



Community of Christ

Sharing in Community of Christ: Exploring Identity, Mission, Message and Beliefs

Lesson 2 - Our Sacred Journey

This lesson is based on 'Sharing in Community of Christ' pages 27-32, 76-81, 11-12 and 35-36.

Guide Times

- Overview of the Enduring Principles – 30 minutes
- Our sacred journey – 15 minutes
- We share a name – 15 minutes
- The church- 20 minutes

Part 1 – Overview of the Enduring Principles (30 minutes)

1. Display the images of the logos without the labels. Do you know which Principle each logo represents? (5 minutes)

Images for printing or display on screen can be found here or as an attachment at the end of the lesson: <https://www.communityofchrist.ca/media.html>

One without labels can be found here:

https://www.facebook.com/CofChrist/photos/a.10151353257237977/10156337046112977/?type=3&_rdr

2. The Enduring Principles are listed below as a brief outline for the activity.

The Foundation: God, Christ, Holy Spirit (from page 27)

God's revelation in Jesus Christ and continuing presence through the Holy Spirit, as proclaimed by scripture, is the foundation of our faith, identity, mission, message, and

beliefs. We do our best to uphold these enduring principles (values, concepts, themes) as a faithful response to our heritage and our continuing experience with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.



Grace and Generosity

God's grace, especially as revealed in Jesus Christ, is generous and unconditional

- *Having received God's generous grace, we respond generously and graciously receive the generosity of others*
- *We offer all we are and have to God's purposes as revealed in Jesus Christ*
- *We generously share our witness, resources, ministries, and sacraments according to our true capacity*



Sacredness of Creation

In the beginning, God created and called it all good

- *Spirit and material, seen and unseen, are related*
- *Creation's power to create or destroy reminds us of our vulnerability in this life*
- *God is still creating to fulfil divine purpose*
- *We join with God as stewards of care and hope for all creation*



Continuing Revelation

- *Scripture is an inspired and indispensable witness of human response to God's revelation of divine nature*
- *God graciously reveals divine will today as in the past*
- *The Holy Spirit inspires and provides witness to divine truth*
- *In humility, individually and in community, we prayerfully listen to understand God's will for our lives, the church, and creation more completely*



Worth of All Persons

- *God views all people as having inestimable and equal worth*
- *God wants all people to experience wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships*

- *We seek to uphold and restore the worth of all people individually and in community, challenging unjust systems that diminish human worth*
- *We join with Jesus Christ in bringing good news to the poor, sick, captive, and oppressed*



All Are Called

- *God graciously gives people gifts and opportunities to do good and to share in God's purposes*
- *Jesus Christ invites people to follow him by becoming disciples who share his life and ministry*
- *Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world*
- *We respond faithfully, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to our best understanding of God's call*



Responsible Choices

- *God gives humans the ability to make choices about whom or what they will serve. Some people experience conditions that diminish their ability to make choices*
- *Human choices contribute to good or evil in our lives and in the world*
- *Many aspects of creation need redemption because of irresponsible and sinful human choices*
- *We are called to make responsible choices within the circumstances of our lives that contribute to the purposes of God*



Pursuit of Peace (Shalom)

- *God wants shalom (justice, reconciliation, well-being, wholeness, and peace) for all of creation*
- *Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God's shalom (peace), reveals the meaning of God's peace in all aspects of life*
- *The vision of Zion is to promote God's reign on earth, as proclaimed by Jesus Christ, through the leavening influence of just and peaceful communities*
- *We courageously and generously share the peace of Jesus Christ with others*
- *Led by the Holy Spirit, we work with God and others to restore peace (shalom) to creation*
- *We celebrate God's peace wherever it appears or is being pursued by people of good will*



Unity in Diversity

- *Community of Christ is a diverse, international family of disciples, seekers, and congregations*
- *Local and worldwide ministries are interdependent and important to the church's mission*
- *The church embraces diversity and unity through the power of the Holy Spirit*
- *We seek agreement or common consent in important matters. If we cannot achieve agreement, we commit to ongoing dialogue and lovingly uphold our common faith in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church*
- *We confess that our lack of agreement on certain matters is hurtful to some of God's beloved children and creation*

