Create Shalom:
Abolish Poverty, End Suffering

Community of Christ
Lessons for Young Children Ages 3–5
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Introduction

The reunion class material for young children will explore concepts expressed in the Mission Initiative Abolish Poverty, End Suffering, using terminology and activities appropriate for children ages 3–5. Children will explore scripture passages in paraphrased story form that will teach about peace (shalom), hunger (poverty), sharing, and helping neighbors and strangers. Lessons include scripture stories, song suggestions, games, interactive activities, snack suggestions, and art activities.

Preschoolers enjoy process more than the finished product, so suggestions are for art activities rather than crafts that all look the same. The process will reinforce the lesson, and children will relish telling about their own creations. Where practical, write children’s words on their artwork so families will understand the process and learning that is taking place.

An estimated time to complete each activity is included to assist in your planning, so select from activities to fit your allotted class time. Times to complete activities will vary based on the number of children.

Each lesson includes an optional story. Each of the suggested books (new or used, and for various prices) is available online or in local bookshops. We Share by Monica Bradford is available at www.heraldhouse.org. Each book contains engaging photos or illustrations that will draw preschoolers into conversation about peace (shalom) and what all people need. While not required for the lessons, these additional stories can add to the learning and may be a good investment for an individual or congregational library.

Note:

For all snacks, model “healthy…relationships with…the earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 163:2b) by avoiding use of plastic (unless recycling is available) and Styrofoam. As much as possible, serve snacks using reusable or paper plates and paper cups, preferably containing recycled content. If your schedule permits, allow time for children to help prepare, serve, and clean up snacks to reinforce the concepts of sharing and helping.
Focus

Today's lesson introduces the reunion theme “Create Shalom: Abolish Poverty, End Suffering” with age-appropriate language and introduces sharing concepts paraphrased from Isaiah 58:7 as the scripture focus for the week.

Focus Scriptures

Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a
Isaiah 58:7

Objectives

The learners will…

• be introduced to one another, the teachers, and the theme for the week.
• discover through scripture how God feels when people are sick, hungry, or don’t have places to live or clothes to wear.
• participate in activities to explore feelings about sharing and helping.

Materials

• Puppet Supplies: paper lunch sacks, wiggle eyes, yarn cut for hair in a variety of colors, markers or crayons, glue or glue sticks
• Feeling flash cards
• Snack supplies
• Optional: Puppet stage

Resources

• Bible
• Doctrine and Covenants

GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

10 minutes

Greeting Song

Introduce the children to one another by having children stand one at a time during the song and say their names. Introduce teachers this way too.

We’re glad you’re here today
We’re glad you’re here today
We’re glad to see you [child’s name]
We’re glad you’re here today

Tune: “The Farmer in the Dell”

Prayer

Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Start by saying, “Thank you, God, that we are together in this place.” Go around the circle and ask children to tell one thing they are looking forward to in the lessons. The teacher concludes with “Amen.”
**Song: “If You’re Happy and You Know It”**

Ask, “Do you know the song ‘If You’re Happy and You Know It’? Let’s sing the first verse.”

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands
If you’re happy and you know it, and you really want to show it
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands

Ask, “But are you happy all the time? What other feelings do you have?” Ask for children’s suggestions and act out what they might do if they felt that way. Suggestions:

If you’re mad and you know it, stomp your feet…
It you’re excited and you know it, jump up and down…
If you’re sad and you know it, cry and cry…
If you’re tired and you know it, stretch and yawn…
If you’re scared and you know it, shiver and shake…

Ask, “When do you feel…happy, sad, mad, etc.?”

**Art Activity: Feeling Puppets**

Assist children as requested (opening glue, etc.) but allow children to decorate their puppets any way they want (puppets do not have to actually look like a face or a feeling). Encourage children to tell about the feeling they are making and write their words on the back of their puppets. It is all right if the ideas seem unrelated to the lesson. Accept all ideas without judgment. For example, if children decide to make a monster puppet or a superhero puppet, encourage learning by further asking what the monster or superhero might be feeling or how it might help someone. Teachers should make a puppet with the children or if you include the puppet show activity, make a puppet ahead of time.

**Game: Feeling Charades**

Ahead of time, prepare Feeling Flash Cards with pictures (cut pictures from magazines, look for images online, or draw simple faces) to depict various feelings. Have a child select a card and act out the feeling while the other children guess the feeling. Allow each child to have a turn (or to decide not to have a turn).

