

Godly Journey

**The early church, Paul's journeys
and how we can join the adventure!**



Part One: Welcome to the Early Church

***Godly Journey* is written by
The Rev. Linda L. Grenz**

Godly Journey was named by the good folks at St. Paul's, Southington, CT after the original title, *Road to Rome*, caused some discomfort (this being a phrase sometimes used by those leaving the Episcopal Church for the Roman Catholic Church). Our thanks to them for helping connect the title to Paul's Journeys AND with the Journey to Adulthood (J2A) program they and others use as the next step.

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INTRODUCTION

Godly Journey invites participants into the life of the early church and introduces them to Christians who helped spread Christianity. Key among those is, of course, Paul and his companions. Young people will learn about him and his companions, where they traveled and how they contributed to the spread of the faith throughout the region.

They will also meet Cleon, a slave boy who escapes from his master and is taken in by a Jewish family that is in the process of becoming Christian in the face of the danger that creates for them. The father tries to buy Cleon from his master, but he refuses. So Cleon and an older slave board a ship which soon sinks leaving the two slaves with the question of whether they should save their master or let him drown.

This story invites participants to reflect on our own cultures experience with slavery and the ways in which we experience difficult ethical decisions in our daily lives. They will also be invited to reflect on how Christianity is spread today and how they can be Christ-bearers in their own lives.

Godly Journey is a fun and interesting way for young people to learn about the early church, Paul and the Epistles. It engages them in role playing and encourages them to experience the danger and wonder of Christian life in the days when the church was in its infancy. This program was originally designed for fifth and sixth graders for use as a Sunday School program (would also work in a 4-6th grade class). Portions of it can also be used as a summer program in a camp or conference setting. And it is especially appropriate for sixth graders in the alternate year of the Journey to Adulthood youth ministry program.

That said, we've discovered that many (and especially in most small to medium churches) have used this as an intergenerational program. In at least one case this was by default—the men leading the group and youth were so enthusiastic about it that one-by-one the adults migrated to this group until they made it an official intergenerational activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Portions of this program are drawn from the *Mustard Seed Series* by the Rev. Anita Kiere. We are especially grateful for her story of Cleon, the idea of building a diorama of Caesarea, and her help in forming questions for discussion. Some of the optional handouts (especially word games) are also from this curriculum.

The story of Paul and portions of his letters are adapted from the *Message Bible*.

The cover photograph is by “stran93” on http://www.123rf.com/photo_3014913_mountains-north-of-israel.html.

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WELCOME TO THE EARLY CHURCH

PREPARATION

The first three parts of this program incorporate three primary activities – worshipping together as an early Christian group, exploring stories of Paul and the fictional story of the slave boy Cleon, and building a diorama of Caesarea as a way to learn about life at the time of the early church. Caesarea is a good location both because of its significant role in the Bible and because we usually focus on Jerusalem. Cornelius, the first recorded Gentile convert lived in Caesarea; Peter lived about 30 miles away. Phillip, the evangelist, lived in Caesarea. Paul passed through the city several times. Herod the Great built Caesarea on the site of a small, ancient port city between the years of 22 to 9 BC. That means that the city was fairly new, relative to other cities of the region. And it was a showcase – an amazing man-made harbor that made the city a major port city, a showy palace on a peninsula, a striking amphitheater and even a water/sewer system that brought fresh water into the city from miles away. Inhabited by Greeks and Jews and filled with immigrants and visitors from around the region who came with the sea traffic, Caesarea is an interesting city to explore and a great backdrop for learning about the early church.

The fourth and fifth sections of this program move into relating life in the early church to today's world. Slavery, especially child slavery, is explored both then and now. And we look at the spread of the faith, then and now, concluding with an action plan for how we can spread the word in our time and place.

Participants

This program was originally designed to be the “gap year” for the Journey to Adulthood (J2A) program so was geared to sixth graders with the assumption that many churches would use it for fourth to sixth graders. Ironically, it turns out that many churches (and most smaller churches) have chosen to use this as an intergenerational program engaging everyone from second or third grade through adults. The combination of action and wide range of information makes this attractive to adults as well as youth—and the children benefit from seeing teens and adults diving into the role plays, activities and conversations with passion.

Length of Program

If you do every session in one week and meet all or most weeks from early fall to early summer, you can complete this in one year. However, most churches are doing this over two years. Simply go as far as you can in a session during any given week and then pick up where you left off the next week. If you add in the weeks most churches generally skip (e.g., Easter, the Sunday

after Christmas, etc.) there is more than enough to keep you busy for two years. Because this program includes links to the internet and connections to things that can be found there, we have learned that the young people are eager to do research and add to the content. That is one reason some churches have slowed down and let the participants lead. Others simply find that 45 minutes isn't enough to thoroughly explore the session's content—and that the participants want to talk more about some topics or are engrossed in an activity. So pace this according to your group's interest and energy.

Think of this experience less like a course of study that you need to march through and more like an adventure—it is, after all, a Godly Journey. Take your time. Feel free to take some side roads, letting group member's jump in and suggest something to explore. If you think of this as a journey, you will go exploring and discover many riches. See this as your travel guide, rather than approaching it as a 45 minutes lesson plan!

Room Set-up

For this first section, set up your room to resemble a dining room in a home in Caesarea. This is the most likely place where early Christians would have met – around the dining room table in the largest home of local Christians.

A church table with a tablecloth and folding chairs are fine. Try to eliminate much of the rest of the room's décor if it is a usual Sunday School room, replacing it with things you might see in a home of the era. For example, remove pictures, posters from the Sunday School program five years ago, Bibles, hymnals, books, etc. If this room needs to be used by others during the week you may not be able to do as much as you can if its use is dedicated to this group. Adapt the room décor to your situation.

Pull the shades/drapes or cover the windows with black paper to make the room as dark as possible. The goal is to create a bit of the sense of danger early Christians experienced when they met. They could meet in homes – as friends gathered for a meal or visitation. But there was the danger that someone might identify this as a Christian gathering and in many quarters that kind of attention was dangerous.

For the first month or so (depending on how long you choose to maintain the role play), you will need enough candles on the table to provide sufficient illumination. Use pillar candles that are less likely to tip over and select holders that are wide, flat and sturdy. Also, make sure you have at least one working fire extinguisher handy and that you know how to use it.

Put a sign outside the door that says – “Please knock and wait to be admitted to this room.” If you can obtain one, put a **mezuzah** (pronounced muh-ZOO-zuh) on the right side of the door, in

the upper third of the doorpost (i.e., approximately shoulder height). A mezuzah is a little decorative box that contains a piece of parchment with the Shema written on it – Jews Add a small fish symbol in some rather inconspicuous place – perhaps right under the mezuzah.



over the lower half of the door window with black paper – leave the upper half that is at the eye level of an average adult open in accordance with “safe church” rules (i.e., leave space for an adult to be able to look into the room as they pass by). If your hallway has a light right outside the door you might find a way to unscrew the light bulb or shelter the door window from light in some way to reduce the amount of light getting into the room. The idea is to darken the room (not making it completely dark) without going to too much trouble and with the safeguards mandated by safe church principles in place.

Post a “calendar” on the wall opposite the door that says:

Today is Sunday
12 September 2010
4th of Tishrei, 5771
תשע"א בְּתִשְׂרֵי ד'

Alternatively, you can put the calendar up for the date you are meeting in the year 59 AD in Caesarea (which is when and where this course is set). In that case, your calendar would read:

The Curious History of the Gregorian Calendar

Prior to the British Calendar Act of 1751 the official British calendar differed from that of continental Europe by eleven days—that is, September 2 in London was September 13 in Paris, Lisbon, and Berlin. The discrepancy had sprung from Britain's continued use of the Julian calendar, which had been the official calendar of Europe since its invention by Julius Caesar (after whom it was named) in 45 B.C.

