

The community of believers was one in heart and mind. (Acts 4:32a)

The Great Commission – Matthew 28:16-20

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: SHARE

Today's story is about Jesus' ministry and teachings being carried out and continued through the work of his followers. Jesus commissions his disciples with the task of forming a worldwide community of faith. This community is to be life-giving and guided by the messages of Jesus.

However, there is some doubt and also a sense of mystery. Some people worship, while others have many questions. This is similar to many of the stories in the Gospels when the disciples doubt and don't believe. We, too, can live in this ambiguity. We worship God and want to follow Jesus while also having many questions, doubts, and concerns.

Jesus did amazing things through his teachings and ministry, and by his example he made it possible for us to know God. Jesus passed on his message of love to his followers and asks us to share this message with everyone.

A commission means a call, and a call is something God wants or asks you to do. In this commission, God wants us to do something so great: to share Jesus with the whole world. This can look like multiple things: kindness, love, respect, and ministry. Children can do many of these things too. We are all called to go baptize, teach, and serve. These are central to Jesus' ministry and to our calling as followers of Christ.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

The Great Commission is a familiar story to many. It is used in lots of ways to invite us to live out our mission as Christians. For many people, this is the task of evangelizing. In today's world this can be a hot-button topic. However, evangelism does not always mean conversion. In fact, Merriam-Webster notes that *evangelism* is about "personal commitments to Christ." This week, practice evangelism by engaging in some self-reflection through journaling. Write about the ways have you committed your life to Christ and how you embody that in your everyday life.

Come Together

Welcome to Wonder

Supplies: *Class Pack—pp. 10 & 23, 16 & 17; Leader Guide—pp. 4, 85; Activity Sheets (Session 6); Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD; CD player; stickers or markers; items for Wonder Table (small table, white cloth, and items such as a candle, globe, worship elements); Wonder Box; map; pens; pencils*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Attendance Chart (Class Pack—pp. 16 & 17). Set up a Wonder Table (see Leader—p. 4). Place the map inside the Wonder Box. Set the Wonder Box on the Wonder Table.*

- Play “Celebrate Wonder” (CD) as the children arrive. Lyrics are on page 85 of the Leader Guide.
- Greet each child. Show the children where to mark the Attendance Chart using a sticker or a marker.
- Distribute this week’s Activity Sheet (Session 6). Help the children interact with the activities on each page.

Tip: *Display the Wonder Wall poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 23), or use the instructions on the back of the poster to create your own.*

Sing and Celebrate

Supplies: *Leader Guide—p. 87, Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD or Celebrate Wonder DVD, CD player, DVD player, TV*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy “Song Sheet—Unit 2” for each child.*

- Gather the children around the Wonder Table, and hand out the Song Sheets.
- Play “Tell Somebody” (CD or DVD). Invite the children to sing and celebrate.

Wonder Time

Share a Story

Supplies: *CEB Bible, Class Pack—pp. 6 & 27, Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player, small pieces of paper or sticky notes, pens, pencils, crayons, markers*

Prepare Ahead: *Obtain the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat (pp. 6 & 27).*

- Lay the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat on the floor.

- Read from the Bible today's story in Matthew 28:16-20.
- Have the children write or draw good news and put it on the Wonder Story Mat.
- Watch the Session 6 video on the DVD.

Wonder with Me

Supplies: Class Pack—insert, pp. 12 & 21; Wonder Box (containing a map)

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Word poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 21), and locate the Wonder Cube (Class Pack—insert).

- Let a child roll the Wonder Cube. Direct the children to answer the question(s) about the Bible story. You can interact with the Wonder Cube as time allows.
- Then pick up the Wonder Box and place it in front of the children.

SAY: Today's faith word is *Share*: to offer God's blessings to others.

- Wonder together:
 - How do you share with others?
 - How would you have felt if Jesus asked you to share his message?
 - What does Jesus ask us to share in this story?
 - Who can you share Jesus' message with?
- Open the Wonder Box and reveal the map.

SAY: A map can show us the whole world. Jesus wants us to use his message to love everyone all around the world.

WONDER: Can you do that? How?

Experience Wonder

I Am Going (Game)

- Have the children sit in a circle.

SAY: In the Bible story, Jesus sent his friends out into the world.

WONDER: If you were going on a journey all around the world, what would you take with you?

- Instruct the first child to say, "My name is _____, and I am bringing _____ around the world." The item the child is bringing must start with the same letter as his or her first name. Play the game until everyone has had a turn.

Tip: To make it more challenging, you may have each child remember what the previous child named.

Color the Journey (Reflection)

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 42, crayons, markers, colored pencils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy “Color the Journey” (Leader Guide) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Color the Journey.”

SAY: Let’s spend some time thinking about how we might share God’s love and grace with the whole world.

- Play some quiet music, and invite the children to reflect quietly as they color.
- Allow the children to color for a few minutes or as you see fit.

Tip: Help children quiet their voices and calm their bodies before beginning this activity by doing a breath prayer or by turning down the lights.

All Around the World (Craft)

Supplies: picture of the earth, construction paper (green, blue), markers (blue, black, green), scissors

SAY: Jesus asks us to spread his love all around the world.

- Show the children the picture of the earth. Have each child draw a circle on paper and decorate the circle to look like the earth.
- Have the children cut four strips of construction paper. Show them how to fold the strips accordion-style and then glue one end of each strip to the earth circle to make it look like it has arms and legs.

SAY: You have an earth that looks like it can walk, run, give hugs, and offer so much love. You can spread Jesus’ love to all the earth.

Peaceful Place

Supplies: suggested books: “Come with Me” by Holly M. McGhee and “Silence” by Lemniscates; quiet items: globes, maps, sheet music

- Locate the suggested books and quiet items, and place them in the Peaceful Place.
- Allow children who want or need a quieter activity to visit the Peaceful Place.

Tip: You may choose to include other quiet toys, books, or activities.

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice—Sharing the Good News Through Witness

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 89, “Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book” (optional)

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy “Celebration Chart” (Leader Guide) for children who have not received it yet.

- Gather the children around the Wonder Table.

SAY: Today we are invited to go and tell. We will go and tell Jesus’ message.

- Invite the children to shout, “Jesus loves you!”
- Then have the children whisper, “Jesus loves you!”
- Repeat the activity as long as you choose.

WONDER: Is it easy to follow Jesus? Do you ever have doubts?

SAY: It’s OK to wonder about how you can follow Jesus, but don’t forget that Jesus loves you and the whole world no matter what!

- Send “Celebration Chart” home with children who did not receive it yet.
- Encourage the children and their families to use the “Celebration Chart” and to read together the quarterly *Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book* (if purchased).

**CELEBRATE
WONDER™** Color the Journey