**Scripture Stories**

Open your Bible or Doctrine and Covenants so children will recognize stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions throughout the reading of the scripture passage to help children understand the words. Hear their ideas and involve them in the story or text.

**Suggested Introduction:** “We are going to learn about how God wants us to help people who are sick, hungry, or who don’t have places to live. In Doctrine and Covenants, we find out how God feels when people are sick, hungry, or don’t have a home.”

**God Weeps**

God, who made the whole world, weeps when people are hungry or don’t have places to live or are treated badly or are sick.

Ask, “What is weeping?” (crying) “When do we cry?” (when we are sad) “When do you feel sad? Why do you think God sometimes might feel sad?”

This is not what God wants. Listen to the mothers and fathers all over the world who seek a future of hope for their children.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a, paraphrased

Ask, “Have you heard the word seek? What do you think it means? It means to try to find something. Do you know what future means? It means it hasn’t happened yet. We are waiting for it. Are you excited about Christmas? Christmas is in the future—we are waiting for it. Have you heard the word hope? What do you think hope means? Hope means we believe something good will happen.”

Ask, “Do your families take care of you? How do they take care of you?” (with food, clothing, shelter) “How do you think your [mom, dad, grandparent, guardian] would feel if he or she didn’t have any food to give you or didn’t have a place for you to live? How would you feel?”

**Share Bread**

In the Bible in the book of Isaiah, we are told how we can help people:

If someone is hungry, share your bread.
If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home.
If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.

—Isaiah 58:7 NRSV, paraphrased

Ask, “What does it mean to be hungry? When have you felt hungry? Where do you live? Who lives with you? Where do you get your clothes? What do you do when your clothes get too small for you?” We will learn about how God wants us to help people who are hungry, sick, or who don’t have places to live or clothes to wear. We will hear stories about how Jesus helped people.
RESPOND
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Activity: Puppet Show

Use the puppets the children made to role-play stories about sharing or feelings. An adult and a child can do a puppet show together so the adult can ask the child questions and guide the story and child's ideas. Ask children for an idea about a feeling they would like to act out or something they would like to share (or something they don't want to share) as a basis for the role-play.

If desired, make a simple puppet stage ahead of time from a large cardboard box with one side cut out and two pieces of fabric attached at the top for curtains.

Optional Story

Revise the first two sentences of Can You Say Peace? by Karen Katz to read: “All around the world, children everywhere wish for peace, hope for peace, and ask for peace.”

Ask, “Where do you live? Have you heard the word peace? What do you think it means? Let's read the story and find out.” As you read the story, encourage children to repeat the word for peace in various languages.

Ask at the end of story, “Do you get to go to school (preschool/daycare/nursery/playgroup)? Do you get to play outside? Do you have food to eat? Should all children be able to go to school, play outside, and have food to eat? This is part of peace, when everyone has what they need.”

Snack Suggestion

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

Have a loaf (or loaves) of whole-grain or gluten-free bread on a plate to pass around the table to break and share. After children have washed their hands, ask them to break off a piece of bread and pass the loaf to the next person.

Remind children of the scripture passage from Isaiah: If someone is hungry, share your bread.

SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” (Say the first part of scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in last word. Repeat throughout the six lessons, using less of the scripture phrase and inviting children to fill in more.)

- If someone is hungry, share your… (bread).
- If someone doesn't have a place to live, share your… (home).
- If someone doesn't have clothes to wear, share your… (clothes).

Encourage children to look for ways to share throughout this day and be ready to tell about it at the next lesson.

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Start a sentence prayer by saying, “God, today I will share by…” Give children an opportunity to respond if they wish. End with “Amen.” Sing today's good-bye song, “I Will Share.”

- I will help people, I will share, I will help people, I will share, I will share, share, share.

Text: Mary Kay Speaks
Tune: “He's Got the Whole World in His Hands”
Focus
Hear a story about Jesus walking and sharing with his friends and consider what it means to follow Jesus.

Focus Scripture

Objectives
The learners will...
• discover through scripture how Jesus shared with his friends.
• participate in activities to consider what it means to follow Jesus.
• recall the previous lesson and concepts of how God wants them to share with and help others.

