***Welcome to the Drama Ministry Retreat!***

***Greetings!***

# ***We’re glad you’re coming along. Here is the date, time and location of the retreat…***

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| --- |
|  |

##### Here are some things you’ll need to know…

* *Projects for work or school, watches, radios, electronic games or anything else that will distract you from giving your best to this time…*
* *Expectations about the retreat and worries about where you “should” be or what is happening while you aren’t there to take care of it…*
* *Fears and anxieties about what others may think of you or how they will treat you here and misconceptions about how God sees you…*

* *Seasonally comfortable clothing*
* *Bedding (sheets, pillow, etc.)*
* *Toiletries, towels, etc.,*
* *Flashlight or battery-powered lantern*
* *A snack to share*
* *Musical instrument (if you play one)*
* *An openness and a willingness to grow*
* *A heart for Jesus and for other youth*
* *Your stuffed animal or doll\**

* ***Come to learn all about Drama Ministry!***
* ***Come to share some great times!***
* ***Come to learn to reach out to your peers!***
* ***Come to grow in your walk with the Lord!***

***\* One special thing you need to bring is a stuffed animal or doll (or toy) from your childhood, something that meant (and means) a lot to you. You MUST keep this with you at all times during the retreat (unless you hire a baby sitter – more on that later).***

***We’ll see you soon! It’s going to be great!***

***Because of Him,***

***The Retreat Team***

# ***Application for the Drama Retreat***

##### Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Complete the following…*

1. *How would you describe your relationship with Jesus and with the Church right now? Share the “nuts and bolts” of your spiritual life (prayer, Bible reading, church attendance and fellowship with other believers – how you relate to Jesus and live the Christian life).*
2. *Why do you want to be a leader to your peers (be specific)?*
3. *What gifts and skills would you bring to this ministry that would help you to be a leader?*
4. *What do you plan to give to this retreat and what do you hope to get out of it?*

***To the Families of Our Drama Retreat Participants!!!***

*Dear Parents and Prayer Partners:*

*Thank you for supporting this person on our Drama Retreat. It is so important that our young people grow in their own walk with the Lord and that they be equipped to reach out to their peers in Christ. We believe in this ministry and plan to give ourselves fully to it. This is what we’d like you to do for the retreat:*

* *Please pray for the person and all these young people throughout the retreat. Ask God to protect them and fill them with His Spirit so they may be drawn closer to Him.*

* *Pray for all the leaders as well that we may focus on God’s will and rely on His strength – not our own. Pray that we will be open to the Holy Spirit as He works in our lives.*
* *Pray specifically during these times when the group will also be praying:*
* *Friday, 9:30 – 11:00 p.m. – During this time we will be meditating on our call to reach out to others in Christ…*
* *Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – Our breakfast prayer, to begin a day of looking at our relationship to Jesus and learning about reaching out in Christian witness to others…*
* *Saturday, 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. – This will be a time for some deeper spiritual searching and sharing with peers and mentors…*
* *Saturday, 9:30 p.m. – Our evening prayer, focusing on our unity in Christ and the joy of living in His Spirit…*
* *Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – Our breakfast prayer, to help us focus on the ministry that will take place through the efforts of our team …*
* *Sunday, 2:30 p.m. – Our closing worship, to praise God for His closeness, His strength and His guidance, and to ask for His grace to begin the task of leading others to Christ…*
* *Please compose a letter to person, expressing your love and sharing your feelings about the person’s decision to minister to others. If you are a parent of a young person, please share about your relationship with your child. Make it a positive, affirming letter and send it anyway you want (letter, card). Put the person’s name on the envelope and get it to (leader’s name) as soon as possible. You can also send us an email with a recorded message if you like.*

*Thank you for giving so much of yourself to these young people.*

*In His Gracious Care,*

*The leadership Team*

Permission Slip for Drama Retreat

I authorize emergency care as noted below:To: any physician, hospital or authorized health care delivery agentFrom: the parent(s)/guardian(s) of

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the following persons are authorized to order emergency medical care for my/our child noted above, and also authorized to execute any permission slips, or authorizations required in connection with such a case:

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Carrier \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Known Allergies \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Prescription/Non-prescription drugs currently being taken \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of last tetanus booster shot \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Any medical conditions of which we should be aware \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency number(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s)\* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\* Every attempt will be made to reach parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to routine or emergency treatment.

Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of child above and date signed

## Medical Information

###### This covenant is made between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and this

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###### community on the \_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in the year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

*During this experience, I will give myself over to God’s will and devote myself to the study of his Word, to fellowship with other believers, and to prayer and worship of our heavenly Father. In doing this, I will shut out distractions from my life, close my mind to Satan’s lies, and call upon the name of Jesus to fill my life with His Spirit.*

*These are some things I offer up now, which I will put aside during this time…*

*These are things I will be working on to draw nearer to God and to know His will…*

*I pledge to my Christian brothers and sisters, to my peers and the adult leaders. I will support them and give myself fully to building them up in the Lord. This is my prayer for the group and this experience…*

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

Signature and date

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.***

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

***A Peer Minister’s Covenant***

###### My Letter of Light to God

God has just sent you a “letter of light” asking you to “get real” with Him. Answer the questions below to share in your small group. Then spend some time composing a letter back to God talking about your relationship with Him and your relationship with this group. Affirm your group members and consider sharing this letter with them. You DON’T have to share if you don’t want to…it is a personal choice!

My Dear Child,

I just wanted to ask you how you feel you’ve lived up to my call to be a light to the world, to live in light rather than darkness – you know, to be a witness to the gospel of Jesus.

* Have you ever hidden your light? Why?
* Is there any darkness in your life you need to bring out into the light so I may take it away?
* What do you feel is your finest moment as a witness of the Gospel?
* What have you learned about the people in your group and what would you like to say to them?

I pray that you will answer the call to follow me and to be a light to the world. Please write me a letter and share your feelings on this. Let’s be honest, because…well, I already know what you’re thinking and going to say, but I think it will help for you to do it. So write. I’d love to hear from you.

I love you,

**God**

**My Letter of Light to God**

Dear God…

# ***Witnessing: Sharing Your Story, Your Journey, with Others***

Sharing your story of salvation is the most fundamental part of being a Christian. As you have found your way in Christ, so too, are you called to help others find their way. Whether you share your testimony of salvation or speak about growing in your Christian faith, you must remember to do it in God’s strength and not your own. Giving witness to Christ is fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 to make disciples of all nations.

#### Outline for a Witness Talk

***Getting Started –*** Here, you let your listener(s) know that your talk is all about, your journey of transformation in Christ. In one-on-one conversations, let the Holy Spirit provide you with the opening and speak through your words. In a group setting, you will begin a bit more formally. Be always ready to give an answer to those who ask you the reason for your hope (1 Peter 3:15).

***Sharing Your Testimony –*** This is the actual sharing of your testimony or talk. Here, you describe your journey, as it was before Christ, what it became in Christ and how it is growing in His Spirit. Consider these four stages of coming to Christ:

* ***Call –*** This is where you were, a place where what you had was not enough and something cried out for more.
* ***Search –*** In your lost state, you searched for meaning and failed to find it. This led you to deeper struggles, a sense of despair and a hunger for something to come and save you.
* ***Discovery –*** By God’s grace, the Lord came and touched your heart and led you to confess your helplessness and to give your life over to Jesus in a new and transforming way.
* ***Rebirth –*** This is how you live now in Christ, hopeful and growing in your walk, living out all the possibilities of a Spirit-filled life.

#### Five Elements of Spirit-Filled Sharing

1. ***Begin and End with Prayer.*** Ask God to guide you as your gather your thoughts, write your testimony and share it with another person or a group. Offer the honor and the glory of your witness to God, the true author of your story.
2. ***Make Your Sharing a Personal Thing.*** If you are giving a salvation testimony, look deeply into your experience with the eyes of faith to see your journey as God sees it. In all talks, draw from your own experience those things that have most touched you. Spend time praying over your talk until it becomes comfortable, like a friend you are introducing to others for the first time.
3. ***Be a Part of the Whole.*** Remember that your witness is one small part of a great work of God. Whether with one individual or with a group at a meeting, see yourself as an instrument in the hands of God and trust Him to finish the work you begin in His Spirit.
4. ***See Witnessing as a Process.*** Depending on your audience, you will have to adjust your talk so that it reaches them. With the unchurched you may want to tone down the “religious” language. Only provide enough details and use enough examples to get the point across. This takes practice and guidance from a more spiritually mature Christian.
5. ***Make Witness a Proclamation, not a Production.*** Share your story with confidence, remembering always the grace that has saved you, but don't become a performer on a stage. Challenge others to respond, but don’t try to “reel them in” to build up your own ego. Remember your communication skills: looking at your listener(s), speaking clearly, slowly and with conviction as you move through your sharing. Be real and concrete. Share the Spirit and pray throughout your talk for God to touch the lives of your listener(s).


##### The Joy of Salvation in a Nutshell…

* *God loves you and wants you to know and*

*love Him.* ***(John 3:16, John 17:3)***

* *We need Jesus in order to be free and*

*whole* ***(Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23)***

* *Jesus is the only way of salvation. He paid the price.* ***(Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 15:3-6, John 14:6)***
* *Jesus offers us the gift of Himself and calls us home to heaven* ***(John 1:12, John 3:3, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:13)***

In your ministry, when you find there are people ready to make a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ, those powerful truths will serve as the foundation for the journey they will take, and the relationship they will build with Jesus. For your part, you have the privilege and the responsibility to draw these fellow journeyers into the Body of Christ and help them to connect more deeply to the Church, the sacraments and a more intimate prayer life.

### Faith Journey Witness Journal A – “My Life Walk”

***Working Through***

***Your Testimony***

Here, you will do two things.

1. You will write in your journal about these questions and all that God has put in your heart during this experience.
2. You will write out a first draft outline of your Christian testimony.

Select a time slot during the open time and spend it with one of the adult leaders. Share what you wrote, talk about your faith and the questions you have. Work through the Scriptures about leadership, witnessing and helping. Pray about your own struggles and pray in praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for drawing you to His Son and for equipping you for His great work with your peers.

Growth Questions...

* What is something God has shown you about yourself during the past year?
* What is one thing you have learned about Jesus during the past year?
* What has been your hardest struggle as a Christian?
* What about yourself do you want to see grow even more during the next year?

Faith Questions - Think about them...

# Being Spiritual

* What does it mean to you to be “spiritual”?
* Where are you on your spiritual walk with God?
* What is one spiritual gift God has shown in your life?
* When have you felt God’s Spirit in you?

# Jesus

* Who is Jesus to you?
* Do you ever question who/what the Gospels say he is?
* How would you rate your relationship with him?
* What about Jesus and his life touch you the most?
* Does anything about him confuse you?
* What one thing about you do you think he cherishes the most? Why?

# The Church

* What do you think is the Church’s biggest struggle?
* What bugs you the most about your local church?
* What is the best thing about belonging to this Church?
* Where do you see the Church heading in the future?
* What is the biggest obstacle to unity among God’s people?

*And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the work of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

Are you more like… Are you happy

 with your choice?

* a hammer or a nail? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a stream or a lake? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a mountain or a forest? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a star or a candle? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* the sun or a mirror? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a pen or a piece of paper? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* fire or ice? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a rainbow or a raindrop? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a bird or a stone? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a cricket or a snail? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
* a meadow or a city street? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

## Consider these questions…

* Why did you choose the way you did each time?
* Why are you unhappy with those you checked “no”?
* Which choice seems to best describe you?
* How do your choices make you feel about yourself?
* How do they make you feel about God’s work in your life?

Faith Journey Witness Journal B – “See the Real Me”

1. What is one wall you have put up that you have tried to break down with someone else?

1. What masks do people around you wear? What is one mask that you wear?

1. When have you ever tried to break down a wall or get past the mask of someone else?
2. What regrets do you have in your life that were the result of keeping your distance from others?
3. What walls have you kept between you and Jesus even today that you would like to begin to break down?
4. What can you take from your broken walls to rebuild relationships with God and others?

1. What can you do on this retreat to help break down walls and remove masks?

Faith Journey Witness Journal C – My Timeline

*Look at the timeline below. In the space around the line, write in significant events and people who have had a positive or negative influence on you and connect them to the line. List dates when possible. Then answer the questions at the end…*

Birth Today

* *What was one of the most significant events in your life? What was one significant person in your life? How did these influence you (positively or negatively)?*
* *How does this event or person fit into an overall pattern for your life in terms of what you see God doing? Why do you feel this way?*

***Faith Journey Witness Journal D – Who Am I?***

This seems like a simple question, doesn’t it? When you read it, your brain might have fired off an answer right way. “…a boy.” “…a girl.” “…a teenager.” “…a student.” Well, at least those are some of the good things. But are there any bad? When you read that question, did you hear in your head, “…just a kid.” “…nobody special.” “…ugly and unpopular.” “…a looser.”???

We often see ourselves according to what we do, our position in life or how others see us. And right at this moment, let’s not say whether that’s good or bad. Let’s take a look at who you say you are.

Take a little time and answer the questions below.

1. Rate yourself on a scale of one to five, one being not you at all and five being definitely you.
2. I’m generally happy with my life the way it is right now. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

Are you this?

Or this?

1. I get along well with others and can make friends easily. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
2. I have a few intimate friends who are friends to the end. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
3. I’m a successful person by the world’s standards. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
4. I’m a successful person by my own standards. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
5. I don’t give in to peer pressure - I’m my own person. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
6. I’m a person others can count on when things get tough. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
7. I know where I’m going and who I want to be. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
8. I’m a good example to others in what I say and do. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
9. I wouldn’t want to be anyone else, even if I could. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
10. Answer the questions below with a few words or a sentence or two.

When you ask yourself, “Who am I?” what immediately comes to mind?

If we asked that question of your friends, what do you think they would say?

Are you happy with the answers in part A? If not, what would you change? Why?

