



**WELCOME TO THE  
GRATITUDE STATION!**

THE UNITED THANK OFFERING PRESENTS:

# GRATITUDE ROCKS!

A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude, Geology, & Fun

## WELCOME!

Thanks for signing up to run the Gratitude Station for camp! This station is the lynchpin of the day. Here we will help students begin to connect what they learning into things they can use in their daily life. Each day there will be an activity and a discussion for this station. The small group leader can help with both as they will be getting to know their campers a lot throughout the week. This station will also take items from other stations to turn them into gratitude gifts for the campers to take home on Friday. Two big things to note is that on Day 4, we're inviting you to plan an outreach project. You will need to plan this project to fit the needs of your community, but don't worry, we've got some ideas to get you started. We've also got a craft project that either requires purchasing a lot of molds or just making a plan so a group works on it each day. It's on the next page.

Here's a quick look at your week ahead:

### Day One: The Rock Cycle

**Activity:** All About Me: Gratitude Edition (give thanks for the gift that you are)

### Day Two: Metamorphic Rocks & Pressure

**Activity:** Peace Path & Rock Frame Craft (give thanks for your rock formation group)

### Day Three: Igneous Rocks & Volcanos

**Activity:** Prayer Writing & Wrap Bath Bombs (give thanks for your church & someone special)

### Day Four: Sedimentary Rocks & Weathering

**Activity:** Giveback Activity (give thanks for your community)

### Day Five: Minerals & Gemstones

**Activity:** Special Closing Gratitude Session - we'll prepare during our station today (give thanks for those that love you)



## WHY GRATITUDE?

Gratitude is a spiritual practice of our faith. It is a practice that we assume folks just "know how to do" or that we've got it summed up by teaching kids to say "please" and "thank you" but gratitude is about something more. Gratitude is when we notice and give thanks for the gift that someone is, for the good things that we experience simply because they are a gift. Gratitude is a reminder that all good things come from God and our response is to not only say thank you, but to give back to the world to build up gratitude wherever we can. This week, campers will give thanks and give back to the world around them as they learn a bit more about gratitude in your station.

## SETTING UP YOUR GRATITUDE STATION:

### CREATE THE MOOD

The gratitude station is going to be a place where campers can create ways to say thank you to those around them. We recommend having a table ready with supplies to make thank you notes, or drawings to share their gratitude. You'll also be making "gifts" so gift bags, tissue paper, wrapping paper, and ribbon are good to have on hand.

### TOOLS YOU'LL NEED

You will need in your space:

1. scissors
2. art supplies
3. tape
4. paper
5. tables and chairs
6. space for items to dry overnight
7. storage for each group's items for the last day

### SENSORY NOTES

The gratitude station should be a sensory rest spot for all of our campers. It might be worth inviting campers into the room and taking a moment to ground themselves before beginning. If you are a Godly Play church, you can also use the door keeper process to check to see if campers are ready to enter.

# WEEKLONG PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS!

## OVERVIEW

This week you are going to help campers use up some of the rocks they got from the dig on the first day. You'll want to do some planning to keep costs low on this one. We're going to take the rocks from the dig on the first day and turn them into a resin ornament they can give to their adult on the last day. We recommend starting this on the first day. If you have six small groups, then do two groups a day so you finish before the last day. This means you'll need enough molds for each camper in those groups. For example, if there are 8 campers in a group, you'll need 16 molds.

This project really depends on mixing the resin well. It typically comes in two bottles that have to be stirred together. We recommend having an adult do the stirring because if you don't get it completely mixed the resin will not set up correctly.

## SUPPLIES

Note: the amount of supplies you need will be based on what size mold you choose. The pictures show coaster-sized ornaments, but keychain-sized also works well.

- resin
- gloves
- silicone molds
- craft sticks
- rocks from day one
- cardstock or pieces of cereal boxes (or similar)
- ribbon
- glue
- small bag to "wrap" the ornament in

Note: you will need one mold per camper that is doing the activity for the day as these need to dry overnight.

## DIRECTIONS

*Note: for younger campers, simply have them place their rocks in the mold and then later have helpers use resin to create the ornaments.*

1. Give each camper their bag of rocks back. Invite them to pick out rocks they like, or ones they think go together. They can even plan it out a bit in the mold to see what fits (if they do this, have a piece of cardstock on hand so they can flip their rocks over onto the cardstock).
2. Place the mold on cardstock or pieces of cereal boxes - this is to catch any resin that might overflow. Have the camper write their name on the box so they know which one belongs to which person tomorrow.
3. Put on gloves!
4. Fill the mold a bit less than halfway with resin.
5. Gently place the rocks in the resin. You can use a craft stick to move the rocks around or press them in/flip them over.
6. If the mold is not full once all of the rocks are in, top off with more resin.
7. You can add a ribbon to the resin - this can be a bit messy, so you can also wait until it is dry and glue it onto the edge of the ornament.
8. Leave the molds to dry (some place where folks won't be tempted to touch them) overnight.
9. Remove the ornaments from the molds the next day - add a ribbon so it can be hung on a tree if you didn't yesterday.
10. Hold onto this for the final day!