Materials
• Art Activity: Construction paper or roll paper, washable paint, 9 x 13 in. (22 x 34 cm.) reusable pans, chair, bucket of soapy water, and towels
• OR Alternate Art Activity: Construction paper and crayons or markers
• Optional: Rhythm instruments
• Snack supplies

Resources
• Bible

• Community of Christ Sings

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Start by gathering the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Greeting Song
“The More We Get Together”
The more we get together, together, together
The more we get together, the happier we’ll be
For your friends are my friends and my friends are your friends
The more we get together, the happier we’ll be

—German Folk Song

Ask children for suggestions on what else we can do together and then sing additional verses.

Prayer
Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Begin by saying, “Thank you, God, for friends to share with.” Go around the circle and ask children to name one of their friends. The teacher concludes with “Amen.”
Ask if children had a chance to share with someone after the previous lesson.

**ENGAGE**

*Invites exploration and interaction*

**Scripture Story: Walk with Jesus**

(paraphrased from Luke 24:13–35 NRSV)

Open your Bible so children will recognize stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions provided throughout the reading to help children understand the words. Hear their ideas and involve them in the story or text.

Ask, “Have you heard the story of Easter? What did you do last Easter?” (Ask for children’s ideas—some may know the basic story. Some will remember Easter baskets, egg hunts, etc.). “Easter is a time when we remember the story of Jesus and new life.”

“This Bible story from the book of Luke tells about two of Jesus’ friends who were walking on a long road to their house.”

Two of Jesus’ friends were walking on the road to the town called Emmaus where they lived.

Ask, “Do you know the name of the town where you live? Is it far from here or close to here? How did you get to this place? How long do you think it would take you to walk from your home to here?”

They were very sad because they thought Jesus was dead. While they were walking, Jesus came and started walking with them, but they didn’t know it was Jesus.

“Can you think of a time when you didn’t know someone? Maybe the person was wearing a hat that covered his or her face and you didn’t know who it was. Maybe it was someone you hadn’t seen for a long time. Maybe it was someone your parents knew, but someone who you didn’t remember.”

Jesus asked them what they were talking about. They stopped walking and looked sad. One of them told the story of how Jesus had died three days before, but some of the women who were friends of Jesus told them they had seen Jesus alive. They still didn’t know it was Jesus who was walking with them.

They started walking again. Jesus told them the story of what had happened to him, that he had died but God gave him new life. They still didn’t know it was Jesus who was walking with them.

When they got to their town, they asked Jesus to stay at their house for the night because it was getting late.

“Have you ever spent the night at someone’s house?”

They sat down at the table for dinner. Jesus took a loaf of bread and broke off pieces of bread. He said a prayer of thanks to God, and gave the bread to his friends.

“That was just like our snack yesterday!”

When Jesus gave them the bread, they knew it was Jesus and they were very happy and excited that Jesus was alive! They ran to tell all their friends.

“What do you know about Jesus? Can you see Jesus? How can you learn about Jesus? What do you think it means to follow Jesus? What did you learn yesterday about what Jesus wants us to do?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**Activity: Noticing Walk**

Tell children they are taking a “noticing walk.” Ask what and whom they see and hear. Recall the story of Jesus and his friends walking toward Emmaus. Ask for ideas on how to follow Jesus.

**Alternate Activity: Combine Scripture Story and Noticing Walk**

Tell the scripture story from Luke as you lead the children on a walk. Stop in various places to ask questions and help them imagine they are part of the story.

**Art Activity: Walking-feet Painting**

This is a messy but fun activity. It is best-done outside as an individual activity or a group activity. For an individual activity, have a large sheet of construction paper or poster board for each child. For a group activity, spread a length of roll paper or a paper tablecloth on the ground. Use 9 x 13 in. (22 x 34 cm.) reusable pans with a small amount of washable paint (one or more colors). Invite one child at a time to remove his or her shoes and step in the paint. One adult can hold the child’s hand and help the child step in the paint (one or more times if using various colors) then step on the paper to make footprints. Another adult can have a small chair ready with a bucket of soapy water and a towel to clean the child’s feet. Another adult can help the children put shoes and socks back on.
Ask, “Was it easy or hard to walk in the paint?” (It’s hard because it is slippery.) “We need help to walk in the paint; just as Jesus teaches us to help one another. In the same way, we can help people who need food, places to live, and clothes to wear.”

Alternate (less messy) Art Activity
Trace each child’s feet (with shoes or barefoot) on a large sheet of construction paper. Let children color in their traced feet with crayons or markers. As they color, ask for their ideas about how they can follow Jesus. Write the ideas on their papers.

