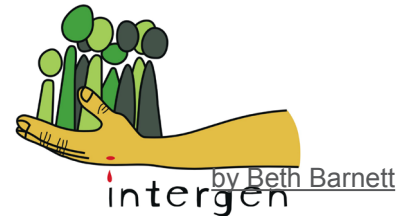


Intergenerational Worship



Visions and Voices:

Resources for Intergenerational Worship

June 24 Pentecost 5 Year B

Stressful Stories and Bubble-wrap Bible Reading



What this is: Intergenerational Bible engagement and Art



Where it's used: In any intergenerational gathering;



Time: 5 minutes



Bible focus/theme: Mark 4:35-42; 2 Cor 6:1-13



What's needed:

- Chris Booth Art image 'Boats in the Storm' on screen or printed
- Pieces of bubble wrap, distributed around your gathering space.
- Sharpies
- Optional - three people to give the simple summaries of the readings (see below)

Introduction

What do you find stressful? What makes you anxious?

(Welcome and affirm all suggestions)

What do you find calms you down?

(Welcome and affirm all suggestions)

You know one thing that helps a lot of people calm down is bubble-wrap. Squishing the little bubbles on bubble-wrap helps a lot of people keep calm.

In our readings today, from 1 Samuel 17 in the Old Testament, from the Gospel of Mark and from the Letter to the Corinthians, there is a lot of stress. The stress just keeps piling up and up. So to help us all stay calm there are pieces of bubble-wrap distributed

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around your seats today. Reach and find them, because you're going to need them soon.



The army of Israel are being attacked by the Philistines and the Philistines have a huge giant on their side - really stressful.

In the gospel reading the disciples are crossing the sea in the dark in the middle of a storm - very very stressful.

The writers of 2 Corinthians are describing how they have been beaten up, put in prison, left hungry - it goes on and on describing stressful situations.

Optional: Ask 3 different people to prepare these brief summaries and have them stand up and deliver them at this point. If it will be appreciated by your community, ask them to include a little bit of costumery - a shield or helmet, a sailor's beanie or an oar, chains or scrolls.

These are Stressful Stories - so we're going to do some Bubble-wrap Bible reading. With our bubble wrap stress relief sheets ready, let's read some Bible.

Read Mark 4:35-42, stopping at various points to notice the stress rising in the text (indi-

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” The ‘other side’ meant the place where a different people group lived, and it especially meant the place where the Roman armies were stationed. Some people find new situations stressful.

And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him.

A great windstorm arose, feel the tension rise and the waves beat into the boat, its getting more scary so that the boat was already being swamped. How stressful is this!? But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” You can hear the anxiety and desperation.

He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. Ok - now its a different kind of stressful - its a bit freaky.

He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great fear absolutely out of their minds terrified a

nd said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

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Continue with the reading from 2 Corinthians 6:1-13, again pausing to notice the escalating anxiety in the text, and encouraging and modelling the use of bubble wrap.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! so far so good, but watch out

We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry,

but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way:

through great endurance, things are getting hard

in afflictions, hardships, calamities, feel the stress

beatings, imprisonments, riots, oh - the anxiety is off the scale

labors, sleepless nights, hunger; **more stress!**
by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, **hang on - things are sounding better**
holiness of spirit, genuine love,
truthful speech, and the power of God; **not so bad**
with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; **Uh -oh, back to**
battling in honor and dishonor, **stress**
in ill repute and good repute. **stress**
We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; **stress**
as unknown, and yet are well known; **more stress**
as dying, and see—we are alive;
as punished, and yet not killed;
as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;
as poor, yet making many rich;
as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. **So many problems and things to**
cause anxiety, but they are all mixed in with thankfulness and joy and knowing the
love of God.

We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you.
There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours.
In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

Conclusion

It's been a stressful time reading the Bible today.

There are two things I've noticed.

First - the Bible doesn't pretend that life is always calm and manageable. Followers of Jesus, the people of God, even apostles get stressed and anxious and fearful. It's just really normal - I know it, you know it, the Bible knows it.

But secondly - in the midst of the fears and stresses there is comfort, the voice of Jesus that says 'Be still' and the loving Spirit of God, that reminds us of what is true and good and pure - the living love of God in our hearts.

Take home your piece of bubble-wrap and let it remind you that God is with us in the stressful situation.

Art Extension

Through the remainder of your gathering time, invite participants to write on their pieces of Bubble-wrap some of the things that stress them. Invite them to add them to a large poster of the image by Chris Booth (where the waves are already a bit bubble-wrapped) or to a similar picture you have drawn yourself.