Piecing the Puzzle

A five-lesson series that teaches children without disabilities how to relate to children with disabilities.

Christian Churches Disability Ministry

www.ccdmonline.org

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Piecing the Puzzle

Christian Churches Disability Ministry (CCDM) strives to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and their families. One of the ways we seek to accomplish this is by providing lessons such as these. You have our permission to copy portions of this booklet for your classroom purposes; however, we request that you print the following credit line on your copies:

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Overview

Piecing the Puzzle was originally written for use in Vacation Bible Schools. It has been adapted for use as supplemental material for church schools, youth group meetings, or mid-week Bible classes. This series of lessons will help students see how the pieces of their lives can come together to create a beautiful picture. It teaches students to empathize with those in need, see their duty as Christians, relate to a cause (CCDM), and then seek to uplift that cause.

Inspiring children to become sensitive to the needs of others gives them a basis for developing an affinity for mission work, community involvement, and discipleship. It is an important part of their Christian education.

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Bible Story

The Good Samaritan
Luke 10:25-37 (NIV)

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus: “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

“He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’”
Application

Who is your neighbor? Someone who lives close to you? Perhaps it is a grandparent or a friend. Jesus told us that all people are to be our neighbors. That means even people we have never met are to be our neighbors.

What kinds of deeds do we do for our neighbors? Sometimes we play with them; sometimes we help them. We can do things like get their mail and water their plants while they are on vacation or take food to them if they are sick.

So this means that we are to be helpful to all people. When we see someone who is in need, we should help him. Have you ever seen anyone who was in need? What did you do to help him? Sometimes people need money, and we can help by sharing ours with them. Sometimes people need someone to talk to, and we can help by listening. Sometimes people just need a friend. Does anyone at your school need a friend? Is there someone who always sits alone at the lunch table? You could be a good neighbor to that person by sitting with him at lunch or playing with him on the playground.

There are other people to whom we are to be good neighbors as well. Do you know anyone in your church or in your community who has a disability?

Maybe he sits in a wheelchair, or perhaps he cannot see. There are many people with disabilities who live all around us, and we are commanded by the Bible to be good neighbors to them.

What are some ways you can be a good neighbor to people who have disabilities in your community? With your parent’s permission, help them carry shopping bags to their car or bus, offer directions, hold doors open, etc.

You can also do good deeds for people all over the world through mission outreach projects. There are many organizations that help others nationally and internationally. The first step in beginning a mission project is to find out about the organization you want to help. What is their mission, goal, history, and structure? After you know about them, make a contribution of money or time. Think of a fundraising project your school
or church class can do to raise money (such as a car wash, yard sale, bake sale, etc) and donate the proceeds.

One member of our global community is the **Christian Churches Disability Ministry**, an organization that helps people with disabilities. This ministry serves people with disabilities in many ways, but today we are only going to talk about one of them. Our first puzzle piece is called **community**. Just like the Samaritan helped the person in his community, CCDM helps communities learn how to enrich the lives of people with disabilities. They do this by providing information about various disabilities. They know about government procedures and policies that affect people with disabilities and provide information as requested.

Ask students to explain how this relates to the lesson they just heard. How should the differences we see in people affect our views of who is and who is not our neighbor? All people, regardless of their differences, are our neighbors, and we should treat them accordingly and not dwell on their differences.
Community

Craft - Sand Painting

Materials

- Colored sand (or plain sand or salt to make your own)
- Elmer's glue
- Small paint brushes
- Small bowls
- Coloring page
- Shellac

Sand Painting

Buy colored sand at a craft store or make your own by coloring sand or salt. Pour a small amount of sand in a jar and add several drops of food coloring. Shake until all sand is colored. Pour out flat and lay in sun or in oven to dry.

Using small paint brushes, paint with thinned glue over all areas of color page that you want to be a certain color. Sprinkle sand over the glue allowing it to cover all parts. Shake off excess sand. Please note, use only one color at a time, until picture is colored.

To preserve picture, when dry, spray with shellac.

Application

Remind the students that the puzzle piece for this lesson is Community. As they are painting, review the lesson.

| Relate combining the different colors when making the painting | TO the results you get when all members of the community are included. |

Ask students to discuss what they will do to be a good neighbor. Ask them to explain how CCDM helps the community.
You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they might see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven.

Application

What does a light do? When would you use a light? Why don’t people hide lights? How does that relate to Christians? As Christians we are told to shine out before men. That means people should know, just by being around us, that we are Christians. Is this a difficult task? Is it hard to be different?

The Bible tells us that the best way to win people to Christ is by being different from the rest of the world. What can you do at your school to show the kids that you are a Christian? Pray before lunch; don’t make fun of other people; watch the language you use; and show respect for your teachers.

