



## OLDER CHILDREN'S (5TH-8TH GRADE) LESSON PLAN

### One Great Hour of Sharing

#### Lesson Objectives—

At the end of the lesson, the learner will be able to

- identify what a community needs
- tell how communities are broken
- envision how communities can be restored

#### Resources and Equipment—

- Building blocks
- Copies of Activity Sheet “Isaiah 58:1-14” for each participant
- Activity Sheet “Isaiah 58 Guide”
- Highlighter markers
- Colored sheets of construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Craft paper

#### Setup—

Table and chairs

#### Gather—

15–20 minutes

#### Entry Activities—

Building a Community

**Opening Prayer—***Open with this prayer or one of your own.*

Gracious God, you made us to be in community with one another. May we treasure the communities we live in and the differences that each person brings. When there are problems in our community, may we help mend them with kindness and love. **Amen.**

#### Building a Community—

*Invite the children or youth to use blocks to build a community. While they are making their community, engage them in conversation about what makes up a community using the following questions.*

- What do you need to live in a community? (Some ideas might be: water, food, recreation (parks/playgrounds), schools, housing, transportation, services, and so forth.)
- Who lives in the community?





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### One Great Hour of Sharing *(continued)*

*Write their responses on a sheet of newsprint or white board.*

- What do you need to learn?
- What do you need to stay healthy?
- What do you need to grow?
- What do you need for shelter?
- What do you need for protection?
- What do you need for enjoyment?

#### **Explore—**

*30–35 minutes*

#### **Reading the Bible—**

*Hand out copies of Activity Sheet “Isaiah 58:1–14” and highlighter markers. Tell the children or youth that they are going to break down this long passage and discover the message Isaiah has for God’s people. Use the Activity Sheet “Isaiah 58 Guide” to lead the group through the passage and indicate which words and phrases to highlight.*

*When you have finished, invite the children or youth to read the passage aloud using only the highlighted words.*

#### **Rebuilding the Community—**

*Give the children or youth each a sheet of colored construction paper. Invite them to take turns answering the question, “How have communities been torn apart?” Instruct them to tear their paper in two as they give an answer. If anyone would like to share more, they may tear their paper again.*

*Tell the children or youth that they are going to take their torn pieces and make a mural of a new community. Ask them the following questions:*

- What would help people in the community?
- What would you like to see in a community?

*Invite them to use their torn papers, and tear more papers and shapes as needed, to depict a community that they have described. Have them glue their shapes onto a piece of craft paper. If the children or youth would like, they may write descriptions or names on the paper as well, such as “Community Center” or “Community Garden” or “Playground.”*





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### One Great Hour of Sharing *(continued)*

#### Repairing the Breach

The passage urges us to repair the breach and act with kindness and justice. When we can respond to anger and conflict with peaceful means and kindness, we become repairers of the breach. When one person changes a response it has an effect on countless others. Our actions can affect others. We can create a community that is connected to one another. *Use the following questions to have a conversation about conflict resolution.*

- When somebody says something insensitive to you, should you confront him/her on it? What's a good way to do that which preserves the relationship rather than tearing it apart?
- Have you ever said something in the heat of an argument that you regretted later? What happened?
- Do you find it easy or difficult to apologize when you are wrong? Why is that?
- Some say that conflict is just something you have to get used to because it happens all the time. What do you think of that kind of an attitude? Is it a good idea to get used to conflict? Why, or why not?
- What are the benefits of resolving conflicts in a peaceful and positive way?

*Tell the youth that conflict is a normal part of life. We all have occasional conflicts, even with people we love. But we shouldn't let little conflicts tear apart our families or our communities.*

*Share the following strategies:*

- Tell the other person what's bothering you—but do it nicely.
- Remain calm. Don't let your emotions take control.
- Listen to the other person. Try to understand how the other person is feeling.
- Speak with kindness. No name-calling or insults.
- Be peaceful. No hitting.
- Speak in a calm and quiet voice. Don't yell or raise your voice.
- Look for a compromise.
- And, if all else fails, ask somebody else to help!

**Closing—**

*5 minutes*





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### One Great Hour of Sharing *(continued)*

#### **Prayer for the Community: a Litany—**

*Gather the children around the mural of their restored community. Say the following prayer inviting the children or youth to repeat “We pray for the community.” (Note: the words that are capitalized are from the Isaiah 58 scripture passage.)*

Dear God, sometimes you need to SHOUT at us to tell us WHAT IS WRONG.

#### **We pray for the community.**

We can be BUSY, BUSY, BUSY, trying to be faithful and we COMPLAIN that you DON'T EVEN NOTICE. We BICKER AND FIGHT.

#### **We pray for the community.**

God, you call us to *[use the words from your list you created or the words from Isaiah]*  
BREAK THE CHAINS OF INJUSTICE

#### **We pray for the community.**

GET RID OF EXPLOITATION IN THE WORKPLACE

#### **We pray for the community.**

FREE THE OPPRESSED

#### **We pray for the community.**

CANCEL DEBTS

#### **We pray for the community.**

SHARE FOOD WITH THE HUNGRY

#### **We pray for the community.**





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INVITE THE HOMELESS POOR IN

**We pray for the community.**

PUT CLOTHES ON THE SHIVERING

**We pray for the community.**

BE AVAILABLE TO OUR FAMILIES

**We pray for the community.**

God, you will TURN OUR LIVES AROUND and SHOW US WHERE TO GO. We will BE KNOWN AS THOSE WHO CAN FIX ANYTHING, REBUILD AND RENOVATE, MAKE THE COMMUNITY LIVABLE AGAIN.

**We pray for the community.**

And we will all BE FREE TO ENJOY GOD!

**AMEN.**

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