

# *The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World*



*1 Corinthians 10:17: "...we who are many are one body..."*

## Resource and Planning Pack:

- Planning ideas, helps, and guides;
- Hymn and worship ideas;
- Sermon-writing helps;
- Children's sermon;
- Sunday School resources;
- Historical perspective;
- Bulletin inserts.



## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

### Planning Notes:

### Introduction

In this packet you will find resources for planning *Laity Sunday* in conjunction with the *Week of the Laity, January 24-30, 2010*, although the resources are designed so that they may be used at any time of the church year that best fits your congregational needs and planning.

Once again we have linked our materials to our General Assembly. The 2009 General Assembly brought us the theme, *For the Healing of the Nations* (Revelation 22:2), connecting Disciples to the identify statement: “*We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As members of one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord’s Table as God has welcomed us.*” This year’s materials draw their theme from the second part of the statement and the idea of God’s “*Welcome Table.*”

Thanks to new technology, some of the wholeness ideas and lessons are now online – a great starting place for ministry planning. You might want to have your *Week of the Laity* planners start at the assembly webpage at <http://www.disciples.org/GeneralAssembly/tabid/59/Default.aspx>, and look at the inspiration that came out of the great gathering of assembly participants in ‘think tank’ type activities called the Wholeness Café, created by, and suitable for, Disciples of diverse ages and backgrounds: <http://wholenesscafe.disciples.org/>

The *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* are a people built upon laity and clergy *working together* in service to Christ. Thus, any day in a Disciples church is a day for laity involvement, with laity heavily involved in leading, teaching, serving, and reaching out to the community and world. *Laity Sunday* is a special time to reflect upon, promote, and celebrate the many roles served by your congregation’s lay ministers, both inside and outside your church walls.

*Week of the Laity* resources are planned to give you flexibility and a variety of choices. You are encouraged to edit and enhance the suggestions to fit the particular needs of your own congregation.

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#### Where do we get the word, “Laity”?

##### Word Origin (etymology):

**lay** (adjective): Middle English 15<sup>th</sup> century, from Old French *lai*, from Late Latin *laicus*, from Greek *laikos* (of the people), from *laos* (the people).

- 1. lay people rather than clergy:** the followers of a religion who are not clergy.
- 2. laity** (LAY-uh-tee) (*noun*): the people who are not members of a particular profession, especially those who are not part of the clergy, such as “gifts of the *laity*....”

From: [www.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.thefreedictionary.com); [www.allwords.com](http://www.allwords.com)





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

Planning Notes:

*Planning  
Reminder:  
Who are we  
doing this for?*

### Thoughts for Planning Laity Sunday

*GOAL: To inspire, inform, and equip laity and clergy alike in the everyday ministries they can and are called to offer to God.*

1. *Laity Sunday* should be more than having a lay person give a sermon (reinforcing some people's mistaken idea that a minister's only job is preaching). *Laity Sunday* is a great opportunity to help everyone explore and recognize the many types of ministry that members of the congregation have been uniquely gifted to accomplish.
2. Avoid communicating that *Laity Sunday* is “the Sunday where lay people do the ministry.” Emphasize that laity are in ministry constantly, serving alongside salaried clergy who are their coaches, partners, and teammates.
3. *Laity Sunday* can generate high levels of energy and fresh ideas with a potential for greatness. Yet, without organization, such ideas have the potential to fly in all directions and become disconnected. Avoid this by staying focused on theme, purpose, audience, and time limits.
4. Take the approach that, like professional clergy, laity are *learners*. And all learners must have chances to grow and develop. *Laity Sunday* is one of these chances!
5. Avoid the temptation to have lay participants read only “canned words” that professional clergy have written for them. This reinforces the idea that laity have no inspiration or original gifts of their own.
6. When choosing assignments, break the tasks into small, do-able assignments appropriate for each participant involved. Share the opportunities, reinforcing the idea that ministry is a team effort.
7. If your congregation always uses the same talented lay leader to speak, consider instead this time spreading the opportunities around. Take special care not to overlook the voices of emerging leaders among your adolescent and young adult populations.
8. Work to ensure that your presenters represent your congregation's diversity in generation, gender, ethnicity, education, and experience.
9. Have your planners look for creative ways to recognize and encourage the many ministries performed by laity behind scenes and out of the spotlight.
10. **Laity Sunday worship planners** are likely to find more resources than can be used in one worship service. Discuss ways that these resources can carry over into future opportunities to help with worship planning.





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: "...we who are many are one body..."*

Notes:

### Laity Sunday Planning Team:

People:

Important Dates:

**Try Backwards Planning:**  
Begin with the end in mind.

1. After this worship service is over, how would you want those attending it to describe it to others?
2. What new or reinforced Christ-like behaviors would you like to see in those who have experienced the worship service you are planning?
3. How can you help people get to where you want them to be from where they are now?

