

Share Christ's Peace: Going Deeper

Reunion 2007

Lessons for Kids

Ages 6–12

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Introduction

The peace of Jesus is what the gospel is all about. It is the way Jesus lived, and it is the way Jesus wants us to live in the world. Peace is the “good news” that the world needs to feel and hear.

Everything that Jesus did was peacemaking. When he healed the sick, fed the hungry, forgave sins, and took care of those who were bullied or hated or ignored—he was being a peacemaker. It is quite a challenge for us. But it is what Jesus showed us how to do and wants us to continue doing.

This year’s reunion theme, “Share Christ’s Peace: Going Deeper,” is a challenge for us to learn more about what the peace of Jesus means and what to do as disciples in the Community of Christ.

This week kids will learn to go deeper into Jesus’ teachings, they will discover ways to seek the kingdom, they will break down walls that stand in the way of peace, they will say yes to Jesus, and they will be models for peace in what they do and say.

May your reunion experience and your ministry with children be blessed as you work together to bring about the peace of Jesus.

“The peace of Jesus Christ’ contains all of the promises, hopes, and blessings of the gospel.”

“Jesus speaks ‘peace’ and opens the way to peace ... for the whole of creation” (Stephen M. Veasey, 2005 World Conference Sermon).

Recommended Storybooks (also recommended for intergenerational worship). Not required.

Rainbow Fish and the Sea Monsters’ Cave by Marcus Pfister, translated by J. Alison James (New York: North-South Books, 2001), ISBN 0735815372.

Russell and the Lost Treasure by Rob Scotton (Scarborough, ON, Canada: HarperCollins Children’s Books, 2006), ISBN 0060598514.

The Coconut Monk by Thich Nhat Hanh, illustrated by Vo-Dihn Mai (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 2005), ISBN 1-888375-53-1.

“The Selfish Giant” is a story by Oscar Wilde and is available in several children’s-book formats, two films, and online.

Incredible You! by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy, illustrated by Melanie Siegel (Australia: Hay House, 2005), ISBN 1-4019-0782-2.

Jerusalem Sky by Mark Podwal (Toronto, ON, Canada: Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 2005), ISBN 038574689X.

Music (may be used on any day)

Camp songs:

“Deep and Wide”

“God Is So Good”

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

“Make New Friends”

“I’m Gonna Sing [When the Spirit Says Sing]”

“Jesus in the Morning”

“Bubblin’ Over”

“If You’re Happy”

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

“Jesus Loves the Little Children”

“My God Is So Big”

“This Little Light of Mine”

NS 7 “Companions on the Journey”

NS 21 “Instruments of Your Peace”

NS 27 “Lay Your Hands”

NS 28 “Let Justice Roll like a River”

NS 32 “Lord, I Give You”

NS 40 “Now Sing to Our God”

NS 44 “Seek Ye First”

NS 45 “Shine, Jesus, Shine”

NS 52 “What Does the Lord Require of You?”

SP 3 “Gather Your Children”

SP 4 “Gather Us In”

SP 9 “Bring Forth the Kingdom”

SP 15 “Put Peace into Each Other’s Hands”

SP 27 “I Am Standing Waiting”

SP 32 “This We Can Do”

SP 34 “We Are Your People”

SP 36 “Called by Christ to Love Each Other”

SP 44 “Go, My Children”

R-10 “I Have Called You by Your Name”

R-11 “Community of Christ”

R-15 “Put Peace into Each Other’s Hands”

R-19 “Take the Path of the Disciple”

R-17 “We Have the Power to Share the Light”

Class Planning

Choose a class plan based on the ages and number of kids, available leadership, time schedule, and facilities. Classes can be organized by age/grade level or can be multiage groupings with kids of various ages in each group. Multiaged classes work well for groups with an uneven distribution of ages. Multiaged classes also tend to result in fewer discipline problems. Of course there is a big difference in skill levels between children who range in age from six to twelve. Some are very accomplished readers and writers, and some are just beginning. Some are very socially mature and others shy and inexperienced in a class setting. Choose activities from these pages that best match the abilities of the kids in your class, and also team children so they may work together on projects, leaning on each other's skills. For some projects, you may create age-level groups, such as older kids for scripture searches, etc.

Before class begins, create a journal/scrapbook for each child. Any method of creating a book, elaborate or simple, is up to you. A simple way is to fold five pieces of colorful 8.5" x 11" construction paper in half to make pages that are 8.5" x 5.5". (Bind them with brads or yarn.) Another alternative is to have kids create their own scrapbook on the first day of class.

Daily Lessons: Day 1—Go Deeper: Know Jesus, Know Peace

Welcome Kids!

