

CHANGE THE WORLD

Be. Go. Do. Children's Supplement

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Tennessee Annual Conference



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church®

RETHINKCHURCH®

GETTING STARTED: *BE. GO. DO.*

Elementary children are using their creativity, talents and technology to change the world in big, powerful ways. These same children are in your children's ministry. You can help them change the world, not for personal accolades, but for Jesus.

By using these children's messages, you'll be able to mobilize and inspire children to become change agents for Jesus. Each lesson contains a hands-on exploration of the weekly Scripture, thought-provoking follow-up questions and ideas for concrete life application for children. These lessons are also perfect for children's church, midweek activities and Sunday school. They're great for family "do-votionals," too. The study also contains a special change agent commissioning service designed to kick off or wrap up the four-week study.

During each lesson, you'll see how God's word transforms children's lives and how that transformation flows outward into their homes, communities and the world. Here are a few tips to help you guide the world-changing change agents in your children's ministry.

1. Share your story. Children want to know how you're changing the world, too. Take a few minutes each week to talk about how God is changing you as you serve others. If you have photos of a recent service experience, bring them! They'll help children understand your message.
2. Allow ample time for discussion questions. Children learn best from sharing their thoughts and hearing the thoughts and ideas of their peers. This type of learner-to-learner interaction helps children build relationships with each other and their leaders.
3. Encourage new ways of service. There are creative change agents in your midst. Ask children how they'd like to change the world and create mission opportunities based on their input.
4. Be sure to share stories of your children's God-sized, Spirit-fueled, world-changing efforts in worship, newsletters, the local newspaper and on the United Methodist Communications Facebook page. You'll continue inspiring and motivating others to do what your children have already done.

We'll be praying for you as lead children on this incredible journey. Thanks for being a leader who challenges children to be who God has called them to be in a world that desperately needs to experience the love of Jesus.

Scripture reminds us that, "A child shall lead them." Those words, echoed so long ago, still ring true today. We look forward to hearing how one child, the Christ child, will lead your children as they change the world.

Patty Smith

Director of Children's Family Ministries, Tennessee Annual Conference

WEEK 1: “CHANGE AGENTS LEARN ABOUT GOD (ARE CHANGED BY GOD)”

Option 1: God! The Ultimate Transformer

Preparation:

Purchase a simple Transformer toy that has only a few manipulations to change it from one thing to another. Practice manipulating the Transformer several times so you are comfortable using it.

Supplies:

Transformer

Bible

Show the children the Transformer and say: **I’ve brought something fun for us to play with today. It’s a Transformer.**

Ask: **What do you think a Transformer does? How do you think it works?**

Show children how the Transformer changes from one thing to another.

Say: **By moving parts of the Transformer, we can change it from one thing into another. Today’s Scripture talks about how God wants to change us.**

Open your Bible to Romans 12:2 and read it to the children.

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing.” (New Living Translation)

Say: **Wow! God wants to change us by changing the way we think. That means God wants us to learn more about God. For example, we’re in church now, and we’re learning about how we can change the world for Jesus.**

Ask: **What are some other things we can do to learn about God?**

Say: **To learn more about God, we also can read the Bible, pray and help others.**

All of these things change us. As you read the following statements, change parts of the Transformer to bring it back to its original form. Be sure you change it enough after each sentence to ensure it is complete after the final sentence.

Say: **When we read the Bible, we learn about God’s amazing love for us.** (Change piece on the Transformer.)

Say: **When we pray, we can talk to and listen to God.** (Change piece on the Transformer.)

Say: **When we help others, we can show others God's love.** (Change piece on the Transformer.) Show children the changed Transformer.

Ask: **How is what happened to the Transformer like or unlike how God changes us?**

Why do you think we should let God change us?

Say: **There's one more part to our verse today.** Read the last part of the verse. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing.

Good and pleasing means something is helpful to us. When we read the Bible, pray and help others, it's good for us! Just like playing with Transformers, but even better!

Let's pray and thank God for changing us through God's word, God's church and God's world.

Option 2: Butterflies of Joy

Preparation:

Locate the video *Young Butterflies Cheer Elderly* included in the multimedia bundle.

