

All Church Worship Brainstorming Summary

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Members present: Vicki Zuker, Glenn Chilson, Dena Chilson, Lynne Richmond, Ann Selleck, Diane Thompson, Mary Ivanov, Barb Gripton, Dave Selleck, Jim Post, David Booth, Karen Booth

“The worship we hope to develop will be rooted in Scripture, centered on Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It will be relevant to local and emerging culture, while addressing the needs of believers and unbelievers alike. Above all, it will intentionally engage people physically, emotionally, intellectually, and soulfully.”

Felt needs: What physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual need are we addressing in this service so that worship is engaging and a means of making disciples? What question needs to be posed/answered so that we are making disciples? Note from Karen: Each service’s felt need is in the message synopsis in bold print.

“Seeing Jesus”

The truth and joy of resurrection is confirmed as the disciples see Jesus again and believe. Jesus meets them where they are and guides them in next steps. Beyond seeing him and believing, he speaks to them with the expectation that they will listen to him.

We are witnesses to the resurrection and the promises of new life in Jesus Christ. How do we experience the presence of the risen Christ - one who meets us where we are whether we doubt or have deep faith, whether we recognize him at first or not? How do we respond to the truth of who he is as Messiah? How do we hear his call to feed his sheep, follow him, and go and make disciples?

Another piece is how we see Jesus in the world around us. As we come closer to merger, how do we see Jesus alive and active in brothers and sisters in Christ from Lakeside UMC?

Ideas for the series:

Image: “Hidden” Jesus (right) <http://www.illusions.org/dp/1-54.htm>

Drama/monologues: Thomas, Peter, women at the tomb, disciples. Also: “I Was Blind, But Now I See.” Length: Under 5:00. Cast: 2. Mr. Brown visits the doctor to show that he has regained his sight, but the doctor refuses to believe it is possible. Drama Ministry

Question: How are you a witness that God is alive?

Music for series: Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus (UMH 349), Open Our Eyes, Lord (FWS 2086); Have You Seen Jesus, My Lord? (camp song) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMQUK5vD8dc>

Visuals for the series: Large glasses, maybe many pairs, all different (clown glasses; eyes on springs glasses)

Hands-on item: Novelty glasses or spy glasses.

Alternate series titles:

- Fresh Eyes
- Focus: Seeing Jesus Anew
- Breakthrough
- The Best News Ever Seen
- Encounters with Jesus
- In Plain Sight
- Hidden in Plain Sight



April 3, 2016:

2nd Sunday of Easter

Pastor Mary is on vacation. Jimmy Epplett is preaching.

Title suggest by our group: "Believing is Seeing."

Scripture: John 20: 19-31 (Contemporary English Version)

¹⁹The disciples were afraid of the Jewish leaders, and on the evening of that same Sunday they locked themselves in a room. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group. He greeted them ²⁰and showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they became very happy.

²¹After Jesus had greeted them again, he said, "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me." ²²Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive anyone's sins, they will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven."

²⁴Although Thomas the Twin was one of the twelve disciples, he wasn't with the others when Jesus appeared to them. ²⁵So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But Thomas said, "First, I must see the nail scars in his hands and touch them with my finger. I must put my hand where the spear went into his side. I won't believe unless I do this!"

²⁶A week later the disciples were together again. This time, Thomas was with them. Jesus came in while the doors were still locked and stood in the middle of the group. He greeted his disciples ²⁷and said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands! Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and have faith!"

²⁸Thomas replied, "You are my Lord and my God!"

²⁹Jesus said, "Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!"

³⁰Jesus worked many other miracles for his disciples, and not all of them are written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you will put your faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. If you have faith in him, you will have true life.

Synopsis: Doubt. We all have it and we all use it and it stops us from seeing things and experiencing things.....

We go into situations with a preconceived notion of what they are going to be like or what the outcome is going to be. We doubt things will be different...Ever!!! So we don't believe we are held back by those doubts! We doubt people can change, we doubt a community can overcome, we doubt that we will succeed, we doubt ourselves, and we doubt God!

Thomas doubted until he saw with his own eyes! We sometimes still doubt even then!

There is a clip from The Santa Clause2 where Charlie is trying to convince his principle that his Dad really is Santa and he shows her his snow globe. He says to her, "Seeing isn't believing. Believing is seeing"! Then she sees and gets it! We need to believe before we can truly see the amazingness of God!

Jesus says, "Blessed are those who believe without seeing!" What do we believe and what does that allow us to see?

