



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

YOUTH

RESOURCES GUIDE



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®



DEAR YOUTH LEADER,

World Communion Sunday is on Oct. 6 this year. The ecumenical observance began in 1936 as a way to recognize our shared connection in Christ and to bring Christians together in a spirit of unity and peace.

In The United Methodist Church, congregations throughout the denomination will also join together to receive a Special Sunday offering that helps scholars from around the world reach their full potential through scholarships, training and mentoring.

This guide includes resources for engaging your youth in celebrating World Communion Sunday. We pray these ideas will help connect young people more deeply with the global church and spark a generous spirit in support of scholars.

The outline can be adapted to your context and put in whatever order works best for you. Because the offering supports students around the world, you can use a number of approaches to involve youth.

As you plan to celebrate World Communion Sunday, we pray that you will be blessed with a spirit of unity and hope as part of the body of Christ.

PROMOTIONAL TEASERS

Several weeks before the offering, begin to prepare students for World Communion Sunday. The next three pages introduce some videos you can show to build awareness.



3 WEEKS AWAY

World Communion Sunday is three weeks away:

Say, “On Oct. 6, we will join Christians around the world to celebrate World Communion Sunday.

We’ll be hearing more about it over the next few weeks.”



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY IS 3 WEEKS AWAY VIDEO

<https://youtu.be/OnfdErarlvw>

2 WEEKS AWAY

World Communion Sunday is two weeks away:



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY WHEN WE GIVE VIDEO 2

<https://youtu.be/bkhQVKf0R1s>

Say, “In two weeks, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday along with Christians all over the world. We will join with other United Methodists to receive an offering that helps students afford to go to school.”

NEXT WEEK

World Communion Sunday is next week:



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY WHEN WE GIVE VIDEO 3

https://youtu.be/GbATac_9RJw

Say, “Next week, please come prepared with a special offering to help students around the world achieve greater education and training opportunities. We will receive the offering as part of World Communion Sunday, celebrating our unity with Christians around the world.

“STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS” FUNDRAISER

Organize a teen-led fundraiser to benefit World Communion Sunday scholarship recipients. Ask the youth group to brainstorm ideas for raising money and awareness about the World Communion Sunday special offering. Some ideas include:

CREATE A COOKBOOK OF FAVORITE FAMILY RECIPES AND SELL THE BOOKS.



Include a summary in the introduction of each recipe. This is a great opportunity for students to interview family members about their heritage. An alternative idea is for students to source the recipes and stories from non-family members in the congregation as a cross-generational project.

HOST A MOVIE NIGHT.

After securing the appropriate licenses, invite the community to watch a movie together. Films that feature another country offer accessible bridges to global connections. Movies like “Coco,” “Slumdog Millionaire,” “Queen of Katwe,” “Cool Runnings,” “Lion” and even “Black Panther” provide opportunities for positive and meaningful conversation. Include a basket for freewill donations to support the World Communion Sunday special offering.

CREATE AND AUCTION GIFT BASKETS.

Ask local merchants and artists for items to create themed baskets around World Communion Sunday. Themes could include school supplies, religious items or global/travel. Students assemble the baskets and auction them to raise money for the World Communion Sunday offering.



Large-Group Opening and Icebreaker

Welcome the students as usual. In your welcome, include an introduction to World Communion Sunday: “Today, we are joining with Christians around the world to celebrate our unity through Jesus Christ.”

WHERE IN THE WORLD

1. POST A WORLD MAP ON THE WALL.
2. GIVE EACH STUDENT ONE PUSH PIN OR STICKY FLAG.



Break into groups of 10 or fewer. Ask each teen to think of a place in the world they would like to visit. They should give three clues: a type of food they would eat, an activity they would try and the language that is spoken. The others in the group try to guess the country based on the clues.

AFTER EVERYONE HAS A TURN TO GUESS, EACH STUDENT PUTS A PIN ON THE COUNTRY HE OR SHE WAS THINKING ABOUT.

SAY:

We have sisters and brothers in Christ around the world. We celebrate the diversity of food, language and activities. We also celebrate that God sent Jesus for all of us and that, together, we are a family.

AS WE WORSHIP TODAY, HOLD THE CHRISTIANS IN THESE COUNTRIES IN PRAYER, REMEMBERING THAT WE ARE ALL CONNECTED. WE ARE GOD'S ROYAL FAMILY.