Welcome each child by name. Play a game to help kids get to know each other. Form a circle of 8–10 people (kids and leaders), and pass a soft sponge ball (like a Nerf ball) to the person on the left. Each child says their name as the ball is passed around the circle. Next, the leader tosses the ball to anyone in the group, calling out their name before tossing it. The one receiving the ball calls out another person's name and tosses the ball to them. Keep playing until everyone has had a chance to catch and toss the ball at least once. On the next round, have kids call out where they are from when they catch the ball. On the last round, add a second ball, and again have kids toss the ball to each other, calling out names. See how fast the group can learn the names and toss the balls (safely).

Go Deeper Story

Invite everyone to sit down, and ask them what they know about Rainbow Fish (a popular story character). Share the book (also used in worship) *Rainbow Fish and the Sea Monsters' Cave* by Marcus Pfister, translated by J. Alison James (North-South Books, 2001), ISBN 0735815372. This may also be shared in the reunion worship service. In this story, Rainbow Fish bravely swims into the most dangerous place in the ocean to cure a sick “bumpy-backed” fish. Rainbow Fish finds that the scariest place is not so scary after all when it means caring for another.

Discuss:

1. What is the scariest place for you to go?
2. What is the scariest thing for you to do?
3. Tell of a time when you overcame your fear to help someone else.

Sometimes we need to go into a new place—a place that is deeper—in order to care about others. Sometimes we need to try harder than we've ever tried before.

Go Deeper with Jesus' Parables

When Rainbow Fish and his friend went deep into the sea cave, he was not only able to help someone, but he overcame his fear of going deeper. The same is true when we dig deeper with Jesus. Jesus taught many parables which had a deeper truth underneath the story. Let's dig deeper into Jesus' parables to find out what they mean. Send kids “swimming” around the room to find paper fish shapes where the scriptures below are printed.

Provide Bibles for kids to look up scripture references from the list below. They may work as teams on this project. They are to dig deeper to find the “story behind the story,” and can make a model representing their story from clay.* Kids may then lay their clay creations on a sheet of construction paper and write down its scripture reference. When all are finished, kids can explain what the parable means to them. Write their parable messages on poster board for all to see.

Jesus' Parables	Parable Message (Examples)
Build your house on a rock.—Matthew 7:24–27	Trust what Jesus tells you and do it.
God knows the number of hairs on your head. —Matthew 10:29–31	God cares about every bit of us.
A mustard seed becomes great. —Matthew 13:31–32	Even small things can do great things.
Buy the pearl of great price.—Matthew 13:45–46	Go for the best of what God has.
The widow's mite is worth more than riches. —Mark 12:41–44	Give with all your heart.
God finds the lost sheep and the lost coin. —Luke 15:1–10	God cares about each of us.
Jesus is the bread of life.—John 6:35	Jesus is what we need each day.

Jesus shared great ideas with us through simple stories. Jesus wants us to go deeper, be a little stronger, try something harder, take a risk, or push ourselves a little bit, just like Rainbow Fish did. When we do these things, then we help ourselves to grow, and we help others. This is what the peace of Jesus is all about.

*Use Crayola's® Model Magic, Play Doh®, or a homemade air-dry clay (see recipe below): Mix together 1 cup salt, ½ cup cornstarch, and ¾ cup cold water. Stir all ingredients together over low heat. In 2 or 3 minutes, mixture will thicken and can no longer be stirred. Turn out onto waxed paper or aluminum foil and cool. When cool, knead until smooth. If dough dries out, add water.

Know Jesus; Know Peace

When we know Jesus, we know what peace is all about. We learn about Jesus in his parables. That is one way we learn to be a peacemaker. Give each child a blank paper fish like the ones printed with the scripture references. Invite kids to choose a parable message from one of the parables, and write it on their fish. Then have them write what they are going to do *today* to share the peace of Jesus with others following this message. Have kids glue these messages onto a page in their scrapbooks. They may color the page to look like the Rainbow Fish's big blue ocean—using the book for inspiration.

Peace Definition

The reunion theme is “Share Christ's Peace.” What does this phrase mean? Write this definition on the board for kids to copy in their books, or print handouts for kids to include in their books:

Share Christ's Peace (sher krīstz pēs) 1. promises, hopes, and blessings of the gospel revealed by Jesus Christ 2. support of the Holy Spirit, Christ's promised presence with humans in his absence 3. freedom from fear, anxiousness, discouragement, or

alienation 4. opportunity for balance and wholeness for humans, communities, and all of creation 5. a source of hope and blessing to share with others

Discuss what “Share Christ’s Peace” means to the kids. This definition is derived from Steve Veazey’s introduction to *Go With Peace* by Kelly Guinan (Blair, NE: Kind Regards, LLC, 2005), ISBN 0-9719279-2-8.

