes.
- *Return to the church at ___ sharp so your treasurers may be judged and displayed for others. Scores will be calculated by the judges.

Judging:

- *Ten points will be awarded for every item you bring back.
- *Twenty points will be awarded for the team cheer, song, rap or poem.
- *Ten points will be deducted for every minute that you are late.





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Find:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Christmas Tree angel | 16.. An "Always" minipad with wings |
| 2. Picture of an angel | 17. A sunhat |
| 3. The book "Goodnight Moon" or "The Sun Also Rises" | 18. Name three characteristics of an angel: |
| 4. Milk carton (Milky Way) | 19. Sunscreen |
| 5. A soup ladle (the big dipper) | 20. Angel food cake pan |
| 6. A compass | 21. Any kind of sunlight soap |
| 7. The name of a song with the word "angel" in the title | 22. A Horoscope from a newspaper or magazine |
| 8. A sun catcher or prism | 23. A sundress |
| 9. . Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" tape /CD/record | 24. Name two famous astronomers: |
| 10. Sunflower seeds | 25. SunRype juice container |
| 11. Sun newspaper | 26 A box of _star' cereal |
| 12. A starfish | 27. Ten words derived from the word "angel" |
| 13. Solarcain lotion | 28. Any Star Trek collectible |
| 14. Comet cleanser | 29. Name four movies featuring angels: |
| 15. Go to and sing a song with the word _angel' in it. You will be given a badge to show you have completed this task. | 30. An object that reminds you of an angel and be prepared to explain why |



ANGEL STATEMENTS

Seek an angel with an open heart, and you shall always find one.

Sometimes you know angels only by the miracles they leave blossoming in their path after they are gone.

An angel is someone you are always happy to bump into.

An angel is someone you feel you've known forever even though you've just met.

Anyone who helps you grow is an angel.

Angels make you feel welcome in this world.

Angels encourage your best qualities and hidden talents.

Angels give you those gentle pats on the back you sometimes need to keep going.

Angels give you direction.

Angels gently push you out of your little self and into the broad arena of love.

Angels remind you that you are enough.

Angels help you see your life in a better light.

An angel is someone who brings out the angel in you.

Angels might not always come when you call them, but they come when you need them.

The only way to know an angel is by your feelings.

An angel is someone who raises your spirits. An angel is someone who helps you believe in miracles again.



Fair Trade

Session One: A Youth Program

CGIT at Norval United Church in Norval, Ontario participated in this two-session program that introduced them to the issues of Fair Trade. It was created by their leader, Penny Langstaff. This two part program, which emphasizes respect for workers of all ages and all countries, could be used with any group of older youth (ages 14-18). Each session takes about one hour. Fair Trade is growing in momentum, there are new changes, please check these references for updates.

Session One: Unjust Labour Practices

Materials and Preparation:

You will need the following:

Zoned for Slavery (23 minutes: AV film available through AVEL West)

Bible, Chart paper and markers

TV with AV set-up

World map, marked with key areas where teens and children are employed in the manufacture of clothing

(eg. Bangladesh, Mexico, and some South American countries).

Vocabulary definitions posted on chart (list follows)

Opening:

Together, invite the participants to consider the following questions:

-What is meant by the term —fairll? What are some examples of fairness?

-What are some of the things that you think about when you buy clothes? (colors or styles

that suit you, how you think others will see you, how much money.)

- What influences you and gives you ideas about the clothes you buy/wear?

(magazines ads, peers, movie stars, prices)

Prepare the participants for watching the video *Zoned for Slavery* by introducing some key words. Share the definitions on your chart:

Maquila: Short for —maquiladorall; from the Spanish word meaning to assemble a factory located in a free trade zone within a Third World country, usually in Central America, the Caribbean, or parts of Southeast Asia. Most workers are young women



who work long hours in poor working conditions for little pay. The maquila generally is operated by a contractor to make the goods for a large, foreign corporation.