### Ideas for Clergy Involvement in *Laity Sunday*

1. The purpose of *Laity Sunday* should not be simply to fill the pulpit when regular clergy is away. *Laity Sunday* works well when clergy can be involved in the support role of teaching, coaching, equipping, encouraging, and inspiring planners and participants.
2. One of the most valuable gifts that clergy can offer *Laity Sunday* planners and participants is wisdom on keeping **focused** on being God's instruments as they work through their **theme, purpose, audience, and time limits**.
3. Another especially important, but often overlooked, way that clergy can be involved is in *receiving the ministry gifts of laity*.





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: "...we who are many are one body..."*

Estimated  
Time

### Service of Worship: Planning Notes

To help in planning, here are some common parts of worship services. Which will you include? What needs to be added? Who will do each? In what order will each occur in the service?

What	Who	Order in Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Welcome/Introduction	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Call to Worship, Invocation	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hymn: Opening, Praise Choruses	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Litany/Choral Reading	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Prayer / Lord's Prayer	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hymn: Prayer	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Scripture Reading (s)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's Moment/Sermon	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Offertory Meditation, Prayer	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hymn: Communion	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communion Meditation	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Words of Institution	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer for Loaf	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer for Cup	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Elders/ Serving at the table:	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Deacons/Servers	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Music	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sermon(s)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Invitation	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hymn of Invitation/Sending forth	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Receiving new members into Christ, congregation	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Benediction <i>(often given by one giving the sermon)</i>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

*Whose message  
are we trying  
to get across?*





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

*Planning  
Reminder:  
Who are we  
doing this for?*

Planning Notes:  
Items of Worship

Welcome

Call to Worship

Scripture 1

Scripture 2

Litany / Responsive  
Reading

Children's moment

Message/ Sermon (s)

Benediction

Communion:  
Communion  
Meditation

Prayer for the Loaf

Prayer for the Cup

Opening prayer  
(invocation)

Prayers of the  
People (Pastoral  
Prayer)

Lord's Prayer

Offertory Prayer

### Worship Planning Ideas

**Scriptural Texts:** Luke 15; 1 Corinthians 10:17;  
John 17: 20-23; Psalm 133

### Planning Ideas and Resources:

<http://www.disciples.org/GeneralAssembly/tabid/59/Default.aspx> (General assembly)  
<http://wholenesscafe.disciples.org/> (Wholeness café instructions, ideas)

### Chalice Hymnal

The suggestions included on this and the next page are from the *Chalice Hymnal*, with the theme of God's reaching out to the world with a plan for healing, wholeness, and peace. The suggestions are not at all a complete list, but can perhaps help with initial planning and inspire ideas of other resources that are especially fitting to the context of the particular congregation and worship experience.

### Basic Resources for Sunday Worship (p. 771-776)

Worship planners may wish to consult this section of the *Chalice Hymnal* for examples of different parts that may be included in a Sunday worship service.

### Meditations, Poems, Calls to Worship. (Use in worship, in bulletin, flyer, etc.):

- 473 Be God's Kindness (reading from Mother Teresa of Calcutta; could be Call to Worship);
- 653 Bread and Justice (reading from Rubem A. Alves, Brazilian philosopher);
- 271 The Church (reminder of the family of God, from Design of the Christian Church (DOC));
- 481 The Church is One (by Thomas Campbell, from 1809 Declaration & Address);
- 466 A Disciples Identify Statement (Kenneth Teegarden, former Disciples General Minister and President);
- 483 For a Renewed Sense of Compassion (Janet Berry, English churchwoman);
- 508 For One Who Suffers (by Howard Thurman, African American leader);
- 332 God of Wondrous Darkness (inspiring perspective in short devotional prayer by R. Allen);
- 551 Outwitted (popular, often-memorized and quoted poem);
- 279 Reach Out and Worship (simple verse for Call to Worship); and
- 394 That the Church May Be One (Didache, 2<sup>nd</sup> century).

### Litany, responsive readings:

- 460 The Church in Mission (responsive reading adapted from Divisions of Overseas Ministries);
- 657 God of the Ever-Present Crosses (from Christian Conference of Asia, Bangalore Worship Handbook);
- 710 Let the Day Come, Lord (responsive reading); and
- 664 A Litany for the World (short, appropriate litany by John Bell, Iona Community).

### Psalter: responsive readings-chorus from Psalms (see guidelines p 726-727):

- 729 Psalm 15 (in Psalter; uses chorus from Amos 5:24 (Let justice roll down...));
- 755 Psalm 107: 1-9, 33-43 (in Psalter; connects to "Lift Every Voice and Sing," p 631);
- 764 Psalm 133 (in Psalter, responsive reading and choral response on unity); and

### Prayer ideas:

- 443 Joy Through Involvement (prayer, Rosa Page Welch, African American Disciples singer);
- 449 May God Embrace Us (simple prayer by Janet Morley, British churchwoman);
- 505 Prayer for Healing (can be used as a congregational prayer);
- 468 Prayer of St. Francis (especially fitting, well-loved prayer; can use as a litany); and
- 660 Serving the Poor (four-line prayer of Mother Teresa of Calcutta).