RESPOND
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Game: Following Feet (“Simon Says”)
Ask, “Do you think it is easy or hard to follow Jesus?”

Let’s play a game to see if we can follow directions. It’s called Following Feet. If I say “following feet,” do the motion. If I don’t say “following feet,” then freeze!

Example: “Following feet jump up and down. Following feet stop jumping. Touch your toes. I didn’t say ‘following feet’! Freeze!”

Song: “We Are Marching in the Light of God”
Ask children to stand and march around the room while singing “Siyahamb’ Ekukhanyen’ Kwenkhos’ (We Are Marching in the Light of God)” CCS 95. If available, use instruments such as shakers, drums, or tambourines for children to carry. Ask children to do different motions (such as marching in the light of God, jumping in the light of God, or spinning in the light of God).

Optional Story
Ask before reading aloud the story God’s Dream:
- What is a dream?
- Can you tell about a dream you had?
- What do you think God dreams about?

Ask after reading the story, “How can we help God’s dream come true?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

Snack Suggestion
Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

On a reusable or paper plate, give each child a tortilla (or flat bread) and a small amount of 100-percent fruit jelly or jam. Using a reusable butter knife (if available), allow the children to spread the jelly or jam and roll the tortilla or flat bread.

SEND
Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” Say the first part of the scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in the last word. Repeat throughout the next lessons, using less of the scripture phrase and inviting children to fill in more.

If someone is hungry, share your… (bread).
If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your… (home).
If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your… (clothes).

Ask children to notice where they are walking today. Where is the farthest place they have to walk? Ask children to remember where they walked so they can tell the class at the next lesson.

BLESS
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Start a sentence prayer by saying, “Today I will follow Jesus by…” Give children an opportunity to respond if they wish. End with “Amen.” Lead the good-bye finger play with motions.

Open, Shut Them—Good-bye Finger Play

Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Raise your hands up high.
Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Wave to [child’s name] and say Good-bye. (repeat for each child)
Focus
Today children will hear a story about how a large crowd of people ate when Jesus’ disciples shared a little food, and will practice sharing with others.

Focus Scripture
Matthew 15:32–39

Objectives
The learners will…
- discover through scripture how sharing a little can help a lot.
- participate in activities to consider how to share with others.
- recall previous lessons and concepts of how God wants them to share and help others.

Materials
- **Sharing Activity:** Empty paper lunch sack for each child with his or her name on it, paper lunch sack for each child with enough of a small item (such as stickers, small boxes of raisins, or pencils) to share with each of the other children
- **Art Activity:** Large size, heavy-duty balloons; funnel; fine sand; small scoops or measuring spoons; permanent marker; and 9 x 13 in. (22 x 34 cm.) reusable pans
- Snack supplies

Resources
- **“The Sharing Song”** by Jack Johnson from the soundtrack Sing-A-Longs and Lullabies for the Film Curious George; lyrics: www.metrolyrics.com/the-sharing-song-lyrics-jack-johnson.html; available for purchase: jackjohnsonmusic.com/music/detail/singalongsandlullabiesforthefilmcuriousgeorge
- **Optional Story:** A Little Peace by Barbara Kerley (National Geographic Children’s Books, 2007, ISBN 9781426300868)
- Bible

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Start by gathering the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Greeting Song
This is the way we start the day, start the day, start the day
This is the way we start the day, so early in the morning
First we smile and wave to a friend, wave to a friend, wave to a friend
First we smile and wave to a friend, so early in the morning
Then we turn and shake a hand, shake a hand, shake a hand
Then we turn and shake a hand, so early in the morning
Then we turn and sit right down, sit right down, sit right down
Then we turn and sit right down, so early in the morning
Now we are ready to learn and play, learn and play, learn and play
Now we are ready to learn and play, so early in the morning
—Traditional folk song, lyrics adapted
Tune: “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”

Prayer

Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Start a sentence prayer by saying, “Thank you, God, for food to eat.” Go around the circle and ask children to name a favorite food they are thankful for. The teacher concludes with “Amen.”

Ask, “Where was the farthest place you walked yesterday?”

ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

Scripture Story: Feeding a Crowd
(paraphrased from Matthew 15:32–39 NRSV)

Open your Bible so children will recognize stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions throughout the reading of the scripture passage to help children understand the words. Listen to their ideas and involve the children in the story or text.

