

Feeding 5000

WORKSHOP:

Games



OUTLINE – Games Workshop

Scripture: The Great Commandment

Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34, Luke 10:25-28

Connection to Heifer:

There are two pillars to the Great Commandment: love God and love your neighbor as yourself. Heifer is founded on the idea of helping one's neighbor, who then helps a neighbor, who then helps a neighbor, until the entire community is lifted out of poverty.

Objectives:

- Learn that Jesus gave us the Great Commandment. You only need to know two things to live in right relationship with God:
 - Love God.
 - Love your neighbor as yourself.
- Learn how Heifer works with people around the world to live out love for neighbors.
- Learn how your congregation can show love for neighbors by supporting Heifer International through the purchase of animals.

Overview:

- Learn about the Great Commandment and the connection to Heifer International.
- Using balloons, experience the power of neighbors to support each other.
- Create a circle of support and learn how Heifer works in balance with the local community.
- Use a “distribution solution” to transport “resources” from one community to the other.
- Challenge the congregation to create a circle of support through donations to Heifer.

Supplies:

Option 1: Balloon Relay

- Eight- or nine-inch round balloons, blown up – you will want to have a lot of them and paper bags or large boxes to hold the balloons for each group
- One sheet of thin masonite or thick plywood with a smooth surface, approximately 1 square yard each (3x3)
- Heifer's Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development (See Resource Packet)

Option 2: Heifer Circle of Support

- Eight Ribbons—smooth and approximately ½-inch wide. They should be 4 to 5 feet in length with words on them per instruction (approximately 50 feet needed)
- Tape
- Long ribbon a little longer than the circumference of the circle of students. Approximately 36 feet
- Hula hoop



Option 3: Distribution Solution

- Plastic colander with rather large openings and a flat bottom.
- 40-feet of string divided into four equal sections—thread the string through the colander per the diagram. Tie a small knot at the end of the string so it cannot be pulled out.
- Sticky notes – 1.5”x2” work well
- Pens
- For young children use small stuffed animals
- Older children and adults can use several two-liter bottles with tops. Fill each bottle with different amounts of water
- Paper with “Farmer” written on it

In Advance:

Write the 12 Cornerstones on 12 balloons and the different animals that Heifer provides on other balloons. You can have additional balloons with either your Church name or the children’s names. These represent all the donors who support the work of Heifer.

LESSON – Games Workshop

The Great Commandment: Read any of the scripture referenced above from the translation of the Bible that your congregation uses.

These two commandments, found in three of the four Gospels, convey Jesus' message to the world. They restate the ancient law from Deuteronomy known as the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). In Jesus' time, every Jew would have known these verses. Even today this ancient text can be found in the mezuzahs that are in many Jewish homes. The challenge then and now is to live out the scriptures, not to just know them.

The words of the prophets Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:33) and Micah (Micah 6:8) reinforce Jesus' statement that the greatest commandment was to love God with all that you have and to love your neighbor as yourself. The scriptures are to be in your heart at all times. If you act out of love, then you see each person as a child of God, worthy of love. You don't want to do anything that would harm your neighbor. This is doing the will of God. Heifer International is based on this very principle. Love and respect for all people is lived out in their organization and work.

The activities in this lesson explore the way that Heifer helps to change the lives of farmers around the world. Select from any or all of the activities depending on the age group of the participants and the length of your program.

OPTION 1: Balloon Relay

The object of this activity is to work together to transport balloons from one end of the room to the other and then use them to support the weight of the group. Use the balloons with the Cornerstones and animals for this activity.

Divide your class into two or three groups and gather at one end of the room.

At the opposite end of the room place the sheet of Masonite and a box or bag to contain the balloons.

Heifer has some concepts that guide the way that they help people around the world. These are called Cornerstones. Different projects emphasize selected Cornerstones based on the needs of the community. Each group will have several Cornerstone balloons. As you divide the balloons evenly for each group, share information about each Cornerstone from the Resource Packet.

Heifer International provides the gift of animals to help farmers around the world feed their families and generate income to send their children to school. Animals are chosen for farmers in different countries based on their needs, community and environment.

