



An 8 Week Unit on Community

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Antarctic Adventures!

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Community is God's Plan for YOU!

Community Helps Us Learn How to Forgive (SAMPLE LESSON)

Community Helps Us Learn How to Ask Forgiveness

Community Helps Us Learn How to Be Unselfish

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Game Day!

The Set Up for ***Expedition Kids!***

Did you know that every one of us is on an expedition? We are! God has each one of us on a journey that can bring glory to Him and purpose for us. And like any expedition, we need the right tools to be successful.

Kids are no different. With ***Expedition Kids!*** curriculum, children can get equipped to go out and be successful in the expedition God has them on. They need to have the tools of prayer, reading God's Word, knowing who they are in Christ and that God has a purpose and a plan for them.

Our goal is to provide quality curriculum for churches that is affordable, full of energy & fun, with the spiritual depth to make an eternal impact. We want kids to want to come to your church, to hear about how awesome God is, and to want Him in their lives!

Expedition Kids! offers a kids' church curriculum that is effective, inexpensive and easy to use. It's aimed at children from 1st – 5th grades and employs a large-group/small-group teaching format. It is fun and sometimes a little crazy, with the room's environment changing to reinforce and reflect the current unit's theme. It is a great help to smaller churches and church plants that currently may not have a large budget, technological capabilities or volunteer pool.

You're going to have to be willing to cook up several giant pots of slime, put down some tarps in your kids' church room, and catapult eggs. Most activities and games reinforce the lesson point, but sometimes we do something just because it's fun. While they are having fun, kids will be learning about prayer, how to read their Bible, how to pray for others, and what it's like when God speaks to us. There are weeks that the curriculum calls for movie or game weeks. This is a time to kick back and enjoy being with your kids – and let them build relationships with each other! These weeks also make the curriculum flexible so it fits into your calendar.

Expedition Kids! helps get people involved. You don't have to teach if that's not your gifting: there's a place for everyone to pitch in and begin the expedition! Places to serve include: *small group leaders* for those with pastoral gifting, *teachers* for those comfortable speaking and entertaining, *carpentry* opportunities to build games, *artistic* opportunities with decorating and even a skit or two for those *dramatic* types!

There are several special items you will need to make as you progress through

the curriculum (potato launchers, egg-a-pults, Plinko game, etc.). While these take some time to make, they will be used again either later in the unit or in another unit.

Expedition Kids! is easy. Simply print it out from the curriculum CD, write the dates you plan to teach the lessons on the Table of Contents page and make copies. You can also edit and print so it's ready to go! Another option is to email it and let the volunteers print out the weeks they need.

Expedition Kids! Format:

This curriculum plans for an hour and a half, with a 10 – 15 minute worship time.

Welcome – This is a time to make announcements, welcome guests, celebrate birthdays, etc.

Worship – Don't have a worship leader? Consider ordering some DVD's from Vineyard Music Group USA (Fruit of the Spirit DVD), Group Publishing (www.group.com), God's Kids Worship company (www.godskidsworship.com), or use previous VBS worship DVD's.

Small Group Trek Team Debriefing – This is a time for kids to gather in small groups with their Trek Team Guide (small group leader) to discuss their week, review last week's lesson and see how it applied to their lives. It's a chance to "debrief" from their expedition of the past week. It is recommended to keep the same groups each week so that relationships can be formed among the children and leaders.

Trailbreaking – This is the large-group teaching time. You can have someone double up as the teacher and a small group leader if you're short on volunteers.

Memory verse – Expedition Kids! uses the same verse for 4 – 5 weeks at a time and uses motions to help kids remember.

Small Group Trek Team Gear Up – This is a time for kids to return to their small groups to discuss the lesson, get "geared up" for the week, and have prayer/ministry time.

