

**UNITY WORLDWIDE MINISTRIES  
EASTERN REGION YOUTH OF UNITY  
FAMILY GROUP MATERIALS**



**Spring Rally 2014**

## TIPS FOR FAMILY GROUP LEADERS

**Take Time to Be Centered:** Spend time in meditation or prayer to connect with God. When you are centered, your group will be centered.

**Focus on the Group:** Always start by centering and connecting the group with an opening prayer even if you are starting late. Use the prayer provided or use it as an example to create your own. Ask the group to focus when you need their attention. If people are having trouble staying focused on one activity or discussion, try another centering prayer or take three deep breaths as a group.

**Set the Tone:** Your energy sets the tone for each activity. The group will pick up on your energy. If the next activity is light, keep it light. If it is quiet, keep it quiet. Use your example, your words and your actions to guide the group.

**Be Prepared:** Read and understand the material before you begin the family group time. Check the materials and supplies before the activity. Clarify any questions about the material during the family group leader meeting.

**Let the Group Do the Discussion:** You may need to become comfortable with waiting for a response from people in the group. BE OKAY WITH SILENCE! Discussion means more than one answer and everyone's input is valid. Allow several people to respond before moving on.

**Keep It Moving:** Avoid dragging out activities as this creates boredom and lack of focus.

**Time:** Be on time or early to each Family Group meeting so that the group can start on time. Check the timing in your Family Group material before you begin each session. Watch the time during the workshop. Be willing to stop an activity if the next one needs to start. If the needs of your group require you to change or skip an activity, do this at your discretion while honoring the input of the Regional Team and the overall goal of the material.

**Encourage Everyone to Participate:** Allow a person the right to pass but be aware of the tendency of some people to dominate and some to hold back. Remind everyone that each person and all ideas are important.

**Closing:** Always take time for a Closing Circle even when running late. Do a short prayer, a Yeah God or a group hug to acknowledge the end of the time spent together.

**Other Groups:** Try to maintain a normal conversational level of talking because there will be other groups nearby. Be aware of quiet times of prayer and meditation in other groups around you and keep the level of noise down.

**Heart Agreements:** Be familiar with the Heart Agreements and remind individuals of these agreements if necessary.

**Optional Activities:** Keep your Family Group together during the entire time allotted for Family Group. If your group finishes early, do one or more of the optional activities until the end of the family group time. Do not close your Family Group early.

**Additional Help:** If you need any advice or assistance at any time during your Family Group, please ask the Family Group Coordinator.

Thank you for serving your region as Family Group Leader – you are a blessing!

# EASTERN REGION Y.O.U. SPRING RALLY

April 25-27, 2014

## BLUE SKIES

### FAMILY GROUP #1

Friday Evening  
8:00-9:00 pm (1 hour)

#### Opening Prayer:

Leader: Begin the Family Group by joining hands and reading the Opening Prayer

#### Prayer:

Send Thy peace, O Lord, which is perfect and everlasting, that our souls may radiate peace.  
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may think, act and speak harmoniously.  
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may be contented and thankful for Thy bountiful gifts.  
Amen.

#### Affirmation:

Leader: Introduce the Affirmation. Read the Affirmation out loud then invite everyone in the group to say the affirmation together.

I am the blue sky I wish to see.

**Quote:** Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the Quote.

“The blue sky is infinitely high, crystal clear...that’s what the world should be...a world of infinite possibilities, laid before us, crystal clear.” ~Kenshin

### **ACTIVITY 1 – GETTING ACQUAINTED**

5 Minutes

Going around the circle, have each person introduce themselves by stating

- his/her name
- chapter
- and number of Rallies attended
- one thing in your life that causes you to experience blue skies (happiness).

Note to FG Leaders: Be sure to welcome any first timers and offer to be available throughout Rally to answer any questions or address any concerns.

### **ACTIVITY 2 – NAME GAME**

10 Minutes

Materials: None

FG Leader: Before beginning the game announce that the group will be playing a name game to help everyone learn the names of everyone in the group. Go around the circle one more time

with each person saying their name while everyone focuses on remembering all names. Make sure everyone knows the name of the person to their right.

Begin a cadence slapping your hands on your thighs twice and snapping your fingers twice: slap, slap, snap snap. One of the Family Group Leaders will start the game. On the first snap say your own name. On the second snap say the name of the person on your right. Start slowly. The person to the right of the leader then says his/her name and the name of the person on his/her right.

