

PARTISAN PIZZA

WHAT YOU NEED: This can be only discussion, but it would be best with actual pizza



Optional: pizza-making supplies and a microwave oven, pizza delivery, or prepared frozen pizza

WHAT YOU DO:

- Discuss with kids the different things needed to make a pizza; dough, cheese, sauce, toppings. (If you're making a pizza this is great discussion while doing so.)
- Ask kids what their favorite part of the pizza is, have them brainstorm reasons why their favorite is the best and most necessary part; without them, it isn't really pizza at all!
- Debate the issue, making sure to keep it light and funny, without any hard feelings afterward.

WHAT YOU SAY:

- Okay, really, to make the best kind of pizza, you need all the parts of a pizza: a crust, sauce, cheese, toppings—even if it's more cheese—and of course salt, spices, all of these things contribute to making pizza the amazing awesomeness that it is.
- Pizza is more than just a bunch of soggy veggies and flour in a bowl of milk. There's a lot that goes into pizza that makes it more than bare ingredients. There's cooking and mixing and tossing and rolling and shredding and topping and baking and cutting. That's kind of like the church—we're just a lot of ingredients. We need someone to bring us together to make us more than just humans who are standing near each other in a big building.
- We need Jesus. He is who makes us the actual church. That's why the church is called Jesus' body. (The body of Christ.) We need our differences, but we also need to be united around Jesus who leads us and guides us, helping us make wise choices to love and serve others with our individual talents and gifts. That is why going to church is so important. That's how **"the story of Jesus changes how we work together."**

CONNECT THE THUMBPRINTS

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible, "Connect the Thumbprints" Activity Pages-NIRV; 1 per child, washable markers, wet wipes, pens

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each child an Activity Page and a pen.
- Review the memory verse by reading Ephesians 2:8 aloud and saying it together.
- Have kids fill in the missing words on their papers. See if they can do it from memory but assist as needed.
- As kids work, ask them to tell you what the memory verse means. What is the gift of God? (*eternal life, salvation*) Why is it something we can't earn by being good? (*none of us can ever be good enough*)
- When kids have filled in the words of the memory verse, tell them they will take turns adding a thumbprint inside the gift (get everyone in the family's thumbprint.) box on each other's paper. Show them how to paint their thumbs with the marker and then quickly press a thumbprint inside the gift box on their page.
- Invite the kids to repeat the process by painting their thumbs and adding thumbprints inside the gift boxes of everyone's paper. This will work for one child by simply including family members to add their thumbprints.
- When finished, have the kids wipe their thumbs clean with a wet wipe.
- Last, let them use their markers to connect the thumbprints (like connect-the-dots) to make an abstract outline and discuss what they think the outline looks like (similar to cloud formations).

WHAT YOU SAY:

- When Jesus died, He died for each of us. That's an incredible gift! When we admit that we have sinned, and we understand that believing in Jesus is the only way to have our sins forgiven, we can then receive God's gift of eternal life. When that happens, **the story of Jesus changes how we work together.** We begin to realize that we're all part of a wonderful plan that God is leading. Each of us have different gifts and skills that are as unique and individual as our fingerprints. When God connects us with others and we work together, there's no limit to the different ways He can use us."