Supplies:

Copy of Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

Scripture:

Romans 12:1

“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.” *New Living Translation*

Say: I've brought a book to share with you today. It's called *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. It tells about a hungry caterpillar that changes into a colorful, beautiful butterfly. Gather children in a circle and read the book, showing the pages as you read.

Say: In our story, the not-so-happy caterpillar changed into a beautiful butterfly.

In a minute, we'll watch a video about a group of butterflies who changed the lives of some not-so-happy people.

Let's pretend we're butterflies as we get ready to watch. Everyone flap his or her wings (arms) with me. OK; let's watch.

Show the video clip.

Ask: How did the butterflies show God's love to the people they met?

How does showing God's love to others change the world?

Open your Bible to Romans 12:1 and read it to the children.

Say: To sacrifice means to give up something that is special to you. In this verse, Paul says we should give up some things in our lives as a way to show we love God. For example, you can give your favorite toy to a lonely friend. You can give up your playtime to help your mom or dad do chores. You can give up your place in line in the lunchroom and let someone go before you. You can skip going to a sleepover on Saturday night to make sure you are at church on Sunday morning. Those are all types of good sacrifices.

Ask:

- **What types of things do you think the butterflies had to give up to show God's love to the people in that video?**
- **What things could you give up to show God's love to someone this week?**

Say: **Think of one thing you'll do to show God's to someone this week. When I point to you, flap your arms as if you have butterfly wings and then say what you'll do. I'll share first; then we'll go around our circle.**

Point to each child in the group and encourage him or her to share.

Option 3: What Changed?

Preparation:

Print and copy the Change Agent Challenge for each child. (available for free download at www.umcom.org/changetheworld)

Supplies:

Bible

Say: **Let's play a game. It's called "What Changed?" Look at me carefully. See what I'm wearing and what I'm holding. Pay special attention to the small things you see such as my jewelry, the pen in my pocket and my glasses. In a minute, you'll close your eyes, and I'll turn around and change something about myself. I might take off my glasses or take the pen out of my pocket. When I turn around again, you'll guess what I changed. Everyone look carefully at me for 10 more seconds.** Have children close their eyes and then turn around. Change something about yourself; then turn back around.

Ask: **What did I change?** Allow a few children to guess.

If no one guesses correctly, reveal the thing you changed.

Say: **Let's play again. Take a good look at me.** Allow about 30 seconds. Say: **Close your eyes again.** Turn around and change something else. Turn back around and have children guess what you changed. If no one guesses what you changed, show the children. Ask:

How did you find what I changed?

Say: **To figure it out, you had to look carefully or study what I was wearing, what I had in my pockets and what I had in my hands.**

Our Scripture for today talks about another way of changing a person.

Open your Bible to Romans 12:1 and read it to the children.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing." (New Living Translation)

Say: **Wow! God wants to change us by changing the way we think.**

Ask: **How is the way God wants to change us like or unlike the way I changed myself during our game?**

Say: **I changed myself on the outside, but God wants to change us on the inside—to change the way we think. That means God wants us to learn more about God.**

Ask: **How do you think we can learn more about God?**

Say: **Just as you had to look carefully and study what I changed about myself, God wants us to look carefully at God and study God’s word so God can change us. During the next month, we’re going to learn more about God by reading the Bible, praying, going to church and serving others.**

Distribute a Change Agent Challenge printout to each child. Say: **This is a fun calendar you can use to learn more about God this month. Each day, you can do a special activity to learn more about God.**

Each has a picture that shows what kind of activity you’ll do. When you see a Bible, you’ll read a story or verse from the Bible. Ask: When you see hands that look like this (make praying hands), what do you think you’ll do? Allow time. Say: When you see a picture of a church, you’ll discover something new at church. And when you see a picture of two open hands, you’ll find a way to serve others.

At the end of 30 days, we’ll see how much you’ve learned about God and how God has changed you.

Then we’ll celebrate how you’ve been world-changers too by helping others.

Option 4: God Changes Us

Preparation:

Fill cups or vase $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water.

Purchase Orbs (see "Supplies")

Supplies:

Large vase of water or small cup of water for each child

Giant Orbs in a Jar from www.stevespanglerscience.com

God Changes Us

Say: **Today we'll discover how God changes us as we learn about God. Let's try an experiment to see what that is like.**

Sprinkle a few orbs in each child's hand. Have children describe the orbs' size, texture, weight and other characteristics.