Caesar's calendar, which consisted of eleven months of 30 or 31 days and a 28-day February (extended to 29 days every fourth year), was actually quite accurate: it erred from the real solar calendar by only 11½ minutes a year. After centuries, though, even a small inaccuracy like this adds up. By the sixteenth century, it had put the Julian calendar behind the solar one by 10 days.

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII ordered the advancement of the calendar by 10 days and introduced a new corrective device to curb further error: century years such as 1700 or 1800 would no longer be counted as leap years, unless they were (like 1600 or 2000) divisible by 400.

If somewhat inelegant, this system is undeniably effective, and is still in official use in the United States. The Gregorian calendar year differs from the solar year by only 26 seconds—accurate enough for most mortals, since this only adds up to one day's difference every 3,323 years.

Despite the prudence of Pope Gregory's correction, many Protestant countries, including England, ignored the papal bull. Germany and the Netherlands agreed to adopt the Gregorian calendar in 1698; Russia only accepted it after the revolution of 1918, and Greece waited until 1923 to follow suit. And currently many Orthodox churches still follow the Julian calendar, which now lags 13 days behind the Gregorian.

From <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/gregorian1.html>

Today is Sunday
12 September 58
8th of Tishrei, 3819
תתי"ט בתשרי ח'

You can find the exact information for the day you are starting your group by using the date converter on this website: <http://www.hebcal.com/converter>. The main site, www.hebcal.com has other interesting information about holidays, etc. For example, you can select the first item: Hebcal Interactive Jewish Calendar, on the next page, pick Hebrew (not Gregorian) and it will give you the entire year's calendars. Play with the options to get the one you like best or use the one provided at the end of this lesson plan for September of 2010.

On another wall, you might post a map of the area and/or something that about Caesarea – a town promotional poster or whatever your imagination comes up with. You can find information at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarea> or you can Google Caesarea and select “Images” to get plenty of pictures, maps, etc. that you can print and post (while it is not legal to publish copies of most images or texts found on the internet, you can make copies for educational use). Make sure you have a map of the region posted on the wall or available to show. You can buy one or use one you find on the internet. You can check out <http://www.bible.ca/maps/>. This site has lots of great maps you can download and use with this course.

Character Sheets

Prepare a Character Sheet for each participant using the characters at the end of this lesson. It would also be useful to provide place cards for each person that has their character's name on both sides. Each character has information about life in the times of the early church that they will be able to offer to the group during the first few sessions. The chart tells you who has what information so you will know who to call on. This also means that you need to pass out the characters in the order given (the first characters have more direct information while the later ones have information that is interesting but not essential) – and is information you can offer as the leader. Read the characters ahead of time – you may choose to give certain characters to particular people. For example, if you have a singer in your midst, give the Cantor Character to him/her.

If you have fewer participants than characters, give each participant two or three sheets and invite them to pick one character for themselves and then assign the other two to be their cousin, sibling, friend, neighbor, etc. Then they can “speak for” the other characters with that

topic comes up. So, for example, when you are talking about buildings, Hannah can explain that her cousin Daniel is a builder and....(add info from Daniel's sheet). That way you will still have access to the information provided on the character sheets.

If you have more participants than characters, use the WORD file to make extra characters. Take as many of the original characters as you need – except for Pricilla and Aquila which are the leader roles. If you make copies of Junia and Andronicus or Gideon and Hannah, who are the other house church hosts, omit the church host information as three couples are about enough hosts. Make duplicates of the number of pages you need. Then change the names but leave the description “as is” (read through to make sure you change the spouse names, etc.). You'll also need to add the appropriate names to the center header “Things only you and ABC know.” Here are some names that Paul mentions in Romans 16 that you can use:

- Phoebe, (Paul identifies her as a deacon of the church at Cenchreae and “a benefactor of many and of myself as well.”)
- Epaenetus, the first convert in Asia
- Mary, who has worked very hard among the Roman church
- Ampliatus, “my beloved in the Lord.”
- Urbanus, “our co-worker in Christ” and my beloved Stachys.
- Apelles and those who belong to the family of Aristobulus
- Herodion “my relative” (e.g., Paul's relative – make him a cousin or uncle)
- Narcissus
- Tryphaena and Tryphosa
- Persis
- Rufus and his mother—“a mother to me also”
- Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, Philologus, Julia and Olympas
- Nereus and his sister

Acts 10 says that the congregation in Antioch was blessed with a number of prophet-preachers and teachers including:

- Barnabas
- Simon, nicknamed Niger
- Lucius the Cyrenian
- Manaen, an advisor to the ruler Herod

These names and relationships give you some ideas to weave into the character sheets. And, if you are ambitious, you can, of course, research more roles and write up your own characters. And internet search will turn up some good ideas. We could certainly use bakers, butchers and candlestick makers; sailors, scribes, teachers, doctors, etc., etc. Use our template and your imagination.

Worship Materials

The Worship Bulletins contain the worship service you can use with this program. However, you may also want to order a copy of the Reformed Jewish Prayer Book to share with the group, such as:

Paths of Faith: The New Jewish Prayer Book for Synagogue and Home : For Weekdays, Shabbat, Festivals & Other Occasions (Hardcover) [\$18] Highly recommended – this is the one used in the program’s worship services.

Mishkan T'Filah: A Reform Siddur: Weekdays, Shabbat, Festivals, and Other Occasions of Public Worship (English and Hebrew Edition) [\$49]

We strongly recommend that you obtain a copy of *the Message Bible* by Eugene Peterson. It is a contemporary paraphrase of the Bible, so it has the author’s interpretation embedded in it. However, it is a credible paraphrase and it is much more interesting to this age group than even *the New Revised Standard Version* (our next preference).

You may also want to order a copy of the *Pocket Bible Guide* by Linda L. Grenz. It is available from LeaderResources and you are entitled to a 10% discount if you order ten or more copies. Log into your church (account set up when you ordered *Godly Journey*) and when you check out and it will automatically deduct 10% from your order.

Food

Place plates with pita bread and two pitchers: one with water the other with red/purple grape juice which you will serve mixed half and half (in Jesus’ day, they would have mixed it 5 or 6 parts water to 1 part wine which you can also do although it won’t taste especially good!). Set out dishes of hummus, drizzled with olive oil, fruits, nuts and/or other Mediterranean or Jewish dishes. Some recipes are provided at the end of this lesson plan if you are ambitious – or just buy easy to obtain items at the grocery store. Other foods that could be on the table include: grapes, raisins, dates, figs, olives, cheese (especially ricotta, mozzarella and goat cheese), butter, honey, yogurt (sweetened with honey), yogurt cheese (with herbs or sweetened with honey), pistachios, almonds, walnuts. You will want to have these meals in place for those first two sessions, at a minimum, or for as long as you like. Some of this depends on your group, the willingness of the adults to supply food (ask parents to take turns). And it may just depend on the size of your room and whether you can recreate the “dining room worship setting” each

week in addition having enough space to build the model of the city of Caesarea – which needs another table. If your space is limited, the dining room table will need to morph into the base for the city model by the fourth session.

Caesarea Diorama

A major project of the year is creating a diorama of the city of Caesarea. Do not try to get this done quickly – it can, in fact, take most of the year. The purpose of doing this is to engage the young people in conversation about life in the early church. Each character knows about some aspect of life in Caesarea – your job is to draw out that information by asking questions (we’ll give you examples to help you get started).

