

# The United Thank Offering Presents: Waves of Gratitude

A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude



## Welcome!

The United Thank Offering (UTO) Board and Staff are pleased to present you with this free program focused on water and gratitude.

One of the amazing things about our world is water. As humans, we depend upon water to live, for transportation, and recreation. As Christians, the water of baptism unites us to our community of faith and to the Trinity, which means it is important to us as people and as people of faith. It turns out that psychologists think that gratitude is just as important. It helps us to feel better, lead happier lives, and even sleep better at night. So what if gratitude were as ubiquitous to us as water? What if gratitude were a tool through which we lived out our baptismal promise to seek and serve Christ in all persons? These thoughts are what created the program you are holding in your hands. It ties together gratitude, water, creation, baptism, and community into a fun and engaging program for kids and leaders alike. It also helps connect faith concepts with books and STEAM projects they might experience outside of church, which makes this program unique in that it is visitor friendly. We wanted to make sure that we also connected each day back to parents, so we created a daily passport and follow-up letters. We also know that camp can be costly, so we tried to keep supplies to a minimum (or easily donated, up cycled, or reused) and as low cost as possible while still being a ton of fun. We hope your congregations loves this program, and we're grateful you're using it!

## Each day you'll engage participants through:

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

Participants will get to do something outside and with water, it is summer after all! These activities will tie into the theme of the day at the closing gathering.

2

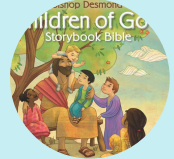
### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

There's a new song to sing with a familiar tune each day and time to move our bodies through games, yoga, and water themed movement.

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

There is a craft for each theme and a STEAM project. We've also got extras listed in case you want additional stations or a spot for early finishers.



### Hear a Bible Story

Each day begins with learning a story from scripture in a kid friendly way.



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

Each Bible story and theme will get connected with a popular children's story to help build connections.



### Practice Gratitude

Participants will learn a gratitude practice and share thankfulness at the closing.

## Sample Full Day

### 9a Gather and Full Group Activities

- Welcome and name tags
- Sing
- Hear the Story
- Wonder About the Theme
- Announcements for the Day

### 9:45a Move Into Schools of Fish for stations

### 10a Morning Stations

*(30 Minutes Per Station - 2 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon)*

- Station 1: Craft of the Day
- Station 2: Game of the Day
- Station 3: STEAM Project of the Day
- Station 4: Gratitude Stop

### 11a Schools of Fish Time

- Snack-tivity
- Circle time with story

Noon Lunch Break!

### 12:45p Swim to your stations!

2p Water Activity, finish crafts, expansion

### 2:45p Snack-tivity

### 3p Closing Full Group Activities

- Sing
- Remember the Stories
- Share what we learned
- Practice Gratitude

3:30p Pick Up

## Sample Half Day

### 9a Gather and Full Group Activities

Welcome and name tags  
Hear the Story  
Wonder About the Theme  
Announcements for the Day

### 9:20a Schools of Fish time

for circle time and story  
Snack-tivity  
Circle Time with Story

### 9:50a Swim to your stations!

*(20 Minutes Per Station)*

Station 1: Craft of the Day  
Station 2: Game of the Day  
Station 3: STEAM Project of the Day  
Station 4: Gratitude Stop

### 11:15a Water Activity

### Noon Closing Full Group Activities

Remember the Stories  
Share What We Learned  
Practice Gratitude

### 12:30p Pick Up



## Schools of Fish

### or how we're organizing into groups

Since we're spending our week thinking about water, all of our participants and staff will be organized into schools of fish! This is a great chance to talk about fish that live in your state or area, and a quick Google search will bring them up. Or, if you want to use materials that are readily available at the craft store, you can use the fish you find there.

#### **Remember to have a school for:**

Junior counsellors

Station leaders

Participants by grade level with their group leader - just be sure to be clear if you mean entering that grade in the fall or having just completed it

**Use these fish to create name tags** - just make sure to laminate them (or turn them into buttons) so they survive the water activities.

**Each school will also need their own pennant**, which will help them move about and find their leaders. Cut a poster board into a long triangle and write (or use bulletin board letters) the fish name for the group. Attach it to a dowel, umbrella or broom. On Day One, each school will decorate their pennant with drawings and colors that are meaningful to them. Depending on the size of your groups, you should make a front and back that can be taped or glued together so kids can be working on both sides at the same time without competing for space to work.

Each day, the school of fish will decide on a word or phrase of gratitude regarding the theme and write it on a ribbon to add to their pennant as another way to connect the theme to the activities of the day.

## Daily Passports

### or how we're sharing what we did each day when we go home

Most parents find the answer to: "What did you do today?" a bit lacking. To help our parents feel engaged with what our participants are doing, each one is given a passport that shares the theme of the day, what we read and talked about, and a place to get a stamp or sticker each day. It has room for them to write some thoughts during School of Fish time to help capture their experience. The passport serves as a great keepsake and conversation starter. While it is an optional item to use, we strongly recommend it! **You can download the passport in the Additional Resources section for the week.**

## Letters for Home and Safety Considerations

Included on our website in the Additional Resources for the week are a sample registration form and waiver and a welcome letter for after registration. We offer these to help get your thoughts going on communicating to families and gathering information you need, but please be in touch with your diocese regarding what information they recommend (or forms they recommend) that you use.

Just a reminder to ensure that all of your volunteers are following Safe Church practices as a part of your Vacation Bible Camp. Again, be in touch with your diocese to ensure the safety of all volunteers and participants. We've created a sample sign-in and sign-out form as well, so IDs can be checked easily.

Finally, don't forget to follow up with families after the event is over to invite them to the next family friendly event. We've included a sample letter on our website to get you started.

## Setting Up for the Week

Below you'll find the materials each station will need to have available throughout the week.

### School of Fish

1. Art Supplies
2. Wide Ribbon to add to the pennant each day (should be a different color each day)
3. First Aid Kit
4. Emergency Contact List
5. Extra snacks, paper towels
6. Tissues
7. Hand Sanitizer

### Quiet Area

1. Books
2. Soft pillows or comfy place to sit

### Gratitude Station

1. Art Supplies

### Movement Station

1. Soft floor for games

### Big Gathering Space

1. Gratitude Reflection space - either poster boards, big sheets of butcher paper, or similar with writing instruments. If doing paper chains, you'll need supplies for attaching links and hanging the chains.
2. Musical instruments for the kids to use when singing their songs (not necessary, but nice!). You can also have kids make instruments in the craft area. There're lots of easy to do ideas online for making instruments with kids.

### STEAM Station

1. Each day will be a different activity but you'll want to make sure to have table coverings or even small plastic trays where they can do their experiment without worrying about a mess.
2. This room should have access to hand washing areas nearby.

### Craft Station

1. Art Supplies
2. Coloring Sheets from the Resource Section
3. Floor covering, if needed

## Books You'll Need

Below are a list of books we suggest for each day of Waves of Gratitude. You might know of a local favorite that would also work, so feel free to change it out to best suit your program. We also recommend making a comfy reading area where someone who might need a lower sensory area can go and read books, breathe, and relax. In this spot you can include books from previous days or other books on water, gratitude, or faith.



Day One: The Snail and the Whale by Julia Donaldson

Day Two: Save the Ocean by Bethany Stahl

Day Three: Bubbles...Up! by Jacqueline Davies

Day Four: The Thank You Book by Mo Willems

Day Five: We are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom



## Setting Up: Big Gathering Space

Each day you'll begin and end together as a big group. The space that likely makes the most sense is your worship area. This will allow you to set up a check in/out table (see Resource Section for sample forms). You can also assign rows for schools of fish to sit together. You'll also want signs that direct people to the bathroom.

In the big gathering space, you'll want to create a way for participants and leaders to share gratitude at the closing. You can make **banners** using butcher paper or poster board. Make sure to have the theme for the day at the top and writing tools handy. Then kids can write the things they are grateful for from the day as they assemble for closing. The other option is to make **paper chains**, so each class can write on the strips of paper during the day (or as they get to the closing) and assemble them at the closing. Each class can have their own color and then all can be mixed together when joined.

You can also take time to ask people to share a word or phrase of gratitude that you add during the closing. Make sure to call out themes that you see and share something you are also grateful for. Hang the paper (or chains) so everyone can see it - either will make a great backdrop for photos at the end of the week and will help to connect camp with your congregation Sunday morning.

Note: we've created summaries for the big gathering in this booklet. If you need more help connecting things, or more information, please see the directors guide for helpful hints and daily overviews.

## Setting Up: Schools of Fish Areas

Once you've determined how many groups of kids (which are then your schools of fish) you'll have, you need to dedicate a space for them to gather, make a snack, hear a story, and talk. This should be a quiet place away from other schools of fish to enable listening and relaxing. This is especially important for kids with sensory issues so they can count on a quiet moment in the day. This can be as simple as a table with chairs in a classroom, a spot outside at a picnic table, or gathering in an office that is unused for the week. Each room needs enough places for all of the kids to sit and room to work because the snacks are also activities. Depending on your space, this can also be a place to keep their artwork until the end of the day and other personal items.

## Setting Up Stations

Each day, the schools of fish will rotate through stations. Depending on how many schools you have (or the constraints of your space), you might need to include school of fish time or snacks as stations instead of happening at the same time. You will need adequate space for the school of fish to engage with the activities presented at the station.

Station One: Crafts - chairs and tables will work best here...and a floor that can be cleaned up easily.

Station Two: STEAM - chairs and tables will work best here...and a floor that can be cleaned up easily.

Station Three: Movement - you will want a large open area for yoga and games. If you have a spot with a soft floor, that would be best, if not, borrow yoga mats from your congregation and cover the floor with them.

Station Four: Gratitude Practices - this station can double as quiet space if needed with pillows and soft things. Kids will have an activity to do, but it can be done on the floor. This is also a great place to keep other books and quiet things for kids to use.

# Day One: Grateful for Connections

*Waves of Gratitude: A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude*



## Welcome!

Today we're going to give thanks for all of the ways we are connected to others.

Today as we welcome participants to our Vacation Bible Camp, we want to notice and give thanks for all of the ways we are connected, including ways to connect with someone new. Today we will help kids connect with one another, leaders/ volunteers, and the space they're spending time in this week.

