# A New Creed Children’s Program

This four-session series (with the option of session 2 being used for up to seven weeks) acquaints children with The United Church of Canada’s A New Creed. The series focuses on these four parts of the Creed:

* We are not alone
* We believe in God: who has created and is creating
* We are called to be the Church
* We are not alone in life, in death, in life beyond death

Create posters of [A New Creed](https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/new-creed) or parts of [A Song of Faith](https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/song-faith).

Repeat the New Creed [with actions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFEZlhcsMR4) every week. Feel free to develop your own actions as a group as well. Take photographs of the children and use them on posters.

Songs: [We Are Not Alone; God Is with Us](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eghlch_QdPM) or [A New Creed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyeIITCAEBA) by Ellen Wilson

Ralph Milton’s *Family Story Bible and Lectionary Story Bible, Year B,* arementioned a few times and are available from the [United Church Bookstore (UCRD)](https://ucrdstore.ca).

Develop interview questions about the Creed and talk to children one on one about their responses, then create a video for the faith community to watch together.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A New Creed** | **Lesson 1: We Are Not Alone, We Are Fearfully and Wonderfully Made** |
| **Bible Verses** | Psalm 139:1‒6, 13‒181 John 4:7‒8 |
| **Theological Grounding** | The United Church of Canada’s A New Creed states, We are not alone, we live in God’s world.We believe in God: who has created and is creating…”The United Church of Canada’s A Song of Faith states, Finding ourselves in a world of beauty and mystery,  of living things, diverse and interdependent,  of complex patterns of growth and evolution,  of subatomic particles and cosmic swirls, we sing of God the Creator, the Maker and Source of all that is. |
| **Emphasis or Theme** | Belovedness: I am a child of God and a part of God’s beloved creation |
| **Welcome and First Activities** | Mirror activity: Say to the children, “I have the most amazing thing in this box. I want you to look in the box, but don’t tell anyone else what you see.” When children look in the box, they’ll see their own reflection. After everyone has had a look, ask them to describe what they saw when they looked in the box: brown eyes, black hair, red shirt, etc.Introduce the children to A New Creed and let them know you’ll be focusing on different statements in the New Creed for the next several weeks. A creed is an “I believe” statement. You’ll be learning about what The United Church of Canada believes and also thinking about what you as individuals believe. Today you’ll focus on the very first line of A New Creed: “We are not alone.” |
| **Introducing the Story** | Ask the children, “What are some of your favourite songs?” After they have named a few, read the Introduction to Ralph Milton’s story “A Song about Being Born.” (You may want to jot down some of the songs they name and play them on your phone or device as they work later.) |
| **Tell the Story** | Read Ralph Milton’s *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, “A Song about Being Born.”Note: Children may be adopted or not live with their biological mother. Consider the children in your group and how you will respond if they challenge this story. Perhaps leave out the references to “mother.” |
| **Learning Activities** | Pair the children and have each child lie down on a roll of newsprint while their partner traces their body. (You could also do chalk drawings outside on a nice day.) Children can then colour in their body outlines. If they like, they can add words or images that describe things they like to do, things they like about themselves, or a personality trait:* I like to read.
* Drawing of a soccer ball.
* I help my dad do laundry.

