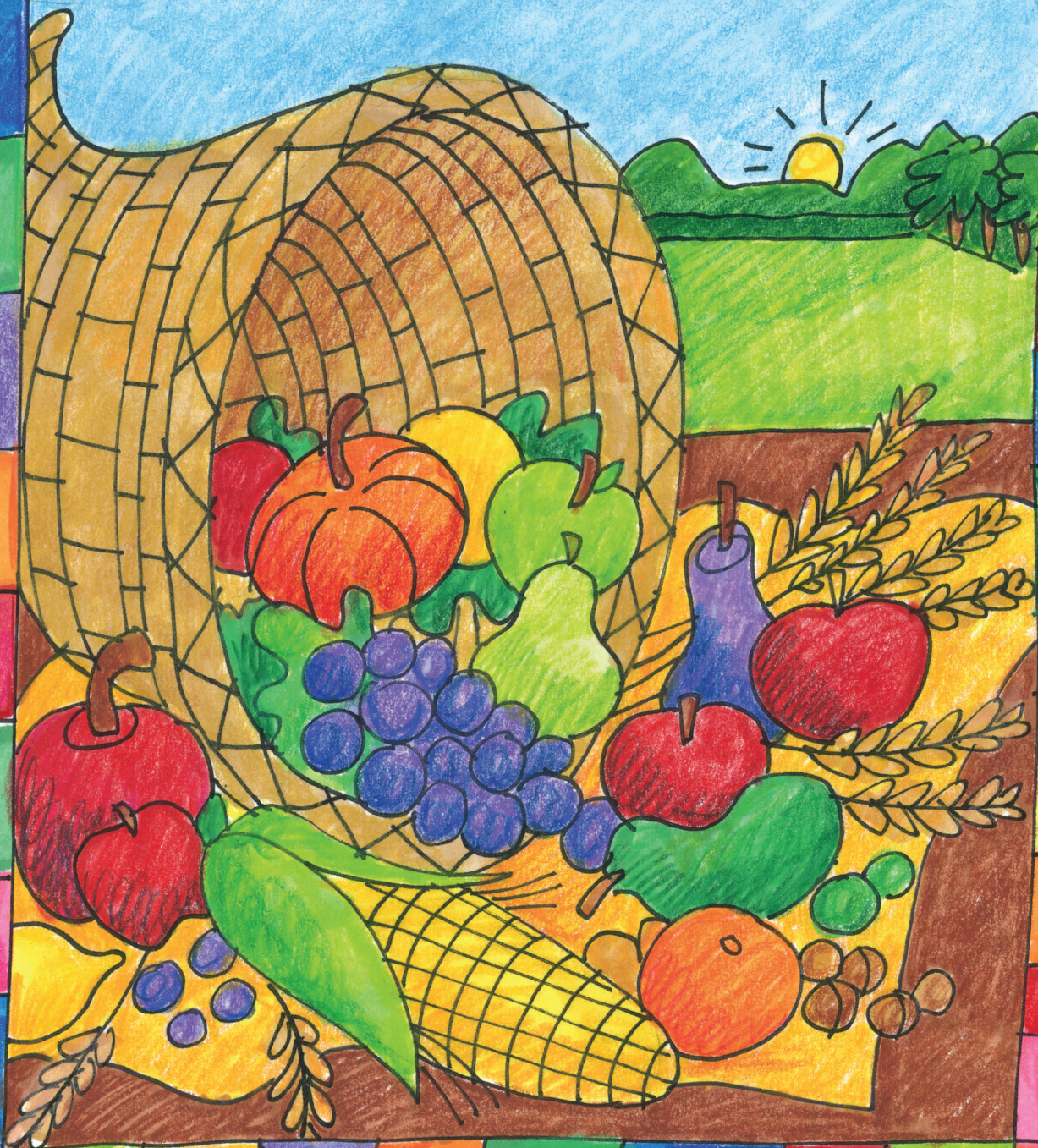
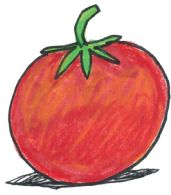


HARVEST



The Abundant Life Garden Project®

Cynthia Coe and Jerusalem Jackson Greer - Curriculum Designers, The Rev. Jay Sidebotham - Illustrator



The Abundant Life Garden Project®
offered by Episcopal Relief & Development

HARVEST

GARDEN GOALS

Children will learn that God gives us gifts for abundant life, including the harvest of our labors. It is important that we care for and share this gift with others.