Fun Elements You Can Incorporate:

If you don't already have one, come up with a fun name for your kids' church. Ours is called "Base Camp" because every 3 or 4 months we pack up and move

our base camp to a new location to learn about something new. This is when we completely redecorate the room and keep it a surprise from the kids until they walk in the door (we've built a tent that remains the same no matter where we are). We may go underwater to learn about how immeasurable God's love is, we may go into a cave to dig for treasures represented by answers to our questions, or we may join in with a Mexican fiesta to celebrate the salvation that is available through Jesus!

Have a Trading Post where kids can spend Bible Bucks on trinkets & toys (www.orientaltrading.com is a great place to find inexpensive treasures!). We usually have ours the last Sunday of each month at the end of class time. Kids can earn Bible Bucks for knowing the memory verse, making good choices during class, wearing a children's ministry Tshirt, bringing their Bible, bringing a friend and just being there!

Decorate the room if you can. Use scene setters & plastic tablecloth rolls from party supply stores, butcher paper from teacher supply stores, an overhead to copy a scene onto drop cloths, or just decorate the stage. We offer some ideas, so make it as elaborate or simple as you wish. Also, several of the units follow after the theme from some VBS's so you may have some of these decorations already. It's great stewardship to reuse these resources!

Consider making a sound effects CD to play as children arrive, or play music that fits the theme.

Not an artist? There's help! Use Microsoft Office Online for clipart & decorating pictures for backdrops or animals. Print or copy them onto a transparency and then shine them onto paper or fabric. Trace, and voila! Professional looking artwork using less-than professional level talent!

Welcome to Antarctic Adventures!

Intro and Special Directions

What do I want the kids to know?

When I told my son about the new unit I was writing on “community,” his first response was “Oh, we’re learning about communities in school!” Yes, they learn about neighborhoods and what makes a community function. But there’s a critical difference I want him to know: you can live in A community, but not live IN community. There’s a BIG difference! Our churches and our children’s ministries should attempt to foster living IN community. Community is where you can be real, be comfortable being yourself; where you can use your gifts; where you go through the ups and downs of life with the support of others. It is focused on being real: the real you. The church should form a community. Really, you can have community at a bar - but the community we want our kids to have has deep, lasting and supportive relationships with Jesus at the center. Here are the main points for this unit:

what community is, what it means to live in community
what you need to have community
why community is important

What to Special Order:

- Fake Snow – www.snowinseconds.com is where we ordered ours from, but there are several companies.
- Marshmallow Snowman Treat Packs: www.orientaltrading.com (IN-4/3559, cost is \$5.99 for 72 packs, as of 7/10)
- These are so cool, they aren’t in the curriculum, but they are so cool you may have to order them anyway - Xray Gummy Fish!!! (\$12.60 for 36 ct):
http://www.candywarehouse.com/xraygummyfish.html?utm_medium=s hoppingengine&utm_source=shopzilla

Community Helps Us Learn to Forgive

DATE: _____

Today we are hosting the 70 x 7 Chillympics (like the Olympics) except this is a contest that takes place in the freezing temp's of the Antarctic. Contestants are competing in different events to learn how much 490 is in different measurements - hint: it's always a lot! This can help give kids a measure of how forgiving Jesus wants us to be.

Supplies:

- jar with 490 jelly beans for fish eggs (you could use gummy fish or goldfish crackers) Set up for kids to see and make a guess how many are in the jar when they arrive. If you can't find gummy fish, you can order all kinds of cool candy from www.candywarehouse.com. You could also use goldfish crackers, but that wouldn't be as much fun to win. ☺
- slips of paper for kids to write their name & guess for the # of jelly bean fish eggs
- bowl or something to put their guesses in
- Measuring tape
- Cones
- CD player with batteries and a fun game CD to take outside
- Limbo stick (broom, mop, or dowel)
- Straw per child
- 4 Sets of 1st, 2nd, 3rd place awards, if we want to do that
- One 490 Grape Stomp award per child
- One 70 x 7 Chillympics participatory award per child
- 490 grapes
- Baby Pool
- Towels & water (either a hose, sink or water in buckets to clean feet)
- Veggie Tales' "God Wants Me to Forgive Them?" Video or 3,2,1 Penguins "Escape from Planet Hold-a-Grudge" has an episode called 'Oh, Mercy!' about forgiveness, only needed if you have extra time.