***Faith Journey Witness Journal E – What is My Witness?***

***Read the following and then complete the following exercises below.***

***The word of the Lord came to me, saying,***

***“Before I formed you in the womb, I***

 ***knew you,***

 ***before you were born I set you apart;***

 ***I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”***

***“Ah, Sovereign Lord,” I said, “I do not know how to speak’ I am only a child.”***

***But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.***

***Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”***

##### Jeremiah 1:4-10

1. *Describe a time in your life when you felt called to be a witness to another person - that is, you took a stand for something you believed was right, no matter what the cost.*
2. *Do you think “ordinary” Christians like yourself could be called “to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant?” In other words, what does this passage mean to you in your life?*
3. *Do you feel as if you’re an effective witness for Christ? Why or why not? What could you do to become a better witness? How much does being a witness matter to you?*


##### “The Power of Story”

The Gospels tell us that Jesus never spoke without using a story (Matthew 13:34-35). Through such stories Jesus revealed “things hidden since the creation of the world” (v. 35). The power of a good story speaks to that hunger for meaning that we all have within us. That is the hunger that drama taps into our desire to be loved and accepted, and to know that there is more to our lives than just living day to day. Here are some things to keep in mind when beginning a drama ministry...

* ***Jesus’ stories were real.*** He spoke using things his hearers knew and could understand He spoke to broken people through the imagery and dialogue of their lives. There was nothing in His words that was beyond the hearing of those humble and broken enough to let Him in.

* ***Jesus’ stories were transferable***. His stories took the hearer beyond their own experience to the deeper realities of God's kingdom within their hearts. Through the Holy Spirit, His hearers could grasp what salvation and grace were all about.
* ***Jesus’ stories were living and active.*** His were not just words to be heard. They were filled with the Holy Spirit's power and led to acts of obedience, love and service in every transformed heart. Anyone who heard the words was left with two options: to accept or reject Jesus Himself.

# Now read 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

*Here is what Paul is saying...*

Only those who have been touched by the Holy Spirit can grasp God’s plan of salvation set in eternity. Those with the Spirit are able to judge what you present in light of God’s eternal Word. Without that Spirit, your ministry will fall on deaf ears. Understanding this great truth, that the Holy Spirit of God is the one who will move in the hearts of those who will witness your drama, is what will make the difference between a show and an effective drama ministry. With this in mind, let me suggest five simple practices when preparing and carrying out your ministry:

* ***Let PRAYER permeate all you do.*** Ask God to guide you from start to finish, remembering that He is the true author of your work, the one who will move your audience.
* ***Make it a PERSONAL thing.*** See how the drama fits into your own story and put yourself into what you do. Spend time with your role and let it be a part of you, letting your faith journey spill out into your character and your actions.
* ***Be a PART of the whole.*** Remember that you are part of a team and part of the Body of Christ. Be in unity with the other actors and work out how you share the Gospel together under the Holy Spirit.
* ***Make the drama a work in PROCESS with your audience.*** Gear what you do and how you approach your audience in much the same way as you would when sharing your testimony, avoiding "churchy" language and speaking to their situation and culture.
* ***Make Your Drama a PROCLAMATION, not a production.*** Never let your performance or ego take over the message. Be confident, real and concrete. Realize that, in the end, it is God who does all the great work. Give the honor and glory to Him.


#####  “Simple Techniques for Drama”

1. ***Put Yourself into the Part…***
* Draw from your experience and emotions.
* Begin with prayer and Bible study.
* Seek the Holy Spirit to guide your words and actions.
* Remember that the Gospel is a living message.
1. ***Watch, Speak, Move and Discuss...***
* Learn from those who have done it before.
* Listen to yourself speak and act your part.
* Perform it often enough to make the drama yours
* Practice with others for feedback on how to improve.

1. ***Remember That Simpler is Better...***
* Watch the exaggeration.
* Use movements that are fluid and subtle.
* Be careful not to over-project your voice.

1. ***Don’t Take On Too Much...***
* Use only a few dramas per event.
* Balance things with humor and straight talk
* Go where your gifts can be used best.
1. ***Debrief, Evaluate, Affirm and Give Glory...***
* Pray and discuss things after every performance.
* Take time to affirm one and the group.
* Give God all the honor and glory.

### Ministering to the Crowds…

1. ***The Witness Talk***

After a serious drama, one of the performers can stand up and give his or her testimony. Here you present your talk as a three-fold journey (before salvation, conversion, and your walk since) considering these stages of coming to Christ:

* ***Call/Search–*** You begin in a place where you saw that what you had was not enough and something cried out for more. In your lost state, you searched for meaning and failed, becoming open to what God would now do.
* ***Discovery –*** By God’s grace, the Lord came and touched your heart and led you to confess your helplessness and your sins, and to give your life over to Jesus forever.
* ***Rebirth –*** This is how you live now in Christ, hopeful and growing in your walk, living out all the possibilities of a Spirit-filled relationship with Jesus Christ.
1. ***Large and Small Group Hands-on Activities –***

Here you explain what will happen and give out the materials (sometimes before the drama if you have something your audience needs to look for in the skit). Be open to the Holy Spirit. Here are some examples of activities:

* A worksheet with discussion questions or a survey to be filled out and shared.
* Something to build using clay or craft materials.
* A pre-packaged puzzle (something to be put together or folded together).
* Discussion cards with topics relating to the theme of your presentation.
* Audience participation in impromptu skits.

1. ***Small Group Facilitation***

In this activity, each person on the drama ministry team becomes a leader of a small group for a time of deep discussion or prayer. This can be a more open time, where the young people discuss with the leaders their impressions about the drama and its implications for their lives. It can be followed up by a time of prayer for the specific needs of those who are participating.

1. ***Praying the Healing Prayer***

At the end of every performance, there will be an opportunity to invite the audience to participate in a prayer service for healing and conversion. Although this can be a simple spontaneous prayer that is led by the youth leaders, there are many prayer services that you can adapt to fit your needs.

## **“Specific Uses for Small Skits”**

Deciding when to use a small skit is easy. Anytime you need to make a point, you can consider a good time to use a skit. The tricky part is deciding how to use the skits in different settings. Below are a few suggestions to consider.

1. **Youth Group Meetings, Retreats, and Worship –**

Fellowship meetings and retreats come in all shapes and sizes but generally have within them the elements of community building, prayer, teaching, response activities, witnessing, and fellowship. Here are some guidelines for using skits within these elements:

* + **Community Building -** Icebreakers, and theme-setting activities, involving audience participation.
	+ **Prayer –** A “Call to Worship” before the worship to set the tone and lead the audience into a prayerful mood.
	+ **Readings –** To bring the Scriptures alive by presenting a unique focus/interpretation of the biblical story.
	+ **Teaching –** As a substitute to a homily or to enhance a homily, either before or afterward.
	+ **Response Activities** – To get the audience moving again or to foster a sense of participation or meditation.
	+ **Witnessing** – This could be a dramatic presentation of a personal testimony, though traditional works best here.
	+ **Communion –** Leads to a deeper experience of the bread and cup, rather than overshadowing them.
	+ **Fellowship –** Usually this may not lend itself to skits (there are exceptions), but is a natural part of the meeting.
1. **Street Evangelism –**

Taking your skits “on the road” is a step for a more mature drama group, requiring greater spontaneity and risk. A good practice for this is at a church outing. Usually, street evangelism includes a lot more mime with the skits.

1. **Church Events –**

Using skits at church events (coffee houses, pot luck dinners, “On the Green” meetings, etc.) is a way to expand the ministry and serves to keep your youth group “visible” before the church. It is also good safe practice for the group.

**Drama Techniques for Small Skits**

Below are some additional considerations to help you get into character:

1. **Let the music, setting and fellow actors have an emotional effect on you.** Draw from the depth and strength of the other actors and let the moment sweep you up in its power.

1. **Get in touch with your past emotions and bring them into the present.** Filter your performance through your past experiences but focus on the “realness” of the moment (for, in a sense, it is real).
2. **See through the eyes of the character you play.** Lose yourself in the character you play, stepping outside your own personality so that you may convey what the character represents.
3. **Tune out the audience – Tune in to the audience.** Have a servant’s heart that is strong enough to shut out the distractions of your audience yet weak enough to invite them into your world.
4. **Make your performance “serious play.”** Let your performance be a seriously joyful expression of your commitment to living as a child of God – a playful labor of love done the in the sober service of your audience.

*In short, let the Holy Spirit pick you up, mold you into a great player in God’s kingdom, and carry you through your performance for the sake of God’s eternal plan. Let the divine artist turn you into a great work of art for His sake. Be open to your giftedness and God’s grace. Let your own creativity, your strength and your weakness be at the disposal of the Gospel and the needs of your audience. Your performance is meant to make their burdens light by yoking them with Jesus Christ. It is more than just entertainment or diversion – it is a serious call to all who are witnesses of the story to come and join in the play.*

##### “Using Mime and Dance”

***Scriptures that speak of God’s people dancing:***

* *When the Israelites had marched through the Red Sea, Miriam led the women with dancing* ***(Exodus 15:20)****…*
* *The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time for dancing* ***(Ecclesiastes 3:4)****…*
* *David, after slaying Goliath, returned home to dancing and song* ***(1 Samuel 18:6)****…*
* *When the ark was being brought back to Jerusalem, David leaped and danced with all his might* ***(2 Samuel 6:14)****…*
* *God has turned our mourning into dancing* ***(Psalm 30:11)****…*
* *We are called to praise His name with singing and dancing* ***(Psalm 149:3, Psalm 150:4)****…*
* *Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, spoke of God’s people dancing with joy* ***(Jeremiah 31:4)****…*

We can see many different types of dance here: the dance of wonder and elation of the Israelites, David’s high-spirited dance of unrestrained joy, the subtle dance of mourners who move out of their time of sorrow into a time of restoration, and the dance of God’s people in unified praise of the God who is above all things. Here are several elements of sacred movement that should characterize your drama ministry:

1. ***Dance ascribes to God the glory due Him.*** Dance gives focused praise to God. Many of the psalms call us to make a joyful noise to God (Psalm 95, for example). But the ultimate purpose for our dancing must be to give God glory.
2. ***Dance is something the Spirit of God prompts us to do.*** Remember, it is *God* who turns our sorrow into dancing. As we respond to what God had done in the lives of His people. God promises to turn our tears into a dance of joy.
3. ***Dance is how God’s people celebrate the saving events in their lives.*** There are many special events in our lives that call for celebrating with dance. When we come to recognize God’s hand in it, it is cause for dancing and singing for joy.
4. ***Dance is how God’s people come forth from times of sorrow.*** When we see how God has worked in our lives through our trial, we begin a new journey with Him and celebrate with gratitude and joyful dancing.
5. ***Dance is ultimately a communal affair.*** When we dance for the Lord, others in the Body cannot help but be moved by it. Dancing is meant to be shared together – a common expression of all that God has done and is doing for us now.

## ***Choreography for the Uncoordinated***


###### Before your performance…

1. ***Remember – focus is everything.*** Mime is a serious thing, even when the emotion you are sharing is joy. Let yourself be caught up in the Spirit so that He can guide you. It may help to think of yourself as a robot being guided by remote control, or a person held in an invisible force field.
2. ***The face can tell the whole story.*** Your whole facial expression will be the most powerful element in the dance. It will communicate so much of what you are trying to say through the mime. Your audience will take notice of your face, so be aware of what you are saying with it.
3. ***Go for fluid, not fancy; grace, not glory.*** What matters to your audience is the love and commitment you put into the mime. People expect a prayerful dance, not a classical ballet performance. Let the moment and the Spirit guide you along and let your movements be smooth and natural. Always keep in mind that you are sharing the Gospel in your dance.
4. ***Get real and lose yourself in prayer.*** Your dance will become more authentic when you forget about pleasing people and get real with God. The wonder of dance as prayer is that it is both a communication with God and an expression of what God is doing in you. Just surrender to what is happening, relax and let the love of God spill out into your life.

###### During the performance…

1. ***Begin with prayer.*** Spend time in the Word, meditating on the scripture being used for worship. Ask yourself how it affects you where you are today. Put your need for recognition and your fears in submission to the greater good.
2. ***Look at the worshippers.*** Consider where they are spiritually. What are their personal circumstances like? What are their needs? Whatever you can know will help in determining what to present in your mime.
3. ***Consider your circumstances and your surroundings.*** Think about the context of the worship and how you can use your surroundings and circumstances to draw out the most from your audience.
4. ***Come to unity as a worship team.*** Work together as a team to put your skit into the whole of your meeting, worship service, or outing. Think of your performance as an integral part of a unified experience of grace.

##### “Specific Movements for Sacred Dance and Mime”

1. ***The Sweep.*** Here the actor extends his arm (or both for more effect) across his body and “sweeps” it in the air to the other side. The positioning of the hand and the fluidity of the motion can be adjusted to convey different feelings. It is done with great deliberateness to convey power and strength or to show creative action or change. When the head is turned away in the direction of the sweep, it can be used to convey a sense of wiping away or turning away from sin.
2. ***The Direct.*** This is similar to the sweep motion, though it is used to direct a person or to point something out. The hand, depending on emphasis, is fully extended or with the index finger pointing or slowly or forcefully directed toward something. It may be a place to go or an object to behold. The head is usually turned in the direction of the direct. In some instances, both hands can be used to display all that is around the person.
3. ***The Uplift.*** The actor raises up one or two hands as if lifting or pushing something upward. The palms can be with the thumbs out (release), or with the thumbs in to (offering)/focus). It can be started with the arms at the sides or done in a sweeping motion with the arms beginning down and behind the person and then moving up and above the head. It is used to show prayer, offering, or lifting up a person or object to God. It is often used to lead a procession in joy as well.
4. ***The Reach.*** This is like an uplift with attitude, though the hands may move either up, down or out. The hands are kept close to the body and are moved out in either a straight or “wax on, wax off” sort of motion. The fingers are extended but curved (or cupped) as if grasping or holding onto something. The whole body moves as if being pulled behind by the reaching hands. This movement conveys intense emotion, longing or deep desire.
5. ***The Fold.*** In this move, the arms are pulled down and inward around the face as the body “retreats” to a lesser or greater extent. The person may also drop to his knees or to a genuflecting position as this happens as if closing himself up like a flower at night, hiding in fear or shame, or gathering things to himself. These are the images this puts forth to the audience, this closing, hiding or gathering. Many mimes will end a performance with a fold movement
6. ***The Submission.*** This is similar to the fold but the person swings the extended arms, palms facing up, behind the body as she comes down in a kneeling or genuflecting position. This usually is done before another performer, though it is also done alone when it is understood that the person is submitting to God. The head starts looking up or at something but is bowed or lowered to the ground at the end of the movement.
7. ***The Cross (or The Angel Wings).*** Here the arms are extended outward and up, in a crucifixion posture or a gesture of flight. It is used to express the freedom found in Christ, to show the agony of the Lord’s death, as a sign of submission. Often, when using the “wing” posture, the person moves back and forth or in a circular motion, showing the motion of flight or giving oneself to the Lord.
8. ***The Crescent Walk (with Spin).*** The foot is moved subtly in a slight swinging motion in the shape of a crescent moon, with the curve to the outside or inside of the moving foot. The hand can be behind the back, folded across his chest, or held prayerfully, depending on the mood. The spin move conveys a sense of moving over great distances. It is done with the whole body in one quick fluid motion and punctuates the walk very nicely when done right.
9. ***The Oppression (or The Fall).*** Falling is always done slowly, with a drop to the knees (or a slight bending of the knees to the side) and a graceful drop to the side. This needs to be done without making any noise and takes a little practice. Sometimes a folding movement is incorporated into the falling. This movement is used to show death, oppression, pain or despair.
10. ***The Resurrection.*** Equally as important as falling is rising. Here, the person gets to a position of sitting on her knees, and then pushes forward and up, using the ankles to push up in one smooth steady motion. Different arm movements (angel wings, fold, reach, etc.) are used with this to express different levels of activity such as praise, joy, resurrection, Rapture, etc.
11. ***The Blessing.*** This is a motion of sharing and touch. The hands tell the story as they reach out and extend over another person, cradle the face, embrace, bless or transfer power. It can be made with one hand or two and usually the gesture is made from the top down; that is, the hand is extended and moves down to the other person.
12. ***The Rejection.*** This is simply a gesture of turning away made with the whole body. It can be used to show the person turning away from something or to show the person’s reaction to being rejected by God or another. It is done with a swinging motion, the arms moving together.

