

1

Peacemakers Know Peace

ISAIAH 11:6–9; MATTHEW 5:9



GOAL

Children wrestle with what it means to be a peacemaker and uncover examples of God's peace found in Scripture and in the world.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- C** Conversation
- D** Drama
- F** Food
- G** Game
- M** Music
- NS** Nature/Science
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for the places of peace and restlessness that you show us. Help us to be partners of peace with you, each and every day. Amen.

THIS SESSION

Jesus says, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” but what does it mean to be a peacemaker? In this session, children start to explore what God’s peace looks like, and how they might be able to practice peace in their walk with Jesus.

THE BIBLE STORY

Isaiah’s vision of the peaceable kingdom (Isaiah 11:6–9) gives the children a glimpse into God’s peace and how that might differ from what the world teaches us to expect. Jesus does the same thing, turning the expectations of who is blessed upside down. It is not those who battle and cause conflict but those who find ways to cooperate and work together who are the children of God (Matthew 5:9)

CONNECTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Children at this age may understand *peace* in very broad terms as an absence of war or conflict, as a construct in opposites: war and peace. Knowing peace or finding peace within may be somewhat of an elusive concept. Children in situations of conflict may yearn for it but not have the skills to work at it for themselves or with others. Teaching children mindfulness (peace within) and peacemaking skills at this age will serve them well as they grow.

SESSION PREPARATION

Depending on the options you choose:

- “Peace Pilgrim” (p. 9): Obtain *Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim*, by Kathleen Krull (Flyaway Books, 2021), or use the YouTube video “Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim—Read-Aloud” (bit.ly/FMPeacePilgrim, 10:42).
- “Pushing and Pulling” (p. 10): Obtain several sets of strong magnets (larger than 1½” or the diameter of a toilet-paper tube).
- “Learning about Peacemakers” (p. 10): Obtain the *Make Peace* infographic poster (bit.ly/FMInfographicPosters, Year 2 Set).



GETTING STARTED

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- Paper
 - Markers, crayons, colored pencils

VISUALIZING PEACE

A

As children arrive, welcome them and begin a conversation about peace. You might ask the following questions to get the children thinking about peace:

- ✦ What do you think of when you hear the word *peace*?
- ✦ What is the opposite of peace?
- ✦ What are some examples of peace?

Provide paper and drawing supplies. Invite the children to illustrate an example of peace. Set aside pictures for “Defining *Peace*” (below) and save the pictures for use in session 2.

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- Glory to God* hymnal or other hymnal with “Dona Nobis Pacem” and/or internet-connected device



Hebrew:
Sim shalom, sim shalom, sim
shalom,
sim shalom aleinu.

Arabic:
Rabbu habna salamann tamman
Rabbu habna salamann.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

M T

Invite the children to pray with music as they sing or listen to “Dona Nobis Pacem,” found in the *Glory to God* hymnal #752, or sing along with or listen to the YouTube video “Dona Nobis Pacem” (bit.ly/FMPacem, 2:04). Explain that the Latin words are a prayer that means “Give us peace.” As the tune becomes more familiar, you might introduce singing the song in Hebrew or Arabic.

Close the prayer with the following sentences:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Let us live as makers of peace. Amen.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

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- Pictures from “Visualizing Peace” (above)



Display the pictures of peace in your space for the duration of this unit.

DEFINING PEACE

C

Invite the children to share their pictures of peace from “Visualizing Peace.” Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- ✦ Do you think that *peace* is hard or easy to explain? Why?
- ✦ What does it feel like to experience peace?
- ✦ What does your body feel like when you are not peaceful?
- ✦ What are some things that prevent or disturb peace?
- ✦ When is a time you have felt peaceful?



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

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- Pictures cut from Resource Pages 1 and 2
 - Bibles

OF LIONS AND LAMBS

NS C

Place the pictures cut from Resource Pages 1 and 2 on a table and invite the group to work together to pair the pictures in a way that they think would be peaceful pairings. Tell the children there are no right answers. Invite them to share their thoughts for their pairings.

Tell the children that the prophet Isaiah tried to explain what God’s peace would be like by creating a word picture. In his picture, Isaiah used these animals and humans to talk about peace. Encourage the children to listen for the way Isaiah paired them as you read aloud Isaiah 11:6–9. After reading, engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- Which of Isaiah’s pairs do you find most surprising? Why?
- What do you think Isaiah is trying to tell us about peace through this word picture?
- Does his picture make you think about peace differently? Why or why not?
- What do you think it would take for animals to get along in the way Isaiah is describing?
- Do you think they could make peace with each other in this way by themselves? Why or why not?
- How might God help them to make peace in this way?

Read the Scripture passage aloud again, and invite the children to match their cards as Isaiah describes the animals. Wonder together what can be learned about God’s peace from this passage. Invite the children to consider situations in the world, in their community, in their schools, or in their families where people might not get along. Talk together about the following:

- Where do you see conflict, pain, or sadness in our world?
- Who do you see making a difference in those situations?
- How are they making a difference?



With a large group, give each child a picture and have them get into pairs that they think would be peaceful pairings.

FINDING THE PRACTICE ALL AROUND US

Choose one or both options.

PEACE PILGRIM



Tell the children that they will hear a story about a real person who wanted to do something to draw attention to the world’s need for peace. Read aloud *Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim*, by Kathleen Krull, or show the YouTube video “Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim—Read-Aloud” (bit.ly/FMPeacePilgrim, 10:42).

Wonder about the following questions:

- What did Peace Pilgrim notice was wrong in the world?
- How did she set out to make a difference?
- What are some of the things she did to get ready for her peace walk?
- Do you think she did make a difference? Why or why not?
- At the end of the book, the story says that Peace Pilgrim invited people to act in ways that would make the world more peaceful. What do you think that we might do to make the world a more peaceful place?