MESSAGE: PLANTING SEEDS



What are some ways that we see kingdoms or royalty represented today in? Music? Games? Movies? The world?

THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT KINGDOMS A LOT. God created us in God's image, as God's beloved children. Jesus tells a story – a parable - about the kingdom of God, and he compares it to a seed.

HAND EACH STUDENT A MUSTARD SEED.

JESUS SAYS THAT WHEN GOD'S PERFECT LOVE IS IN CHARGE, SOMETHING AS SMALL AS A MUSTARD SEED CAN BE PLANTED AND CAN GROW STRONG AND MIGHTY.

- It creates more seeds that can be ground to add spice to your food.
- The leaves of mustard greens can be eaten like spinach.
- Jesus says the mustard bush that grows from this tiny seed becomes the greatest tree with strong branches and leaves for birds to come and rest.

Jesus is saying that like God's perfect love, something as small as a mustard seed can do so much more than we might expect.

But it requires care and nurturing to reach its full potential.

As you hear Jesus telling this story – this parable – in Matthew 13:31-32, think about how you experience God's perfect love.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU EXPERIENCE
GOD'S KINGDOM ON EARTH?

Invite one of the students to read:

“He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’”





THROUGH OUR OFFERING ON
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY, WE
CARE AND NURTURE THE SEEDS IN
YOUNG SCHOLARS LIKE YOU.

The United Methodist Church is part of encouraging faithful students to reach their full potential through education, mentoring and vocational training. Each financial gift that is placed in the offering plate joins with the gifts of other United Methodists and grows into scholarships and opportunities that then multiply into the world.

As we gather around God's table of grace with our sisters and brothers in Christ, we catch a glimpse of God's perfect love. We remember how much Jesus loves us and that we are part of God's royal family. God's kingdom is like a student who starts out small but who sings, prays and worships; is nurtured in Christian love; studies hard; and brings the nurture he or she receives into the world in mission and outreach as Christ's hands and feet while witnessing to God's tremendous love.

GOD HAS ENTRUSTED US TO REPRESENT CHRIST'S LOVE THROUGH THIS FAITH COMMUNITY CALLED (NAME). THROUGH OUR ACTIONS, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH GOD AS KINGDOM BUILDERS.

Today, we have an opportunity to support young scholars. People like the Rev. John Finau, who was called into ministry at age 16 and later attended Candler School of Theology. He was able to do this, thanks in part to funds received through the World Communion Sunday offering.

Finau is using his education to build safe places for young people in his community.

WHEN WE SUPPORT UNITED METHODIST SCHOLARS, WE IMPACT NOT ONLY THE STUDENTS, BUT ALSO ALL OF THE PEOPLE THEY TOUCH THROUGH THEIR GIFTS.

The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. It is found in each of our hearts and can grow to become God's perfect love here on earth, even just for a moment. And each of those moments can add up to something that is forever.



AS YOU CONTINUE IN THIS SCHOOL YEAR, HOLD ONTO THE MUSTARD SEED I GAVE YOU.

Put it in a box or jar. When you feel discouraged or worried, take out the seed and remember that God has planted a seed in you that is growing into a purposeful, strong and beautiful part of God's kingdom.



Small-Group Questions

GROUP 1

1. Talk about something that you have become very good at (sports, art, hobby, subject in school).
2. What was it like when you first started?
3. What did you do to improve? Who helped you?

GROUP 2

1. Who are the people who have helped you grow closer to Christ?
2. Can you help someone in your life grow stronger in his or her faith journey?
3. What are some steps you can take to do that?

GROUP 3

1. What are the places that you spend your time where you see God's kingdom growing?
2. What would your school look like if God's perfect love were reflected?
3. What are some steps you can take to help that love grow?

Holy Communion



If it is possible in your context to share Holy Communion, World Communion Sunday is an important day to take part in the sacrament.



Offering

Today, we can help nurture the seeds for students around the world through our gifts. You are invited to sing “I Need you to Survive” as we receive the offering today.



“I NEED YOU TO SURVIVE”
HEZEKIAH WALKER

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Gardener, as we move into the world, may each step we take plant seeds of your love.

Nurture and grow the perfect love of your heavenly realm throughout every corner of the world. Bless the recipients of the World Communion Sunday offering so that they will grow in your love and grace and share with others.

May we all glorify you and nurture your kingdom. Amen.



For more information and resources
on World Communion Sunday, visit

umcgiving.org/WCS



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