There are many ways you can build a diorama. You can use plasters, paper mache, clay or other landscaping materials – or a combination of all of the above. One way to do this is to have each person build something related to his/her profession and then help the others as well. The carpenters and construction guys (and their wives) obviously build the houses; the potter and his wife can make pots, plates, etc.; the shoemaker might construct a shoe shop or the women might work together on making the tools, sleeping mats, household items, etc.

If your group reacts negatively to “couples” working together, (as is likely if you have 4th-6th graders) you might have them work in teams and in stages instead. So everyone helps with the initial layout, sketching where the Mediterranean Sea is on one side and the pastures/fields on the other side of the city. Figure out how many houses you will build, where the marketplace is, etc. and form teams to build each section of the city. You can easily go on the internet and search for images of houses of the time. Remind the group that while Caesarea was a newer city with lots of wealthy Greek and Jewish homeowners, there were also poor people who lived at the edges and many of the early Christians were poor people attracted to Jesus’ message of respect and equality for all. So they will need to build at least one big, fancy house (where this group meets each week), one middle class home (with a separate, outside rooms for livestock) and one poor family’s home (single room with livestock inside). If you just do three homes, you can gather them around a single courtyard – even though that would not have happened in real life. If you have a larger group or enthusiastic participants, you can build the wealthier homes looking over the harbor, the poorer family homes at the edges right next to the city walls and the middle class homes in between.

Don’t be afraid of taking a fair amount of time in planning what to do and building the diorama. Remember that the primary reason for doing this is not just to make a pretty diorama – it is to

learn about how the early Christians lived and what they believed. Each character has information they need to share with the entire group. So you want to engage them in thinking about their character's life and what he or she might have done, said, felt, etc. while living in the city, talking with family and friends or coming to worship. These discussions are more important than "getting it done." You have an entire year to work on this project, so on days when the participants are talkative, you might do nothing or very little on the diorama. On days when they aren't into talking, you can focus their attention on constructing something, painting, modeling clay figures, etc.

Logistics of Building a Diorama

You'll need a sturdy foundation for your diorama. Something like $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood would be ideal. Remember that once you put on all of those building materials, it is going to be pretty heavy. So don't choose a base that's too lightweight and then find that it will bend or even break when you try to move it.

Finally – this is very important! Before you begin, compute how large your diorama will be. Take a sheet and fold it into the size you plan to make your diorama. Now have two people hold it and walk, keeping the sheet taut between you. See if you can walk the "board" from the car to the meeting room (as if you were moving the board into place at the beginning of the year) and then from the room to the parish hall or wherever you want to display it at the end of the year (keeping it flat as if it were a completed diorama). There is nothing worse than spending a year building a wonderful diorama and then discovering that you can't get it out of the door and up the stairs to the parish hall! So follow the carpenter's motto: "measure twice, cut once." Make it as large as you possibly can (easier to build). But just make sure you can carry it to wherever you want to go. If your parish hall is available for the group to meet and is a safe place for this project to live while it is being built over several months, you might just want to set up a table there and cover the project with a sheet each week.

HOME-MADE BUILDING MATERIALS

Paper mache is messy but fairly easy to make. And it is probably the least expensive option. Create your paper mache form. For your city, assemble a collection of boxes (e.g., pizza boxes work well) to serve as the base – cover them with chicken wire and then cover that with paper mache. More directions are in Session Three. And you can check out websites such as: http://www.ehow.co.uk/how_8585500_build-model-ancient-greek-citystate.html or <http://www.lizard-landscapes.com/miniature-city.html> .

If you decide to use paper mache prepare your desired paper mache paste (find recipes for paper mache paste below). Tear newspaper into strips. The length of your strips may vary depending on the size of your paper mache project; however, you will want your strips to be about 1- to 2-inches wide.

Dip one piece of newspaper at a time into prepared paper mache paste. You want to newspaper strip saturated. Hold the strip over the paste bowl and run it through your fingers to squeeze off excess paste.

Stick the newspaper strip over the form you want to paper mache, and smooth it down with your fingers.

Completely cover your creation with a layer of newspaper strips. They should all be overlapping and running in different directions.

After one layer is applied, let it dry completely. This can take up to 24 hours so this is a good thing to let sit until the next Sunday.

Add a second layer of newspaper strips and let it dry completely.

Repeat this process until you get the desired effect, but you should have at least three layers of paper mache newspaper strips so you can see that this will take up several weeks.

Paint and decorate the finished house, wall, well, etc.

Paper Mache Paste Recipes

The no-cook method will probably work best in a youth group room setting. To make this paper mache paste, simply mix together 1 part flour to 2 parts water plus a couple of tablespoons of salt to help prevent mold. You will want it to be the consistency of thick glue, but you also want it to be runny and not thick like paste. Add more water or flour as necessary. Mix well to remove any lumps. If your participants don't like the smell of the glue mixture you can add a few sprinkles of cinnamon to combat the odor. You should be able to store this glue in a covered bowl or jar, in the refrigerator, for a few days but probably not longer than to the next Sunday.

To make the cooked version of a paper mache paste, you need 1 part flour to 5 parts water. Start out by putting 4 parts water into a pot on the stove and bring it to a boil. While you are waiting for it to boil, mix 1 part flour to 1 part warm water. Beat this mixture briskly to remove lumps then slowly add it to the boiling water, stirring constantly. Let it boil for 2 - 3 minutes. It should be smooth and have the consistency of thick glue. If necessary, you can add more water

or flour mixed with cold water in small amounts until you get the desired consistency. This version tends to keep a bit longer and stick a bit better – but not probably enough to be worth the trouble of cooking it!

A resin based paper mache paste is messier to work with (so better for youth or adults than children) but it dries to a very hard finish which will make your finished project more durable. This paste is probably the best option for a model city you want to have around for a year. You'll need a cup of flour, ½ cup Resin Glue Powder and 4 cups of water. Put 3 cups of water in a pot and bring it to a boil. While you are waiting for it to boil, mix the 1 cup of flour and the 1/2 cup of powdered glue resin together. Slowly stir in 1 cup of very warm water. Once it is all blended together, beat this mixture briskly to remove lumps. Once your pot of water is boiling, slowly stir in the flour mixture. Mix well and let it boil for 2 - 3 minutes or until it is clear and smooth. This too will keep for a few days or a week in the refrigerator, so don't mix up huge batches of it each week.

Finally, you can also just buy liquid starch and use that. That is certainly quicker and easier and it keeps forever so you just open the bottle and pour. But it will cost more, if that is a consideration.

Clay Recipes

You can make your own modeling clay by mixing: 2 ½ cups flour, cup salt, 1 cup water and food coloring (optional). Store in the refrigerator wrapped in plastic wrap and in a sealed plastic bin to keep it from drying out. A cooked clay recipe: mix and cook over low heat until mixture thickens – 1 cup salt, 1 cup flour, 1 cup water, food coloring (optional). Cool before using; store in the refrigerator.

READY-MADE BUILDING MATERIALS

You can, of course, buy modeling clay. Modeling clay is a term that covers a group of malleable products used for sculpting and building. All kinds of modeling clay can be shaped and worked with modeling tools for sculpting, blending, texturing, thinning, scraping, poking, and cutting. They can also be rolled with rolling pins, molded, and worked with tools such as extruders, potato mashers, and garlic presses to create various effects. Modeling clay can be built up on its own or built onto a pre-formed armature. There are four basic types of modeling clay.