Drama Group Exercises – Leader’s Sheet – A

Below are some beginning warm up drama exercises to get your team into the spirit of doing drama. These exercises are fun and easy to do, and still challenge the young people to come out of their shells to explore the wonderful world of drama. The suggestions given are only to get you started. Invite your youth leaders to come up with their own ideas.

***Exercise 1 – “Banquet Speakers” –*** Here, the young person takes a topic and speaks on their topic continuously for one minute. Some suggested topics are:

* You are the foremost expert on the correct way to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich (or anything else).
* You are here to convince the group that the world is going to end by the time you finish your speech.
* You are accepting the Nobel Prize for whatever you want (the sillier, the better).
* You are an astronaut, returning from the first man mission to Mars, recounting your (silly?) adventures.
* You are a member of a secret society of ninja warriors, who can’t quite disclose all the details of your mission.
* You are the president, about to tell the American people that the country is bankrupt or about to be invaded.
* You are a scientist, about to reveal the secret for living the perfectly happy life
* You are a $19.95 gadget salesperson, receiving an award for the most sales.
* You are an actor receiving the Oscar for your “Best Actor in a Dramatic Role” performance

 ***Exercise 2 – “String Sculptures” –*** Each small group is given a supply of long lengths of string (Different colors make for added fun!) and must dangle the string toward the ground and then write a phrase or “sculpt” a picture, using the string as their “ink.” The other groups will guess what they have created. Some suggested ideas are:

* Spell out the name “Jesus” or any biblical character, and draw a quick picture of them as well.
* Create a day in one of the four seasons, showing the fun you would have.
* Draw any kind of animal: A dog, cat, elephant, giraffe, bird, etc.
* Draw an object in the room (A chair, table, podium, window, etc.).
* Draw a dolphin jumping out of the water.
* Create a symmetrical design using circles, triangles, curves, etc.

***Exercise 3 – “People Sculptures” –*** This is a “frozen mime” where the members of the group form into an object or scene. The group can tell the other groups what they are doing after they let the groups have a guess. Some suggested ideas are:

* Object – An Elephant
* Object – A Mousetrap
* Object – Spaghetti & Meatballs
* Object – Table and Chairs
* Object – Statue in the Park
* Object – A Snowplow
* Object – Monkey in a Cage
* “Alien Invasion”
* “The Exorcism”
* “The End of the World”
* “The Boring Lecture”
* “Babysitting Gone Wrong”
* “You’re Fired!”
* “Police Take Down”

***Exercise 4 – “Silent Role Play” –*** The group members are given a scenario and must act out the scene. The other groups must guess what they are doing. Some suggested scenes are:

* “Our Favorite Movie”
* “Trimming the Christmas Tree”
* “Football Instant Replay”
* “The Really Bad Confession”
* “The Nightmare”
* “Video Game Players”
* “The Boxing Match”
* “The Bad Operation”
* “Scary Children’s Public Television”
* “The Overworked Children’s Photographer”

List your own ideas below…

Drama Group Exercises – Leader’s Sheet – B

***Exercise 1 – “Personalities”***

Directions: Two volunteers are selected. Someone reaches into the box and takes out a slip of paper. Each becomes the person described on the paper and talk about a topic for one or two minutes. For an added twist: 1) don’t have the volunteers tell who/what they are until after the time is up; or 2) have each person take a different slip. Some sample topics could include:

* + The pros and cons of dating vs. courtship…
	+ Paper vs. plastic at the grocery store…
	+ Dealing with parents as you grow up and desire more independence…
	+ Deciding which career is right for you…
	+ The best thing to do on a Saturday night with your friends…
	+ Reviewing a television show (old or new)…

Exercise 2 – “King Solomon’s Party”

Directions: Have one person be King Solomon. The king is receiving visitors from distant lands and wants to discuss trade agreements. Several volunteers select a slip from the box and become the person or thing on the slip, but don’t tell the king. They must answer the king’s questions (“Where have you come from?” “What do you have to trade?” “What would you desire from my kingdom?” “What wisdom or advice do you have to bring to me?” “What are your people like in your country?” etc.) from the perspective of the person/thing they are.

Exercise 3 – “Roundtable”

Directions: Assign each person a Bible personality from the list and have them discuss a topic with each person trying to convince the others that their point of view is the best. If you want, have one person be a moderator (also a Bible personality) to keep the discussion on track. For an added twist, reuse the characters from the first two exercises instead of the Bible Characters. Some examples of topics are:

* + The worst thing about living when you lived is…
	+ Your favorite thing to do…
	+ The most important thing you learned during your life…
	+ The biggest thing that is wrong with the world today…
	+ Something today that is important to you…

***List your own ideas below…***

Personalities – Characters

YOU’RE THE PHARAOH OF EGYPT, THE ONE MOSES DEALT WITH

YOU’RE THE LION KING (OR YOU CAN BE SCAR, THE BAD LION)

YOU’RE THE GROUNDHOG WHO SEES HIS SHADOW ON GROUNDHOG DAY

YOU’RE AN OVERENTHUSIASTIC SPORTS ANNOUNCER WHO CAN’T STOP TALKING

YOU’RE A PARANOID, COMPULSIVE, NEUROTIC ESCAPED MENTAL PATIENT

YOU’RE THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

YOU’RE A LOUD, PASSIONATE PROPHET THAT NO ONE LISTENS TO

YOU’RE A DIEHARD GENERAL WHO’D JUST AS SOON NUKE ‘EM THEN TALK TO ‘EM

YOU’RE A HYPOCHONDRIAC WHO SEES DEATH JUST AROUND THE CORNER

YOU’RE AN OUTDOORS EXPLORER LIKE THE CROCODILE HUNTER GUY

YOU’RE THE WORLD’S SHYEST PERSON

YOU’RE A PERSON WHO CAN’T STOP CRYING OVER EVERY LITTLE ISSUE

YOU’RE A RETIRED SUPERHERO WHO JUST CAN’T CUT IT ANYMORE

YOU’RE MR. ED OR THAT LITTLE TALKING CHIHUAHUA OR ANY ANIMAL LIKE THAT

YOU’RE A SIGMUND FREUD-TYPE PSYCHOTHERAPIST

YOU’RE AN EXERCISE ENTHUSIAST WHO IS A LITTLE “DITZY”

King Solomon’s Party – Characters

YOU’RE A GERMAN CUCKOO CLOCK COMPLETE WITH CHIME ACTION

YOU’RE THE NUMBER ONE SANDWICH MAKER, THE OWNER OF A SMALL SHOP

YOU’RE A LOUD OBNOXIOUS ROCK STAR FROM A HEAVY METAL BAND

YOU’RE BOB FROM BOB’S DISCOUNT FURNITURE (OR ANYONE LIKE THAT)

YOU’RE A NUCLEAR WARHEAD THAT NEEDS TO BE DIFFUSED VERY SOON

YOU’RE A CUTE AND CUDDLY KIDS’ SHOW ANIMAL HOST

YOU’RE THE COMMON COLD OR FLU

YOU’RE ONE OF THOSE $19.95 GIZMO PRODUCT ANNOUNCERS

YOU’RE A MAFIA BOSS

YOU’RE A COURTROOM STENOGRAPHER

YOU’RE A DISGRUNTLED CIRCUS CLOWN

YOU’RE A DEMENTED TOY, THE LEADER OF OTHER DEMENTED TOYS

YOU’RE OLD MAN WINTER

YOU’RE THE COOLEST, HIPPEST SUPER SPY

YOU’RE A PERSON WHO COLLECTS DISGUSTING THINGS

YOU’RE THE AVENGING ANGEL OF DEATH

Roundtable – Bible Characters

NOAH

NOAH’S WIFE

ANY ANIMAL ON THE ARK

ABRAHAM

SAMSON

BALAAM’S DONKEY

THE ANGEL GABRIEL

MOSES

JOHN THE BAPTIST

THE INNKEEPER FROM THE STABLE

GOLIATH

PETER’S MOTHER-IN-LAW

ZACCHAEUS

LAZARUS

FOR TWO: CAIN AND ABEL

FOR TWO: JAMES AND JOHN

JOB

THE POSSESSED MAN FROM THE TOMBS

MATTHEW

ELIJAH

EVE

JOSEPH

MARY MAGDALENE

STEPHEN

THE CENTURION

JARIUS’ DAUGHTER

KING DAVID

ONE OF SOLOMON’S WIVES

SOLOMON

URIAH

PICK A CHARACTER

PICK A CHARACTER

###### Role Play -“ Saying Good-bye to Jesus”

Read the brief description of your character below. Listen to the music and try to become that character. You are here to say good-bye to Jesus. He is about to leave to face His death and you are not sure you will ever see Him again. One by one, in this order, approach Jesus and, without words, spend a few moments expressing your character's feelings as you say good-bye.

***Hints for playing your role -***

1. Let the music have an emotional effect on you.
2. Don't let the presence of the audience make you self-conscious.
3. Reflect on your own feelings - how you would feel if you were in your character's place (because for now, you are!).
4. Watch your "Jesus" to see how he responds to you. Let his emotions effect you as well.
5. Be slow and serious with your movements. Take time to get your message across. You may think you're spending a long time, but to the audience, it's quick. Don't be afraid to take the time you need.

***Mary (Sister of Martha) -*** You sat at Jesus' feet to hear His words while your sister complained about the tasks of hospitality. He accepted you, a woman, as equal and deserving of His teaching; though your culture looked down on you. Here was the man who stated clearly God’s plan for women, the one who raised you up in your role as helpmate. You remember, when your brother Lazarus died, how you went to Jesus angry and confused and witnessed His great distress over the sorrow and lack of faith of the people and His great power as he raised your brother from the dead. And here you are, one of His first female disciples, about to say farewell to your friend and brother...

***The Man Born Blind -*** From birth you were blind. You used to sit at the gate to the temple to beg alms from the people. All your life, you felt cursed and shut off from the world. But then, this wonderful man made mud with His spit and put it on your eyes. You were upset at first - confused by His actions - but then, you felt the presence of a great healer, and you went and washed in the pool and were set free from your blindness. The leaders mocked you and threw you out of the temple, but Jesus found you and offered you the hope of the Messiah - and you saw and believed. Because you were blind, you now see in ways other people can't. Though you are not sure why this great prophet has to die, you accept that it must be; because, by His dying, he will make all men see...

***The Samaritan Woman -*** Jesus found you out at the well in the heat of the day. You couldn't come out in the early morning, because the women of the town despised you. You had had five husbands and were living with a man outside of marriage. You were shocked when this Jew began to speak to you, a woman and a Samaritan. To him, you should have been less than a dog, yet he asked you for a drink. At first, there was sarcasm in your voice, because you were afraid and defensive. You thought he was making fun of you, or perhaps wanted to use you in some way. But His words brought the water of life to your soul and the water of tears to your eyes. You drank in His words with great joy as he told you he was the Messiah. What a gift he gave you in bringing a foreigner into His company, for it was a foreshadowing of things to come. And now, you are saying good-bye to your Messiah. You are confused, but still haunted with His words of life as you bid him farewell...

***Judas -*** Your heart is troubled and full of confusion. You thought you were an honored disciple because of your intelligence and your skills. The master had allowed you to hold the common purse - to which you had helped yourself from time to time; but always for the good of the plan you had. You had hoped Jesus would have revealed His glory and ushered in a new age of power for the Jews. You saw how he fed the 5000 and walked on the water, cured the sick and raised the dead. And now, you just can't see why Jesus is so determined to die. Perhaps he has gone mad - or perhaps he is trying to force the authorities to take a stand on His claim to be the Messiah so that he can reveal himself in all His glory. But why didn't he do it sooner? What is lacking? Perhaps it is time now for you to take matters into your own hands. As you say good-bye in your bitterness and confusion, there are thoughts of silver pieces and a hearing before the Sanhedrin in your mind...

***Mary (Jesus’ Mother) -*** Here is your son. From the beginning, you knew he had a destiny to fulfill. You had accepted God's call and given him birth in that musty dark cave. When he was a child you had nursed him at your breast, held him in your arms, picked him up when he fell down When he was twelve, you found him in the temple, where he knew he must be. For so long he was your little boy, but now he was a man. You remembered how he made the water wine at your urging, allowing you to share in His mission. You remember too, how he said that all men and women are His mother and brothers and sisters. You followed him as he lived out His mission of sharing the good news, binding up the fallen, and finding the lost. You knew all this was leading to the cross and yet you also know now you can't prevent what is to come. But you must be strong as you comfort your son for the last time...