GARDEN FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

- ☐ Review lesson
- ☐ Choose options from each section
- ☐ Gather materials needed for each section
- ☐ Print Lessons and Home Life Handouts
- ☐ Set up classroom - *Will you be learning as a whole class or being using the Growing Station Rotation* set-up?*

*Growing Station Rotation

Some classes respond better to a learning center style of teaching, and some do better with whole-class learning, and some teachers feel more effective in one vs. the other. These lessons can easily be taught in either style and we hope that you will choose the one that best suits your instructors and children. The **Listen** and **Do** portions of each lesson can easily be set up as learning stations.

Understanding the Lesson | Teachers

This week's interactive, Scripture-based module will introduce you and your class to the work of Episcopal Relief & Development in the area of Harvest.

Harvest is a time of celebration, marking the end of a growing season and a time of feasting on the fruits of our labors. As you prepare to celebrate together during Week 6, you might consider that Harvest not only celebrates food but also the cycle of life itself. Seeds fall and are buried for a time of seemingly little or no growth. Water and soil nourish and fertilize these seeds, resulting in growth mysteriously taking place unseen. Then, new growth springs forth, resulting in the plants we now feast upon. The uneaten seeds of this harvest, held back as we look toward the future, soon will be buried to start the cycle anew. Though a time of celebration, this is also when the hard work begins. Harvest is the most labor-intensive time on the farm. Produce must be picked at just the right time; crops must be stored and preserved properly and then taken to market or otherwise distributed. Many factors, particularly the weather, affect this process. In our spiritual lives, we might see harvest as the "hard work" of our own spiritual growth and maturity. We may have become new in Christ or may have grown in spirit and in our lives in Christ. But this is not just a time of kicking back and enjoying the feast. As part of our Baptismal Covenant, we are called to serve Christ in all persons and to strive for justice and peace among all people—no small tasks. Like the harvest of literal fruits and vegetables, this spiritual harvest of our own growth takes time and effort and certainly will be affected by the wind and the water of the Holy Spirit. And like the life cycle of plants, we will have cycles of sowing new seeds of growth in our lives, waiting—perhaps not so patiently—for new growth to appear, then gearing up for yet a new round of harvesting and serving others.

Stocking the Tool Shed

These are the common items you will need each week:

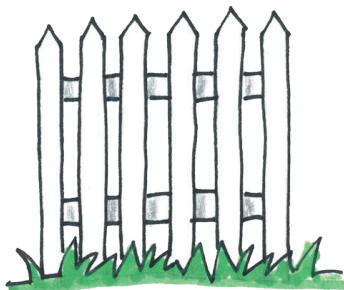
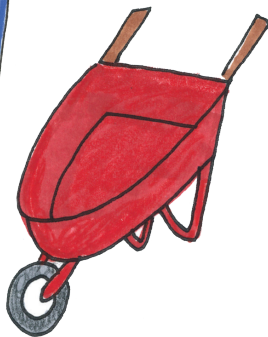
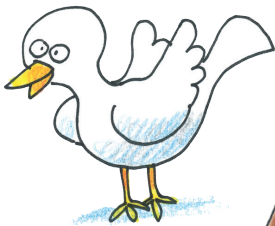
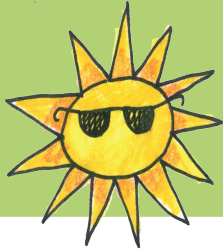
- A large blank writing surface (paper, poster boards or fabric)
- Garden Journals
- Each participant (if possible) should have a simple journal to use throughout the program. We recommend something similar to these: https://www.amazon.com/Kraft-Notebook-Inches-Notebooks-Journals/dp/B06XS9WXWQ/ref=sr_1_12?ie=UTF8&qid=1510090284&sr=8-12&keywords=kraft+paper+notebook
- Or a supply of all-purpose blank white paper (enough for each child to have three to five sheets)

- A plentiful supply of crayons, washable markers or colored pencils (at least three to five writing instruments of various colors recommended for each child)
- At least one Bible (two or more copies preferable)
- At least one *Book of Common Prayer* or access to the BCP online
- Any printables needed for this lesson.
- Television or screen if you will be watching the Digital Story options



Rhythm of Learning

The rhythm of learning for these lessons is based upon the same structure as a Eucharist service, following a simple **Gather, Listen, Do, Go** format. You may do as much or as little from each section as you feel is best for your class.