As children are drawing, play some of the songs they said they like to listen to. Other songs that could be played include “I Am a Child of God” from *More Voices*, “This Is Me” from *The Greatest Showman*, or “Born This Way” by Lady Gaga. |
| **Consider Popular Culture Connections** | **Books***Who Am I? I Am Me!* by Jeannine Sanders*You Are Special* by Max Lucado (available on Kindle)*The One, the Only Magnificent Me* by Dan Haseltine*On the Night You Were Born* by Nancy Tilman*What’s My Superpower?* by Aviaq Johnston*Giraffes Can’t Dance* by Giles Andreae**Movie***God Made You Special* by VeggieTales |
| **Review** | Prepare a small bowl of water and invite children to dip their hands in the water one at a time while the rest of the group says, “You are loved by God” or “You are God’s beloved.” Children could anoint each other if they feel comfortable. |
| **Conclusion** | Ask each child to silently think of something they like about themselves. Invite them to give silent thanks to God for the thing they like. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A New Creed** | **Lesson 2: We Believe in God: Who Has Created and Is Creating** |
| **Bible Verses** | Genesis 1:1–2:3 Creation storyJohn 14:1 Believe in God |
| **Theological Grounding** | The United Church of Canada’s A New Creed states, We are not alone, we live in God’s world.We believe in God: who has created and is creating…The United Church of Canada’s A Song of Faith states, Finding ourselves in a world of beauty and mystery, of living things, diverse and interdependent, of complex patterns of growth and evolution, of subatomic particles and cosmic swirls,we sing of God the Creator,the Maker and Source of all that is.Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator, who is both in creation and beyond it.All parts of creation, animate and inanimate, are related.All creation is good.We sing of the Creator, who made humans to live and move and have their being in God.In and with God, we can direct our lives toward right relationship with each other and with God.We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life.We can grow in wisdom and compassion.We can recognize all people as kin.We can accept our mortality and finitude, not as a curse, but as a challenge to make our lives and choices matter. |
| **Emphasis or Theme** | Believing in God, we are called to care for creationNote: **This resource could be used for up to seven weeks**, each focusing on one “day” within the creation story. Begin and end each session the same way, with different activities based on the theme provided.  |
| **Welcome and****First Activities** | First week: Gather around an unlit candle. Ask the children about things they like about darkness/nighttime (e.g., it’s a time for rest or for reading; maybe they get to watch a video or show at night; maybe they’ve been to camp or a cottage and they’ve heard night sounds or seen stars). Light the candle. Ask about things they like about light/daytime (they go to school; they play outside and enjoy the warmth of the sun). Give thanks to God for dark and light.Follow-up weeks: Each week gather around the unlit candle and light it together. Have children bring with them an object that represents the day’s theme. Use those objects as a check-in. If children aren’t coming weekly, you can have a basket of objects to choose from.  |
| **Introducing the Story** | Ahead of time, invite children to bring in a picture of their favourite thing in creation (e.g., tree, sun, mountain, insect, or person). You may also want to have objects from nature for them to choose.Start by showing the children your favourite thing and telling them why you think it’s beautiful or fascinating. Wonder out loud about why God created it and why God calls us to love and care for it. Invite the children to share why they brought their favourite things in. If they haven’t brought anything in, provide paper they can draw or write on or magazines or cards with appropriate images.Say or read A New Creed together and let the children know you’ll be focusing on different statements in the New Creed for the next several weeks. A creed is an “I believe” statement. You’ll be learning about what The United Church of Canada believes and also thinking about what you as individuals believe. Today you’ll focus on the part of A New Creed that says, “We believe in God: who has created and is creating.” |
| **Tell the Story** | Read “God Makes a World” in Ralph Milton’s *The Family Story Bible*.Note: If you’re covering the story for seven weeks, invite the children to recall the story from the previous week and begin to tell the story together.See also ideas from [With Respect in Creation](https://www.united-church.ca/worship-theme/children), a Sunday school program that focuses on caring for creation. |
| **Learning Activities** | **Weekly craft option:** Create the creation story with Lego! For a craft that will produce as little waste as possible, purchase a few boxes of classic Lego and land or water pieces, and each week have the children recreate the object that they brought to represent the day’s theme, ultimately building a creation story that you can display in your space. As you build your creations, discuss the importance of each aspect of creation, what makes it loved by God, and what our responsibility is to care for it.**Week 1: Light**To create stained glass lanterns, use clear glue to attach small pieces of tissue paper to small- or medium-sized mason jars. Before gluing the tissue to the jars, children might draw on the paper ways that they bring God’s love into the world. Once they’re finished, distribute either real or electric tea lights to illuminate the lanterns.Conversation about light/dark: Why do we need both? What makes dark beautiful? What makes light beautiful?