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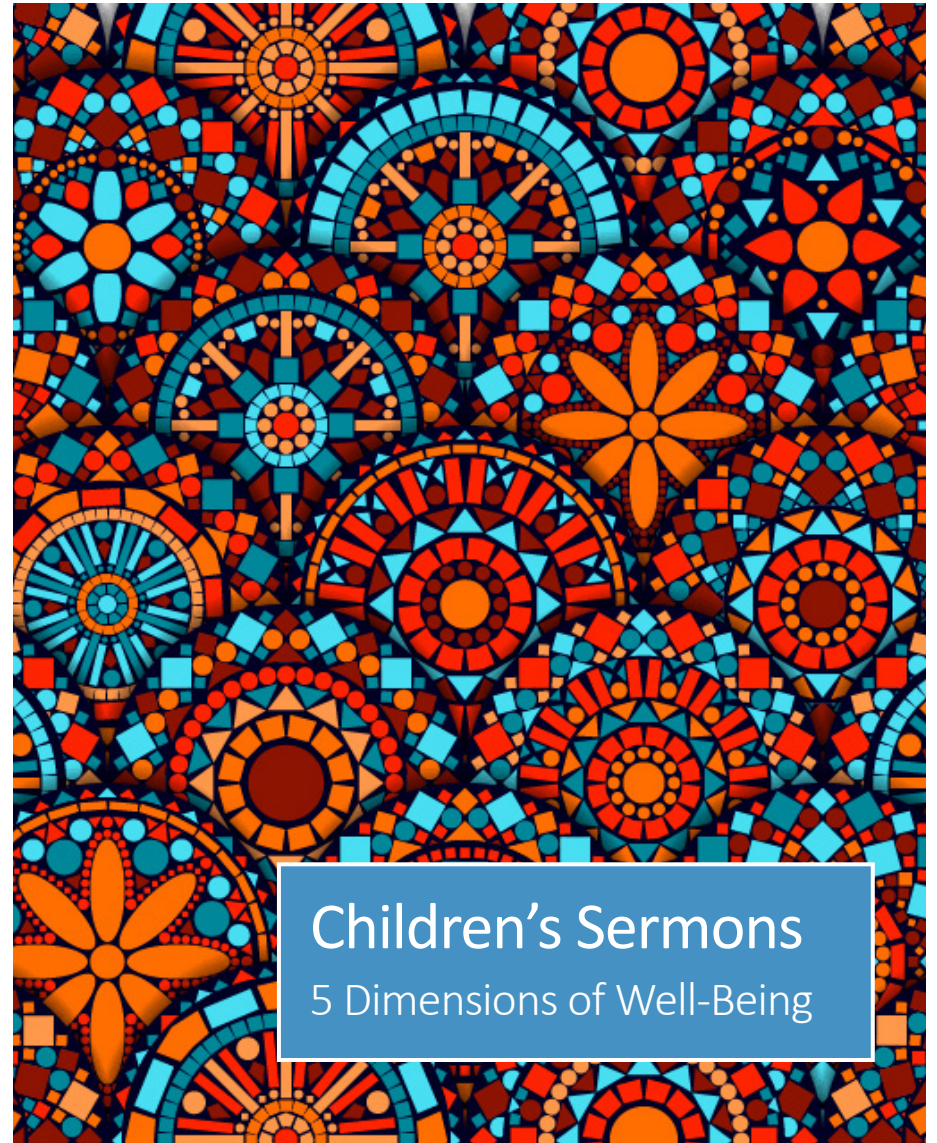
BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

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Children's Sermons

5 Dimensions of Well-Being



Mtoto Wa Mungu “A Child of God”

Children’s sermons based on the 5 Dimensions of Well-Being

Created by:
Wespath Benefits and Investments
and Rev. Grace Imathiu

These *five children’s sermons* are provided to encourage children of all ages to care for their well-being. We hope that they inspire many United Methodists to take time to take care of themselves.

This project could not have been started or completed without *Rev. Grace Imathiu, Sr. Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois*. Rev. Imathiu’s theological insight, creativity and storytelling ability is at the core of these sermons.

Mtoto Wa Mungu Swahili for “A Child of God”

The purpose of Mtoto Wa Mungu is to provide the children’s sermon leader with a series of stories to teach children and the congregation about the love of God, the importance of taking care of themselves and utilizing the gifts given to them.

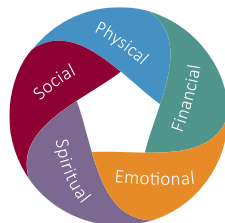
This booklet contains 5 unique children’s sermons based on Wespath’s 5 dimensions of well-being: physical, spiritual, financial, emotional and social.

The series is best presented in 5 sequential weeks.

To help communicate the story, the children will be introduced to Brynn who uses one of her gifts to help raise funds for other children.