Disciples Home Missions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org> (888) 346-2631



## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: "...we who are many are one body..."*

### Hymn and Chorus Ideas (from the Chalice Hymnal)

**Laity Sunday** can be a chance to step out and try one or two new ideas. (Be sure someone learns the new tunes first and is able to lead them!) Consider:

- singing a hymn or two unfamiliar to your congregation, but especially fitting;
- singing a hymn or two born out of different cultures than your own;
- applying a new tune or beat (or rap) to words with tunes you don't use; and/or
- using especially fitting hymn words as responsive readings.

#### Chalice Hymnal sampler of hymns fitting our theme:

- 501 Balm in Gilead (*beautiful, much-loved African American spiritual*);  
 433 Blest Be the Tie That Binds (*a favorite of Disciples since their early days*);  
 668 For the Healing of the Nations (*especially fitting words, traditional tune*);  
 506 Healer of Our Every Ill (*unison, simple and beautiful*);  
 600 Jesu, Jesu (*simple, beautiful and catchy folk tune from Ghana; practice rhythm first*);  
 631 Lift Every Voice and Sing (*inspiring, triumphant; African American anthem*);  
 393 One Bread, One Body (*well loved fitting communion hymn*);  
 493 Somos Uno en Cristo (We Are One in Christ) (*simple, meaningful, catchy tune*);  
 352 Spirit (*beautiful; cue hearers to look for God's story. Don't let the tempo drag; sing all verses*);  
 496 Unidos (*beautiful, inspiring song of Christian unity*).  
 667 With the Wings of Our Mind (*beautiful unison Korean hymn*)

#### Gathering, Closing, or other parts of the service:

- 546 Amazing Grace (*favorite worldwide; consider a devotional on the hymnwriter's story*);  
 475 The Church of Christ in Every Age (*traditional*);  
 272 The Church's One Foundation (*traditional favorite*);  
 655 Community of Christ (*contemporary words to Hebrew melody*);  
 673 Down By the Riverside (*well-known African American spiritual*);  
 467 Fill the World With Love (*simple, beautiful unison verse*);  
 284 Gather Us In (*unison, fast-moving popular tune and words*);  
 280 God is Here! (*can be used as Call to Worship or litany, with or without music*);  
 656 God of Freedom, God of Justice (*sing or use as litany*);  
 685 God Made All People of the World (*Korean-English*);  
 469 I Am the Light of the World! (*light and moving, suitable for simple choir*);  
 614 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me (*simple, inspiring African-American spiritual*);  
 480 I Love to Tell the Story (*timeless, inspiring favorite of many generations*);  
 641 I See the Mornin' Breakin' (*Appalachian folk tune; beautiful song of hope*);  
 474 I Will Go Wherever God Calls (*inspiring words and melody; Korean-English*);  
 461 Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service (*traditional melody*);  
 677 Let There Be Peace on Earth (*inspirational favorite across generations*);  
 708 My Lord, What A Morning (*inspiring African-American spiritual of hope*);  
 680 O God of Every Nation (*traditional*);  
 539 Old Ship of Zion (*old gospel favorite, by Thomas Dorsey*);  
 510 Out of the Depths (*simple unison tune, useful for healing services*);  
 658 Restless Weaver (*fitting words sung to traditional tune*);  
 701 Shall We Gather at the River (*well-known and loved African American spiritual*) and  
 455 You Have Called Me (*beautiful unison chorus*).

Hymn / Music

Planning Notes:

Opening/Gathering/  
Praise:

Prayer Hymn:

Communion/ Lord's  
Supper:

Invitation/  
Sending Forth:

Other:

Special Music:

Hymn/  
Song Leaders:





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

Notes, ideas on  
Breaking of the  
Bread  
(Communion,  
Lord’s Supper):

### Hymn and Chorus Ideas ( continued; from the *Chalice Hymnal*)

#### Hymns and Choruses for Breaking of the Bread – Communion — Lord’s Supper:

- 408 Come, Share the Lord (*beautiful, simple communion hymn*)
- 384 Here At Thy Table, Lord (*old favorite, soothing*)
- 420 I Come With Joy (*simple, uplifting; unison*);
- 424 I’m Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table** (*old favorite, African American spiritual*)
- 403 In Remembrance of Me (*beautiful, fitting to theme*).
- 425 Let Us Break Bread Together (*traditional African-American Spiritual*);
- 422 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ (*simple, uplifting Jamaican folk melody*);
- 393 One Bread, One Body (*a favorite, Christian community*);
- 395 Seed, Scattered and Sown (*simple communion hymn, beautiful words*)
- 396 Una Espiga (Sheaves of Summer) (*beautiful communion hymn in Spanish and English*)
- 400 When You Do This, Remember Me (*uses founder Alexander Campbell’s words*)
- 430 Lo, I Am With You (*unison chorus, from Iona Community*)

#### Meditations for Breaking of the Bread – Communion — Lord’s Supper:

- 401 Communion Affirmation (*adapted from Disciples’ founder, Alexander Campbell*);
- 412 The Miracle of Communion (*short reading from Rosa Page Welch, African-American Disciples Singer*);
- 388 Remember Me (*Alexander Campbell, suitable for communion meditation*);
- 389 Words of Institution (*see also I Corinthians 11:23-26*).