Gather

This section includes welcoming activities and the lessons introduction.

Listen

This section includes multiple storytelling options. Please choose one **"Story from the Field"** and one **"Story from our Faith"** to share. If you have a large group and enough volunteer leaders you may want to split into small Learning Pods and assign each pod a separate story to reflect on, then have each pod share with the larger group what they discovered.

Do

This section includes three activities to help children respond to what they have heard in the stories, and dig deeper into the lessons topic. Depending on your time frame and class size you can choose to do one or all three. For larger groups you may want to set up each activity as a Growing Station and have children rotate through in their Learning Pods.

Go

This section prepares children for taking what they have learned back into their everyday lives through prayer and a charge to action.



The Abundant Life Garden Project®

Gather

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Garden Trifold display board with the previous layers firmly attached, scissors, markers or crayons, paper, glue sticks, a large bowl, and fresh fruits and vegetables (locally sourced if possible).



Welcome Activity:

Celebrating the Harvest!

As children come into the learning space, have them write or draw pictures of fruits and vegetables. Have them cut them out, then glue them onto the tri-fold board. Once all children have arrived and participated in this activity, begin your lesson with the opening prayer.

Early Finishers: Children who finish before the others and need their attention redirected may work on the Harvest coloring sheet provided in the *Printables Packet*.

Place a large bowl, with a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables (from your garden or a local garden or farm if possible) and other locally sourced items like honey or boiled eggs, in the center of the room.



Opening Prayer:

Leader: As you may have guessed, today's lesson is going to be all about the gift of the Harvest! Let's begin our lesson for asking for God's presence to be with us as we learn and explore this gift. Everyone please take one piece of the harvest in your left hand.

Leader:

The Lord be with you!

Children and helpers:

And also with you!

Leader:

Please repeat this prayer and these motions after me.

May God be in my mind (using your right hand, touch middle of forehead)

May Jesus be in my heart (using your right hand touch middle of chest))

May the Holy Spirit be by my side (using your right hand first touch the left shoulder, then the right shoulder.)

Amen!

Following the prayer ask children to return items to the bowl.)



Gather



Theme Introduction and Review:

WEEK FIVE

Welcome to the Abundant Life Garden Project®

offered by Episcopal Relief &
Development!

*Can someone remind us
all what it means to have
abundant life?*

*Who gives us the gifts
we need to live an
abundant life? (God!)*

What is one thing you remember from our lesson on Water?

What are some examples of how water helps us and others to live abundantly?

(Baptism, Keeps us alive, Waters crops, New life)

*What is something that you remember about how Soil
helps us and others to live abundantly?*

*We can plant food in it, it helps the ecosystem and is a home
to bugs and creepy crawlers, represents Growth.*

What is the spiritual soil of our lives?

Our Hearts!

Let's listen to some stories from people who depend on a healthy harvest!

INDEX CARDS:

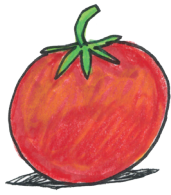
Harvest Facts

If you have good readers hand out the **Harvest Facts** cards from your **Printables Packet**. Ask the kids to read them one at a time, out loud. If you do not have good readers, you can share the following facts yourself:

- Corn is called maize by most countries, this comes from the Spanish word 'maiz'.
- Harvesting is the process of gathering a ripe crop from the fields.
- Corn is a cereal crop that is part of the grass family.
- Wheat covers more of the earth than any other crop.
- Rice is the thirstiest crop: according to the U.N., farmers need at least 2,000 liters of water to make one kilogram of rice.
- Peas are a good source of vitamin A, vitamin C, folate, thiamine (B1), iron and phosphorus.
- Corn is the most produced grain in the world.
- Reaping is the cutting of grain or pulse for harvest, typically using a scythe, sickle, or reaper.
- An ear or cob of corn is actually part of the flower and an individual kernel is a seed.
- Potatoes are the number one non-grain food product in the world.
- Soybeans produce twice as much protein per acre as any other major vegetable crop.
- On smaller farms with minimal mechanization, harvesting is the most labor-intensive activity of the growing season.
- On average an ear of corn has 800 kernels in 16 rows.
- Yams are the first harvested crop of the year, which marks the beginning of several Yams Festivals throughout Africa.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

- **Which of these facts most surprise you?**
- **What do you think the Harvest has to do with having or sharing abundant life?**



Listen

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Stories from the Field Booklet or a way to show the digital options, pens, coloring pencils, crayons, and Garden Journals



Stories from the Field

After children have had a few minutes to share their thoughts about Water, share one of the Stories from the Field options, **Choose one** from either Hard Copy or Digital.

