

Cards of Caring for Valentine's Day

A Lesson on the First Gift of Discipleship "Live among God's Faithful People"

Objective: To encourage participants to support older members of the congregation through making and sending cards of encouragement for Valentine's Day (or other season of your choice!)

Audience: Any age, but especially suited for upper elementary and youth

Duration: 45-60 minutes depending on discussion and number of cards made



Materials/Preparation Needed:

- Bibles
- Cardstock in various colors—the cardstock will be folded in half to make the card
- Items to add decorations—stickers, foam shapes, craft tape, sequins, etc.
- Glue sticks
- Scissors—both multipurpose and decorative craft
- Sample card
- Large 6 x 9 envelopes
- Addresses of older members of congregation (*Note: Please check with your office administrator about how many older members you may have and how many cards you might need to make. We first decided to send a card to those over 65 and realized we would have to restrict the group to those over 80 because of the numbers involved!*)
- Table for supplies
- Tables for participants to sit and be creative

Sit out cardstock and decorative items on a separate table so that participants can easily pick out materials they wish to use.

Place bibles, glue sticks, glue dots, and scissors at each of the tables where people will work.

Decide how you want to handle the addressing the recipients of the cards. Cards can be generic and later put in envelopes with the addresses on the outside. OR you can hand participants names and addresses of specific people to whom they can send their cards.

Lesson/Event:

A. Introduction:

1. Welcome participants and invite them to take a seat at one of the tables.

2. Explain that today, the group is going to study what it means to “live among God’s faithful people,” which is one of the Five Gifts of Discipleship. You can quickly review what all the five gifts are at this point or move further into the lesson.
3. Have participants turn to the following verses in the bible: Romans 12: 4-5, 15, Acts 2: 44-47 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11. You can either ask individuals to read the different verses aloud to everyone and discuss the following questions as a large group OR have them discuss the questions in a small group and report back to the large group.
 - What did Paul compare the church to in the book of Romans?
 - What would happen if a part of our body, like a foot, decided it didn’t want to support the rest of the body?
 - In the book of Acts, how did the early Christians live with each other?
 - What instructions does Paul give to the Romans and Thessalonians about how they should treat each other?
 - In what ways can we as Christians in our church support each other?
4. *Say this or something similar:* Just as the early Christians encouraged each other in times of joy and in times of sorrow, we can make sure that we support members of our congregation throughout the year in how we welcome people and let them know that we care about them. “Living among God’s faithful people” means that as disciples of Jesus we have a group of people with whom we can get together, worship, study, play and support. Just as we RECEIVE support from others, it is important that we GIVE support as well.

Today we are going to make cards for Valentine’s Day (or whatever holiday you choose), to encourage the seniors in our congregation and remind them that they are a beloved part of our congregation and God’s family!

B. Craft:

1. First, to help participants, brainstorm some phrases that might be used on the cards.
2. Let students know how many cards they each should make. Then let them go to the table to pick up supplies.
3. As participants work on the cards, circulate to check on their progress and tell stories about those to whom they are sending cards. (Pictures of recipients if you have them would be great to have posted as well.) Collect the cards on one table.

C. Closing:

1. Have everyone gather around the table which has the cards.
2. Encourage those present to make a point of encouraging other members of the congregation through emails, texts, or sending other cards.
3. Offer a blessing for the recipients of the cards as well as those present.