Here are some things to make sure you connect for kids in the big gathering:

1. Where are the bathrooms and what are the rules around going to the bathroom?
2. Where are their leaders and where can they go for help if they get separated from their school of fish?
3. What are schools of fish and which one is theirs?
4. Important safety rules to remember?
5. Where can you go if you need a quiet break?

What connections are you most grateful for today as you begin Vacation Bible School? Add all of these names to your big gratitude project so that you start the week off remembering those who helped get this camp going.

## Today you'll engage participants through:

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

Today we'll have an extra STEAM experiment with water. We'll use sharpened pencils to pierce a bag filled with water and see how the connection keeps the water inside.

2

### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Today you'll engage with two songs: *Deep and Wide* and *Take Me Out to the Ocean*. Kids will also play an under the sea action game and the options to expand the activities.

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

Our craft today is painting rocks - a way to connect with others in our neighborhood. At the STEAM station we'll look at acids and bases...opposites connected by water.



### Hear a Bible Story

Matthew 25

or

*Children of God Storybook* pg. 100



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

*The Snail and the Whale* by Julia Donaldson



### Practice Gratitude

Today we'll encourage kids to think about all of the people they connected with today and add them to your group gratitude project at the closing session.



## Day 1 Morning Big Gathering Time

Today we are going to talk about how we need other people and because we need other people? And because we need other people, we have opportunities to say thank you? From our friends to our parents, each person is someone who we can be grateful for, and their actions are often things we can give thanks for as well.

Let's start with a story you might know: read Children of God Storybook pg. 100

- Who are people who show you love? Who are people you know who are fun?
- I wonder if you've ever helped someone, how did you feel?
- What are some ways we can see God in everyone we meet?

One of the things I notice in what Jesus is telling us today is that when we connect with people with kindness, we get to also connect with God and the love of God through them. I hope you'll notice today all of the ways you can connect with others and God, because today our theme is connections. You're going to connect with your school of fish, and then come back here to share what you've learned and connect with all of us. You're going to connect with stations and their leaders, where you'll do crafts and experiments. There's so much to connect with this week, and we're excited to get to connect with all of you.



## Sample Schedule for the Big Gathering

### Morning

1. Introductions
2. Sing a Song
3. Hear the Bible Story and talk about it
4. Announcements

### Afternoon

1. Sing
2. Welcome back
3. Invite kids to share their favorite part of the day
4. Big Gratitude Activity
5. Reminders for tomorrow
6. Dance Party - This is a great way to let kids play while waiting on parents with fun music. Ideas for music are found on the additional resources page for the week.

## Day 1 Afternoon Big Gathering Time

**Welcome back** to our big gathering! Today we spent so much time connecting with one another, the leaders, and gratitude. I don't know about you, but I am feeling happy about all the friends that I've made today and grateful for the ways we can connect, from things we all like to doing activities together.

**Sharing:** Can one fish from each school come up to share with everyone your favorite part of the day or something cool that you learned?

**Big Gratitude Activity:** It sounds like everyone had a great day and did all sorts of cool things. To help us remember the things we did each day, we've got this giant poster where we can write things down. I've written down things that people shared just now, but raise your hand if you want to add something to our poster. (Write down ideas, or invite kids to do it themselves. If using paper chains, ask them to work on these in their schools and then we'll connect the chains from each school.)

**Reminders for Tomorrow:** Tomorrow we'll start back here in this big space together. Remember to bring your water bottle, lunch, and clothes you can get messy in. We're sending home a reminder with your parents, but if you forgot to bring a white T-shirt today, please bring it tomorrow as we're going to be using them in our water activity.

**Dance it out!** We've had a great day, and now it's time to introduce you to how we wrap up - it's time for a dance party! Let's dance it out!

## Supply List For Day 1

### Movement:

1. Fish Bowl (or similar)
2. Game timer (can be a sand timer or phone)
3. Fish action cards (best if printed on card stock)

### Crafts:

1. Smooth rocks - at least 2 per participant
2. Acrylic paint (and brushes/cups/etc.) or paint pens
3. Table covering and smocks (optional)

### Water Activity:

1. Ziplock Bags
2. Sharp Pencils

### STEAM:

1. Red Cabbage Powder
2. Citric Acid
3. Baking Soda
4. Clear cups
5. Pipettes

### Gratitude:

1. Cards (2 per person) from the resource section and envelopes
2. Extra blank thank you cards
3. Markers/crayons

## Supply List For Snacks

Today you'll set up a **mix your own under the sea trail mix station** for the schools of fish. Instead of doing snack in their individual rooms, it might be easier to do this in one space, where they can take their snacks with them. You'll need **bowls and scoops** (small measuring cups work well) for each item kids can choose from. You can have schools make **one big container for each class or individual ones** if there are food/allergy issues. The idea is to have enough for snack today, and back up snack if kids get hungry during the week.

**Ideas:** Goldfish crackers (different sizes or flavors), sunflower seeds, pretzels, Cheerios, dried fruit, etc. We do not recommend adding M&Ms or other sugary options as most kids will struggle to add those in moderation. You could allow the teacher to add one bag at the end to the big container.

**Backup Items:** It is always wise to have back up snacks available for hungry kids. We recommend keeping cheese sticks, yogurt, and applesauce on hand.

**End of the Day:** We recommend having ice pops to end the day with, as it helps cool kids down and hydrate them.



## Day 1: Gratitude Station

Today at camp, we are talking about and noticing all of the people we are connected to as a way of noticing their love and God's. Let's make sure the people we are thankful for know how much they mean to us. Today we're going to write thank you notes but these are a different kind of thank you card - not for a gift but for the person in your life.

1. I wonder if you've ever written a thank you note...can you tell me what it was for?
2. Have you ever said thank you to someone just for being who they are? I wonder what that experience was like?
3. Today, we are going to write cards to thank people we love for just being a part of our lives. We have these great cards that can help us use our words to say thank you for people we love. Each of you will get two cards, and we can help you fill them out if you need it.
4. You can draw a picture of you and the person on the blank side of the card using the markers.
5. If you finish early or want to write more cards, we have blank thank you cards available for you to use.

Thank you for writing cards with me today, it was really wonderful to learn about all of the connections that you are grateful for. Be sure to put your cards in your take home pile so you can mail or give them away.





## Day 1: Movement

In your movement station you're going to help the kids deepen the connections they are making with a fun game called: Under the Sea

Actions - it's basically ocean charades.

To prepare, you'll cut out the fish from the supplemental materials. On each fish write a verb that a child can act out and others can guess. Try: jumping, swimming, sleeping, running, etc. This is a great job for your junior counselors to help with. You'll want to print these on card stock so they last the day (and have extras just in case).

When the kids come in, invite them to take a seat on the floor. Show them the bowl (a fish bowl is great, but you can also use a basket or something you have on hand) and explain that each kid is going to get to act out actions that the rest of the group has to guess. The goal is to guess all of the actions in the bowl. Using the timer on your phone or a small sand timer, invite each kid up to draw a card and act out the verb. Depending on the length of your sand timer, each kid can likely do two actions in their turn.

Still have time left? Play a rousing game of Fish, Fish, Shark...it's just like Duck, Duck, Goose! Getting too crazy? Use the Under the Sea Yoga poses from the resources section to center.

## Day 1: Music

Today we've got two songs to start our time together. You can use one or both.

### Deep and Wide (hymn tune in Additional Materials: Camp Director)

Deep and wide, deep and wide

There's a fountain flowing deep and wide. (X2)

### Hand motions

deep = hold one hand up and other down

wide = hold hands out to the side

fountain = make a wave with arms

Repeat the text omit the word "deep", then "wide", then "fountain" and use only hand motions. Try speeding it up if the kids are doing well at omitting the words, as it often gets very silly and fun.

### Take Me Out to the Ocean

(To the tune of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game")

Take me out to the ocean

Take me out to the sea

Show me the foamy waves rolling there

As I breathe in the salty sea air!

Let me look, look, look at the ocean

See the sea and explore

For it's fun to dive from the top

to the ocean floor!

## Day 1: Snack-tivity

Note to school of fish leader: Today we are going to make Under the Sea Trail Mix. You're actually going to make enough to have on hand for your school of fish for the week as a back-up snack. The great thing about trail mix is that there is no end to what you can put in it, which means that it is very customizable.

Before adding any nuts, make sure you don't have any allergies; this should be on the list provided to you by the director at the start of camp. If you have some kids with food issues, be sure to have smaller containers on hand to make their own mix for the week.

While making the snack, help the school see connections...is there something everyone likes? Is there something everyone dislikes?





## Day 1 Craft: Gratitude Rocks

A really popular pandemic craft was to paint rocks to leave for people to find. Today, we're going to paint rocks that kids can leave outside around the building for people to find on Sunday. There are two options for this craft:

**Option 1: Acrylic Paint** - for this option, you'll want to remind kids that this paint does not come out of clothes or shoes so to be careful. Rocks will get painted and left to dry (they can put them out the next day).

**Option 2: Paint Pens** - less messy, but harder to cover the rock, these pens can be used to draw on the rocks and they dry pretty quickly. This is a more expensive option as you will need a lot of them.

Before you start, talk to the kids about what kind of connection they can make with someone through their rock. What kinds of words or drawings might they put on it to brighten someone's day? What kind of rock would they like to find (for example, colorful or dull)? Remind them that they are not to put their name on the rock, as it is just a way to share joy and kindness with someone. We recommend having enough rocks so each kid can paint two - one to leave and one to take with them for home.



## Day 1 STEAM: Acid and Bases

Today we're going to use science to show how we are connected to each other, even if we seem very different. Today we are using acids and bases, which are opposites, but connected through their neutral, which is water. Water connects everything, just like we are connected to each other through Baptism, gratitude, and being together this week. The really cool thing is that acids and bases can also change one another when they mix, or connect.

1. In one cup, mix 1 tsp. Citric Acid in 1/2 oz warm water. Mix until combined.
2. In another cup mix 1 tsp. Baking Soda in 1/2 oz warm water until combined.
3. In a beaker or cup, mix 1/4 tsp. Red cabbage powder with 2 oz warm water.
4. Tell the kids that today, you are going to separate colors. Ask them what two colors make purple. (Red and Blue). Tell them that you're going to pour the purple liquid into the cups and watch what happens. Pour half into each cup - one will turn blue (base/baking soda) and one will turn red (acid/citric acid).
5. You can put it back, by pouring both cups into the bigger beaker. Note: it will bubble because the solutions release carbon dioxide as a part of the reaction.
6. Why did this happen? The big solution (red cabbage) is an indicator that tells us when something is acidic or a basic. Acids and bases can be used to neutralize one another. When you add an acid to a base it lowers the pH level and vice versa. (In the resources section, you'll find a pH chart you can show the participants.)