Free Trade Zone: A special area in which maquilas are located. Special laws govern this zone within its host country. The foreign corporation there produces things that are **free** from paying most taxes, **free** from obeying environmental regulations, and **free** from obeying labour regulations. [Note: you may want to speak briefly about the purposes of taxes and labour and environmental controls; e.g. Taxes were described as money that we pay so that we all have access to medical care, doctors, nurses, hospitals, medicines, teachers, schools and good roads; Environmental regulations were described as laws preventing companies from polluting rivers and landfill sites with toxic chemicals or from destroying forests. Labour regulations were described as laws that mean workers have the right to be treated respectfully, that they cannot be fired unjustly or abused, and that they can organize associations or unions to speak up for their rights as a group.]

Contractor: A company hired by a corporation to make a product. The corporation gives a description of the product (specifications for running shoes or a dress shirt) to the contractor, who then sets up a factory in a free trade zone where the workers will work at the lowest rates of pay; where the company will have to pay the least taxes and follow the fewest regulations. The contractor is increasing profits by reducing costs.

Corporation: A registered company to produce goods or services for profit.

Retailer: A company that sells products to consumers.

Cooperative/Collective: A group of workers who organize together to share equipment and ideas and thereby secure a stronger voice for themselves.

Human Rights: Rights that allow individuals to be treated fairly and with dignity While the participants are watching the video, encourage them to take note of the following:

-What costs go into making clothes?

-What does the term sweatshop mean?

Following the video, discuss these questions:

-How do you feel after watching that video?

-What did the term 'sweatshop' refer to? (Add this definition to your vocabulary.)

-How does learning about this make you feel? Hopeful? Unhopeful? Why?

-What could we do to make a difference to this situation?

If appropriate for your context and group, find and share stories on the web of young activists who are working to make a difference in the world such as:

- Craig Keilburger
- Severn Cullis-Suzuki, or
- Ryan Hreljac



Taking Action

Affirm ways in which the group can make a difference.

Connect these ways to the CGIT Purpose: ***to become what God would have us be.***

Consider that this might mean:

- Sharing stories, our own and others'
- Making 'fair' or 'just' choices'
- Empowering ourselves and others to —become what God would have you be

Create a diagram of social justice. Consider:

- Which step on the diagram is the hardest for you? Why?
- Which step is the hardest for people in general? Why?

Empowering Others: Making Choices/ Making a Difference

To become the people that God would have them be.

God would have us be."

Social Justice:

Becoming the community

God would have us be"

Sharing Stories/Becoming Aware:

Building relationships as Jesus did"

Read **Micah 6:8** and discuss the differences between 'kindness' and 'justice'. Ask why both might be important.

Briefly talk about two examples of social justice, adding two more words to the glossary.

Boycott: Uses negative pressure; the consumer withholds purchases from the named retailer.

A disadvantage to this approach is that it may also have detrimental effects if workers, already living in poverty, lose their only source of livelihood.

Buycott: Uses positive pressure to persuade retailers to take responsibility for the conditions under which their products are made. Consumers give voice to concerns, via letters/prepared postcards, to send the message to retailers and corporations that they will continue to buy products as long as the workers the companies employ are treated justly.

Closing: Close the session with a circle prayer



FAIR TRADE- Session Two: We CAN Become...

Materials and Preparation

Common Grounds (available from AVEL West) or alternatively

Taste for Trade: (21 minutes, Fair Trade is highlighted.)

TV and VCR

Chart paper and markers

Definitions from the previous session

A package of Fair Trade coffee or coffee beans

Copies of: ***Fair Trade Coffee Workshop Kit*** available from:

www.oxfam.ca/campaign/downloads/coffeekit2.pdf

If possible, make arrangements for a visit to a local coffee shop or grocery store that stocks Fair Trade coffee and other goods. Also, invite a speaker from a Fair Trade organization to visit your group, or a speaker from a business that uses Fair Trade products.

Opening: *Welcome the participants and review discussions from the previous session.*

Invite them to share how what they have learned influences the way that they shop.

Having watched the video ***Zoned for Slavery***, the group is now aware that the cost for making some products is more than just the money the consumer pays.

-Some products cost the people who make them their right to be treated with dignity.

-Some products cost the workers who make them their right to be paid a wage that allows a decent living in their area.

-The cost of some products includes the loss of people's right to work in an environment that is safe or not harmful to health.

