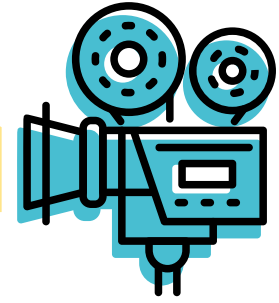


At the Movies

BLACK PANTHER



GATHER

The film *Black Panther* is an epic tale of the mythical land of Wakanda and its leader, King T'Challa. It is the eighteenth film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and was the first Marvel film with a predominantly black cast. *Black Panther* was praised by critics and fans for its stunning visual spectacle, an award-winning soundtrack, and for featuring female characters as skilled warriors and brilliant scientists. Themes of reconciliation and teamwork are central to this film.

ICEBREAKER: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD

As participants arrive, hand each person several yellow sticky notes, several pink sticky notes, and a pencil. Identify two blank spaces on a wall or whiteboard where people can post their sticky notes. Ideally, these spaces will be on opposite sides of the room. Have the group sit in their usual places. Walk them through the activity with these instructions:

1. Sometimes, when we have worship, we start by confessing our sins and receiving God's forgiveness. We do this act of reconciliation with God, but we don't always take time to reconcile with the people we've hurt.
2. Think of a time you hurt or offended someone, which resulted in you making amends with this person. Write your sin on the yellow sticky note. Write your act of reconciliation on the pink sticky note. (Eg. "I stole \$5 from my friend" and "I apologized and gave them their money back.")
3. Affix your notes next to each other on the wall. Would anyone like to share what you wrote?
4. Now, think of an issue between you and someone else that is unresolved. Write your sin on another yellow sticky note and write a possible way you could reconcile with this person on the pink sticky note. Place these notes next to each other on another wall.

SUPPLIES

- Yellow sticky notes
- Pink sticky notes
- Writing utensil

DID YOU KNOW?

Black Panther became the highest-grossing film in history (over \$1.3 billion) to be directed and written by African-Americans.

WATCH

Introduce the film *Black Panther* to the group. Indicate that the movie contains some violent action sequences and language which isn't usually church-appropriate. Encourage the group to pay special attention to the ways race and culture are portrayed through the interactions among Wakandans.

Play the film.

Discuss the film:

- One of the key relationships in the film is between T'Challa and his father, T'Chaka. They have great love for each other, and yet T'Challa feels that he needs to make different choices than T'Chaka. Discuss a time you disagreed with someone you respected. How did it play out?
- Erik Killmonger wants to use Wakanda's weapons to help people of African descent gain power, especially for people whose ancestors were slaves and whose families continue to be mistreated. What do you think of his motives? Are there other ways to address past wrongs inflicted on African-Americans other than through violence?
- Shuri, T'Challa's sister, said, "Just because something works doesn't mean it cannot be improved." What are some aspects of your home, neighborhood, school, or church which are working fine but could use a little improvement? How might you go about making those changes?

RESPOND

For thousands of years the people of Wakanda used a fictitious metal called vibranium to create powerful weapons. Instead of sharing it with others, they protected this precious resource by keeping it hidden. Find the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Read this parable aloud as a group.

1. A "talent" from the story is an amount of money. We also use the same word to describe a gift or ability. Cut shapes out of the paper which represent your talents. (Eg. music notes, soccer ball, hands, dollar bill.)
2. Write on each shape at least one way you can use this talent in service to others.
3. Tape your talents on the wall in a circle around the sticky notes.
4. Discuss as a group one way you can multiply your talents during the week.

SUPPLIES

- *Black Panther* (2018) movie
- Video source

DID YOU KNOW?

Black Panther is a movie 25 years in the making. The first consideration began in 1992, with Wesley Snipes expressing interest in playing the lead role.

SUPPLIES

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Scissors
- Masking tape

Questions to consider as you work:

- When is a time you've benefited from the generosity of someone else?
- What are some of the risks which come with sharing your talents with others?
- How might our group partner with youth groups of other faiths, cultures, or ethnicities? What might we learn from these groups? What might we be able to teach?
- Christians talk about "being the church in the world." What does that look like for you individually? How about for your congregation?

End with prayer:

Holy God, we thank you for your love, mercy, and forgiveness. Help us to extend that same reconciliation to others in our life. Give us courage to share our gifts with those around us. Thank you for this community and for the whole church around the world. Amen.