Hard Copy Option:

Seeing a Way Out of Poverty

Courtesy of Harvey Wang for Episcopal Relief & Development

You might have older children or youth who are good readers take turns reading the paragraphs of this brief true story.

After the story is read, take time to review together.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- ***What did Solomon's children reap in order to help their parents feed their family?***
- ***How did someone else's harvest enable Solomon's family to eat better and go to school?***
- ***How will these children be able to share their harvest in the future?***

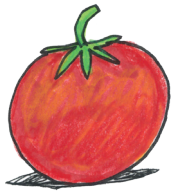
Digital Stories:

Passion Fruit Farming

<https://youtu.be/Z330IMo21nQ>

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- **What is the crop that farmers in Kenya are able to grow that is popular?**
- **How are the women helping with the farming program?**
- **How did this program start? (The man who worked for the government decided to go back to his hometown to teach people how to farm better.)**
- **What lengths would you go to to make sure that you could grow and sell food in order to provide for your family?**
- **What can you do to help those in your community gain access to healthy food?**



Listen

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Bible, Book of Common Prayer, Blank Paper or Garden Journals, Markers or coloring pencils



Stories from our Faith

Leader: Begin by asking children if they can think of any bible stories or words from our liturgy (you might say Worship Service) that talk about a harvest.

Possible Answers: *Creation story, Parable of the Sower, Ruth and Naomi.* Pick **one** of the following to share:

Old Testament Study: **Gleaning the Fields**

Read Ruth 2:1-18. For younger children, a children's Bible storybook such as *The Children of God Storybook Bible* by the Rt. Rev. Desmond Tutu might be used to tell this story.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- **How did Boaz share his harvest?**
- **How might we share our harvest in today's world?**
- **How would a woman like Ruth be fed in today's world? Who would help her?**

Dig Deeper: Draw a picture or write a short poem or story about someone sharing their harvest with another person.

Note: Ruth and Boaz became great-grandparents of King David and ancestors of Jesus!

New Testament Study: **Feeding and Sharing**

Read Luke 9:10-17.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- **Who in our world might be in a desolate place?**
- **Why can't we feed them?**
- **How could there be enough food for everyone in our world?**
- **What gift of abundant life can you share with others?**

Dig Deeper: Draw a picture or write your responses to these questions OR draw a picture or write what you think this story looked like and how the events took place.

Book of Common Prayer Study

The Great Thanksgiving

In this lesson, help think about the sacrament of Holy Communion in our worship services and its relationship to abundant life.

Hand children copies of the *Book of Common Prayer*, together look up and read the first section of Eucharistic Prayer A as on page 361. Even if some of your children are not reading yet, allow them to hold a copy of *Book of Common Prayer* and ask the older kids to help them locate the correct pages.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- **What is this part of the worship service called?**
- **What does it mean to be in "communion" with other people?**
- **Why do we celebrate the "Great Thanksgiving" in our worship services?**

Next: Have children turn to page 364. Ask them to look for the words in bold print on this page.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

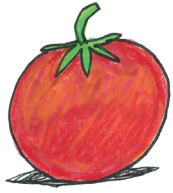
- **What is this part of the sacrament of Holy Communion called?**
- **What are we given when we go up to the altar?**
- **What do we do with what we are given?**
- **How does this help us to have abundant life?**

Finally, ask everyone to turn to page 366: Guide children reading what we are told to do as we leave the worship service (in the bottom half of this page). Consider having one or two children be the "deacon" and the rest of the class be the "people".

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- **Where are we asked to go after we leave a worship service?**
- **What are we asked to do after we leave a worship service?**
- **What do we say in response?**
- **How does this help us share the gifts of abundant life?**

Remind children: These questions are not for discussion only in this lesson! Please think about them the next time you participate in a worship service!



Do

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Fruit and Vegetables that must be peeled, shucked or snapped.