-Some products cost workers the loss of their right to voice their concerns without fear of judgment or physical threats.

-Other products come at the cost of polluting the environment.

Acknowledge that these costs are not fair or just, and that purchases must be carefully considered to determine whether such costs are incurred with the product.

Realize also that that the system that creates these injustices is complex. It is easy to feel hopeless about making a difference. Learning about people who have made a difference can bring hope that such action is possible.

Fair Trade

Briefly review the glossary from the previous session and add two new words.

Free Trade Global Economy: This is hoe products/goods are exchanged around the world. Most free trade benefits the few at the expense of the many and promotes free trade zones and fewer restrictions and rules for the companies.



Fair Trade: An alternative to free trade; organizations put people's needs ahead of profits; workers are treated with dignity; consumer's put peoples needs and rights, and care of the earth, ahead of low prices.

Consider the —Conventional Coffee Pathll on page 20 of the Oxfam **Fair Trade Coffee Workshop Kit**.

Compare the effects of this method of coffee supply with the method of clothing supply discussed in the previous session.

Invite the participants to imagine the life of a teenage girl working on a coffee plantation.

Watch the first 10 to 15 minutes of the video **Common Grounds; The Story of Coffee-**from the beginning of the video until the statement —for their common goodll).

Consider the following questions:

- What new information did you receive?
- How do you feel about what you saw and heard?
- What surprised you?

Consider —Alternative Route of Coffeell on page 23 of the **Fair Trade Coffee Workshop Kit**.

Discuss the differences that might be apparent between the lives of workers involved in this type

of coffee production and the workers involved in conventional coffee production.

Craft

Invite participants to create —Helping Handsll by tracing their own hands on colored foam sheets. The hands

can be decorated, ideas of possible actions and names added. The finished hands could be placed around

the social justice diagram.

Taking Action

Pass around the bag of Fair Trade coffee and notice the mark that indicates a Fair Trade product.

Search your church's kitchen and see what kind of coffee your congregation purchases. If possible, visit grocery stores or coffee shops in your neighbourhood and see whether they stock Fair Trade coffee.

Invite a speaker from a store or shop that stocks Fair Trade coffee to talk about the importance of using these products.



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Pass around samples of green coffee beans and invite everyone to taste test the Fair Trade coffee.

Invite the group to name personal choices they are willing to make to act with justice. Determine a step the group might take together toward doing justice in your community. Decide on an action plan. If time allows, begin to implement the action plan. Actions might include writing letters to area shops encouraging them to use and sell Fair Trade items, or petitioning the church board to begin using Fair Trade coffee. Arrange a taste test for the whole congregation.

Perhaps the group could consider making a request to a group in the congregation for special funding so that Fair Trade items could be used at coffee hour and other church social events.

Closing

Gather in a circle for closing prayer.



From Bullying to Promoting Peace

Bullying is not about anger. It is not even about conflict. It is about contempt. This program looks at what bullying is, who bullies are and what we can all do to protect ourselves and others by creating ridicule free environments and promoting peace in our CGIT groups, our churches, our communities. Complete with worship service and morning watch, this program can be used over one or many CGIT nights, or as a weekend program.

Discernment

This program is based on the lessons from Nancy Reeves book —I'd say Yes, God—If I Knew What You Wanted!

This four part program could be used over four weeks as a portion of the program or in one night as the full evening's program. An opportunity for girls and the leaders to consider how (when faced with a question) they can look within Spiritual Discernment to discover we are all given direction when we are still enough to listen.

Complex Relationships

Relationships can be complicated. Teens and parents, teens and their friends, CGIT Leaders and their groups, all of these are relationships that can become tense at times. This is a program that can be used over one or two CGIT nights, offering groups points for discussion. How to have a conversation about difficult subjects, conflict resolution through learning how to see another's point of view and how to stand up for your own point of view, respecting our differences.

