

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School Student-Led Week of Prayer 2011



Introduction

With a desire to have my 6th graders see themselves as part of God's family, recognize the importance of service, and be actively involved in witnessing, I challenged them to take the lead in the spring week of prayer. (Fall is a little too early, since I don't have a strong enough connection with them yet, but spring works perfectly.)

Every year our school has difficulty finding a speaker for the spring week of prayer, especially one who can speak on a 7th and 8th grade level and to the younger students. With this new method, I am able to reach older students by involving them in leadership while connecting with students from the younger grades through the kind of hands-on visual program they appreciate.

It takes two to three weeks to help my students prepare for the program and one week to present it. Each program is presented four times a day to groups of one or two classes at a time, grades K-5. Having multiple presentation opportunities is good because it helps the student leaders relax, enjoy and improve their presentation each time. It also teaches them how to adjust the program for the grade level they are presenting to.

In the past, I've invited small Seventh-day Adventist schools from the area to attend our program. I think it would also work great as an outreach program for neighborhood children during the summer. Our young people want to be active in the work and just need to be shown how they can do it.

While this is a large investment in time, many subject areas are covered during the process: art, while students create props and scenery; computers, while students make PowerPoint slides using links and video clips; language arts, while students write prompting cards, handouts and PowerPoint text to go with their talks; Bible, as they learn to understand God's calling to produce fruit and share their understanding through witnessing and service; music, as they prepare to lead song service and perform special music; even videography, as students can participate in videotaping the program. After our program we made a DVD (available for viewing on this site) for each student to see and remember their part during week of prayer.

TOOLS TO USE

Songs

The lyrics for each song were displayed on PowerPoint slides made with a farm theme. My 6th grade students played the piano during some songs. For others, we used music and lyrics provided on YouTube.

- [Promise-](#) This song became a group favorite as students added a clap between the P-R-O-M and the I-S-E. I don't have a copy of the original music, but with the help of a fellow teacher, we

wrote out what I remembered the song was like when I heard it years ago. I believe it came from the Standard Publishing Company's Promise Builders for Jesus VBS, 1997.

- [Fruit of the Spirit](#) - This was our theme song. We used the YouTube link for the music and PowerPoint words. Kids made up great motions and the song was a hit.
- [1 John](#) This was one of the other songs we sang.

Talks

The idea for the daily talks came from Gospel Light's 2010 VBS program, Son Harvest County Fair, www.gospellightvbs.com/sonharvest/. I didn't use their talks, but I did use the ideas shared on their website to write my own scripts.

- Monday – Grow Love: [script](#), [PowerPoint](#)
- Tuesday – Sprout Joy: [script](#), [PowerPoint](#)
- Wednesday – Plant Peace: [script](#), [PowerPoint](#)
- Thursday – Produce Patience: [script](#), [PowerPoint](#)
- Friday – Pick Kindness: [script](#), [PowerPoint](#)

Communications

- [Outline for Student Planning](#)-I sent this outline of our program to the other teachers in my building and home with their students to generate interest and excitement.
- [Letter to Teachers](#) –To create excitement among the teachers, I presented them and my principal with this letter.
- Brochure for Families: [outside](#), [inside](#)-With my help the students created these brochures to give to each of the school's families.

Evidence

[Video](#) – 13 minutes capturing highlights from the week

[Photos](#) – A gallery of ideas to creatively adapt to your setting

Standards

Some of the NAD Bible curriculum and Journey to Excellence goals met include B-4.1, B-4-2, B-4.3, B-4.6, J2E 1.2, 1.6, 1.8, J2E 2.3, J2E 7.1, 7.3,7.4, 7.5, J2E 8.3, 8.7, J2E 9.4, and J2E 10. 4, 10.6. I think the program best met the general goal stated in the Bible curriculum outline number *VII. Communication Skills* – Opportunities will be given for students to communicate their faith and interact with others through development of verbal and nonverbal communication skills and the use of information technology.

REFLECTIONS

My heart overflows with thanks to God that I embarked on this program with my 6th graders. During the experience they blossomed into gifted speakers and leaders, and saw how God blessed their service. They came away knowing they were ready to share the Gospel message with those around them.

The enthusiasm of the guests and parents who attended showed that this was what they were hoping for when they sent their child to a Seventh-day Adventist school. One parent sent me a card saying that there were times when making the tuition payment was difficult and they questioned whether it was worth it, but after seeing their daughter speaking in the program they *KNEW* it was worth every penny.

They asked me to “keep teaching them what you are teaching them” as “you have helped make our daughter a beautiful young lady.” Praise God!

Lower grade teachers shared that their students kept asking, “Is it time for us to go to Week of Prayer?” And even after the week was over, they frequently requested the songs *The Fruit of the Spirit* and *PROMISE* during their worships. I gave these teachers the PowerPoints and links we used in the program so they could continue singing them with their kids.

I was grateful for the opportunity to share about our program with the local newspaper and show what Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is doing. We had a full page in the town’s paper. In the future, I’d like to advertise the program in the paper beforehand so community members could attend.

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