Far left: finished ornaments  
Top Left: laying rocks out to see what fits  
Bottom Left: wet resin in the mold  
Above: pouring in some resin for placing rocks - do not overfill the mold!

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## DAY ONE: THANKFUL FOR ME

Today we're learning that things are always growing and changing, and that includes us! Sometimes people struggle with changing - we want to help our campers to understand that one of the cool things about being alive in the world is that we get to keep growing, learning, and changing. That means that our favorite color might be blue today, but tomorrow we might love green more. Just like rocks that move through the rock cycle, we are changed by all sorts of things, from learning something new, to experiencing a new place, to meeting a new friend with different life experiences from ours. We are always growing and changing so it is good to learn to take a moment and give thanks for who we are and what we are able to do.



## DAY ONE: THE ROCK CYCLE

## SUPPLIES & DIRECTIONS

You will need:

- one handout per camper
- pens, markers, etc.
- camera/phone
- dice

### Directions:

Today we are going to spend some time reflecting on who we are and sharing it with our group. Each student gets a handout to fill in about all of the things they are grateful for about themselves. Then we'll give each camper a chance to share a bit about themselves with their group as a way to get to know one another.

1. First play a get to know you game...we love "stand up, sit down" you read out a statement (ex. I love ice cream) and anyone who agrees, stands. Come up with 10-15 options to ask
2. Have students fill out their sheets - and share their sheets as they feel comfortable - no one has to share and no one has to share everything
3. Take a picture of the small group with their leader - you'll want to print one per camper and have it ready for a craft tomorrow.

## EXPANSION

For older campers who might rush through this activity, you can invite them to write a thank you note to their future self. What things do they hope they will have done, what kinds of things do they think they will learn or do in the next year that they will be grateful to have experienced. Are there things they want to do differently at school next year that they want to remind their future self about? Give students an envelope to seal their letter in and ask them to address it to themselves. Then ask them to write a month and year on the back when they want you to send the letter to them. Collect the letters and make sure to send them when it is time! (This might be something the parish administrator would be willing to do for you after camp.)

## SCAFFOLD

For younger campers, use the additional sheet we've provided to play "roll and tell" instead of the sheet provided. Invite kids to draw a picture of themselves and the things they are grateful for and then as they describe it to an adult or older camper, write the things they share on the bottom.

## GIVING THANKS FOR OURSELVES

Welcome to our gratitude station! This station is a bit different than your other stations because in this room, we're going to spend some time reflecting and sharing things we are grateful for. Today, we're going to start by making sure we all know what gratitude is. Can anyone tell me what gratitude is? (Let students share their answers, respond to each person.) For me, gratitude is a way to pay attention to the world around me. It lets me see that each and everyone one of us can be a gift to the people we see in the world around us. When we show kindness, or care for others, we are being a gift to them. That means that they can also be a gift to us. This is why when someone does something nice for us, we often say thank you to acknowledge the nice thing they did for us. Here's the interesting thing about gratitude. Did you know that we can also notice and say thank you for all of the good things God is doing in our lives? We can say thank you to God by noticing and caring for ourselves, others and the world around us. Today, we are focusing on giving thanks for ourselves. Have you ever said thank you to yourself before? Let's try it! Think of one really cool thing you can do or thing you know and tell yourself thank you for it. For example, do you like to run? Say thank you body for being strong and fast. Let's try it all together so we can feel silly together. One, two, three...(let everyone say at the same time what they are grateful for). Okay, that feels a little bit silly but it is really important to notice all of the cool things you are doing. You all just finished school this year, what is one thing you know now that you didn't know last summer? (Let kids share.) Our brains are so amazing, they let us learn new things, ask good questions and grow. Today as you've been learning about the rock cycle you've learned how rocks change due to pressure and heat, or weathering. People are like rocks, we grow and change because of the people or the environment around us. Have you ever had a friend teach you a fun game? Have you ever tried a new food and realized it was delicious or disgusting? Have you ever gotten into a fight with a friend or family member? All of these things help us to grow and change.

Today in our gratitude station, we're going to do an activity to help you give thanks for who you are and all of the amazing things you can do.