Please contact Alberta CGIT Association for these programs:

Alberta CGIT Association Office:
Percy Page Centre,
11759 Groat Road NW
Edmonton, AB T5M 3K6
Phone: 403-453-8571
Fax: 403-453-8553
Email: cgit@telus.net



CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR: Evening One

Introduction: When the girls are planning the second half of their year, they might like to

celebrate Chinese New Year. Ask if they would like to find out about this celebration with a Chinese New Year Party. This can be done in one, two or three evenings depending on interest. Talk about Canadians celebrating New Year's Day. Draw the girls' attention to the Chinese New Year and their calendar—celebrated on the first day of the first lunar month, usually the end of January or early February. Traditional customs around superstitions and worship gradually became a way for people to celebrate and enjoy time with their families.

The Chinese Zodiac uses a cycle of twelve—each year signifying a different animal with a different fortune. For those turning 12, 24, 26—the meeting of one's zodiac year—termed *benming nian*—traditional superstitions consider this an unlucky year. If you wear red, it helps

to ward off dangers. In Chinese traditions, red is one of the luckiest colours signifying loyalty, success and happiness.

We share presents in our Western culture, Chinese people give money gifts at Chinese New Year, weddings and birthdays. Gift \packets can be candies and goodies wrapped in red material or a red envelope filled with gold wrapped chocolate money. As the New Year approaches, all house cleaning must be finished and cleaning tools put away. You must not sweep any good fortune out the door! Avoid buying new shoes or the coming year may have rough waters—in Cantonese, shoes are a homonym for 'rough'. Make sure you don't have any debts to begin the new year, or you will be in debt for the coming year!

Purpose: Celebrating the Chinese New Year will give us a better understanding of another culture, to be tolerant of people from different cultures and to have fun. After your group has

finished this program, they may be ready to look at another culture or religion that might be

misunderstood in our society.

Brainstorm ideas from the girls. From a list, select the ones they would like to do. Some suggestions might be: Dragon Masks, Chinese banners with greetings, fortune cookies, Chinese Gift Packets, paper lanterns, red place mats, Chinese appetizers.

Several craft patterns are available on the Internet.

Search Chinese New Year-favorite craft patterns will be one of many sites.

Evening One: Suggested Project Materials Required:

1) Dragon masks Sheets of white paper or cardboard



Dragon mask pattern (Encourage their own pattern.)

Brightly coloured markers

2) Banners with Chinese letters showing greetings)

Large sheets red/white paper for banners

(Shelf paper works well)

Red, black, gold markers

3) Chinese Gift Packets print on red paper, use pattern this page Use gold paint to decorate their envelopes.

Red construction paper 20 x 30 cm

Scissors, glue, gold ink or paint

Gold-covered coins or candy

4) Paper lanterns

5) Red place mats decorated with Chinese numbers—gold ink/paint



Chinese New Year: Evening Two: Fortune Cookies

You will need a newspaper with horoscopes, supplies to make fortune cookies,

- 1) Have the girls discover horoscopes from our calendar year.
- 2) Using a Chinese calendar (available on the internet), have girls discover 3) *The girls can bake or buy Chinese fortune cookies.*
- 4) Purchase chopsticks and learn to use them.
- 5) Make paper lanterns for decorating

Fortune Cookies

250 ml flour 4 egg whites
125 ml sugar 125 ml oil
5 ml salt 30 ml vanilla extract
30 ml cornstarch 15 ml water
15 ml cinnamon

Have fortunes printed on 1 cm x 6 cm paper strips

Heat oven to 150°C or 300° F. Combine first 5 ingredients, beat 1 minute. Spread 1 tbsp cookie batter into a 10 cm circle on greased baking sheet. Repeat with rest of batter. Bake for 12 minutes or until light brown. While still warm and soft, set one disk in the center of a potholder. Place fortune in center of cookie and fold in half. Bring up other two ends to make shape of fortune cookie and drape over the rim of a cup or metal bowl. Press down on both sides to curve cookie into a crescent. Cool shaped cookie in a muffin tin. Allow to cool until crisp.

Makes 24 cookies. Store up to two weeks in an airtight container.

Evening Three: Celebrating the Chinese New Year

Your group might like to celebrate with a Chinese meal and decorate with all the projects they have made in the previous meetings. Many shops have several varieties of appetizers or meals to choose.

Have the girls discuss how they can learn about other cultures and how we learn from others.