Example: Slap Slap Grace Caleb (Snapping fingers on each name)  
Slap Slap Caleb Gen  
Slap Slap Gen Chance

Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.

In the second round, say your own name and the name of anyone else in the circle. The person whose name was called then says his own name and someone else in the circle. Keep going until everyone's name has been called a few times. To make the game harder, speed up the beat.

### **ACTIVITY 3 – BLUE SKIES RELAY**

**5-10 Minutes**

**Materials:** 2 Large Pieces of Blank Paper or Paper on Clipboard, marker or pencil, masking tape or string.

**Set Up:** Set the playing field by creating a starting line with masking tape or string. Set a large piece of paper or the clipboard and paper a distance from the starting line. Divide group into 2 teams and instruct each team to form a single line behind the starting line. The first person in line holds the marker or pencil. It will serve as a baton for the relay and will be passed to the next person in line once the first person is finished. The next player in line may not cross the starting line until they have the baton in their hands.

Give the group a 3 minute time limit and inform the group that this is a race to see which group can come up with the highest number of items that help them experience Blue Skies. To accomplish this, the first person in line on each team runs to the paper and writes down their first name and something that helps them experience "Blue Skies" in their life. Once they have written something down they run back to their line and hand the "baton" to the next person who does the same thing. Game continues until time is called.

After the race is over bring both teams together and look at how many things the group was able to list. If you wish and can find room on the wall near you after the Family Group Bags are put up, you can put the Blue Sky lists on the wall with masking tape.

### **ACTIVITY 3 – HEART AGREEMENTS**

**10 Minutes**

**Materials:** Large Sheet of paper, Markers, Masking tape

1. As the leader, take a couple of minutes to explain to your group the purpose of a family group. Share how the groups are designed to be a safe place where each of us is free to be ourselves and to experience acceptance and love. The family group works together

during all of the family workshops scheduled during the rally. It is important that each person is present and on time for each workshop in order to build the consciousness of love and support that is shared in the group.

2. Explain to the group that to create a safe environment, there are certain agreements that must be discussed and agreed upon. Ask the group what agreements they would like to have to feel safe and have a good experience together.
3. Create a poster of the Agreements that the group suggests and feels comfortable with.
4. Some important agreements for the Family Group appear below. Feel free to suggest any or all of them and to put them in the words the group feels comfortable with.
  - Be on time – if one person is late, it affects the whole workshop
  - Participate enthusiastically in all activities
  - Do not criticize, put anyone down, interrupt, or be sarcastic
  - Give loving attention to each person sharing
  - Know that there are no right or wrong answers
  - Respect everyone's right to pass at any turn
  - Be supportive of one another at all times.
  - Keep what is shared in confidence with this group

**Leaders: Please share exception to confidentiality rule: We are legally and morally bound to report situations that indicate a danger to yourself or someone else.**

5. Other possible agreements are:
  - We will listen with our hearts and not interrupt one another
  - We will behold the Christ in each person
  - We will end each family group with hugs
6. When everyone has agreed upon the Heart Agreements and feels comfortable with them, have each person sign the poster, committing themselves to the group and the group's agreements.
7. Tape your Heart Agreement up on the wall, where your group meets.

#### **ACTIVITY 4 – THEME DISCUSSION & LOVE NOTE BAGS**

15 Minutes

Materials: White paper bags, Markers, Masking tape,

Pass out the love note bags to each member of the group. Explain that

- Each person receives a bag in which to collect “loving thoughts” from other members of their family group throughout the weekend, as well as from others here at rally.
- A table is set up to provide notepaper, markers, stickers, etc. for writing these special notes to each other. This can be done after meals and during free time, but not during scheduled activities.
- Everyone should leave the love note table promptly when activities are scheduled to begin.

Then:

- Pass around the markers and encourage each person to personalize their bag by decorating it. Make sure they put their Name, Church, City and State somewhere on the bag where people can read them.
- When the bags are finished, put them up on the wall near your Family Group meeting space using the masking tape.
- If your Family Group is meeting in one of the cabins, put them in the hallway of the main meeting room on the wall next to your Family Group Number.
- Use the number in the bag and tape that to the wall in the hallway where you are hanging your love note bags.