### Activities

Use the information on the previous page to walk campers through their activities for the day.

### Bonus

If you have time, you can invite each kid to write on a card what their superpower is...are they kind, can they run fast, do they love to draw, do they know a ton of facts about dinosaurs? What makes them special? Then you can put the cards on the wall as a decorations for the week.



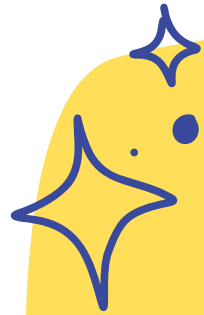
#### PRO TIP:

When this lesson was being piloted, the gratitude leader shared this story, which we thought was a great way of explaining the difference between thankfulness and gratitude to kids.

They shared:

I love ice cream. If my mom buys me an ice cream, I am thankful to have it and eat it. A few days later, I might think about eating that ice cream and spending time with my mom. When that happens, I'm grateful. Gratitude is the gift we carry with us long after we eat the ice cream.



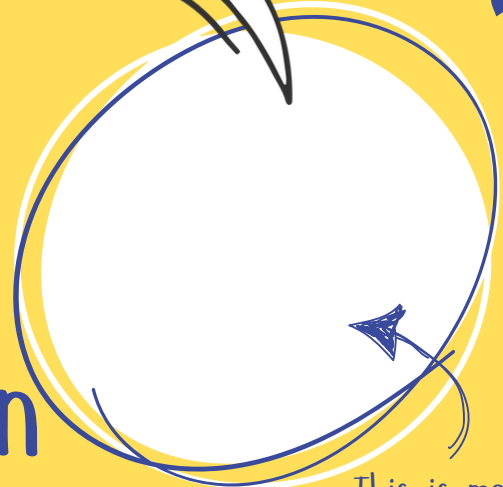


# All About Me

## Gratitude Edition

My name is \_\_\_\_\_  
and I'm \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

I love:



This is me!

Ways I can help others:

- \*
- \*
- \*
- \*

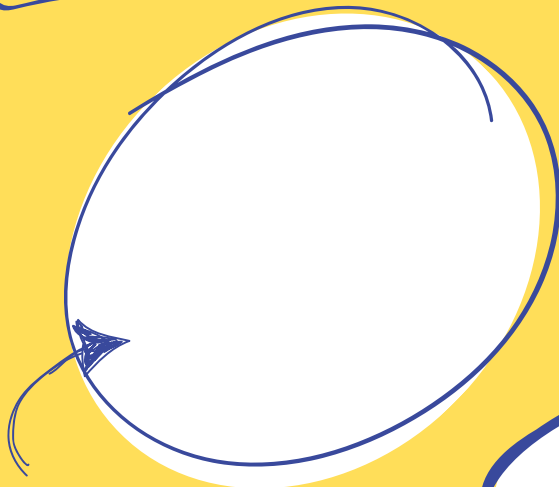
My best trait is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Things I like to do for fun:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Here's a drawing of things  
I'm thankful for today.



- \* One new thing I learned this year:
- \* One cool thing I can do is:
- \* I love being an expert on:

One way I show kindness:

\_\_\_\_\_

UTO

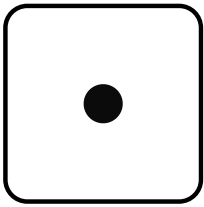


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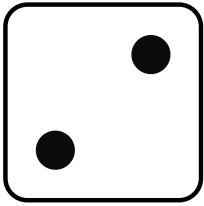
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## ROLL AND TELL: A GAME TO CELEBRATE ALL THAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT YOU!



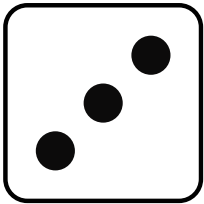
**What is your favorite color?**

What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?



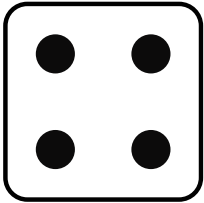
**What is your favorite animal?**

What is your favorite thing about summer?



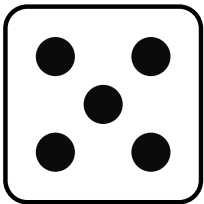
**What is your favorite food?**

What is your favorite thing to do with your family?



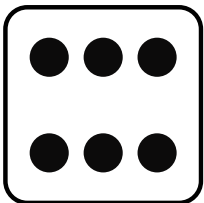
**What is your favorite show?**

If you could have one super power, what would it be?



**What is your favorite sport?**

What is one way you can help others?



**What is your favorite book?**

What are you really good at doing?