By understanding other cultures and religions, we learn how we are similar and are more understanding of differences.

Finish the evening with a popcorn prayer where the leader begins the prayer and each girl adds to the prayer, as they feel comfortable.

—Oh, God—tonight we think about people who are different, each of us knows someone who might be from a different culture or different from us. Sometimes these people make us feel uncomfortable or afraid. Help us be more understanding and loving. Tonight I am thinking about who comes to our church. She looks so different from us in her dress from Africa.



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Help me to reach out to her and make her feel welcome in our church”

Each girl then names one person and asks for help to reach out. When you have gone around the circle, close the prayer....

—Give each one of us here tonight the strength to be more loving and kind to people who seem to be different. Amen.





Teenage Suicide I: Learning About Suicide from Direct Experience

What does it mean to have —abundant life? What are the signs of abundance?

Job will not —curse God and die. He says, —God gives and God takes away. What does Job consider important enough to live for? What kind of justice is he looking for?

Listen to a recording of —Jesus Christ Superstar. Does Jesus appear to be looking for death? Compare the recording with Matthew and John’s accounts of the last week of Jesus’ life.

Call the local mental health service or suicide hot-line and invite a representative to speak to your group. Invite them to bring resources they give to clients.

Prepare questions to ask them.

Identify and list all the resources in your community that provide mental health services: include the names, addresses and phone numbers of guidance counselors, public health services, counselors and therapists and ministers who may have skills in crisis management. Include toll free numbers that may provide service to your community. Distribute the list to members of your group and interested church members.

Do some research into the historical attitudes about suicide. Did you know that in the Middle Ages suicides were not buried, but their bodies hung at road crossings or dragged through the streets? Many times the families of suicides were shunned by the rest of society. Ask a life insurance salesperson if his/her company will pay death benefits to the family of a suicide. What is your denomination’s view of suicide? Where do you agree? Where do you disagree? Have the group formulate its own statement about life and the value of human beings.

Use the enclosed open-ended sentences to help the members of your group know how they handle stress, Have the group discuss ways they can help each other through small or large crises. Make a covenant to do this for one year.

How I Handle Stress ...

When I feel depressed, the first place I go is

When I feel depressed, the person I am most likely to talk with is

The last person I would talk with is



The last place I would go when I am depressed is ...

When I am depressed, I try to pray about ...

When I know a person is depressed, the first thing I do is

When I feel better, I celebrate by

I know that if _____ happens, I always get angry.

If I could change one way that I act when I am angry, I would

Biblical Attitudes About Suicide

There are no direct statements in the Bible that call suicide right or wrong. The Bible says that life is good. The Bible affirms life even when it is not always easy. God through Jesus Christ is always with us, to help us, to meet us, and to heal us. We are never really alone because we belong to God.

The Bible affirms the goodness of life. Job, even in the time when he was sure that God had left him alone forever, never contemplated suicide. When his wife suggests that he should

—Curse God, and die, Job would not take his own life. (Job 2:9)

The Psalms affirm that God has given us life -- we should celebrate and be thankful.

Many Psalms begin with several verses describing the feelings of being totally alone, that even God has left the writer alone. Yet in the end, the singer gives thanks to God for the life he/she has and for God's continued love and care.

The two most famous people in the Bible who committed suicide are King Saul and Judas. In 1 Samuel 31, King Saul commits suicide by falling on his sword when he has lost a battle with the Philistines, the traditional enemy of Israel. One possible explanation for his suicide is that conquered kings were often tortured before they were murdered by their captors. Rather than suffer this humiliation, he committed suicide.



Judas committed suicide by hanging himself after he betrayed Jesus (Matthew 27:5). Matthew uses Judas to show how another prophecy about the Messiah was fulfilled in Jesus' life. Judas tried to return the money he had taken from the temple priests, but they would not take it because it was —blood money, and had been used to buy the life of a human being. The priests took the money and bought a field in which to bury strangers who died in Jerusalem, thus fulfilling a prophecy in Jeremiah that 30 pieces of silver would be used to buy a potter's field.