Oil-based modeling clay, sometimes called plastilina or even plasticine, several distinct properties that make it useful: unlike pottery clay and wax, oil-based modeling clay stays soft and workable; it neither hardens nor dries. Unlike pottery clay, it comes in a wide array of

colors that can be used as purchased or blended. Also, unlike pottery clay, oil-based modeling clay doesn't stick to your hands. However, it cannot be fired (essential if you want to make a real pot, for example).

Polymer modeling clay is available as several products under the names of Fimo®, Sculpey®, and Premo®, for example. These different polymer modeling clays have various degrees of softness at room temperature, and they can be mixed to combine their individual properties — for example, to make a softer clay stiffer by combining it with a firmer clay. They are finished by baking in an oven at 265°–275°F (129°–135°C) for 15 minutes for each ¼ inch (6mm) of thickness. Although they are made to be paintable upon baking, polymer modeling clays are available in a wide variety of colors, which can be mixed. In addition, some special feature colors have been created, including translucent, fluorescent, metallic, and bright colors. Other featured specialty clays have a stone texture or glow in the dark (always a winner with youth — and a neat way to make a fireplace glow or create a night scene with lamps, fire, etc..

Dough modeling clay resembles the product PlayDoh®, and is often, in fact, called playdough. Playdoughs are easily made at home in both cooked and uncooked versions (see home-made recipes above), and are less expensive than some of the other types of modeling clay. They are made of such ingredients as flour, cornstarch, cream of tartar, oil, and water. They can be colored when made, for example, with food coloring, or have color added after. One of the useful features of dough modeling clay is that it reusable, though, for example, in the case of a gingerbread house, baking is used to set and preserve the form. Flour-based products — including PlayDoh®, which clearly states that it is meant to be used and reused rather than employed to make lasting items — have a tendency to crack as they dry. However, there are some other types of air-drying modeling clay available, sometimes called “curable clay,” such as Activ-Clay® and Model Magic®, that yield better results in this respect. For a city diorama, these would be a better choice — nothing worse the spending time building something only to have it crack and crumble.

Pottery Clay or Firing Clay is used for pottery and stoneware, and is worked by hand and on a potter's wheel. It is meant to be air-dried and then fired in a kiln so isn't really an option for this project. However, you want to be aware that it exists so you don't inadvertently buy this kind of clay instead of one of the more appropriate versions.

Celluclay is a specific product that is somewhere between paper mache and clay. It is a low cost, recycled paper medium that mixes easily and mold quickly. It can be sanded, sawed, nailed and water proofed. Wet Celluclay can be added to areas already dried. Unused mixed Celluclay can be stored for several days in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator. Celluclay

adheres to almost any surface and can be combined with a variety of materials. Celluclay requires no special tools for working. (simple sculpting tools include plastic knife, fork, stirrer, toothpicks, cookie cutters, etc.) You control the thickness and the texture - it can mimic just about any texture known producing lightweight, durable and thoroughly economical sculpture of any dimension.

Mix Celluclay to desired working consistency and press, extrude, free form roll, drape, pinch, coil or slab build. For larger or more dimensionally daring works consider an armature of wire, wire mesh, cardboard, Styrofoam, paper or even a temporary armature like a balloon. To get a flat sheet, simply roll it between sheets of plastic with a household rolling pin. Add more water to prepared Celluclay for a superior casting pulp and pour into prepared molds for dimensional cast paper or, for example, pour it inside of the city walls to create a flat surface that you can stamp and roll to create stone courtyards, road, etc.

You can color it with chalk, pastel or crayons, paint, markers, drawing mediums and varnish. You can dye it by adding dry fabric dyes to the water when preparing the mixture. Any dry dye seems to work - the higher quality dyes yield a deeper color. Good results can be had even with the most common and economical ones available. To dye 1 LB of Celluclay - use the same amount of dye recommended by the manufacturer for 1 LB of dry fabric. Mixing tones of dyed material yields novel faux stone effects - add a little Snow Dazzle or Candle Glitter for a stone like appearance.

You can also embed a variety of materials from dried floral materials to papers, mosaic tiles to beads, wires plain, twisted or mesh, glass squiggles, tiles, sea glass and almost anything else you can think of! Stamping on the wet surface provides an embossed look to bas relief richness – brush ink or water onto the stamp to prevent sticking.

To add a finish that is very subtly colored - sprinkle sand on to the prepared Celluclay surface, cover and roll. If the warped surfaces not to your liking, spray the dry surface with warm water, cover and iron with a hot iron...the Celluclay will relax and flatten. Thicker pieces may require repeated spraying and ironing - don't force it. To keep dust to a minimum, place the dry product and water along with anything else being included in a freezer quality zip-lock plastic bag and mix in the closed bag - having pushed out the excess air in closing. If the Celluclay isn't "plastic" and of a good working condition - it simply needs to be kneaded and wedged more before using - this includes "waking it up" again after you have let it sit between work sessions. Remember you can store prepared Celluclay almost indefinitely in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

You can use just about anything to help create shapes – push molds, candy molds, soap molds and any shapes you find in the kitchen, hardware store or junk drawer. All work well - dust with cornstarch or baby powder to be sure the cast piece releases easily. Clay tools and clay extruding tools (Clay Gun) make great Celluclay tools. When extruding Celluclay - be sure it is extremely well mixed - and a touch thinner to make it easier to extrude. Plastic palette knives smooth the surface easier than sanding or rubbing with steel wool once dry. However, Celluclay can be smoothed to an almost polished surface once dry.¹

OTHER MATERIALS

Your diorama will need a variety of other materials, depending on what your group decides to do. We encourage you to ask the participants to find and bring in some of the “extras” – bits of cloth and leather to make clothes and shoes, stones, twigs, a variety of tools to carve or decorate the clay, etc. You will probably need to supply the paint, brushes, sponges, etc. but they might even have some of those at home. Ask after the second session and start a “supplies box” where they can put things they bring. The more you involve them, the more it becomes their diorama instead of yours!

Read through the “Supplies” section of each lesson plan to see what you will need for each lesson. The items you need to order ahead of time include:

- Additional copies of the *Cleon Makes His Choice* – ten copies were included with your order; if you need more, they are available from LeaderResources (www.LeaderResources.org/cleon). You are entitled to a 10% discount if you order five or more copies. Log into your church (account set up when you ordered *Godly Journey*) and when you check out and it will automatically deduct 10% from your order.
- Newsprint, markers, tape (masking or blue painter’s tape), acrylic or poster paint and brushes (for diorama project) lighter watercolor paints and brushes (for map project)
- Food, drink and dining setups – candles, tablecloths, eating utensils for whatever you’re serving, etc. See RECIPES below. We strongly encourage you to ask the parents to take responsibility for preparing and bringing the food items – it’s a good way to involve them and takes that task off of the leader’s list of “To Do’s.”

¹ Adapted from directions provided by Activa Products

- Room décor – ways to block light from windows and anything else your imagination and resources allow you to help create the feeling of a home in Caesarea. Rugs, wall hangings, baskets, pottery bowls and jugs would all be appropriate. Look for things that are handmade or rustic in feel.
- A keyboard, guitar or other musical instrument (with player) that can help support the Psalm chants.
- *Paths of Faith: The New Jewish Prayer Book for Synagogue and Home : For Weekdays, Shabbat, Festivals & Other Occasions*
- Optional but recommended: *Deluxe Then and Now Bible Maps* from Rose Publishing or a comparable book of maps of the region and time. This version has plastic overlays with current countries which is helpful but not necessary.

RECIPES

House Bread (El Khobz)

This is a Middle Eastern flatbread that is easy to make. El Khobz basically means the “house bread” sort of like the “house wine.” If you do this bread weekly, you might offer it for use at the Eucharist.