Visuals: Glasses. Snow globe.

Media possibilities: We only looked at the first two suggestions as a group.

- “Believing is seeing.” Here is just one example from “The Santa Clause”:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8YxwloflvQ>. **Comments:** This looks like a good illustration. We could probably Jimmy’s example, above, and pair it with a hands-on item.
- “God Does Not Exist!” Length: 3:26. Free. Set in a barber shop, this short film shows a conversation between two characters as they tackle the big question that has been a controversial debate for decades, 'Does God Exist?'
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcFi-MQI32U> **Comments:** Very similar to the dentist video we used. It has been shared on Facebook.
- “Jesus Resurrection Appearances” beginning at 0:06:00. Retelling of the story.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evoOalQwITg>
- “Gospel of John” beginning at 2:27:35. Retelling of the story.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hexhw3wWmE>
- “Jesus Appears to Thomas” (aka “Doubting Thomas). Visual liturgy. Length: 3:36. We own it. Last used 4/13. <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/36336/jesus-appears-to-thomas>

Activities: Holy Communion.

Music:

Hands-on item: Snow globe (could be homemade with baby food jar, water, and glitter).

April 10, 2016:

3rd Sunday of Easter

Kim Bos is preaching. Pastor Mary will go to worship at Lakeside UMC.

Title suggested by our group: “A Hopeful Ending” or “Hopefully Ever After...”

Scripture: John 21: 1-19 (Contemporary English Version)

¹Jesus later appeared to his disciples along the shore of Lake Tiberias.

²Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, and the brothers James and John, were there, together with two other disciples. ³ Simon Peter said, “I’m going fishing!”

The others said, “We will go with you.” They went out in their boat. But they didn’t catch a thing that night.

⁴Early the next morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize who he was. ⁵Jesus shouted, “Friends, have you caught anything?”

“No!” they answered.

⁶ So he told them, “Let your net down on the right side of your boat, and you will catch some fish.”

They did, and the net was so full of fish that they could not drag it up into the boat.

⁷Jesus’ favorite disciple told Peter, “It’s the Lord!” When Simon heard that it was the Lord, he put on the clothes that he had taken off while he was working. Then he jumped into the water. ⁸The boat was only about a hundred yards from shore. So the other disciples stayed in the boat and dragged in the net full of fish.

⁹When the disciples got out of the boat, they saw some bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. ¹⁰Jesus told his disciples, “Bring some of the fish you just caught.” ¹¹Simon Peter got back into the boat and dragged the net to shore. In it were one hundred fifty-three large fish, but still the net did not rip.

¹²Jesus said, “Come and eat!” But none of the disciples dared ask who he was. They knew he was the Lord. ¹³Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave some of it to his disciples. He did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from death.

¹⁵When Jesus and his disciples had finished eating, he asked, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than the others do?”

Simon Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, you know I do!”

“Then feed my lambs,” Jesus said.

¹⁶Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you!”

“Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus told him.

¹⁷Jesus asked a third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus had asked him three times if he loved him. So he told Jesus, “Lord, you know everything. You know I love you.”

Jesus replied, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸I tell you for certain that when you were a young man, you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will hold out your hands. Then others will wrap your belt around you and lead you where you don’t want to go.”

¹⁹Jesus said this to tell how Peter would die and bring honor to God. Then he said to Peter, “Follow me!”

Scripture: I Peter 1: 3-9 (The Message)

³What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we’ve been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, ⁴including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! ⁵God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you’ll have it all—life healed and whole.

⁶I know how great this makes you feel, even though you have to put up with every kind of aggravation in the meantime. ⁷Pure gold put in the fire comes out of it *proved* pure; genuine faith put through this suffering comes out *proved* genuine. When Jesus wraps this all up, it’s your faith, not your gold, that God will have on display as evidence of his victory.

⁸You never saw him, yet you love him. **You still don’t see him, yet you trust him**—with laughter and singing. ⁹Because you kept on believing, you’ll get what you’re looking forward to: total salvation.

Synopsis: Nature and necessity of hope.

Visuals:

Media possibilities: Both videos do a good job of telling the story.

- “The Gospel of John” beginning at 2:41:35. Retelling of the story. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hexhw3wWmE>.
- “Jesus Appears to His Disciples at Lake Galilee.” Length: 4:36. We own it. Last used 4/13. Visual liturgy. <https://www.bible.com/videos/84-jesus-appears-to-his-disciples-at-lake-galilee-from-lumoproject-dot-com>

Activities: Celebration and prayer for Kim Bos, graduating from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Native American Ministries Sunday.