Peace Prayers

On a poster board, have today’s scripture written:

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid” (John 14:27 NRSV adapted).

Invite children into a circle and affirm to them that Jesus will be with them in all that they do. Tell them Jesus gave his peace, comfort, and love to all of us. Before he went to heaven, he told his followers that he would leave his peace with them, so they would never need to be afraid. Read the scripture aloud, and ask children to close their eyes. Then guide the children through a meditation. Ask children to imagine feeling worried, scared, or afraid to do something new or something they don’t feel good at. Ask how their body feels—tight? tense? jittery? What are their minds and their emotions doing? Are they racing? worrying? feeling nervous? Now have them imagine what it feels like for a great big cloud of peacefulness to come over them. Have them relax their legs, arms, head, and neck. Have them quiet their minds and think about cool breezes and floating in big billowy clouds. How does this feel? This is the peace Jesus gives us.

Now walk around the circle. Touch each child on the shoulder and say, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.” Do this for each child individually. When done, children may write this scripture into their scrapbooks.

Scripture Story: Deep Foundation

Invite a child to read the following scripture story from Luke 6:46–48 NRSV adapted:

Jesus said, “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I tell you? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That someone is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.”

Invite kids to put this scripture to the test. Give each kid some locking bricks (such as Lego or similar toy bricks), enough to build a small house. The brick houses could be built inside a large plastic-tub lid that can hold slightly damp sand. Outside, kids can build their houses in dirt or sand. In either place, they are to “dig deeper” to slightly bury their house in the sand or dirt to make it stronger. When all houses are built, pour a pitcher of water into the lid. If outside, simulate the flooding of a river as referenced in the scripture. Show the kids how their houses are not destroyed by the water.

Discuss: In this scripture, Jesus tells us to follow what he says. Because when the rough times come, we will not be shaken, hurt, or upset. We will trust in what Jesus has told us. Remember what Jesus told us in the parables? Summarize this from the poster board used with the parable-message activity.

“Go Deeper” Game

Play a game of going deeper. Set up a relay game where the class is divided into two teams. On a table across the room, set two glass or clear plastic jars filled with cotton balls. On just a few cotton balls (slightly more than there are kids on each team), make a colored dot with a permanent marker. Mix these marked cotton balls in with the others. Give each team a set of chopsticks. When the signal is given, kids race down to the table, dig for the marked cotton balls with their chopsticks, pick up a marked ball—when they find it—with their chopsticks, and race back to their team, dropping the ball into a basket at the starting line and handing off the chopsticks to the next player. The first team to finish with all of their players bringing back a marked cotton ball wins.

Labyrinth

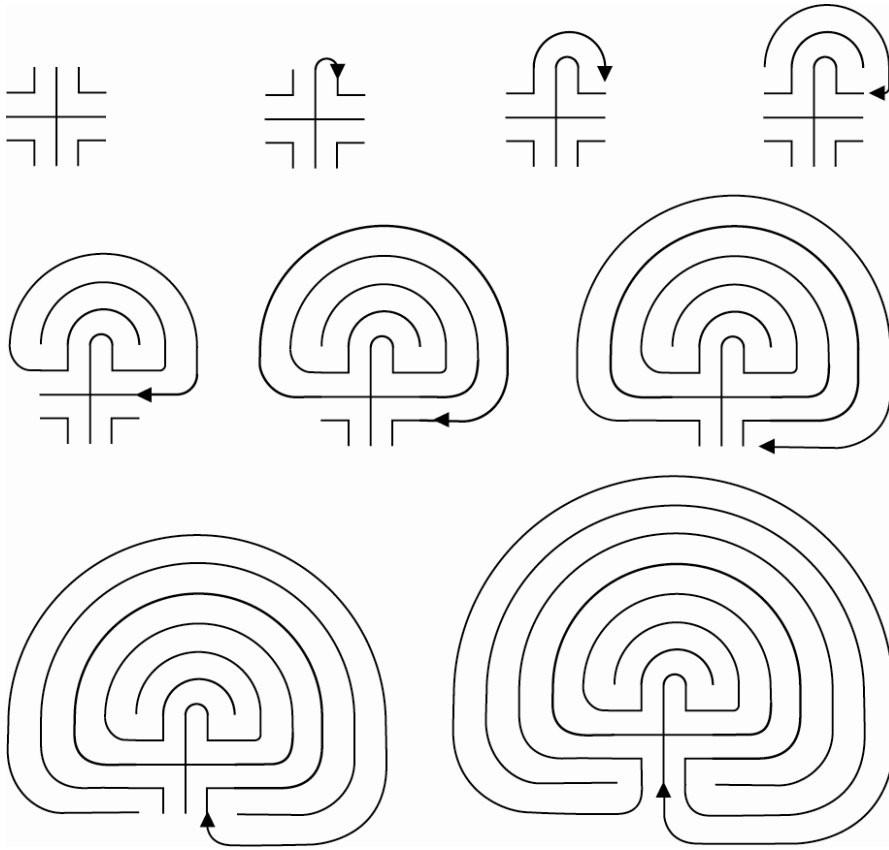
Labyrinths are an ancient tool for personal, psychological, or spiritual transformation. They are made of a single path, unlike a maze, that lead people to the center and back out. Traveling the labyrinth gives people the opportunity to reflect, focus, find peace, increase energy, and feel more in tune with themselves and with the Spirit. More information may be found at the Labyrinth Society: www.labyrinthsociety.org.