Say: **Let's compare these orbs to us. Ask: What are some things we can do to learn about God?**

Say: **To learn more about God, we can read the Bible, pray, go to church and help others.**

If you do this as a children's message, give each child a cup of water. Write each child's name on his or her cup.

If you do this as an all-church object lesson, bring out the large vase filled with water. (Consider leaving this vase on display throughout the series to demonstrate how we need Living Water to keep us growing.)

Say: **This water represents God. Let's see what happens to our orbs (us) when we surround them with water.**

Have children gently drop their orbs into the water as they name the things that help them learn more about God. Set aside the cups of water (or the vase). It takes about an hour for the orbs to grow, so make sure the children will still be in church in an hour.

Say: **While we wait to see what happens to our orbs, let's learn more about God at church right now.**

Send the children back to their seats or dismiss them for children's church. Continue with the sermon.

Near the end of your sermon, bring the children forward again, show them the orbs and say: **Let's look at our orbs.**

Ask: **What happened to them?** Hear responses.

Say: **Our orbs changed! They grew larger by soaking up the water around them.** Take the orbs out of the water and give a few to each child.

Open your Bible to Romans 12:2 and read the passage.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing." (New Living Translation)

Say: **God wants to change the way we think! God wants to change us in good ways.**

Ask:

- **How is what happened to the orbs like or unlike how God changes you as you grow closer to God?**
- **Why do you think God wants us to change?**
- **How do you think your life will change because of learning more about God?**

Say: **Let's pray and thank God for changing us as we learn more about God. Hold a few of your orbs in your hands and look at them as we pray.**

Close by praying: **Thank you, God, for all the ways we can learn about you. Thank you for changing us through your word, prayer, church and helping others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

WEEK 2: “CHANGE AGENTS OBEY GOD”

Option 1

Scripture:

Acts 9:10-19a

Preparation:

Locate the video “Chinese Church Helps Ugandan School” (included in Change the World multimedia bundle).

Say: **Let’s play a quick game of “Simon Says.” I’ll call out things for you to do. Obey me if I first say the words “Simon says.”**

You will be out of the game if you follow an order that doesn't begin with “Simon says,” or if you don’t do what I say to do.

Let’s practice. “Simon says, put your hands on your head.” Check to see if children have their hands on their heads.

Say: **One more practice. “Jump up and down.”** Check to see who is jumping. If they are, remind them only to obey when they hear the words “Simon says.”

Say: **Everyone ready? Let’s play.** Play a few rounds of the game.

Ask:

- **What was it like to obey my commands?**
- **What did you do to help you obey my commands?**

Say: **Just as I wanted you to obey me when I said, “Simon says,” God wants us to obey God too.** Open your Bible to Acts 9:10-19a and show children the words.

Say: In our Bible story today, we'll discover how a man named Ananias obeyed God. I need your help to tell the story. Whenever you hear me say, "Jesus said" in the story, make a thumbs-up to show it's good to obey God. Let's practice.

Jesus said (thumbs up), "Ananias, go visit Saul." But Ananias was afraid to go. He had heard how mean Saul was to Jesus' followers.

Then Jesus said, (thumbs up), "Ananias, do not worry. I have special plans for Saul. He will become one of my followers and tell everyone about me." Ananias obeyed what Jesus said (thumbs up) and went to visit Saul. When Ananias met Saul, he placed his hands on Saul's eyes and healed him. Saul could see! Ananias baptized Saul. Saul became a follower and friend of Jesus—just as Jesus said (thumbs up).

Ask:

- **How did Ananias obey Jesus?**
- **Why was it important for Ananias to obey Jesus' commands?**
- **What might have happened to Saul if Ananias had not obeyed Jesus?**
- **What happens when you don't obey God?**

Say: Because Ananias obeyed Jesus, Saul's life was changed. When we obey Jesus, we change, and others change, too.

Watch this video to see how one woman obeyed God and changed the lives of many children and adults in Uganda.

Show the video clip.

Ask:

- **What did Ari do?**
- **How did she obey God?**

Say: Just as Ananias obeyed Jesus and helped Saul, Ari obeyed God by helping Silver and his family.