Ideas: Corn (in the husk), Purple Hull or Black Eye Peas (in shell), Oranges, Fresh Coconut, Watermelon, Tree Nuts such as Pecans or Walnuts in the shell, Avocados.

- A few corresponding pre-peeled and packaged Vegetables and Fruits.

The best ones is corn or peas

- Paring knife

- Bowls

To place shelled/peeled produce in, paper bags to collect the shells, rinds and husk.

Learning Activity:

Harvest Work

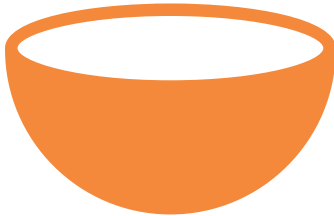
Peel

Safely demonstrate the peeling, shelling, or shucking of a few of the samples you have brought. Let children work on produce that does not require a knife.

Compare and Contrast

If you are using corn, shave the kernels off the cobs as children finish shucking.

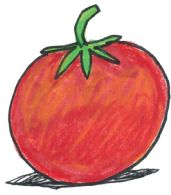
If you brought a frozen bag of corn, see how long it takes to shuck and shave enough corn in order to have the same amount. (This can be done with any fruit or vegetable that requires peeling, but corn works the best as the process is so tedious!) Have the kids discuss how it would change their afternoons and evenings if they had to help prepare dinner this way each night. What fun activities would they have to give up?



Ponder

Leader: Did you have any idea how much effort it took to take one piece of corn (or other fruit or vegetable) from off the stalk to onto your plate? And we didn't even harvest this from the garden - that is a whole other set of steps that someone else had to do. Now, most of us have access to fruits and vegetables that have been peeled and packaged and are sold in grocery stores. And a large part of that peeling and packing was done by machines. But in many parts of the world where our Episcopal Relief and Development workers go, they don't have big grocery stores like we do. In fact, the majority of the people in the world don't even have access to refrigerators. They either grow their food themselves or they purchase it at a marketplace which is similar to our farmers market. And because they don't have refrigeration they have to eat what they purchase either right away or within a few days. This means that they have to peel, or shuck, or shell, their food, which you can tell is hard work and takes a lot of time. For a large part of the world, just getting food from the fields to ready to cook or eat, takes a lot of effort and time. Have the children wonder together how they can cultivate an attitude of gratefulness for the ease of access that they have to food. Ask for ideas about what can they do to help others access food more easily.

IDEAS: supporting the work of Episcopal Relief and Development agricultural work, helping to harvest and prep food from a local garden that can then be donated to a Food Pantry or Soup Kitchen.



SUPPLIES NEEDED

Creative Activity:

Fruit and Vegetable Painting

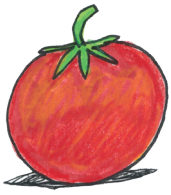
This activity will help demonstrate the uniqueness of creation. The craft, as laid out calls for each child to create their own piece of artwork, however if you are going to have a Celebration Feast and/or Eucharist, you might consider having the children stamp a pre-washed cotton drop cloth (easily found in the painting section of most hardware stores) that you can use as a tablecloth or frontal for your celebration.

Directions:

1. Distribute one piece of art paper, one plate, one paint brush, and one cup of water to each child.
2. Have children pick a few pieces of the pre-cut produce "stamps".
3. Squirt about 2 tsp of paint onto their plate "palette."
4. Demonstrate how to either gently press their produce into the paint, or how to "paint" the flat surface of their stamp using their paint brush.
5. Once their stamp is coated with paint, demonstrate how to gently, yet firmly, press the stamp onto their paper.
6. Notice the different shapes and patterns the different pieces of produce leave on the paper.
7. As the children continue painting and creating, wonder aloud about how people - just like the produce - are all different. Engage the children in a discussion while they work, about how just like different types of fruits and vegetables need different things in order to thrive and grow (some need a lot of sun, some need a lot of water while others don't need much at all, some need cool temperatures, some need sandy soil, and some need a lot of pruning). Help them make the connection between this idea and how different people need different things in order to experience abundant life (some people need to spend a lot of one-on-one time with people they love, some people need to find meaningful work fighting injustices, some people need time and space to create art, some people need to get their hands dirty and work in the dirt). Ask them to share how they experience abundant life? How do they feel God's love and how do they best like to share God's love with others? To help get them started, share your answers to this question.
8. Make sure that each child writes their name on their paper. If you are having a Celebration Feast and/or Eucharist, save the artwork to display at that gathering.