Each group will get several animal balloons. Divide the animal balloons and share, or have the children share, information about the animals. (See Resource Packet)

Each group should form two lines, as they will need to transport the balloons in pairs. If you have a very small group you can challenge them to move all the balloons in five minutes using the list of transportation methods. If they accomplish this see if they can set a shorter time and meet that time.

- The first pair should pick up a balloon. They will have to carry the balloon between their right elbows to the opposite side of the room. They can then deposit the balloon in the bag or box provided. They should then run back and tag the second pair.
- The second pair should pick up a balloon and carry it between their left pointer fingers (no other fingers please!) Repeat what the first pair did.

- The third pair should pick up a balloon and carry it between their left knees.
- The fourth pair should carry the balloon between their hips.
- The fifth pair should carry the balloon between their forearms.
- Make up additional transportation methods as needed. Have fun!

Different methods were used to move the balloons from one end of the room to another. Heifer uses different methods and techniques and animals to help people get to the same goal. This is because no two communities are the same. Each has different strengths and needs and yet the goal is always the same: sustainable changes that improve their lives.

Taking a Stand with Heifer

When all the balloons are at the opposite end of the room in their containers the entire team should go to that end of the room. The next part of the activity will be to place the balloons under the Masonite and have one or more children stand on the board with the fewest balloons popping. Make sure there are plenty of spotters.

When they are successful, ask them to shout out, “Love your neighbor as yourself!”

Reflection

It seems as if the balloons won't hold up a person, certainly if only one balloon were under the Masonite it would pop.

- Why do you think it works?
- Was it easy to get the balloons to stay under the Masonite?
- How can you relate this activity to the Great Commandment and Heifer's work in communities?

The person/s supported by the balloons was supported because all the balloons worked together. The pressure was distributed to all the balloons; no one balloon had to carry all the weight alone. When we recognize that all people are our neighbors, we can work together to support one another as we strive to live as God wishes; filled with love. Heifer knows that when we all work together—local congregations, individuals, Heifer staff and the farmers—great things can happen.

Pass on the Gift is a very important aspect of Heifer's work in that each partner farmer commits to pass on the gift of a living animal to another farmer in need. In this way the farmers demonstrate their love for their neighbors. Younger children may want to take a balloon for themselves at the end of class. If this is part of the plan make sure there are enough balloons for each participant to take two—one to keep and one to give to someone else just—like Heifer's strategy of Passing on the Gift.

Heifer helps people work together

Goats are friendly creatures that nuzzle your hand and nibble your buttons – they’re curious to find out all about you. Sometimes, Heifer goats build friendships where there were only bad feelings before.

That’s what happened in Albania. An unsettled political situation and economic hardship had everyone on edge, especially in Alarup, a mountain village where Heifer had a goat-development project. People there depend on goats as a primary source of income.

Two families, both members of the Heifer group, had been feuding over politics for decades. Things came to a head when a young man from one family and a young woman from the other wanted to get married. Their families refused, and the unhappy young woman was married off to a lad from another village.

Twenty years later at a Heifer group meeting, the two saw each other again. How would the families react? The Heifer group came to a wise decision. “We will pass on the offspring of our gift goats to these two families first,” they said. A longstanding feud ended; the villagers cheered, and, from all appearances, the goats were happy too!

OPTION 2: Heifer Circle of Support

Advanced Preparation:

<u>Write these words on the Ribbon</u>	<u>Share this information with the participant</u>
Generosity	There is an important relationship between donors to Heifer and the farmers who receive the living gifts. Farmers all pledge to Pass on the Gift to another farmer.
Agroecology	Farming practices that are ecologically sound are shared so land can be improved in a sustainable way.
Nutrition	Through Heifer’s living gift of an animal the nutrition of the farmer and community are improved.
Training	Heifer provides extensive training and support for all project participants. For many participants, the training is as important as the animals they receive, and it is not unusual for whole villages to attend training sessions.
Poverty	Approximately 1.4 billion people live on \$1.25 a day. Many of these people live in rural, farm communities.
Lack of education	Many people cannot afford to go to school and cannot get the education they need to improve their lives.
Poor land	Poor land quality does not allow farmers to grow crops or support animals or their family.
Hunger	Hunger affects people’s ability to live their lives to the fullest. Finding enough food and water consumes the vast resources and energy for many families around the world.