**Week 2: Sky above and water below**Option 1: Creek/river clean-up. If there is a creek or calm river close to your church, you could lead a clean-up event and talk about our responsibility to care for the sacred water we encounter. For safety, make sure everyone is wearing latex gloves, and remind children to call for a leader if they see something sharp that needs to be picked up.Option 2: Water pollution activity. Invite each child to fill a basin with water and any garbage they find in the area (wrappers, straws, containers, etc.). Give each child rubber gloves and tools to pick the garbage out of the water. Once objects are out, pour the contaminated water through a coffee filter and funnel, showing how hard it is to make water safe and clear again once it’s been polluted.**Week 3: Green plants, tall trees, grass, and beautiful flowers**Depending on the time of year, create an indoor or outdoor garden. Explain the process of planting, nurturing, and, in some cases, harvesting. If you don’t have space for a garden, you can buy small pots and have each child decorate their pot and fill it with soil and a seed of their choice. They can take the pot home and tend to its growth themselves, witnessing the blossoming and sprouting!**Week 4: Golden sun in the daytime and silver moon at night**Look at a World Clock map together, and talk about how it’s daytime in some parts of the world and nighttime in other parts. Make a sundial! For instructions, visit this website (or another like it): [www.raisingarizonakids.com/2015/06/how-to-make-sundial-clock](http://www.raisingarizonakids.com/2015/06/how-to-make-sundial-clock/).**Week 5: Shiny fish in the sea and bright coloured birds in the air**Option 1: Creek/river clean-up from week #2 can alternatively be done this week.Option 2: Listen to a variety of bird calls ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHnzqKfxSQw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHnzqKfxSQw)). Notice how they’re similar or different. Reflect on how God created such different and amazing sounds. If possible, go out in the neighbourhood and try to listen for or spot a bird. If you have a bird expert or hobby birdwatcher in your community, this is a great opportunity to ask them to share in leadership.**Week 6: Animals on land**Blessing of the pets. Have extra volunteers on hand for this day! Invite children to bring in their pets or pictures of their pets or animals they love. Ask children to say why they love these animals, how they care for them, and the ways God shows love to them.**Week 6: People in the world**Put together a photo board. Either ask all the children to bring in a picture of themselves, or take photographs of all the children to post on the board. Then ask them to take photographs of people in the church at coffee hour the next Sunday and then add their photos to the board. As well, invite children to bring in photos of people who don’t look/act/talk like them. Wonder together about how God is found in every photo and the people in the world we may never meet. Talk about how seeing God in others changes how we treat each other.**Week 7: Rest**Make a collage, individually or as a group, that represents the ways you and other people rest from school/work/play. While working, talk together about why resting is important, why is it good that God rested, and why rest is a way to care for ourselves and our communities. |
| **Going Deeper** | Take an opportunity to go deeper after each chosen activity by having a conversation about how the work of our hands and bodies live out our faith statements as The United Church of Canada.In proclaiming that we are not alone, we live in God’s world, we are responsible for honouring the word that God has created and is still creating. Here are some questions you might discuss with your children:* Who do you share your home with? (people, pets, critters, etc.)
* Who do you share your community with? (people, animals, etc.)
* How do you live in right relationship with those around you?
* Why do you think God created the world? What do you think God is still creating in the world?
* What actions do you take in your daily life to care for creation? (e.g., composting, recycling, turning off lights)
* How do know that God is always with us?
* Look at the language of A Song of Faith; what does that spark for you?
 |
| **Consider Popular Culture Connections** | **Books***The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss (also movie)*Old Turtle and the Broken Truth* by Douglas Wood*Merhorses and Bubbles* by Asia CitroFor older children/teens, listen to activist Greta Thunberg talk about her call to action to care for creation ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmmUIEsN9A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmmUIEsN9A)). Together or individually, write a letter to your church board or local MP about why, as leaders, they need to help care for God’s creation. |
| **Review** | “Then God said to the people: ‘Take care of my world. It’s yours to use. All of it. But please be kind to my world.’” This is one of the lines in “God Makes a World” in Ralph Milton’s *The Family Story Bible*. Perhaps end each session with this line, and ask two things: How have we not taken care of the world, and how can we be kind to creation? Talk together about how we believe God created the world and is still creating in our world today, and how that helps us live and be kind to God’s world.Week 4: Read the section titled “Enough” in Carolyn Pogue’s [*A New Day: Peacemaking Stories and Activities*](http://carolynpogue.ca/books.htm#newday)*.* Discuss what it means to know we have enough. |
| **Conclusion** | For your closing prayer, give thanks to God for something God created, and ask God to help you care for something/someone who is hurting today. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***A New Creed*** | **Lesson 3: Called to Be the Church** |
| **Bible Verses** | 1 Corinthians 12:14–31 Body of Christ1 Samuel 3:1–21 Call of Samuel  |