***John (The Beloved Disciple) -*** Jesus chose you though you were very young. He saw in you a potential beyond a fisherman. He knew you were mature enough to witness raising the little girl back to life and His transfiguration on the mountainside. Yet, when you acted like a young man, he did not speak harshly to you, but challenged you and all people to become like little children in His Kingdom. He loved you in a special way - a way that was gentle and tender like a brother - and you remember all the times you sat close to him as you did at this final meal. You do not want to be separated from His side, and yet your great love allows you to trust and let him go. As you come to say farewell, you try to be brave, yet your youthful passion expresses itself in your last farewell...

***Martha -*** You remember that time when you chastised Jesus for allowing your sister Mary to sit at His feet when there was so much work to be done. But you never forgot His words - that only one thing is needed to follow him. The day he came to see you and your dead brother Lazarus, you knew now that this one thing was your unconditional trust and love. It made you bold enough to call him to show His power and strong enough to accept that if he did not, you would see your brother again at the resurrection. By His act of love, Jesus made you a partner in sharing the gospel. Though you are afraid now as you say good-bye, you are determined to live out your reborn life, whatever is to come...

***Lazarus -*** You have known Jesus for a long time. You provided for His needs and offered him your home whenever he came to Jerusalem. You know how he is feeling now, because you have faced the fear of dying and the silence of the grave. Yet, you have witnessed your own resurrection, and now you must say farewell to the one who said that he too would rise. You are not sure of what is to come, but you trust your friend and feel immense sorrow as he goes to face the silence of the grave as well...

***Mary Magdalene -*** The memory of your conversion is still in your mind, as if it happened yesterday. You were in the bonds of sin; possessed by demons you had allowed to enter your heart. You surrendered your fear and despair to him as you fell at His feet and wept. You had nowhere else to go and nothing else to loose. Yet Jesus raised you up and freed you from your life of sin. He gave you a love you had never known before. For a long time you had followed him and seen to His needs. You loved him as you loved no other. And now, your friend is going to leave you and face the pain of death and there is nothing to do now but weep as well...

***Peter -*** “You are the Rock - and on this rock I will build my Church!" The words seemed strange to you now. You do not understand. Jesus had chosen you to be the leader of this group of people, but when you made your first real decision as leader and challenged His prediction of His death in Jerusalem, he turned away from you and said, "Get behind me, Satan!" You never seemed to get it right. When he came walking to you on the waves, you spoke with boldness and asked to come out on the water to meet him. He called you, but when the waves became too much for you, you began to sink. At the mountain when Jesus was transfigured, you were so overcome with fear you spoke in a babble about building tents for Jesus and His heavenly companions. And, at your final meal together when you swore you would be willing to die for him, he stopped you and told you that you would deny him before the night was over. You know you have to say good-bye to your friend, but you doubt yourself and fear what will become of this small Church when he is gone. And yet, you muster your courage and your great faith compels you forward as you approach to comfort your friend and master one last time...

***Questions for the audience (and other actors) -***

1. What did each actor do to show you who his/her character was?
2. How did the actors' seriousness help to set the mood?
3. How did the music, lighting, etc. help to set the mood?
4. What would you have done differently with any of the characters?

Questions for the actors after the role play -

1. What helped you to get into the character you had to play?
2. How did "Jesus" help you to convey your message?
3. How did the actors before you (or the order you went in) effect you?
4. How did the music, lighting, etc. help you with your role?
5. What would you change about your performance?

### “Knowledge, Gifts, and Leadership Inventory”

Rate your leadership qualities by circling numbers on the scale below:

1 = Poor, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent)

1. *I enjoy taking responsibility for things. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
2. *I am comfortable speaking in groups. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
3. *I am an organized and efficient worker. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
4. *I complete projects I start. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
5. *I relate well to people in authority. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
6. *I know how to manage my time well. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
7. *I know how to delegate work properly. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
8. *I can take charge of a difficult group. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
9. *I am a good listener. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
10. *I am not afraid to “get my hands dirty.” 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
11. *I can accept others’ ideas and suggestions. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
12. *I know how to lead by example. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
13. *I am aware of my gifts and needs. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
14. *I can draw out the best in others. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
15. *I can handle group conflicts well. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
16. *I can motivate poor workers to improve. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
17. *I know how to lead a group together. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
18. *I can create a relaxed feeling in a group. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
19. *I handle my own stresses well. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*
20. *I take time out for myself. 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5*

* *What is your total?* \_\_\_\_\_
* *Are you happy with it?* \_\_\_\_\_
* *Why or why not?*
* *What is the most important quality of leadership?*

***Read these passages from John:***

* 10:14-18
* 13:1-7
* 14:1-14
* 14:15-15:8
* 15:9-17

***Which is most like your idea of a good leader? Is it…***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***a guide who leads with authority and shows the way?***
 | * ***a model who leads by his or her life example?***
 |
| * ***a companion who walks the way with others?***
 | * ***a teacher who instructs others on how to follow?***
 |
| * ***a servant who gives his or her life for others?***
 |

Here are some important passages on knowing and following God’s will:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Proverbs 16:9
 | * Proverbs 3:5-7
 | * Isaiah 30:21
 |
| * Jeremiah 29:11-13
 | * Matthew 22:37-38
 | * John 4:34
 |
| * John 6:44-45
 | * John 17:3
 | * Romans 12:2
 |
| * 2 Corinthians 5:19-20
 | * Philippians 2:13
 | * 1 John 4:7-8
 |

God calls us to know and love Him. Every good thing in our lives came from Him. It is He who initiates this love relationship with us, He who calls us to follow Him, and He who gives us what we need to accomplish His will for His people thought our lives. Now read these passages on Gifts of the Spirit:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Romans 12:1-8
 | * 1 Corinthians 12:4-11
 | * 1 Corinthians 13
 |

We need to understand that a gift is not a “super power” or a “thing” we get, but an expression of God working out His will in your life, of showing you He can accomplish through you what you cannot do for yourself. He gives you these gifts not for your benefit, but to build His kingdom through you. Now consider the following questions:

1. ***What is your relationship with God like right now?***

1. ***Where has God shown Himself in your life (through your gifts)?***
2. ***Where and in what ways do you think God is working in His people?***
3. ***How do you think you are called to join in with God’s great work?***

“Group Dynamics and Leadership Roles”

#### Using What You’ve Got

***The Setting*** *– Think about what you want to accomplish. Do you need tables and chairs and lots of light, or will the floor and a few candles do? Adapt the space to fit your situation, not the other way around.*

***Leader Skills*** *– Keep an “interested” posture, giving each speaker your full attention. Use silence to gently “nudge” group members to share. Keep your inner dialogue going and listen actively to others, especially to non-verbal clues. Be a serious, caring guide, not a pushy group dictator.*

***Group Defenses*** *– Some members may find ways to disrupt the group by making sarcastic or funny comments, projecting their feelings onto others and tossing around blame, using generalizations about people, situations or life instead of owning up to their feelings, or changing the subject when things get uncomfortable for them. Deal with each person in a firm, Christian manner.*

#### The Role of the Leader


# ***Unifier –*** ***Helping each person to feel he or she is a welcome and valuable member of the group.***

## ***Tasks –***

* *Encouraging open sharing*
* *Exploring each member’s gifts*
* *Using give and take in meeting goals*



Enabler – Helping each member to open up and share his or her ideas in a safe environment.

### Tasks –

* *Using active listening to gain a sense of each person’s needs*
* *Creating a calm caring atmosphere that promotes open sharing*
* *Building a solid relationship among the group members.*

***Facilitator – Guiding the members toward the goals of the group and keeping everyone on track.***

***Tasks –***

* *Defining goals and setting the tone*
* *Exploring ideas and feelings in a safe way*
* *Coming to consensus and bringing closure*

See

2 Timothy 2:24-25

Romans 12:10

Colossians 3:12-17

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Proverbs 3:5-7

Galatians 6:1

Philippians 4:6-7

James 3:17

1 Peter 3:15

James 3:5-6


#### Dealing with Difficult Group Members

***Too Much To Say Person*** *–* This person will focus on his or her problems, offer lots of “helpful advice” to everyone else or generally ramble on a lot. Jump in, thank the person, summarize his or her main points and move on.

***Angry Person*** *–* This person will use aggressive tactics to intimidate or embarrass the leader or other group members. He or she may argue for the sake of arguing, act immature, or talk only about things he or she is interested in. Sometimes this person needs to be ignored, but most of the time, he or she needs to be confronted in a firm but caring way. You need to say which behaviors are not acceptable and why, while stressing which behaviors are. Help from the group should be used sparingly.

***Not Tuned In Person*** *–* This person may be confused about his or her feelings, timid about sharing, or simply bored. Being especially careful to call this person by name and using direct questions will help him or her to open up. Also, drawing out what he or she cares most about and working it into the sharing will go a long way as well.

Conflicts: A Skit for Small Group Leadership

The Characters: Joshua, the leader; Tom, the “Too Much to Say” person; Angela, the “Angry Young Person” person; and Ned, the “Not Tuned In” person.

The Scene – These people are members of a small group on a retreat who are meeting for a discussion for the first time. They have just heard a witness talk given by a young girl named Mary. Mary talked about her rough family life and how she ran away from home when she was fifteen. She then talked about a woman from the South Street Mission who helped her to come to Jesus. It was a moving talk, given with a lot of nervousness.

# ***Skit One – The Wrong Way***

***Joshua –*** Okay, let’s get right down to the discussion. How did everyone feel about Mary’s talk? Anyone? ***(Silence)*** Come on you guys! I thought it was a great talk! You have to have something to say! ***(Pause)*** Did it upset you when she talked about running away?

***(Angela sighs and looks angry and bored) (More nervous silence)***

***Tom –*** Okay, I’ll start. Well, when she started talking about how her mother and father were fighting all the time, I started to think about a friend of mine whose parents used to fight all the time too. She’d call me up almost every Friday crying and want to come over to talk. Most of the time we sat up all night just talking. She always seemed better after that. I guess I gave her good advice. Anyway, there was this one time, when…

***Joshua –*** Whoa! Slow down there, Tom! Let someone else have a turn! Angela – you look pretty bored. What do you have to say about it?

***Angela –*** I think *this group* is pretty boring! Lots of people’s parents fight. You’d think she was the only one with problems!

***Tom –*** Well, maybe you’re upset because it touched a sad note in you!

***Angela –*** It touched a *BORING* note in me, that’s all!’

***Joshua –*** Okay, I think we’re getting off track. Ned, how about you?

***Ned (Pause) –*** I don’t know. It was a good talk, I guess. It kind of hit home.

***Tom –*** Oh, did your parents ever abuse *you,* Ned?

***Ned (Looking very uncomfortable) –*** No! Why did you ask that?

***Angela –*** ‘Cause he’s nosey, that’s why!

***Joshua –*** No, I think he was trying to get you to open up, Ned.

***Angela –*** WELL THAT’S A PRETTY STUPID WAY TO DO IT, DON’T YOU THINK?

***Joshua –*** Well, maybe, but we’re supposed to be having a discussion. You guys are missing the point! Let’s get back on track.

***Tom –*** Okay. Well, I think it was a good story, but a poor talk. She kept stopping every two seconds to find her place on her cards. And she wasn’t looking at us and it was hard to hear her sometimes.

***Joshua –*** I think she was just nervous.

***Tom –*** Well, she should have been more prepared. I was on a retreat last year and I spend six hours preparing my talk.

***Angela –*** No, you probably spent six hours giving your talk!

***Joshua –*** All right! All right! That’s enough! ***(Pause – looks around the room and then at Ned)*** NED, WILL YOU PLEASE SAY SOMETHING! YOU JUST SIT THERE WITH THAT DUMB LOOK ON YOUR FACE!

***Angela –*** Leave him alone! He can’t help it if he has a problem.

***Tom –*** It is weird, though. You’ve hardly said anything during this whole retreat!

***Ned –*** Okay! Here’s something! WHY DON’T YOU GUYS JUST…

***Joshua –*** OKAY! FORGET IT! WE’RE DONE HERE! YOU GUYS CAN GO OUTSIDE UNTIL LUNCH!

***Tom –*** Cool!

***Angela –*** It’s about time!

***(They walk out and leave Joshua alone to sulk)***

Conflicts: A Skit for Small Group Leadership

# ***Skit Two – The Right Way***

***Joshua –*** Okay, since this is the first time we’re meeting for discussion, I thought we could go around the group and say something about why we’re here.

***(Angela sighs and looks angry and bored)***

***Tom –*** Okay, I’ll go first. Well, I’m here for two reasons, really. First of all, I wanted to learn more about how to do retreats. Ever since I was a kid, people have felt comfortable around me and they’ve come to me for advice. I’ve helped a lot of people and I think I’m pretty good at it. Last year, I gave a talk and it was pretty good, but I’d like to get more experience. ***(Is about to say more…)***

***Joshua –*** Good, Tom. And your second reason?

***Tom –*** Oh. Well, my second reason is to learn more about myself. I think if I could get more in touch with what I’m going through, I could do more for other people.

***Joshua –*** Thanks, Tom. I think those are two good reasons. Angela, how about you next?

***Angela (Looking disgusted) –*** Well, I’m not from Trinity. I’m from the Lutheran church down the street, but I don’t go that often. I’m just here because my pastor and my parents are making me go.

***Joshua –*** Well, I hope we can make this a good experience for you, Angela. I know it’s hard when you don’t want to be somewhere, but we can work together to make the best of it. Okay, Ned; you’re next. What would you like to say?

***Ned –*** Well, I’m here because one of the leaders – I think his name was Paul – said he thought I’d get a lot out of it.

***Joshua –*** Well, Ned, I hope he’s right. We’ll do our best.

***Angela (Sighs and rolls her eyes) –*** How long do we have to do this?

Joshua – We do this until we’re finished. It usually takes about five to ten minutes…(Angela groans)…but I’ve found it goes a little faster if everyone puts something into it. So I think we could move right into our discussion. As far as how we’re going to do this, It’ll work out better if we remember to focus on how things affect us rather than on the character of other people. We need to listen to what each person has to say. Everyone will get a chance to speak and all I ask it that you’re honest and treat each other with respect. Now we can move on. First, were there any general comments about Mary’s witness talk? (Silence) Tom, how about you?

***Tom –*** Okay. I thought it was an okay talk, but she kept stopping to find her place and she seemed very nervous. I don’t think she was very prepared. When I was on retreat last year, I spent six hours preparing my talk before I gave it.