We can obey God and help others, too.

Ask:

- **How can you obey God and help others?**
- **Why does obeying God change the world?**

Say: When we obey God, we can change the world in many ways. Let's play another game of "Simon Says" with a twist. In this game, instead of saying "Simon says," I'll say, "Jesus says" and call out something you can do to obey Jesus. Then you'll do that thing. Jesus says, "Help others." Turn to a friend near you and touch his or her fingertips. Say one way you can help others—such as "pray for them." Pause. Jesus says, "Love others." Put your hand on your heart, turn to another friend and say one way you can show someone you love them—like "Give a hug." Pause. Jesus says, "Forgive others." Close your eyes and think of something for which you need to say "I'm sorry" such as being mean to a brother or sister. Talk to God about that thing. Pause. Jesus says, "Tell others about me." Put your hands around your mouth, turn around and face the congregation and shout, "Jesus loves you!" Pause. You did a great job showing you can obey God.

Let's pray together. Dear God, thank you for people like Ananias and Ari who obeyed you and changed people's lives by helping others. Help us to obey you and help others too. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Option 2: Change Agents Obey God

Scripture: Acts 9:10-19a

Supplies:

Empty soda can

Inflated 9-10-inch balloon

A volunteer “assistant”

Gather children in a circle. Say: **Today we’re learning about a man named Ananias who obeyed God.**

God wants us to obey too. When we obey God, we become followers. Let’s try an experiment to see

what that’s like. Show children the empty can. Using a permanent pen, write the names of the children on the can. Place the can on its side on a flat, smooth surface such as a table or a smooth floor. Say: **The can stands for all of you.**

Choose someone to be your assistant. Show the children the balloon. Say: **The balloon stands for God.**

Write the word “God” on the balloon.

Rub the inflated balloon back and forth quickly through your “assistant’s” hair. Hold the balloon close to the can without actually touching the can or the floor. Observe what happens. The can will roll toward the balloon without you even touching it!

Ask:

- **What happened to the can?**
- **How is that like when we obey God?**
- **Why do you think we should obey God?**

Note: If the can doesn’t move toward the balloon, debrief the experience using these questions:

Ask:

- What happened to the can?
- How is that like when we don't obey God?
- Why is it important for us to obey God?

Say: **Obeying God helps show our love and trust for God. Obeying God also allows us to be part of a greater plan.**

Let's pray and ask God to help us obey. Dear God, we love you and want to obey you. Help us to obey you today and every day. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Option 3: *Obeying God Changes the World*

Supplies:

Christ Candle

One small candle per person (the kind used for candlelight services)

Matches/lighter

Say: **In our Bible story today, we'll discover how a man named Ananias obeyed God and helped a mean and angry man named Saul change his life. It was not easy!**

I need your help to tell the story. When I make a mean face, you'll make one too. When I smile, show me your smile. When I look scared, look scared. OK? Let's practice. Show me your mean face (pause), your scared face (pause) and your smiley face (pause).

Open your Bible to Acts 9:1-19a and show children the words.

Say: **Saul did not believe in Jesus. He was a very mean man. (mean face) He didn't like anyone who believed in Jesus. One day, Saul was traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus when he heard a voice that said, "Saul, why are you so mean to me?" Saul was so surprised by the voice that he fell down. (scared face) Then Saul asked, "Who are you?" The voice answered, "I am Jesus. Go to Damascus."**

When Saul stood up, he couldn't see. A friend helped Saul travel to Damascus.

When Saul arrived in Damascus, he stayed in a home on Straight Street. During Saul's stay there, Jesus told one of his followers, Ananias, to visit Saul. But Ananias was afraid to go. (afraid face) He had heard how mean Saul was to Jesus' followers. (mean face)

Ask:

- **How would you feel if Jesus asked you to visit someone who wasn't very nice?**
- **Would you obey him? Why or why not?**

Say: **Let's see what happened next.**

Jesus told Ananias not to worry because Jesus had special plans for Saul. Saul would become a follower of Jesus and tell everyone about him. Ananias obeyed Jesus and went to visit Saul. When Ananias met Saul, he placed his hands on Saul's eyes and healed him. Saul could see! (smiley face)

Ananias baptized Saul. Saul became Paul, a follower and friend of Jesus. (smiley face)

Because Ananias obeyed Jesus, Saul's life was changed. When we obey Jesus, we change, and others change, too.