Encourage Family Group members to write love notes to others in their group as well as other groups throughout the weekend and place them in their bags. Remind them how nice it is to give, receive and read these love notes after the weekend is over.

Theme Discussion: As you are creating your beautiful love note bags, take some time to think about what the theme of this rally means to you. While sharing markers, share your ideas together. The following questions may be used as discussion prompts but feel free to ask different questions based on where the discussion goes in your particular group.

- What does the theme Blue Skies mean to you?
- Sometimes, there are clouds in the sky. What do they represent to you?
- What do you think is the value of obstacles that seem to get in the way of our happiness?
- Sometimes a storm or weather pattern prevents us from seeing any blue skies at all. Can you describe an experience like this in your life?
- How do you know blue skies exist when you can't see them?
- How do you find blue skies in your life in the midst of a storm?
- What is the value of a cloudy day?
- How do you think this theme relates to the world at large?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the closing prayer

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that amidst our worldly strife we may enjoy thy bliss.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may endure all, tolerate all in the thought of thy grace and mercy.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that our lives may become a Divine vision, and in Thy light all darkness may vanish.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, our Father and Mother, that we Thy children on earth may all unite in one family.

Amen.

**Opening Prayer:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the opening prayer or create one of their own.

I invite you to close your eyes and take a deep centering breath.

Divine Spirit, thank you for bringing us together today to continue to enjoy the love we share for one another. As we move forward, allow us to experience the blue skies present within ourselves. Amen.

**Affirmation:**

Leader: Read the affirmation and invite the group to say the affirmation together.

I choose to live in this present moment.

**Quote:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the Quote.

“Clouds come floating into my life, no longer to carry rain or usher storm, but to add color to my sunset sky.” ~Rabindranath Tagore

**ACTIVITY 1 - CHECK -IN**

5 Minutes

Go around the circle giving each member of the group a chance to check-in, indicating how they are feeling now, how things are going for them at Rally, anything they have particularly enjoyed, or anything they have found challenging. This is a quick check in with each person having about a half minute to share.

**ACTIVITY 2 – BLUE SKIES GAME**

25 Minutes

Materials: Large Pieces of Heavy Paper or Vinyl, Bowl or Bag of Jumbo Marshmallows String/ Boundary markers (plastic or paper plate with rock) or Masking Tape

Game Set Up: If possible, find a playing area outside and mark off boundaries with 4 Boundary markers. If inside, mark off boundaries with masking tape X's. Markers are placed at the 4 corners of the playing area. Players play within the large square area denoted by the 4 corner markers. Place the pieces of heavy paper within the playing area. Some may be close enough so players can easily move from one to the next. Others should be far enough apart so that players must step into the open space in order to go from one to another.

Players line up single file behind the starting line, ask one person to take a turn as tagger with the nerf balls.

Say:

The squares represent our Blue Sky experience (Who we are when we are fully aware of the Christ Within) The jumbo marshmallows represent clouds or life experiences that can obscure

our Blue Sky. The ground in between the Blue Skies represent our uncontrolled emotions and thought patterns.

The object of the game is for the players to move across the playing field by moving from Blue Sky to Blue Sky from one side of the playing field to the other. Taggers carry the bag/bucket of “clouds” (jumbo marshmallows and gently tosses them at the players when they step onto the playing field. If a player is tagged while not on a Blue Sky square, they must start over. If a player is tagged while on a Blue Sky square, they may proceed.

Invite players to make their way across the playing field a few at a time. Let the first player get a few squares ahead before the next one proceeds. When half the group has made it across, invite someone else to be the tagger so the tagger can have a turn.

Once game is over or time is up, gather the squares, markers and “Clouds” up and lead the group in a brief discussion using the discussion questions.

### Discussion Questions

- How was the experience of the game for you?
- What was the most challenging part of the game?
- How did you play the game? Did you try to race through or did you stop and strategize? How did this work?
- How did the experience of being tagged while on your Blue Sky compare with being tagged while off your Blue Sky?
- Were you able to get across? How did that feel?
- How do you stay centered in your Christ Presence in the midst of challenges?
- How is this game like something in your life?
- How is this game like something within you?
- How does this game relate to the theme for this rally?

### **ACTIVITY 3 - EXAMINING OUR CLOUDS**

**30 Minutes**

Materials: Cloud papers, pens or pencils, List of Questions for Cloud Activity

Leader: Pass out cloud papers and pen or pencil to each person. Invite everyone to set their papers and pens aside but where they can reach them easily.