What can you do at home to show your parents or other relatives that you are a Christian? Tell the truth; respect and obey your parents; pray before meals; and be helpful around the house.

There are many people in each of our lives who do not know God. We can show them about being a Christian without telling them. All we have to do is live our lives a certain way, the way God would have us to, and
they will see. We will be like lights on a hill, and we will shine where everyone can see us.

One of the ways our church can shine out to the world is by providing a place that is comfortable for ALL people to come to worship. Our second puzzle piece is called church. This is another way that CCDM serves people with disabilities. They provide churches with information on how to accept and include people with disabilities in all phases of church life. Some congregations are not welcoming or inclusive of people with disabilities. Imagine if a person with a physical or mental disability came into our church and was treated with love and respect. Do you think that he would notice? Do you think our church would stand out in his mind as a good place to be? By welcoming people with disabilities to our church, we have the opportunity to teach them about Jesus’ love. What better witness would we have than treating people just like Jesus would have treated them?

We talked about being the Light of the World. Jesus tells us in the Bible that we are to shine out to the world like a city on a hill. People should know, just by looking at us, that we are Christians. By showing love to all, it is possible to do this without saying a word.
Church

Craft – Prayer Boxes

Materials

- Small boxes with lids (wood or paper)
- Glow in the dark (iridescent) paint
- Stickers
- Several sheets of blank paper

Make Good Deed Boxes

Ask each student to paint the words “prayers” on the box

Have them add other decorations

Cut the paper into strips

Pass out strips so that the students can write what they are doing or will do to help others

Students should place the boxes somewhere in their bedroom as a reminder to pray for everyone and to “let their light shine.”

Application

As kids are working, review the lesson. Ask questions and allow them to answer. Ask them to explain how they will try to let others know they are Christians. Be sure they know that the puzzle piece for this lesson is church. Ask them to explain how CCDM helps the church.
Caring

Bible Story

Paralytic
Mark 2:1-5 (NIV)

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

“I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home.” He got up, took his mat, and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Application

Today we are going to talk about our third puzzle piece. It is caring.

Note: Allow plenty of time for discussion, but be careful not to let students go into too much detail about personal family situations during this session.

Why did Jesus heal the paralyzed man? Do you think he would have if it were not for the man’s friends? Probably not, because the man would not have been able to reach Jesus.

If you were the man who was paralyzed, who would have dug through that roof to get you to Jesus? Who cares about you that much?
It must be nice to have people who care enough about you to make sure you were able to see Jesus. Do you have people who care about you? Maybe it is your mom and dad or your grandparents. Maybe it is a close friend.

What about people here at church. Is there someone here who loves you that much? How do you know when someone loves you? Do they take care of you and provide you with things that you need? Do they tell you they love you? What else do they do?

Like the people you just mentioned, CCDM serves many people in many different ways. One of the ways they help people with disabilities is by helping them care for themselves.

CCDM operates two group homes where people with developmental disabilities can reside. At their residences, people with developmental disabilities are able to live somewhat independently. Most of them have jobs in the community, they pay some of the rent on their rooms, and they share in household duties like doing their own laundry and cooking. Just like you will grow up and leave your parents’ house one day, people with disabilities need to move out on their own and live away from their family. The group homes also help the residents’ families because they know their loved ones are being taken care of. It is always important to provide assistance and the CCDM does just that.
Caring

Craft-Puzzle Picture Frames

Materials

- Several brightly colored puzzles (you can buy these at a dollar store)
- Hot glue guns or paste (depending upon age of children)
- Cardboard cut outs large enough to frame average sized picture
- Razor blade to cut cardboard
- Family photograph (children supply their own)

Puzzle Picture Frame

(Teacher - make cardboard frames prior to the class to avoid possible student contact with razor blade or cutter)
Cut out rectangle from cardboard box
Cut 5” X 7” hole in the center of the rectangle.

Using paste or a hot glue gun, glue puzzle pieces around outside of the rectangle stacking them on top of each other making a 3-dimensional design.

Instruct children to tape a family picture to back with faces showing through the hole.

Application

Review the lesson with the children. Ask questions and allow them to answer. Ask students if the faces they will see in the pictures that will go in their frames belong to people they believe would have taken them to see Jesus all those years ago. Make sure kids know the puzzle piece for the lesson is CARING. Ask them to explain how CCDM helps those who care about people with disabilities.
Then the king will say to those on his right, “Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what’s coming to you in this kingdom. It’s been ready for you since the world’s foundation. And here’s why:

“I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me.”

Then those ‘sheep’ are going to say, “Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?”

Then the king will say, “I am telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me – you did it to me.”

Application

This story is referring to judgment day. On that day, we will stand in front of Jesus and He will say, “Come on into Heaven. You have done well in your life on earth. I want you to be with me in Heaven for eternity. You have taken care of me – when I was sick, when I was hungry or thirsty, and when I was alone. Now I want to take care of you.”