***Angela –*** It was probably more like you spent six hours *giving* it!

***Joshua –*** Angela, I know you don’t want to be here, but I don’t think it’s fair to put people down. What did *you* think of Mary’s talk?

***Angela (Looking embarrassed) –*** I don’t know. It was just a talk. I think she made too much about her situation. Lots of people have problems at home, so why do we have to listen to them here? It’s like we’re supposed to break down and start crying and convert or something! Well, it’s not that simple!

***Tom –*** Maybe her talk touched a nerve in you somewhere.

***Angela –*** What are you, some kind of expert? You gave one lousy talk and you think you’re God! I see you at school and I don’t see people flocking around you for advice.

***Joshua –*** I think both of you are missing the point. This isn’t group therapy or a time for insults. Mary spent a lot of time preparing her talk and she was very nervous about giving it. She *did* practice it *several* times, but this is her first time in front of a group. She wasn’t trying to impress or convert anyone. She was just sharing her story. Our discussion is about how her story affected us.

***Angela –*** IT BORED ME; THAT’S HOW IT AFFECTED ME!

***Joshua –*** I don’t believe you, Angela, but even if that’s true, it’s okay to say that because we’re supposed to be sharing how we feel and saying you’re bored is better than saying nothing at all. Ned, I’d like to hear what you have to say about all this.

***Ned (Pause) –*** Well…I think it was a good talk. It really hit home in some ways.

***Tom –*** Oh, were *you* abused when you were younger, Ned?

***Joshua –*** That’s not an appropriate thing to say, Tom. Why don’t we let Ned tell us what he means before we respond?

***Ned –*** First of all, my parents did *not* abuse me, but my dad was away a lot and it was hard on my mom and me. It was tough not having a father around. I missed him a lot.

***Tom –*** So you had a hard life then?

***Angela –*** Why don’t you let him talk, Tom! You never shut up, do you?

***Joshua –*** Angela, Tom – please! I want you to remember what I said about respecting each person’s right to speak and working together as a group. Ned, please finish what you were going to say.

***Ned –*** All I was going to say is that when I heard Mary talk about how her parents always fought, it made me think how lucky I was to have such a close family. My mom and I really stuck together during those times and it kept me from going crazy.

***Angela (Sighs - Pause) –*** I don’t even know what it’s like to have a father. My mom raised me all by herself. My dad left when I was two.

***Tom –*** I think we have a pretty good family. Whenever I have a problem, I know I can talk to my mom or dad. Sometimes my dad and I just pack up the car and go fishing and just spend the day talking.

***Angela –*** How does your dad get a word in?

***Joshua (Playfully) –*** Angela…

***Angela –*** Sorry, Tom. Just kidding. You do talk a lot though.

***Ned –*** Some people like to talk and some don’t; that’s all.

***Joshua –*** Is that how you are, Ned?

***Ned –*** Yeah, pretty much. I wish I could open up to people more easily.

***Angela –*** Me, I don’t care what I say! If people don't like it, I just ignore them.

***Joshua –*** Angela, do you really *not* care what others think of you?

***Angela (Pause) –*** Well, yeah, I guess. I mean, some people will like you and some people won’t, and I can’t do anything about it.

***Tom –*** Well, you don’t have to worry about that here, Angela. No one here likes you.

***Ned –*** Tom!

***Angela –*** Oh, don’t worry Ned. Tom and I have been like this since we met in third grade.

***Tom (Playfully) –*** Yeah, deep down we really love each other! ***(Angela rolls her eyes)***

***Joshua –*** Well, I hate to break up this mutual admiration society, but we have a good discussion going and I’d like us to continue with it. What about Mary’s talk impressed you the most? Angela?

***Angela (Pause) –*** Well, I guess it was when she said how that woman just took her into her spare room in her house and took care of her. I mean she never tried to preach to her and she didn’t call her parents until Mary was ready. That seemed pretty cool.

***Tom –*** Yeah, that would have been hard for me to do. I mean, her parents didn’t even know where she was! The woman could have been arrested for kidnapping or something.

***Ned –*** Yeah, well, that was my favorite part too, but I didn’t even think about those things. I think that sometimes you just have to do what you think God wants and accept the consequences.

***Tom –*** Hey, Joshua, so what do you think?

***Angela –*** Yeah, we haven’t heard from *you* yet.

***Joshua –*** That’s because I’ve been trying to keep the group focused. Mary and I have been friends for a while now and we’ve been through a lot together. I think we can talk about anything. When I hear how God worked in her life to help her make it through, I’m amazed. I think she’s a strong person, and she hasn’t held on to a lot of bitterness, even though she had a lousy childhood. It’s a good reminder to me of how God can get us through anything.

***Ned –*** Yeah, I know what you mean. I’m not a very strong person, but it was nice to hear her say that I don’t have to be. Sometimes I forget that.

***Angela –*** Well, I try to be strong, but sometimes I just end up acting strong. ***(Pause)*** I’ve had a pretty hard life too. It’s made me feel sometimes like I can’t trust anyone anymore. I guess when I heard Mary talk about God like that, it *did* hit a nerve. ***(Looks at Tom)*** And don’t say anything, Tom! ***(Tom smiles - Pause)*** I’ve always had a relationship with God, but I guess I always sort of kept it on a certain level. I’d talk to him, and he’d talk to me. As long as he didn’t bother me about too much, I’d keep talking to him. ***(Pause)*** I don’t know. Maybe that isn’t the best way to do it.

***Joshua –*** Maybe we could talk more about how God has worked in our lives. Tom, how about you first?

***Tom –*** All right. ***(Looking at Angela)*** And I’ll try to keep it short, okay?

***Angela –*** Talk all you want, Tom. I’ll just go to sleep.

***Joshua –*** Guys! Go ahead Tom.

***Tom –*** I guess I see God working in my life through my dad, mostly. Like I said, my dad and I spend lots of time just talking. I think I can tell him anything. And my dad isn’t afraid to tell me stuff either. He’s always tried to show me that he’s not perfect and that he relies on God to help him. ***(Pause)*** I remember one time, when we were out hiking, he told me how, when he was my age, he threw a cherry bomb in this kid’s car and blew the kid’s ear off. It was the first time I ever saw my dad cry – well, except when *his* dad died. He really felt bad. He said it took a lot of courage to go and say he was sorry to the kid and his family. But he and his dad talked about it and then prayed before he went. It wasn’t easy, but he faced up to it. ***(Pause)*** I really admired him for telling me that.

***Angela –*** So what happened to the kid?

***Tom –*** He had plastic surgery on his ear, but he could never hear out of it after that.

***Ned –*** Did he ever forgive your dad?

***Tom –*** I don’t know. My dad said they moved away.

***Joshua –*** Thanks, Tom. That was a good story. Ned, do you want to go next?

***Ned –*** Sure. Well, you guys might laugh, but I think I have a real close relationship with God. I’ve seen Him work in my life through other people, like my mom and dad, and my pastor. I spend a lot of time by myself – I guess I’ve always been kind of a loner – and I like to read a lot. I read the Bible every day and I spend time talking to God about what I read. Afterward, I write about it in a journal. It really helps me to sort things out and see where He is in my life.

***Angela –*** You have a journal? That’s so cool! I write in my journal every day! I thought I was the only person who did things like that. I pray a lot too, but it’s not the way that people think.

***Tom –*** You pray? I thought you didn’t go to church!

***Angela –*** Just because I don’t go to church, doesn’t mean I don’t pray. I pray a lot! I just don’t like going to church.

***Joshua –*** Well, I pray and I go to church, but I think I see God working the most when I spend time with young people. It helps me to know that other people have the same struggles I do. I think that’s what Mary was trying to say in her talk. When we open up to where God is working in our lives – even when it doesn’t seem like He’s there – it helps us to grow closer to Him.

***Angela –*** But how do you know when God is telling you to do something? I mean, like if he’s trying to tell you to go somewhere or do something?

***Joshua –*** I find it helps to look at a lot of different areas, like circumstances, my prayer life, counsel from other Christians; but mostly, I figure it out through His Word. When all these things seem to be coming together about something, I can be pretty sure that’s God telling me something. Do you think He’s saying something to you, Angela?

***Angela (Pause – Big sigh) –*** I don’t know. I just feel like something’s missing from my life. When I heard Mary talking about how she turned her life over to Jesus, I sort of had a…sick feeling in my stomach. It was like I just wanted to get up and run out of there! But something kept me there. Maybe I was too embarrassed to leave!

***Joshua –*** Or maybe, God was helping you to stay, even though someone else was telling you to go!

***Angela –*** Maybe. I mean, what am I supposed to do? It seems so unreal just to say a bunch of words and then, poof – you’re all set. It’s just not me.

***Ned –*** Yeah, I hear you. I made a commitment to Christ a few months ago, and, at the time, it didn’t seem like it was going to do anything for me. All I know is that I didn’t like the way my life was going. I didn’t think I was a bad person or anything, but I was just so afraid of what other people thought about me. I guess I’m still working on that part, but once I gave all that over to Jesus, it just felt…I don’t know, lighter or something. It wasn’t really a big deal – I mean I didn’t get hit by lightning or anything. But, ever since then, I’ve just been growing and making better choices and I don’t care as much what other people think. Put it this way – a year ago, I would never have thought I’d be going on a church retreat with a whole bunch of people I didn’t know. But here I am!

***Joshua –*** Thanks for saying that Ned. I don’t always think our relationship with God has to be big and dramatic. Sometimes it’s just smooth and steady.

***Tom –*** I don’t know if this will help, Angela, but even though I’m a Christian and sometimes act like I have it all together, I still have a hard time relating to other people. I guess that’s why I kind of talk them to death all the time.

***(Angela is beginning to cry)***

***Joshua –*** Well, Angela; I guess you can see that no one is any different than you are. All of us have had it tough, and none of us has it all together: believe me! But that’s what’s so great about what Jesus did for us. We’re all sinners. We all fail and we all struggle. But even though we couldn’t handle things on our own, God sent His Son to take all our struggles onto Himself. He paid the price we were supposed to pay when He went to that cross so we could have a real relationship with God. It’s amazing to think that God love me so much that He did that for me. Jesus made the difference in our lives and He can make the difference in your life too. Do you feel like He’s speaking to you now?

***Angela (Shaking her head yes) –*** Yeah, I think so.

***Joshua –*** Would you like to have a deeper relationship with Him? ***(She nods)*** Well, how about if you just talk to Him about it right now? Just tell Him how you feel, that you don’t want to do it alone anymore, that you’re sorry for the wrong things you’ve done, and then ask Jesus to take care of it all. And don’t worry about saying the right words; He’ll know what’s in your heart.

***Angela –*** I just don’t know what to say.

***Joshua –*** How about if we pray first and you talk when you’re ready.

***Angela –*** Okay, I guess.

***Joshua*** – Tom, why don’t you start?

***Tom (Big Sigh) –*** Hey Lord. I just want to lift up my friend Angela to you right now. I know she’s been hurting a lot lately and she really needs you in her life. Help her now to say what’s in her heart.

***Ned –*** Lord, I know how hard it can be sometimes. Thank you for bringing me here today so I could meet Angela and Tom and Joshua and get to talk about things. Help Angela now to talk to you and not be afraid. Help her to know we’re her friends and that we’re here for her.

***Joshua –*** Oh, yes, Lord. I thank you for who you are and I thank you for Tom, Ned and Angela and that you’ve brought us all here together at this moment in your perfect timing so that we could come closer to you. Thank you that you’re Spirit helped us to share with one another, even though some of it was tough. Lord, I know you love us all. I know you love Angela and I know that you desire to have a deeper relationship with her. Be here for her and help her to be open to you. And help us to be here for her as well. In your name we pray…Amen.

***Tom and Ned*** – Amen.

***Angela (Long pause – Sighs) –*** Hey God! ***(Pause)*** God, I don’t know what I’m supposed to say right now. I’ve been mad at you ever since my dad left us and sometimes I wanted to tell *you* to get lost too. I know you’ve always been there for me, but I guess I kept pushing you away because I wasn’t ready for…I guess I was afraid that you’d disappoint me too ***(Begins to cry)*** I’m sorry about that, Lord. I’m sorry for all the stupid things I did to keep you away…and for all the other stupid stuff I did in my life. ***(Pause)*** Jesus, I need you in my life now. I don’t want to handle it on my own anymore! Please be my friend, Lord!

***(Tom and Ned are crying – Joshua is teary-eyed and smiling)***

***Joshua –*** There. That wasn’t so bad. So how do you feel?

***Angela (Composing herself and wiping her tears) –*** I guess I feel…quiet – lighter, I guess. Yeah, I think it feels lighter. ***(Tom is wiping his eyes)*** Hey, tough guy! Need a tissue?

***(They all begin to laugh)***

***Tom –*** Shut up, butthead!

***(More laughter)***

***Joshua –*** Angela, I know that wasn’t easy. I really appreciate that you allowed us to share this with you. And don’t forget, we’ll be here for you when you need us. That’s the best part! It’s like being in a club. When you need us, you can just call on us and we’ll be there for you.

***Angela –*** Thanks. I’m sorry. I guess it was hard opening up. I guess we didn’t really get to talk a lot about Mary’s talk.

***Ned –*** I think we did. We were supposed to say how Mary’s talk affected us.

***Joshua –*** I think Ned’s right. Mary shared her story with us so we could get in touch with how God is working in our lives right now. Obviously, she affected each of us in a lot of ways. You know, it might be nice to thank her and tell her how much her talk meant to us.

***Ned –*** Yeah, that’s a good idea.

***Tom –*** Lunch would be a good idea too. What time is it?

***Joshua –*** Oh, about ten after twelve. I guess we ran a little late.

***Angela –*** Do we have any free time after lunch? I really think I’d like to talk to Mary. ***(Pause)*** I think we have a lot in common.

***Joshua –*** We have about an hour and a half after lunch to do whatever we want. I think Mary would like that very much.