- Tie the ribbons onto the hula-hoop per the diagram. Use tape to secure them evenly around the hoop.
- Cut all the ribbons to an equal length.

Exploration

Show the children a bicycle wheel (preferably from a two wheel bike)

- Have them identify the parts - hub (center), spokes and rim.
- Could the wheel work with only two of these parts?
- Why does it have to be all three parts?
- What would happen if the rim was crooked or the spokes were bent or the hub was not round?
- Would the wheel roll well?

When a bike mechanic builds a bike wheel he or she assembles the pieces. Then the real work begins. The wheel must be balanced. The mechanic makes sure that the rim is true (perfectly round). Using simple tools the mechanic adjusts the tension on each spoke until they are all even. One way to check if this is done correctly is to “pluck” the spokes just like you would pluck a guitar or stringed instrument. A well-balanced wheel is in harmony. The hub, spokes and rim all work together to make the wheel roll smoothly after the mechanic has done the creative work.

This game will explore some of the issues faced by poor farmers and the kinds of support provided by Heifer. Half of the circle has ribbons that are issues faced by the farmers. The other half of the circle has ways that Heifer helps address these specific issues. Heifer International’s goal is to create a circle of support for the farmers. The farmer and his/her family is the center of the circle. Everything that is done is intended to provide this farmer with the ability to break the cycle of poverty and become more self sufficient in a sustainable way.

Heifer gifts a farmer with an animal that is suited to the environment. They also provide training on how to keep the animal healthy, how to manage the income generated by the animal products, how to use animal manure, how to use other sustainable agricultural practices and ongoing support to help the farmer move from poverty to self-sufficiency. Through Passing on the Gift the first farmer moves from the center of the circle to the support side of the circle and another farmer takes his/her place. In this way an ever increasing number of people’s lives are changed by the efforts of Heifer International.

You will need a minimum of nine participants for this activity.

- One person is the farmer and stands in the middle of the hula hoop.
- Four people represent other farmers in the area who will be receiving a pass on. They should take hold of the ribbons with the words, *lack of education, hunger, poor land, and poverty*.
- Four people represent Heifer project support. They should take hold of the ribbons with the words, *training, generosity, agroecology, nutrition*.
- The long ribbon will be tied around the entire circle.

Action

Have the farmer hold up the hula hoop.

Everyone should pull gently on their ribbon to help lift the hula hoop.

Working together, adjust the tension on the ribbons so that the farmer can let go of the hoop.

Place the long ribbon along the small of the back of the ribbon holders. Tie it together. This ribbon represents the encircling love of God and interconnected relationship of all people to one another. It is the physical presence of the Great Commandment.

Challenge

Have people in the circle change places and keep the ribbon in place. When we love God with everything we have we are moved to love our neighbor. This love always comes full circle.

When the ribbons hold up the center circle the issues of poverty no longer hold the farmer back and hunger and can move to become a support to another farmer. This is an important part of all the work that Heifer does. Farmers pass on the living gift of offspring from their animals to another deserving farmer.

If you have more than nine participants:

Have the farmer step out of the center and take the place of one of the Heifer project support people.

Have a new farmer come to the center.

Repeat the process until “farmers” have replaced all the Heifer project support people.

Reflection

For those who were farmers what did it feel like to be able to let go of the hula hoop?

- Where in the circle are we as individuals and a congregation?
- Which issue concerns you the most?
- Which area of support excites you the most?
- How can you pass on this experience to others in your family or congregation?

I asked God for all things, that I might enjoy life. God gave me life, that I might enjoy all things.