| **Theological Grounding** | The United Church of Canada’s A New Creed states, We are called to be the Church to celebrate God’s presence, to live in respect with Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil...The United Church of Canada’s A Song of Faith states, We sing of a church seeking to continue the story of Jesus by embodying Christ’s presence in the world.We are called together by Christ as a community of broken but hopeful believers, loving what he loved, living what he taught, striving to be faithful servants of God in our time and place.Our ancestors in faith bequeath to us experiences of their faithful living; upon their lives our lives are built.Our living of the gospel makes us a part of this communion of saints, experiencing the fulfillment of God’s reign even as we actively anticipate a new heaven and a new earth.The church has not always lived up to its vision.It requires the Spirit to reorient it, helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition, challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement,for we are called to be a blessing to the earth.We sing of God’s good news lived out,a church with purpose: faith nurtured and hearts comforted, gifts shared for the good of all, resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize, fierce love in the face of violence, human dignity defended, members of a community held and inspired by God,  corrected and comforted, instrument of the loving Spirit of Christ,  creation’s mending.We sing of God’s mission. |
| **Emphasis or Theme** | Hearing God’s call for us, and the churchNote: You can choose to use this as a multi-week resource focusing on one’s individual call (Samuel) and our collective call as Christians (Corinthians) or choose one that fits with your season’s themes.  |
| **Welcome and****First Activities** | Blindfold a child at one end of the room. Place different obstacles to have them walk around. Have someone at the other end guiding the blindfolded person through, or have a buddy beside the blindfolded person helping them.Play the game Simon Says. This is a helpful way to demonstrate how well we listen to one another, how we know when to follow instructions, and how some instructions may seem unfamiliar or challenging to us.On a flip chart, write down what makes people good listeners and what helps us listen to others. Share ideas about how other people can also help us listen better and help us understand what something might mean for us. |
| **Introducing the Story** | Sometimes we get phone calls from people we love, and sometimes God calls people to action. Just as we answer a phone call, we are encouraged to answer a call from God. I wonder what a ringtone from God might sound like? (If you have a cell phone with you, you could take some time to make musical ringtones from God.) Say or read A New Creed together and let the children know you’ll be focusing on different statements in the creed for the next several weeks. A creed is an “I believe” statement. You’ll be learning about what The United Church of Canada believes and also thinking about what you as individuals believe. Today you’ll focus on the part of A New Creed that says, “We are called to be the Church.” |
| **Tell the Story** | Read “God Calls Samuel” or “Paul Writes a Letter” in Ralph Milton’s *The Family Story Bible,* or act out the scene of God calling Samuel. Have children take turns being Samuel and Eli. Talk together about how it felt to be each character. An example of a script can be found here: [www.secondchurch.org/attachments/samuel%20drama%20script%20fall-e\_2014.pdf](http://www.secondchurch.org/attachments/samuel%20drama%20script%20fall-e_2014.pdf) (scenes 3 and 4). |
| **Learning Activities** | *Corinthians*Option 1: Buy or create your own blank puzzle. Have children draw something on one of the pieces that represents their hobbies, passions, or interests. Put the puzzle together at the end, showing that every piece is needed to make a whole. Note: If any children are missing this week, save a piece for them to take home next week so they’re included in the final puzzle.Option 2: Set up stations around the room that represent different spiritual gifts (see list and examples below). Have children independently spend about five minutes at each station or a small group can travel together. Have a conversation at each station about the importance of that gift within the community. a) Encouragement: Write notes of encouragement to give to other children, teachers, or parents.b) Hospitality: Help set up for coffee time after church.c) Social Justice: Have a conversation about what pain/suffering they would like to end in their school/community/world or have someone from the congregation’s outreach committee talk about an issue/project they’re working on. Brainstorm ways they can help.d) Music: Invite children to create rhythms and sounds together on available musical instruments.e) Leadership: Have any children teach the others something they love to do.f) Prayer: Write a prayer together.g) Giving: Choose an activity from the Mission & Service stewardship lessons for children (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B0ONYpGPGJTfN1N0RVZXM0tJem8/view>). Watch one or more videos about how/why our church supports God’s people and the world.h) Compassion: Ask the children to name something they are happy about and something they are mad/sad/confused about. Have children write “warm fuzzies” (affirmations) to each other to help one another when things are tough—or just when they need encouragement.i) Athleticism: Invite children to teach each other a game, skill, or drill.*Samuel*Option 1: Think of one thing you’re really good at and talk about why it matters to God and to people around you. Talk together about how to use that gift to serve others. If you’re great at art, create an image to show the beauty of God’s world. If you’re great at dance, create a dance. If you love to help people, create a list of ways to help others decide how they can serve God’s people. This craft could be individualized or done in small groups.Option 2: Invite an adult/elder or two (preferably not one of the children’s parents, grandparents, or caregivers) into your church school that week to talk with the children about themselves, their lives in the church, and their relationship with God. Brainstorm questions beforehand. Here are some suggestions:* When did you start coming to church? Do you remember why?
* How long have you been coming to this church? Why do you come?
* How do you listen best for God and Jesus in your life? What helps you feel loved by God?
