

## Ministry with Children District Leadership Training Opening and Closing Devotions

### Opening Devotion

**A Reading** - Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 18, verses 1-7.

**A Song** - "Jesus Loves Me"

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made!

**People: We will rejoice and be glad in it!**

Leader: We serve the children that God has made!

**People: We will both love and take care of them!**

Leader: We welcome children in God's name!

**People: We will not be stumbling blocks for our children.**

Leader: This is the children's ministry training that gives thanks to God for children, where we covenant to meet their needs faithfully.

**People: We will give thanks and covenant anew. Amen.**

### A Story

*Let us pray:* O God, we come to hear your word today with ears distracted by wiggles and giggles, minds trapped by tensions and to-do lists, and hearts dulled by habit. By your Spirit, sharpen our ears to catch your word to us this day. Open our minds to grasp your truth. Quicken our hearts to respond to your message to us that together we may create the world you intend for your beloved children. **Amen.**



### Closing Prayer

**Leader:** In the Gospel of John, we read Jesus' post-resurrection words to the disciples. How might they call us to new life, new hope, and a new day for ourselves and for all children? Listen! Jesus said, *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."*

Friends, we know the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. Every child is our neighbor and deserves and needs our love. Let us love the children as we love ourselves.

**People: We will love God. We will love our neighbor. We will work toward a community where children know the love of God. Amen**