—Gertrude Freiin von Le Fort (novelist) 1876-1971

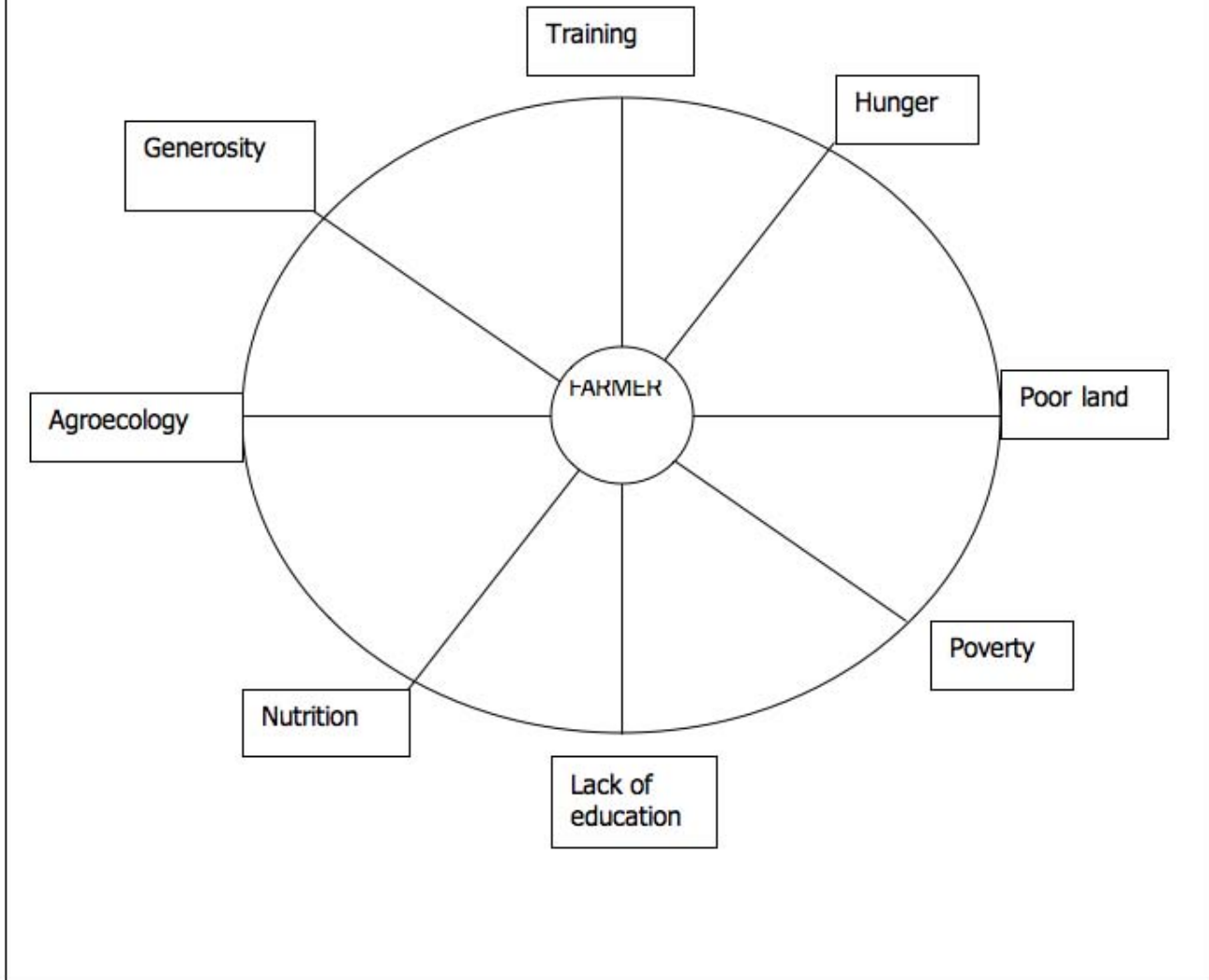
How Heifer’s circle of support looks in the world – Pigs in the Dominican Republic

The day the pigs died was a day of deep sadness. African Swine Fever appeared on the island and the whole pig population was affected. The government made false promises that they would substitute new, healthy animals. But nothing happened. People like Doña Blanca were desperate. A long dictatorship was ending. Stolen land was being returned, but farmers like her needed to learn how to manage it well. And they needed livestock for cash income.

