

Growing Together

Use any or all of the following activities to expand, enrich, or enliven your K.I.D.S. (Kids Into Discipleship and Stewardship) emphasis through the week. Review activities throughout the school year.

Worshiping Together

Worship Ideas

- The widow trusted God to care for her. Ask, What does it mean to trust someone? Encourage students to share their ideas. Mention that when you see cheerleaders, you will sometimes see them make a pyramid with one cheerleader at the top. At the end of the cheer, the top cheerleader drops down, and the cheerleaders at the bottom catch him or her. Top cheerleaders trust the others to catch them so they are not injured. Read Isaiah 12:2, and discuss the fact that we trust God for our salvation; we fully depend on Him to save us. He has provided Jesus, His Son, to save us. Each day read and discuss one of the stanzas of “I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus” (LSB 729) and note the things for which we trust God that the hymn writer mentions.
- Define the terms *joy*, *peace*, and *hope*. Read Romans 15:13 to your class and note the blessings we receive when the Holy Spirit helps us trust in God (as the widow did): hope, joy, and peace. Encourage the class to say this Bible verse with you several times. Make a bulletin board with the slogan “Through Jesus, God gives us hope, joy, and peace.” Have the children use one of the three words in a sentence and/or a picture. Isaiah 26:3 uses the term “perfect peace.” What do they think that means? (God is in control, so no matter what is happening, we do not need to worry.) Sing “I Have the Joy” (LOSP, p. 62) or “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” (AGPS 139).
- Sing “Show God’s Love” (from *Sing-Along Praise* by Anita Reith Stohs, p. 37) to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.”

Show God’s love in all you do.
Show God’s love in all you do.
Show God’s love in all you do.
In what you say and what you do.
Show God’s love in all you say.
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Show God’s love in all you say.
In what you do and what you say.

Reading the Word Together

Additional Bible Study Suggestions

- Read the Bible story using the Arch Book *The Widow’s Offering* by Joanne Bader.
- Read about the rich young man (Luke 18:18–30). It can be difficult to follow God with all that we are and have. The rich man found it hard to give his wealth and security away. He did not love and trust God above all things.
- Read about the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9–14). The Pharisee wanted everyone to notice the good things he did (including tithing or giving money to church). The tax collector, however, was humble and admitted he was a sinner. He trusted in Jesus’ forgiveness and didn’t care what others thought of him. Jesus was also humble. He was exalted on a throne in heaven yet came down to earth as a human baby. Our King of kings died a painful, shameful death on the cross so that one day we would see His glory in heaven.

Practicing Together

Role-Play Activities

- Provide time for student volunteers to prepare and role-play the story of the widow's mite. A narrator could tell the story. Role-play the story as the Bible reading during one of your devotions in the coming days or even for chapel. With a narrator, use the role play your students prepare as part of a devotion your class conducts when you visit a nursing home or elder care facility.
- Have your students use charades to act out one of the *K.I.D.S Count* characters doing something to help someone else. Have the class try to guess what each character has chosen to do to help.

Traveling Together

Field Trips

- Take your students on a field trip to a local facility that has been built with LCEF funding. Before you leave, prepare a list of questions such as these that students should inquire about: What types of activities go on in this facility? How does this facility help people show God's love to others? How does this facility help people share the Gospel with others? What features in the facility tell you that Christian people are at work here? Estimate how many LCEF stamps it would take to build and equip this facility; then calculate it.
- Perhaps you live in an area that would allow your class to take a factory tour. Talk about how we can trust in God to take care of all our needs: food, shelter, and clothing. See where these items are produced and how God uses other people (workers) to bring His blessings into our lives. Search for fabric mills, housing manufacturers, food growers and processors (including snack, soft drink, or

ice-cream manufacturers), or shoe and boot manufacturers. If not, simply visit a local farm or grocery store, appreciating where our food comes from.

Building Together

Arts and Crafts Activities

- Ask your students, **Does Jesus want us to give everything we own to Him?** (Let children offer their ideas. Help your students understand that Jesus doesn't need our "stuff." He does want us to love and trust in Him completely, as God teaches us in the First Commandment. God loved us completely by giving His greatest treasure, His Son Jesus, to be our Savior. Jesus gave us His love completely by dying on the cross for us and securing eternal life for us in heaven. We give our lives and our gifts to God to thank Him for His love to us.) Provide materials (e.g., paper, crayons, pastels, old magazines from which they may cut pictures) for your students to make pictures of things they could give to Jesus. We can use what we have according to His will and for His glory. Encourage your students to include work they could do (e.g., rake lawns for others) in the things they could give. Use their pictures to create a class bulletin board with the title "Loving Jesus and Others."
- Make a heart collage using an assortment of pink, red, or purple construction paper and wrapping-paper scraps. Cut small hearts from the paper and write the words "love" and "trust" on the construction paper hearts, reminding them of Martin Luther's explanation of the First Commandment, we should "love and trust in God above all things." Arrange the hearts on a piece of 12 × 18-inch construction paper, covering the entire sheet; then glue.