Just like acids and bases, when we connect with other people we are sometimes changed by that connection. I wonder what are some ways that you've changed because of someone you know?



### Craft Expansion Ideas

Some kids will paint their rocks very fast. Be prepared with either extra rocks or thick paper they can paint on. You can also set up a coloring area in the craft room with the coloring sheets found in the resource section.



### Acid and Base Expansion & Reminders

After you show kids the experiment, let them try it on their own. It is important to remind them that the citric acid (which is found in bath bombs so an acid they may experience at home) is still an acid and they need to wash their hands after using it. (And do not rub your eyes!)

### School of Fish Expansion Ideas

Today there is a lot going on in our school of fish but if you find you have time to fill, we recommend spending more time talking about the book. You can wonder about why the teacher let the children leave, or why the snail wanted to travel. There's lots to discuss.

### Water Activity Expansion idea

If everyone gets tired of trying to poke pencils through their bag, there's another fun water trick kids can try! All you need are some small buckets (think sand castle size) and water. Fill the buckets halfway and tell the kids to spin while holding it. The centrifugal force on the water keeps it in the bucket until they stop.



## Day 1 School of Fish Time

Today in our first School of Fish, we are going to take time to get to know one another and see if there are things that connect us beyond just being in the same grades in school. Let's start by introducing ourselves, and in honor of being fish, we're going to introduce ourselves speaking in Whale like in the movie *Finding Nemo*. If you've not seen the movie, we're going to just talk with our mouth as big as we can and as slowly as we can, sort of imagining how whales speak. Share your: name, favorite color, favorite sea creature and the most important thing we should know about you. (Feel free to add or change.) We'll try to guess.

(After everyone has introduced themselves, you'll need to make your school of fish pennant.) Each school has their own poster board pennant with the name of our fish on it but we get to decorate it to represent our group. I wonder, what things did you hear from our group that you also like? What things connect us that we can draw or write to decorate our pennant? (Encourage them to work together on decorating the pennant.)

**Snack-tivity** - today we'll make under the sea trail mix! We're going to make our own unique mix of snacks our group likes. We get to eat some now and we'll have some for the whole week. Let's see what food items we can connect around!

**Story and Snack** - once the snack is made, it's time to read our story for the day. Let's talk about the connections we heard in the story. I wonder if the characters will be grateful for those connections. I wonder what the snail felt when the whale offered to carry it. Have you ever made a new friend, what was that like?



## Day 1 Water Activity

Today in our water activity, we are going to do magic with water. This is an activity you can also do at home to amaze your families!

We're going to start by filling your bags 3/4 of the way with water and then sealing them. What do you think will happen to the water if we try to push a pencil through the bag?

Next, take one of the very sharp pencils and carefully but firmly push the pencil through the bag one side at a time.

What happened? What would happen if we added more pencils? (Give the kids time to experiment with more pencils, different directions, or even two at once.)

Wonder why this works? Water can't escape the bag because ziplock bags are made of a polymer. Polymers have long chains of molecules that are flexible, so when you poke the pencil into the bag, the pencil slides between the chains of molecules and they create a seal to keep the water in. That seal is like a connection between the bag and pencil and that connection keeps us dry, so I know that I'm thankful for that connection!

# Day Two: Grateful for Creation



*Waves of Gratitude: A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude*

## Welcome!

Today we're going to give thanks for creation.

Today as we welcome participants to our Vacation Bible Camp, we want to notice and give thanks for creation. Kids will shine today because they are often grateful for nature and they find it easy to name things (pets, pandas, etc.). Today we will spend less time on orientation which means more time in stations. Be sure to consider adding expansion items, or having them ready, especially for the older kids.

Remember to use big group time to reinforce songs from previous days (so today you'll have four songs total) and let kids know they can always keep adding to previous days' gratitude projects if they think of something later.

Here are some things to make sure you connect for kids in the big gathering:

1. Creation includes everything and everyone, so there's a lot to give thanks for today!
2. What is one thing participants can do today to help care for creation?
3. Important safety rules to remember?
4. Where can you go if you need a quiet break?

What aspects of creation are you most grateful for today? Add all of these names to your big gratitude project so that you can model for kids that practicing gratitude is for everyone.

## Today you'll engage participants through:

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

Today we'll make our camp shirts using Sharpies and water. Kids will see how powerful liquids are that they can even change their markers.

2

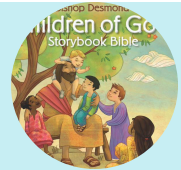
### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Today we'll sing *Orange Octopus* and *He's Got the Whole World In His Hands*. For movement, we'll keep the octopus theme going with octopus tag.

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

Today we'll make glow in the dark jellyfish as our craft and invisible ink in our STEAM station. Our gratitude station is getting crafty with a potted plant.



### Hear a Bible Story

Genesis 1

or

*Children of God Storybook Bible* pg. 8-10



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

*Save the Ocean* by Bethany Stahl



### Practice Gratitude

Today we'll encourage kids to think about their favorite parts of creation and give thanks for them. Add them to your group gratitude project at the closing session.



## Day 2 Morning Big Gathering Time

Today we are going to talk about creation or nature and all of the ways we can give thanks for the big beautiful world we live in. Sometimes I think we forget that we are a part of all of the amazing things around us and we forget to notice nature around us. How many of you looked out the window on your way here? Shout out some things you noticed from creation! (People, plants, trees, dogs, so forth) Yes, all of these things are a part of creation and it is wonderful to notice and give thanks for them. Let's hear our Bible story, you might know it. Read Children of God Storybook pg. 8-10

- I wonder if you have a favorite park or outside space?
- I wonder if you've ever planted anything? I wonder what it felt like to watch your plant grow?"
- I wonder if there are parts of creation that are harder for you to be thankful for? I wonder if we can still find something to be thankful for? (Ex: spiders eat mosquitos)

Today we are going to give thanks for creation, our place in it, the amazing parts of it, and learn how we can take care of it. You're going to try all sorts of cool things with your school of fish, and then come back here to share what you've learned. You're going to see some amazing things that parts of creation can do - from invisible ink to decorating shirts in a cool new way. I can't wait to hear about it when I see you later.



## Sample Schedule for the Big Gathering

### Morning

1. Introductions
2. Sing a Song
3. Hear the Bible Story and talk about it
4. Announcements

### Afternoon

1. Sing
2. Welcome back
3. Invite kids to share their favorite part of the day
4. Big Gratitude Activity
5. Reminders for tomorrow
6. Dance Party

## Day 2 Afternoon Big Gathering Time

**Welcome back** to our big gathering! Today we thought a lot about creation. I don't know about you but I am looking forward to this weekend when I can get out in nature and give thanks for all of the cool things in the world around us! Speaking of, let's hear what you learned.

**Sharing:** Can one fish from each school come up to share with everyone your favorite part of the day or something cool that you learned.

**Big Gratitude Activity:** It sounds like everyone had a great day and did all sorts of cool things. To help us remember all of the things we did each day, we've got this giant poster where we can write things down. I've written down things that people shared just now, but raise your hand if you want to add something to our poster. (Write down ideas, or invite kids to do it themselves. If using paper chains, ask them to work on these in their schools and then we'll connect the chains from each school.)

**Reminders for Tomorrow:** Tomorrow we'll start back here in this big space together. Remember to bring your water bottle, lunch, and clothes you can get messy in. Be sure to take home your shirts along with the washing instructions. We hope you'll wear your shirt later this week so we can see the finished product.

**Dance it out!** Thanks for such a great day, can't wait to see you all tomorrow, but in the meantime, let's dance it out!

## Supply List For Day 2

### Crafts:

1. Paper Bowls with a hole in the center for yarn
2. Neon Yarn (variety of colors) cut into 18" pieces
3. Neon Paint and Glow in the Dark Paint (If you can find it combined, that's perfect!)
4. Scissors and paint brushes
5. Table covering and smocks (optional)

### Water Activity:

1. Sharpies in a lot of colors and sizes
2. Spray bottles with rubbing alcohol
3. Cardboard to put inside each shirt
4. Tie Dye kit/supplies - optional

### STEAM:

1. Cotton swabs
2. Baking soda
3. Rubbing alcohol
4. Turmeric powder
5. Hair dryers
6. Newspapers

### Gratitude:

1. Acrylic Paint, brushes, water cups
2. Terracotta pots with a liner - can be a cup, just poke holes in it for drainage
3. Sunflower seeds

## Supply List For Snacks

Today you'll be making Jello Cups with Gummy Sharks and swimming fish wands.

### Jello Cups

- Clear cups for everyone
- Blue Raspberry Jello (enough to fill a cup 1/2 way for each participant and a few extras)
- Crushed graham crackers (sand)
- Honey
- Whipped cream (to make waves)
- Shark or fish candies

### Under the Sea Wands

- Pretzel Rods
- Goldfish crackers
- Blue Melting Chocolate in a tall deli container (you'll want a "runner" to melt the chocolate and take to each school of fish)

**Backup Items:** It is always wise to have backup snacks available for hungry kids. We recommend keeping cheese sticks, Goldfish, and applesauce on hand.

**End of the Day:** We recommend having ice pops to end the day, as it helps cool kids down and hydrate.



## Day 2: Gratitude Station

Today, as we notice all of the things we love about creation, let's make sure we contribute to creation and give thanks for our favorite parts of it. Today we're going to paint a pot with our favorite things from creation - plants, animals, places, weather, really anything you love about the world around you can go on your pot. Please be careful with the paint as it will not come out of clothing or shoes. You can use words, drawings, or just be creative. Then, we're going to plant some seeds that can grow in our pots. Because your pots will be wet, you'll need to leave them here to dry and they'll go home with you tomorrow.

With participants discuss:

1. Invite each participant to share one thing that they put on the outside of their pot with the group.
2. What things do plants need to grow? Do you think plants are as thankful for these things as you are for the things that help you grow?
3. We're planting sunflowers, did you know that sunflowers will turn to face the sun throughout the day? This is called heliotropism - it is like they are so thankful for sunlight that they move with it all day!