Leader Say: Our next activity will involve getting into and remaining in a quiet space for a short period of time. I invite you to take a moment to get comfortable in your chair and if you are comfortable doing so, close your eyes. (Pause) Now take a few deep centering breaths. (Pause) With each exhalation release any tension, concern or worry and allow yourself to become peaceful. (Allow a few moments for everyone to center)

Now take a moment to picture yourself under blue skies in a place of your choosing. Allow yourself to feel the warmth of the sun shining down upon you. The sky above you is a brilliant blue and seems to shimmer and sparkle in the sun. Take a moment to experience the peace of



the place you have chosen and allow yourself to be at peace and in harmony with all of your surroundings. (Pause )

Now bring forth to your mind's eye a situation or relationship involving another person in your life that you would like to be different. (pause to allow each person to think of a situation.) You will be sharing your situation with a partner, so choose a situation or relationship about which you are willing to share. If more than one situation comes to mind, choose the situation you would most like to work on at this time. (Pause, allow time for everyone to think of a situation.)

Are you able to remain in your Blue Sky experience when thinking of your situation? Take a few more moments to experience your Blue Sky before opening your eyes. When you have thought of a situation and you are ready, gently open your eyes and pick up your cloud and write a phrase or short sentence describing the situation or relationship on one side of the cloud. Please remain in the silence for this activity while everyone is writing.

Leader: Ask everyone to find a partner for sharing. If there is an even number the leader may participate with a partner. Give each set of partners a list of questions. Each set of partners should read the first question and both should respond before moving on to the second question. Each person should respond with a sentence or two in response to each question in order to finish in the time allotted. When partners are finished with all of the questions, each partner will think of an affirmation that will help them experience Blue Skies even in the midst of the challenging situation

#### Questions for Cloud Activity

1. How do you feel when the situation happens or when you think about the situation?
2. In what way would you like the other person to change so that the situation can be improved?
3. What do you think is going on with the other person when they act in the way they act or say the things they say?
4. Do you have an opinion about who is right and or wrong in the situation? How do you think your opinion about who or what is right or wrong affects the situation?
5. What is something you can do to change the situation?
6. In what way can you change your thinking about the situation/person/relationship?
7. Is there something in you that is in need of healing that this situation is calling you to look at?
8. Our 2011 Fall Rally theme was "No One and Nothing is Against Me?" Do you think it's possible for that statement to be true? Explain.
9. Who and what are you? (Who or what is the "me" in the idea "No one and nothing is against me?")
10. Do you believe that your true nature is of God (Love, Peace, Joy,)
11. When you feel someone is against you, what do you think it is that the person is against.
12. If you were Jesus, how do you think you would think, feel and act in response to this situation?
13. What affirmation can you create that will help you experience Blue Skies in the midst of this challenge?

## **ACTIVITY 4 - CREATING OUR BLUE SKY**

**30 Minutes**

Materials: Blue paper, paper clouds from previous activity, magazine pictures, markers, scissors, glue, pens/pencils,

### Instructions:

Next we are going to create a framed collage to help us experience Blue Skies in all situations. Each person will create an affirmation for this purpose. They may use the affirmation they created in their activity or choose another affirmation that has meaning for them. The Blue paper is available as the background. If you wish, you may cut out your cloud and write your affirmation on the blank side of your cloud to remind you that your affirmation will help you experience blue skies when clouds are present. Use any of the materials available and feel free to paste on pictures or words that will help you experience your Blue Sky.

When finished, your collage can be placed on your dresser or desk or any other place where you will see it often. Be creative and create your personal Blue Sky reminder.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the closing prayer

Divine Spirit: We are so grateful for this time together to explore and examine the clouds in our life. We know that all experiences have value. Help us to know and experience Blue Skies even in the midst of our life's challenges. Help us to be grateful for the clouds in our life knowing that they add color to our sunset sky.

Amen

## **FAMILY GROUP #3**

**Saturday Evening  
(6:30-7:45 pm - 1 Hour 15 Minutes)**

### **Opening Prayer:**

Invite a member of the group to read the opening prayer or make up one of their own.