Music: Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore (UMH 344)

Drama: Both are available at <http://www.dramaministry.com/>.

- “A Hopeful Ending.” Length: Under 5 minutes. Cast: 1 adult and 2 kids. A misguided Sunday School teacher tells children horrible, real-life stories. **Comments:** These are probably the stories that many people live with. It might be a good way to open the service. Some of the listeners lost interest before it was over. Our readers did an excellent job – kids and teacher.
- “Swimming to Shore.” Length: Under 5:00. Cast: One man. A disciple cheering Peter on from the boat as he swims to Jesus reflects on Peter’s connection with Christ, and the passion he has for serving. The disciple comes to the conclusion that he wants that same fire. Drama Ministry. **Comments:** We did not read through this together.

Discussion points: 1) It might make sense to begin the John reading with verse 9 or 15 as it is very long and not all of it points to the nature and necessity of hope. 2) We look forward to hearing of Kim's experience teaching Native Americans and how it relates to the need for hope. 3) Why don't Jesus' disciples recognize him? Possible answers: He was seen out of context; at a distance; at daybreak when the light was poor and there could be mist over the water; in a daze after being awake all night; in a state of disbelief. 4) This is Jesus' third appearance. Why do the disciples keep "getting stuck" not recognizing him? 5) Key verse: I Peter 1: 8.

April 17, 2016: "Living with Heartburn"

4th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Luke 24: 13-35 (Contemporary English Version)

¹³That same day two of Jesus' disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, ¹⁵Jesus came near and started walking along beside them. ¹⁶But they did not know who he was

¹⁷Jesus asked them, "What were you talking about as you walked along?" The two of them stood there looking sad and gloomy. ¹⁸Then the one named Cleopas asked Jesus, "Are you the only person from Jerusalem who didn't know what was happening there these last few days?" ¹⁹"What do you mean?" Jesus asked.

They answered:

Those things that happened to Jesus from Nazareth. By what he did and said he showed that he was a powerful prophet, who pleased God and all the people. ²⁰Then the chief priests and our leaders had him arrested and sentenced to die on a cross. ²¹We had hoped that he would be the one to set Israel free! But it has already been three days since all this happened.

²²Some women in our group surprised us. They had gone to the tomb early in the morning, ²³but did not find the body of Jesus. They came back, saying that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. ²⁴Some men from our group went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. But they didn't see Jesus either.

²⁵Then Jesus asked the two disciples, "Why can't you understand? How can you be so slow to believe all that the prophets said? ²⁶Didn't you know that the Messiah would have to suffer before he was given his glory?" ²⁷Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets.

²⁸When the two of them came near the village where they were going, Jesus seemed to be going farther. ²⁹They begged him, "Stay with us! It's already late, and the sun is going down." So Jesus went into the house to stay with them.

³⁰After Jesus sat down to eat, he took some bread. He blessed it and broke it. Then he gave it to them. ³¹At once they knew who he was, but he disappeared. ³²They said to each other, "When he talked with us along the road and explained the Scriptures to us, didn't it warm our hearts?" ³³So they got right up and returned to Jerusalem.

The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. ³⁴And they learned from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter. ³⁵Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread.

Synopsis: The experience of Cleopas and his friend is amazing! Their hearts are burdened with the news of Jesus' death. Then they experience their hearts "strangely warmed" as they talk about Jesus with a stranger they meet. Then they share a meal with this stranger and

recognize Jesus. After that, their hearts are bursting to share Good News. What do we do with unexpected moments of grace? How do we share the joy of seeing Jesus?

Visuals: Roloids, Tums, Prilosec, Zantec. Looking into a rear-view mirror.

Hands-on item: Roloids or Tums

Media possibilities:

- “The Appearance of Christ on the Road to Emmaus” (an excerpt from “The Passion”). Length: 3:18. Cost: Free. Retelling of the story. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmmTWQn95xQ>
Comments: It felt real. They were scared as they were running away from Jerusalem. Good facial expressions, especially as they realize it is Jesus as he breaks bread. How will people react to Jesus’ visible change in appearance? Could it be attributed to Jesus being fully human and fully divine?
- “The Road to Emmaus” trailer. Length: 2:21. Cost: Free. We have used a portion of this before. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3L9eXMeV1A>
- “Our Risen Savior: Road to Emmaus.” Length: 5:36. Cost: Package of four videos and scripts for \$79.99. Skit Guys look back at the walk on the road to Emmaus. <https://skitguys.com/videos/item/our-risen-savior>

Drama: “Road to Emmaus.” Characters: 2. Length: 10-12 min. When your best friend dies, you don’t expect him to come back to life and walk with you. Listen to two older disciples who walked with Jesus not long after His resurrection.