## Day 2: Movement

Today we are going to play tag but in a new way - octopus tag!

Octopus tag is one of my favorite games, but can get really silly, really fast, so play this outside if you can.

Begin by picking two kids to be "it," this is the octopus. When the octopus tags someone, they become a tentacle on the octopus and can help tag others. Fish will run from one side to the other - they can only go forward, the octopus can move all around. Play continues until everyone is tagged. This game goes pretty fast once you've got a few tagged, so play it again with new people in the middle.

Still have time left? A great way to help kids relax and recenter is to play sea star. Sea stars float around the ocean peacefully so we'll all lay on the floor and stretch our arms and legs out and peacefully pretend to use them to "swim" on the ground. (It is sort of like making snow angels but without the snow.) If folks are really silly, you can add breathing to the movement - breathe out and move arms and legs out, hold, breathe in and move arms and legs in. Count to 4 for each breath and hold.

## Day 2: Music

Today we've got two songs to start our time together. You can use one or both.

### He's Got the Whole World In His Hands

1. He's got the whole world, in his hands. (X3)

He's got the whole world in his hands.

2. He's got the wind and the rain, in his hands. (X3)

He's got the whole world in his hands.

3. He's got everybody here, in his hands. (X3)

He's got the whole world in his hands.

4. He's got plants and animals, in his hands (x3)

He's got the whole world in his hands.

5. He's got the whole world, in his hands. (X3)

He's got the whole world in his hands.

### Oh I Wish I was an Orange Octopus

(To the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")

Oh, I wish I was an orange octopus. (X2)

Oh I'd wave my lovely legs,

And I'd splash in all the waves,

Oh, I wish I was an orange octopus.

Sing it again with purple, yellow, turquoise, any two syllable color will work!

## Day 2: Snack-tivity

### Jello Cups

1. Make the jello cups before so they are ready to decorate.
2. Set up a small, shallow plate with honey (can mix with a little water so it's less thick) and a small shallow plate with graham cracker crumbs (or sprinkles). Kids can dip their cup into the honey then the sprinkles to make the rim sandy.
3. Then let kids decorate the top of their jello with candies and cream.



Image and Idea: [kidsactivityblog.com](http://kidsactivityblog.com)

### Under the Sea Wands

1. Each kid will dip their pretzel rod into the blue melting chocolate - put it in a skinny, tall glass or jar.
2. They can decorate their wand with Goldfish - but move quickly before the chocolate hardens!





## Day 2 Craft: Glowing Jellyfish

Did you know that some jellyfish create their own light through a process called bioluminescence? This means that they glow as they float around the ocean. Today, we're going to make our own jellyfish that glow at night and are very bright during the day.

### Set Up

1. Poke holes in the bowls so the yarn can come through the middle.
2. Mix neon paint and glow in the dark paint in bowls
3. Everyone needs a bowl, and 6 pieces of yarn. You can pick any colors you like.
4. First we are going to put our names and school of fish inside the bowl. Then we'll paint our bowls. Pick one color and paint the entire outside of the bowl.
5. Set your bowl aside and let it dry.
6. Line up the yarn, fold it in half and make a knot at the top, leaving a loop to hang your jellyfish. Then separate the strands of yarn to make them extra wiggly. It is easier to start separating them at the top by the knot.
7. Once the bowl is dry, pull the loop through the bowl, leaving the knot inside. Add eyes and a mouth.

I wonder how you can shine bright in creation? (Kindness, Recycling) Everyone can shine, even if they are not bioluminescent!



## Day 2 STEAM: Invisible Ink!

Today I want to talk with you about how creation sometimes is sneaky. Can anyone tell me what camouflage is in animals? Camouflage is an adaptation that lets animals blend into their surroundings. It's why a Polar Bear is white and a coyote is brown. Camouflage also lets things disappear, so today we're going to make invisible ink with a message about creation as a way to give thanks for the sneaky parts of nature.

1. We'll start by protecting our workspace with newspapers. This is a great way to reuse something you might have at home.
2. First, we are going to make our ink. We'll mix 1/2 cup of water and 1 TBS Baking soda.
3. Now you're going to take your cotton swab and paper to write your message. You're going to write: "Thankful for creation!" In the middle and you can decorate around the edges.
4. Now we need to quick dry our paper - so use a hair dryer (with help) to dry your paper.
5. Now we need to make the reagent, or the thing that makes the invisible ink appear. We'll mix 1 cup of rubbing alcohol with 2 tsp Turmeric powder.
6. Using the foam paint brushes, we're going to paint over our paper and see if our message is revealed!

Can you think of other things that are hidden in nature? (Ex. Leaf bugs, worms after the rain, rainbows) This is one of the things I am most grateful for in nature is getting to see things show up in new ways.



### Craft Expansion

Older kids will likely finish early. If they come to the Craft Station first, you can ask them to pull apart more yarn for little kids. Or, let them make bracelets from extra yarn and beads.



### Invisible Ink Expansion

If you need to fill more time, you can always do this experiment again but with different agents. The one that most folks know is lemon juice. Kids can make a drawing with lemon juice and then take it home to reveal. This is best to do with a big image and lots of lemon. The paper needs to be heated to reveal the message, so hair dryer or oven.

### School of Fish Expansion Ideas

Our story for today is called Save the Ocean and it comes with some fantastic extras in the back. You can use these to help fill time as needed.

### Water Activity Reminders

There are two options: traditional tie dye or the activity listed here, it really is up to you and your abilities!

Set up a spray station with plenty of paper to protect the floor/table/ground. Once they are done spraying, put the shirts in the sun to dry with a piece of paper saying who they belong to.

Be sure to let parents know to wash the shirt separately the first time. (Or the directions from tie dye.)

## Day 2 School of Fish Time

Today in our second School of Fish, we are going to take time to talk about creation and our role in it - especially when it comes to taking care of the oceans.

Begin by asking everyone to share their name and their favorite thing about an area of water close to where you are gathering (this might be a lake, river, stream or ocean). Share your own story of that body of water and why you like it so much.

Read the story. While you might not be near the ocean, we can connect the story to the body of water near us. Here are some things you might want to discuss.

1. What are some ways we can take care of the water near us?
2. What are ways we can encourage our community to be grateful for that area?
3. Can you tell me about another water area that you are grateful for?

After everyone has shared, you'll show them the ribbon for the day. Ask each participant to share one thing they are grateful for in creation (shade, park, pandas, etc.) and add it to the ribbon with a sharpie. Then tie the ribbon to your pennant.

**Snack-tivity** - today we're making two snacks - Shark Cups and Under the Sea Wands. For the Shark Cups, you each are going to get a cup of raspberry jello. First you'll dip the cup in this bowl that has honey in it to make the rim sticky. Then you can dip in graham cracker crumbs to make sand. Next, you can put a scoop of whipped cream for the waves, and no more than 5 jelly fish/sharks. Next we'll make wands. Each of you gets a pretzel wand, we'll dip it into this warm, blue chocolate, pull it out and you can attach goldfish to it, but move quickly before it dries!

## Day 2 Water Activity

Today in our water activity, we are going to tie die our own camp shirts and see how liquids can change things. And while this is the water activity station, today we are not using water but rubbing alcohol, so please be careful with your tools, they will stain.

First we are going to put a piece of cardboard inside of our shirt - this is to keep the design from spreading from the front to back. If you want to just use colors (and not words or drawings) you can skip this step and let the colors bleed through to both sides like tie dye.

Now we're going to color our shirts. You can draw, write, scribble, but don't make anything too solid. The more color the better, but leave white space where the colors can run. Don't forget the sleeves! Abstract is better than words. Think rainbows and scribbles.

Once you're happy with your design, we're going to spray the whole thing with rubbing alcohol. Do not spray anyone! If you want the design to be on both sides, put the cardboard under your shirt, and if you want to do each side individually, keep the cardboard in the middle. The spray will make the markers bleed and color the white spots on your shirts.

# Day Three: Grateful for Baptism



*Waves of Gratitude: A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude*

## Welcome!

Today we're going to give thanks for Baptism...and bubbles!

Today as we welcome participants back to camp, we want to notice and give thanks for baptism. This is not about getting baptized but about the promises made at our baptism that connect us to our communities and to God. Because this is a big topic, we're going to focus on "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself." Because some of this might be hard for kids, today will also focus on bubbles. You might be wondering how are bubbles and baptism related? The big way, which we'll talk about in big group, is how bubbles can reflect and refract light. We can see rainbows through them. We are like bubbles, we have to be gentle with ourselves and one another, and through our lives others can see the light of God (which is expressed through our Baptismal Covenant when it asks if we will "seek and serve Christ in all persons"). We've added a great way to get your clergy involved as an expansion on today's theme, see the Camp Directors Guide for more information.

Here are some things to make sure you connect for kids in the big gathering:

1. Baptism is about promising to love God and to love creation and people.
2. We want people to know how great God is through how we act - we want to let God's light shine through us, just like how light shines through a bubble.
3. Important safety rules to remember?
4. Where can you go if you need a quiet break?

Consider your Baptismal Covenant, re-read it before you start the day. What parts are most important to you? How does God shine through you?

**Today you'll engage participants through:**

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

As you could probably guess, our water activity will be making bubble solution and playing with bubbles. Make a bubble big enough to stand in.

2

### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Today we'll sing: *This Little Light of Mine* and *The Animals in the Ocean*. For movement, we're going to have a bubble wand relay race!

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

Today we'll even use bubbles to paint during craft time. In STEAM we're going to build bubble wands and see what shape works best.



### Hear a Bible Story

Matthew 3 or Luke 3  
or  
*Children of God Storybook* pg. 68



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

*Bubbles...Up!* by  
Jacqueline Davies



### Practice Gratitude

Today we'll encourage kids to think about baptism and give thanks for the way love shines through them to the world. Add them to your group gratitude project at the closing session.



## Day 3 Morning Big Gathering Time

Today we are going to talk about baptism. Baptism is when we make promises about our faith. If you were very young when you were baptized, your parents might have made those promises for you. For me, these promises are best summed up by saying that we promise to let the light of God's love shine through us. Love is such a bright light in our world, it can look like kindness, empathy, friendship, and care. Let's hear our Bible story, which will let us know what it was like when Jesus was baptized. Read Children of God Storybook.