Do you think that Jesus meant that only those people who physically saw Him and helped him would be able to get into Heaven and the rest of us
would just be left out? I don’t think so. Everyone has a chance every day to help Jesus. We can do it by helping other people.

Jesus says that all people are important to Him. EVERYONE!! That means all the people in the world no matter what their appearance is; no matter how old they are; no matter what their talents are; no matter what athletic abilities they have; no matter how easily they learn; no matter how they speak. Jesus loves us all. He loves everyone in this room no matter who you are.

When Jesus was on earth, He took a special interest in people with disabilities. There are people with disabilities in our communities. Their disabilities may be caused by a condition at birth, an accident, or disease. People with disabilities should be treated with respect and dignity. They should never be ridiculed or ignored. Jesus taught us that when we do nice things for people with disabilities we are doing it to Him.

What kinds of things can we do here at the church to show that we love all people just like Jesus did? We can treat everyone the same. We can love each person no matter how he looks, talks, or dresses. We can love the person with a disability as much as we love everyone else in our congregation. That is what Jesus would want us do.

Our fourth puzzle piece is Jesus. We have been talking about what Jesus wants us as Christians to do for Him and for those around us. CCDM tries to do just what Jesus wants them to do. All of their programs are Christ-centered. They show people with disabilities that Jesus loves them just like they are. All their programs teach people with disabilities how to be Christians and how they in turn can serve Jesus by helping other people.
Jesus

Craft

Materials

- Construction paper in at least 4 colors
- Scissors
- Glue
- Heavy string or cord

Hands of God Wreath

Ask each child to choose at least one color of paper. Have each child trace the outline of their hand onto the paper and cut out the outline. Assemble the hands randomly into the shape of a wreath. Glue them together. Use the string or cord to hang the wreath.

Application

While the kids are working, review the lesson. Make sure they know that the puzzle piece for this lesson is JESUS. Explain to them that the hands symbolize we are God’s instruments. Just as Jesus did God’s work here on earth, we should each strive to help our fellowman, particularly those with disabilities. Ask questions and allow them the students answer. Ask kids to explain how CCDM provides a link between people with disabilities and Jesus.
Education

Bible Story

Boy with Epilepsy
Matthew 17:14-21 (NIV)

When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

“O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.

Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

He replied, “Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Application

Tell me about Jesus. What did He do while He was on the earth? He was born in a stable, He died on the cross, but what else did He do? He was a teacher. Many of His days were spent teaching lessons about all kinds of things. Can you remember any lessons He taught? Who did He teach? He taught His family, He taught people in the streets, He taught those that He healed, and He taught His disciples.

In this story, whom was Jesus teaching? He was teaching His disciples. What did Jesus mean by saying that a person could tell a mountain to move and it would? He meant that anything is possible with God. Just because our human minds cannot understand something doesn’t mean
that it is impossible for God. He is so much bigger than our minds. He is so big that we cannot understand Him.

What did Jesus mean by His saying, “Faith as small as a mustard seed?” Did He mean an actual comparison? Or was it just a figure of speech? Jesus meant that until we believe something could happen, nothing ever will. But once we believe, even those things that seemed impossible are suddenly possible with God. We have to be willing to admit that something could happen in order for it to actually happen.

Jesus taught many people many lessons. In this short story, many lessons were learned.

CCDM also teaches people about Jesus and about people with disabilities. This is our fifth puzzle piece. It is called **education**. Jim Pierson, who was the director at CCDM, wrote many lessons to help people know how to work with people with disabilities and to understand their disabilities. Just like Jesus taught His family, the people around Him, and His disciples, The Christian Churches Disability Ministry teaches people from all over the world how to serve those with disabilities and their families. CCDM offers a variety of material that educates and enlightens those who wish to explore disability related topics or to develop a disability ministry.

CCDM materials and programs are Christ-centered. They teach the inherent value of all people. They can be found on the CCDM website: **www.ccdmonline.org**.
Activity

Show students the Overview page of this booklet. Point to each piece and name it.

Well, our puzzle is almost complete. We have five of the six pieces. Our last puzzle piece (with question marks) stands for YOU. With your help, CCDM can continue its caring ministry. There are many different ways you can participate in this ministry. You can commit to praying on a regular basis for the residents, the staff, board of directors, and contributors of CCDM. Without strong prayer warriors, none of their ministry would be possible.

(Revise to fit your church situation.)
You can help by getting your church involved in a disability ministry program. If one is established already, you can volunteer to help. If there are no services offered, you can be the one to start the process.

Now we will pray for CCDM and their mission of inclusion.

Plan a student mission project with the group. (Review the Application Section of the Community puzzle piece.)