***Tom –*** I’m going to play basketball after lunch. Do you want to play, Ned?

***Ned –*** Yeah! I brought my ball in the car.

***Joshua –*** Well, we’re done here. Hey, let’s end with a quick prayer. ***(They all gather around)*** Lord, we just thank you for this day and for this retreat. We thank you for what you are doing in our lives, and for drawing Angela closer to you today. Father, be with us as we go through the rest of this retreat. Help us to open up to Your Spirit and to love each other the way you love us. We thank you Father, and we ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

***Angela, Tom and Ned –*** Amen!

***Joshua –*** So, let’s go get some lunch.

***Tom –*** Cool!

***Angela (Playfully) –*** No, Tom – *YOU’RE* COOL!

***Tom –*** You’re a jerk!

***Angela –*** I love you too, Tom!

***Ned –*** Are these guys always like this?

***Joshua –*** I don’t know. I guess we’ll find out!

***(The three of them walk out together)***

***The End***

“Christian Helping Skills”

“Christian helping” involves an open, honest relationship between two people. The “helper” walks along with the “helpee,” sharing his or her experience with the Lord and offers the Holy Spirit’s strength to the helpee through prayer in order to help him or her come to a place of transformation and growth in Christ.

Qualities of a Good Helper - A Good Helper…

* Loves Unconditionally – accepting the helpee as a unique individual created and loved by God (See John 15:9-17, Psalm 139:13-14a, Romans 15:2).
* Is Relational – seeing the process of helping as a shared journey and leading the helpee into a (better) relationship with the Lord through personal witness (See Matthew 5:16, Proverbs 9:8-9, Hebrews 10:24-25).
* Relies on the Word – to guide him or her in responding to the helpee, knowing that God’s Word is eternal and true, and sharp enough to cut to the heart of the matter. He or she uses God’s Word to confirm where God is working in the helpee’s life (See Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16, Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119: 105).
* Is Empathetic – or able to “feel with” the helpee, experiencing his or her emotions without being overwhelmed by them (See Romans 12:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, Romans 12:15).
* Is Focused – during the helping process so that all his or her attention and energy is focused on understanding and responding to the helpee in the Spirit (See James 1:19, Ephesians 4:2, 2 Timothy 2:24-25, James 3:1-12).
* Maintains an Inner Dialogue – to be aware of the meaning in the helpee’s words and actions, and his or her own personal feelings about the helpee and the helping relationship. (See James 4:7, Ephesians 4:15, Hebrews 11:6).
* Prays through the process – asking God to come into the helpee’s life, to protect them both from Satan’s lies and temptations, and to see them both through to the end (See Romans 8:26-27, John 15:7, Colossians 4:5-6).

The Process of Helping – Some Practical Suggestions…

* Posture – Sit close to the helpee, leaning forward, giving the helpee your full attention and concern.
* Eye Contact – Look into the helpee’s eyes with acceptance, affirmation and reassurance.
* Facial/Body Movements and Tone of Voice – Be calm and caring, but reflect the helpee’s feelings and tone. This will help him or her to feel comfortable enough to explore his or her issues more deeply.
* Active Listening – Focus on the content of what is said and the feelings behind the content. Accept the helpee’s story as you are hearing it now, without planning your answers, passing judgment on the helpee or trying to offer advice or solutions – in other words, telling the helpee what to do.
* Responding – Use continuing responses (“Uh huh.”, “Go on, I’m listening.”, etc.). Restate the content of what is said in your own words, reflect the feelings you are sensing from the helpee and share your understanding of the meaning behind the content and feelings. Let your emotions reflect what the helpee is feeling, like a mirror, letting the helpee know that you are in touch with what he or she is going through.
* Questioning – Use questions to allow the helpee to explore his or her feelings more deeply, rather than to gather information too quickly. Questions should be open (“How did that make you feel?” / “What will you do now?”) rather than closed (“Did that make you feel angry?” / “Will you try to talk to that person?”).
* Confrontation – Avoid confronting the helpee until he or she shows a willingness to change and grow. Confrontation is meant to challenge the helpee to face feelings he or she is uneasy about or unaware of.
* Personal Sharing – This should be done only when it helps to further the “moment” by adding the clarity of your own experience to the discussion. It should not be in the service of your own needs. The person being helped is usually the one doing most of the personal sharing.
* Touch – Touch should be used to offer support, encouragement, and strength to the helpee and not to satisfy your own personal need for contact. You need to be careful the helpee does not misinterpret your touch as a sexual gesture. Knowing when it is appropriate to touch comes with experience.

Note – Christian Helping is not…



* Providing “practical” solutions, “sound” advice, or making decisions for the helpee.
* Offering false reassurance or making light of the helpee’s problem.
* Passing judgment on the helpee for what he or she says or has done.
* Using “techniques” to look for “causes” or to avoid things you find uncomfortable.

Christian helping involves walking the journey together, growing from the experience and keeping your eyes fixed on the goal of mature life in Jesus Christ.

# ***Father, I Need Help***

***Jim (Knocking on the door) –*** Hey, Father. Are you busy?

***Father (Looking up and smiling) –*** No, Jim; come on in. How’ve you been? I haven’t seen you at youth group in a while.

***Jim (Looking nervous and fidgeting) –*** Oh, I’m okay.

***Father –*** Sit down, Jim. What’s up? ***(Jim sits down)***

***Jim (Still fidgeting) –*** Oh, nothing. I just wanted to stop by and say hi. Sorry I haven’t been to youth group in a while. I’ve been kind of busy.

***Father –*** How’s your family? I’ve missed seeing you together in church.

***Jim (Big sigh) –*** Uh…they’re okay.

***Father –*** Have you made the basketball team yet? I hear there’s a lot of competition for your position this year.

***Jim (Nervous, tight face) –*** I…uh…don’t think I’m going to try out for it this year. ***(Head twitches)*** I’m pretty busy these days, you know, with school and my job.

***Father (Sitting up) –*** Hmm. That’s too bad. I know how much you love basketball. I guess you’ll miss it.

***Jim –*** Well, I have tons of homework this year…I’m taking three advanced classes…and I’m picking up a lot of extra hours at work. ***(With no enthusiasm)*** I have to start planning for college soon anyway.

***Father –*** You seem upset about something, Jim. Anything you need to talk about? You know I’m a good listener.

***Jim –*** Yeah, I know. ***(Pause)*** I guess I’m not sure where to start.

***Father (Leaning forward) –*** Why don’t you start at the beginning?

***Jim (Biting his lip and leaning back) –*** I just don’t want to bother you; that’s all.

***Father (Smiling) –*** You’re not bothering me, Jim. And you know you can say anything to me. It’s what the Lord has called me to do and I care what happens to you.

***Jim (Pause – heavy sigh) –*** It’s about my parents.

**Father –** Um hmm. Go on.

***Jim (Rubbing hands on legs and rocking, slightly) –*** There’s just been a lot of tension at my house lately. ***(Pause)*** You see, my mom and dad have been arguing a lot lately. ***(Father is nodding)*** Well, see, my dad’s been out of work for about four months now, and he goes out drinking a lot. When he comes home, he and my mom get into it. Sometimes they get into some real shouting matches.

***Father –*** It must hurt to hear them argue like that.

***Jim –*** I don’t think he means it. He just gets…I don’t know…weird when he’s had too much to drink. Afterward, he’s always sorry but…I know my mom and my sister don’t deal with it too well.

***Father –*** How *do* your mom and sister deal with it?

***Jim –*** Well, my mom doesn’t make it any better. She’s always hounding him to get a new job and getting on his case about his drinking. My sister just hides in her room or goes out all the time.

***Father –*** And how do *you* deal with it?

***Jim –*** Well…I try to talk to my mom about easing up on my dad. He’s really trying to find a job. It’s just tough these days.

***Father –*** Do you talk to your dad or your sister?

***Jim –*** Well, I talk to my dad, but not about this. Whenever I try to bring it up, he gets mad so I just avoid saying anything about it. My sister and I talk once in a while, but she doesn’t have too much to say. I guess it upsets her too much.

***Father –*** Sounds like you’re trying very hard to understand what everyone’s going through. I’m wondering though. You seem the most sympathetic toward your dad. How come?

***Jim –*** Well, I think he has it the toughest. I know it hurts him to be out of work and not be able to bring any money home.

***Father –*** Yeah, that may be true, but it sounds like you *all* have it pretty tough.

***Jim (Angry) –*** Yeah, but my mom and my sister sometimes act like babies! They don’t know what it’s like to lose a job!

***Father –*** Maybe not, but I’m sure it’s still tough on them. What makes them babies about it?

***Jim –*** Well, my mom isn’t supporting my dad. All she can do is yell at him about his drinking. And my sister; she just avoids the whole thing by running away from it.

***Father –*** Do you think you’re being fair to your mom and sister? I’ve found that supporting people sometimes means confronting them about the things that are hurting them. It takes a lot of strength to do that. And, as far as your sister goes, I don’t see the difference between her avoiding the problem by hiding and your dad avoiding it by drinking. They’re both probably pretty scared.

***Jim (Very angry) –*** You don’t understand! I knew this was a waste of time! ***(Starts to get up)*** My dad’s trying as hard as he can! He’s not a bad person! ***(Paces by the door)***

***Father (Calm but firm) –*** I never said your dad was a bad person. He’s going through a really tough time right now and he’s probably feeling lost and alone. But just like he’s trying to deal with this by drinking, your mom and sister and *you* are all trying to deal with it in your own ways. This isn’t about blame, Jim; it’s about working through it together.

***Jim (Looking confused) –*** I don’t know! The whole thing is so crazy! I mean, what am I supposed to do about it?

***Father –*** I know that sometimes it seems like you don’t have any control and that you can’t do anything about your life, but there are things you can do.

***Jim (A bit sarcastic) –*** Yeah, like what?

***Father –*** Well, you can go find someone to talk to, like you’re doing here with me. You’re sticking by your family and trying hard to do what you think is best to hold them together. My guess is that you’re taking extra hours at work to help support your family, right? ***(Jim nods)*** Well, with all that stuff – and it’s good stuff – there still is something else you can do.

***Jim (Sitting back down, curious and frustrated) –*** What’s that?

***Father –*** You can stop trying to bear the whole burden alone. You can take it to God and let Him handle it instead of trying to solve everyone’s problems by yourself.

***Jim (Making a face) –*** Yeah, well, I’m not really into God these days, Father. I don’t pray and I haven’t been to church in a long time. I don’t think God would want to listen to me right now anyway.

***Father –*** That’s where you’re wrong. He *has* been listening to you the whole time. And He’s been right there walking along with you. You just can’t see Him right now, but He’s there. All He wants is for you to come to Him for help. I’ve learned that sometimes God allows pain to come into our lives in order to push us toward Him. He uses the tough times to build our character.

***Jim (Sighs) –*** Sometimes I don't feel like I even care about all that stuff. All I know is everything's going wrong and I can't do anything about it. **(Sighs)** You know, I had a lot of plans for college and my future. When I made varsity, the coach told me he thought I'd have a good chance of getting a basketball scholarship. But with work and everything going on at home, I don't even have time to think about what I want. **(Sighing and shaking his head)** Everyone's so busy thinking about how bad everything is, and no one's really doing anything about it...except me. **(Pause)** It's not fair! When do I get a break?

***Father –*** It's pretty hard to see God in all this when you’re stuck in the middle of it; I know. It sounds like you’re caught in a pretty hopeless situation.

**Jim –** You've got that right!

***Father –*** So what are you going to do about it?

***Jim –*** I don’t know. I guess I’m not going to do anything. I don’t have much choice, do I? My family needs the money and no one else seems to be able to deal with this whole thing.

***Father –*** Jim, you’ve been coming to youth group for about six months now. You know me; you know who I am and where I stand. If you don’t think there’s another choice, why did you pick me to talk to?

***Jim –*** I don’t know. I didn’t have anywhere else to turn, I guess. ***(Pause, head goes down, looking a little guilty)*** Maybe I just figured you’d understand.

***Father –*** Well, I do – better than you think. I went through something like this when I was in high school. My dad lost his job and I started working to help my family out. I wasn’t interested in sports or anything, but it didn’t make it too easy to have a lot of friends because I was working all the time. But one of the toughest things was that I couldn’t go to the college I wanted to attend.

***Jim –*** Yeah, where’d you want to go?

***Father –*** Oh, I wanted to go to this good school out in California so I could become a lawyer. There were one or two others I had as backups. To be honest, I don’t remember all the names. But, I guess that wasn’t what God had in mind for me, so I ended up going to Trinity College, which then led to Seminary, and, well – here I am!

***Jim –*** Do you ever miss it?

***Father –*** That I could have been a lawyer? No, not really? I just came to realize that this is exactly where God wants me to be. And He was there the whole time, watching over me. He knew what He was doing and it just took a tough situation to move me to where He wanted me.

***Jim –*** So you’re saying God doesn’t want me to be a basketball player?

***Father –*** No, not necessarily. I’m saying that God is still a part of your life, even in the bad times; and He’s in control of everything too. Even when things seem bad He’s there. In the end, He gets us to where we should be – in *His* time and in *His* way. ***(Pause)*** Hey, I’m not trying to brush off everything that’s happening to you. I don’t know what God has in mind for your family and I’m not trying to say that trusting in Him is the easiest thing to do. But, I *have* found that the more I trust Him, the lighter the burden becomes. That’s what you need to do in this situation, Jim. You’ve got to trust God and give this problem over to Him.

***Jim –*** Yeah? It’s easier said than done, Father!

***Father –*** I know it’s hard. Hey, most of what I go through I can only understand after it’s happened. But I always come to see that He was a part of it all the way through.

***Jim –*** Well, what if I don’t end up going to college? I can’t believe God wants me to waste my talent working in a restaurant for the rest of my life.

***Father –*** Maybe not, but for as long as you’re here, I know He can use you. I had a friend who’s a youth minister who had to work in a grocery store stocking shelves to make ends meet. I used to think, “Man, how can he put himself through that?” I learned that he didn’t think of it as something beneath him and I think the way he was able to do that was because he trusted God to be Lord of his life. And you know, I know of at least five men he brought to his men’s group while he was working in that store. As far as I’m concerned, there isn’t any finer purpose for being on this earth, than to introduce people to Jesus.

***Jim (Pause, heavy sigh) –*** Being Christian isn’t always easy, is it?

***Father –*** Hey, that’s the first time you referred to yourself as a Christian since you came in. I’m glad you finally recognized your position in Christ.

***Jim –*** What? Bottom of the barrel? ***(Pause)*** Yeah, yeah – I know, not funny.

***Father –*** Actually, you’re not too far off. Without Christ, you might as well consider yourself bottom of the barrel, because you won’t get very far in life without Him, at least not spiritually. And that’s the important thing. In the end, you’ll be much happier saying, “I’m living for Jesus.” than saying, “I got a scholarship.” ***(Pause)*** But don’t get me wrong. I don’t think God’s plan has to include you not reaching your goal. I think it’s all a matter of your priorities. Are your goals for *your* honor or His? Do you want the scholarship so you can be rich and famous or so you can be a witness for Him?