- I wonder what Jesus' baptism looked like to those watching?
- Have you ever asked your parents about your baptism? What did they tell you about it?
- I wonder what the light of love in others might look like?
- I wonder how we can give thanks for the light of love we see in ourselves and others?

Today we are going to do a lot of things with bubbles. Bubbles are a great way to remember how the light of love works. Even though bubbles are clear, you can see rainbows in them. Bubbles act like a prism and break apart the white light into the colors that are inside it. Does anyone know what the colors of the rainbow are? You're going to try all sorts of cool things with your school of fish, and then come back here to share what you've learned. You're going to see all kinds of bubbles and even use them for art today. I can't wait to hear how your day goes when I see you later.



## Sample Schedule for the Big Gathering

### Morning

1. Introductions
2. Sing a Song
3. Hear the Bible Story and talk about it
4. Announcements

### Afternoon

1. Sing
2. Welcome back
3. Invite kids to share their favorite part of the day
4. Big Gratitude Activity
5. Reminders for tomorrow
6. Dance Party (we recommend *Roy G Biv* by They Might be Giants!)

## Day 3 Afternoon Big Gathering Time

**Welcome back** to our big gathering! Today we thought a lot about bubbles, baptism, and how like bubbles we can let the light of love shine through us. I saw a lot of bubbles, tiny, normal and huge today, and I am feeling the light of love coming from all of you as you continue to show kindness and practice gratitude here at camp.

**Sharing:** Can one fish from each school come up to share with everyone your favorite part of the day or something cool that you learned?

**Big Gratitude Activity:** It sounds like everyone had a great day and did all sorts of cool things. To help us remember all of the things we did each day, we've got this giant poster where we can write things down. I've written down things that people shared just now, but raise your hand if you want to add something to our poster. (Write down ideas, or invite kids to do it themselves. If using paper chains, ask them to work on these in their schools and then we'll connect the chains from each school.)

**Reminders for Tomorrow:** Tomorrow we'll start back here in this big space together. Remember to bring your water bottle, lunch, and clothes you can get messy in. Be sure to take home your submarine, bubble wands, and other crafts.

**Dance it out!** Thanks for such a great day, can't wait to see you all tomorrow, but in the meantime, let's dance it out!

## Supply List: Day 3

Today many stations need bubble solution. See the resources page for different recipes to try.

### Crafts:

1. Paper towels
2. Dish soap (non-toxic)
3. Washable (non-toxic) paint
4. Cups and straws
5. Heavy paper

### Water Activity:

1. Bubble solution
2. Kiddie pool
3. Hula hoop
4. Wands of various sizes

### Movement:

1. Variety of Bubble Solutions and wands

### STEAM:

1. Straws
2. Pipe cleaners
3. Wire
4. Variety of items with holes in them that kids can try to blow (or wave) bubbles with (ex. Whiffle ball, cookie cutters, clean fly swatters, berry baskets, top of a spice shaker)
5. Bubble solution

### Gratitude:

1. UTO Blue Boxes
2. Bendy Straws
3. Foam Stickers
4. Print out from the craft resource page
5. Hot glue or tape
6. Post-its (try to find ocean shapes, or you can just cut squares of paper)

## Supply List For Snacks

Today you'll be making **Under the Sea Graham Crackers**

- Graham Crackers
- Blue Icing
- Goldfish crackers
- fish gummies

We also suggest having some veggies, cheese or fruit to go along with this sugary treat.

**Backup Items:** It is always wise to have back-up snacks available for hungry kids. We recommend keeping cheese sticks, Goldfish, and applesauce on hand.

**End of the Day:** We recommend having ice pops to end the day, as it helps cool kids down and hydrate.



## Day 3: Gratitude Station

Today we are going to make a gratitude journal using a UTO Blue Box and Post-its.

▸ Build and color your Blue Box, then cut out the nose and tail fins.

Assemble the tail: cut the two hearts as marked, then fold the hearts in half, slide the two pieces of the hearts together and secure with tape if desired, fold up the bottoms of the hearts, you can then glue or tape these to the end of the UTO Box.

- To assemble the nose: cut out as marked, roll into a cone, and secure with glue or tape. You can use tape so secure the nose to the box, but hot glue works really well for this part.
- Add windows to the side of the sub using the foam pieces – let the kids get creative!
- Add one big circle, then a smaller circle to the top. Take about a third of a paper straw, bend it at the top and glue to the circle to create the scope.
- Ask the children to share who they would bring on their submarine with them and what gifts does that person bring to the sub. Invite them to write the names on the windows, or draw their pictures before adding it to the box.
- Give each child Post-its for their box and invite them to share what they are most grateful for today and write or draw it on the Post-it before putting it in the box. Explain that this is their gratitude sub, and they can keep adding all the things they are grateful for to the box throughout the year, or go back and see what's inside on days they are feeling sad. This sub helps us care for ourselves and others through gratitude, just like our Baptismal promise to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves. When we practice gratitude, we notice the good things God is doing in us and others.







## Day 3: Movement

Today we are going to have a bubble wand relay race!

Divide the group into two, and put them at opposite sides of a small area. At the end of each area set up a small table (or use the ground) with bubble solutions (be sure to label the solutions so you can find out what worked best) and wands.

Today for movement we are going to have a bubble wand relay race! In front of you are a variety of bubble solutions and wands. We'll line up and the first person will pick a wand for catching while the second person will start blowing bubbles from one kind of solution. Once the first person has caught a bubble, they will walk it to the other side and then sit down. If your bubble pops, you have to go back for a new one, so keep an eye out in case you need to blow more bubbles for your teammate. The game ends when one team makes it to the other side first.

**Discuss:** Which bubble solution worked best? Which wand worked best?

## Day 3: Music

You can use one or both of the songs listed below.

### This Little Light of Mine

1. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. (x3)  
let it shine, let it shine let it shine!
2. Hide it under a bushel, oh no! I'm going to let it shine. (x3)  
let it shine, let it shine let it shine!

### Animals in the Ocean

(To the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus")

The sharks in the ocean go chomp, chomp, chomp  
chomp, chomp, chomp (x2)

The sharks in the ocean go chomp, chomp, chomp  
all day long.

The turtles in the ocean go snap, snap, snap  
snap, snap, snap (x2)

The turtles in the ocean go snap, snap, snap  
all day long.

The crabs in the ocean go click, click, click  
click, click, click (x2)

The crabs in the ocean go click, click, click  
all day long.

The jellyfish in the ocean go wobble, wobble, wobble  
wobble, wobble, wobble (x2)

The jellyfish in the ocean go wobble, wobble, wobble  
all day long.

## Day 3: Snack-tivity

Today we've got a fun and easy snack-tivity: under the sea graham crackers.

Each participant gets a full sheet of graham crackers. The group has blue icing to share as well as goldfish, fish gummies, and sprinkles to create their own "painting" of an underwater scene. Encourage kids to share why they chose something or not for their painting. We suggest having extra graham crackers on hand so kids can make two or just have extra crackers as a part of their snack. The more things you find to decorate with, the more fun this snack-tivity will be.

Because this snack has a lot of sugar, we recommend pairing it with some protein. Cheese, hard boiled eggs, or even some pepperoni slices (kids love the sandwich sized ones from the deli) will help keep kids feeling energized and full.





## Day 3 Craft: Bubble Painting

**Before you begin:** Cover the table with plastic, either a trash bag or tablecloth, to help with clean up. Mix the paint - we found that 2 TBL paint, 1 TBL soap and a splash of water works best. To test if you have the right amount, blow bubbles and if they show color, you've got it! If they don't, add more paint. No bubbles? Add more soap. Too thick? Add more water. You'll want to have several colors and 2 cups per color.

Today we are going to make art with bubbles. On the table in front of you are cups with a mixture of paint, soap, and water. Give each kid a set of straws. You are going to choose one color at a time, and we have enough cups for everyone to pick one. You'll get to use all of the colors but just one at a time. Make sure to use a new straw for each color so the colors don't get mixed.

Put the cup on your paper towels. Take one of your straws and blow bubbles in the cup - do not drink! Let the bubbles reach the paper towel. Carefully, move the cup to the side. Take your paper and press down on the bubbles to make an imprint. We'll do it again until your whole paper is colored and you're happy. You can also gently place the paper on top of the bubbles to transfer to the paper instead of on the table.



## Day 3 STEAM: Build and Test Bubble Wands

Today we are going to experiment to figure out what makes the best bubbles. We're going to make three different kinds of solution and build our own wands. Remember that whenever we do an experiment, we always want to have a control to compare to, and since most of us buy bubble solution at the store, we'll use that as the control and figure out if we can make better solution ourselves.

We'll start by building our wands. In front of you are pipe cleaners, straws, wire, and scissors. (If you need help cutting wire, please ask.) You can bend them into any shape you want, just remember to have a stick at the end so you don't touch where the solution goes and break the surface tension.

Now that we've built our wands, we'll make solutions.

1. Control - store bought solution
2. Soap and water only
3. Soap, water, and glycerin
4. Soap, water, glycerin, and sugar

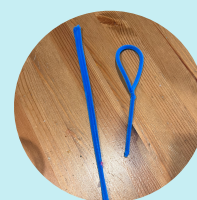
Now that we have our solutions, it is time to test them out!

After everyone has tried everything, ask which one worked the best and why they think that is. You can also share that adding glycerin keeps the bubbles from drying out, which is why they last longer than just soap. The sugar further strengthens the solution through the bonds each chemical makes.



### Craft Expansion

This makes really cool paper, you can always hold onto it and wait until it dries and turn it into a card for their parents on the last day. The thicker the paper the better. Alternative for younger kids - have them paint a sheet of bubble wrap and then flip it onto a piece of paper to make a print. (See Additional Materials.)



### Bubble Reminders

It is not likely you'll have a lot of extra time today, but if you do, you can ask which wands worked best, or what materials seemed the most effective. The purpose of the wand is to hold the surface tension. So what happens if we try other objects?

### School of Fish Expansion Ideas

Today we've talked a lot about letting light shine through. If you have prisms or kaleidoscopes lying around bring them for schools of fish to share and use.

### Water Activity Reminders

Today the kids will be using bubbles in everything they do, but they really won't have time to just play with them. That's why today's water activity is a super big bubble maker, but also have lots of other wands and solutions so kids can play and try new things they might not have gotten enough time with earlier. Remind kids to look for rainbows in the bubbles and see how many they can find where the light shines through.