If possible, create a labyrinth for kids to walk each day of reunion. This could be used by other reunion attendees, so several groups may wish to create one together. It can be drawn inside or outside with chalk, laid with bricks, marked with masking tape, or painted onto a parking lot.

Follow the pattern on the next page.

Kids may also create their own labyrinth in their books following the pattern below.

How to Draw a Labyrinth



Day 2—Seek the Kingdom: God’s Community

Welcome Kids!

Play yesterday’s ball-toss activity, helping kids become more familiar with each other’s names. Add a round where kids say what they are enjoying most about reunion so far. Express joy that they are all there.

Seek the Kingdom Story

Share the storybook (also used in worship) *Russell and the Lost Treasure* by Rob Scotton (HarperCollins Children’s Books, 2006), ISBN 0060598514. This story is about an insomniac sheep that goes on the trail of treasure with his Super-Duper Treasure Seeker. What he finds is a treasure that is truly precious: his friends and family.

Picture Treasures

Russell found a treasure that he wasn’t too excited about, at first. It was a camera. Discuss:

1. What did Russell do with the camera?
2. If you found a camera, what or who would you take pictures of?

If possible, give each pair of kids a small instant camera such as the Polaroid I-zone camera, and encourage them to take pictures of every kid in the room. These cameras make instant tiny self-sticking photos that can then be displayed on a bulletin board in the classroom. Or use an instant camera to take pictures of the kids, maybe as a group, so each kid can paste it into his scrapbook. Another possibility might be to give each kid an index card, pair them in teams of two, and have them draw a portrait of their partner as if taking a photograph. These may be displayed on a bulletin board in the classroom or put into their scrapbooks. Discuss:

1. Why did Russell think his friends were the best treasure he found?
2. Do you think your friends and family are your best treasure? Tell why.

Seek the Kingdom with Jesus the Peacemaker

When Russell sought buried treasure, he found wonderful blessings that were with him all the time. The same is true when we seek Jesus. We find that Jesus and the blessings of our friends and family are there with us all the time. Jesus was a peacemaker. He wants us to be one too. Let’s discover how Jesus wants us to be peacemakers.

Send kids on a treasure hunt, looking for small gold “nuggets” (goldenrod paper with the following scripture references printed on them, wadded up, and hidden around the room or outside). Have one scripture nugget available for each kid to find. As kids find them, have them spread them open and tape each onto the top of a sheet of paper. When all are found, invite kids to look up the scripture story on their nugget in the Bible and read it; then draw a picture of Jesus being a peacemaker in that story. When kids are done with their pictures, tape them along the wall. Have each kid describe their picture and their story about Jesus as a peacemaker.

Scriptures of Jesus as a peacemaker:

1. Jesus feeds thousands.—John 6:1–21
2. Jesus eats with tax collectors.—Mark 2:13–17
3. Jesus heals a lame man.—Mark 2:1–5
4. Jesus heals a leper.—Mark 1:40–45
5. Jesus overturns tables.—John 2:13–22
6. Make friends with your enemies.—Matthew 5:25
7. Jesus calms the storm.—Matthew 8:23–27
8. Jesus welcomes children.—Matthew 19:13–15
9. Do it for the least.—Matthew 25:40–41
10. Jesus heals on the sabbath.—Mark 3:1–5
11. Jesus prays.—Luke 5:16

Jesus showed us how to seek the kingdom by the choices he made. This is what the peace of Jesus is all about.

Peace Prayers

Pray a stop-action prayer. Invite kids to move around the room, saying aloud things they wish to pray for. Each child might be praying like this: “Dear God, I pray for my mommy, my kitty, my teacher, peace on earth, etc.” Stop them every few seconds and have them freeze. Record on a poster paper whatever they were praying aloud at that moment. Do this several times until a poster board is full of the things they are praying for.

