

# PEOPLE CONNECTION

by Dean Dammann

## THE CHURCH

### PURPOSE

To have participants experience togetherness and to understand how the body of Christ, the church, is held together.

### PREPARATION

Make copies of the Checklist in the "Meat" of the Meeting or write the questions on a chalkboard.

Gather enough pencils, paper and Bibles for the group.

### OPENING

Form groups of six to eight. The person with the biggest hands serves as group leader.

Take a few minutes to get acquainted if necessary. Have the group share favorite family times or activities.

Ask the youth to recall the most significant or meaningful spiritual experience that happened to them in the church fellowship. Instruct them to write a brief paragraph to identify the occasion—when, where and why it was meaningful. Each person in turn shares his or her paragraph, making additional explanation as necessary.

### THE "MEAT" OF THE MEETING

Distribute and discuss the Checklist.

After everyone has shared, discuss any new learnings gained from the experience.

Each group's next activity is to

#### Checklist

Choose two items that best describe your feelings about the opening activities.

- I was surprised by what (name) shared.
  - I feel closer to members of the group than I did at the beginning.
  - I felt uncomfortable sharing my experience.
  - I was surprised that (name)'s experience was like mine.
  - I was excited about sharing my experience.
  - Other
- Share the two items you checked and explain why you chose those.

develop a "people machine," which is an action human sculpture. Each member becomes part of a machine that acts out an activity. Because it is a machine, each part functions as part of the whole. To replicate a crane, there would be wheels or caterpillar treads, an engine, controls, the crane part, the hook or bucket and the operator. As the machine is assembled, the youth should be sure to connect each part (person) and plan a specific action for each part.

Groups should plan their machines in secret so the other groups are not aware of their plans. They should practice

"running" the machine as much as possible without revealing its identity.

Take time for each small group to demonstrate its machine for the total group. After each group performs, have the other groups decide what machine was modeled. Each group should try to reach consensus in its guess. Distribute paper so that the guesses can be written down and compared after all groups have demonstrated their machines.

As a total group share the guesses. Choose the machine in which all the parts best worked together.

Return to the small groups and read Ephesians 4:14-16. Discuss these verses as related to the concept of the body of Christ as a people machine. Each group should examine ways the people machines enhance or enlarge

understanding of the youth's part in the body of Christ, the Christian church.

Verse 16 indicates "the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided." Read Ephesians 4:12—5:21 and have the youth identify the specific actions which might break their connection with the other parts (people) of the body or which build connections within the body (church). Have the participants make a list by noting verse numbers and key words on a sheet of paper. Compare the lists.

### RESPONSE (OR CLOSING)

Have the youth choose one of the "connection" actions which needs attention in their lives. As a closing, pray a short prayer bringing this concern to the Lord. Then join hands and pray the Lord's Prayer together.