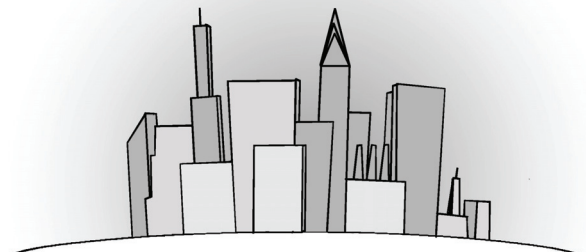
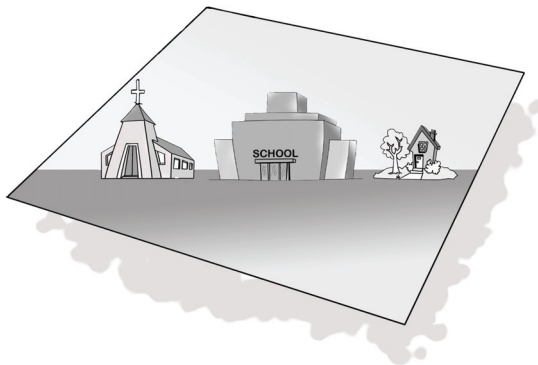
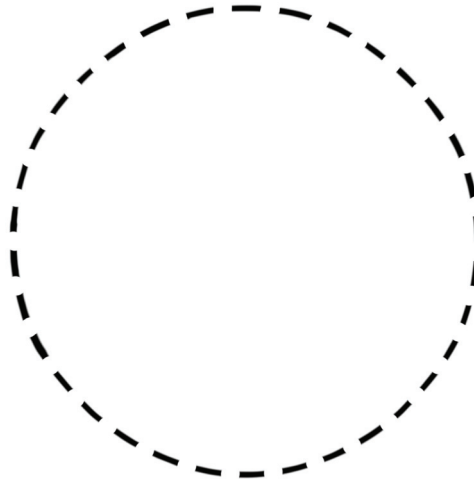
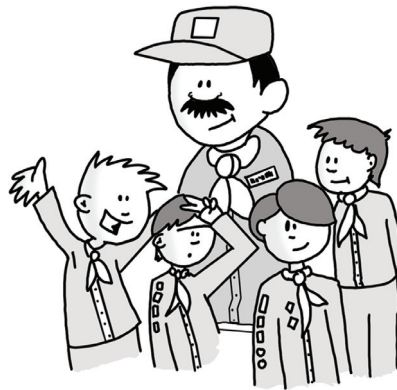
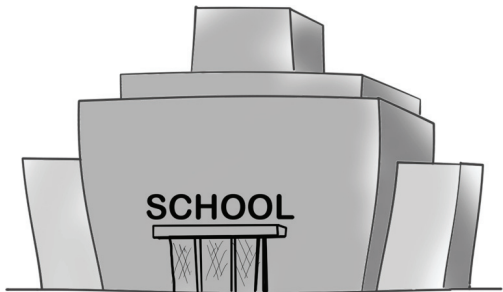


# Participating in Our Community

We all belong to groups of people who gather together for a common purpose or activity. This is a community. We gather with others to learn at school, to worship together at church, to play on a sports team, to celebrate holidays, to clean-up our community, to raise money for people in need, and so much more.

Which communities are you and your family involved with? Draw a picture of your household in the center circle, then draw an arrow from there to all the communities your household is connected to. Add any communities that we missed that you are a part of.



# Jesus Participates in Community

Jesus' showed us the importance of community. His own life started in Bethlehem because his parents were there because they participated in the government's census where all of the citizens were counted. He prayed and participated in temple life. He attended community gatherings like weddings. And he showed the world that to be in community means to pay attention to our brothers and sisters in need.

Read the Bible passages below, and then think about what it means to participate in community.

- ❖ **Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom, and healing people who had all kinds of disease and sickness. (Matthew 4:23)**
  - ⊙ **Participating in community means helping those who need help, including the sick.**
- ❖ **Jesus went into the Temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling there. (Matthew 21:12-13)**
  - ⊙ **Participating in community means doing the right things in the right places.**
- ❖ **On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, "Where do you want us to get the Passover Meal ready for you?" (Matthew 26:17)**
  - ⊙ **Participating in community means joining with our church to celebrate the feasts of our faith.**
- ❖ **Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee, Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. (John 2: 1-2)**
  - ⊙ **Participating in community means celebrating important times with other people.**
- ❖ **So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God." (Mark 12:17)**
  - ⊙ **Participating in community means being a responsible citizen.**



# We Participate in Community

When we look at the early church community, they seemed to really understand what it meant to live and use your gifts in community. Just imagine this:

We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. So we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace God has given us. If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it according to the faith we have; if it is to serve, we should serve; if it is to teach, we should teach; if it is to encourage others, we should do so. Whoever shares with others should do it generously; whoever has authority should work hard; whoever shows kindness to others should do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:4–8)

Now underline all of the gifts that you read in the Bible passage.

That's a lot of gifts! What gift do you think you have?

## Imagine !

Have you ever imagined what it would be like if everyone in the world used their gifts in service to someone else, so that the world and all its communities would be a better place? Let yourself dare to imagine, and finish each sentence below.

**Example:** Imagine if those who could sing shared their gift at Sunday worship. . .

*The church would rock! God would be praised! Even I would enjoy going to church and singing!*

☉ Imagine if those with **money** shared with those without money. . .

☉ Imagine if those with **food** shared with those who don't have food. . .

☉ Imagine if everyone shared their **gifts** and **talents** with their communities. . .

**Imagine if everyone did their part.**

**We don't have to just imagine this, we simply have to do it!**

# Try It — Participate!

We can all make a difference in the world by putting on our "community glasses" and seeing the needs right in front of us. Sometimes we can meet the needs easily, sometimes the needs are really big and we have to be patient. What's most important is that we see how connected our lives are to the lives of others, and that we do our share to make the many communities we are part of great communities.

Put your glasses on, what needs do you see that you and your household could help meet? What will you do to meet the need?

## Neighborhood

A Need I See. . .

## School

A Need I See. . .

## Church

A Need I See. . .

## Town/City

A Need I See. . .

## World

A Need I See. . .