Supplies needed:

- Bucket—each week
- Bottle of water—week 2
- Penny—week 3
- Can of soda—week 4
- Jigsaw puzzle piece—week 5



Sermon 5: Social Well-Being

Supplies/Props Needed:

Bucket and jigsaw puzzle piece (a picture from a magazine can be cut into pieces that can be glued together to make the picture)

Concept/Lesson:

We all need friends and family. We are part of a bigger picture and we are never alone. We always have Jesus’ love.

Our bodies are like a bucket, that they are filled with Jesus’ love for us and that even small things fill our bucket. We also know that sometimes our buckets get bumped and it feels like a can of soda that has been shaken up, but remembering that we are a Child of God helps.

Show the jigsaw piece.

Questions:

Q: What is this?

Wait for answers.

Q: Do you know what the picture looks like from just this piece?

Wait for answers.

It is difficult to know what the picture fully is, when there is only one piece. You have to wait until the pieces are together then, you can see the full picture.

Q: When do you feel alone? *Wait for answers.*

Q: What do you do when you feel alone? *Wait for answers.*

Q: Who do you reach out to when you need help? *Wait for answers.*

Brynn Story:

Over the past few weeks, we have learned more about Brynn who used her gifts to make a picture to raise money for other children. Brynn takes the finished picture to the post office to mail it to the mission. At the post office, she is not sure how to protect the picture against damage in shipping. The postal worker helps her wrap the picture so it is safe and secure. Another customer at the post office overhears the story of the picture and how it is going to help other children and said they will pay the shipping. This means that Brynn can add some money to help more children. She is thankful and says a prayer. She realizes how many people the picture has connected her to: *her aunt who taught her how to make the picture, the pastor who told her the story of the children who needed help, the framer and the lady in the framing store, the postal worker who helped her wrap up the picture and the man who helped pay for the wrapping*. Everyone who helped used their gifts. Therefore, this one small picture became an even bigger gift, connecting many people. Brynn is grateful for everyone who helped her and in turn, helped others.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for giving us gifts of helping others and the gift of your love. Help us to remember that we need to take care of ourselves so that we can continue to use our gifts—no matter how small—so we can help others. Amen.



Sermon 4: Emotional Well-Being

Supplies/Props Needed:

Bucket and a can of soda

Concept/Lesson:

Sometimes things don't go the way you expect them to. Do you get all shook up and ready to explode like when you shake up a can of soda? Or do you have things in your bucket that help you keep calm.

Remember that we have been filling our buckets with good things—food, exercise, care, Jesus' love, and nurturing and sharing our gifts. We learned that no matter how small our gifts are, they make a difference. Our bucket can be filled to the top. But even when your bucket is filled with wonderful things, sometimes we get bumped and our filled-up bucket sloshes around and spills out. This can be scary and frustrating. Kind of like what happens when a can of soda gets all shaken up. When we are frustrated we can make a terrible mess by hurting others with our words or our actions.

Shake up the can of soda.

Questions:

Q: **Should we open up the can? Why or why not?** *Wait for an answer.*

Q: **What things make you want to explode?** *Wait for an answer.*

Q: **How do you feel?** *Wait for an answer.*

Q: **What things do you think that you could do to help you not explode?** *Wait for an answer.*

Here are some things that you could have in place to help you not explode:

- Repeat after me: Dear God, please help me
- Repeat after me: I am a Child of God, please grant me peace
- Take deep breaths
- Go for a walk
- Count to 10
- Look at the situation from a different perspective or way

LESSON: It is important to have tools to help us not explode like a can of shaken up soda.

Brynn Story:

If you remember from last week, Brynn used her gifts to create a picture—called Mtoto Wa Mungo or “Child of God”—to help raise money for missions. She took the picture to the framer and they did not charge full price for the picture framing. Now, Brynn is excited to pick up the picture. Brynn goes the framer with her saved money. When the framer tells her how much it will cost, she realizes that someone had taken some of her money. She doesn't have enough to pay the framer. She feels frustrated, angry and confused. She feels like a can of soda that has been shaken up. She takes some deep breaths, says a prayer and looks at her picture that tells her that she is a Child of God. One of the other customers in the store hears the story and said that she would pay the framer. The customer wants to contribute to the mission to help other children. Brynn smiles and the feeling of being a can of shaken up soda in her tummy goes away. She feels better and knows that she can use the money to pay for the shipping for her picture. She also has the feeling of Jesus' spirit of love.

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank you for buckets full of wonderful gifts. Help us to know that sometimes things do not go the way that we want them to. Help us remember that your love and having faith in you that everything will work out the way you want it to. Amen.



Sermon 1: Physical Well-Being

Supplies/Props Needed:

A bucket or cup (in any size, color or material—i.e., plastic, wooden, ceramic)

Concept/Lesson:

We can compare our bodies to a bucket. Our bodies need to be sturdy and strong in order for us to help celebrate Jesus and to do his work. The wonderful thing about buckets is they come in all shapes and sizes. They can hold lots of things big or small—but they all hold something.