#### Talk about the Lord’s Supper:

*The worship planning team may want to discuss with their clergy leadership any specific guidelines, if any, to be followed in serving the Lord’s Supper in that particular congregation. When deciding among the methods of serving the Lord’s Supper, discuss advantages and disadvantages of each method as it relate to context of the congregation and worship service.*

How will communion be served?

Who will preside at the Table?

What preparations are needed?

Who will do what?

What clean up is needed?





Planning Notes:

## Responsive Reading

**P: Jesus told parables about being lost. He asked,**

L: “Which one of you who has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?”

**P: When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices.**

L: And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them,

**P: ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’**

L: Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?

**P: When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying,**

L: ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’”

**P: Jesus told of a man with two sons. The younger one took his inheritance, traveled to a distant land and squandered everything.**

L: He was starving when he came to himself, saying, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!’ He set out for home.

**P: But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him.**

L: Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

**P: But the father said to his servants, ‘Let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’**

-Adapted from Luke 15 (New Revised Standard Version)





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

### Planning Notes:

### Help in Writing a Prayer: Remember, “A-C-T-S”

*Prayers may be of all different types, but here is one helpful way to remember some key parts:*

**A: Adoration** (praise, honor, worship): reminds us of the One with whom we are speaking. Recognizes God’s almighty power, glory, goodness, and presence with us.

**C: Confession:** our chance to acknowledge and clear away our sins and behaviors that are getting in the way of our relationship with God.

**T: Thanksgiving:** time devoted to recognizing and expressing our gratitude for God’s blessings and presence in our lives.

**S: Supplication:** asking God in humility for help with our own and with others’ needs.

- The various prayers in a worship service may each have a different focus, offering only some of the “A-C-T-S,” or adding other elements to the prayer, as well.
- Refer to the Model Prayer (Lord’s Prayer) in Matthew 6:7-13.
- For a different way to do a group prayer, try having different speakers take responsibility for offering each of the parts of the A-C-T-S.

### Prayer for the People:





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

Planning Notes:

### Sermon Ideas

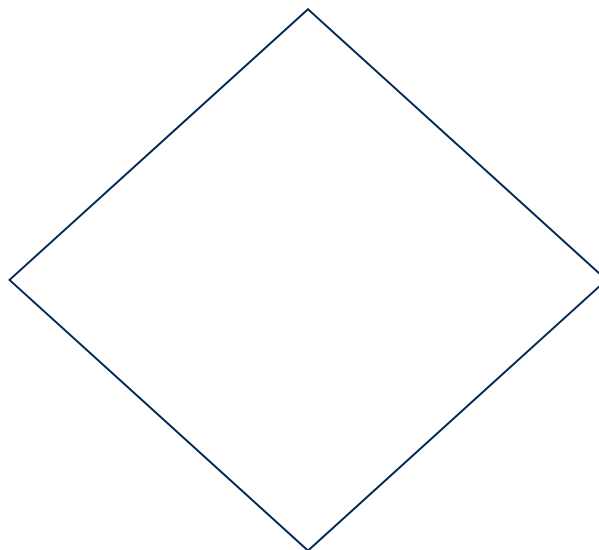
#### Suggestions for Sermon Preparation:

- Read and meditate on the scripture text. Ask yourself, “What is the good news from God in this passage?”
- Consider the scripture in several different translations.
- Look at verses that come before and after the selected text.
- Consider the context of the text. Who wrote the verses? To whom? What was the situation and purpose?
- Consult resources such as *The New Interpreter’s Bible* or other commentaries that your pastor suggests.
- Consider what possible meaning the verses have for us today.
- Include at least one life-like illustration.
- Do the illustrations to be used in the sermon, whether in picture or word, represent the diversity of people in the congregation? In the world? Do the illustrations give an accurate, fair, and unbiased view of God’s people who are different from yourself?
- Practice delivery in the sanctuary with the microphone; work with a coach if needed.

#### Ideas for Sermon Presentation:

- Consider using more than one speaker, each offering a short meditation/illustration on a different aspect of the text.)
- Encourage congregational participation by having people turn to their neighbors and discuss for one or two minutes particular points of the sermons.

#### Brainstorming:



**“The essential purpose of preaching is to bring the good news from God to the congregation.”**

*-Ronald J. Allen, Professor of Preaching and New Testament, Christian Theological Seminary*

What is the good news from God in this sermon?