Dear Mother, Father God,

Thank you for bringing us here tonight, all of our souls and paths have met and now we live together in this moment. Thank you for the loving energy and welcoming space we have here, we welcome the Spirit and space to share and we are here in unity . Amen.

### **Affirmation:**

Leader: Read the Affirmation, then invite the entire group to say the affirmation together.

**I turn every experience into an opportunity.**

### **Quote:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the Quote. Once the quote is read invite everyone to take in the words of the quote and then request the reader to read the quote one more time

“After winter comes the summer. After night comes the dawn. After every storm, there comes clear blue skies.” ~Samuel Rutherford

## ACTIVITY 1 – HEART TALK

70 Minutes

Materials: Box of Kleenex, Heart

Leader Say: The Heart Talk is a time to share from our hearts. It is a sacred time that empowers us through honest sharing and respectful and loving listening. This is a time to release anything that may be weighing us down or keeping us from being close to others. This is also a time to express the joys and blessings that are present in our life. Your family agreements are very important in this activity so that everyone feels safe in sharing with the group. What is shared in the group should stay in the group. The exception to the confidentiality agreement is if something is shared that represents a danger to yourself or others.

There are certain rules that are followed in the Heart Talk:

- 1) Only the person with the heart may talk. The person talking receives love, undivided attention and deep listening from everyone in the group.
- 2) No one should respond to someone else's sharing. This is not a time to offer advice or in any way to try to counsel or fix another. It is only a time to listen deeply to others and share from your own heart.
- 3) Honor the inner strength and wholeness of each person in the group. Tearfulness during the Heart Talk should not be taken as a sign that the speaker needs physical contact from others in the group.
- 4) The heart is sacred and should be handled with care. It is always passed to the left.
- 5) Everyone has the right to pass.
- 6) Be considerate about how long you talk. Monitor your sharing so you don't monopolize or take up more than your share of the time.
- 7) The Heart Talk ends once the heart goes around the circle once with nobody sharing or once the time allotted has been used.

Meditation (leading into heart talk)

*Leader's Note: Begin the Heart Talk with the following meditation. While reading this meditation aloud to your family, allow yourself time to listen to the words, you may also want to read through it once before reading it aloud. If you are giving yourself time to hear the words then everyone else will have time to absorb them as well. Just don't close your eyes 😊*

Get comfortable in your chair. If you choose to, you may sit on the floor. Gently allow your eyes to close. Take a deep breath and slowly let it out....become aware of every cell in your body...take another deep breath and let that out...now just listen to the silence around you...or listen to the sounds you hear in the room...now think of any conflicting feelings or emotions your life.....think about how these situations made you feel... did you feel less than perfect?...think now of how glad you are to be at Rally, where you can let these conflicts and negative emotions float away.....take another deep breath and acknowledge your negative emotions float away...and know that you ARE perfect...Bring your awareness to your heart center ... It is here in your heart that you experience your oneness with Spirit...Your heart is one with the heart of Spirit...As your heart beats it is the rhythm of love singing to you of oneness...now as you breath, feel your breath moving in and out of your heart...watch your breathing...as your breath moves in and out of your heart, recognize your heart to heart connection with Spirit...Begin to be aware that you are also connected with each person in the circle...know that this is a safe place to be...you are surrounded in a soft light...so safe...so loved...the light wraps you in love...the perfect love is in and all around you ...Now allow that light to radiate from your heart area...Now let the light flow down your left arm out your left hand

and into the hand of the person on your left...picture this love flowing around and around the circle and when you feel peace in the room take a deep breath... and, when you are ready, open your eyes.

Leader Say: The heart is in the middle of the circle and may be picked up by anyone in the circle to begin the Heart Talk.

## **ACTIVITY 2 - LOVING REFLECTION**

20 Minutes

When approximately 30 minutes is left in the Heart Talk, read the following instructions:

Leader Say: The heart talk is a way to release negative aspects of our life that are keeping us from experiencing the life we want. As we share our hearts and reflect on life and its complications it is easy to begin to focus only on the things that are serious and difficult. We may forget that God has given us free will and all the tools necessary to overcome any challenge in our life. We will begin to pass the heart around again with the following questions in mind.

- ♥ How can we change our experiences and look at things from another perspective.
- ♥ What can we do when we feel powerless or out of control?
- ♥ How can we remember God and Unity in times of trouble and crisis?
- ♥ How can we learn to see the lessons in things instead of the struggle?
- ♥ What are ways we can cheer ourselves up when we feel down?
- ♥ What effect does keeping an attitude of gratitude have on our life and perspective?