- Fruits and vegetables of different shapes and textures, all cut* in half. Ideas include: Lemons, Apples, Potatoes, Onions, Green Peppers, Carrots and Cucumbers. A note about cutting: Think about the shape you want to stamp - some will work better if cut in half vertically, and some will stamp better if they are cut horizontally. Also, the stems on apples and peppers make wonderful handles. Advanced Method - You can cut out shapes, such as squares, hearts, letters, and stars, into the center of potatoes.
- Craft paint
- Disposable or plastic plates for painting palettes
- Paint brushes
- Large sheets of construction or heavy duty paper or cotton painting dropcloth (make sure to pre-wash it)
- Painting smocks (if needed)
- Cups of water





Do

Contemplative Activity: Meditation



Begin by asking the children to sit “crisscross applesauce” or to lie flat on their backs, next, ask them to take three deep breaths and then, if they comfortable, to rest their hands on their stomachs and to close their eyes. The leader should close their eyes and take deep breaths, in order to model silent meditation for the children.

Next, ask them to listen closely with their imaginations as you read:

After a moment for children to reflect on the parable just read, ask the following questions:

When were we ourselves were hungry and someone fed us?

When did someone give us clothing, welcome us or visit us?

When can we give these gifts to others?

Repeat the first two steps. Have the children assume their meditation position, and ask them to listen once again to the passage of scripture. After a minute or more, the leader might ask children to share any thoughts they have. Some of these thoughts will be quite profound. Others might be silly. Some children might not want to share their thoughts at all. All these reactions are perfectly okay, and children should not be forced or pushed to say anything.

Finish this time by asking the children to open their hands, palms facing up, and to repeat this prayer after you:

May I know the love of Jesus in my heart.

May I plant the love of Jesus in the world.

May I grow the love of Jesus in my home.

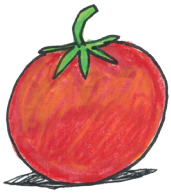
Amen.

Listen to the words of Jesus:

Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison, and you visited me.

Matthew 25:34-36

For tips and information on the importance of silent time with God and how to lead children in meditation, please see **Abundant Life Garden Project® Facilitators Guide** as offered by Episcopal Relief & Development.



Interactive and Intergenerational Activity:

Local Garden

If you have a local garden in your church or neighborhood, here are three interactive and intergenerational activity options:



1

Work with your garden coordinator to help harvest produce, eggs, or honey from your local garden. Have your garden coordinator talk about what happens to this harvest. Have children write or sketch the items they gathered in their Garden Journals.

As you wrap up your time, ask the children these questions:

- **Is there a way that you can help share the gift of food with others?**
Donate to a food pantry, volunteer in a soup kitchen
- **What needs to be done in order for the food to be ready to sell/giveaway?**
- **How can we help each other make these ideas happen?**

Intergenerational connection: If you have a food-based ministry at your church, invite those parishioners who serve this ministry to come and share (or even give a tour!) about their work. Ask them to share how their work is tied to their love of God.

2

If you have older children (fourth grade and up) consider making a short video commercial about your local garden or what they have learned during the **Abundant Life Garden Project®**. Have the kids write, produce, and film the commercial (using a mobile phone would be fine.) Make sure to send your film to churchengagement@episcopalrelief.org so that we can share about it on our blog!

Intergenerational connection: Invite tech-minded members, teens, and college students to join in this project. Help make the connection for your kids that all gifts come from and can be used to the glory of God!

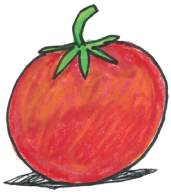
3

Host a Garden-to-Table taste comparison (if your garden isn't producing a harvest yet, consider sourcing other locally grown items.) Cut up similar items from the grocery store. Have children compare and contrast the flavors, textures, and appearance of the two groups of food. Have them write their findings in their Garden Journals.

As you wrap up your time ask your class to discuss their findings with each other.

Discuss the reason some people might buy food at the grocery store, some people at the farmers market or through a co-op, while others try to grow their food, each according to their own need and budget. Remind them that not everyone has the same options - especially in certain places of the world - which is why the work of Episcopal Relief & Development is so important.