Kids Will Learn:

- that if you live in community with someone, eventually you are going to have to forgive them
- that God wants us to live with hearts that continually forgive
- Forgiving 490 times is a lot of forgiving!
- Kids will have the opportunity to spend a little quiet time searching their hearts to see if there's someone they need to forgive.

Scripture: Matthew 18:21, 22 "The Peter came to him (Jesus) and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No!" Jesus replied, "seventy times seven!"

Month's Memory Verse: "All of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters.^[a] Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude." 1 Peter 3:8

THE LESSON

Welcome kids as they arrive:

Have fun music playing! Everyone should be ready to focus on and welcome kids at this time.

JELLY BEAN FISH EGGS JAR GUESS – Have the jelly bean jar out and the slips of paper so kids can guess how many items are in the jar. Have them write their name & guess on the slips of paper. Someone monitors their guesses and puts the right ones in a bowl (be sure their names are on them so we can draw from the ones that are right.) I assume kids will figure it out and guess 490 just because of the theme, if not the closest guess wins.

15 minutes

Worship

5 minutes

Orientation Welcome

Welcome kids to Antarctic Adventures. Over the next few months we are going to go on an expedition to the freezing cold Antarctic where we will learn about living in community. Penguins have a lot to teach us about living in community! In the frozen depths of the Antarctic, very few creatures are equipped to survive the severe conditions by themselves. If you think the weather is bad where you live, just imagine the creatures that have to deal with snowstorms that continue to dump frozen precipitation for weeks at a time! Polar bears have their thick fur coats to stay warm, seals have comfortable layers of blubber... but penguins? Though they lack the same degree of insulation, penguins are unique in that their communities are able to band together- literally- and share body heat to stave off those subzero temperatures.

Make announcements, celebrate birthdays, etc.

15 minutes **Trek Team Debriefing**

Welcome the kids. Here's the cool penguin fact for this week: Penguins either waddle on their feet or slide on their bellies across the snow, a movement called "tobogganing", which conserves energy while moving quickly. They also jump with both feet together if they want to move more quickly or cross steep or rocky

terrain. Depending on the area you're in and how many kids you have, you can have the kids practice jumping with both feet and see how fast they can go! It's a skill they will need later on! :)

See who knows the monthly memory verse.

Ask the kids how their week went. Was there a time when anyone felt alone this week? Was there a time when you were really glad for a close friend? Remind them about Jesus, who is the best friend, and will never leave them alone.

Choose a child to read the scripture for the day: Matthew 18:21, 22 "Then Peter came to him (Jesus) and asked, 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?' "No!" Jesus replied, Seventy times seven!"

Today they will learn about how forgiving God wants us to be.

25 minutes Trailbreaking

Community strengthens you by helping you become more like Jesus. One way is that we have to learn how to forgive. Ephesians 4:32 says, "Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."

(here's something interesting that you may or may not share with the kids, depending on time: In Phil 4:2 – 4, Paul encourages two women to work out their differences, even with the help of another person. How would you like for your disagreements to be saved forever in the Bible? 😊)

Either you read or have a child read the Scripture for the day: Matthew 18:21, 22. Ask: How much is 70 x 7? (490) That's a lot of times to forgive someone for doing wrong things to you! Did Jesus mean that if someone sins against us 491 times, we shouldn't forgive? What did he mean? He meant that we should live with hearts that continually forgive. People can be in the most peaceful settings in the world, but if their hearts are full of anger and bitterness, they will not find peace.

To help us realize how much 490 times is, and how forgiving Jesus wants us to be, we are having our 70 x 7 Chillympics! It's like the Winter Olympic Games, but every game or event we play will help us realize how much 490 is! Having a Kids' Olympics fits in great with community, too, because countries from all around the world get together every 4 years to compete.