God’s Community Game

On poster board, print today’s scripture: “Do not be defined by the things that separate you but by the things that unite you in Jesus Christ” (Doctrine and Covenants 162:5a). Have children copy it into their scrapbooks.

Discuss: This scripture is about finding those things we have in common when we follow Jesus. Play a game of being united in Jesus. Ask kids to sit down at the start of the game. Read statements that might be true about the children (use statements listed below). Kids should stand up if you say something that is true about them. If two or more kids stand up, have them link arms or hold hands, or connect in some way, before sitting back down again.

Stand up if . . .

1. You have sent someone a get-well card.
2. You helped someone when you’d rather be playing.
3. You prayed for someone you didn’t like.
4. You invited someone new to join you or your family for dinner.
5. You did a chore to help someone.

6. You told someone about Jesus or your church.
7. You said prayers with your family.

Now invite kids to each take a turn with an idea for “Stand Up If.” After all have had a chance, close the game by linking arms and sharing the cheer “We are united in Jesus!”

Peacemaker Treasure Boxes

Give each kid a complete set of the scripture stories from the above activity (on wadded paper golden nuggets), and have them make a treasure box to hold the scripture treasures. Treasure chests can be made from self-drying clay such as Crayola’s® Model Magic or air-dry clay (recipe in Day One’s activities). Give each kid a square of it, then have them slice it into six sides: a base, four sides, and a lid. Sides can be pressed together and smoothed over forming a hollow box. The lid can be curved like a treasure box or flat, but it should be placed on the box later, when it is dry. Details can be added to the outside of the box, such as small plastic coins, sequins, or other materials. When the box is dry, it can be colored with markers or paint and filled with the wadded-up gold nugget scriptures. Allow paint and decorations to air-dry after kids create their treasure boxes.

Day 3—Break Down Walls: Build Bridges

Welcome Kids!

Today play a form of the “Duck-Duck-Goose” game to continue to familiarize children with each other. The child chosen as “It” goes around the circle and taps on each person’s head saying their name rather than saying “duck.” When they get to the person they want to have chase them, they say, “Jesus loves YOU,” and the child tapped gets up and chases the other around the circle to the empty spot. Keep playing until everyone has had a chance to be “It.”

“Break Down Walls” Story

Share the book (also used in worship) *The Coconut Monk* by Thich Nhat Hanh, illustrated by Vo-Dihn Mai (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 2005), ISBN 1-888375-53-1. This story is about the late Vietnamese monk of peace, Dao Dua, known as the Coconut Monk. On his way to the presidential palace to try to end the Vietnam War, the monk is thrown in jail, behind walls. Yet he finds a way to spread a message of peace despite his captivity with his friends: a cat and a mouse. This is a story about overcoming fears and can inspire kids to share the peace of Jesus. Discuss after reading.

Invite kids to gather in pairs to create a skit they can share with the class about peacemaking. If they need help, give them index cards with these starter ideas. Some are based on Aesop’s fables.

1. A lion gets a thorn in his paw, and the only one around to help is a tasty mouse.
2. A bunny needs a ride across a pond where an alligator swims.
3. A hungry fox needs help getting grapes from a tree where a snake lives.
4. Two animal friends are competing in the same race.
5. An older brother bear is taught how to catch the best fish in the creek by his father. The younger brother is not.

Break Down Walls: Build Bridges

Read today’s scripture, recorded on poster board. Have kids copy it into their scrapbooks.

“For Jesus is our peace; he has made both groups into one, and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Ephesians 2:14 NRSV adapted).

Most of the time, the “walls” that come between us and others cannot be seen. They may be walls that are created by the way we think we are supposed to act, the things we want, or the prejudices we have against others. One way to break these walls down is to show friendliness and resolve problems with others.

Hold up two different-colored strips of paper, about five or six inches apart. These strips represent two people who are different from each other. Ask kids, “How can two people be different from each other?” (They may speak two different languages, like different sports, have different voices and dialects, or look different.) Any way that we are different from others can cause a wall to be built between us. We may think our differences mean that we can’t be friends. But when the peace of Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, blows between two who are different (blow steadily between the two strips of paper), they come together. When the peace of Jesus blows between us, we come together. [What happens in the demonstration is that the blowing causes an area of low pressure between the papers, and the outer air forces the paper together.] Kids may want to try this for themselves.

In the same way, when we have problems with others, the peace of Jesus can bring us back together.