Intergenerational connection: Are there people in your congregation who have been on mission trips and can speak to food in other cultures. Ask them to join in your taste test and to share stories about the selection and availability of food during their adventures.



Do



Connecting the Lesson

Leader: Harvesting is incredibly important work. Without the harvest process delicious fruits, vegetables and nuts would simply be ornamental, like flowers. And they would die and root in the fields and the gardens, without ever being useful to anyone or anything. The same is true for the harvest of God's love. It must be harvested and shared in order to help us all grow.

Do you remember how in our Soil lesson we talked about the spiritual soil of our lives being our hearts?

And then do you remember the sorts of seeds that we talked about planting in that spiritual soil during our Seeds lesson?



Can anyone remember what those seeds were?

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control

What do you think it would like to harvest those things we have been growing in our hearts?

How can we harvest and then share the gift of abundant life through love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control?

Ideas: We can harvest these things by first shucking or peeling off things like selfishness, shame, blame, anger, fear... and then we can share the Fruits of the Spirit through our attitudes and actions at home, at school, in our neighborhoods.

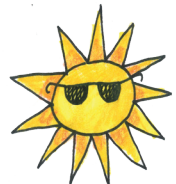
Ask kids to give examples of a time when they shared peace, or had patience, or were gentle with someone. Or when they showed self-control by not losing their temper.

I wonder what practices we need to be working on to make sure that we are sharing the harvest of God's love with the world? What ideas do you have?

Meditation can help shuck off anger, prayer can help peel away selfishness, and Worship helps us to feel joyful.

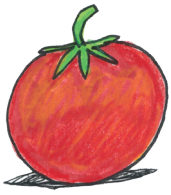
What are some of the practices we learn at church that can help share the harvest?

We pass the peace, we share bread and wine with each other, we learn patience when we sit and listen to the lessons or sermon, we pray prayers of confession in order to better be ready to love our neighbors.



Ask kids to think about what a Harvest Celebration would be like if the Fruits of the Spirit were represented by literal fruits and vegetables.

Next, using their Garden Journals, have them write or draw what they have imagined. Who would they invite to the feast?



Closing Prayer

Closing Reflection: For the closing reflections and prayer, ask children and adult or youth helpers and leaders to once again form a circle again around the bowl of fresh produce. Ask your group to take a few deep breaths, look at the bounty and think about what they saw, heard or experienced during their time today.

What did you learn during our time together?

Do you think about anything differently now?

What might change in your life as a result of this time together?

How will you share the gift of abundant life this week?

Songs may be sung here. If you have older children, the Litany of Thanks may be used here. (Available in the **Printable Packet**)

Home Activity

Send the Abundant Life Garden Project® Handout *Harvest Time* home with the children, either by hardcopy, or by sending the project home digitally.

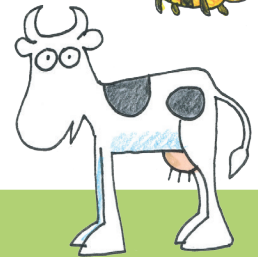
Prayer:

We thank you, Lord, for the many, many gifts you have given us. We thank you for water, for seeds of all kinds, for the many varieties of soil, for all the animals that enrich our lives and for times of harvest. We pray to always seek and serve Christ in others by sharing and making wise use of our harvests. Let us be the hands and feet of Christ in serving the hungry, the thirsty, the lonely and the lost. In Christ's name, Amen.

Charge:

Leader: Let us go into the world with grateful hearts, sharing the gifts of abundant life with everyone we meet!

Children: Praise be to God!



Additional Resources

Songs

Father Eternal Ruler of Creation:
For the Fruit of All Creation:
God's Got the Whole World in God's Hands
(insert different types of food at each verse)
This Pretty Planet
For the Beauty of the Earth
Doxology

Books

Rah, Rah, Radishes!: A Vegetable Chant
by April Pulley Sayre
The Enormous Potato by Aubrey Davis
Grandma Lena's Big Ol' Turnip by Denia Lewis Hester
Stone Soup Paperback by Ann McGovern
Feast for 10 by Cathryn Falwell
Before We Eat: From Farm to Table by Pat Brisson and Mary Azarian
How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?: The Story of Food
by Chris Butterworth (Author) Lucia Gaggiotti (Illustrator)