* In what ways have you, or do you, serve God’s people/the church?
* What gifts do you see in us? (especially important for both children and adults to answer about the other)

Option 3: This exercise requires work beforehand! Ask for local volunteers to be pen pals with a child for a period of time, and ask children if they would like to participate. You can either have secret pen pals (known by number or letter) or pen pals where you know each other’s names. At the end of the time period (try for at least four letters in a month), have a lunch or dessert time together. |
| **Going Deeper** | Take an opportunity to go deeper after each chosen activity by having a conversation about how the work of our hands and bodies live out our faith statements as The United Church of Canada. In proclaiming that we are the church, an imperfect and beautiful community that loves and serves, seeks justice, and resists evil, we strive to live as followers of Jesus. Here are some questions you might discuss with your children:* What calls you to be in the church?
* What gifts do you share with your church and your community?
* Who do you see on Sunday mornings? Who’s missing?
* Who did Jesus love? And how do we love the people and the ideas Jesus loved?
* Can you think of something that made Jesus mad? Is it still going on today, and what can we do to bring hope?
 |
| **Consider Popular Culture Connections** | **Books***I Dreamt… A Book about Hope* by Gabriela Olmos*Scaredy Squirrel* by Mélanie WattAlso check out books (for kids up to age 9) as suggested by Storypath: <http://storypath.upsem.edu/tag/1-samuel-31-10-11-20/> |
| **Review** | Talk together about how God created us with different gifts and how all of those gifts are needed to serve God in the church community and the world. Talk about how God calls us at different times in our lives—from when we are small to when we are very old. Talk about how being in community helps us recognize and use our gifts. |
| **Conclusion** | Around the circle, tell the person next/across from you what gift/talent you see in them. For newcomers that week, observe them in the group, and say what gift you saw in them that day. Thank God for their gifts and ask that we may follow Jesus by serving/helping others with our gifts. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A New Creed** | **Lesson 4: In Life, in Death, in Life Beyond Death** |
| **Bible Verses** | Luke 22:14‒23 Last SupperLuke 24:28‒35 Emmaus |
| **Theological Grounding** | The United Church of Canada’s A New Creed states, …to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.We are not alone.The United Church of Canada’s A Song of Faith states, By becoming flesh in Jesus, God makes all things new.InJesus’ life*,* teaching, and self-offering, God empowers us to live in love.In Jesus’ crucifixion, God bears the sin, grief, and suffering of the world.In Jesus’ resurrection, God overcomes death.Nothing separates us from the love of God.The Risen Christ lives today, present to us and the source of our hope. |
| **Emphasis or Theme** | Remembering Jesus: CommunionBefore enacting this lesson plan, it would be helpful to familiarize yourself with [What We Believe](https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/what-we-believe) on The United Church of Canada website, especially with respect to the sacrament of [communion](https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/baptism-and-communion). One belief to emphasize is the United Church’s open table belief—anyone who seeks to have a relationship with Jesus Christ is welcome at the table.You may also want to think about who in your community could serve as a resource for this lesson. This person may be a minister, a communion elder, or a member of the worship committee.  |
| **Welcome and****First Activities** | Have a table set up for the children to sit around, as if they’re at the Last Supper themselves. Welcome each child into the space and invite them to help set the table. Around the room have items to place on the table; ask each child to help set the table with the objects and symbols they would like and say why it’s important for those to be present. (Objects could be a cloth, a loaf, a cup, juice, plates, a cross, a candle, or the Bible.) |
| **Introducing the Story** | In talking about communion, ask questions such as these ones: Does your family say grace before you eat? Or maybe you’ve learned a grace sung or said before meals at camp? What are the words you’ve said or sung to bless a meal?In talking about Jesus’ life, ask questions such as these ones: What is your favourite story of Jesus that you can remember? Jesus asked us, his disciples, to remember him when we are around a table together. Why would he ask us to remember him?Say or read A New Creed together and let the children know you’ll be focusing on different statements in the Creed for the next several weeks. A creed is an “I believe” statement. You’ll be learning about what The United Church of Canada believes and also thinking about what you as individuals believe. Today you’ll focus on the part of A New Creed that says, “In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.” |
| **Tell the Story** | Option 1: Read “The Last Supper” from Ralph Milton’s *The Family Story Bible*, or another version of the Last Supper story, along with “On the Road to Emmaus.”Option 2: Tell the Godly Play story of “The Good Shepherd and World Communion*.*”See Popular Culture Connections for other ways to tell/supplement the story. |