Ingredients

- 1 cup semolina flour
- 2 cups unbleached white flour
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. sesame seeds
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar
- ¼ cup warm water
- 2¾ cups water
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp. semolina flour for the countertop

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a large round metal pan (approx 12" across & 1.5" deep) or a cookie sheet. Mix yeast, sugar, and water in a cup or glass dish and set in a warm place until the yeast is bubbly.

Mix the flours, salt, and sesame seeds in a large bowl. Add the water, yeast mixture and oil slowly in batches, stirring as you add liquids. When it begins to pull together, remove from the bowl and knead the dough for 8-10 minutes. The dough should be smooth and elastic. Cover with a moist, hot towel and let rest for 5 minutes.

Spread some semolina flour on the countertop. If you are using the cookie sheet method, cut the dough in half and make each half into a smooth ball. Place the two balls on the cookie sheet or put the single ball into the round pan. Cover with moist, hot towels and let stand another 5 minutes. Then flatten the dough balls into a round disk about 5" in diameter. If you are using the round pan, flatten the dough until it covers the bottom of the pan. Cover with a moist, hot towel and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about an hour).

Use a sharp knife make an X on the top and bake 15 minutes. Then lower the heat to 325°F and bake another 25–35 minutes or until it is browned and sounds hollow when you tap the bottom. Remove from the oven and let cool. Cut just before serving.

Yield: 1 large round loaf or two smaller round loafs

LESSON PLANS

SESSION ONE

Encountering the Early Church

SUPPLIES

- Food and drink of your choice
- Candles, tablecloth
- Calendar page, worship bulletin and character sheet for each participant

Getting Started

On the first week, set out plates of pita bread (tear into pieces, don't cut as knives would not be used) and any other food you choose to serve in the center of the table along with a pitcher of grape juice and one of water next to one of the leaders. The leaders assemble ahead of time inside the room, the lights are off and the candles are lit. Position one teacher at the far end of the room and the second teacher next to the door. Wait. As the young people arrive and, you hope, knock on the door, have the teacher close to the door call out "Who is it?" and as each young person answers, open the door a crack or fold back the paper on the window so you can confirm the person's identity. Then open the door and hurriedly pull the young person into the room, immediately closing the door behind them. Greet the new arrival with relief and joy and invite them to sit and enjoy the refreshments. Remember, you need to look like an ordinary gathering of friends, just in case someone should take offence at a gathering of Christians.

Distribute the characters (samples at the end of this lesson) to each young person as they enter and invite them to read about their character while you wait for the rest of the group to arrive. You might want play some Jewish music during this gathering time if you have CDs or connection to the internet.

Worship

Distribute the Worship Service lead the group through the opening worship. Begin by explaining that you will be using the language that is now used in the Reformed Jewish service in America. Conservative and Orthodox Jews pray in Hebrew but since we don't know Hebrew, we are using the service used by Reformed Jews. Also, tell them that this first week you will just say the words, but later the group will learn how to chant some of the words to hear what that is like.

Lead the worship service using the first bulletin (the three bulletins only vary by the section marked by “For the Body” or “For the Soul” or “For the Torah.”) The bulletins appear to be “backwards” from our usual mode because Hebrew is read right to left instead of left to right. So this is what a bulletin with both Hebrew and English translations would look like. Also, kids will think it is neat!

Invite the group to enjoy the food you provided. Pour them a half class of grape juice with a half glass of water. If you want to make it a bit more authentic in texture, blend in a handful of blueberries to give it a more “pulpy” feel. As you are pouring it, ask if they know why you are mixing it with water. If no one volunteers, explain that in many parts of the world the water wasn’t pure enough to drink by itself. So people mixed it with wine which acted as a disinfectant. Point out that the alcohol content would be diluted but was enough to kill bacteria. Explain that this would have been a fairly normal meal – bread, wine and then some other savory items (cheese, olives, nuts) and/or sweet items such as raisins, dates, etc.

Discussion

Explain what this year will be about using the Introduction above. Tell them that today they will learn about how the early Christians met in community. Next week they will learn more about how they worshipped. And tell them a bit about the model of the city that you will build.

Explain that it is the year 58 AD. Point to the calendar and explain that the Jewish year is different from the Gregorian year that we use. Pass out the printed calendar at the end of the lesson and invite them to look at it. Jews used different names for the months and days of the week...and others in the region used still other calendars and names. Explain that Jews worship on their Sabbath Day which is from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

Ask:

- If this is 58 AD, how long has it been since Jesus died and rose again? [about 25 years – so this is in the very early stages of the transition from Judaism to Christianity as a separate religion or faith group.]
- What has happened since then – who can remember what we know about the early days when the disciples preached in Jerusalem? Encourage them to recall the Pentecost experience and anything else they can remember hearing about the Christian community in the early days.
- What must it have been like in those early days? Read Act 2: 38-47 – encourage the group to talk about the wonder, excitement, energy that is reflected in this passage.

- Peter said, "Change your life. Turn to God and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so your sins are forgiven. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is targeted to you and your children, but also to all who are far away—whomever, in fact, our Master God invites." He went on in this vein for a long time, urging them over and over, "Get out while you can; get out of this sick and stupid culture!" That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers. Everyone around was in awe—all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person's need was met. They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved. *(from the Message Bible)*

- How did the story of Jesus reach people in other nearby cities like Caesarea?
- Who were the early converts? [predominately Jews with some God-fearing Greeks and other immigrants in the region; often these people were already attracted to Judaism]

Explain that early Christians tended to practice both Judaism and Christianity at the same time – in fact, many of them believed this was simply the fulfillment of the Jewish promise of a Messiah, so they felt they were still Jews and their meetings would use the ordinary weekday Jewish prayers mixed with stories about Jesus. You will do add stories about Jesus in subsequent weeks – this week you can just skip the Reflection Section or, if you have *Paths of Faith*, read the reflection found on the bottom of page 26

Ask:

- Why did Christians begin to be persecuted? What were they doing “wrong?”
- Who persecuted them? [both Jews and Romans]

Use the following from www.wikipedia.com to guide your discussion:

Dissention began almost immediately with the teachings of Stephen at Jerusalem (unorthodox by contemporaneous Jewish standards), and never ceased entirely while the city remained. A year after the crucifixion of Jesus, Stephen was stoned for his alleged transgression of unorthodoxy, with Saul (who later converted and was renamed Paul) heartily agreeing.

In A.D. 41, when Agrippa I, who already possessed the territory of Antipas and Phillip, obtained the power of procurator in Judea, hence re-forming the Kingdom of Herod, he was reportedly eager to endear himself to his Jewish subjects and continued the persecution in which James the lesser lost his life, Peter narrowly escaped and the rest of the apostles took flight.

After Agrippa's death, the Roman procuratorship resumed and those leaders maintained a neutral peace, until the procurator Festus died and the high priest Annas II took advantage of the power vacuum to attack the Church and executed James the greater, then leader of Jerusalem's Christians. The New Testament states that Paul was himself imprisoned on several occasions by Roman authorities, stoned by Pharisees and left for dead on one occasion, and was eventually taken as a prisoner to Rome. Peter and other early Christians were also imprisoned, beaten and harassed. A Jewish revolt, spurred by the Roman killing of 3,000 Jews, led to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the end of sacrificial Judaism, and the disempowering of the Jewish persecutors; the Christian community, meanwhile, having fled to safety in the already pacified region of Pella. The early persecution by the Jews is estimated to have a death toll of about 2,000. The Jewish persecutions were trivial when compared with the brutal and widespread persecution by the Romans.