Ask: **Why do you think Jesus chose Ananias to help him with his plan to change Saul?**

Say: **Watch this video clip to see how another person obeyed Jesus and changed the lives of others.**

Like Ananias, Ari had to take chances to discover and do what God was calling her to do.

Share about a time when you thought it was impossible to do what God was calling you to do. What happened?

Allow time.

Say: **Often, we think that because we're not talented enough, rich enough or skilled enough, we cannot make a difference in the world—that we are not part of Jesus' plan to change the world. But what we do is not what truly changes the world. Our obedience to Jesus does.**

When we're obedient, Jesus takes what we do and multiplies it.

Let's see what that's like.

Dim the lights in the room. Light the Christ Candle.

Say: **Jesus came to be a light in the world, bringing hope, joy, peace and love to a world filled with darkness. He came to change the world.**

Distribute a candle to each child. Make sure a youth or adult is available to help each younger child.

Light another candle from the Christ Candle and then light the candle of someone else in the room. Have people pass the flame around the room from one person to the next until everyone's candle is lit.

Ask:

- **What happened to this room?**
- **How is this experience like being part of Jesus' plan to change the world?**
- **How can you obey God and be part of God's plan to change the world?**

Take a few responses for each question.

Say: Each of you had a role in changing this room or this tiny part of the world. That's a lot like the power of obeying God. If each of us obeys God, we, like Jesus, change the world.

Let's pray together. We're going to pray with our eyes open, thinking about how Jesus, the light of the world, changes the world through and with us.

WEEK 3: "CHANGE AGENTS TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS"

Option 1

Supplies: A Bible

Open the Bible to Acts 16:6-10 and show children the words.

Say: In our Bible story today, two men named Paul and Silas traveled to a place named Macedonia to tell people about Jesus.

As they were traveling, sometimes the Holy Spirit would keep them from crossing through certain places. One night Paul heard a man call to him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" Hearing this, Paul and Silas thought God wanted them to go to Macedonia. The Holy Spirit did not keep them from going. So, they traveled to Macedonia to tell people about Jesus.

Let's play a game to see how Paul and Silas might have felt as they tried to travel to some of those places.

Divide the group into two equal teams. Form two lines. Have the two teams face each other. Have the members of each team hold hands.

Choose which team will begin. Have that team choose someone from the opposing team that they want to come over. They then chant, "Jesus, Jesus, send ____ right over!" The child whose name is called runs as fast as possible toward the opposing side and tries to break through the arms of any two of the opposing team members. If the child breaks through, the child chooses one team member to join him or her as the child returns to his or her own side. If the child doesn't break through, he or she joins the opposing team. Play until all the children have been called to come over.

Ask:

- **How did it feel to try to break through the other team members' arms?**
- **How did it feel to try to block someone from breaking your line?**
- **How is breaking through someone's arms like or unlike how the Holy Spirit kept Paul and Silas from going to some places and allowing them to go to others?**
- **Why do you think Paul and Silas couldn't go to certain parts of Asia and then were called to go to Macedonia?**

Say: Paul and Silas went to a new place called Macedonia to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to go to new places to tell others about Jesus, too. Sometimes these places are in different cities or countries. At other times, they are places where we work, go to school and play.

Ask: Where is God calling you to go to tell others about Jesus?

Say: The Holy Spirit directed Paul's and Silas' path to tell others about Jesus. God will direct your path, too.

Let's stand and form our two lines again. Have lines form about 4 feet from each other. **Follow my prompts as we pray.**

Dear God, thank you for Paul and Silas who told people about you. Join hands with the people next to you. Thank you for my friends who love you too. Have the lines take two steps forward toward each other. **Help us go to new places. Shake hands with the people in front of you to share your love with new friendly faces. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.**

Option 2: *Change Agents Go Where God Sends Them*

Supplies:

2 balloons for object lesson (round ones will work, but the longer, tubular balloons are preferred)
Kite string (about 10-15 feet long)
Plastic straw
Tape
1 balloon per child for closing prayer
2 chairs

Preparation:

Tie one end of the string to a chair.

Put the other end of the string through the straw.

