



## TELL THE WORLD: NURTURE AND RECLAIMING

June 20, 2015

### Sabbath School Program: CLASP My Hand

#### Prepare for the program by gathering together:

- One sheet of plain or colored paper per person
- One pen/pencil per person
- Several heart-shaped balloons for the closing illustration

#### Introduction

Today is a special Sabbath in which we're focusing on nurturing and reclaiming members. We can reach out to new people, tell them about Jesus, and baptize them. But unless we continue to love and care for the people who come to our church—unless we *disciple* them—it's like planting a garden, and then forgetting to weed it and water it.

#### CLASP each other!

“CLASP” is an acronym that can remind us of some of the important things we need to do to nurture and reclaim each other:

● **Comfort** one another when sad and hurtful things happen. “Mourn with those who mourn” (Rom. 12:15).\*

● **Love** one another—discover what helps each person to feel loved and valued—and then do it for them. “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34).

● **Accept** and forgive each other when mistakes have been made, or when you have differing ideas and preferences. “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Rom. 15:7).

● **Support** each other when times are hard. “Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2).

● **Pray** for each other. “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints” (Eph. 6:18).

#### Exploring CLASP

● Create small groups of 3 to 5 people and allocate each group one of the CLASP categories to discuss.

● Give them a few minutes to list some different ways that they could comfort, love, accept, support or pray for others.

● Invite groups to feedback some ideas in each category.

#### CLASP my hand

Distribute the paper and pens. Invite everyone to draw around a hand and write on each finger one thing they would like others to do that would encourage and nurture them if they were on the margins of the church family, unable to attend, or taking a break for a while.

They can also include some ways that they would like to CLASP other people in your church family and community.

The hands can be taken home to remind them to CLASP each other. Or you can collect them, cut them out, and create a bulletin board of ideas.

### **How Jesus inspires us to CLASP each other**

*Preparation:*

- Purchase some large, red, heart-shaped balloons. You only need one, but it is good to have a spare in case one pops!

- Choose one person from your leadership team to represent God. They need to be able to blow up a balloon easily.

- Choose one person from your leadership team to represent a Christian.

- Choose one person to be the “narrator” to explain what is happening.

Have the volunteers—“God” and “Christian”—stand at the front of the church a short distance apart. Christian holds a deflated heart balloon.

*Narrator:*

We want to reach out to nurture each church member, and we want to reclaim those who have chosen not to come to church for a while. But sometimes we don’t know what to do for the best. And sometimes we don’t have the energy, love, and wisdom to do this caring work.

*Christian looks dismally down at the small, flat balloon in his/her hands.*

But we can always go to God and ask Him to fill us with His Spirit.

*Christian suddenly looks up, smiles, and takes the balloon to “God.” “God” inflates the balloon carefully, without tying the end, and gives the balloon back to Christian.*

Then we can take God’s wise and loving Spirit and share it with those around us who really need to experience God’s love.

*Christian takes the balloon and moves around the congregation, visiting different people, and carefully letting a little air out at a time, as a symbol of sharing God’s love with them. As Christian visits each person, the narrator shares an idea of how love might be shown. Add more of your own.*

We can invite them for a simple supper in our home; we can call them up; we can pray with them and for them; we can send a thoughtful card or email; we can surprise them with a bunch of flowers, a loaf of bread, or some vegetables from our garden; we can go and help them do a job they find difficult.

But we need to keep going back to God to make sure we don’t get depleted, and to make sure we are fully topped up with plenty of God’s love to share.

*Christian takes the empty balloon back to God to be re-inflated.*

God is always ready and waiting to fill us with His love, so that we can focus His love in the places where it’s needed most.

### **Closing questions**

- Whom do you know who needs to feel the CLASP of your love and God’s love this week? What will you do to CLASP them?

- What would happen if everyone in this church did one thing each week to CLASP another person in our church community?

### **Musical Selections**

*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

81—“Though I Speak with Tongues”

573—“I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go”

575—“Let Your Heart be Broken”

577—“In the Heart of Jesus”

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\* Unless otherwise noted, all scriptural references in this Sabbath School program are from the *New International Version of the Bible*.