**2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World**

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

Planning Notes:

**Sermon Planning Helps**

*What am I trying to say?*

**Exercise: The Sermon’s Essential Message**

See if you can condense the essential message of your sermon into one sentence, using this formula and example:

	Subject	Verb	Predicate
(Formula)	God	<i>[activity of God for the restoration of the world]</i>	<i>[Result of God’s redeeming activity]</i> .
(Example)	God	promises	to be with us always.
(You try)	God		

**Sermon Checklist**

1. What is the good news from God in this sermon?
2. Does the sermon honor the integrity of the Bible or the topic?
3. Is the sermon appropriate to the gospel, understandable, and morally plausible?
4. Does the sermon relate to the text or the topic in a responsible way?
5. What is the significance of the sermon for the congregation?
6. Does the sermon move in a way that is easy to follow?
7. Does the preacher embody the sermon in an engaging way? Does the sermon contain at least one life-like illustration of the good news with which the congregation can identify and that illustrates the good news of the sermon?

Adapted from Ronald J. Allen, *Preaching, An Essential Guide*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002 (a guidebook of preaching essentials written with laity in mind).





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

Planning Notes:

### Historical Perspective: A Table Theology

Two centuries ago Thomas Campbell took a stand against turning worshippers away from the Lord’s Table. These were individuals that the higher church authorities had labeled as unworthy because of a different doctrine, shutting them out from their version of the Lord’s Supper. About the same time, Thomas’ son Alexander was having similar issues in Scotland, questioning the place of human authority in being gatekeepers into the church or to a welcome place at the Lord’s Table.

Out of their beliefs grew a new movement for Christ, merging with Barton W. Stone’s group of Christians, to form the Christians, Disciples of Christ. Priorities of this movement became working for the unity of all Christians and a returning to the essentials of following Christ. Thomas Campbell saw divisions among Christians to be a horrible sin, able to inflict deep injuries among God’s people and therefore terribly limit their effectiveness in their call to serve as the body of Christ in the world—the church. Thomas hoped that their movement for Christian unity could help to heal many of the divisions that had come before them. Yet over the years, this movement had plenty of its own painful divisions and setbacks, resulting in more several streams of believers—the churches of Christ, the Christian Churches (independent) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Nevertheless, despite setbacks, the movement has continued to keep moving forward, sometimes even at a slow creep, ever learning and growing.

Disciples of Christ still are driven by the vision of being a healing force in the world, finding ways to unite people of faith. Perhaps what has kept the Disciples of Christ from straying completely off course is the central rudder they have found in the Lord’s Table. And Disciples have continued to grow in full comprehension of its meaning. Today, Disciples are still driven by the call to gather at the table, empowered in this by time and again answering the call to return to the table, diverse as we are, but one people in Christ, ***a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.***

#### ***Disciples of Christ Statement of Identity:***

*We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for  
wholeness in a fragmented world.  
As part of the one body of Christ,  
we welcome all to the Lord’s Table  
as God has welcomed us.*





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: "...we who are many are one body..."*

### Sunday School and Whole-Church Ideas

Notes:

#### Children:

- On individual paper or a large shared piece of newsprint, have children draw a table, with room at the edges to draw in people who they think would want to come to God's Welcome Table to eat. Talk of how this could be people who are very different from the children, and what the differences might be like, not good or bad, but just different. Try to include people of different ages and lands. Next, have the children put some food on the table; this can be drawn in, or made out of a Play-doh-type clay. Get the children talking about what the nature of their guests means in the type of food that would make them feel welcome. Encourage them to talk with each other as they work, and brainstorm off each other. .
- Work jigsaw puzzles and have the children talk about which piece they think represents them, their friends, and people around the world.
- Copy the picture (page 14 ) for children to work on in class, or to take with them.
- Have children talk about their table rules and home. Ask how they are similar to God's expectations of how people treat each other.

#### Older Children and Youth:

- Can also "draw the table activity." They may be able to draw it figuratively, by talking about who they believe would be at the table.
- Work a puzzle together. You might do this by giving each person an envelope of pieces that only that person can put down. Or try working a simple puzzle in the same way, but pair up individuals where one member of the team cannot see but can place the pieces, and the other member cannot use his or her hands, but can give instructions.
- Look at the general church website on the General assembly, and follow links to the Wholeness Café. <http://www.disciples.org/GeneralAssembly/tabid/59/Default.aspx> (General assembly)
- <http://wholenesscafe.disciples.org/> (Wholeness café instructions, ideas). Consider how you might have a wholeness café at your church. Consider carrying forward one of the ideas from the general assembly, within your own congregation.
- Use the lesson sheet on page 15 or 16 to help think about the statement of identity and the Table Rules we use in our church.

#### Whole-Church:

- In keeping with the theme of teamwork, have the class explore the numerous resources from the past General Assembly and its theme (<http://www.disciples.org/>; follow links to "General Assembly"). After reading the background information, materials, and opportunities, have the class consider ways to help, such as praying for the event, its participants and planners; attending or finding other ways to follow the event; or finding ways in their own surroundings to help the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.
- **Table Talk or Wholeness Café:** Explore the instructions for the conversational groups directing their collective energies to what really matters in your church. These can be found in Wellness Café of the General Assembly website <http://wholenesscafe.disciples.org/>.
- Use the Table Rules exercise on page 15 to examine your own congregation's rules and hospitality at the table.