Pull the string tight and tie it to another support in the room.

Say: In our Bible story today, two men named Paul and Silas traveled to Macedonia to tell people about Jesus.

As they were traveling, sometimes the Holy Spirit would keep them from crossing through certain places. They had to change direction several times.

Let's try something to see what might have happened as they tried to go one place, but ended up in another.

Let's say this chair was one of the places where Paul and Silas were trying to go.

Stand about 10 feet from the chair and face it.

Blow up a balloon but don't tie it off. Keep the opening closed tightly to prevent air from escaping.

Say: **This balloon stands for Paul and Silas traveling to that place.** Point the balloon at the chair with the mouth of the balloon facing away from the chair. Let the balloon go. The balloon should fly around and not hit the chair. Ask:

- **What happened to the balloon?**
- **Why do you think it didn't hit the chair?**
- **What do you think would help it hit the chair?**

Say: **Let's go back to our Bible story. One night, Paul heard a man call, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" Hearing this news, Paul and Silas thought God wanted them to go to Macedonia. They traveled to Macedonia to tell people about Jesus. The Holy Spirit did not prevent their passage. Paul and Silas went where God wanted them to go!**

Blow up another balloon but don't tie it. Pinch the end of the balloon and tape the balloon to the straw. (You'll need a helper for this.) Let the balloon go. Ask:

- **What made the balloon hit the target?**
- **How was the balloon hitting the target like God telling Paul and Silas to go to Macedonia?**
- **Why do you think Paul and Silas were able to travel to Macedonia to tell others about Jesus?**

Say: **God *wanted* Paul and Silas to go to Macedonia. God wants us to go to new places to tell others about Jesus too. Sometimes these places are in different cities or countries. Other times they are places where we work, go to school and play. Think of a place where you could go to tell others about Jesus. In a minute, we'll use that place in our prayer.**

Recruit some volunteers to help blow up a balloon for each child. Do not tie the balloons. Give a balloon to each child and remind the children to hold the mouth closed tightly.

Say: **We're going to use our balloons to help us pray. Look at your balloon while we pray. Dear God, the world is filled with people whom we can tell about you. Help us to go to places near and far to change the world with your amazing love. Help us to go to....** Have children shout the name of the places where they'll go and then let their balloons go. **In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.**

Option 3: *Change Agents Go Where God Sends Them*

Supplies:

Poster board
4 large paper clips
Strong 2-inch magnet
Markers
Map of Paul's and Silas' journey

Preparation:

1. Draw Paul's and Silas' route to Macedonia on a piece of cardboard.
2. Make small 1-inch drawings of Paul and Silas on a piece of white paper.
3. Cut out the drawings and attach each of them to a large paper clip.
4. Bend the paper clip in half so it forms a backward "L." This should help your Paul and Silas stand.
5. Place Paul and Silas on the piece of cardboard.

As you tell the Bible story, move the paper-clipped Paul and Silas to each location on the map.

Say: **In our Bible story today, two men named Paul and Silas (place the paperclips on the cardboard) traveled to Macedonia to tell people about Jesus. This is a map of their route.**

Place the magnet under the cardboard where the paperclips are resting on top. Use the magnet to move the paperclips as you tell the story.

Say: **As they were traveling, sometimes the Holy Spirit would keep them from crossing through certain places. They tried to go to Asia, but the Holy Spirit wouldn't let them go there.** (Move Paul and Silas halfway to Asia and then stop.) **Then they headed north for the province of Bithynia.** (Move Paul and Silas north to Bithynia and stop halfway.) **The Holy Spirit wouldn't let them go there either! So Paul and Silas decided to go on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas.** (Move them through Mysia to Troas.)

One night, Paul heard a man call to him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” Hearing this, Paul and Silas thought God wanted them to go to Macedonia. The Holy Spirit did not prevent them from going. So, they traveled to Macedonia to tell people about Jesus. (Move Paul and Silas to Macedonia.)

Ask:

- **How do you think I was able to move Paul and Silas from one place to another on the map?**
- **How is the way I moved Paul and Silas like the way the Holy Spirit showed them the way on their journey?**
- **Why do you think the Holy Spirit kept Paul and Silas from going to some places but let them go to another?**

Say: **God *wanted* Paul and Silas to go to Macedonia. God helped Paul and Silas on their journey to tell others about God, and God will show you the way, too!**

God wants us to go to new places to tell others about Jesus. Sometimes these places are in different cities or countries. Other times they are places where we work, go to school and play. Think of a place you could go to tell others about Jesus. In a minute, we’ll use that place in our prayer.