Ask:

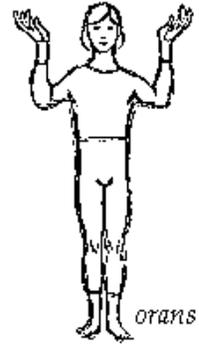
- How do you imagine the persecutions affected the lives of the first Christians?
- Christians originally met in the dining rooms of Jewish homes – much like we are here in this room. They had to be careful about who saw them gathering and what they said to others about these gatherings. Can you imagine what it must of have been like to be a Christian – excited about your new faith and wanting to learn more but afraid of being “caught” by those who disagreed with you? What do you think life was like for them?
- What happened to those who were caught? [e.g., Stephen was stoned to death.]
- Point out that the cost was high (life and death) and the dangers were real. Why do you think people continued to meet to worship together?
- Given the dangers, why did new people convert to Christianity?

Distribute the character sheets and encourage each person read about their character so they can be that character in the next session. Make sure you have an extra copy of each character sheet and that you know which participant has which character – you can't count on the participants bringing those sheets back next week!

Closing

Invite the group to stand and raise their hands in the orans position (that's what the priest usually does during the Eucharistic prayer – hands at just above the shoulder and about a foot out from the shoulder with the palms facing your head). Explain that this is the Jewish prayer posture that the early Christians would have used in prayer (and that's what the priest is still using all these many years later). Invite them to pray the closing prayer found at the end of Worship Service in unison.

NOTE: For the third session, you need to recruit two people to interrupt your session. Choose people who can be rather brusque and a bit threatening. Read the directions at the end of Session Two and schedule a quick dry run for after next week's session. Keep all of this secret from the group – you want to maintain the element of surprise.



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change view: [[event list](#) | [calendar grid](#)]

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 29th of Elul, 5770 כ"ט באלול תש"ע Erev Rosh Hashana ערב ראש השנה	2 1st of Tishrei, 5771 א' בתשרי תשע"א Rosh Hashana 5771 ראש השנה 5771	3 2nd of Tishrei, 5771 ב' בתשרי תשע"א Rosh Hashana II ראש השנה יום ב'	4 3rd of Tishrei, 5771 ג' בתשרי תשע"א Parashat Ha'Azinu פשת האזינו Shabbat Shuva שבת שובה
5 4th of Tishrei, 5771 ד' בתשרי תשע"א Zom Gedaliah צום גדליה	6 5th of Tishrei, 5771 ה' בתשרי תשע"א	7 6th of Tishrei, 5771 ו' בתשרי תשע"א	8 7th of Tishrei, 5771 ז' בתשרי תשע"א	9 8th of Tishrei, 5771 ח' בתשרי תשע"א	10 9th of Tishrei, 5771 ט' בתשרי תשע"א Erev Yom Kippur ערב יום כיפור	11 10th of Tishrei, 5771 י' בתשרי תשע"א Yom Kippur יום כיפור
12 11th of Tishrei, 5771 יא' בתשרי תשע"א	13 12th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ב בתשרי תשע"א	14 13th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ג בתשרי תשע"א	15 14th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ד בתשרי תשע"א Erev Sukkot ערב סוכות	16 15th of Tishrei, 5771 ט"ו בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot I סוכות יום א'	17 16th of Tishrei, 5771 ט"ז בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot II סוכות יום ב'	18 17th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ח בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot III (CH"M) סוכות יום ג' (חל המועד)
19 18th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ח בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot IV (CH"M) סוכות יום ד' (חל המועד)	20 19th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ט בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot V (CH"M) סוכות יום ה' (חל המועד)	21 20th of Tishrei, 5771 כ' בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot VI (CH"M) סוכות יום ו' (חל המועד)	22 21st of Tishrei, 5771 כ"א בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot VII (Hoshana Raba) סוכות יום ז' (הושא רבה)	23 22nd of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ב בתשרי תשע"א Shmini Atzeret שמיני עצרת	24 23rd of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ג בתשרי תשע"א	25 24th of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ד בתשרי תשע"א
16 18th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ח בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot IV (CH"M) סוכות יום ד' (חל המועד)	17 19th of Tishrei, 5771 י"ט בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot V (CH"M) סוכות יום ה' (חל המועד)	18 20th of Tishrei, 5771 כ' בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot VI (CH"M) סוכות יום ו' (חל המועד)	19 21st of Tishrei, 5771 כ"א בתשרי תשע"א Sukkot VII (Hoshana Raba) סוכות יום ז' (הושא רבה)	20 22nd of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ב בתשרי תשע"א Shmini Atzeret שמיני עצרת	21 23rd of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ג בתשרי תשע"א	22 24th of Tishrei, 5771 כ"ד בתשרי תשע"א

CHARACTERS

Distribute one sheet to each young person at the end of the first session. Make sure you keep a copy of each character sheet and the name of the person who has that character because you will need it when the participants forget to bring their sheets back the next week!

If you have less than the number of characters, either give each participant more than one character and/or post the extra characters on an easily visible spot where you can invite the group to look at them – make sure you refer to those sheets often.

CHARACTER CHART

Character	Role	Knowledge	Who?
Jacob	Potter	Lighting, sitting, beds, pottery	
Rebecca	Jacob's wife	Foods, cooking, eating	
Martha	Isaac's wife	Poor, goats in house, farm life	
Isaac	Farmer	Foods raised/eaten	
Peter	Shepherd	Shepherd's life	
Marion	Peter's wife	Poor people's life; marriage customs	
Aaron	Cobbler or tanner	Shoe-making	
Sarah	Aaron's wife	sandals	
Amos	Farmer	Large farm; older man	
Esther	Amos's wife	Jewish harvest festivals	
Daniel	Builder/cousin of E.	House construction; family business	
Ezekiel	Builder/cousin of D.	Window construction	
Ezra	Builder/brother of E.	Stone houses; Caesarea buildings	
Cornelius	Centurion	Military life	
Felix	Slave	Slavery in Rome	
Junia	Wife of Andronicus	Relative of Paul, hosts church	
Andronicus	Greek merchant	Building in Caesarea, wealthy	
Gideon	Jewish builder	Caesarea's buildings	
Hannah	Wife of Gideon	Caesarea's water system	
Lazarus	Harborman	Harbor details	
Dorcas/Tabitha	Clothing Merchant	Widow; clothing styles	

JACOB

Your name is Jacob (pronounced JAY-cob). You are 33 years old and have been a Jew all of your life. You are married to Rachel and have five children. You are a potter – you make pots, pitchers, cups, oil lamps and other clay vessels that you sell in the marketplace.

You heard about Jesus on a trip to Jerusalem that you and your wife took to dedicate your youngest son at the temple. Your wife’s cousin and her husband were Christian Jews and when you stayed with them, they told you the story of Jesus and their belief that he was the Messiah. You and your wife returned to Caesarea four months ago and found this group of Christians. You have been worshipping with them ever since.

THINGS ONLY YOU KNOW

These are things that you can share with the group when you talk about life in the early church and homes in Israel at the time of Paul.

Lighting was provided by small oil lamps like the ones you make. They used olive-oil to burn and were filled from a goatskin oil container. Most people, however, went to bed at sunset and got up at dawn, so the lamps were not used every day. Honest people didn’t work after dark, which is where the phrase “works of darkness” came from. (Luke 22:53; Rom. 13:12; Eph. 5:11-14)

The main room in a Galilean home was usually used for eating, storing food, and socializing when the weather was inappropriate for being outdoors in the courtyard. Wealthy people reclined as they ate; poorer people sat on the floor or benches. People like you had beds made of wooden frames with rope stretched over them with a mat that was laid on each bed. Often more than one family member slept in the same bed. Poorer people usually slept on mats placed on the floor. People could take their mats with them when they traveled sort of like our modern day sleeping bags.

