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***The Canadian Girls
in Training***

National Newsletter



Fall 2011

**Prepared by the
Saskatchewan CGIT Committee**



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This year the Saskatchewan CGIT Committee Inc. have asked some ladies to write the national resource for leaders called The Torch. Thank you to Celia Ricker, Frances Goudie, and Emma Plummer, who together were Saskatchewan's Torch Committee for 2011. With their hard work they created a study called "Creating Living Waters". I encourage leaders to take the time with their groups of girls to do the study with them.

With the abundance of technology we have at our fingertips, it seems that we never pause in our lives to create quiet moments with ourselves and with God. We are forever on our cell phones and computers for school, work, and recreation times as well. We oftentimes forget to take the time to acknowledge God's presence around us and be at peace. We need to set our technology and gadgets aside from time to time.

In this study leaders and girls are asked to reflect on areas of their lives where they feel tested (just like Jesus was in the desert) and how they can bring peace to themselves and others around them. They will discover ways they can become a light for others. Creating living waters reflects on the CGIT purpose of knowing God. It will help girls and leaders find ways that they can know God, but first we need to be peaceful and be ready to listen and just feel God around us.

Thank you again to Celia, Frances and Emma for their hard work and dedication to CGIT to bring this very important issue of the Torch to the girls and leaders of Canada.

Alice Monks
Chairperson, Saskatchewan CGIT
Committee Inc.

At our Saskatchewan CGIT Committee meeting this January, Thelma Stevens had lunch with us as our special guest. Thelma Stevens is a veteran CGIT Leader. She led CGIT groups for many years and has photo albums of those wonderful times. She led many CGIT Camps, CGIT Leaders' Workshops and held positions on the Saskatchewan Provincial CGIT Committee. She had a real connection to girls and leaders. Thelma made a difference in their lives and continues to do so in ours as well.

We asked her to share her wisdom with all of our Saskatchewan leaders and girls again in a letter that was published in the Goldenrod in the Spring of 2011. Following is a portion of her letter to us.

"Once again we approach the end of another year of regular CGIT meetings. Now is the opportunity to reflect upon it. Perhaps you are feeling weary and telling yourself this is your last year and saying someone else can take over. Before that, pause a minute and ask yourself why you are a leader in the first place. Is it because it is a program you believe in with all your heart? The CGIT group is a safe gathering where each member is accepted for who she really is. Not having to keep up with someone else in dress, academics, or spending money.

The years 12 to 18 are years when young people make lifetime decisions ... how they will take care for their lives and values ... what they will choose as their life work ... the type of person they may choose as their life partner ... their relationship to God. As your programs focus on your CGIT purpose, your discussions can shape their decisions.

As leaders, the members will also influence you. Do you recall times when you didn't really feel up to going to your regular meetings. But by the time you met with your group, you returned home refreshed and valued as a person.

Leadership is a privilege and not to be considered as just another outing.

Bless all of you and your girls as you share these precious years. Together may you continue to become the women God would have you be.

Sincerely,
Thelma E. Stevens

CREATING LIVING WATERS

Written for the Torch, Sept. 2011

INTRODUCTION

The following scripture exploration sums up what creating living waters is all about.

Scripture Exploration

Read: Genesis 1: 9 – 11

Challenges within this scripture:

- a time of creating springs and rivers of God's creative compassionate Spirit deep within each one of us (strong flow of life).

Question:

How is creation happening today? (What stages 1 to 4 are all about.)
(Time factor here should be 20 minutes to about half an hour.)

STAGE 1: Re-creating Still Waters For Peace

Scripture Exploration

Read: Psalm 23: 1-4

Define – the quiet places in our lives when we take the time to explore God's Compassionate Spirit alive and flowing within ourselves and the world.

Focus - on "still waters, "green pastures", "comfort" of God – God's Healing Spirit at work bringing peace to ourselves and others.

Resource: The Canadian Bible Society, 401 – 43rd St. E., Saskatoon, SK S7K 0V5, Tel: 1 800 667 4691, offers wallet size cards of Psalm 23 – a small donation is appreciated.

Questions:

1. What are some advantages of creating and re-creating "still water" times for peace in our lives?
2. What things in our lives disconnect us from taking "still water" times for peace?
- be sure that "busyness" is mentioned – suggestion: a good time for everyone to turn off their cell phone, gather their cell phones in a bucket and pick them up again as they leave (the "bucket brigade" process for each week.)

Project One: Creating our own "still water" Time for Peace:

Begin the process of creating a journal/personal diary

Resource: <http://www.creativewriting-prompts.com/how-to-write-a-journal.html>

Personal process for creating a journal/personal diary for Stages 1 to 4:

1. Read the verses and/or questions for each week.
2. Be still.
3. Write in a journal your responses.

4. Read the verses and/or questions again.

Each girl should have a copy of the personal process to keep in her journal.

Create a large poster with the verse

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

This large poster will be used each week for worship.

- Each girl writes this verse on a small card and keeps the card in her journal.

Worship:

Hymn Voices United 577 – Peace Like a River

Stillwater Time For Peace

Gospel Exploration:

- Read and discuss Jesus as the source of living water - John 7: 37-38
- Read and discuss Jesus as a source of healing – John 8: 5-15
- Write down your questions and hand them in to the leader. Be sure to keep a copy of your questions for your own journaling.

STAGE 2: The How of Creating Still Waters For Peace Within Ourselves

-The “bucket brigade” again.

-Using the large poster, review the journaling experience.

-Talk about last week’s questions.

Project Two: God’s re/creating ways through the growth of “peace plants” - one in the church and one in each girl’s home.