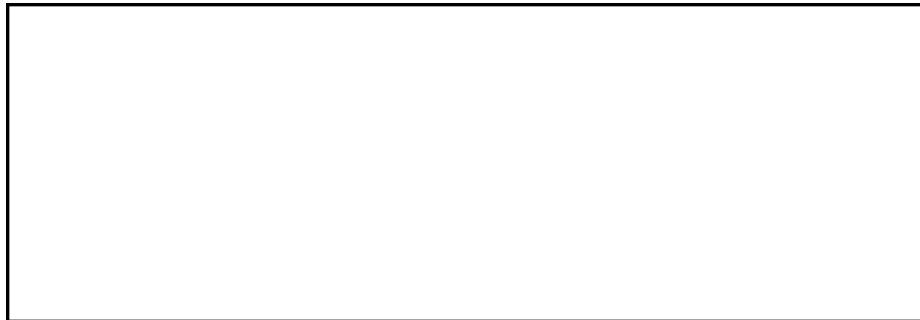




**2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World**

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

- 1. Imagine the picture below is a small version of God’s Welcome Table. Draw a picture of some of the people you would like to meet at God’s welcome table.**



- 2. Now add two more people to the table. Imagine people that are very different from you. If you joined together at God’s Welcome Table, what do you think you might talk about?**

- 3. Can you think of some people who might not know they are welcome at the table? Add them in, too.**





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

### Welcoming all to the Table: Table Rules

The Disciples of Christ statement of identity reminds us: **“We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord’s Table as God has welcomed us.”** Welcoming all to the Lord’s Table is not always easy. For one thing, it requires submission to the will of the Host. Nevertheless, time and again, Disciples return to ‘be fed’ at the table, remembering the Host and growing as people of God. Does this remind you of a family table and a family meal? How does being at the table help a person see a brother or sister through the parent’s eyes? Consider the rules below, and how they can help us think about our behavior at the Lord’s Table.

#### Rules for the Family Table

1. You, like the others here at the table, are guests of the Host and are expected to follow the Host’s rules.
2. No one starts eating until we’ve said Grace. We hold hands while thanking him—the Good Lord put us here together, so must expect us to hold together in this life.
3. Absolutely no cussing, spitting, fighting, or dishonesty at the table. Any and all weapons must be left outside.
4. No ill will allowed here, including spitefulness, talking bad of, and putting people down (including yourself).
5. Good humor and talk that builds others up is appreciated. If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all.
6. Be respectful to all at the table. Start by remembering your *pleases* and *thank yous*. Eat civilized, not calling attention to yourself or spoiling others’ appetites with your habits.
7. Always be grateful for the work of the cooks and tell ‘em so, even when things don’t turn out exactly as desired.
8. Be mindful of the food to be had and the mouths needing to be fed here. Don’t take more than your share. Gladly pass each dish along to the next, sharing instead of hoarding what’s good.
9. No matter how much or little we’ve got, we’re always grateful for it, and will share with any soul at our table.
10. If you learn that someone along your way will be going hungry tomorrow, invite ‘em to our table. We can always add a little more water to the soup.

-written by Deborah Phelps. Used in *Streamers: The Table Matters*, 2007, by *Disciples Home Missions & Disciples of Christ Historical Society*.

Table Rules: What, if any, Biblical scripture does this rule remind you of?	What parallels might a similar rule have in the life of a church, or in a person?
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	





2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”

**Identity Statement**

1. Spend some time seeing if you can say the statement from memory. Do you agree with it? Would you change anything?
2. Next, break it down into lines think about each part, line by line. What does each line mean to you : on your job? In your family? school? community?

***We are Disciples of Christ,  
a movement for wholeness  
in a fragmented world.  
As part of the one body of Christ,  
we welcome all to the Lord's Table  
as God has welcomed us.***

***—Disciples of Christ identity statement***

*We are Disciples of Christ,*

*a movement for wholeness*

*in a fragmented world.*

*As part of the one body of Christ,*

*we welcome all to the Lord's Table*

*as God has welcomed us.*





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*



### Children’s Sermon: Missing Pieces

*(Please feel free to edit and adapt this sermon option as you see fit.)*



#### I. Supplies:

- Flat board or small table** (with or without legs) that can be placed in the children’s midst.
- A jigsaw puzzle** with some sort of scene (such as a nature scene) that will allow you to focus more on the puzzle than the picture on it. Choose the size based on the option used (below).
- Bible