Leaders: The heart talk ends when the time allotted is up or when the heart has gone around the circle with everyone passing. Please do your best to end the heart talk on time.

### Finishing Heart Talk early:

If your group finishes early, your group may choose one of the optional activities found at the end of the Family Group material or the group may work on love notes in the remaining time. If you want to lighten the mood, a silly and fun optional activity "The Fruit Game" (Not Fruit Basket Upset) appears at the end of the Family Group Material. Please be mindful of nearby Family Groups in choosing any optional activities.

Leaders: Please keep your Family Group together during the allotted Family Group time.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Thank you Mother Father God for bringing us together here and now to share our love and light with one another. Just as the Blue Sky is present behind each cloud, we know that your light and love is present in all situations. Amen

Leaders: Please remind everyone to bring their cameras to the next Family Group meeting if they want to take a picture of their Family Group.

## **LEADERS**

Please bring your family group bags to the staging area and sort your materials into the containers provided. Please help us by throwing away any markers, pens or glue sticks that are dried out or used up, putting pens together in a rubber band, pencils together in a rubber band, and putting a complete set of markers in each box. Remember to pick up your "Sunday Bag" before tomorrow's Family Group meeting. It has everything you need for tomorrow's family group meeting. Thank you!!

## **FAMILY GROUP #4**

**Sunday Morning  
9:30-10:00 am (30 Min)**

### **Opening Prayer:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the Opening Prayer or to say their own prayer.

Divine spirit, we are so grateful for all the experiences, lessons, blessings, and friends that have come to us through this rally. We trust that you will continue to guide us on our spiritual journey. Amen.

### **Affirmation:**

Leader: Read the affirmation, then invite the entire group to say the affirmation together.

**Everything I need comes to me at the right and perfect time.**

### **Quote:**

Leader: Invite a member of the group to read the Quote. Once the quote is read invite everyone to take in the words, and ask the reader to read the quote a second time.

Just when the mountain looks too high, the obstacles too great between you and your goals you suddenly see the beautiful blue sky, the very presence of The Great Spirit, which gently reminds you of the limitless possibilities ahead. So, reaching out to absorb that amazing energy, you find the will, the strength to keep climbing, for you know in the end the view will be worth the effort. Even more amazing, you may not even remember the effort later, only the limitless field of possibilities and beauty that now lay before you. ~Unknown

### **ACTIVITY 1 – CHECK IN AND FEEDBACK**

10 Minute

Materials: Evaluation Forms, Pens

Ask group members how they are feeling as well as what they have liked about rally and what was most meaningful to them. While group members are checking in, pass out Evaluation Forms and request group members to provide written feedback to the team. Remember that the team has worked very hard and done their best to create a unique, spiritual and fun Rally experience. Feedback should come from a loving space and a desire to lovingly provide appreciation as well as helpful suggestions.

### **ACTIVITY 2 – DISCUSSION**

5 Minutes

For those of us who have been to Rally, we know the feeling we carry into our world after we leave Rally. It is sometimes difficult to hold this feeling if we are in environments we find challenging. We know it is possible to hold this 'Rally High' outside of Rally, but how do we do it? Discuss how we might better know there is only light in our lives. Consider how we might overcome ideas such as fear or self doubt. What support and resources do we have in our lives to help support us once we leave rally? Is there anything learned during Rally that will help us as we transition back to "the real world"?

### **ACTIVITY 3– GROUP PICTURE**

5 Minutes

Take pictures of your group for anyone who has brought their camera.

## **ACTIVITY 4 – CANDLELIGHT APPRECIATION & CLOSING**

10 Minutes

Materials: Candle, Candle guard, matches, Small slips of paper, Bag, Pens

Have each person write their name on a slip of paper and put it in the bag. Pass the bag around and allow each person to pick a name from the bag. No one should reveal whose name they chose. If someone picks their own name, they should put the slip of paper back and pick another name.

Form a circle and light a candle. Invite each person to take a moment to send love to the person whose name they picked out of the bag. Then beginning with the leader the person holding the candle will tell the group what they appreciate about the other person without revealing who the other person is. Use “This person” to refer to the person and avoid pronouns that reveal the gender of the person being appreciated. After saying a few words of appreciation, the candle holder gives the candle to the person they described. Continue until each person has honored someone in the circle.