<https://skitguys.com/scripts/item/road-to-emmaus>

Activities: Noisy offering.

Music:

Discussion points: 1) We hear this story almost every year. How do we keep it fresh? 2) Often we don’t recognize an encounter with Jesus when it is happening. It is clearer in hindsight. Sharing our God moments helps us recognize His hand in our lives. 3) Lynne’s story: She doesn’t usually stop for panhandlers, but had a recent experience where she felt compelled to do so and was blessed by him (Bless you, my dear). 4) Note that in Luke, Jesus does not appear to the disciples first, but to the women. 5) There were twelve apostles, but many disciples. 6) Key verses: Luke 24: 31-15.

April 24, 2016: “A Good Ghost Story”

5th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Luke 24: 36-49 (Contemporary English Version)

³⁶While Jesus’ disciples were talking about what had happened, Jesus appeared and greeted them.

³⁷They were frightened and terrified because they thought they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸But Jesus said, “Why are you so frightened? Why do you doubt? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet and see who I am! Touch me and find out for yourselves. Ghosts don’t have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

⁴⁰After Jesus said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹The disciples were so glad and amazed that they could not believe it. Jesus then asked them, “Do you have something to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of baked fish. ⁴³He took it and ate it as they watched.

⁴⁴Jesus said to them, “While I was still with you, I told you that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Books of the Prophets, and in the Psalms had to happen.”

⁴⁵Then he helped them understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them:

The Scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer, then three days later he will rise from death. ⁴⁷They also say that all people of every nation must be told in my name to turn to God, in order to be forgiven. So beginning in Jerusalem, ⁴⁸you must tell everything that has happened. ⁴⁹I will send you the one my Father has promised, but you must stay in the city until you are given power from heaven.

Synopsis: Telling stories is an important way to activate our brains and to unleash creativity. The disciples had a story to tell when Jesus came to them and proclaimed peace. They thought he was a ghost, but he was alive. Jesus' presence with us can be startling at first, and the peace he offers can be surprising when we're unsettled and restless. Jesus desires that we get close to him and spend time with him to experience peace and joy and to know him. Ministries like Christian camping are transformative times of get to know Jesus personally and in community with others.

Visuals:

Media possibilities: Camp promotion video?

Activities: Camp Sunday. Get testimony from kids, youth, and adults.

Music: "Have You Seen Jesus, My Lord?" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMQUK5vD8dc>

Comments: Some people may know this. Click these links for better recordings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PjKcxCEZ78> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEBhk3cZ7aw>.

Discussion points: 1) In Luke's gospel, this is the first account of Jesus' appearance after the resurrection. 2) Notice how the disciples were startled by Jesus' appearance and the way He opened up the scriptures to them. Now they have a great story to tell. 3) Make the connection to the way camp transforms people from knowing about Jesus to knowing Jesus.

May 1, 2016 at 10:00 am: Children's Sunday

6th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Mark 10: 13-16 (New Living Translation)

¹³One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him.

¹⁴When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." ¹⁶Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.

Scripture: Luke 18: 15-17 (New Living Translation)

¹⁵One day some parents brought their little children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But when the disciples saw this, they scolded the parents for bothering him.

¹⁶Then Jesus called for the children and said to the disciples, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. ¹⁷I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."

Synopsis: Let the children come to me.

Visuals: Bulletin cover created by a child (Ethan Fuller?) or youth.

Media possibilities:

Activities: Holy Communion; kids serve with parents. Bibles for third graders. Blessing of health kits. Recognition of Christian Education leaders. Noisy offering for VBS in July.

Children's time possibility: Glenys Nellist, author of Love Letters from God, will join us. Give her an opportunity to sell books after worship.

Music: Could Michael teach kids a song? Would Diane want to do a small group of chimes (similar to Christmas)?

May 2016 "Unity" series (Pentecost)

We see unity in many places – on a sports team, in a workplace, when people share an experience, among people working toward a common cause. Unfortunately, many times, unity is hard to witness in the church! Disunity is more common. Jesus prays for unity among those who believe in him. The Holy Spirit brings unity to believers. It all sounds good, but in a fractured and fragmented world where religion seems to divide us rather than bring us together, how do we nurture God's call for unity in the Body of Christ? How do we distinguish between unity and uniformity?