#### II. Preparation:

- Option 1:** *Children look at a jigsaw puzzle that has been already assembled atop a table or board. Use any size jigsaw puzzle that has been assembled on a board or the table top. In preparation, remove and hide away a few strategic pieces of the puzzle so that the puzzle is frustratingly incomplete. Carefully cover the assembled puzzle with a lightweight cloth, such as a pillow case or large dish towel. Consider this option for large groups and for very small children.*
- Option 2:** *Children assemble a simple puzzle. Choose a simple puzzle that can be worked quickly. Plan to enough pieces so that each child can have one and you will still be able to hide away two or three key pieces before you begin. If you have more children than puzzle pieces, you can give one piece to two children and ask them to work together as a team. Consider this option for small numbers of older children).*

#### III. Illustration

1. **“How many of you like to work puzzles? (Raise your hand to indicate to them to raise their hands.)**  
**“That’s great! I like to work puzzles, too. When I work a puzzle, I like to look at a picture of how it is going to turn out, to help me know how the pieces fit together. Do you like to do that, too?”**
  - **Option 1:** **“What do you think is under the cloth?” (Accept a few responses.) “I want you to look, but not touch after I remove the cloth...” (Carefully remove the cloth; allow the children study the puzzle).**
  - **Option 2:** **“I have some pieces of a jigsaw puzzle here. I am going to give you each a piece of the puzzle, and ask you to work together to place them where fit together. I need you to work carefully and patiently with each other so we do a good job of making the puzzle. Do you understand?” (Once you believe they understand, release them to work on the puzzle. If available, you could have the picture of the puzzle at hand for children to use as a guide. )**
2. **“What do you think? Isn’t it pretty? Can you tell what the picture is?” (Accept comments, but steer things toward the ones who recognize that some pieces are missing.)**
3. **“Have you ever had that happen to you before, where you work a puzzle and find out at the end that a piece or some pieces are missing?” (Accept a few comments.)**
4. **“What do you do when you find out that some pieces are missing?” Accept comments, steering toward ideas such as, “Try to find them!”**
5. **“What if you went looking for the missing pieces, and still couldn’t find them? How would you feel about the puzzle then?” (Accept comments such as, “sad, mad, it wouldn’t be the same, it’s not right, etc. ”)**
  - “Well, I have to tell you that we won’t be finding the pieces to this puzzle right now. That is because I left them out on purpose, as part of our lesson. I wanted us to think about the places where the pieces are missing.” Point to the puzzle: “See the gaps there—the places where the pieces could have been? Do the gaps bother you?” Accept responses. “They bother me. And I wonder if the puzzle with missing pieces is a little bit like God’s people?”**





## 2010 Week of the Laity: The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World

*I Corinthians 10:17: “..we who are many are one body...”*

**Children’s Sermon: Missing Pieces** (continued from previous page).

7. *(Continue). “How do you think the puzzle with missing pieces could be like the church?” Let the children give ideas. Try to state them aloud, rephrasing if necessary. Allow the children’s responses to stand, or offer, “I think you have it. There are some people missing from church who could be here. There are some missing pieces. “*  
*“Does that bother you? Do you think that might bother God, too?”*  
*“Where do you think the people are who leave gaps around the table? Allow responses, or: “Could it be that no body told them about God’s love? Could it be that some people told them that they weren’t welcome? Could it be they didn’t have a way to get to church? Could it be they couldn’t leave their homes to come to church?”*
8. *“Yes, I think God has given us a beautiful picture of what it would be like if all of God’s people came together as one. (Briefly hold up the puzzle box with the picture on the lid, if you have it, then set it down and pick up the Bible.) “We can see in the words and stories of the Bible what the picture is supposed to look like. “*
9. *“In the big picture of how things should look, I think that each person would bring the gift that only he or she could bring—a very own piece of the picture, that together makes up the people of God.”*  
*“Do you know that nobody else can bring to the world the gifts that you bring?” Point or gesture individually toward each child, making sure not to miss any. Finish by making a sweeping gesture toward the congregation and any other individuals in the room.*

#### IV. Wondering and Reflecting Questions.

*“I’d like to close today with some questions to think and wonder about, for now, and also when you are alone with God. You don’t need to answer aloud.” Adapt the question to your group, pausing between each question to allow the listeners time to think.*

- *I wonder if we ever feel like the missing piece, wanting a chance to be part of the picture?*
- *As we gather as people of God here today, I wonder who might be the missing pieces?*
- *I wonder what gifts that they alone could bring?*
- *I wonder how God feels about the gaps?*
- *I wonder what God wants us to do to fill those gaps?*
- *I wonder if it would be hard to find those missing pieces?*
- *I wonder if we know where some of those missing pieces are?*
- *I wonder what we would need to change to bring all of the missing pieces to God’s table?*
- *I wonder what God’s picture would look like if all of the pieces were there as God had planned?*

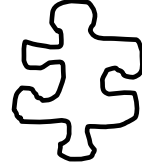
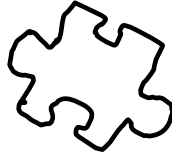
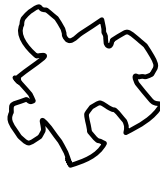
**V: Sending Forth.** *“Let’s pray together. Please bow your heads.”*