## Day 3 School of Fish Time

Today in our third School of Fish, we are going to take time to talk about bubbles and letting the light of Christ shine through us.

Our book today is called: *Bubbles...UP!* This is about a girl who loves the water and the bubbles it creates.

- I wonder if you noticed times when someone showed love or kindness to someone else in the story.
- I wonder if you've ever noticed the bubbles when you swim, and I wonder where they come from.

Our story today is a reminder of all of the ways that the light of God's love shines through us and others. I know that I am always grateful when I see people enjoying being together, having fun, and playing safely and kindly.

We're going to end our time by thinking of something we can write on our ribbon. Baptism is when someone becomes a Christian. When someone is baptized, they make promises, or have promises made on their behalf, about being a sign of God's love in the world. So when we think about Baptism, I wonder if any of you have ideas of what to be thankful for about being a part of a church community. (This one is really hard, even for adults. You might have to help them. Some ideas: it means we aren't alone because we have a church community to watch out for us, it means seeing the light of God's love through others like stained glass or a rainbow, it means a place to question and pray. You can simply be thankful for belonging.)

## Day 3 Water Activity

You've probably already guessed it, today we are playing with bubbles. There are a ton of cool bubble wands (big rope kinds, fly swatters, giant wands) on the market and if you can find some that people will let you borrow (or will buy for you) it would be great to have all of those on hand today. Not to worry if you can't find some, we're going to build a giant bubble wand.

You'll create a giant bubble station by filling a kiddie pool with bubble solution. Put a cinder block (or similar) in the middle that someone could stand on without being in the solution. You'll then add a hula hoop that fits the pool. While you can try to do this without rope, it is better with it. Tie rope at three points on the hula hoop and then using a pulley (or simply over the branch of tree - you might need to put something over the branch to protect it and let the rope move smoothly) you'll slowly lift the hoop out of the bubble solution to create a big bubble. Have kids experiment with pulling it fast or slow and see how high they can get the bubble to climb. Once they've mastered this, they can try standing inside the bubble on the block while their friends pull the bubble up and over them. Ask if they can see any rainbows!

The goal of the water activity is to play, experiment, and blow lots of bubbles.

# Day Four: Grateful Every Day



*Waves of Gratitude: A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude*

## Welcome!

Today we'll give thanks for each day...including the not so great ones.

Today as we welcome participants to our Vacation Bible School, we're taking time to help them see that each day brings so many things to be thankful for. For most kids, their parents are likely reminding them to say please and thank you, so what we're focusing on is noticing the thing that would elicit the thank you. Most kids are used to people doing things for them, so noticing that action is kind of tough. Connecting it with other things they already feel gratitude for, toys, food, summer vacation, can help them deepen their appreciation for all of the good things happening around them and the good people interacting with them.

Here are some things to make sure you connect for kids in the big gathering:

1. Each day is a gift filled with good things to notice - it's easy on a birthday with presents but what about your average Thursday?
2. Have you ever thought about all of the things people help you with each day? What would happen if they didn't?
3. Important safety rules to remember?
4. Where can you go if you need a quiet break?

Consider your own day and all of the people you interact with, how would your day be different without them? Make sure to give thanks for all of them through the big group gratitude project.

## Today you'll engage participants through:

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

Today we're going to think about how ordinary things, like saying thank you or cornstarch, can really change things...by making oobleck!

2

### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Today we'll sing *Peace Like a River* and review songs from the week. For movement, we're going to have a race with water and sponges.

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

At the Craft Station, we'll be up-cycling to give thanks for things that might be art or trash, and in STEAM we'll make some summer-proof snow.



### Hear a Bible Story

Jonah 1-4

or

*Children of God Storybook* pg. 58



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

*Thank You Book* by Mo Willems



### Practice Gratitude

Today we'll encourage kids to think about how each day is filled with things and people that they can notice and give thanks for, from their parents to their favorite snacks and toys.



## Day 4 Morning Big Gathering Time

All week we've talked about different ways to be thankful and today we're going to focus on being grateful each day. Some days it is easy to be thankful, like when you're on a trip or if you get to do your favorite things. Other days it is harder to be thankful, like when you have a big test at school that you're feeling nervous about or if you have to get a shot at the doctor's office. This happens to everyone, but instead of running away from a hard day, learning to see the good things mixed in will help us get through. Let's hear our Bible story, which will tell us about someone who was not feeling very grateful. Read Children of God Storybook.

- I wonder what would have happened had Jonah listened to God and tried to practice gratitude for the hard task?
- I wonder if you've ever had a hard day, what helped you get through it?
- I wonder how we can use gratitude to notice that even on a tough day there are good things happening?

Today we are going to see how gratitude changes things and that when we practice gratitude when things are going well, it helps our brain to remember it when the day isn't as great. Gratitude changes things, just like you're going to change trash into treasure and make water into a solid. I can't wait to hear how your day goes when I see you later.



## Sample Schedule for the Big Gathering

### Morning

1. Introductions
2. Sing a Song
3. Hear the Bible Story and talk about it
4. Announcements

### Afternoon

1. Sing
2. Welcome back
3. Invite kids to share their favorite part of the day
4. Big Gratitude Activity
5. Reminders for tomorrow
6. Dance Party

## Day 4 Afternoon Big Gathering Time

**Welcome back** to our big gathering! Today we thought a lot about how we have so much to be thankful for each day, from our friends, parents, creation, and even our own abilities. We've also thought about how gratitude changes things. Saying thank you makes people feel good about themselves and their actions, just like cornstarch makes water into oobleck, and egg containers become super cool crafts.

**Sharing:** Can one fish from each school come up to share with everyone your favorite part of the day or something cool that you learned?

**Big Gratitude Activity:** It sounds like everyone had a great day and did all sorts of cool things. To help us remember all of the things we did each day, we've got this giant poster where we can write things down. I've written down things that people shared just now, but raise your hand if you want to add something to our poster. (Write down ideas, or invite kids to do it themselves. If using paper chains, ask them to work on these in their schools and then we'll connect the chains from each school.)

**Reminders for Tomorrow:** Remember to bring your water bottle, lunch, and clothes you can get messy in. One big reminder, tomorrow is our big water day, so please be sure to wear your swimsuit under your clothes so you can get wet and bring a towel.

**Dance it out!** Thanks for such a great day, can't wait to see you all tomorrow, but in the meantime, let's dance it out!

## Supply List: Day 4

### Crafts:

1. Egg Cartons
2. Pipe Cleaners
3. Mermaid, Lobster, and Whale pieces from the resource page
4. Eyes
5. Markers, glitter glue, etc. to decorate with

### Water Activity:

1. Cornstarch
2. Food Coloring

### Movement:

1. Buckets
2. Sponges

### STEAM:

1. Baking Soda
2. Shaving Cream
3. Jars with lids or bowls with spoons
4. Ziplocks for taking "snow" home
5. Water Cycle page from the resources tab
6. Coloring supplies

### Gratitude:

1. Pick Up Sticks (you can purchase giant yard sized sets to use or small table top sets - we recommend 1 set per 3-4 kids)
2. Handout with the color coded questions from the resource page - one copy per group



## Supply List For Snacks

Today you'll be making **Clam Shell Cookies**

- Vanilla Wafers (or similar round cookie)
- Icing (for the least mess, have it in pre-filled piping bags)
- Candy eyes

We also suggest having some veggies, cheese or fruit to go along with this sugary treat.

**Back-up Items:** It is always wise to have back-up snacks available for hungry kids. We recommend keeping cheese sticks, Goldfish, and applesauce on hand.

**End of the Day:** We recommend having ice pops to end the day, as it helps cool kids down and hydrate.



## Day 4: Gratitude Station

Today we are going to play a gratitude game using pick up sticks!

- Take turns trying to pick out one stick from the pile without moving the others.
  - Answer the question that goes with the color you picked.
  - Note: If your set has more than four colors, choose your own question for the other color(s).
1. Red = Who is a person you are grateful for and why?
  2. Yellow = What is a thing you're grateful for and why?
  3. Green = What was an experience you're grateful for and why?
  4. Blue = What's something that God (or your parents) has done in your life that you're grateful for?

Encourage everyone to switch groups and play at least two rounds.

After everyone has played, bring the group together and discuss how it went. Some questions to consider:

- Which category was the hardest to think of things to be grateful for? Why was that the hardest?
- What other categories would you suggest people use?
- Would you suggest different categories for adults?





## Day 4: Movement

Today we are going to have a water filled relay race!

Divide the group into two or three - and put them at opposite sides of a small area. You'll want to try and have the same number of people on each team. At the end of each area set up a small table (or use the ground) with an empty bucket. In front of each team is a bucket filled with water and sponges. For younger kids, you might want to have a line on the inside so that it is a bit easier.

Today for movement we are going to have a water relay race! In front of you is a big bucket of water and one sponge. We'll line up and the first person will pick up a sponge and fill the sponge with water. You'll need to figure out the best technique for getting the water to the other side without it dripping out on your way. Then you'll run to the other side and squeeze as much water as you can in the bucket. Run the sponge back to the next person in line. The game ends when one team makes their bucket overflow with water.

**Discuss:** What was the best technique you found for getting water to the other bucket?

## Day 4: Music

Today we're introducing only one new song, so feel free to add favorites from previous days.

### Peace Like a River

I've got peace like a river  
I've got peace like a river  
I've got peace like a river in my soul

I've got love like an ocean  
I've got love like an ocean  
I've got love like an ocean in my soul

I've got joy like a fountain  
I've got joy like a fountain  
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul

I've got peace, love and joy like a river  
I've got peace, love and joy like a river  
I've got peace, love and joy like a river in my soul

### Hand Motions:

River = wave motion with arms

Ocean = big sweeping outward motion with arms

Fountain = arms are like water bubbling up from the top of a fountain.

You can repeat this and omit the word (ex. River) and only use the hand motions.

## Day 4: Snack-tivity

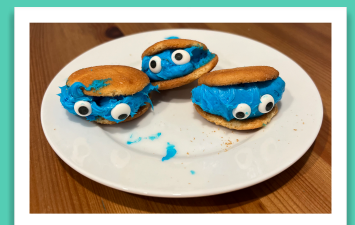
**Today we've got a fun and easy snack-tivity: baby clam shell cookies.**

Start with a big bowl of vanilla wafers. Let kids know how many total baby clams they can make. Each baby clam takes 2 cookies.

