

## Day 1—Go Deeper: Know Jesus, Know Peace

### Worship Center

For the week, display a picture of Christ with the banner “Share Christ’s Peace” near it. You may want to add daily-theme banners around the room as the week progresses.

Prepare posters, overheads, or PowerPoint slides of daily themes and scriptures.

### Scripture Reading

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*

—John 14:27 NRSV

### Music suggestions:

“I Have Called You by Your Name” R-10

“Now Sing to Our God” NS 40

“Shine, Jesus, Shine” NS 45

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

“Center of Peace” SP 1

“Gather Your Children” SP 3

“Called by Christ to Love Each Other” SP 36

“I Am the Way” by Mark Schultz, *WOW 2001* CD or *Mark Schultz* CD

### Gathering/Worship

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

### Lesson

#### Jesus the Peacemaker

Before class, make hang-tags for each student using a sheet of typing paper. Punch two holes on one side and thread a string through them. When campers arrive, distribute one to each. Instruct them to hang the tags around their necks and on their backs. Their assignment is to think about Jesus as a peacemaker. What can they recall from the stories of Jesus that are examples of peace or peacemaking? Give them a marker that will not leak through the paper. They are to find someone they don’t know very well, introduce themselves, write their examples on each other’s tags, and explain why they chose their examples.

When all partners are finished, have them bring their tags to the instructor and find a place to sit. Use the tags to make a chart on paper or poster board for the wall. Put similar ideas on the same line. As a class, analyze the chart. Use extra paper to make additions the class might suggest.

Put this quote from Ulrich Mauser on poster board or PowerPoint for the class to see. Read and compare Mauser's points to their bar graph. Add any examples that the class may have missed. Ask the class if they agree with the quote.

*It is possible to describe the entire ministry of Jesus as a single act of peacemaking. If one takes into account that the healing of the sick, the feeding of the hungry, the care of the neglected and despised, and the forgiveness of sins are all aspects of the restoration of God's peace through the powers unleashed by the dawn of God's kingship on earth, one may fairly say that the core both of Jesus' preaching and his acts is captured in the phrase: Jesus the peacemaker.*

—Ulrich Mauser, *The Gospel of Peace: A Scriptural Message for Today's World* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1992), 188.

### **Defining Christ's Peace**

The theme for reunion is "Share Christ's Peace: Going Deeper." Ask youth, "What is the peace of Jesus Christ?" Ask someone to read John 14:27 NRSV. (Have it posted in the room or provide Bibles for all to look up the scripture.) Ask another to read the statement by Stephen Veazey, president of Community of Christ. Have it also posted.

*The phrase "the peace of Jesus Christ" contains all of the promises, hopes, and blessings of the gospel as revealed by Christ and as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, his promised presence with us. In all of the places in our lives where we are afraid, anxious, discouraged, guilt-ridden, or alienated, Jesus Christ speaks "peace" and opens the way to peace, not just for individuals, but for the whole of creation.*

—Stephen M. Veazey, 2005 World Conference Sermon

These references help us to better understand, but for many there are still questions like the following:

1. What are the promises of the gospel?
2. What are the hopes of the gospel?
3. What are the blessings of the gospel?
4. Who is Jesus Christ? How did he share peace? (We've already started to answer this question.)
5. What is the Holy Spirit? What is its role?
6. Where in your life are you afraid? anxious? discouraged? guilt ridden? alienated?
7. How does Jesus Christ open the way to peace for you? your family? your congregation? your community? for all of creation?
8. What does it mean to be the peace of Jesus? How do we do it?
9. What other questions might youth have?

These are some of the questions that we'll begin to answer this week; many of them we'll continue to explore our entire lives.

Why do we need to go deeper to understand what Christ's peace is? To help us better understand, we can look at one of Jesus' parables. He used them frequently. Share the following parable with the class.

*I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.*

—Luke 6:47–49 NRSV

What is the truth we are to understand from this parable?

Divide into several small groups to write a definition for Christ's peace. Add examples and list different ways of exploring the peace of Jesus Christ. Come together and share definitions and examples. Combine to make a class definition. Use the definition provided above, taken from the adult reunion text, and compare it to the class definition.

