

LEARNER SHEET: SAFEGUARD LIFE

Matthew 5:17-48



THE BIG IDEA

God wants us to nurture and protect all living things.

BIG FUN IDEA

Go for a hike together in a local nature preserve or park. Look for examples where life is thriving. What is not doing well? Why? Has harm been inflicted by nature or humans? Or is the dying a part of a natural cycle?

BIG SERVING IDEA

Call a local service agency to determine physical needs in your community. Make a comprehensive list (food, toiletries, clothes, and so forth). Have everyone take responsibility for one or two items, assemble all items, and bring them to the place designated by the agency you contacted.

PRAYER TIME

Remember your partner's prayer needs—record them here.

DISCUSSION TIME

- **Discuss the following quote from Luther's Large Catechism: "The meaning of this commandment, then, is that no one should harm another person for any evil deed, no matter how much that person deserves it....Many people, although they do not actually commit murder, nevertheless curse others and wish such frightful things on them that, if they were to come true, they would soon put an end to them" (The Large Catechism, in *The Book of Concord*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000, page 411).**
- **On a sheet of paper, write about a time you were "killed" by another's words or actions, and a time you "killed" another with your words or actions. Discuss with the group.**
- **On a sheet of paper, write about a time you nurtured and protected life, and a time your life was nurtured and protected by another, then discuss.**
- **Does violence in movies, television, and video games desensitize you to the reality and pain of killing? Why or why not? In watching or playing such violence, are you participating in "killing" as we're talking about here? Why or why not?**

LEARNER TAKE-HOME SHEET: SAFEGUARD LIFE

Matthew 5:17-48



Take this sheet home and keep it someplace near the dinner table like on the fridge. At least three times next week at dinner, use Prayer Time and one other family activity to make your confirmation learning come alive!

PRAYER TIME

There are seven inhabited continents on earth and seven days of the week. Pray for the well-being of the residents of one continent each day this week. Pay attention to the news or do an Internet search to learn about the particular needs of people on the continent for which you are praying.

TALK TIME

- What does your family already do to care for the physical needs of your neighbors? Discuss together one new way of caring for others that you can try in the coming months. Make a plan to make it happen.
- How do you reconcile the God who commands, "Do not kill," with the God who commands one country to eliminate another?
- What might your family do or say that unintentionally "kills" each other? How do you build each other up and support one another's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs?

WEB TIME

Check the Web sites for "Lutheran Services in America" and the National Council of Churches' "Web of Creation." What are they doing to take care of the physical needs of their neighbors and all of creation? Do a search on "nonviolence." Look at five sites. What resources do these offer for nonviolent conflict resolution?

RITUAL TIME

Integrate your prayers and the ritual theme this week. Each day find a hymn from the continent for which you are praying. (Borrow a hymnal from church if you don't have one.) Sing or read it together. How about planning dinner around people on that continent too?



KEY WORDS

Keep a family white board someplace near the dinner table, and write these words on it. Try writing a family definition for each one during the week.

INTERRELATEDNESS
ACCOMPANIMENT
BEING
NONVIOLENCE