Food was served on pottery plates or bowls. Provisions such as grain, wine, and oil were stored in large jars in cool places. Other foods were hung from the ceiling. Life for first-century Jews depended upon raising food and protecting it from spoilage, rodents, or insects, so the people needed to store it well. Your pots help keep food secure as well as giving people a way to serve it for dinner.

SESSION TWO

Worship in the Early Church

SUPPLIES

- Food and drink of your choice
- Candles, tablecloth, utensils as needed
- Worship bulletins for each participant
- Character sheet for participants who forgot/lost theirs

Getting Started

Continue the drama of sneaking participants into the room, keeping the lights off, candles lit, etc. If at all possible, include some of the different foods today so you can talk about what people ate in Caesarea. As the participants gather, invite them to try some of the foods. When all have gathered, tell the group that today will focus on how people worshipped in the early church.

Ask:

- How do you imagine the early Christians worshipped? What clues can we find in the Bible? You may want to have them look up the following passages:

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:41-42

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.* Act 2:46-47

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Acts 3:1

If you ordered a copy of the Jewish prayerbook (Siddur; pronounced SID er), now is the time to pull it out and let the group look at what's in it. Pull out a Book of Common Prayer and invite them to compare the Morning Prayer service and the Eucharist to what they see in the Jewish book. What is similar and what is different? Christian liturgy is based on the Jewish liturgy.

Explain that the *Shema* (pronounced sheh MAH) is perhaps the most important sentence in the Hebrew Bible (which we may call the Old Testament, although more and more churches now refer to it as the Hebrew Bible). The Shema is an affirmation of Judaism and a declaration of faith in one God. A Jew is obligated to say Shema in the morning and at night and it is repeated throughout the prayer services.

The Shema may be said while standing or sitting (Reformed and Conservative Jews usually stand while Orthodox Jews generally sit as one does when studying the Torah – the Hebrew Bible). In the day of Jesus, Jews stood to show the Shema's importance and to demonstrate that saying Shema is an act of testifying in God (testimony in a Jewish court is always given while standing).

Ask: What does this remind you of – what do we do in our worship service? [This is, most likely, the origins of our standing for the reading of the Gospel.]

The Shema is:

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad
Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One

The literal word meanings are roughly as follows:

- Shema** — listen, or hear & do (according to the Targum, accept)
- Yisrael** — Israel, in the sense of the people or congregation of Israel
- Adonai** — often translated as "Lord", it is read in place of YHWH
- Eloheinu** — our God, the word "El" or "Eloh" signifying God (see also: Elohim), and the plural possessive determiner suffix "-nu" or "-enu" signifying "our"
- Echad** — the Hebrew word for the number 1, which has the dual meaning "one" and "alone"

This first sentence is the one that is repeated in worship and personal prayer – and is the first one taught to children. But the full Shema includes the full text of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Numbers 15:37-41. Adult memorize the full text. Look up and read these passages. Discuss how they embody the essence of Judaism – monotheism and the covenant with God that is reflected in the Ten Commandments.

It is very important to Jews that each word in the Shema be pronounced clearly and correctly – which is why it is said aloud. While we don't know Hebrew, it is worth learning this special first sentence. Practice pronouncing the words together:

- Shema** — shuh MAH
- Yisrael** — ees reye L (reye as in eye and L as in saying the letter "L")
- Adonai** — add doe NIGH
- Eloheinu** — aye low HAY new
- Echad** — ayeCH hod (the CH is guttural at the back of the throat)

In worship, the Shema was often chanted (traditionally three times) – and chanting (or singing) is the best way to learn another language. So take some time to practice the Shema chant using the handout at the end of this session. You can find various versions on the internet – while the following chant is set

to musical notes we are used to, chanting is not exactly the same as singing. If you can get access to the internet it is worth listening to some of the files there:

<http://www.the-temple.org/images/prayers/Shema%20V%27ahavta/Shema-%20chanted.mp3>

(this one follows the notation below)

<http://www.shemayisrael.com/tape/Yemenite.mp3>

(this one sounds like it is by an older rabbi and is more 'free form')



Sh' ma Yis-ra - el, A-do - nai El - o - hei - nu A-do - nai e - chod.
Hear O, Israel. The Lord is our God! The Lord is One. (or The Lord alone.)

Worship

Distribute the Worship Bulletin lead the group through the worship, chanting the Shema you just practiced. Before you begin, explain that you will stop at one point and talk about Jesus – which is what the early Christians most likely did. In other words, they did the normal Jewish prayers plus sharing news about Jesus. Encourage the young people to talk out of the roles they've been given, sharing bits of themselves if they like. But remind them that there are many more weeks when they can talk about their character so they shouldn't feel obligated to say much or even anything about their character today. They can share their character bit by bit – and they might study up on their person or role and add to what they have on their sheet.

Ask who would like to read the lesson and who will lead the Shema and the prayers. After you have decided who will do which roles, begin the service.

Discussion

After worship, invite the group to reflect on the experience.

Ask:

- What was familiar?
- What was new or different?
- What did you especially like? Was there anything that felt uncomfortable to you – especially as a Christian?

Explain that at this point in history there were very few written documents such as the Gospels. A few people wrote down accounts of what they remembered or heard but these were generally personal writings, letters, etc. There were no printed books that contained the Gospels and the Epistles hadn't even been written yet. The Gospel of Mark, the earliest written Gospel, was compiled around 70 – a dozen years from today. But there were older documents floating around that the writers of the Gospels had access to and may have used as the basis of their Gospels.

Take time to look through the Jewish prayerbook(s) if you obtained them. And/or ask if anyone knows how Jewish worship today differs from ours. See if anyone has attended a bar mitzvah or a bat mitzvah and, if so, invite them to describe what happened.

Ask:

- What is the main thing we do in worship – what is the “highlight” of our service? [Eucharist – giving thanks, receiving/becoming the Body of Christ]
- What is the main thing Jews do in worship? [Pray – saying prayers is the most important part of Jewish worship.]

Prayers, often with instructions and commentary, are found in the siddur, the traditional Jewish prayer book. Jews are expected to pray three times every day using specific prayers that they memorize – and more on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays. While you can pray alone, attending synagogue to pray with a **minyan** (quorum of 10 adult males) is considered ideal.

Ask:

- There are three branches of Judaism in America. Do you know what they are? [Orthodox, Conservative and Reform or Progressive]
- What is the difference between them?
- What are some of the Jewish laws, customs and traditions?

Use the following to help the group learn more about Judaism. Ask questions to see if they know any of this or to invite comments and reflections. Wherever possible, ask them to compare what the Jewish faith practices to what we do – what is similar, what is different?

Orthodox Jews carefully observe all of the laws and traditions. They use only Hebrew in worship services (and their services tend to be long). They marry only Jews and do no work AT ALL on the Sabbath (including driving, cooking, turning on/off lights). They avoid pork or eating meat and dairy together or even have them touch the same dishes – in fact, they will have two separate kitchens to make sure they can follow all of the dietary rules properly and will only eat food that has been approved by a specially trained rabbi. All worship leaders and community leaders are men – women hold only very traditional roles. Children are generally home-schooled or attend a Jewish school. Men wear black suits and hats and never cut their sideburns giving them long hair at the side of their faces. Women wear long dresses and long sleeves and married women cover their hair.