*“Dear God, thank you for your call to us to come together to be one people, one church. When people are missing from the picture, God, let it bother us enough to do something about it. Give us wisdom and courage in this task. For this, we ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.”*



## Week of the Laity: *Missing Pieces*

1. Think about the jigsaw pieces below and their attributes: shapes, tabs, and gaps. Does one piece best represent you?
2. Think about the tabs and gaps and if any represents a part of your life.
3. Which is needed: a tab or gap to join with another piece? What does that mean to you in thinking about your own strengths and weaknesses, and need for each other?
4. How is wholeness related to coming together as the body of Christ?
5. Who sees the big picture? Who is it that helps provide the 'brain power' and vision to help all of the pieces fit together?



## *Missing Pieces*

Think about a person that you know who might not know he or she is welcome at God's table. Say a prayer for that person, and think of what you might say to help them feel more welcome.



## Crypto clue:

See if you can decode the words below. Each letter stands for another letter of the alphabet (with the code given below if you need to use it.)  
 If you are successful, you will discover what Jesus said, when once he found out about some people being kept away from his welcome.

U L K K W L U O K K U L J W O U Y S L T

J F G L K F G L H T Y Y F T F K

D K F Z K W L G... 18:16.  
 -U C M L 18:16.

Code:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
H	R	J	Y	L	X	I	W	O	V	M	U	G
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
T	F	Z	E	S	D	K	C	P	B	Q	A	N



## 2010 Week of the Laity: *The Welcome Table for a Fragmented World*

- This 2010 edition of Disciples Home Missions' *Week of the Laity* resources was written and compiled by Deborah Phelps, MDiv student at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, for *Disciples Home Missions* of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) under the direction of the Rev. Billye P. Bridges.
- For more information, contact Deborah Phelps, Rev. Bridges, or William Culp at the DHM office: **888-346-2631** or **mail@dhm.disciples.org**
- Historical references are from *Streamers*, a study of Disciples history and values, available as a free curriculum for Disciples of Christ and other Stone-Campbell churches and individuals (available at [www.discipleshomemissions.org](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org)).
- Copies may be obtained directly from the DHM Web site or via mail at:  
**Disciples Home Missions**  
**P.O. Box 1986**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46206**
- A special thanks to Ronald J. Allen, *Disciples of Christ* minister, and Professor of Preaching and New Testament at *Christian Theological Seminary* in Indianapolis, Indiana (<http://www.cts.edu>), for help with sermon and preaching guidelines.



*Equipping Disciples for Christ...*

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## Feedback Form: Disciples Home Missions 2010 Week of the Laity Resources

*How are we doing? Please help us keep improving by offering us your feedback:*

- This form can be printed and sent in the mail to *Disciples Home Missions* (see address below).
- An identical form can be filled out quickly on-line at the website: [www.discipleshomemissions.org](http://www.discipleshomemissions.org)

### Questions #1 to 4 have to do with what you thought about *DHM's Week of the Laity* resources:

1. Which most closely describes the portion of this year's *Laity* resources that your group used?  
(a) none                      (b) theme only                      (c) some                      (d) most                      (e) all
2. How adaptable and appropriate did you find this year's materials to your congregation's needs?  
(a) not at all                      (b) slightly                      (c) somewhat                      (d) very
3. Before this year, what has been your experience using *DHM Week of Laity* resources?  
(a) never used before    (b) used, often not helpful    (c) used, sometimes helpful    (d) used, usually helpful
4. How likely are you to use *DHM Week of Laity* resources next year?  
(a) will not use                      (b) might use                      (c) probably will use                      (d) definitely will use

### Answer #5 to 8 if your congregation held a Laity Sunday worship service of some type.

5. Approximately how many people were present at your Laity Sunday service?  
(a) under 50                      (b) 51-100                      (c) 101-200                      (d) 201-500                      (e) over 500
6. How useful were the resources in helping your group plan, prepare, and conduct Laity Sunday?  
(a) not at all                      (b) slightly                      (c) somewhat                      (d) very
7. How would you rate your overall Laity Sunday worship service?  
(a) waste of time                      (b) slightly meaningful                      (c) somewhat meaningful                      (d) highly meaningful
8. How useful do you think the resources were in helping to equip your group to know, live and share the good news of Christ?  
(a) not at all                      (b) slightly                      (c) somewhat                      (d) very

### Free Response (feel free to add additional comments on the back or another page):

9. How will 2010's Laity Sunday be remembered at your church? (free response)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What about the *Laity Sunday Resources* did you particularly like or find helpful for your group?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. What about the *Laity Sunday Resources* would you like to see changed or added for next year?

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Return this form to:

**Disciples Home Missions**  
**P.O. Box 1986**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46206**  
Attention: William Culp

Optional information:

*Congregation name, location*

*Person filling out this form/position in church:*

*Demographically, our congregation is:*