This is when Heifer arrived in the Dominican Republic and I, Nidia de los Santos, became the Heifer representative. Campesinos received pigs on the condition they would share some of their offspring with other families. Heifer taught us new ways to care for pigs and how to make land more productive. This was the beginning of real change. A decade and more has passed and I see that as economic independence grows, so does social independence.

Heifer passed us a gift of training, animals and technical assistance; we are passing it on. Because of her Heifer animals Doña Blanca was able to send her son to the agricultural university. He is now an agronomist, serving his community. He makes sure no more pigs need die.

Heifer's circle of support



OPTION 3: Distribution Solution – this is a very challenging activity!

During this activity the class (or groups) will simulate Heifers International's work to change the world.

Sticky situations

Heifer International helps people around the world.

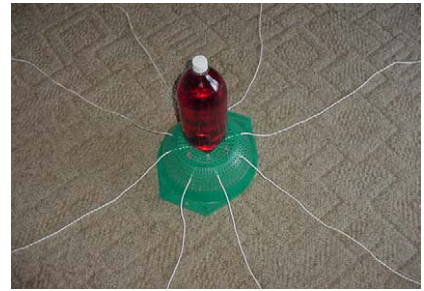
Why might people need help?

Write the answers on sticky notes. The answers might include war, no money, natural disaster and illness. Place these sticky notes on the colander in places that do not interfere with the strings.

These kinds of things affect people around the world. Sometimes there is a natural disaster that destroys a farmer's field or home. Wars cause a lot of heartache and people are often forced to leave their homes. HIV/AIDS and other illnesses ravage whole communities. Each of these things leaves people who were already on the edge of survival in an even more difficult situation.

Two-liter bottles will represent the work of Heifer International. The strings represent all the people who work together to transform the lives of the farmers and their families.

The object of this activity is to lift the bottle with the strings through the colander and move it to the location that needs this resource – "Farmer" paper. Place the colander upside down so that the flat bottom is up. Place the two-liter bottle on top and have everyone take a hold of his or her string. The only rule is that you may not touch the bottle or the colander with any part of your body. You can only touch the strings. This is challenging but possible and there are many different ways to achieve the same results.



Note to Teacher: Younger children may want to carry some stuffed animals from one location to another. This will be much easier and provide the same teaching moment.

Reflection

See how working through this situation used all your strength and brains to learn how to quickly and carefully change a situation. It is through love that we approach the situation of injustice in the world. We know that God has given the world all that is necessary for all people to live a good and productive life. It is up to the people of the world to recognize that everyone is their neighbor and what befalls one, befalls us all. Heifer International provides a wonderful tool to make the Great Commandment a reality.

Use the distribution solution to carry the gifts from the congregation to the altar for dedication.

Fundraising Responses from lesson:

Balloon Relay:

Try to fill a large space with balloons. This could be a large box, a classroom, a space marked out on the floor of the fellowship hall – be creative.

Congregation members could purchase balloons that would be placed in the space. The children could determine the value of each balloon.



Heifer Circle of Support:

Create a Circle of Support from your congregation. Using a large hula-hoop add ribbons for every dollar amount (\$5, \$10 or \$20) donation. You can write the name of the donor on the ribbon or the animal that Heifer could provide with that donation. See overview material for dollar amounts needed for each animal or group of animals.

Challenge the congregation to fill the hoop.

At the end of the rotation select several people to re-create the Circle of Support from the lesson in the worship service as part of the dedication of the gifts given to support Heifer.

Distribution Solution:

How much does \$120 weigh and can you move it. Challenge the congregation to donate \$120 for a litter of pigs. Gather the money (no checks please) and place it in a container.

During the worship service for dedicating your support to Heifer have children carry the money using the colander and strings. Put a sign "Farmer" on your altar area to receive the gifts.