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## DAY TWO: THANKFUL FOR CONFLICT

You might find this heading odd, but conflict is how we grow and change. Most people avoid conflict, because dealing with ourselves and others can be challenging. We often hear folks say that they choose to avoid conflict or that they aren't good at it, this is because many of us were never given the tools to deal with conflict well. Today we're going to teach a way of dealing with conflict that campers may have experienced in their schools call the Peace Path. The Peace Path is an evidence-based, visual conflict-resolution tool for elementary students that helps them work through a process that helps resolve disagreements. This is a great tool and you can find stencils or decals online to put the peace path on the ground at your church (because even adults sometimes need help and a reminder of how to deal with disagreements in a way that is productive).



## DAY TWO: METAMORPHIC ROCK

## SUPPLIES

You will need:

- a peace path for the floor
- name tag holders (if the kids are already wearing name tags, this can just get added to the back of it (see example))
- peace path cards for each camper
- craft frame for each camper (we recommend something substantial because we're adding rocks to it)
- mod podge
- sponge brush
- small rocks from day one

## EXPANSION

For older campers, you can talk to them about being peace makers, how can they help intervene in conflict (safely) and encourage/teach others to use the peace path to diffuse conflict.

## SCAFFOLD

For younger campers these are big ideas, but they know a lot about conflict, so it might be worth talking about this from the arena of sharing. How do we deal with someone when sharing goes wrong? We have to talk about what we need and how we can work together so everyone gets what they need.

## ABOUT THE PEACE PATH

We're leaning heavily on resources that are readily available on the internet and used in a lot of schools, including the peace path as laid out by Recess Lab because we find it easy to follow. If you want to make your own peace path, feel free to! You'll see some examples to the right. What we like about this model is that it is something the campers may have been introduced to at school and they can learn how to use it in other places outside of school.





## TEACHING ABOUT CONFLICT

Today we're learning about conflict. Just like metamorphic rocks are created through pressure and heat, humans are created through pressure and conflict. Unfortunately, conflict makes most of us very uncomfortable. We often leave a conflict feeling like we didn't get our feelings heard and that the other person just yelled at us, or we are the one yelling and can't figure out why we feel better but the other person doesn't. Conflict is really hard and it is something that most people, regardless of age, struggle with. So today, we're going to learn about something called the peace path. I've got some conflicts that we're going to use practice using the peace path with and then we're going to do a couple of crafts to help us remember that conflict isn't bad, but how we deal with it matters.

### Making Peace Path Lanyards

To learn the peace path, we're going to first make lanyards. This is going to explain the peace path process and then will give you a way to keep it with you to remember how to use this tool here at camp and out in the world. Each of you will get one of the cards that describes the steps and you can tuck this into your lanyard so you have it handy if you need to practice later this week. Now, we're going to go over these steps, and your leader and I will demonstrate how to use the lanyard.

### Teach the Floor Version of the Peace Path

At our church, we are committed to dealing with conflict better. So we've added the peace path to the floor of this room because this is where we have a lot of meetings and sometimes at those meetings, there is conflict. We're going to use it now with some scenarios to see how it works. Can I have two volunteers to go first? (Let the kids work through the peace path in teams of two- those watching can offer help or feedback on how they could have done it differently.)

#### Conflict One:

Person A and Person B are playing chess. Person A is losing at chess to Person B. Person A says: "You're cheating!" Person B assures Person A that they are not cheating and a disagreement ends in Person A flipping over the chess board. It's time for the Peace Path!

#### Conflict Two:

Person A wants to listen to Taylor Swift songs and Person B wants to listen to Weird Al. A shouting match about the musical artists leaves both people red in the face and angry. It's time for the Peace Path!

#### Conflict Three:

Person A loaned a pencil to Person B. Person B does not want to give the pencil back when asked by Person A. It's time for the peace path!

### Ending

These are silly conflicts, but not unlike problems that come up from time to time among friends. It's helpful to have a way to deal with hurt feelings before they cause broken relationships. We'll use the peace path to help all of us deal with conflict this week.

## CRAFT PROJECT USING ROCKS

Yesterday, we took a photo of your small group and today we are going to give thanks for this community who is willing to help us be better about conflict by framing this moment! This is a quick craft, but it will have to dry overnight. You're going to cover this frame with a thick layer of mod podge and then decorate it with the small rocks you found yesterday. Make sure to write your name on the back before starting so we can get your frame to you tomorrow. Your frame will stay here overnight to dry, then I'll add the photo to it. Tomorrow you can take it home and it will be a reminder of the gift of this small group.



#### PRO TIP:

Have the frames ready to go with the name of the small group, year, and camper name on the back.

