

Grade 2, Theme Five

Family Letter

Dear Family,

We are ready to begin the last theme of *Fully Alive*, our family life program. Because the partnership of home, church, and school is so important, this letter is written to let you know what we talk about in class, and to offer some ideas for your involvement.

About Theme Five

Theme Five of *Fully Alive* is called “Living in the World.” We are not simply individuals who have relationships with family members and friends. We are also members of human society. We want the children to become aware of how big the world is, and of the many ways in which people contribute to making it a good home for all. This awareness is the foundation for a Christian attitude of care and personal involvement in the world.

In Theme Five we will:

- explore aspects of the world that make it a good place for us.
- learn about some natural resources of the world, which are gifts of creation.
- discover some of the work that people do to transform God’s gifts for our use.

Working together at school and at home

- In class we will be talking about what makes the world a good place for us. Because adult life is more stressful, it can be difficult to remember the joy children find in occasions, like Christmas or a picnic in the park. Be sure to ask what makes the world a good place for your child, and tell him or her about what makes it a good place for you.
- Your child will be bringing home a sheet about the gifts of the Earth that your family especially appreciates. Take this opportunity to talk about the many natural resources we have — farmland, forests, abundant water, minerals — and how we use them and try to protect them.
- Children who live in the city don’t get too many chances to see the process through which workers transform raw materials into the things we need. You might like to play this game with your family: Choose an item in your home, and try to identify some of the people who worked to make it, e.g., a wool sweater (farmer who raised the sheep, workers who prepared the wool, workers who knit the sweater).

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Theme Five Topics

In Grade Two, this theme is developed through three topics. The children begin by talking about some of the things that make the world a good place for them, from family celebrations to playing outside with friends. In Topic 2 they consider the richness of God's creation and the many natural resources of the earth. The final topic, as it was in Grade 1, is about human work. The children discuss the work that people do to transform the gifts of the earth into the things [that](#) we all need.

Topic 1 — The World is a Good Place to Be

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

Genesis 1:31

Summary

This topic helps the children understand the goodness of God's world. The teacher and the children explore illustrations of events and people that make the world a good place to be. Then the children talk about their own experiences of what makes the world a good place for them.

Main ideas

- God made the world for us. It's good to be alive in it.
- There are all sorts of wonderful things to do and see in the world.
- We thank God for making the world a good place to be.

Family participation

- At school each child contributed to a class chart by completing the sentence: "The world is a good place to be because . . ." You might ask your child what he or she chose.
- You could tell your child about what makes the world a good place for you. You might want to mention how glad you are that God made the world and loves everyone in it. Let your child know that you are happy God gave you a family that includes him or her and makes the world a very good place to be.
- As children grow up, their faith in the goodness of God and his creation is challenged by what they see around them and by their own failures and weaknesses. That is why it is

so important for them to know that their parents continue to see goodness and find joy in the world despite the difficulties. Children need hope and faith that it is always good to be alive and that God never abandons them. They learn this from adults who believe it themselves.

Topic 2 — Gifts of the Earth

And God say, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with see in its fruit; you have them for food.”

Genesis 1:29

Summary

This topic helps the children understand that God has given us what we need to live in the world. The teacher and children look at photographs of some of the many natural gifts God has given us. They talk about how we use these gifts and show appreciation for them.

Main ideas

- God has given us everything we need to live.
- We care for the gifts of the earth because God wants us to use them wisely.
- We thank God for giving us so much.

Family participation

- This topic provides you with an opportunity to talk about the way your family uses God’s gifts. You might talk about the gifts that the family uses every day, such as the food we eat, the cotton and wool in our clothing, the fuel that heats our homes in the winter, the wood that our furniture is made of, the park where we have our picnics.
- This topic also gives you an opportunity to help your child begin to distinguish between the things that we need in order to live and the things that we may want, but don’t really need. Children are very much influenced by their parents’ attitudes to the things of this world. If possessions are very important to you, they will be very important to your children. If, on the other hand, you are careful to distinguish between what you may want and what you need, children will learn a valuable lesson. Instead of saying, “We need another car” (or television, or furniture), you might say, “It would be nice to have a new car but we don’t really need one.” In the same way, when your child asks you for something that she or he doesn’t really need, you might answer, “I think that’s something

you want but don't really need. We'll have to see. Maybe it could be for your birthday or for Christmas.”

Topic 3 — We Work with God's Gifts

While providing the substance of life for themselves and their families, men and women are performing their activities in a way which appropriately benefits society. They can justly consider that by their labour they are unfolding the Creator's work . . .

Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 34

Summary

This topic helps the children understand the work that people do to transform God's gifts into things that we need to live. The teacher and the children talk about different kinds of work, and discuss how much we depend on these workers for essential needs like food, clothing, and homes.

Main ideas

- Many people work with the gifts of the earth to make and grow the things we need.
- We all depend on the work that people do.
- The work that people do helps to make God's world a good place to be.

Family participation

- At school the teacher used a few items in the classroom (a sweater, a piece of fruit from someone's lunch, a small toy) and ask the children to identify some of the people who worked to make (or grow) the item. You might try this at home as a family activity. Each person could name one of the people who worked to make this gift for the family. (For example, an apple: the farmer who grew the apple; the people who picked the apple; the people who transported the apple from the farm to a market or store; the people who sold the apple.)
- Work is the way we build God's world. Our work makes the world a better place and helps us become the people God wants us to be. Our human weakness, however, makes work hard, and when we are tired we often speak of it as a terrible burden. It's important to let children know that work itself is good, and how much we all depend on the work of others.

- You might like to read the prayer, “Thank You, Lord,” with your child. This prayer concludes *Fully Alive* for Grade 2. What special thanks would you and your child like to add? You will find the prayer in the section, *Fully Alive* Grade 2 Prayers.