Questions:

Q: **How do you use a bucket? What are things that you put in a bucket?**

Wait for answers like: water, berries, nails, cleaning supplies.

LESSON: It is important to take care of the bucket, so that it can hold all of those good things. Your body is like a bucket. Like a bucket, your body holds wonderful things—like our bones, our tummy, our lungs, our hearts, our brains, our emotions. Like the bucket, we need to take care of our bodies— that way we can hold everything that we need to, and we are able to do and share the gifts that Jesus has given us.

Q: **If your body is like a bucket, what are some things you can put in it?**

Wait for answers like: eat fruits and veggies, drink plenty of water, exercise, music and hugs.

Show the bucket to the children.

Q: **What are you going to do this week to take care of your bucket/body?**

Wait for answers. Now let me tell you a story of a girl named Brynn, and how she is taking care of her body so that she can share the gifts that Jesus has given her.

Brynn Story:

During church, Brynn learned about an auction to help raise money for children's missions. There were other children who needed resources to help take care of their bodies/buckets such as food, water, vaccinations. She thought that she could use one of her skills to create a picture to sell at the auction to raise money for the children. Her aunt had shared her gifts of making pictures with Brynn over the past few months and now she wanted to use this gift to help. She found the sample of the picture she wanted to make and got to work.

PRAYER:

Dear Jesus, Thank you for your gift of our wonderful, perfect bodies. Each of our bodies is unique and different and perfect. Our bodies help us to run, play, draw, sing, write, learn, hug and more. Please help us to use our gifts to honor and celebrate you. Amen.



Sermon 2: Spiritual Well-Being

Supplies/Props Needed:

Bucket and a bottle of water

Concept/Lesson:

Our bodies are like buckets and are filled with wonderful gifts. One of those things is how Jesus loves us and that he fills us with love—so we can love ourselves and others.

Do you remember last week we talked about how our body like a bucket, holds wonderful gifts—things like bones, muscles, lungs, brain and your heart.

Questions:

Q: When you see a heart what do you think of?

Have the children share ideas. If they don't, bring up love, ask if they think of love.

Q: Who do you love? How do you know someone loves you?

Wait for answers.

Q: How does it feel to be loved?

Wait for answers.

Q: How do you know Jesus loves you?

Wait for answers.

Q: Have you heard about Baptism? Do you remember baptism?

Wait for answers.

LESSON: When you are baptized your family dedicates you to Jesus to help you know his love. When you were baptized, you had water placed on your head. When we pour the water in the bucket, it is like your body being filled with the spirit of the love of Jesus. Pour water in the *bucket*.

Brynn Story:

Last week, we learned about Brynn. Brynn is using her gifts for creating pictures to help raise money for other children. She is determined to create the best picture she can for the mission's auction. She decided the picture she would make will be called, Mtoto Wa Mungo or "A Child of God." She designs the best picture she can, finds the best colors and paper that she can. As she uses her gifts that Jesus gave her to work on the picture, she is filled with Jesus' spirit of love.

We will learn more about Brynn's story and her picture next week.

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank you for the gifts that you have given us and for the spirit of your love living in us, just like at our baptism. Help us to share that spirit with those we care and love. Amen.



Sermon 3: Financial Well-Being

Supplies/Props Needed:

Bucket and a penny

Concept/Lesson:

Our bodies are like buckets and they hold wonderful things like our bones, our muscles, our lungs and our hearts and more. Last week, we learned that many people love us, and that love helps to fill our bucket. We need to take care of our bodies, so that they can be filled with Jesus' love for us. Today, we are going to learn that we are never too small to make a difference.

Questions:

Q: Are there ever times that you feel small? Do you sometimes feel that you are too little to make a difference?

Wait for answers. Show the penny.

Q: How much do you think this is worth? Can you buy anything with it? Does a penny make a difference?

Wait for answers.

LESSON: On its own, a penny doesn't have much value; but if you continue to save a penny, before too long, you can have a dollar! What happens if you want to buy something for a dollar and you only have 99 cents? All of a sudden, that penny means a lot!

Our gifts from God are like that. They may seem small, but if we work together and bring the gifts that have been given to us, we can make a difference—just like that penny.

Brynn Story:

The past two Sundays, we have been learning about Brynn. She is using her gift of creating pictures to help raise money for a mission project to help other children. She has felt Jesus' love for her as she has created her picture. Over the past week, Brynn finished her picture and she went to have it framed. She is worried about the cost to have the picture framed. But she was determined to share her gift of making pictures to help others. While her gift was small, she believed it would help others. So she takes it to the framer and she tells them her story. The framer decides to give a gift and that they will not charge Brynn for the work it takes to frame the picture—just the supplies. Brynn feels the spirit of Jesus in the framer's gift and now she doesn't feel her gift is so small.

PRAYER:

Dear God, sometimes we feel so small and that we cannot do enough to make a difference. Help us to remember that all gifts are important and that by sharing our gifts and combining them with others we can make a difference and show Jesus' love. Amen.