# PEACE PATH

Teaching students how to talk about their emotions is hard. A great way to start getting your students to start talking to each other about their emotions is by using "I-Statements"

## What are "I-Statements?"

"I-Statements" are used to express emotions felt after an action. For example "I didn't like it when you said I can't play foursquare."

## "I-Statements" in the Peace Path

Using "I-Statements" in the Peace Path helps change the way your students think about the conflict. Instead of accusatory language like "You said I was bad at foursquare," we want students to think about their feelings. So the above statement would read "I didn't like it when you said I can't play foursquare." Also, by expressing how the student is feeling, the student is not making any judgments about the person they are disagreeing with, so there is no need to become defensive!

## How the Peace Path Works

Together, create a Peace Path to walk along for each of these steps.  
Students can follow these steps to work through and resolve conflicts.

**Step 1:** Students take turns sharing their feelings and repeating the other student's feelings.

| Student 1            | Student 2                          |             | Student 2            | Student 1                          |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| I feel...<br>when... | I know that you<br>feel... when... | <b>Then</b> | I feel...<br>when... | I know that you<br>feel... when... |

**Step 2:** Students take turns sharing their needs and repeating the other student's needs.

| Student 2                          | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 1  |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| What can I do to<br>make it right? | I need... | I will... | Thank You. |

**Then**

| Student 1                          | Student 2 | Student 1 | Student 2  |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| What can I do to<br>make it right? | I need... | I will... | Thank You. |

**Step 3:** Students take turns sharing how they know that the conflict has been resolved.

| Student 2                                  | Student 1                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| I know that the problem is over because... | I know that the problem is over because... |

**Step 4:** Students shake hands and leave in peace.

**Next Steps to try this week:**

- ☐ Practices with your students' "I-Statements"
- ☐ Paint or draw a Peace Path on your Playground
- ☐ When students get in an argument, ask them to use an "I-Statement" when talking about the disagreement.



## PEACE PATH PROCESS

- 1 Breathe & Get Calm.**  
*Take a breath: (inhale like you're smelling a flower, exhale like you're blowing out a candle)*
- 2 State the problem using "I" statements.**  
*Take turns, and listen.*
- 3 Repair the Harm.**  
*Apologize for harm done and name what is needed to repair the relationship, make an agreement on how to move forward.  
"I'm sorry for..." "I need..."*
- 4 End the Peace Path.**  
*Share a fist bump, high, five, or a handshake.*

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## DAY THREE: GRATEFUL FOR CHURCH

Today we are learning all about volcanos in most of the stations, but here, as in big gathering, we're focusing on the Eucharist. We're going to focus on prayers - specifically, the prayers of the people and prayers in general. Each group will learn about the Prayers of the People and write a portion of them, learn about prayers and then write their own for publication by UTO.

We'll take a break to move our bodies about halfway through to wrap the bath bombs and imprint fossils to prepare them to give away to someone special of their choosing. There's a lot to do today, so let's get started!



## DAY THREE: IGNEOUS ROCK

## SUPPLIES

### You will need:

- wrapping paper or tissue paper
- ribbon
- tape (if using wrapping paper)
- gift tags

### For the Prayers of the People:

- prayer worksheet
- flipchart paper for writing the *Prayers of the People*
- copies of the *Book of Common Prayer* (looking at pages 383 for Prayers of the People)
- cup with each of the sections for the prayers of the people on slips of paper to pick from

### For fast finishers or scaffold:

- UTO Coloring Sheets  
(<https://unitedthankoffering.com/color/>) We really love using one of the sheets that you can print as a poster - give each camper a tile to work on during the week and then display the poster at the end of camp
- coloring tools

## EXPANSION

If you have older campers or want to make this more challenging, you can have each small group write their own prayers of the people. They will need to work together to make sure they have the same endings of the petitions and decide who is writing what portion. This is a good activity to check in with your clergy about. If they like the idea of the prayers the students have written, each small group could write for a different season of the church year. That way the congregation could feature the prayers written all year long.

## SCAFFOLD

Younger campers may not have the writing skills to do this project. No worries, there are several options to help them get their prayers out into the world. The first is to use talk to text on a phone or a computer. Let each student say their prayer out loud for the computer to transcribe. You can also do this the old fashioned way and have an adult write it for them. You can help fill the time with some of the UTO coloring sheets if transcribing.