Say, “Our story today is about a time Jesus fed more than 4,000 people lunch (dinner)! Where do you eat lunch? What do you like to eat? Have you ever been in a big crowd of people?”

For three days, a large crowd of more than 4,000 people had been listening to Jesus teaching and watching Jesus helping sick people get better. During their time with Jesus they did not go to their houses and on the day they were to go home, they had nothing to eat.

“When do you eat food? How do you think you would feel if you didn’t have any food for breakfast or lunch?”

Jesus told his followers, “This crowd has been here for three days. I don’t want to send them home without anything to eat because they might get sick on the way.”

“We don’t have enough food to feed all these people,” Jesus’ followers told him.

Jesus asked them, “How many loaves of bread do you have?”

“We have seven loaves of bread and a few fish,” they told Jesus.

“How many loaves of bread did we eat for our snack on the first day of class? How many children are in our class? How many people are 4,000? How many loaves of bread do you think 4,000 people would need? How many did they have?” (seven)

Jesus asked the crowd to sit down on the ground. He took the loaves of bread and the fish, and he broke off pieces of the bread. He said a prayer of thanks to God, and gave the bread and fish to everyone in the crowd.

“Do you remember the other story about Jesus where he broke pieces off a loaf of bread and shared it with his friends? Do you remember the story about the long walk?” (Ask for children’s thoughts about what they remember.) “How far did you walk since our last lesson?”

After everyone had something to eat, Jesus’ followers put the leftover broken pieces of bread in baskets. The bread filled seven baskets!

“Do you remember what disciples of Jesus Christ are to do to help people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.) “Sharing a little can help a lot.”

Activity: Paper Lunch Sack Sharing

Prepare in advance empty paper lunch sacks for all children (see Materials on page 10). Fill another set of paper lunch sacks with enough of a small item to share with all. Have children look in their bags one at a time and tell the other children what is inside.

Ask, “Would you rather have all of the same thing or one of each thing?” (Answers may vary—one child may be very possessive of what they think is “theirs.”)

Place the empty sacks with the children’s names in front of each child. Encourage children one at a time to share the items in their sacks by placing one item in each child’s sack while a song plays.
**Song for Sharing Activity**
Play “The Sharing Song” by Jack Johnson.

**Art Activity: Balloon Bags**
Before class, blow up and deflate a balloon for each child. Let children select a balloon color (or use all one color) and write child’s name on the balloon with a permanent marker. Holding the balloon over a 9 x 13 in. (22 x 34 cm.) pan, assist the children to insert the funnel and fill the balloon with sand using the scoop. Fill the balloon completely, allowing room to tie the stem.

**RESPOND**
*Takes the learners from hearing to doing*

**Game: Cooperative Balloon Bag Tag**
(Adapted from Cooperative Bean Bags, Young Peacemaker’s Club curriculum, www.kidpeace.org)
Ask children to place their balloon bags on their heads and move slowly around the room. Tell them they can only move if the balloons are on their heads. If a balloon falls off, the person is frozen. The child can only move again if someone helps put the balloon bag back in place (teachers can be helpers if all balloons fall off and everyone is frozen). If a child’s balloon falls off while he or she is helping someone, the child can put it back in place and move around again.

Ask, “Was it more fun to help or to be frozen? How did you feel when you were frozen? How did you feel when someone helped you? How did you feel when you helped someone? Do you remember how God wants us to help people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**Snack**
Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.) Have a large bowl of bite-sized crackers or savory biscuits and a scoop. Encourage children to take one scoop of crackers and pass the bowl to the next child. Remind children of the scripture story from Matthew where Jesus shared lunch with more than 4,000 people.

**SEND**
*Explores how the lesson might be lived out*

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” Say the first part of the scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in the last word. Repeat throughout the next lessons, using less of the scripture phrase and inviting children to fill in more.

- If someone is hungry, share your… (bread).
- If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your… (home).
- If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your… (clothes).

Encourage children to look for ways to help someone today and to be ready to tell about it tomorrow.

**Optional Story**
Read *A Little Peace* by Barbara Kerley. Ask children for ideas that correspond with suggestions for peace in the book.

- What can your hand do?
- Who can you smile at?
- What song do you like to sing?