Take the kids outside to play these games (all having to do with 490 somethings), or you can play them inside if there's space. If kids don't want to participate in an

event, that's fine, they can sit on the sidelines and cheer. I'm not sure how many you'll have time to do, you make a judgment call when you're out there. Just be sure to leave time to come back, get the kids water and be ready when parents are dismissed. There will be a video about forgiving so there's something to do when you get back. You can give out awards for the top 3 competitors in each event, or not. If so, write down the 3 winners of each game so you can give awards when you get back inside.

(There is a Keynote/Powerpoint slide for each event if you do it inside.)

490 Foot Penguin Dash (163.3 yards) – Mark off the distance with cones. Depending on the number of kids participating, you could have the kids simply run, or reinforce the theme by telling them to keep their knees together so they run like penguins. This will make for some great pic's & video! Before they race, show the kids how long one foot is – then measure off 490 feet! That's a lot of forgiveness! On the count of 3, let those who want to participate take off!

490 Inch Ice Cube Slide (40.8 feet) – Show kids how long an inch is, then how long 490 of them are! Launch or race ice cubes by flicking them with your fingers so they will slide. You'll need a smooth surface, so you may need to cover a carpeted area with a plastic tarp. Mark off how far 40.8 feet is and have kids aim to get the closest.

490 Fish Egg Stomp – Show kids one fish egg (grape), then show them 490 fish eggs (grapes). This one doesn't have a winner, just the thrill of stomping grapes! Every participant gets a 490 Grape Stomp award. Have kids take off their shoes and have a bucket of water & towels handy.

490 second Speed Limbo – Show kids how long one second is, then tell them 490 seconds is roughly 8 minutes. We're going to play 490 second Speed Limbo. Have an adult time it. Since we only have 8 minutes, we gotta do it fast. Play music and move the kids through. If someone doesn't want to participate, they can watch or hold the Limbo stick. Every time all the kids make it under without touching the stick, lower it a bit. If a child touches it, they are out.

The 490 cm Fish Race – Show kids how long a centimeter is, then how long 490 of them are (about 16 feet). Measure that off with cones. Give each participant a straw. Each racer holds a bent drinking straw between his or her nose and upper lip, pretending it's like a penguin's beak holding a fish. Make a demonstration. The children curl their lip to hold it tight. See who can run to the finish line & back without losing their "fish."

Go back inside for the final contest. Finally, the last event is the JELLY BEAN JAR AWARD – GIVE THE JAR TO THE WINNER who was the closest

guesser!!!! Stress to kids that we did this today so they would realize how forgiving God wants us to be – it's not just one inch of forgiveness, but 40.8 feet of forgiveness; it's not just one second of forgiveness, but over 8 minutes of forgiveness! He wants us to continually forgive.

5 minutes Memory Verse Practice

See who can remember it best: boys or girls! **1 Peter 3:8**

“All of you should be of one mind. *(point at everyone, then show one finger, then have the forefinger taps the side of the head to indicate the mind.)*

Sympathize with each other.

Love each other as brothers and sisters. *(pat someone on the back)*

Be tenderhearted, and *(signs for “soft” and “heart” are combined: soft - with the palms upward the hands are opened and closed gently, heart - the middle finger taps the chest over the area of the heart)*

keep a humble attitude.” *(push downwards with the both hands)*

10 minutes Trek Team Gear Up

Let the kids have some water if they need it. While they are drinking, let's give kids a chance to respond to this lesson. Ask them if there's anyone in their lives who they have to forgive over and over (brother, sister, friend, etc.). Let's take a moment and just sit quietly and ask God if there's anyone we need to forgive right now - just ask God that in your mind, then sit for a bit quietly and see if anyone or anything pops into your mind. It might be that you need to forgive them. If so, say something like, “God, I forgive them.” If you can't, if your feelings are still hurt, then talk about it with God and ask Him to help you forgive them.

Give the kids a few minutes of silence to try this; walk/talk them through it.

If you have extra time, kids can watch Veggie Tales' “God Wants Me to Forgive Them?”