| **Learning Activities** | Reflect on the significance of the items used in communion:Option 1: [Bake bread](https://gluten.lovetoknow.com/gluten-free-recipes/recipe-gluten-free-communion-bread) as a group. As it’s baking, discuss as a group what it means to share a meal with others. What are some favourite memories of a shared meal? If you feel comfortable doing so, talk with the children about how not everyone in our community or the world has access to food. Ask them what they think we can do about that. Ask where or when in church do we see bread at a table? What does the bread help us remember? Why is it important to remember? Look at Popular Culture Connections to help with this conversation.Option 2: Decorate a collective communion set together, or have each child decorate their own. If it’s a communal set, use it as a part of your table setting for communion with the faith community. a) For ceramic plates and chalices, use permanent paint markers. Make sure all surfaces are totally clean. Then decorate the items however you want! Bake them at 350°F for 30 minutes. Turn the oven off but leave the dishware inside the oven to cool down so they don’t crack in the temperature change. b) For plastic plates and wine glasses, decorate with tissue paper. Cut the tissue paper into small squares and have children choose the colours they want on their mosaic pattern. Dab a small amount of Mod Podge on each piece to glue it to the plate or glass, then coat the entire item at the end. Leave to dry.Option 3: Write a communion prayer together. As a group, think about what would be important to include in your prayer. It may be a good activity for younger and older children together.As a guideline, you can begin this way:One: The Lord be with you.**All:** **And also with you.**One: Lift up your hearts.**All:** **We lift them up to God.** One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**All:** **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**Include some of the following themes:* Stories of God working in the Old Testament (Noah, Moses, etc.): What stories do the children remember? What might those stories teach us about God’s love for us and about God’s world?
* Stories of Jesus’ birth and life: What did he do in ministry? Who did he meet? How did he share God’s love?
* Tell the story of Jesus’ invitation to the Last Supper; show how he broke the bread and poured the wine.
* Remember how Jesus was raised from the tomb, showing us how God’s love is even stronger than death—Include The Lord’s Prayer and the Invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements; pray that God through the Holy Spirit may be with you, and this bread and juice may help us live
* Serve each other: Note the importance of why we serve and don’t just help ourselves (living in community, loving our neighbour/God through serving/helping each other)
* Prayer after communion: Thank God for the time over this table and pray that God may help us continue to live as Jesus’ disciples/followers.
 |
| **Going Deeper** | Take an opportunity to go deeper after each chosen activity by having a conversation about how the work of our hands and bodies live out our faith statements as The United Church of Canada.In proclaiming that Jesus, crucified and risen, is our judge and our hope and God is with us in life, in death, in life beyond death, we are in relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit throughout our lives and after we die. Being a Christian means being a person of hope in the world. Here are some questions you might discuss with your children:* After a celebration of communion, ask them: What did you notice and what questions do you have?
* Why is it important to be at table together?
* Of the story of Jesus’ life and death, what pieces give you hope?
 |
| **Consider Popular Culture Connections** | **Books***Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth* by Douglas Wood*The Blessing Cup* by Patricia Polacco (<https://storypath.upsem.edu/the-blessing-cup/>)*Grandma’s Purple Flowers* by Adjoa J. Burrowes or *Mama* by Eleanor Schick (<http://storypath.upsem.edu/lectionary-links-sunday-march-24-2013/>)**Movies**Last Supper scene in *Godspell* (0:00‒3:15 [www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2RBaN3uWOY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2RBaN3uWOY))*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* |
| **Review** | At the end of this session (or the series), make sure to share in the act of communion with each other—either through joining the full congregation and sharing in leadership in the liturgy, or sharing a meal together as church school. If it’s as church school, invite an ordered minister, designated lay minister, or communion elder to participate and help lead. If children want to share, ask how they found the experience and what they will remember from it. Reflect on how God was with Jesus all his life, and how God is with us in both our happy times and our hard times. |
| **Conclusion** | Say together the ending of A New Creed: “In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.”In a circle, go around and say to your neighbour, “You are not alone. God is with you.”End with a final time around the circle, each person naming one thing they thank God for. |
| **Preparation** | Suggestion: Contact parents/caregivers ahead of time to speak about addressing communion with children, including remembering that Jesus died and was raised to new life. Some children have experienced death (pet, grandparent, etc.), while others have not, so the parents/caregivers may want to have a conversation before and after with their children. Share how you are making church a place to talk about a range of feelings and experiences, including the significance of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. |