

**SPECIAL
SUNDAY**

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®

Children's Activity

Supplies:

- paper plate
- yarn, any color
- hole punch
- craft beads
- paper feathers with dreams listed on them and/or craft feathers
- color markers
- scissors

Additional resources for your church library or to read to the students:

- *Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story* by Kevin Noble Maillard
- *We are the Grateful Otsaliheliga* by Traci Sorell
- *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom
- *Chukfi, Rabbit's Big, Bad, Bellyache, A Tricksters Tale* by Greg Rodgers
- *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses* by Paul Goble

Begin with a prayer:

Today, we are celebrating Native American Ministries Sunday. There are many United Methodist Native Americans and it's important for us to learn about the culture of our Native American church family.

We are going to start our time with a three-step morning prayer that was shared by a Seneca elder, Sister Jose Hobday. Let's start in a line and take a big step forward with each step:

First Step: Plant your feet firmly on the earth (or ground). Using your five senses, give thanks to our Creator God for the countless ways God comes to us through creation—for all the beauty that your eyes see, for all the sounds that your ears hear, for all the scents that you smell, the tastes that you taste, for all that you feel (the sun, wind, rain, snow, warm or cold). Pray this day that you may be open to the countless ways that our Creator God comes to us through your senses, through the gifts of creation.

Second Step: Let go of all the pain, struggle, regret, failures, garbage of yesterday, step out of it, leave it behind; brush the dust of it from your feet.

Third Step: With this third and final step, step into the gift of the new day, full of hope, promise and potential. Give thanks for the gift of this new day, which God has made! (<https://www.gnjumc.org/news/a-three-step-morning-prayer-from-a-native-american/>).



Children's Activity

Tell Stories

The Bible talks about dreams a lot—sometimes it is a way for God to send messages. Can you think of some situations in the Bible that involved dreams?

(Joseph in Egypt, Jacob's Ladder, Daniel, Joseph before and after Jesus is born, the magi, Pilate's wife)

Some Native American stories are also about dreams. Like this one about a dream catcher (read the story):

<https://www.firstpeople.us/FP-HTML-Legends/TheLegendOfTheDreamcatcher-Chippewa.html>.

What are some scary ideas or thoughts that worry you that you would like to get caught in a dream catcher?

(allow time for answers)

In a few minutes, we are going to make our own dream catchers. But first (hand out paper cut in the shape of feathers), on your feathers, write words or draw pictures of what you dream of or of your prayers. We will hang them from our dream catchers.

In Native American culture feathers are a powerful symbol of trust, honor, strength, wisdom, power and freedom. Eagle feathers are especially deeply revered and a sign of high honor.

Make a Dream Catcher

Instructions:

1. Begin by cutting in the center of the paper plate. Leave a rim of 2 inches all around the paper plate
2. Take your hole punch and punch a hole in the rim of the paper plate, about ½ inch apart each.
3. Measure out your yarn 5-6 ft. long. Tie one end of the yarn to any one of the holes on the rim of the paper plate.
4. Weave the yarn up, over and all around the paper plate from one hole to the next one. You can make your pattern any way you like. Make sure to loop through each of the punched holes.
5. You can add the craft beads to the middle of the dream catcher with the yarn as you go through the holes. Simply slip them onto the yarn and continue with the next hole. They will appear to be in the middle of the dream catcher.
6. Once all of the holes are threaded with the yarn, tie a knot at the end of the yarn with the plate and the last hole.
7. Now, take your hole punch and punch 3 more holes in the paper plate at the bottom of the plate.
8. Cut 3 more pieces of yarn, about 5 inches long each.
9. Take each piece of yarn and tie them to the 3 punched holes at the bottom of the dream catcher.
10. Choose some beads to thread onto each of the 3 yarn pieces and then tie one feather to the end of each of the hanging yarn pieces.
11. Take your markers and decorate the edges of the paper plate.
12. Lastly, make a piece of yarn the length you need to hang it on the wall. Punch one more hole to the top of your paper plate dream catcher and tie the yarn to it.
13. Hang your new dream catcher in a place where sweet dreams are welcome.

Pray

Creator, thank you for these children and their dreams. Be a dream catcher and dream caster for them as they grow and learn. Thank you for our Native American church family and for the ways that different culture and traditions share your love with others. Amen.