Hand each child a paper clip.

Say: **We’re going to use our paper clips to help us pray. Dear God, the world is filled with people who we can tell about you. Help us to go to places near and far to change the world with your amazing love. Help us to go to....** Have them place their paper clips on the cardboard as they say where they’ll go. As children talk, move the paper clips into the shape of a cross. **Help us to reach people everywhere for you! In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

WEEK 4: “CHANGE AGENTS CHANGE THE WORLD AROUND THEM”

Option 1

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

Supplies:

Large inflatable or molded plastic pool filled with water

1-inch smooth stone for each child/member of the congregation

Gather children around the pool of water. Open your Bible to Matthew 28:16-20 and show children the words.

Say: **Today in our Bible story, we’ll read that Jesus wants us to go into the world to tell others about him. Let’s try an experiment to see what that’s like.**

Show children a stone. Say: **Let’s pretend this stone is one of us and the water is the world. What do you think will happen to the water when I drop this stone into the center of it?**

(Allow for responses.)

Ask: **What happened to the water?**

Read Matthew 28:19.

Ask: **How is what happened when the stone hit the water like this verse?**

Say: **When the stone hit the water, it created ripples in it. The ripples moved from the center of the water outward toward the edge of the pool. That’s how Jesus wants us to make disciples. He wants us to go from wherever we are (drop another stone into the center of the pool) and move out into the world (follow the ripples with your finger) to tell others about him.**

Ask: **Why do you think Jesus wants us to tell others about him?** Say: **Think of something special you know about Jesus. Maybe it’s that he loves you or that he cares for you. It could even be that he’s your best friend.**

Ask: **How does it feel to know that?**

Ask: Why does knowing Jesus change your life?

Say: Knowing Jesus changes our lives in many wonderful ways. Many people in the world do not know Jesus. Jesus' love can change their lives in wonderful ways too.

Think of someone in your life who needs to know about Jesus' love. How will you show people Jesus loves them?

Give each person a stone.

Say: In a minute, I'll invite you drop your stone into the water. When you drop your stone, say the name of the person to whom you'll show God's love. Watch what happens to the water as you drop your stone.

When we go out into the world and share God's love with others, we create a huge ripple effect of Jesus' love that changes the world — one person, one place, one ripple at a time.

Let's pray. Dear God, thank you for your son Jesus, whose amazing love changed the world. Help us to share Jesus' love with others so we can be world changers for you! In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Option 2

Supplies:

Large inflatable or molded plastic pool filled with water

1-inch smooth stone for each child/member of the congregation

Download and print a graphic of the world or draw on poster board

ART NOTE: GO INTO THE WORLD GRAPHIC IS SIX CONCENTRIC CIRCLES. JESUS IS THE CENTER CIRCLE FOLLOWED BY HOME, SCHOOL, CHURCH, NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE WORLD.

Print images downloaded from www.umcom.org or photos from local church service opportunities.

Don't limit pictures to those of children serving others, but also include photos of children working with people who need help.

Preparation:

Print copies of downloaded photos or of photos from local mission projects

Make the Go into The World graphic

Gather children around the pool of water. Open your Bible to Matthew 28:16-20 and show children the words.

Say: **Today in our Bible story, we'll read that Jesus wants us to go into the world to tell others about him. Let's try an experiment to see what that's like.**

Show children a stone. Say: **Let's pretend this stone is one of us and the water is the world. What do you think will happen to the water when I drop this stone into the center of it?**

(Allow for responses.)

Ask: **What happened to the water?**

Read Matthew 28:19.

Ask: **How is what happened when the stone hit the water like this verse?**

Say: **When the stone hit the water, it created ripples in it. The ripples moved from the center of the water outward toward the edge of the pool. That's how Jesus wants us to make disciples. He wants us to go from wherever we are (drop another stone into the center of the pool) and move out into the world (follow the ripples with your finger) to tell others about him.**

Show children the pictures of people serving others. **[NOTE: THESE CAN BE PICTURES FROM THE LOCAL CHURCH OR DOWNLOADED FROM UMCOR: Picture of a family praying, children serving food at a shelter and eating with shelter residents, children raising money to buy malaria nets and teaching others about the nets]** As you hold up each picture, ask children to describe what they see in the pictures.