Ask, “How are we to share peace and help people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**BLESS**
*Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope*

Start a sentence prayer by saying, “God, today I will help someone by….” Give children an opportunity to respond if they wish. End with “Amen.” Sing today’s good-bye song.

- We wave good-bye like this. (wave hands)
- We wave good-bye like this.
- We clap our hands for all our friends.
- We wave good-bye like this.
- We wave good-bye to [child’s name]
- We wave good-bye to [child’s name]
- We clap our hands for all our friends.
- We wave good-bye to [child’s name]

(repeat for each child)

Tune: “The Farmer in the Dell”
Focus
Children will hear a story about how Jesus helped a sick stranger, and practice sharing with someone children may not know.

Focus Scriptures
Mark 7:24–30, Matthew 15:21–28

Objectives
The learners will…
• discover through scripture that Jesus helped all people, even strangers.
• participate in activities to learn about caring and to share with a stranger.
• recall previous lessons and concepts of how disciples share and help others.

Materials
• Art Activity: Construction paper or card stock folded in greeting card sizes, markers or crayons, stickers, feathers or other lightweight art materials, glue sticks
• Snack supplies

Resources
• Bible

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Start by gathering the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Greeting Song
How many friends are here today, here today, here today?
How many friends are here today?
Let's all count them.
We're glad [number] friends are here today, here today, here today
We're glad [number] friends are here today
Let's all greet them. (give high fives)
Now we're ready to learn and play, learn and play, learn and play
Now we're ready to learn and play
Let's all sit down.
Tune: “London Bridge”

Prayer
Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Start a sentence prayer by saying, “Thank you, God, for people who take care of us.” Go around the circle and ask children to share a word about how people take care of them or someone who takes care of them. Conclude with “Amen.”

Ask, “Did you help someone after the last lesson?”
Scripture Story: Jesus Helped a Sick Girl
(paraphrased from Mark 7:24–30, Matthew 15:21–28 NRSV)

Open your Bible so children will recognize the stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions throughout the reading of the scripture passages to help children understand the words. Listen to their ideas and involve them in the story or text.

Who is a stranger? (someone we don't know) What are children supposed to do around strangers? (not talk to them without an adult) This is a story about a time Jesus met a stranger.

Jesus went to a new place. A woman he didn't know came to him and started shouting at him, “Jesus! Help me! My daughter is very sick!”

But Jesus was there to help other people. Jesus’ followers said to Jesus, “Send her away. She keeps shouting at us.”

How do you feel when people shout at you? How would you feel if a stranger was shouting at you?

The woman came closer to Jesus, knelt down in front of him, and said, “Jesus, please help me!”

Jesus told her he was there to help other people. He told her a story, “It’s not fair to take children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”

Does anyone have a dog? Would your parents feed the dog your food and not feed you?

“Yes, Jesus,” she said, “but even the dogs get to eat the crumbs that fall on the floor.”

Does your dog eat food you drop on the floor?

Jesus answered the woman, “You have great faith.” And her daughter was made well.

What is faith? (believing something can happen) The woman believed Jesus could make her sick daughter better and she trusted Jesus to help even though she was a stranger.

How does God feel when people are sick? (Remind children of the scripture passage from Doctrine and Covenants 163:4a, God weeps.) What can we do to help people who are sick or sad or lonely?

Art Activity: Caring Cards
Let children decorate the fronts of the cards. On the inside, ask children for their ideas about what words let people know they care about them. Write the words for them. Let children write their names in the cards (assist children who don’t know how to write their names).

Caring Activity
Ask for a few minutes of an adult class or worship service for children to deliver their caring cards. Invite children to share a card with someone they may not know, someone who may be a stranger (since they are with a safe adult). Help children find people other than family members with whom to share their cards.

Game: Feeling Sick/Feeling Better (Red Light/Green Light)
Ask, “Have you ever been sick? How do you feel when you are sick? How do you move? What helps you feel better when you are sick? When you are feeling better, how do you move?”

Line children up outside or across the room from the “doctor” (teacher). When the doctor says, “Feeling Sick,” children move toward the doctor very slowly. When the doctor says “Feeling Better,” children move more quickly. After the first round, children can take turns being the doctor. Allow each child who wants to be the doctor to have a turn.