Role-Plays to Develop a More Mature Understanding of Suicide Causes:

In doing role-plays, the cardinal rule is to allow people as much time to debrief as they had for acting out their parts. Discussion may begin slowly, but allow people time to discover their questions and feelings. The purpose of role-playing is to allow people to participate in situations that are as close to real life as possible. The people represented in a role-play should be in a situation that could happen.

The following situations involve two or three people acting before the rest of the group.

1) John is talking to his friend, Jim. John says he doesn't see much point in living now that his girlfriend, Sarah, has broken up with him. (Do this twice. The first time, have Jim ignore John's feelings, tell him he will find someone else, offer to fix him up with a date; the second time have Jim ask questions like: —Sarah was really important to you, tell me what is hurting you. Why do you think you don't want to live?!!)

2) Susan's sister Martha committed suicide six months ago. Susan has been feeling guilty about an argument she had with Martha a few days before she died. Joyce, a friend from church, notices that Susan is depressed. Have Joyce talk with Susan about why she feels depressed.

3) Bill notices that Jane, his girlfriend has been sneaking drinks when they go to parties. He is concerned and tries to talk to her about what is bothering her. Jane talks to him about her grades, which are falling, and her feeling that she will never measure up to her parents' expectations.

*** Check local and /or regional Suicide Prevention agencies for current video's pamphlets, speakers, etc.

AVEL West has available:

FRAGILE TIME: This video deals with teen suicide. It is the story of three teenagers who wanted to die. Two received help while one did not. It suggests some ways we can



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prevent teen suicide. This is designed to be used with young people as well as adults. However, it should be used in a carefully planned session, especially when young teens are part of the group. Be sure a trained counsellor is present. (30 minutes)

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT: Following in the shoes of teens for a day, you begin to realize some

of the problems they face while in high school. Some of the issues addressed include: eating disorders, abuse, suicide and addiction. Join Jenn, Tracy, Scott and Sophie as they deal with challenges. (12 minutes)



Memorial Service: A Teenage Suicide Victim

Gathering

We gather here to acknowledge the death of _____, and we give thanks for her/his life.

In so doing, let us remember that evil can be overcome with good.

We gather with _____'s family and friends to remember God's presence.

In so doing, let us remember that lives can be restored through healing.

Hymn

—Safe in the arms of Jesus!! Songs of the Gospel #161 These are words of assurance.

Prayer

O God, our hearts are torn open with grief.... and painand anger.

We acknowledge our feelings of helplessness and exhaustion.

Yet we cling to the hope that you will care for us ...comfort us...and surround us with your love.

Help us to know that even though we may never be the same again....you will help us carry on. Thank you. Amen.

Scripture

It seems right that we should gather in a service of worship at a time like this.

It seems right too that we should turn to the scriptures of old to see how their faith developed. A psalmist tells us how God loves us and watches over us:

Psalm 139: 1-12

Memories shared by friends

Special Music

—The Dancell by Garth Brooks

Meditation

(Begin with a few biographical details of the deceased)

We gather today to acknowledge _____'s death, to give thanks for his/her life and to commend him/her into the care and keeping of Almighty God.

The first thing we want to do is remember _____. I didn't know him/her but you did. Once you get over the shock of hearing about his/her death, start recalling his /her lifeand talk with one another about what you remember! Tell all sorts of stories:

Was there a particular hobby or sport that ____ excelled or was passionate about?

Was there a special moment when ____ helped one of you look at a problem in a different way?

What was it that you and other people particularly liked about ____ Be specific.



What did _____ especially appreciate in people he/she liked? It is so important to tell the stories of your memories. Make a point, also, to include the negative things:

- the things that upset _____;
- the things that _____ did that upset and puzzled you;
- the way _____ acted when he/she was angry;
- the times _____ closed up and no one could reach him/her.

It is as you talk about these things together; as you laugh and cry together; as you share hugs and try to penetrate the silence, that the healing process will begin, and you will help one another.

With _____'s death, something dear has been torn apart in each who was close to him.

It isn't easy to be hurt like that!

- You may have feelings of guilt;
- You may be carrying a huge burden of anger;
- Or you may be holding your breath, fearful that this may happen to another person you love.