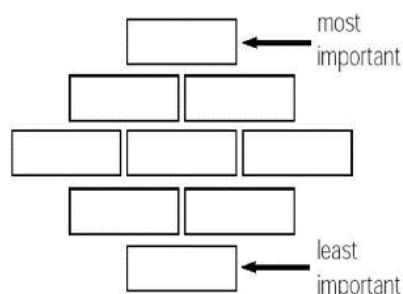


Blessings of Community

- *The gospel of Jesus Christ is expressed best in community life where people become vulnerable to God's grace and each other*
- *True community includes compassion for and solidarity with the poor, marginalised, and oppressed*
- *True community upholds the worth of persons while providing a healthy alternative to self-centeredness, isolation, and conformity*
- *Sacred community provides nurture and growth opportunities for all people, especially those who cannot fully care for themselves*
- *We value our connections and share a strong sense of trust in and belonging with one another—even if we have never met*
- *Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world*
- *We are called to create communities of Christ's peace in our families and congregations and across villages, tribes, nations, and throughout creation*

Activity

- In small groups, discuss which one is the most important/relevant to the church in the British Isles today? (10 minutes)
- Create a 'diamond 9' to express your groups choices.
- Share with the class the one you find most challenging or consider to be least important. (10 minutes for feedback to the whole class)



Part 2 - Our sacred journey (pages. 16-19 76- 81) (15 minutes)

Do not fail to listen attentively to the telling of the sacred story, for the story of scripture and faith empowers and illuminates.

-Doctrine and Covenants 161:5

Script:

As Community of Christ, we share a sacred story of God's unfolding and revealing presence in the world and closer to home, in the British Isles. Our story, although beginning in scripture with sacred Christian history, doesn't end with the Bible; it is continued through the witness, testimony, events and people within and around our congregational communities. Along with the whole Christian church, Community of Christ continues to write new chapters of the story of Jesus' love, responding to God's call and promptings of the Spirit.

The Presidency has provided a set of church history principles (listed below) to help guide the church's continued exploration of its history. For the complete text of "Perspectives on Church History" see page 76 or go to www.CofChrist.org/church-history-principles

1. Continuing exploration of our history is part of identity formation.
2. History informs but does not dictate our faith and beliefs.
3. The church encourages honest, responsible historical scholarship.
4. The study of church history is a continuing journey.
5. Seeing both the faithfulness and human flaws in our history makes it more believable and realistic, not less.
6. The responsible study of church history involves learning, repentance, and transformation.
7. The church has a long-standing tradition that it does not legislate or mandate positions on matters of church history.
8. We need to create a respectful culture of dialogue about matters of history.
9. Our faith is grounded in God's revelation in Jesus Christ and the continuing guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion questions.– can be either small group or whole class.

- What would the current chapter of our story in the British Isles be called? (As an added/alternative activity, you could design a book cover)
- How do the Enduring Principles appear as part of our story?
- What is the difference between seeing history as “what happened” and “someone’s perspective on what happened”?
- Can there be such a thing as “official history”?

Part 3 - We share a name (pages 11-12) (15 minutes)

“Community of Christ,” your name, given as a divine blessing, is your identity and calling. “

-Doctrine and Covenants 163:1

Activity - Invite each person to write their name on a flip chart paper to display. Use any colours or designs they wish. After all names are on the paper, invite the class to pause and consider what it might look like in other cultures, nationalities and countries. How are our names part of our identity?

Script – We are Community of Christ! We share a common name throughout the world that is translated into many languages. Our name is faithful to our heritage and true to our identity and calling today. Display page 12 (Community of Christ in other languages) alongside the flip chart of your names as a visual.

Part 4 - The church (pages 35-36) (20 minutes)

As part of our Basic Beliefs, we believe in ‘The Church’. What does this mean to you? (5 minutes discussion.)

Activity (15 minutes) Think, pair, share

Using everything you have learned about the Enduring Principles, our Sacred Journey and our name, how would you respond if someone said “Community of Christ? I haven’t heard about it.”

Consider your personal answer, discuss in pairs, share in 4s then bring a spokesperson to the class to share ideas.

Can you now write your personal statement of what you would say?

the enduring principles



grace & generosity



sacredness of creation



continuing revelation



worth of all persons



all are called



responsible choices



pursuit of peace (shalom)



unity in diversity



blessings of community



Community of Christ

learn more at <http://www.cofchrist.org/enduring-principles>