## TEACHING PRAYER WRITING

Today in the Gratitude Station, we're focusing on a part of the Eucharist called the Prayers of the People. Does anyone know what that is? (The Prayers of the People are a structured set of prayers that include prayers for the the Church, the nation/leaders, the welfare of the world, the local community, those who suffer/or are sick or are in any trouble, and the departed. It ends with a concluding prayer.) Does anyone know how many versions there are? (6) So here's the thing you might not know. In the *Book of Common Prayer* there are sometimes options for those who are planning worship and the rule of thumb is that what is listed first is what the writers want you to choose. The cool thing about the Prayers of the People is that what is listed first, is the outline to create your own. Today at camp, we're going to write a set of the prayers of the people that we'll use at church this coming Sunday. (Check with your worship leader first!) Each rock formation is going to write one section. To decide what section you are going to write, we're going to draw the section name out of this cup.

To help keep things simple, we are going to use the same response for all of the petitions, or prayers. So we'll write what we want our congregation to pray for and the response will be: "Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*" Which is like form four.

There is no wrong or right way to pray. Prayer is simply saying out loud those things which we would like God to pay attention to. What are we worried about? What are we grateful for? These are the things that we can add.

### Sections and Ideas:

1. The Universal Church, its members, and its mission
  - a. Christians every where
  - b. clergy
  - c. people about to be baptized or confirmed
  - d. prayers for how people of different faiths treat each other
2. The Nation and all in Authority
  - a. President, Senators, Representatives, Supreme Court Justices
  - b. police, fire department, first responders, nurses, EMTs, doctors
  - c. teachers, principals
  - d. parents, baby sitters
3. The Welfare of the World
  - a. creation care, scientists
  - b. peace among people and nations
  - c. space exploration
  - d. any current events that might need prayers
4. The Concerns of the Local Community
  - a. what are you grateful for about our community?
  - b. what in our community needs our prayers or is concerning?
5. Those who suffer and those in any trouble
  - a. the sick
  - b. the unhoused
  - c. those suffering from mental illness
6. The departed
  - a. loved ones who have died
  - b. saints or other famous people who have died that they want to remember

## EXPANSION: WRITE A PRAYER

Once we've finished our Prayers of the People, we'll move on to writing our own prayers. In the Episcopal Church, we have a special form of prayer called a collect. This is just a fancy way to describe a prayer that collects the thoughts and ideas of the community and puts them into one place for everyone to pray together. Collects can be for all sorts of things.

Collects have the following sections: (although sometimes a part is omitted and it is still a collect)

1. an address
2. a phrase that says something about the attributes of God
3. petitions or requests
4. results
5. words of praise

Here is a collect from the Book of Common Prayer for the Second Sunday in Advent:

Address: Merciful God,

Attributes: who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation:

Petition: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins,

Results: that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer;

Praise: who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A collect can be complete and not include all of the parts and a prayer can be complete and not include any of these parts!

You can decide how many of these you want to use. Your prayer can simply be:

Hi God! Thank you for creating trees, I love the shade they give in the summer. Help all people to care for trees so that we never run out of them. You're the best. Amen.

I think we can all agree that trees are useful and good, so this prayer works to collect our feelings of goodwill about trees.

I want to give you all time to write your own prayers now. I've got a handy worksheet in case you want to use these prayer sections, but you don't have to. After you've finished, I'm going to collect your prayers to make a copy before you take it home later this week. We're going to send these prayers to UTO and they will print them in a book so you'll be able to see your prayer in print!

## WRAP BATH BOMBS & IMPRINT FOSSILS

As campers finish up at different times, they can go to the gift wrap area to wrap up the gifts they created at another station to give as a gift to someone special. If they have a lot of time, they can paint the imprint fossil they made to show the gifts they bring to the world.



### PRO TIP:

UTO will publish any and all prayers - short, profound, inspired, or silly. Use the QR code to the right to find prayer worksheets for any age or the form to submit the prayers your campers wrote this week. You can simply take photo of the prayers and upload them!



THE UNITED THANK OFFERING PRESENTS:

# GRATITUDE ROCKS!

A Vacation Bible Camp Curriculum Focused on Gratitude, Geology, & Fun

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Name:

Age:



PRAYER WRITING  
WORKSHEET

SUBMIT YOUR  
PRAYER HERE!



## YOUR PRAYER TITLE

Tell us what you want to name your title, or simply use a word or phrase to let us know what it is about. (example: Thankful for Food)

## PARTS OF A COLLECT

Collects have the following sections: (although sometimes a part is omitted and it is still a collect)

1. an address
2. a phrase that says something about God
3. petitions or requests
4. results
5. words of praise

## MY PRAYER

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Names with Age/Grades:



PRAYER WRITING  
WORKSHEET

SUBMIT YOUR  
PRAYERS HERE!



## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

|                                                          |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--|
| THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH,<br>ITS MEMBERS,<br>AND ITS MISSION |  |
| THE NATION AND ALL IN<br>AUTHORITY                       |  |
| THE WELFARE OF THE<br>WORLD                              |  |
| THE CONCERNS OF THE<br>LOCAL COMMUNITY                   |  |
| THOSE WHO SUFFER AND<br>THOSE IN ANY TROUBLE             |  |
| THE DEPARTED                                             |  |

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## DAY FOUR: GIVE THANKS AND GIVE BACK

Today we're going to address one of the things that is hard about being a kid...it can often feel like you have nothing to contribute or give. Kids take a lot of care, support, finances, and so forth, and most of them have an inkling that they are receiving all of these things. As adults, we often teach kids to say "please" and "thank you" as a way to respond to all of the receiving. We at UTO think it is also important to teach them that they have something to contribute. This might seem like a silly activity to do at camp, but when we tested this at our local public school with fifth graders, the response was overwhelming. We worked with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class by first identifying a project they could do around the school with the help of their teacher and principal. This class was learning about the 50 states (each student was presenting on a state) and there just happened to be a map of the United States on the playground that had fallen into disrepair. Together with some adult helpers, the students repainted the states. While students waited to paint, they kept younger students from walking through the area, talked about their states to the rest of the class and helped make sure everyone was hydrated and had access to shade when they needed a break. The next day, the class opened the area for play by the other students. The area was flooded - they created games to play on the map and received gratitude from the other students. One student said to us: "I never thought I could leave a mark on my school or that anyone would care or remember that I was here." This project is a reminder that no matter your age or abilities you have something to give to the world in gratitude for all of the blessings - known and unknown - that you receive. We hope you'll find a project that helps your campers see how valuable they are, and get them excited about caring for their community and others.



## DAY FOUR: SEDIMENTARY ROCK

### OPTION ONE:

Create a pollinator garden at the church. Talk to the kids about what kinds of plants pollinators like in your area and then work with them to dig up the dirt and plant the garden. Older kids can make garden signs to teach others about the importance of pollinators.

### OPTION TWO:

Create care packages for a local shelter. Ask what they need and then send this information out to families with registration. Then have the kids make artwork and pack the kits into bags for people.

### OPTION THREE:

Create care packages for kids entering foster care. Ask for donations of stuffed animals, blankets, and full sized toiletries. Have the students create care packages in gift bags, let them "shop" to make the best gift possible.

### TEACHING

Note: You might already know what is needed, so do that! Just make sure it is hands on, that the kids can see the results of what they are doing and can feel good about it. Make sure it is special for them and not just something that your church does anyway.

Today you are on your own a bit. You'll need to explain to campers what you are doing and why. It is worth talking to them about all of the things they get in life from their families and community, from shelter, food, water, school, etc. and ask what they can give back to others. Let them know that you've come up with a way for them to give back to their community. Explain what you need them to do and how you are going to do it. Make sure they have a way to connect to the work, even if they are only doing a part of it. Remind them that they are a gift to the world around them and no matter how small they are, they can contribute to making the world a better place.



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## DAY FIVE: GRATITUDE FOR OUR FAMILIES

Today we're finishing up and thinking about the gifts we all have and experience. We will talk about the fact that many of us have and share gifts that folks don't always see. Sometimes we miss those gifts in others, or simply take them for granted.

We're going to help campers create some words of gratitude to share with their adults. At our closing, each student will share words of gratitude that they create in your station today for the adults who will be joining them later. We've included a letter to send home on the first day of camp about this activity that invites adults to come ready to share some words of gratitude with their camper. We get busy with work and school and activities, today we slow down, notice, and give thanks for the gifts of God we engage with every day.



## DAY FIVE: MINERALS & GEMS

## SUPPLIES

### You will need:

- worksheets
- letter to parents/adults (send home earlier in the week and adapt as needed)
- plain gift bags and materials to decorate them
- river rocks
- paint pens
- a list of the adults who are attending the final celebration from the camp leader (not all kids will have their parents there so it is good to know who will be there so they can be specific about thanking that person)

### You will need for the final celebration:

- gifts the campers created throughout the week ready to go
- pocket rocks with words on them (these can be made if you've got someone crafty or purchased online) have more rocks than campers so adults can pick which word has the intention they want. You can also just have river rocks and paint pens for adults to create their own rock as they enter.
- certificates (your camp leader can create these!) for the rock formation leaders to give to their group

## EXPANSION

This project doesn't really need to be expanded, but if you want to do something to make it more special, you can invite older campers to write thank you notes to the adults who help them in a variety of ways. This can be coaches, scout leaders, grandparents and so on.