Using the icing, either spread or squirt icing on one vanilla wafer. Take the second and put it on top like a sandwich, but squish the back down so the front has an opening.

On the side that is open, add two candy eyes for your baby clam.

Because this snack has a lot of sugar, we recommend pairing it with some protein. Cheese, hard boiled eggs, or even some pepperoni slices (kids love the sandwich sized ones from the deli) will help keep kids feeling energized and full.





## Day 4 Craft: Mermaids, Lobsters, and Whales

### Before you begin:

Cut the egg carton into individual cups and poke a hole in the middle of each one big enough for a pipe cleaner to go through it. For younger kids, it might be good to have some pre-cut and pre-painted pieces available.

Today we are going to make an up-cycled craft using egg cartons.

### For the Mermaid:

1. Paint the egg carton pieces whatever colors you like
2. Cut out the mermaid body and tail, color and decorate both sides of the mermaid body and tail - do not use paint or it will take too long to dry.
3. Punch a hole in the bottom of the body and the top of the tail
4. Hook the pipe cleaner to the bottom of the body and then lace on the egg carton pieces, finish by securing the tail to the end of the pipe cleaner

### For the Lobster:

1. Leave three egg carton pieces together and paint red.
2. Cut out the pieces from the resources page and attach to the lobster along with pipe cleaners for the antennae and eyes.
3. Assemble the lobster

### For the Whale: (easiest):

1. Paint one egg holder blue
2. Cut out the pieces for the whale from the resource page
3. Add small blue pipe cleaners (best to have pre-cut) as a water spout (if wanted) and eyes



## Day 4 STEAM: DIY Snow

Since it is summer, it is easy to forget how fun snow is! This week we've been learning all about water, from water in the oceans to water in bubbles. Today we're going to learn about the water cycle and make our own snow.

The water cycle is how water moves from the ground to the sky and back again. Can anyone tell me what the steps of the water cycle are? I've got this great coloring sheet to help remind you. (Found on the additional resources page.) Water evaporates, and then condenses and falls back to the earth as rain or snow. And while it might rain in summer, I thought it would be more fun to make snow today.

First you're going to combine some baking soda and shaving cream in your jar. (Fill halfway with shaving cream and then a big scoop of baking soda.) Then you'll shake the jar until you see the sides become clear again. If they don't, you might need a bit more baking soda. Once it is all combined, open it up and you'll find your summer-proof snow ball!

Have you ever wondered why snow sticks together in a ball? Snow is a bunch of ice crystals so when you put pressure on the crystals, some will melt and connect with others as they quickly refreeze in the cold.



### Craft Expansion

Kids get really creative with this craft, so we recommend having art supplies at the ready in case they want to really decorate their creature. If you have time, ask each kid to write something they are grateful for on each egg holder.



### Snow Expansion

If you want to expand this activity, you can purchase a polymer online that makes snow crystals. Just search for "snow powder" and look for ones that you just add water. This crystal allows you to add as much water as you want, so kids can experiment with it and make fluffy snow, or snow that will "pack." It is a lot of fun and a small bag makes a lot.

### School of Fish Expansion

Today's activity is a great way to help kids who have struggled to share something they are grateful for in the big group be able to share. You can use Post-it notes to write down one name and one thing about the person that they are grateful for that they can add to the banner.

### Water Activity Reminders

Today we're making oobleck. This is one that you can send home in small containers with lids. If you do that, be sure to use the container for mixing and playing to save on clean up. Send it home with a note about putting it in the trash and not the drain. This is one that many kids will ask to make again, so sending home the recipe is a great idea.

## Day 4 School of Fish Time

Today is the fourth time we'll gather in our school of fish and by now, you probably know your group really well. As you prepare, think through each kid in your group and think of something to thank them for, you'll be using it later in the discussion.

Today we are going to read an Elephant and Piggie book - how many of you have read these books before? What can you tell me about the characters? Are they friends? Is one more adventurous and one more cautious? Which do you like better? This book is about the importance of saying thank you. Let's read it. (Note: this is a really easy book to read, so depending on the ages in your group, you can even ask kids to read one page and pass it on if they feel comfortable reading aloud.)

### Questions for discussion:

1. Why do you think Elephant (Gerald) was worried that if Piggie started thanking people they might forget someone?
2. Have you ever not been thanked? How did that feel?
3. Have you been thanked for something you didn't expect? How did that feel?

Now we are going to be like Elephant and Piggie and say thank you. I am going to start. When I call your name, everyone is going to share one thing they are grateful for about you. It can be something you did, like sharing, or something about who you are, like thank you for being kind.

Remember to add your ribbon to your pennant!

## Day 4 Water Activity

Note: This experiment comes to us from *Stay Curious and Keep Exploring* by Emily Calandrelli, host of *Emily's Wonder Lab*. There's a great oobleck episode you can watch with the kids if you have time, or you can watch it to see how to do this in a kiddie pool for even more fun.

Today we're thinking about how gratitude or saying thank you can change someone's day. Today in our water activity, we're going to do an experiment to see how a normal thing...in this case cornstarch...can change water, just like how saying thank you changes someone's day. We're going to make oobleck, which is a non-Newtonian fluid. This means that it doesn't follow normal fluid rules. Sometimes it acts like a liquid, and other times it acts like a solid. (Like ketchup!) When you add force or pressure, oobleck will turn into a solid, but without that, it will act like a liquid.

Mix with your hands 1 cup cornstarch with 1/2 to 3/4 cup water and 2 drops of food coloring in a bowl. It may look a little watery but try to squeeze the liquid into a ball - if it feels solid, you've done it! (If it doesn't, add more cornstarch and if it feels dry, add more water.)

Note: do not put oobleck down the drain! It can clog!



# Day Five: Grateful for Water



*Waves of Gratitude: A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude*

## Welcome!

Today we're going to give thanks for WATER!!

Today as we welcome participants to our last day of camp, we're taking time to help them give thanks for water as a way of wrapping up the entire week. One of the best ways we can help show our gratitude for creation, God, and community is through caring for water. Water is a resource that every living thing needs and unfortunately, is easily polluted and scarce in some areas. When we give thanks for water, we think about how much we need it and how we can use it more responsibly. We also can use it for fun, which is a way of saying thank you to God for the gift of water.

Here are some things to make sure you connect for kids in the big gathering:

1. What if practicing gratitude became as normal to us as using water, how would that change things?
2. What are ways we can take care of water as a way of showing our gratitude for it?
3. Important safety rules to remember?
4. Where can you go if you need a quiet break?

Consider your own day and all of the ways you use water without even noticing. Make sure to give thanks for all of them through the big group gratitude project.

## Today you'll engage participants through:

1

### WATER ACTIVITY

Today our water activity is a celebration of a great week at camp! We're grateful for the time together and for water, so let's have a water party!

2

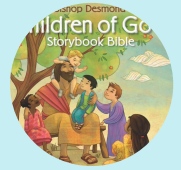
### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Today we'll sing *Rise and Shine* and review songs from the week. For movement, we're going to have a spoon race with water balloons.

3

### CRAFTS & STEAM

At the Craft Station, we'll be creating a photo booth and frames so kids can take home a memory of camp. In STEAM, we'll make water squirters.



### Hear a Bible Story

Luke 8 or Matthew 8  
or  
*Children of God Storybook Bible* pg. 98



### Connect the Bible to Everyday Life

*We are Water Protectors* by Carole Windstorm



### Practice Gratitude

Today we'll encourage kids to think about how much they use water and give thanks for the fun ways - water balloons - and even the boring ways - brushing teeth.



## Day 5 Morning Big Gathering Time

Today we're finishing our week by giving thanks for water. If we remember back to earlier in the week, we heard the story of creation and how God separated the waters and called them good. Today, we're going to hear a story of what happens when water feels scary. In the Bible, water has a couple of scary moments, one is a story I bet a lot of you know - Noah and the Ark - when the world was flooded. The one I want to talk to you about today is when Jesus calmed a storm. (Read the story.)

- I wonder if you've ever felt scared and found a way to stay calm and safe.
- I wonder if you can tell me about a time when you helped someone when they were afraid.

I think one of the important things that happened in our story today is that the disciples noticed the good thing that Jesus did for him and gave thanks, which is something we've been working on all week. Sometimes when something scary is happening, it is good to look for the helpers and give thanks for them. The amazing thing about water is that we need it to live and it can totally change things. (Give an example kids may have seen, like the Grand Canyon.) That's one way that water and gratitude are the same, they can totally change things for someone else. When we say thank you, it makes the other person happy, just like when we are hot and get to play in the water, water makes us happy and cool, it changed us. Or when we are really thirsty and get to drink. Today we're going to celebrate water and gratitude by giving thanks for water, one another, and our camp this week.



## Sample Schedule for the Big Gathering

### Morning

1. Introductions
2. Sing a Song
3. Hear the Bible Story and talk about it
4. Announcements

### Afternoon

1. Sing
2. Welcome back
3. Invite kids to share their favorite part of the day
4. Big Gratitude Activity
5. Reminders (take all your things!)
6. Dance Party

## Day 5 Afternoon Big Gathering Time

**Welcome back** to our final big gathering! This week we've thought a lot about gratitude and water, and today we're giving thanks for water! Water changes things, from Jesus calming the storm in our story this morning, to all of the cool science experiments we've done this week. Water can also take us from being hot and cranky to cool and fun...with the help of a water balloon or two. Today as you head out from camp, I hope that gratitude will be just as important to you as water. Gratitude also changes things. When we say thank you, it can make that person's day, it can help us make a new friend, and it helps us shine the light of God through us to the world.

**Sharing:** Can one fish from each school come up to share with everyone your favorite part of the day or something cool that you learned?

**Big Gratitude Activity:** To help us remember all of the things we did this week, we're going to finish off our giant posters. I've written down things that people shared just now, but raise your hand if you want to add something to our poster. (Write down ideas, or invite kids to do it themselves. If using paper chains, ask them to work on these in their schools and then we'll connect the chains from each school.) I want to share my gratitude for all of the amazing fish that filled our camp this week. (This is a chance to recognize volunteers and model practicing gratitude for the whole group.) We recommend ending the big gratitude activity with a UTO Ingathering to help connect gratitude with generosity. See the Camp Director Guide for more information.