Invite the children to investigate the Peace Pilgrim’s website at www.peacepilgrim.org. Work as one group or form small groups, each with an internet-connected device. Have the children explore at least one item from each of the following tabs at the top of the page: Her Life, Peace Pilgrim Offerings, Her Legacy, About Us, and Blog. If the children are working in small groups, assign one or more of the tabs to each group to delve into and report back to the large group.

- Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim*, by Kathleen Krull (Flyaway Books, 2021)
- Internet-connected device(s)

- Several sets of strong magnets (larger than 1½" or the diameter of a toilet-paper tube)

PUSHING AND PULLING

NS C

Show the children a set of magnets and the way that they attract each other when the poles are opposite to each other. Let everyone take a turn with the magnets to feel how they attract and how they repel each other. Invite them to think of things that *attract* or *repel* peace in the same way. Name the following activities and ask if they think these activities attract or repel peace; if they repel peace, what could be changed to work toward peace:

- Arguing with a friend
- Making cookies for a neighbor
- Forgiving a friend who has hurt you
- Deciding what someone is like before you really know them all that well
- Being jealous of your friend's birthday gift
- Standing up for someone younger than you who is being picked on

Invite the children to suggest some examples of their own. Then ask the following questions that deal more with peace within oneself:

- ✦ How does it attract or repel peace within you if you keep quiet about something that hurt you or your feelings?
- ✦ How does it attract or repel peace within you when you feel pressure to do something you don't want to do?
- ✦ How does it attract or repel peace within you when you are challenged to do something you are afraid of doing, or go out of your comfort zone?

Invite children to share a time when they felt the *pull* of doing something peaceful for someone else or when someone did something that created the *pull* of peace for them.



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or more options.

- *Make Peace* infographic poster
- Internet-connected device(s)



The *Make Peace* infographic poster will be used in each session of this unit. Keep the infographic poster for sessions 2, 3, and 4.

LEARNING ABOUT PEACEMAKERS

C T X

Display the *Make Peace* infographic poster and tell the children that each session of this unit they will choose one or more peacemakers to investigate. Work as one group or form small groups of two or three children. Invite the group(s) to choose a peacemaker to learn about by using an internet-connected device. Tell the children to do an internet search about the person or group they have chosen and find out three interesting facts about them and why the children think this person or group was chosen as an example of peacemakers.

Have the children share the information they found. Wonder together what they have learned about being a peacemaker that they could use in their lives.

ALPHABETICAL PEACE GAME

G

Have the children sit in a circle to play an alphabet game. Explain that you will name a topic, and invite the child to your left to name something in that category that starts with “A.” Continue around the circle to the left, inviting each person to name something in that category that starts with the next letter. To get familiar with the game, do a practice round with animals as the category. If the player whose turn it is can’t think of an example, others in the circle may offer suggestions (but be sure the player wants help). If no one can think of an example that starts with the letter, skip that letter and let the same player try with the next letter. Go around the circle until all the letters have been covered.

Then, try the game with the category “things that are not peaceful.” The children can be creative with their answers! Follow up with a final round of “things that are peaceful.” Tell the children that, when they find themselves in situations that do not feel peaceful, they can think of peaceful ideas mentioned or play the peaceful alphabet game by themselves or with others to remind them of peaceful things.

PEACE DOVE

A

Distribute card-stock copies of Resource Page 3. Tell the children that the dove is often considered a symbol of peace. Wonder what Bible stories they can think of when a dove appears and why the dove might be a symbol of peace. Suggest, if necessary, that in Genesis, after the great flood, Noah sent a dove out to see if there was dry land. Invite the children to imagine the peace that Noah and his family must have felt when they saw the dove return with a green branch in its beak indicating dry land and vegetation after all those weeks of flooding. Comment that the Holy Spirit appears as a dove when Jesus is baptized. Wonder how the Holy Spirit brings peace.

Tell the children that they will create peace doves together to remind them that they are called to be peacemakers. Invite each child to select one color of paint or stamp pad. If using paint, have them place a small amount of their color on a small paper plate. Explain that each child will make a fingerprint (or multiple fingerprints, depending on the size of your group) on each person’s dove to fill the doves with fingerprints. Provide disposable wipes to clean fingers. Have each child also write their name in the white space around the dove and place one more fingerprint so that there is a key to indicate each person who is a fellow peacemaker. Point out that, just as their colorful dove required many friends’ fingerprints, being peacemakers requires many people working together for peace.

- Card-stock copies of Resource Page 3
- Variety of tempera paint colors or stamp pads, one color for each child
- Small paper plates, if using paint
- Disposable wipes
- Pens or markers



FOLLOWING JESUS

PEACEFUL BREATHING

Gather the children together in a circle. Have them close their eyes, settle their bodies, and breathe deeply for a moment. Invite them to think of two colors: one color that is calming and peaceful and another color that is anxious or tense. As they breathe in, invite them to imagine the peaceful color coming into their lungs and filling their bodies, and as they breathe out, invite them to imagine letting the anxious color leave their hearts and

minds. Use the breath prayer “breathe in God’s love” as they inhale and “breathe out worry” as they exhale. Guide them to breathe slowly for several rounds.

Ask the children to open their eyes and hold hands in a circle as they repeat after you as you pray:

Lord, help me to be a peacemaker. /
Help me find peace in my own heart /
and listen to others so I can understand. /
Help me have the courage to seek peace all around me. /
Amen.





**We Can Be
Peacemakers!**