Ideas for the series:

Use the Apostles' Creed (or a creed) each week of the series. **Discussion:** It was written to unify the church around its beliefs. Here is a video version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LK85tVOjLtA>. The Newsboys have a musical version in "We Believe." Also consider using the Korean Creed #884, but not the Nicene Creed.



Visuals: Olympic rings (The colors of the rings and white background of the flag represent the flags of all the countries that participated in the first modern day Olympic games). Puzzle.

Wedding calendar: We have weddings in the sanctuary on May 14, 21, and 27. Loosely related visuals: Five golden rings (or diamond rings).

Activities: 1) Praying for General Conference on May 10-20 in Portland, Oregon . 2) An activity that can bring us together. 3) Book study based on The Shack. The worship teams are looking at doing several activities during the coming year to help merge our congregations into one.

Hands-on item: Steps to a build a better life card, above right.

Media possibilities: We watched the first four videos as a group.

- "The Power of Union is Strength" ad – crabs, ants, penguins
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jop2I5u2F3U>. **Comments:** Cute.
- "Good teamwork and bad teamwork" – birds
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUXdrI9ch_Q&ebc=ANyPxKrQywHnH9fNHklj_uMQzhERldpvPhMluOIDHH5bWLIjL9iz2owJLnVtypuq0mHBDWa86BqY. **Comments:** If you are bad at teamwork, you will be exposed.
- "Unity for Justice" – 30 Jewish musicians <http://sparksnext.com/unity-for-justice/>.
Comments: It would be more effective with the words, which can be found here:
<http://jewishmusiclyrics.blogspot.com/2007/05/unity.html>.
- "Unity" – movie trailer (interconnectedness of life)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QjBES9TbqU>

- “I Am the Holy Spirit.” Length 1:29. Cost: \$15.00. A short transitional video giving clues to the viewer as to who the Holy Spirit is.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/48713/i-am-the-holy-spirit>
- “The Holy Spirit – Don’t Forget About It.” We own it. Last used 7/6/14.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/46874/the-holy-spirit-dont-forget-about-it>

Resource: Uncommon Decency by Richard J. Mouw. Overview: Can Christians be civil in a world falling apart? Philosopher and ethicist Richard Mouw is concerned that, too often, Christians seem to be contributing more to the problem than to the solution. But he recognizes from his own personal struggle that it's not easy to hold to Christian convictions and treat sometimes vindictive opponents with civility and decency. The author will be at First UMC in Grand Rapids on Monday, April 11 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm. Cost: \$20 includes lunch. Register at www.grandrapidsfumc.org/mouw by April 4. Pastor Mary will attend.

General discussion points: 1) This series can be taken on several levels:

- Little: Joining two congregations into one as we merge with Lakeside.
- Big: General Conference in Portland, Oregon.
- Really big: Unity in Christ world-wide.

2) John Wesley spoke to the essential of faiths in the 1700’s. It is amazing how they are still so current. His three simple rules are one example. 3) Bumper Sticker: We > Me (We is greater than me). 4) Jimmy Stewart joke <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iilCcSH8iY>.

May 8, 2016: “Unity in Love”

7th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: John 17: 20-26 (New Living Translation)

²⁰“I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message.

²¹I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

²²“I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. ²³I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me. ²⁴Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began!

²⁵“O righteous Father, the world doesn’t know you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. ²⁶I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them.”

Synopsis: Jesus prays that unity among believers will reach others with his love. Unity is essential if we want to fulfill our mission to make disciples for the transformation of the world, but it starts with the recognition of the love shared between God the Father and Jesus the Son. How do our **nurturing** human relationships help us understand God’s love more fully?

Visuals: Telephone game, passing along a message of love.

Media possibilities:

- “A New Commandment.” Length: 2:44. Cost: \$20.98. Love as Jesus loved.
<https://skitguys.com/videos/item/love-a-new-commandment>

- “Love and Unity.” Length: 1:52. Cost: Free. Love is not colorblind. Unity is not colorblind.
<https://skitguys.com/videos/item/love-and-unity>
- “Abide in Me.” Length: 2:28. Cost: We own it. Visual liturgy John 15.
<http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/4895/abide-in-me>

Activities: Give a chocolate “treasure” to all women in the congregation. Use Mother’s Day to acknowledge all experiences of mothering.