## SCAFFOLD

Similarly to the prayer writing day, younger campers will need help with writing. We would recommend simplifying this activity to two steps:

1. creating a rock with a word or image (heart) to show what they are grateful for about the adult
2. a drawing of the camper and the adult who is coming to the celebration

## FINISH STRONG

Today you can invite campers to pack up their items. You can have them create a bag to put all of their items to take home in. The goal is to make sure everything ends up going home with the campers at the final celebration so having a place to put things until the ending is really useful to set everyone up for success!

## GIVING THANKS FOR THE SMALL THINGS

Today at camp we've been talking about the hidden glory in things like geodes and inside of people like you and me. Today at our gratitude station, we're going to do one final activity to help us give thanks for the simple things that happen in our lives each day. Okay, I'm going to ask some questions and I want you to raise your hand if someone has done this for you recently. Ready?

1. washed your clothes
2. made a meal for you
3. read a story with you
4. played a game with you
5. drove you in a car somewhere

Wow, people are doing a lot of things for us all the time, aren't they? Sometimes we start to take all of these things for granted that other people do for us, and even if we don't say thank you every time someone drives us somewhere we want to make sure that the people we spend the most time with know that we see the hidden glory inside of them. What makes them special? Are they funny? Do they love dinosaurs as much as we do? What is it about them that makes them special to you that other people might not see.

I've got a worksheet for each of you to fill out. This is a special worksheet, because it asks three questions and you are going to fill it out about a special adult in your life who will be joining us later today for the closing ceremony of camp. You're going to share what you wrote with your adult on this sheet, so I really want you to think about what makes them special. If you are not sure who is coming to the closing ceremony, don't worry, we've got a list! We're going to work on this worksheet together, one question at a time in case you need help with it.

Once everyone has finished, we're going to do one last activity. I've got some river rocks here on the table and paint pens. I want you to pick a rock and a word or image that you can put on the rock that sums up what you are most thankful for about the adult coming today. Later, you're going to give this to them, so let us know if you need any help.

If you finish quickly, we've got gift bags to put all of your items in to give to your adults, you can decorate them over here.

At the end of our time together, we're going to make sure each camper has everything packed up and ready to go and that no crafts, gifts, or other items are left behind.

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## I'M THANKFUL FOR YOU...

I LOVE WHEN WE SPEND TIME TOGETHER,  
ESPECIALLY WHEN WE:

---

---

---

HERE IS WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT YOU:

---

---

---

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF ME BY:

---

---

---

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THE UNITED THANK OFFERING PRESENTS:

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**I'M THANKFUL FOR YOU...**

HERE IS A DRAWING OF US TOGETHER DOING  
SOMETHING WE LOVE:

HERE IS WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT YOU:

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF ME BY:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THE UNITED THANK OFFERING PRESENTS:

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Dear Parent,

Thank you for enrolling your child in our Vacation Bible Camp: Gratitude Rocks! As a part of the program, we have a special ending celebration on **DATE** at time, we hope you can make it. This week our campers are learning about geology, the Eucharist, and gratitude. As a part of our closing ceremony, our campers are going to share their gratitude for you in their small groups. They will be filling out a worksheet just like the one included with this note. We hope you will also take a moment and fill this worksheet out about your camper. This activity is a part of our programming on gems and minerals. Specifically, campers are going to learn about geodes and how on the outside they look pretty boring but when you crack them open they are really beautiful and amazing. All of us can seem pretty boring on the outside, but inside each of us is something spectacular. We know that this is true because our faith promises that we are all gifts from God. Each of us has a special gift or ability to share with the world around us, and we want to celebrate and give thanks for the gift that you are and that your camper is.

When you arrive on **DATE**, you'll be invited to **AREA WHERE THEY CAN GATHER**. When you enter, you'll find a table that has a variety of rocks - some with words, some without. Please pick a rock that has an intention that you wish to pass on to your camper. You can then use a paint pen to add a note, or sign the rock. If you don't find a rock you like, we've got blank rocks where you can add your own intention. You'll be invited to share this rock with your camper as a part of the closing ceremony with their small group, called a rock formation. You will be invited to share with your child the gifts that they bring to your family/home, neighborhood or community. If you would like, you can bring a thank you note to read to your child, or you can just share from your heart.

We'll wrap up the whole event with a celebration for families. **We'll be providing the main dish, drinks, and dessert, please bring a side dish to share.** There will be a bounce house and other fun things for kids so parents can get to know one another and enjoy the nice weather!

We'll see you on **DATE**, and thank you for joining our Vacation Bible Camp this summer!

With Gratitude,

Name  
Camp Director