### **Closing Prayer:**

As a final closing prayer, the person holding the candle sends the candle around the circle to the left saying as he/she passes the candle that person’s name and “I see the Christ you are” until the prayer returns to you, then say the following prayer or your own prayer with a similar sentiment to close the Family Group.

Mother Father God, thank you for this incredible weekend we have shared. We know that we have come together as one, in love, and we will continue to support each other through our thoughts and prayers as we continue to experience blue skies in all situations. Amen.

**LEADERS: PLEASE BRING SUNDAY BAGS AND ALL MATERIALS TO THE STAGING AREA AND SORT MATERIALS IN THE CONTAINERS PROVIDED.**

**THANK YOU FAMILY GROUP LEADERS FOR YOUR SERVICE AND DEDICATION.  
WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOUR EXPERIENCE!**

**BLESSINGS AND LOVE FROM**

*Richie, Breanna, Sarah, Niko and Jane*

## **OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The following activities may be used for Family Group #4 or if your group finishes any of your Family Group meetings early and needs additional activities.

### **OPTION A: CIRCLE ACTIVITY**

5-10 Minutes

Have the group form a circle. Have one person stand in the middle of the circle. Have somebody time 30 seconds. During this 30 seconds everyone on the outside of the circle says really nice things to the person on the inside of the circle (i.e. you're beautiful, you have a very calming presence, you have an amazing voice, you have a great sense of humor that brings laughter to everyone around you, you are kind and thoughtful, you're great at basketball— whatever wonderful things you feel toward the person). Don't be afraid to have everyone talking at once. The effect should be a sort of torrent of compliments washing over the person on the inside of the circle. Once the 30 seconds is up have another person step into the center of the circle and repeat the process until everyone has had a turn on the inside of the circle.

If you want to make things a little more interesting, the group can combine this activity with the willow activity so that each person is passed within the circle of trust and told positive things.

### **OPTION B – HUMAN KNOT**

5-10 Minutes

Form a circle with hands in the middle. Take the hand of someone in the circle. Do not take the hand of the person standing on either side of you. Do not take both hands of the same person. Now you have to untie the knot and re-form the circle without letting go of your hands.

### **OPTION C – CIRCLE MASSAGE**

5 Minutes

Have group stand in a circle so that their shoulders are touching. Have the group turn to their right and gently massage the upper back and shoulders of the person on your right. After a few minutes, turn to the left and massage the back and shoulders of the person on the left. As you massage, send love and light to the person you are massaging.

### **OPTION D– WILLOW TRUST CIRCLE**

5-10 Minutes

Form a circle standing around a volunteer who stands in the middle. Have everyone in the circle stand shoulder to shoulder facing the center of the circle with hands held at chest height, palms forward. Each person should have one foot slightly behind the other for good balance. The people in the circle have become a summer breeze and the person in the center will be the willow.

The willow stands in the center of the circle with feet together, arms crossed over the chest, and eyes closed. Keeping the feet stationary and the body straight but relaxed, the willow lets go, swaying from side to side, forward and back. Those in the circle support the willow with gentle pushes of their palms. Make sure that there are at least two people supporting the willow at all times. Each person gets to be the willow in the wind, having the opportunity to trust others and experience the trust in the group.

Since the purpose of the activity is to provide an experience of trust, each member must contribute to a comfortable trusting environment by observing these guidelines:

- No talking or laughing
- Do the activity in silence so everyone can experience the feeling of trust.
- Being smooth and gentle when moving the person around and pay attention to individual differences (height, weight, degree of trust)

### **OPTION E - THE FRUIT GAME**

5-10 Minutes

One of the hardest things in life is self-control, which this activity accurately displays! Put chairs in a circle and have everyone stand up in front of their chair. Get everyone in your group to pick a different fruit. When the game begins, the person who starts says their fruit name, and then the fruit of another person in the circle. Example:

1<sup>st</sup> Person: "Lemon, Banana."

2<sup>nd</sup> Person: "Banana, Kiwi."

3<sup>rd</sup> Person: "Kiwi, Orange"

However, there are two special rules to this game: You must keep your tongue out the whole time, and you cannot laugh! Anyone who does either is "out" for the remainder of the game. Anyone who is "out" sits down in their chair.