Helping Together Service Projects

- Read *The Mitten Tree* by Candace Christiansen (or another favorite mitten story like *The Missing Mitten Mystery* by Steven Kellogg). In the story, the old woman knits mittens to give away to children who don't have any. Just as the *K.I.D.S. Count* gang collected winter clothing, your class can collect and/or make winter clothing. Your class may be successful with some simple scarf knitting patterns with adequate adult assistance, but your students will be sure to find satisfaction when they make no-sew fleece scarves or blankets to give away.
- Make the treats described in the Snacks and Cooking Activities section and, if permission is received, share with residents at a nearby nursing home. They may enjoy watching your class role-play the story of the widow's mite during your visit. Sing some songs like "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus" (AGPS 126). The residents may even join in on the following movement song to the tune (and actions) of "Hokey Pokey":

"Okie Dokie"

You put your right hand in; you put your right hand out.

You put your right hand in, and you help your friend out.

You do the "Okie Dokie" and you spread God's love around.

That's what it's all about. Woo!

Continue with other parts of the body that can be used to help others, such as the left hand, right foot, left foot, head (mind), and whole self. Explain that with the Holy Spirit's help, you can say "Yes!" ("Okie Dokie") to using your talents and time to help others,

even if it means giving it your all or giving up something that's your favorite. Jesus says "Yes" to you. Read about it in 2 Corinthians 1:20.

- Learn the hymn "The Temple Rang with Golden Coins" (LSB 787). Sing it for chapel, a group that meets in your church facilities during the day, or another class during their devotion time. You may want to use the tune from "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" (LSB 733) if it's more familiar.

Moving Together Games and Movement Activities

- Just like squirrels save nuts for winter, we can save money "for a rainy day," as we do when we invest using LCEF stamps. To help students remember to "squirrel something away," play Squirrel in a Tree. First, divide students into groups of three. In each group, two students form a circle by holding hands, and the other student stands in the middle. He or she is a "squirrel" inside a "hollow tree." Choose one student to be the dog ("it") and another to be the squirrel getting chased. The squirrel may escape the dog by going into one of the hollow trees. The squirrel who had been safe in that hollow tree becomes the squirrel being chased. That squirrel must run to another tree for safety. When a squirrel is caught, he or she becomes the next dog ("it").
- Sometimes we hide a coin in a piggy bank to save it. Play a hidden coin game. Direct your students to sit in a circle and hold out their arms with hands cupped together. Choose one student who will stand in the circle, place the coin between his or her palms, and walk around the circle pretending to drop the coin between each person's palms (actually touching each student's hands, who immediately close them up as if they have the coin even

if they do not). At some point, the student should drop the coin between the palms of another student. After completing the circle, the student should exit the circle and say "Coin, coin. Who has the coin?" Everyone tries to guess who has the coin. Whoever guesses correctly hides the coin in the next game.

- **Play Whole Hearted.** Before the game, cut different color construction paper hearts in half using a distinct zigzag line. Divide your class into two teams. Half will stand on one line; half on the other. At your signal, the students will leave their lines to find their partner with the other half that matches their heart. Partners run around the outside of the playing area together until all students have found their partners. Recite Mark 12:30 together. Collect and shuffle heart halves before redistributing to play another round.

Eating Together Snacks and Cooking Activities

- Pretend you are Bucky and eat "puppy food." If there are no students with peanut allergies, make "Puppy Chow" from square cereal, peanut butter, and powdered sugar; serve bone-shaped graham cracker sticks found in your grocery store's snack aisle or make your own bone-shaped sugar cookies; or pretend to gnaw on a shoelace by snacking on shoe string potato sticks and string cheese.
- If you collected winter clothes or mittens as a service project, you may enjoy eating a snack out of a clear plastic glove (not a latex glove with powdery interior). Instead of using

plastic sandwich bags to store the food, fill up a clear plastic glove; don't forget the funnel-shaped, crispy corn snacks for your students to place on the ends of their fingers for nails! (Or maybe the snacks will remind the children of the funnel-shaped offering receptacles used by the widow in the temple.)

- The widow would not have had a fancy kitchen to cook in. Try a no-bake cookie recipe if your class does not have anyone sensitive to peanut allergies. Mix 1 stick margarine, ½ cup milk, ½ cup cocoa, and 2 cups sugar in a pan and boil for 2 minutes. Take off the heat and slowly stir in ½ cup of peanut butter, ½ teaspoon of vanilla, and 3 cups oatmeal. Drop small balls of dough on wax paper and let set before eating.
- Although the poor widow would not have eaten this sandwich (because it originated in New Orleans), have a po' boy (poor boy) in her honor. Serve small sandwich slices from your favorite submarine sandwich shop or use deli meat (however, oysters or shrimp would be most authentic!), a long French bread roll, and any other condiments and customizable toppings to create your own.