Music: #2224 “Make Us One”; #2223 “They’ll Know We Are Christians”; #557 “Blest Be the Tie that Binds”; #2226 “Bind Us Together”

Contemporary song: “Spirit Breakout” by Kim Walker-Smith
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eTgseG9TGE>

May 15, 2016 at 10:00 am: “Unity in the Holy Spirit”

Pentecost Sunday

Potluck, merger vote, trip to Braveheart Raptor Rehab Center, and Unity tickets go on sale

Scripture: Acts 2: 1-12 (Contemporary English Version)

¹On the day of Pentecost all the Lord’s followers were together in one place.

²Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. ³Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. ⁴The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

⁵Many religious Jews from every country in the world were living in Jerusalem. ⁶And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered. But they were surprised, because they were hearing everything in their own languages. ⁷They were excited and amazed, and said:

Don’t all these who are speaking come from Galilee? ⁸Then why do we hear them speaking our very own languages? ⁹Some of us are from Parthia, Media, and Elam. Others are from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene, Rome, ¹¹Crete, and Arabia. Some of us were born Jews, and others of us have chosen to be Jews. Yet we all hear them using our own languages to tell the wonderful things God has done.

¹²Everyone was excited and confused. Some of them even kept asking each other, “What does all this mean?”

Scripture: Romans 8: 14-17 (Today’s English Version)

¹⁴Those who are led by God’s Spirit are God’s children.

¹⁵ For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God’s children, and by the Spirit’s power we cry out to God, “Father! my Father!” ¹⁶God’s Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God’s children. ¹⁷Since we are his children, we will possess the blessings he keeps for his people, and we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ’s suffering, we will also share his glory.

Scripture: John 14: 8-17, 25-27 (New Living Translation)

⁸Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

⁹Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? ¹⁰Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. ¹¹Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.

¹²“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³You can ask for anything in my name, and

I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

¹⁵“If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. ¹⁷He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

²⁵I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

Synopsis: Jesus calls the Holy Spirit an “advocate” who helps us to understand the truth and brings peace to our hearts. The Spirit’s presence isn’t just personal for each of us; it’s the power we tap into as a community of faith seeking to change the world. How do we trust in the Spirit’s presence and power?

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- “Modern Pentecost.” Length: 3:54. Cost: \$22.00. Peter, as a longshoreman from Brooklyn, preaches to the people of Jerusalem about why the Holy Spirit of God has fallen on the disciples. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/66014/modern-pentecost>
- “The Day of Pentecost.” Visual liturgy of verses 1-4. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/59711/the-day-of-pentecost>
- “Pentecost Bundle.” Visual liturgy, countdown, graphics. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/54486/pentecost-bundle-1>

Activities: Invite people to wear red, orange, or yellow. Do we want to bring back the leaf blowers with confetti? Can we do the Pentecost rap?

Music: #384 “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

May 22, 2016: “Unity in Faith”

Trinity Sunday

Scripture: Romans 5: 1-5 (Contemporary English Version)

¹By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live at peace with God.

²Christ has also introduced us to God’s undeserved kindness on which we take our stand. So we are happy, as we look forward to sharing in the glory of God. ³But that’s not all! We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. ⁴And endurance builds character, which gives us a hope ⁵that will never disappoint us. All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love.

Synopsis: We are bound together by the faith in Jesus Christ that we share. We are a family defined by our love for and loyalty to the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We receive peace and hope, which changes, inspires, and encourages us to be faithful. But none of it happens outside of our human experience. What are the essentials of faith? How do we celebrate them and leave room for our personal experience of God?

Visuals: Images of Trinity

Media possibilities: We only watched the first video as a group.

- The Shack by William Paul Young – powerful attempt to imagine the Trinity. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Shack **Comments:** Mack looks too young to accurately

portray the book. There is a new version of the movie coming out in November 2016. The book is the best attempt to engage the trinity as many people have seen, but you have to read it with a very open mind. Could we use it in a book study?

- “The Creed – Unity in the Church.” Length: 3:21. Cost: \$15.00. The Nicene Creed is a cornerstone of our common beliefs in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/20616/the-creed-unity-in-the-church/>
- “Resurrection Creed.” Length: 1:35. Cost: \$15.99. What do you believe about Easter? About God? About Christ? <https://skitguys.com/videos/item/resurrection-creed>

Activities:

Music: #368 “My Hope Is Built”