These are all very deep, and very real, and very frightening feelings.



First: There is no avoiding the pain; you will have to experience it. You have to accept the fact that life is tough and unfair at times. You have to realize that a lot of people have to deal with tremendous amounts of pain, and right now you are one of them!

Second: The secret to carrying on in spite of the pain comes in recognizing you can't carry all these burdens by yourself. Whether you are 10 or 20-years old, 30 or 60-years old, none of us are equipped to carry the whole load; nor are we expected to pretend the burden of pain, sorrow, and confusion is not there.

Each person needs to talk; talk with others; talk especially with people who know how to help. Just as surely as we need trained medical help when we break a leg, so too we need proper care and counselling when the break is in our heart.

Third: We need to channel our feelings in helpful ways. If there are things you wish you had said to _____, write them in a letter. Put words down on paper; write and rewrite that letter until you feel it is right. Then, think about putting your words into action. I know people who have channelled their anger and fear in positive ways. They organized a bike-a-thon with proceeds to go to a designated suicide prevention project. They worked hard, and they rode hard, and the activity brought its own kind of healing.

Our faith is so important at a time like this. There are two essential ingredients...
First is my understanding of God. The God I know is there with us in our darkest times and knows what it is to suffer. This is a God who constantly says

—I love you.!!

—I know you and I love you!!

—I know you; I love you; I am here for you; you are never alone!!

The God I know is the One who carries us through when we have no strength of our own.

God says over and over, —I give you each other.!!

- I give you people who will share your pain and grief...

- I give you people who don't know what to say, but they want to reach out in whatever ways they can to show you that they care.....

- I give you people in the health field, the counseling field, and in the faith community.

The Samaritans have a poem that talks about sharing the grief:

—Hear us crying, we are in such pain,

Together we must comfort, and be comforted

By the loving touch, the warmth

And the sadness we share.

In sharing the grief and pain



We are still alone with our thoughts, our dreams, our love....

Yet, we are together.!!

(Mother), (Father), and (Sibling), your grief, your pain, your loss is deeper than any of us can imagine. ____ will always be an important part of your lives, for his/her spirit lives on through you.

But remember, too, that you each have your own future. Along whatever paths that future may take you, you need to find ways of being there for each other.

Do not deny yourselves the opportunities you will be given to make the best of the days that lie ahead. Though you will never be the same again, with God's help you will find new ways of carrying on. Go with God and may God go with you!

Prayer

Almighty God, we pray for _____. We thank you for the days he/she walked this earth. Now we release him/her into your loving arms.

We pray for family and friends – for their pain, for their loss, for their feelings of frustration, anger and helplessness. Help them find appropriate ways of seeking consolation and healing. May they be strengthened as they face the future.

We pray for ourselves as we face our own mortality. Let us do so with confidence for Christ has shown us how your love reaches beyond the gates of death. Relieve our fears.

Hear us now as we pray the family prayer Jesus taught: **Our Father...**



Announcements

(Invitation to a time for talk together over refreshments.)

Following the Benediction, as we prepare to leave, we will be playing the song —Borders and Time. It Jimmy Rankin, who wrote this poignant song about loss and heartache, called it a song of sorrow and a song of love.

Hymn

—Amazing Grace Voices United #266

Commendation

Into your hands, O Merciful Saviour, we commend your servant____. Acknowledge, we humbly pray, a sheep of your fold, a lamb of your flock. Receive him/her into the arms of your mercy, into everlasting peace, and into the glorious company and the saints.

Benediction

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord's face shine upon us and be gracious to us.

The Lord's countenance be lifted upon us and give us peace.

Now friends, we have done all that we can do.

Let us go now with the peace and love of God in our hearts.

Music

—Borders and Time by Jimmy Rankin

Organizers might want to consider including a handout with the names and telephone numbers of counsellors in the area. Include when grief counselling sessions are available at the school and any Distress Line numbers available to your area.

Some background could be given on the music and hymns chosen so that all ages present could

better understand and appreciate the choices used.

This service was used for a CGIT'er and adapted from a service written by Reverend Joyce Sasse included in United Church —Gathering – a packet for worship planners 1997