Conservative observe the laws but not necessarily all of the traditions – they generally drive, cook, turn on/off lights on the Sabbath but they will not eat pork and generally avoid eating meat and dairy products at the same time and while they often have separate dishes they may or may not have separate kitchens. They might have women cantors but not women rabbis. They might dress somewhat conservatively but in ordinary clothes.

Reformed Jews are the most progressive. They are more likely to marry Gentiles and might eat meat and dairy together but many

DIFFERENCES IN RELIGION

American differences in Judaism reflect some of the differences present in the time of Jesus and in Caesarea. Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Sicarii and the Zealots were some of the groups in Judaism. Many everyday Jews would be considered Conservative. But even in the Bible there are some challenges that would be considered Progressive. The most significant story is that of Peter who sees clean and unclean animals intermingled and the subsequent baptism of Cornelius, a Gentile. Neither conservative nor orthodox Jews of the time would have approved of this “innovation.”

Christianity, of course, has its own different groups – we call them denominations. And even within denominations there are very conservative (orthodox) members who hold fast to the rules and traditions of the past, conservatives who prefer to keep things pretty much “as is” and progressives who are comfortable changing rules and traditions. This is true for any religion. From the outside these differences seem fairly minimal (we see all Jews as Jews and they see all of us as “Christian”). The differences between the faiths seems greater. But from within the faith, the differences between the orthodox and the progressives seems huge. Episcopalians are no different – we too have orthodox (many of them have left to form various branches of “Anglican” churches), conservatives and progressives. But we are all Christians.

will not have two sets of dishes or kitchens. They have female rabbis and women hold similar roles in the synagogue and home as they do in our church. Their dress is the same as ours, etc.

Many Jews sway their body back and forth during prayer. This practice (in Yiddish referred to as **shokeling** – SHUK ling) is not mandatory, but the more conservative the Jew, the more likely it is that they will always do this. Proper concentration is considered essential for prayer, and there are certain prayers, like the Shema, that are invalid if recited without the required awareness and intention.

Parts of the worship services are recited standing – if you visit a synagogue, you would be expected to stand with them. Jews bow at certain points in the services but visitors are not expected to bow. Orthodox and Conservative, and some Reformed Jews put on a **Tallit** (prayer shawl) – something a visitor would not do.

In most synagogues or temples, it is a sign of respect for all males to wear a head covering, usually a dress hat or **yarmulke** (kippa) – they are usually provided near the front door. Conservative and Orthodox synagogues *require* all male attendees to cover their heads, whether they are Jewish or Gentile. Most Reform (or Progressive) temples do not require either Jews or Gentiles to cover their heads but many Reform Jews now choose to wear a kippa.

Jews use different names for their houses of worship, which are very similar to ours – places where people worship, study and gather as a community. Orthodox Jews call it a “shul” which is Yiddish for school and emphasizes the learning aspect of the community (but many contemporary people don’t know what it means). Conservative Jews call their house of worship a “synagogue” which means “house of assembly.” And Reformed/Progressive Jews call theirs a “temple” because they consider all of their meeting places to be equivalent to, or a replacement for, The Temple – a practice which offends some traditional Jews, because they feel it trivializes the importance of The Temple (which was in Jerusalem, destroyed in 70 CE).

Jesus wasn't a Christian Jesus was a Jew

Many Christians are surprised when they realize that Jesus was a Jew, not a Christian. He didn't see himself starting a new religion. He was just being a good Jewish rabbi, a teacher. He encouraged people to see the Jewish faith in a new way – to let go of some of the battles between different groups within Judaism and return to the basics of the faith: Love God and love one another. Christianity developed slowly as a separate religion as Gentiles joined the faith. Many traditional Jews could not accept Gentiles as full members of the faith. So the Jewish Christians gradually became a separate group known as Christians.

Read the title on this box to the group and invite comments. Provide the additional information as needed.

When in doubt, the word "synagogue" is the best bet, because everyone knows what it means, and no one is likely to be offended by it!

Like us, Jews call the place where the worship services are held the "sanctuary." The front of the sanctuary in the United States is generally designed so that it faces towards Jerusalem – the direction that Jews are supposed to face when reciting certain prayers. Episcopal churches generally (but not always) face East – where the sun rises and where we anticipate that we will see the Son rise again.

Probably the most important feature of the sanctuary is **the Ark** (no relation to Noah's Ark); in Hebrew it is called the **Aron Kodesh** (pronounced ah-RAWN KAW-desh or AWR-ohn KOH-desh) or "holy cabinet;" it is a cabinet or recession in the wall that holds the Torah scrolls. The Ark has doors and an inner curtain that echoes the curtain in the Sanctuary in The Temple. During certain prayers, the doors and/or curtain of the Ark may be opened or closed – something that is done by a member of the congregation, and is considered an honor. All congregants stand when the Ark is open – much like we stand for the reading of the Gospel.

In front of and slightly above the Ark, is a lamp that symbolizes the commandment to keep a light burning in the Tabernacle outside of the curtain surrounding the Ark of the Covenant. (Ex. 27:20-21). It is similar to the "Presence Light" that we keep outside of the Ambry or Tabernacle that holds the reserved sacrament. A menorah is also likely to be present, symbolizing the menorah in the Temple. [However, the menorah in the synagogue will generally have six or eight branches instead of the Temple menorah's seven, because exact duplication of the Temple's ritual items is improper. The menorah most of us know has nine candles – eight for the eight days of Hanukkah and one taller one as the lighter candle.] In the center or front of the room is a lectern (bimah) that holds the Torah scrolls when they are read and is also sometimes used as a podium for leading services.

Orthodox synagogues have a separate section where the women and girls sit. This may be on an upper balcony or in the back or side of the room. It is separated from the men's section by a wall or curtain. Men are not permitted to pray in the presence of women, because they are supposed to have their minds on their prayers, not on pretty women! Conservative Jews often sit mixed and Reformed Jews will generally sit together as families much as we do.

Closing

Ask the group to help put away the food – establish norms for how you will clean up and depart each week and start practicing those norms today.

Remind the group to review their character(s) before the next meeting because you will ask them to be “in character” when they arrive. Encourage them to take some time this week to see what they can find about their character’s job or role in Judean society at the time.

Close by chanting the Shema three times. Remember to use the orans position for prayer. Then dismiss the group with the words: “Go in peace and the God of peace go with you.” AMEN. (The other leader needs to model this response each week until the group picks up on it.)

NOTE:

For the next session, you need to recruit two people who will interrupt your meeting to check to see if this is an illegal meetings of that radical sect. Pick people who preferably are big, burly and able to look rather tough...but who also know how to adapt to the reaction of the group. Make copies of the next session for them and read it over with them ahead of time – it would be best to do a quick dry run today.

SHEMA

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad
Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One

The literal word meanings are roughly as follows:

Shema — listen, or hear & do (according to the Targum, accept)

Yisrael — Israel, in the sense of the people or congregation of Israel

Adonai — often translated as "Lord", it is read in place of YHWH

Eloheinu — our God, the word "El" or "Eloh" signifying God (see also: Elohim), and the plural possessive determiner suffix "-nu" or "-enu" signifying "our"

Echad — the Hebrew word for the number 1, which has the dual meaning "one" and "alone"

Pronunciation

Shema — shuh MAH

Yisrael — ees reye L (reye as in eye and L as in saying the letter "L")

Adonai — add doe NIGH

Eloheinu — aye low HAY new

Echad — ayeCH hod (the CH is guttural at the back of the throat)

Chant

Sh' ma Yis-ra - el, A-do - nai El - o - hei - nu A-do - nai e - chod.
Hear O, Israel. The Lord is our God! The Lord is One. (or The Lord alone.)