***Jim –*** How about being a *rich and famous* witness?

***Father –*** Well, I do think having a position in life can give you a great opportunity to witness. But just don’t think that money and fame will bring you all the answers. Look at your dad. He had a great job, at least in terms of the money, and now that’s been taken away from him. Now God’s going to give him an opportunity to know Him in a new way.

***Jim –*** Well, I *will* say that in some ways, I’m glad he’s away from all that pressure at work. He never seemed to have any time for his family anymore. And I know it was affecting his health.

***Father –*** It’s hard on men, I think. We have a tendency to identify ourselves by what we do rather than who we are. When our whole identity gets wrapped up in our work and that falls apart, it’s hard to turn around to identify ourselves by who we are. ***(Pause)*** Maybe that’s the best thing you can do for your dad right now, to let him know you love him for who he is and not for how much money he brings home. It might make it easier for him to get through this time. Then maybe it’ll be easier for him to keep from dealing with it by drinking.

***Jim –*** Yeah, maybe.

***Father –*** You can also remind him that God is still with you guys. And talk to him about how you’re feeling. I think it would be good for him to hear what you’re going through.

***Jim –*** But I don’t want to make him feel any guiltier than he’s already feeling.

***Father –*** Well, maybe he might feel guiltier. But I’ve found that when people are honest about how they feel and they know they can depend on each other, it helps them to have a better connection to each other and a better connection to their Father in heaven. Then they end up feeling much more at peace about these things.

***Jim –*** I don’t know. I’ll have to think about what I’ll say to him. ***(Pause)*** Oh man! I have to go! I’m going to be late for work. Thanks Father for listening and for all the advice.

***Father –*** Hey, no problem. Why don’t we take a moment to pray? I’ll give you a ride to work so you won’t be late.

***Jim –*** Okay.

***(Father and Jim bow their heads)***

***Father –*** Heavenly Father, we just thank you for bringing us together today; and we praise you for your workings in our lives. We thank you for your sovereignty and for your promise that you’ll never leave us nor forsake us. Father, you love us and you stick with us, even when it seems that you’re far away, even when we experience tough times. And Father, I just pray for Jim and his family, that you hold them in your hand, that you see them through this time of suffering, and that you’ll use it to build them up and lead them closer to you. Look on your son, Jim, and give him clarity in all this. Show him where you’re leading him. You know the desires of his heart and you’ve given him his great gift for basketball. Help him to be able to use that gift for your honor and glory and to witness to others about Your Son, Jesus. If it is your will Father, enable him to get the scholarship to the college where he can just thrive for you and your kingdom. Be with this family and help them to know that they are not in this alone, that you are watching over them, and that they have brothers and sisters in this community who care about them. We just thank you and praise You Father and we offer our prayers in Jesus name. Amen.

***Jim –*** Amen. ***(Pause, lifting his head up)*** Thanks, Father. I appreciate it.

***Father –*** Hey, thank you for coming in today. Let your dad know he can come in and talk to me if he wants. Tell him, we’ll do anything we can for him.

***Jim –*** I will. ***(Pause)***

***Father –*** Well, we’d better get going. Say, I’m hungry. Does that restaurant have any good food?

***Jim –*** Yeah, they’re pretty good. Just don’t order the Cajun Chicken. It’s a little spicy.

***Father (Smiling) –*** I’ll keep that in mind. Come on, let’s go.

***(The two exit)***

## ***The End***

***“Discernment in Your Ministry Planning: A Team Effort***

In planning your ministry, you will find that things don’t always run so smoothly. Human beings are flawed. Even believers struggle with pride and Satan’s strongholds. Coming together in the Spirit on what you are doing is essential for your ministry to have lasting success. Below are some suggestions for discerning God’s will and letting Him guide your actions as you plan to minister to your peers.


#### Suggestions for Developing Discernment During Your Time Together

* ***Begin with God.*** He is the Sovereign Lord, the author of all our lives and works. Spend time together in prayer, inviting Him into your process so that you will grow in your relationship with Him. Then you will know where He is leading you.
* ***Listen and confirm.*** Take time to hear how God is speaking in the lives of each person. Look for confirmation of what you hear by looking to God’s Word, your present circumstances and past patterns where you have seen God work, and your prayer.
* ***Start small, but think big.*** When you sense where He is leading, get going. Respond immediately in faith and take it one step at a time. Work in the now, but look beyond what you can do and trust God to do what He says He will do.

#### A Suggested Structure for a Planning Meeting

* ***Pray.*** Prayer develops our relationship with God. It keeps us humble and hopeful. It reveals God’s will and gives us the courage to live it out. Use prayer time to work through personal struggles to become more open to God’s working in your lives.
* ***Explore.*** Consider where God is leading you and confirm it in His Word. Talk about the overall goals of the ministry (evangelization, growth, etc.) and tie your plan into them. Select your goals with openness as to where they may take you.
* ***Refine.*** Once you see where you want to go, think about what you will need to accomplish your goals in practical terms. However, don’t limit yourself to what you have, but rely on God to supply what is lacking.
* ***Plan.*** Divide your work among those gifted for specific tasks. Come up with concrete and practical steps for accomplishing each task and the goal itself. Set up a system to make sure each task is completed. Prepare thoroughly for success in God’s name.
* ***Begin.*** Get to work right away on the most immediate steps and set short-term goals, so that you can evaluate your progress at the next planning meeting. Support one another, hold each other accountable, but be open to the growth that God brings out of failure.


## ***Some Practical Concerns of Goal Planning – You need to consider…***

* ***Leadership.*** Who will take charge of different aspects of the planning? Are they gifted for their tasks?
* ***Costs.*** What will it cost in money, time, energy, and other resources? How much will you let God supply?
* ***Dates.*** When will your plan, project or event begin and end? What is your timeline?
* ***Planning Steps.*** When will you meet to plan? What needs to come first?
* ***Contacts.*** Who needs to be called? What arrangements need to be made? How will you get the word out?
* ***Evaluation.*** How will you determine whether your plan, project or event was a success? What is your measure?

***Be concrete yet spiritual, immediate yet far-reaching, humble yet humorous, challenging yet loving.***

## ***Ministry Planning: Sample Structure and a One Year Plan***

***Our Mission -*** *Because we have been set free by the story of Christ, we are committed to using our gifts to reach out in His Spirit to our peers. We offer our lives and our life stories and pledge to be open, available and loving ministers to all we meet. We are a Body and a living parable, with Jesus our head and the author of our lives.*

***Our Ministry***

***Word -*** *Sharing the Good News with our peers -*

* Making every gathering a journey of growth…
* Keeping the lines of communication open to our peers...

***Fellowship -*** *Building the Body of Christ in friendship -*

* Offering experiences that open us up to the Holy Spirit...
* Reaching out in service to others as Jesus has taught us...

***Spirit -*** *Growing in our relationship with God -*

* Celebrating our relationship with our God in our worship...
* Touching our peers with the healing love of Jesus...

***Our Way***

* Using drama to build community, enrich worship, and build fellowship among the Body of Christ…
* Using drama to witness to the lost and lead them to Christ…
* Using drama to teach, to heal and to inspire…

***Drama Ministry Calendar***

*The following is an example of how your drama team could be incorporated into the life of the church and its youth ministry, using a simple formula of once a month dramas at worship (plus seasonal worship dramas as well), fellowship meetings and fellowship events. Also included are times for training and missions.*

***September –***

* Drama Sunday – “Sunday School Opening”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Back to School Blues”
* Fellowship Event – Spaghetti Supper Drama Evening

***October –***

* Drama Sunday – “Death to Life” theme
* Fellowship Meeting – “Spiritual Warfare”
* Fellowship Event – Harvest Party Drama Show

***November –***

* Drama Sunday – “Harvest” theme
* Fellowship Meeting – “Thanksgiving” theme
* Fellowship Event – Nursing home drama evening

***December –***

* “Drama Sunday” – “Immanuel” – Healing service
* Fellowship Meeting – “The Birth of Hope”
* Fellowship Event – Caroling /“Reindeer Games”
* Worship – Advent Dramas/Living Nativity/Drama

***January –***

* Drama Sunday – “The Light of the World”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Life Issues"
* Fellowship Event – Evangelism All-nighter
* Winter Retreat – Drama/Leadership Training

***February –***

* Drama Sunday – “Following in His Steps”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Love and Choice”
* Fellowship Event – Mystery Dinner Theater

***March –***

* Drama Sunday – “Freedom and Forgiveness”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Discipleship”
* Fellowship Event – Interchurch Drama Challenge

***April –***

* Drama Sunday” – “Victory in Jesus”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Witnessing and Mission”
* Fellowship Event – “Calvary Hike Passion Drama”
* Worship – “Palm Sunday Drama”
* Worship – Good Friday Passion Play 24 (Jr.) –”

***May –***

* Drama Sunday – “The Coming of the Spirit”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Drama Marathon”
* Fellowship Event – Video Scavenger Challenge

***June –***

* Drama Sunday – “Putting Childish Ways Aside”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Growing Up
* ”Fellowship Event – “Senior Sendoff”
* Summer Drama/Leadership Retreat

***July –***

* Drama Sunday – “The Mission Church”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Servanthood”
* Fellowship Event – Drama Missions Trip

***August –***

* Drama Sunday – “Days of Trial”
* Fellowship Meeting – “Winning the Race”
* Fellowship Event – Outdoor Drama Evangelization

#### “Creative Fellowship Meeting Planning”

*A “Fellowship Meeting” is an open gathering of young people for the purposes of building community and spreading the Gospel. Below are seven components of an effective meeting.*

***Welcoming*** – All young people need to feel wanted and needed. Providing good, biblical hospitality is essential to drawing in young people, especially the unchurched. A consistent welcoming atmosphere is crucial for keeping them there and drawing them back another time (See *Genesis 18:1-8*, *Matthew 18:5*, *James 2:15-16*).

***Community Building*** – Creating opportunities for youth to build relationships with one another in a distinct Christian group is important for spiritual growth. Building community involves not only fun activities, but a general spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and self-giving (See *Matthew 20:26-27*, *Romans 15:2*, *1 Corinthians 12:12-13*).

***Prayer*** – At every gathering, the young people need to experience God. This takes place during formal times for prayer as well as in more informal times of reflection and sharing. The young people need to see that children of God are prayerful (See *Matthew 6:5-8*, *Luke 11:5-10*, *John 15:7*, *Philippians 4:6-7*,*1 Thessalonians 5:17*).

***Teaching the Word*** – Fellowship meetings provide many opportunities for sharing God’s Word. The fundamental Gospel message should be the central focus of every gathering, no matter what the topic or theme of the day. Always ground your meeting in God’s living Word (See *Joshua 1:8*, *2 Timothy 3:16*, *Psalm 119:11*, *Hebrews 4:12*).

***Responding*** – Learning is never complete until we invite those we teach to respond to what they have learned. The Gospel must be experienced and lived out, as well as understood and memorized. Each gathering should naturally lead to Christian action outside the meeting (See *Galatians 5:22*, *Ephesians 5:1-2*, *James 1:22*, *James 2:14-18*)

***Witnessing for Christ*** – Each young person must be encouraged to share his or her story and connect with the stories of others who have been saved. This is the Great Commission of Jesus – to make disciples of all nations. Sharing the Gospel means sharing how it has touched our lives (See *Matthew 4:19*, *1 Thessalonians 2:13*, *Ephesians 4:15*).

***Fellowship*** – When all the elements are lived out sincerely in the leaders, the youth will grow in their awareness that they are a community of believers, bound together by the Holy Spirit. Their relationships with each other will find common ground in their relationships with Jesus (See *Romans 1:16*, *Hebrews 10:24-25*, *1 John 1:3*).

***General Format for Fellowship Meetings***

*This format can be adapted for different types of meetings. Whenever possible, the different tasks should be led by youth leaders. Young people can be grouped with adult leaders and youth leaders for small group activities. The group can adopt a certain prayer formula to be used at each meeting or it can be changed or adapted to fit a different message, theme or season. The different adults and youth leading the gatherings should be encouraged to blend their own creativity and styles into the meeting format, while remaining true to the foundational message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

* ***Welcoming/Community Building***
* ***Stating the Message***
* ***Opening Prayer***
* ***Presentation/Learning Activity***
* ***Witness/Sharing of stories***
* ***Closing Prayer***
* ***Fellowship***

***“Fellowship Meeting Styles”***

*There are several ways to modify the general Fellowship Meeting Style. As the leaders prepare for a particular meeting, they need to consider the following ideas:*

1. ***Surrender your plans to God’s will –*** Let the Holy Spirit speak to you as you sit with the Scriptures and wait on the Lord for a Word to share with the young people. Surrender your will to His. Be ready to take risks, and adapt your plans to fit the Lord’s working in the young people’s lives.
2. ***Consider the young people’s needs, but challenge them –*** Make the Gospel relevant to their lives, using illustrations they can relate to. Be open to related messages that flow naturally from the Spirit’s leading. Never water down the message; instead, challenge the young people to see God’s work among them.
3. ***Plan for adventure and mystery –*** Help the young people to get involved in working out the message in a concrete way. Try new things but don’t get too gimmicky. Look beyond the meeting to how God’s kingdom adventure is working itself out in the lives of the young people and in the Body.
4. ***Ground every aspect of the meeting in God’s Word –*** Stick to what you know is living and true. Don’t let extra-biblical materials or a theme overshadow what God has to say in the Bible. Remember the message of salvation and always bring the young people back to it, time and time again.
5. ***Be real, available and loving ministers –*** Be a true witness of Christ to the youth. Accept them and yourself and all your limitations, giving it all over to Christ for His purposes. Don’t be afraid to fail; and when you do, be honest about it, pick yourself up, look for what He has taught you and respond in faith.

