

“The Church Is a Building”

by Carol Duerksen

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- 1 Arrange for persons who work with your church facility to come give your students a tour of the church building. This could include custodians, trustees, pastors, groundskeepers, any persons who work with the actual building and its upkeep.
- 2 Invite someone who knows the history of the church building to come and share a few highlights of its past.

SESSION OUTLINE

1 Begin the session by making the following statement, and asking students who agree with it to move to the right side of the room, disagree to the left side. They must choose one side or the other.

The Church is not a building.

Ask students to explain their answers. Say: *We often say that the church is not a building, it is the body of believers, and that is very true. But it is also true that we do have buildings that we call a “church,” so yes, this was a trick question to get us to think about the church. Today we are going to look at the church building, and we have some people here to help us do that.*

Introduce the guests and their roles.

BACKGROUND:

Invite your guest to share some highlights of the church building’s history.

When was it built? What were some of the issues around building the church?

Invite guests to share about the roles they play in the upkeep of the church. Ask them to talk about what does it take to keep a church building in good shape.

TOUR THE CHURCH:

Go on a tour of the church, visiting various areas that students probably don’t ever see, or rarely see. Ask the persons who work with those areas to talk about them.

Examples and some questions to discuss:

- The heating and air conditioning units. What does it cost to heat and air condition the church every month?

- The archives. What is stored here? How are important papers and items protected?
- Storage closets. What is stored here?
- The audio-visual system.
- Kitchen
- Sunday school rooms.
- Other rooms and aspects of the church building, based on what you church has.

PROCESS:

Come back together to talk about what students saw. What surprised them?

What did they see that was new to them?

PLAN A WORK DAY:

Plan a time for the students to work in the church—dusting, painting, cleaning—anything they can do to be involved with the upkeep of the church facility.

PRAYER:

Close with a prayer, thanking God for the building and for the people who work hard to take care of it.