Discuss the best way to care for a plant in your church. (Check with the church folk involved in caring for plants, how best to do this project and how the plant will be nurtured after this study is completed. Listen to an enthusiastic local gardener.)

Gospel Exploration:

Theme: The importance of re/creating living waters in our lives guided by

- a) Review of woman at the well (John 8)
- b) Mary washing Jesus’ feet (John 12: 1-3)
- c) Jesus washing the disciples’ feet (John 13: 5-6, 12-15)

- Discuss the role of water in these scriptures.

- Discuss what might be the meaning of “living waters”.

- Write down your questions and hand them in, keeping a copy for your own journaling.

Worship

Stillwater Time For Peace (Display large poster from Stage I at the front.)

Worship Resource: Voices United # 563 - Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore.

- Reflect about how you may be a source of “living water” in your home / community. (Journal about this during the coming week)

STAGE 3: Deserts and God’s Living Waters of Justice

- The “bucket brigade”.
- Respond to questions about last week’s scriptures and how the journaling is coming along.

Gospel Exploration

Read: Mark 1: 12,13 – connect to Isaiah 35:1 (making dry deserts bloom)
Jesus’ caring ways “bloomed” after his negative desert experience.

The story about Jesus in the desert environment reminds us that a Canadian wilderness and a Middle Eastern wilderness are not the same.

What might be some differences?

Review the woman at the well and washing feet stories from last week’s study as events that happened **after** Jesus returned from the wilderness of the desert – lives were transformed through Jesus’ caring and healing ways.

Questions for the girls to reflect on for a week:

Each girl should have a copy of these questions.

1. Where are the desert places in your life?
2. How can you water the desert places in your life?
3. What desert areas do you see in your community?
4. How can you water these areas? How can you help desert areas to bloom?

Worship

Stillwater Time for Peace (Again display the large poster from Stage I at the front.)

Theme: God’s Spirit of Justice – as summed up in the CGIT 4-fold purpose.

- Read Scripture Amos 5:24 – Let justice roll like waters
- Write a group prayer with a focus on the 4-fold purpose to guide you through this Stillwater Time.
- Sing “Peace Like a River” (Voices United 577)

STAGE 4: Serving Others and Becoming Agents of Change

- The “bucket brigade”.
- Discuss last week’s questions and repeat last week’s group prayer.
- Discuss the need for “Living Waters” to reach out to nurture and help deserts to bloom, thus becoming agents of transformation and change.

Project Three:

Choose a “desert” area as your service project and plan and complete that project.

Suggestions of Areas of Need:

UCC Mission and Service - <http://www.united-church.ca/funding/msfund/about>

First Nations health and education - <http://firstnationshealing.com>;

<http://www.safewater.org/policy/first-nations-drinking-water-policy.html>

Teen Grief - <http://www.ncyi.org/www/docs/8>

Mental Health Association - <http://www.cmha.ca>

Food Bank - <http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/main.cfm>

Immigration Families -

Bullying - <http://www.bullyingcanada.ca>

Religious Conflict -

Respecting Privacy - <http://www.connectsafely.org/safety-tips-and-advice.html>

Water Use / Waste - <http://www.safewater.org/resources/fact-sheets.html>

Flooding – many municipalities have opportunities to volunteer sandbagging, preparing, or volunteering in the local efforts to cope with flooding.

Education of Girls - UNICEF

CONCLUSION:

Resurrection Re/Creations of God’s Caring and Healing Ways

Question: How has this exploration on Living Waters helped you become the girl that God would have you be?

Final Projects to Choose From:

1. Plant spring peace plants in the churchyard or place of your choice.
2. Report what your group learned in your church newsletter and / or in Sunday worship.
3. Discuss how your poster can be recycled – perhaps somewhere in your church.
4. Discuss the “bucket brigade” and if it should be continued.
5. Should the girls’ journaling process continue?

Concluding Worship:

Stillwater Time For Peace

(Display large poster from Stage I at the front and gather together, if possible, some of the peace plants the girls have nurtured.)

- Review highlights of this Bible Study

- Reread Genesis 1: 9-11

Psalm 23: 1-4

- Repeat Prayer from Stage 3, and pray as well, for peace within and beyond your community.

- Time of Silence

- CGIT Purpose

- Read Amos 5:24 and John 7: 37-38, and sing “Peace Like a River” (VU 577)

EVALUATION

Please complete the evaluation after you have used this resource with a group.

Section I: To be completed by the Leader(s).

How many sessions did you have?

How usable was the material? _____

Did you think the material was appropriate? _____

How might this study be improved? _____

What plants did your group choose? _____

Please describe your project to water a desert _____

Section II: To be completed by girls and leaders.

Please indicate whether you are a girl or a leader. Leader ___ Girl ___

Did you have fun? _____

What did you learn that was surprising? _____

What did you learn about yourself? _____

Please give us your suggestions about what might be changed/included in this study.

When we got together to plan the Torch, we started with the idea of water being necessary for life. The Scriptures that used water as a metaphor led us to explore water and deserts. The Gospel stories about the washing of feet guided us towards the healing path of service to others. Then, when we started thinking about how many deserts there are in our world, social justice issues and the importance of building community became evident.

Finally, we recognized that re-creating living waters is an important part of what CGIT is all about.

We (Celia, Emma and Frances) hope you will take time to evaluate this study. Please use the evaluation form provided or write your own evaluation of the study. We really want to hear about your experience and what projects you chose to undertake.

Please return your evaluations by regular mail or email to the Saskatchewan Committee Chairperson, Alice Monks. Her address and email are on the second page of this Torch.

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, union;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

St. Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226)