



Younger Children's (K-4th Grade) Lesson Plan

Lesson Objectives

Children will:

- Reflect on the meaning of the word peace
- Discover God's desire for peace at all times and in all ways
- Consider how each child can make daily decisions to be a peacemaker in their families, their community, and the world

Resources and Equipment

- Clock Buddy sheet – one for each participant
- Pencils for each participant
- Bibles for each participant (NRSV preferred)
- Scissors
- Markers/crayons
- Younger Children's Activity Sheet for each participant (*At All Times and In All Ways — printed on cardstock, single-sided*)
- 1 brad for each child

Set Up

- Copy the Younger Children's Activity Sheet on cardstock (one page of each for each participant)

GATHER (20 MINUTES)

Peace Is ... Knowing Our Neighbors

As children arrive, give each child a Clock Buddy sheet and a pencil. Ask them to write their names in the center of the clock. Invite them to find another child to sign on one of the lines by the numbers on the clock, and then have them write their name on the other child's clock on the same number. Ask them to try to fill up their clock with names (it's okay if all the numbers aren't filled, but it's important that they sign the same number on the other child's clock as the child signed on theirs).

When all children have arrived and have at least a few names on their Clock Buddy sheet, welcome all by saying:

I'm so glad you're here today! We're going to talk about something really important: peace. We'll talk about not only what it is, but how we can be a part of making peace, too. One way we can be peacemakers in the world is simply by getting to know others. In a minute, I'll ask you to find a certain time on your clock and see who your buddy is for that time. When you find it, meet up with that buddy, and I'll have a question for you to talk about together. Ready?

Find your 3:00 Buddy. *Help children find the name written at the number 3 space on their clocks and match them up together.*



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Now that you've found your 3:00 Buddy, answer this question with your buddy:
"What's your favorite color?"

Give the pairs time to share with each other. Continue announcing various times of buddies to find (i.e., 10:00 Buddy, 6:00 Buddy) and ask a new question each time new pairs form. Possible questions to ask:

- "Name some place you like to go that's really peaceful and share why."
- "Share a compliment about your buddy."
- "Tell your buddy about someone special who you love and why."
- "Peace is ..."
- "Share an idea for a great way to be a friend."
- "What's one way you like to cheer people up?"
- "Share something you love to do and why."
- "If you were to draw a picture about peace, what would you draw?"

Once you've had them pair up with several different buddies and they've answered several different questions, gather the group together again.

That was a fun way to get to know one another. I wonder how getting to know people can help us make peace?

Opening Prayer

Open in prayer using this prayer or one you create on your own:

Loving God, you are a God who desires peace, and you call each of us to be peacemakers in all we do. Help us discover ways to share your peace in this world. Amen.

What is peace?

Help children think through a variety of definitions. For example:

- Calm
- Lack of violence or conflict
- Being whole
- Fairness

We're going to read together in our Bibles about peace. *Invite children to open Bibles to 2 Thessalonians 3:16 (if you have access to the NRSV, use that translation).*

We'll be reading from a book in the Bible called Second Thessalonians. Paul, a follower of Jesus, wrote this letter. Let's read together his closing words in the letter.

Invite a child to read 2 Thessalonians 3:16 from their Bible.



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Paul is praying for Jesus to give peace. Remembering our conversation from earlier, what kind of peace do you think Paul is talking about?

What kind of peace does Jesus give?

Look closer ... what else does he say about the peace that Jesus gives? *At all times, in all ways.*

People who work for peace in our families, our communities, and the world are called peacemakers. All of us can be peacemakers and let Christ's peace work through us.

Let's talk a little more about what it looks like to be about peace *at all times and in all ways.*

EXPLORE (35 minutes)

Peace at All Times, in All Ways

Hand out a Younger Children Activity Sheet (printed on cardstock) to each child so that each child has a clock face (At All Times) and a second sheet that has the circle with the divisions of lunch, early afternoon, etc. during the day (In All Ways). If the clock and the circle page haven't already been cut out, ask the children to cut out the circles.

Sometimes it's hard to think about all of the places and people that need peace in our lives. But as we learn in the scripture reading today, peace isn't just for certain times or circumstances. We can work for peace at all times and in all ways!

Let's talk about time together. Pull out your *In All Ways* circle.

Morning

Let's start with the morning. Each of us will think of something we do between the time we wake up and right before lunch. Don't say it out loud though, and don't write it down yet.

Does everyone have a thought? Now think of an action that matches something you do in the morning. We'll play charades and see if we can guess each other's action!

Play charades as a group, with each child sharing their action and the rest of the group guessing the action.

Those are some good things we do each morning! Now, let's think about how we can be peacemakers during those activities. As Paul says: peace at all times in all ways. Thinking about the specific activities that you shared that you do in the mornings, how can you specifically be a peacemaker as you do them?