We can share Jesus' love with others by praying for people, feeding them and joining them for a meal, and raising money to buy anti-malaria nets for them and telling others about the nets. There are so many ways and places we can go to share that love!

Place the chart where all the children can see it. Say: **Look at this chart. It shows some of the places we can go to show others God's love.** My home, my school, my church, my neighborhood, the world) Have children help you place the pictures in the proper circle/ring on the chart.

Ask:

- **How is this chart like what we noticed about the water after we dropped a stone into it?**
- **What do you think will happen to the people in these places when we share God's love with them?**
- **How will our work change the world?**

Give each person a stone.

Each of you can change the world by sharing God's love with another person in one of these places.

Say: **We'll pray together and use our stones and this chart to help us. Think of where you'll go to share God's love with someone. Then when I point to you, say, "God, I'll go to _____ (name that place) and**

tell people about you. Demonstrate what children will do. Say: **God, I'll go to school (place your stone in the school ring) and tell people about you.** Start with the child to your right and go around the circle. Close the prayer with **"In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."**

Option 3: *Change Agents Share God's Love*

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

Preparation:

Locate the video clip **Teens Opposing Poverty** (included in multimedia bundle)

Supplies:

None

Open your Bible to Matthew 28:16-20 and show children the words.

Say: Today in our Bible story, we'll read that Jesus wants us to go into the world to tell others about him.

Gather children in a circle. **Say: Let's play a game to help us to understand how important it is to share that message. We will play a game called "Telephone." Here's how we'll play. I'll be the operator and whisper a message to the person on my right. That person will pass the message to the person on his or her right. The message will travel counterclockwise around the circle until it comes back to me.**

The Message: Joyful, just Jesus loves Lucy, Lionel, Luke, Lance, Lisa and lots of little lads.

Say: When you finally hear the message, say it aloud, repeating exactly what your neighbor whispered your ear. Then I'll tell you the original message.

Ask:

- **What did you hear?**
- **What happened to the message?**

Say: The message changed. People shortened it. Some people forgot it altogether! Telling others that Jesus loves them is a special message that we don't want to change, shorten or forget. Sometimes the best way to tell people about Jesus' love is to show them that love.

Watch this video to see how one group of teens is showing Jesus' love.

Ask:

- **How did the teens show God's love?**
- **What is the difference between telling people Jesus loves them and showing them Jesus' love?**
- **Which is easiest for you to do? Why?**

Say: **Sometimes it's hard to show Jesus' love. We have to do something that may take time or make us try something new or travel to a place we've never been. Jesus promises to be with us when we share his love with others. He says in Matthew 28:20b, NRSV, "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Jesus is with us when we share his love with others!**

Ask:

- **How does it feel to know that Jesus will be with you when you share his love with others?**

Say: **Jesus is with us, and he will help us show others his love. Let's play another game of Telephone. This time, we'll pass the message and demonstrate it too!** Gather children in a circle and whisper "Jesus loves you" to the child on your right as you give that child a high five. Have that child pass the message and a high five to the child on his or her right until the message travels counterclockwise around the circle and comes back to you.

You also can pass this message throughout the congregation. Once the message returns to you, repeat it and say: **That's how one small group of children can share God's love with others. Let's see what happens when we multiply their efforts.**

I'll high five two people—who'll high five two other people and so on. Pass the message I give you to each person throughout the room. Once you've received a high five, stand and give two other people a high five.

Then keep standing and applaud until everyone in the room is standing and applauding because we can change the world by sharing God's love.

(Start the high-fiving on both sides of the room. Say, "Jesus loves you." Allow time for this to move through the crowd. Time it.)

Say: **It took (insert number of seconds or minutes) for us to change the environment in this room. Imagine what could happen if we left this place and shared God's love with the world!**

You did a great job telling others Jesus loves them and showing them too!

Let's pray. Dear God, thank you for Jesus and his love for us. Help us to tell others about you and show them your love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.