Play a reconciliation game, a game of forgiveness. Draw a large rectangle on the floor (following the Peacemaking Pattern below). This can be done with chalk or masking tape, indoors or outdoors. Use the sentences from the Peacemaking Pattern to play. Take kids through the steps below, teaming them up with a partner. Using the dramas from the previous activity, have them try to reconcile the problem in their “story.”(i.e. the lion and the mouse, etc.) How do they reconcile their problems or the walls that separate them? Do it with each pair in the class.

Peacemaking Pattern:

I show up.
I listen.
I share.
I hear you.
I understand.
We’re friends.
I understand.
I hear you.
I share.
I listen.
I show up.

1. Stand both kids at opposite ends of the Peacemaking Pattern on the “I show up” rectangles.
2. Thank each one in turn for “showing up.” Ask if they’d like to take the next step forward to listen.

3. If they do, thank them for both being willing to listen. (The two kids move to the “I listen” box.) Ask one child to step forward onto the next rectangle (“I Share”). Ask that child to share their story (remember, they are being the characters in the fable: the fox, the snake, the bear, etc.). Thank them for sharing their story.
4. Ask the second child if they wish to also share. If so, have them step onto the “I Share” box. Ask that child to share their story (representing their character from the fable). Thank that child for sharing.
5. Ask both children if they really listened and heard each other. If so, they can both step on the “I hear you” rectangle. Each step they take brings them closer together.
6. Ask each child separately if they understood the other child’s point of view and story and feelings. They don’t have to agree, but did they understand how that child felt and why they did what they did? If so, they may both step forward onto the “I understand” box.
7. The last step is to ask the children if they could now be friends. If they can, they may step together into the center box (“We’re friends.”) They may hug, shake hands, give a “high five” or whatever.

After taking all of the kids through this process, discuss:

1. How did you feel about resolving your problem this way?
2. Do you think this would work with a friend you are having a conflict with?
3. Do you wish to talk about a conflict you are having with a friend?

Have kids copy down the forgiveness pattern into their scrapbooks, and write the name of someone that they will try this method of reconciliation with when they get home from reunion.

“Breaking Down Walls” Story and Movie

If possible, find the movie or story of “The Selfish Giant” by Oscar Wilde. The movie may be difficult to find; it may be available on VHS at a local library. There are several children’s book versions, or go to www.planetmonk.com/wilde/happyprince/selfishgiant.html Web site for the printed story. You might invite children to add their own art to the story.

Make a Bridge

When catastrophes happen—such as floods and other disasters—people sometimes form “human bridges” to pass supplies, sandbags, or other materials from one to another. Find something in the

classroom that kids can pass to each other. Play a game so kids can form a bridge. See how much easier it is to work together than alone.

Give one kid a soft ball, snack box, or whatever is being passed, and have them take it from one side of the room to the other. Give another item to the next kid, etc. Use a stopwatch to keep track of times. Then form a long line with the kids, and have them pass the items from one to another (like a bridge). Clock this time also, and compare the two. Discuss:

1. Which is faster?
2. Which is more fun?
3. Why is it important to build bridges sometimes, rather than do things alone?

“Breaking and Building” Craft

This craft requires a lot of careful attention. Give each kid a pillowcase or other soft container. Place breakable dishes, a flower pot, or other breakable items inside. With their shoe or a soft mallet, kids may break the items by hitting the bag until everything feels like it is broken into small pieces.

Alternative: Give kids sheets of tissue paper and construction paper to tear apart. Include some that is shiny and glittery. Have them imagine these are walls they are breaking down.

They may glue these pieces onto a clean plastic or glass container, such as an empty peanut-butter jar. Use a clear glue, creating a stained-glass effect. When dry, a votive or tea-light candle may be placed inside. During Peace Prayers, these candles can be lit with the lights turned off, creating a beautiful sanctuary for prayer.

Peace Prayers: Good Walls

There are peaceful places in the world. One is the Wailing Wall, a prayer wall in the city of Jerusalem. Here, Jews from all over the world travel to pray. They write their prayers on little slips of paper and slide them into the cracks of the stones in the wall.

Find a “prayer wall” somewhere on the campgrounds where children could experience a similar activity. If one is not available, create a prayer wall in the classroom on a bulletin board or wall. Attach brick façade or thick cardboard squares or circles, like stones, onto the bulletin board or wall. These should be thick enough that kids can stick wadded papers with prayers written on them in between. After children have done this, say a blessing on the children’s prayers that God will be with the children and continue to nurture them as they share the peace of Jesus.

Day 4—A Willing Yes: Be a Giver

Welcome Kids!

Today play a Bingo game in which kids discover more about each other. Make a Bingo card by drawing five columns down and five rows across. Write one of the following descriptions in each square, and add some that are unique to the kids in your class:

Same color of socks as I have

Same initials as I have

Has a pet _____

Different color of eyes than I have

Their favorite food is _____.