For example:

- *When brushing your teeth, share the sink with a sibling (instead of fighting over it!).*
- *When riding on the bus to school, make room for someone who needs a buddy.*
- *When at the library at school, read to someone younger than you.*



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These are ideas that are pretty close to us. But let's think of things together that we could do in our communities for this morning time, and also things in our world.

The kids might not know of ways to work for peace in their communities or in the world. Be prepared with examples from your community and the world. Prompts are listed below:

Community – Morning time peacemaking

- Does your community serve a brunch for free on the weekends? Volunteer/attend it with your family and get to know those in your community.
- Learn about reading programs in your community and find out if there's a place for you to donate books.
- Bring a special treat for your bus driver as a thank-you.

World – Morning time peacemaking

- Our church joins together with other Presbyterian churches in our denomination to work for peace through the world. One way we do this is by participating in the Peace & Global Witness Offering we give to on World Communion Sunday. Through this offering, some of the money we give stays in our community, some goes to our region, and some goes around the world. One way our money to this offering works for peace in the world is through Bible studies and worship resources. Many people in the mornings spend time in prayer, reading the Bible, and worshipping. With money from the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our denomination provides resources for people to study what the Bible says about peacemaking, inspiring people to follow Christ's call to be people of peace.

You all have named excellent ways to be peacemakers in the morning. Pick one of the acts of peace we've talked about today to commit to trying during your mornings. Draw a picture of it, or write it in the "morning" section of your *In All Ways* paper.

Continue working your way around the In All Ways paper with the same process, continuing next with lunch, then early afternoon, etc. For each timeframe (or combine a few if you have a shorter amount of time):

1. Play charades with an activity that children do during that time (encourage each child to think of one, or do in pairs if your group is large).
2. Discuss how to be peacemakers in that time with the activities they have named.
3. Discuss how to be peacemakers in the community, inspired by the specific time of day.
4. Discuss how to be peacemakers in the world, inspired by the specific time of day, or read a way the PC(USA) is engaged in the world.
5. Ask each child to pick one activity to commit to for that timeframe (based on the discussion) and draw or write this down in the specific time of day section.
6. Repeat until all times of day on the *In All Ways* paper are completed.



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Inspiration for Community and World Ideas for the remaining times of day:

Early Afternoon – Community

- Notice who might be feeling left out on the playground and find ways to include them.
- Start a garden with your family and share some of what you grow with a local food and resource center.
- Give someone a compliment and a smile.
- Pick up trash at a local park.
- Learn about a different culture or religion.

Early Afternoon – World

- Peace Camp – held in New Jersey. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim children gathered for a peace camp in which they learned how to resolve conflicts and how to handle angry and sad feelings. Peace & Global Witness Offering funds were used to host this peace camp.

Late Afternoon – Community

- Play a game with your neighbors that's cooperative and not competitive (one that doesn't have a winner, but encourages all to work together).
- Find a sidewalk in your community and use chalk to write or draw messages of peace.
- Speak with kind words. Apologize when you've done something wrong.
- Write a letter to a leader in your community, thanking them for their work.

Late Afternoon – World

- Say a prayer for a child in another country
- The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program brings International Peacemakers to the United States to help us better understand issues of peace and justice around the world. The Peacemaking Program also hosts Travel Study Seminars, sending Presbyterians to various countries to learn more about how countries are working for peace.

Evening – Community

- Some communities have an organization that delivers beds and bedding to families who do not have them. Could you work with an organization like this? Purchase pillows and blankets for a homeless shelter?
- Throw a block party for your neighborhood or host a picnic at a local park and enjoy getting to know your neighbors/community members.
- Share food with someone in need.



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Evening – World

- Talk with your family about purchasing a Refugee Food Basket from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog (presbyteriangifts.org). Refugees are people who are forced to leave their homes and countries because of war, violence, or famine.
- Consider purchasing Bunk Beds for Children from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog.
- Pray for those in the world who are in the midst of war and conflict.

Once children have drawn/written their commitments to acts of peace on their circles, poke a small hole in the middle circle on both pages (At All Times and In All Ways circles). Lay the clock paper (At All Times) on top of the In All Ways circle and connect with a brad. Show the children how to turn the clock so that it matches up with the times of day underneath.

CLOSE (5 minutes)

All of you have thought of so many ways to work for peace at all times and in all ways. Let's offer our acts of peace to God together as we hold our clocks.

Invite children to hold their clocks as you pray this prayer or one of your own:

Closing Prayer

Dear God, you are a God of peace. Help us to be people of peace. We pray for our days, that they would be filled with peaceful acts with our families in our communities. We pray for peace throughout the world. Guide us to make peace at all times and in all ways. Amen.

Invite the children to take their clocks home and put them in a place where they will be reminded of the acts of peace they can do at all times of day.

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