

2020 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

"They showed us unusual kindness" (Acts 28:2)

IDEAS FOR CHILDREN'S TIME

1. Look at a map of the area around Malta. Where is it in the world? What countries are close to it? How big is it in comparison to Canada? Alternatively, trace Paul's journey as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (maps of this are easily available via Google).
2. Make a cardboard boat according to the instructions found on Google or, using coloured tape, mark out the shape of a boat on the floor.
3. Using a large blue cloth, ask each of the children to hold a section of the fabric and move it up and down to represent the strong wind and waves.
4. The passage from the Acts of the Apostles used in the Ecumenical Worship Service (Acts 27:18 – 28:10) is very dramatic and lends itself to acting out. Children may be invited to play various non-speaking roles as the minister reads the passage. For example, children could sit in one area at the front of the church representing the boat and sway back and forth to show that the ship is in a storm. When the minister describes Paul standing up and speaking, one child may stand to represent Paul. There may be a group of children who act out a struggle to show how the guards wanted to harm the prisoners and one child can be the centurion who stops them. There can be children who represent the natives of Malta who show kindness and hospitality. This may help to keep children engaged for what is otherwise a long passage of Scripture.
5. Children could be asked how they show hospitality. Encourage them to name ways our church welcomes people, feeds them, and makes them feel at home.
6. Children could be in charge of serving at a coffee/social time following the service – allowing them to take a leadership role in providing hospitality.
7. Fill a medium container with water. Investigate with children what objects float and which objects sink. Objects may include: a small rock, a feather, a Popsicle stick, a pen, keys, a toy boat. Although the feather floats, it is not strong so nothing can stand on it or float on it. The Popsicle stick floats but it is hard to hold on to. The boat, however, can have people in it. The church is like a boat that helps us to keep afloat and carries us to safety.
8. Have children hold the 8 oars suggested in the Prayer Service. Allow them to be the ones to carry them forward as our hope for unity extends to the next generation.
9. Bring an oar to show the children. Ask what it is and what it's for. What happens to the people in a boat who have no oar? (Loose speed and direction; can't get anywhere.) Brainstorm with the children how prayer, scripture, the church community, etc. are all like 'oars' for us.