At the beginning of class, hand out the Bingo cards, and have kids mingle with classmates. Have them match each unique characteristic to one of their friends and put their friend's name on that space on the card. When an adequate time to play has passed, read through the characteristics and give each child opportunity to tell more about it.

“A Willing Yes!” Story

Share the storybook (also used in worship) *Incredible You!* by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer with Kristina Tracy, illustrated by Melanie Siegel (Australia: Hay House, 2005), ISBN 1-4019-0782-2. This is a very affirming book for children. It helps them believe in themselves as a gifted child of God. Dyer writes ten affirmations such as “Think of something you love to do./That is your passion, so let it shine through./ Never let fear hold you back. / Do what you love—you’re on the right track.” Discuss:

1. What is one of the best things you do?
2. What is something you’ve always wanted to do?
3. If you could do your favorite thing right now, what would it be?
4. Write a plan for what your passion is, and tell how you might follow this plan when you get home from reunion. (Or you can start while you’re here at reunion!)

A Willing Giver

Read today’s scripture of the story of the widow’s mite from Mark 12:41–44 NRSV adapted:

“Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting their money into it. Many rich people put large amounts of money in the treasury. But then a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Jesus told his disciples, ‘This poor widow has put in more than

all those rich people. They gave a little out of their riches, but she gave everything she had out of her poverty.’”

Show the kids a bag full of something representing coins. Pull a few out and put them in a basket as an offering. (These may be coins, candy coins, jelly beans, stones, or whatever.) Have another leader pull only two of the same item out of a pocket, turning the pocket inside out to show there is no more.

Discuss:

1. Did I give more or did the leader?
2. Which of us had more to give?
3. Why did Jesus say the widow gave more than the rich people? She didn't really, did she?
4. Why did Jesus tell this story? What does Jesus want us to do with our offerings?

Giving All That You Can

Make a mural of the ministries of the church. Do this by giving each child a large sheet of poster paper—on which they may paint, color, glue magazine pictures, or otherwise design to depict a need in the world. These needs might include needs for housing, food, education, churches, prayer, etc.

When kids are finished, tape their creations around the room. Design a beginning poster titled “Be a Giver.” Talk about the many people who are helped by generous people in our church. Tell about the countries that are helped.

Giver Game

Play a game of giving by using a large sheet or parachute. Tell kids that we are all going to give until it gets wild and extreme! Giving can be radically fun. Have everyone hold onto an edge of the sheet or parachute and begin shaking it up and down, causing the sheet to undulate. Begin by tossing (giving) balls onto the sheet, a few at first. Continue “giving” more and more of any size and color. Encourage kids to keep the balls bouncing, trying not to bounce any balls off. Keep playing until the kids have thoroughly enjoyed bouncing the balls on the sheet.

With an additional sheet or parachute, kids can be divided into two groups. Balls can then be bounced back and forth between the sheets, again trying to avoid any bouncing off. This can be great fun.

Giver Craft

Create a four-section bank where kids can collect money. Use a recycled coffee can or similar container with a plastic lid. Clean cans well before class. Cut four slits in the lid for four different offerings (adults do the cutting). Inside, kids can put a divider made of cardboard that divides the interior into four sections. Kids may decorate the outside of the can by taping or gluing construction paper to it. They can color

the paper with metallic crayons or apply glitter glue or other creative materials to the paper. They may also paste magazine pictures or prints from the Community of Christ Web site to their can. Have each child write their name on the bottom of their can. They can write on the plastic lid with permanent thin-line markers each of the four offerings' titles: International Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Personal Savings, and Spend As You Wish. Encourage kids to share their money equally between the four sections. Tell kids that the money they collect for the international and local church can be taken to church and given in the offering in an offering envelope.

Peace Prayers

Using a globe or map, have children close their eyes and point to a location on it. When they open their eyes, they may pray for the children in that country: that they have food, clothing, freedom to love God and others, and empowerment to share their gifts.

Day 5—Be Peace: Live Peace

Welcome Kids!

By this last day, kids should know each other well. Today, gather in a circle and have kids share a prayer for the child on their left. They should include the child's name and a special blessing of caring and sharing peace. This can be a very tender time, so you may wish to create a special worship setting: soft music, candles, and a reverent and caring spirit. You may wish to start the prayers as an example, praying for another adult and allowing the children to pray for each other.