### **Lessons Jesus Taught about Peace**

Divide the class into four teams, giving each team a poster board and markers. Assign a different Gospel to each team, and have them search for and record on their posters lessons Jesus taught about peace, both inner peace and corporate peace. They might be statements that come from conversations or sermons, or they might be messages from parables and /or experiences. Be sure they put a scripture reference by what they find, in case they need to locate it later. Put the posters on the wall and share.

### **Activity Suggestions**

#### **How It Works**

Divide the class into small groups. Have groups draw a diagram on a large sheet of paper, telling what they think the peace of Christ is and how it works. Share each group's diagram with the entire class. (If you have a large group, combine two or three groups for sharing.) Combine elements of each group's diagram to make one that represents the class. Display during the week. Add or adjust the information as the week continues.

#### **Video Book**

What did Jesus, the peacemaker, do? If we share the peace of Jesus, what would we do? During the week, go around the reunion grounds videotaping people being the peace of Christ. Divide into video teams, and make a taping schedule so there will be opportunity for everyone to get a chance to use the video camera(s). Let worship planners know what you're doing, and include your video in the closing service. In the event a video camera is unavailable, the youth may be able to record events on paper, and then create skits to reproduce the events witnessed.

### **I Am the Way**

Show a picture of Christ. Listen to “I Am the Way” by Mark Schultz on the *Mark Schultz* CD. Give each youth several sticky-notes and a pen. Provide extra sticky-notes if necessary. After listening to the song ask teens to write on their notes the names of people who have shown them Christ’s peace at one time or another in their life. Play the CD again as they write.

When youth are finished with their notes, have them post them on a wooden cross at the front of the room, and offer a silent prayer of thanks for these people. Display the cross throughout the week with a supply of blank notes and pens so additions can be made.

### **Finding Direction**

The fact that so many people clutter their lives with “fast forward” activities may be an attempt to satisfy, cover-up, hide, or ignore their spiritual inadequacies, because they don’t know how to deal with them. Today’s schedules don’t allow much reflection time: a time to look inward and begin to know Christ’s peace. During the middle ages, people searching for meaning to their lives or answers to problems would walk a labyrinth. Made of concentric circles, a labyrinth is a geometric path that leads to the center and back out again. Within the labyrinth, the path winds back and forth in circuits. Each turn is 180 degrees, an about-face, so to speak. Along the path of many labyrinths, are locations for meditation or inward reflection. These locations provide an opportunity to reflect on what it means to share the peace of Christ.

Take the class to an open area, and make a labyrinth for reunion campers this week to help them reflect on what it means to share Christ’s peace. Several groups may want to help with this project. Use sidewalk chalk, masking tape, or field markers. These directions require approximately an 18 x 18 foot area. (See directions for drawing and making stops for a labyrinth on page 19 of this resource.) Paths are about two feet wide. Mark off seven stops along the path. The first will be as students enter the path, and the last will be after they exit. Space the other stops along the way with either stop three or four at the center. Let teens enter one at a time. This is a silent activity so no one’s individual searching process will be disturbed. Ask them to wait patiently for the person before them to finish and move on before they begin at the next stop. Prepare the directions ahead of time, and make them available for each site. Use headphones and portable CD players for the sites that suggest music.

### **Journal**

When it comes to sharing the peace of Jesus Christ, one of the biggest questions for youth is “Why?” It may be hard for them to identify what motivates or causes them to desire to make such a personal proclamation. To help youth process this dilemma, ask the class to write the name, Jesus Christ, down the middle of a journal page. On the left side, write things that describe Christ’s peace. On the right, write things they wish others knew about Christ’s peace. Encourage them to think about the people they can turn to for support in sharing the peace of Christ. Write those names around the edge of the page.

## **Peace Prayer**

### **Prayer Puzzle of Peace**

Cut out of paper or poster board large letters that spell the words CHRIST'S PEACE. Then cut the letters into smaller pieces to create a puzzle. Give each person one or more pieces of the puzzle and a pencil. Ask them to write on their puzzle pieces three things that they believe keep us from experiencing peace. Next, have them write three things that could bring us closer to Christ's peace. Their examples might include: conflicts between people, attitudes, the world we live in, prayer, friends, governments, or families. Then have them write a prayer asking for God's help in sharing Christ's peace. Put the pieces together to spell the words CHRIST'S PEACE. As each person puts their piece in place, let them read their prayer.