**Dance it out!** Thanks for such a great week! And as always, let's dance it out.



## Supply List: Day 5

### Crafts:

1. Materials to make photo frames. Options: store bought kits from a craft store or online retailer, or cut card stock into rectangles with a hole for the photo
2. Stickers and other ways to decorate the frame
3. Blue sheet or bulletin board paper for backdrop
4. Poster board - enough for each school of fish to have two pieces (maybe more depending on the size, about 1 sheet per 3 kids)
5. Art supplies to color with
6. Materials to hang or attach things to the backdrop

### Water Activity:

1. Water balloons
2. Sprinklers
3. Outside water toys

### Movement:

1. Wooden spoons
2. Water balloons

### STEAM:

1. Paper cups
2. Clay or model magic
3. Straws
4. Random tubes, cups, and other materials they can use to try to spray water

*Note: if making big squirters, see the additional resources page for the materials list*

### Gratitude:

1. Gratitude "fortune tellers"
2. Gratitude journal page  
*both from the additional resources page*

## Supply List For Snacks

Today we recommend having sea-themed cupcakes or an ice cream bar. We recommend changing the schedule to have snack during the big water activity so it feels more celebratory. Given this, you may want to use this opportunity to clean out any snacks you have left from the week during the usual snack time. You can even give one snack-tivity to each school of fish to do again.

Consider inviting families to a pizza (or potluck) and water party so parents can spend time getting to know other families too.



## Day 5: Gratitude Station

**Today we are going to give thanks for water and make one last craft to help us practice gratitude.**

Today we are going to give thanks for water by thinking about and sharing with one another all of the ways we use water. We're going to use this sheet to help us organize our thoughts to share with the group. At the top, I want you to draw a picture of your favorite way to use water. Maybe it is playing in the snow, maybe you love going to the beach, or maybe you really love swimming. Whatever it is, I want you to take some time to draw it here. After you've drawn your picture, I want you to think about the three questions on the page. We use water all of the time, and sometimes we don't even think about it. I wonder if there are ways we use water that aren't as fun? I wonder if there's still something to be grateful for? (Ex. Hand washing, teeth brushing, taking medicine) Next, I wonder if you can think about your favorite fruit. Fruit takes a lot of water to grow. Let's give thanks for water and our favorite fruit. (If someone is struggling, you can always remind them that chocolate is made from cacao beans!) Finally, we use water for all sorts of things every day. I wonder how many ways you use water every day that you're thankful for? (Ex. Drinking, getting clean, flushing the toilet)

Before you go, I want to give you one last craft (you can do it together if you have time) to take with you. You may have seen these, they are called a fortune teller and you write things on the inside and then have someone do them. We are going to write some gratitude questions in the middle and then fold it up to use! (Ex. Name one food you are thankful for...)



## Day 5: Movement

This game is like the egg races of old, except water balloons are likely to burst upon impact with the ground. This makes it wet, silly and often a reminder to slow down.

Today we are going to have a water filled relay race once again! Let's see what you learned from yesterday's sponge race and if that can help you win the water balloon spoon race!

You are going to work together as a team to get as many water balloons from your side to the other. If you drop a balloon and it breaks, you have to run back and get another one. You can go as many times as you have balloons available.

For younger kids, they can hold the spoon with both hands, for older kids, you can make them use only one hand, or walk backwards, or ask them for ideas on how to make it more fun and challenging.

What's the prize for winning? Getting to have a water balloon fight!

## Day 5: Music

Today we're introducing only one new song because it is long.

Rise and shine and give God your glory, glory! (x2)  
Rise and shine and (*clap once*) give God your glory, glory!  
Children of the Lord.

The Lord said to Noah, "There's gonna be a floody, floody."  
(x2)

"Get those children (*clap once*) out of the muddy, muddy!"  
Children of the Lord.

So Noah, he built him, he built him an arky, arky. (x2)  
Made it out of (*clap once*) hickory barky, barky.  
Children of the Lord.

The animals, they came on, they came on by twosies, twosies.  
(x2)

Elephants and (*clap once*) kangaroosies, roosies.  
Children of the Lord.

It rained, and poured, for forty daysies, daysies. (x2)  
Nearly drove those (*clap once*) animals crazy, crazy.  
Children of the Lord.

The sun came out and dried up the landy, landy. (x2)  
Everything was (*clap once*) fine and dandy, dandy.  
Children of the Lord.

Now that is the end, the end of my story, story. (x2)  
Everything is (*clap once*) hunky dory, dory.  
Children of the Lord.

## Day 5: Snack-tivity

Today we're giving thanks for water by not wasting food.

Wasting food is something most kids struggle with. They might not like something or they might not be hungry. Today we're going to recycle some of our snacks from previous days. You might get a whole snack-tivity again, or parts of it. You might get pretzel rods and cheese. Who knows! It will be a surprise! Ask the kids why using up the snacks from the week is a good idea. How could it be a form of gratitude?

Note: today there will be cake or ice cream during the water activity, to make it a party to close out camp. Your church might want to have a potluck party or hamburgers and hot dogs. The goal is to celebrate all that the kids did and give thanks for the gift that they are. Food is a common way we celebrate and come together, so maybe even make some additional snacks for the party so the group can contribute.



## Day 5 Craft: Creating a Photo Booth and Frame

### Before you begin:

Today we are celebrating water and the end of a great week of camp. To begin, hang a backdrop (big blue sheet, or blue bulletin board paper) to represent the ocean. This needs to be some place that is easily accessible during the celebration at the end of the day. This way kids can take photos with their friends or families can take photos together. You can even hold onto the jellyfish from earlier and hang them from the ceiling to add to the photo booth (just be prepared to send them home).

### When each school of fish come to your station, discuss:

This week we've talked all about gratitude or being thankful and celebrating water. I wonder if you can tell me about your school of fish and the things you've learned this week. (Give them time to share.) Today we are going to help everyone remember all of the amazing things we did and learned this week at camp by creating a photo booth. We'll break into smaller groups to help put your school of fish stamp on this booth. One group is going to make a fish to represent your school. It can have the name of your school of fish on it and it should have one thing you are really grateful you got to do this week. One group is going to make something that lives in the ocean. We've got water already represented here, but what else can you think of to add? On this, you're going to write one activity or craft that you did this week that you're thankful for getting to do. Once we've added your unique touch to the photo booth, you get to make your own frame to put a picture in to remember and give thanks for this week together.



## Day 5 STEAM: Water Squirters

Sometimes it is easy to forget how important water is. This week, we've talked about the water cycle and how we need water to survive. Today, we also want to talk about how it can be fun. For our STEAM activity, we've got a bunch of items here for you to use to create a water squirter. We're going to build a simple one together, and then we'll see if you can improve upon it.

To start, we'll help you punch a hole in the bottom of your paper cup. Then, you're going to put a bendy straw into the hole. Use the clay to seal around the straw on the outside. When you pour water into the cup, gravity makes it squirt out the straw.

You can make yours like mine, or you can design your own using the materials I have for you here.

Here's the thing I want to share with you about STEAM and gratitude. STEAM is often about being curious and trying new things or experimenting. Gratitude is a lot like STEAM, it's about being curious and trying to see how things are connected and noticing that and saying thank you. And, just like STEAM, saying thank you can change the day for someone and be a lot of fun, just like water squirters!



### Craft Expansion

Depending on the size of your group, you might want to make this big enough to take a picture of the whole group to send home. If you do that, we recommend also having sea stars for each kid to add their personal best thing from camp. The goal is an under the sea gratitude photo booth.



### Squirter Expansion

If you want to expand this activity, we've included a way to build water squirters using PVC pipe in the additional materials section. This might be good to add for the older kids to do and take home, or to make for everyone to use at the water party.

### School of Fish Expansion

Today we say goodbye to our school of fish by celebrating all of the ways we've made new friends, connected with old ones, and did a lot of cool activities. Make sure that everyone has contributed a word to a ribbon; if not, add extras. Remind them that one way we say thank you for this week is to clean up our area. Help them to pack up their belongings so that everything makes its way home.

### Water Activity Reminders

Today is a good time to remind kids to hydrate. There is a lot of play happening and one way we give thanks for water is remembering that we are mostly water and need to drink to stay healthy in the sun.

## Day 5 School of Fish Time

Today is the last time we'll gather in our school of fish. Today, you'll help our campers transition from camp to what they will remember when they go out to the world. We'll also remind them how gratitude and water are very important, and how we can be water protectors and gratitude givers.

Today we are going to read a book called: *We are Water Protectors*. What do you think this book might be about based on the title and the cover? This book is written by an Indigenous person, and she is sharing some of her culture with us. In the Ojibwa tradition, women are the protectors of water. (This story talks about the pipeline protest in North Dakota that many Episcopalians participated in and is near an Episcopal Church but it is also about the need to mitigate water pollution. We suggest connecting it to pollution because many kids have likely seen storm pipes and things by water.) Let's read the story.

### Questions for discussion:

- Have you ever seen something in water that wasn't supposed to be there?
- Does anyone know what pollution is? (Things that shouldn't be in water, or trash are common answers) Pollution is anything that makes water less clean and safe. Unfortunately, lots of things end up in water. This is why it is important that we make sure to not leave trash outside, or speak up if we see something happening near water that isn't right.
- I wonder what it means to you to be a water protector.

This week, we've talked a lot about water and gratitude and our faith. One of the things that each of us can do is to take care of the water and all of creation as a way of saying thank you to God for the gift that is water and creation. Just like the little girl in the book, we are called to be water protectors. We can do this by turning off the water while we brush our teeth or picking up trash along a river or beach. We're also called to be gratitude givers. This week we have said thank you for so many things. I hope you'll keep doing it, because gratitude really does let the light of love shine through our world. Finish by taking time to thank each person by name for something they did this week that you noticed.

## Day 5 Water Activity

Perhaps the best way to finish a week focused on water is to really play in the water. There are so many ways to do this - you can have a pool party at a local pool, visit a splash pad to play, or simply have water balloons, sprinklers, and other water toys to play with. Whatever you do, this is a chance for the kids to play, have fun, and celebrate water.

Be mindful of your campers, and you might want to have a quieter area for smaller kids or sensory sensitive ones. There are great resources on the internet to make a giant water blob sensory mat or much smaller scale water mats. Water tables are also great for smaller kids and easy to borrow from parents for the day (or week!).

We also suggest moving the water activity to the very end and adding an ice cream station or cupcakes. Really turn this into a celebration before pick up or before a closing potluck.