***A few suggestions for varying the styles…***

* ***Topics and Issues Meeting –*** At this meeting the young people receive practical information and solid biblical teaching on an important topic or issue. They can take time to dialogue during the meeting and plan action in response to what they learn.
* ***Journey and Adventure Meeting –*** Here, the leaders use mystery to draw in the young people and take them on an imaginary or real journey, where they will solve clues to discover a particular Gospel message. Lock-ins and other retreat and overnight events lend themselves very well to this variation in the meeting style.
* ***Skills and Service Meeting –*** The leaders can offer specific training for the young people or use the meeting to prepare for a service or missionary activity. This will provide the young people with an opportunity to live out the Gospel message in ways that show them immediate and concrete results.

***A few ways to prepare and follow up with the young people…***

* ***Get the message out and use creative ways to pique interest.*** Find new ways to get the young people to the meetings. Plan a good phone, flyer, and word of mouth campaign. Offer coupons, prizes, and discounts on events.
* ***Divide up the tasks and keep in touch with everyone.*** This will keep work down to a minimum and involve the most workers. Have back up plans and prepare for different contingencies.
* ***Follow up the meeting by staying in touch with the young people.*** Send thank you cards or call those who come, especially new members. Keep them informed and remember to recognize important events in their lives.
* ***Continue to monitor yourself and your ministry.*** Use word of mouth and surveys to help you evaluate what is going on. Keep focused on the Gospel and keep the leadership team coming together for fellowship and prayer.


#### “Prayer Planning with Young People”

1. ***Traditional Prayer -*** is the prayer that comes from Scripture and is a part of the life of your community. These include Adoration (Praise), Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (Intercession and Petition), best remembered by the acronym, ACTS.
2. ***Spontaneous Prayer -*** is open prayer from the heart. It allows the Holy Spirit to speak through the Word and helps you to share your relationship with Jesus with others. It is the prayer of those who feel led to pray in the Spirit.
3. ***Prayerful Reading -*** involves sitting with the Scriptures in order to immerse yourself within God’s Word. Reflecting on how you are affected by the Bible leads you to discover much about your relationship to Jesus and others.
4. ***Artistic Prayer -*** allows you to share what is in your heart through some form of artistic expression such as drawing, music, movement or writing. It is a concrete expression of what God is doing in your life.
5. ***Listening Prayer -*** is really a part of all prayer, but taking specific time to sit and wait for God to speak to you will help you to become more in touch with who you are in Christ and how much God is present to you.
6. ***Journaling -*** helps you to collect your thoughts and see how you are growing in your walk with Christ. It is a time to share how a particular reading is touching you right now.
7. ***Guided Meditative Prayer -*** is a journey taken with another who leads you through an experience of prayer. Like prayerful reading of Scripture, the leader invites the group to imagine the setting and events unfolded in the Scriptures. The leader may help the participants to slow down their thoughts and relax, use soft lights, smells and instrumental music. This helps you to shut out other distractions in order to truly listen to God speaking to you. Afterwards, the group can respond with spontaneous prayer or prayerful comments about what they experienced.

Planning meaningful worship is something that is centered on God’s eternal and living Word. Here are some ideas for you to consider…

* ***Music and Externals –*** Select music that reflects the tone for what you are trying to share. Consider the time of day and your reasons for worship and use music that draws others into the experience. Begin worship with praise music, or use instrumental music for an opening reflection or dramatic piece to help the group focus on Christ. Select songs based on your readings. Use music in places that naturally call for praise or reflection. Consider how candles, incense, pictures, etc. can also help to set the mood of the prayer. Even the setting and the way the group is positioned will help to make prayer more meaningful.
* ***The Opening or “Call to Prayer” –*** This can be a spontaneous or written prayer, or even a poem or story which invites the group into the experience. Here, you may ask God to be present to you, confess your sins and your need for God, or sum up what is happening to the group (as on a retreat, for example).
* ***Scripture Readings –*** Choose your Scripture message carefully and prayerfully. If you are in a retreat setting, use the readings on which your experience is centered, so that it will repeat key phrases heard earlier. You may choose to act out the reading or concretize it in some other way.
* ***Response/Reflection –*** After the reading, you may want the group to sit in quiet reflection, share feelings, pray spontaneously, sing or perform some other type of activity, which will help each person internalize the message. If someone is offering reflections or preaching on the Word, be sure to prepare by praying for the Holy Spirit’s guidance, studying the readings thoroughly and listening and waiting upon God’s will. If appropriate, involve the group in the response.
* ***Blessing/Sign of Faith –*** Many worship services close with some sign of the group’s unity, such as a traditional prayer, a song, a sign of peace, a formal blessing or some other expression of the group’s relationship with Jesus.

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Remember, worship involves relating to God as His children through His Word, praising Him for His character and deeds and submitting to His eternal will.*

Ephesians 5:19-20

“Prayer Planning Worksheet”

***Focus – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***Setting/Externals –***


##### Special Needs -

###### Notes

###### Prayer Outline

1. ***Call to Prayer (Opening) –***
2. ***Message (Scripture/Teaching) –***
3. ***Response/Reflection (Describe) –***
4. ***Blessing Sign of Faith (Closing) –***

###### Readings

##### Reading 1 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Read***
* ***Choral***
 | * ***Sung***
* ***Acted***
 |

##### Reading 1 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Read***
* ***Choral***
 | * ***Sung***
* ***Acted***
 |

##### Reading 1 - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Read***
* ***Choral***
 | * ***Sung***
* ***Acted***
 |

###### Music

* ***# 1…Title/Artist -***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Recorded***
* ***Sung***
 | Bible Reference - |

* ***# 2…Title/Artist -***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Recorded***
* ***Sung***
 | ***Bible Reference -*** |

* ***# 3…Title/Artist -***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * ***Recorded***
* ***Sung***
 | ***Bible Reference -*** |

## ***“Ministry Planning Sheet”***

***Our Mission Statement –***

***Our Ministry Focus/Goals –***

***Our Main Tools –***

###### Calendar

***June/July/August –***

***September –***

***October –***

***December –***

***January –***

***February –***

***March –***

***April –***

***May –***

***“Brainstorming Sheet for Specific Ministry Projects”***

*Use the sample calendar as a starting point and brainstorm specific ideas for the drama ministry based on the area your small group receives…*

***Specific Area to Deal with: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***Prayer and Exploring –*** What goals come to mind? What needs surface? Where are you going?

***Refining –*** What practical things will we need to accomplish our task (resources, etc.)?

***Planning and Beginning –*** What steps will you take to implement your goal?

1)

2)

3)

4)

#### Alternative Prayer Service for the Drama Retreat, Evening of Day One

***Opening Music –*** Selected Song Sung or Heard on CD.

***Choral Reading –*** Psalm 107 (Adapted)

***Reader –*** Lord, I was in a desert place. I was alone and afraid. I hungered for your life; I thirsted for your peace. I was wasting away, far from the harmony of my family, far from the safety of my home. But you raised me up and you saved me. You gave me many good things.

***Reader –*** I dwelt in darkness, Mighty God. Your council, I could not hear. I believed I did not need you and my foolishness bound me in chains of indifference and sorrow. I stumbled and fell into a dark pit. But you broke my chains and led me into your kingdom, past the gates of my fear into your wonderful light.

***Reader –*** Your heavenly food I could not consume, Lord. Though I hungered for your peace, I did not know how to taste it. But you healed my affliction and made my life an offering of Thanksgiving.

***Reading –*** I had ventured into waters too deep for me, Lord. I traded my soul with angels but I grew fearful and became tossed by forces I could not understand. The wind of your Spirit lifted me to the highest mountain and showed me the deepest parts of my soul. My heart melted away. But you gave me a new heart. The fierce wind of your Spirit became a gentle breeze, and the waves of my sorrow were made still.

***Reader –*** Mighty God, you brought me to that desert. You made my soul thirst for the flowing rivers of your life. And so you showered me with your grace and my soul became the fertile ground of new and abundant life. My sorrow has closed its mouth and my heart has rejoiced in your love. Who is wise enough to understand this? Who is it who can grasp all that you are to us?

***Song –*** Selected for the theme of the drama

***Break into Small Groups –*** Talk about the following questions in groups of four:

* What walls have others set up in their lives that have kept you and others out?
* What “bombs” are they dropping on you to keep you from getting close?
* What walls have you put up in your life?
* How has God quietly encircled and brought down your walls?

***Closing Music –*** Sung by youth and adults

#### Alternative Prayer Service for the Drama Retreat, Evening, Day Two (Reconciliation Service)

###### Opening Prayer

**Leader –** *Lord, we come before you now to seek your grace, your mercy and your healing. Father, we need your forgiveness. Your Son Jesus took upon himself all our sins and brought us new life in the cross. We have been told by your Word to confess our sins to one another and to pray for each other that we might be healed. As we offer ourselves to you, may we be restored in Jesus, for it is in His name we pray. Amen.*

***Reading One –*** *Philippians 2:1-11 - “Imitating Christ’s Humility”*

***Reading Two -*** *John 4:4-42 – “The Woman at the Well”*

***Reflections –*** *We are here to acknowledge our need to turn back to God to renew our relationship with Him. We are called to confess our sins to one another, to build each other up in the faith and to praise and worship the God who has saved us. Reconciliation leads us once again to the joy of our salvation in Christ, and calls us to grow in our faith and do the good works that God has given us to do. One of those works is to reach out in forgiveness and love to others.*

**Leader –** *We offer our prayers to you, as we come together as a community of faithful, to offer praise, to humble ourselves before you, and to strengthen our minds and hearts in Jesus Christ.*

***Choral Reading:*** *“Prayers of Praise and Humility before Our God” (In Section 2)*

***Meditation –*** *Each person is asked to reflect in silence on 1) those he/she has hurt, 2) those things he/she has done to offend God and 3) those people he/she needs to forgive as well.*

***Blessing for the Youth –*** *First the leaders pray for the youth (imposing hands or holding hands) for their openness to the Spirit, that God will grant them His protection, guidance and strength. It is a spontaneous prayer, to be done silently or aloud, as each feels prompted. When they are done, they come up and each lights a candle and then return to sit quietly in small groups. They are encouraged to confess any things that are heavy on their hearts if they want.*

***Reflection Reading –*** *“The Harvest Prayer” (In Section 2)*

***Song for Meditation –*** *“Heart’s Cry” - Steven Curtis Chapman (or other appropriate song)*

***Prayer of Confession/Individual Confession*** (Prayer for Leader on Sheet)

# **Closing Blessing**

***Leader* –** *Let us join hands, bow our heads and pray for God’s blessing. God of mercy and compassion, we praise you for your goodness in sending your Son, Jesus to take away our sins and destroy the power of the enemy. We thank you that we are saved in Jesus. In our confession of our sinfulness, we restore our relationship with you and are strengthened to do the works you have called us to do. May we continue to grow in your Word and in this act of worship, and may we come to know you more fully as we serve you in all our actions. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**Prayer of Confession**

**Leader -** For the times we have hurt God by what we have said and done (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** For the times we have thought we didn’t need God in our lives (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** For the times we have hurt our families and our friends; the times we have thought only of what we wanted and not what God wanted (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader** – For the times we thought we were better than others, when we only listened to our own ideas, when we wanted to make others do what was wrong (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** For the times we knew what God wanted us to do, but we didn’t do it (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** For the times we made excuses for what we did that was wrong, when we hung out with the wrong crowd, when we blamed others, when we would not admit our sins (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** For the times we have separated ourselves from Jesus by looking to other things to give us happiness, when we set our hearts on what is wrong, when we listened to Satan’s lies (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

**Leader –** And for all those other sins we have in our hearts (pause), we pray…

**Youth – We confess our sins, O Lord.**

Statement of Peace

**Dear God, I am sorry for my sins. I am sorry I have hurt**

**others and I am sorry I have hurt you. I am most sorry that**

**I have forgotten to forgive others. I give my forgiveness**

**and my prayer to you in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

***Spiritual Inventory (Examination of Conscience)***

***“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the***

***authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual***

***forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 6:12)***

**Take some time to examine your conscience to see areas of struggle (Check all that apply).**

* *Putting anything else before God, such as money, popularity, material things or even non-Christian occult practices such as a Ouija Board, séances,*
* *Failing to keep the Lord’s Day Holy, not just in going to church but in my attitudes and behavior, failing to take time to reflect on God’s blessings in my life.*
* *Misusing the name of God by cursing or swearing a false oath or making promises in his name that I have not kept*
* *Failing to make time to pray daily, to spend time with God, sharing my joys and my needs, failing to pray for others and to listen for God to speak to me.*
* *Failing to spend time in God’s Word, studying it, learning it, placing it in my heart so that I can grow in my relationship with God.*
* *Setting a bad example for others, for believers and for those who don’t believe in Jesus, even though I know what God wants me to do*
* *Being proud, thinking more highly of myself than I ought to think, showing false humility not giving God the glory for the good I do and the things I accomplish, or refusing to admit when I am wrong.*
* *Not using my speech to heal others, not keeping a tight rein on my tongue, but instead using bad language, course talk, insults, racial or ethnic slurs, or other forms of inappropriate speech.*
* *Letting anger get the best of me, and acting on my anger in inappropriate ways, causing hurt to another with my words or actions, even those that are more passive aggressive.*
* *Taking things that don’t belong to me, and justifying it by making excuses (“Everybody does it!” “It’s not stealing from work!) or failing to correct a mistake that costs someone money.*
* *Lying, cheating or using other forms of dishonesty and deception to get what I want, avoid hurt, make myself look better or to hurt another person’s reputation.*
* *Rebelling against or failing to respect those in authority over me (parents, teachers, police and other adults) in what I say, how I treat them or how I fail to listen to them.*
* *Having unforgiveness in your heart, holding a grudge against another person, refusing to let go of hurts because I have a desire to get even with the other person.*
* *Failing to promote fairness and equality, failing to stand up for those who are weak, failing to care for the needs of the poor when I have the opportunity to help.*
* *Engaging in thoughts, fantasies or wishes that are impure and against God’s call on my life, and letting those thoughts lead to impure actions or bad habits while thinking they are harmless or unimportant.*
* *Not taking care of my own personal needs in mind, body and spirit, over-indulging in food, media, mindless activity or inappropriate reading, or failing to get proper exercise, sleep and nutrition.*
* *Failing to live out my faith or failing to share the Good News of Christ with others, out of fear, laziness, peer pressure or apathy.*

Statement of Peace

**Dear God, I am sorry for my sins. I am sorry I have hurt**

**others and I am sorry I have hurt you. I am most sorry that**

**I have forgotten to forgive others. I give my forgiveness**

**and my prayer to you in Jesus’ name. Amen.**