A “Live Peace” Story

Share the story (also used in worship) *Jerusalem Sky* by Mark Podwal (Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 2005), ISBN 038574689X.. Under one big sky, the city of Jerusalem encompasses three world religions: the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims. This beautiful book of poetry and watercolor shows how these three religions connect and hold things in common under God's big, blue Jerusalem sky. This book will help reinforce the idea that to share the peace of Jesus we need to “be and live” peace and look for connections, not divisions. Discuss:

1. Jerusalem is called the “city of peace.” Is it the city of peace when the people who live there fight over religious beliefs?
2. How can the people of Jerusalem come together as friends?
3. How is “owning” Jerusalem like trying to own the sky? Who owns the sky?

Share the Peace of Jesus: Peace Lights

Read today's scripture, a parable from Luke 11:36 NRSV adapted:

“If your whole body is full of light, it will be like a lamp that gives you light with its rays.”

Have kids copy this scripture into their books.

Make a “constellation” picture to show the world the light that you have to share. Notice the night lights, the stars in the sky, from the book *Jerusalem Sky* and from other books about constellations. Constellations are images that groups of stars suggest. There are constellations that form a “big dipper,” a “little dipper,” “a scorpion,” “an archer,” “a bear,” and others. Ask kids: “If you want to symbolize who you are, what image would you choose to shine your light through? Would it be a peace symbol? a cross? two hands together? a heart?”

1. Give kids dark construction paper to draw their constellation on. Use heavy lines with white, wax crayons or “gel” colored pencils. Symbols should be clear, showing the basic shape, like true constellations. As kids work, discuss what symbols they have chosen to share their light with.
2. Kids can place large dots where the stars would be located—at each corner of their symbol.
3. From the back of the paper, using a sharp pencil, kids can carefully punch holes to show where the stars are. They should make them large enough that a light can visibly shine through them.
4. Form the paper by pulling short ends together. Tape paper into a cylinder.

5. Put the cylinder on top of another piece of dark paper. Trace on the paper around the circular opening of the cylinder. Remove the cylinder, and draw four tabs on the edge of the circle to attach it to the cylinder.
6. Cut this tabbed circle out, fold the tabs down, and tape or glue them to the inside of the cylinder.
7. Turn off the lights in the room. Give each kid a flashlight, and have them shine their flashlight through the cylinder. Kids can show their constellations to the rest of the class.
8. Discuss under the light of their constellations: What does your constellation mean? How will you share your light when you get home from reunion?

“Be Peace: Live Peace” Games

Choose one or all of these teamwork games to practice living peace. Games are from *Go With Peace* by Kelly Guinan (Blair, NE: Kind Regards, LLC, 2005), ISBN 0-9719279-2-8, pages 102—“Pass the Peace”; 104—“The Cereal Dilemma”; and 108—“Land Skis Away.”

Pass the Peace—Give each kid a square of paper and a straw. Kids are to try to pass the “peace” of paper to one another without using their hands. They may blow the paper through the straw and across a table to the other person. They may suck on the straw to hold the paper on the end of the straw—to pass it. Using their hands, they may fold the straw into chopsticks—to grab the paper with. (Kids may do these activities in teams, forming lines, for competition.)

The Cereal Dilemma—Pair kids in teams of two, and give them two bowls of cereal and two spoons. Tape or tie rigid sticks, like a paint-stirring stick or long ruler, to each of their arms. The goal is for each to eat their bowl of cereal without putting their face in it or breaking their sticks. See how the two resolve their problem.

Land Skis Away—Before class, staple 3 strips (3 to 4 foot in length) of 2- or 3-inch-wide elastic to six foot boards (2" x 4" x 6') creating skis that three kids can put their feet into. Each team of three kids needs two boards. Have kids insert their feet under the elastic strips, and move together around the room (without falling).

After all of these activities, discuss:

1. How did you work together in each game?
2. What happened when you didn't work together?
3. Would it have been easier to do these tasks by yourself?
4. What was the advantage of having a partner to do these with?
5. What did you enjoy most about these activities?

Peace Prayers

Gather kids around a table. Put a mixture of various colors of candy (M&Ms work well) in a small bowl, muffin cup, or on a napkin for each child. Create slips of paper that match the colors of the candy, and put them in the center of the table. Ask the first child to pick whatever color of candy they

wish. When they pick it up, they are to also pick up the slip of paper that matches, and read what they are to pray for. At the same time, everyone around the table can eat a colored candy that matches. Prepare as many slips of paper (and colors) as there are children. When all are finished praying, they may finish their snack. (If you want a more healthful snack, have items like grapes, cherries, nuts, raisins, and other items in their bowls with matching colored papers.)

Purple—Pray for your congregation.

Red—Pray for the church in the world.

Blue—Pray about something that concerns you about your church.

Yellow—Praise Jesus and God.

Green—Pray for the earth and what you can do for it.

Orange—Pray for people that need your help.

Brown—Pray for your town, neighborhood, and school.