Optional Story
Read Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace by Shelley Moore. Ask children for ideas to correspond with the suggestions for peace in the book. Select from the following:

- How can you be a friend instead of fighting?
- How can you help someone who is sick?
- When have you been to a party to help someone celebrate?
- Who teaches you to ride a bike?
- Do you know anyone who lives far away?
- Do you know someone who is old?
- What have you helped to plant?
• Have you given away toys or clothes to someone who needed them?

• What is something new you have learned to do?

• How does God want us to share peace and help people? (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**Song**

“Peace like a River”

I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river in my soul.
I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river in my soul.

(put palms of hands together, move them like a moving river)

I’ve got joy like a fountain…
( clap hands, release upward like a fountain)

I’ve got love like an ocean…
(clasp hands over heart, move arms like waves)

I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got joy like a fountain;
I’ve got love like an ocean in my soul…
(do all three motions)

—Based on an African American spiritual

**Snack**

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

**Healthy Trail Mix:** Have several bowls of healthy options (raisins or other dried fruit, oat-based cereal, rice-based cereal) with small scoops. Have children take a small scoop of each food to make their own trail mix, then pass the bowl to the person next to them.

**SEND**

*Explores how the lesson might be lived out* 5 minutes

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” Say the first part of each scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in the last part. Repeat throughout lessons all week, using less of the scripture phrase and inviting children to fill in more.

If someone is hungry…(share your bread).
If someone doesn’t have a place to live… (share your home).
If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear… (share your clothes).

Encourage children to look for ways to meet a new friend today or show someone they care about them and to be ready to tell about it tomorrow.

**BLESS**

*Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope* 5 minutes

Teacher starts a sentence prayer: “God, today I will care about someone by…” Give children an opportunity to respond if they wish. End with “Amen.” Sing a good-bye song. (Repeat until each child’s name is sung.)

**Good-bye Song**

Good-bye [child],
Good-bye [child],
Good-bye [child],
It’s time to say good-bye.

Tune: “Goodnight Ladies”
Focus
Children will learn what all people need to live and how helping people have what they need is the same as helping Jesus.

Focus Scripture
Matthew 25:35–36

Objectives
The learners will...
• discover through scripture how Jesus taught us to treat neighbors and strangers.
• participate in activities to consider how we can use our hands to help others.
• recall previous lessons and concepts of how God wants them to share and help others.

Materials
• Art Activity: Construction paper or card stock, washable paint, 9 x 13 in. (22 x 34 cm.) reusable pans, sink or bucket (pail) of soapy water and towels
• OR Alternate Art Activity: Construction paper, markers
• Inflatable globe
• Water Filter Activity: Empty plastic two-liter bottle, coffee filters, sand, gravel, jug with dirty water, empty pitcher or jug
• Snack supplies

Resources
• Bible

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Hello, how are you? (wave to children)
Hello, how are you?
Hello, how are you?
How are you this morning?
Turn to your neighbor and shake their hand
Turn to your neighbor and shake their hand
Turn to your neighbor and shake their hand
Shake their hand this morning

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Tune: “Goodnight Ladies” (or “Skip to My Lou”)
Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Start by saying, “Thank you, God, for our neighbors.” Go around the circle and ask children to tell about someone who lives near them. Conclude with “Amen.”

Ask, “Did you get a chance to meet someone you didn’t know or show someone you care after the last lesson?”

**ENGAGE**

Invites exploration and interaction

**Scripture Story: Hungry and Thirsty**

(Matthew 25:35–40)

Open your Bible so children will recognize the stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions throughout the reading of the scripture passage to help children understand the words. Listen to their ideas and involve them in the story or text.

Jesus told his followers a story. “I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you let me come in your house. I didn’t have any clothes and you shared your clothes. I was sick and you took care of me.”


Jesus’ followers didn’t know what he was talking about.

“Jesus,” they said, “we have never seen you hungry or thirsty. You are not a stranger. We have never seen you without clothes. We have never seen you sick. What are you talking about?”

Jesus told them, “Whenever you give food to someone who is hungry, or a drink to someone who is thirsty, or give someone a place to stay who doesn’t have a home, or share your clothes, or take care of someone who is sick, it is the same as helping me.”

Ask, “How can we share peace and help people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

Ask, “Who is a neighbor? Who is a stranger? Who can we help?”

**Art Activity: “I Can Change the World” Handprints**

At the top of each child’s paper, write the words, *I Can Change the World*. Let children select paint colors and paint their handprints on the paper. The handprints do not need to be two neat handprints unless that is what the child wants. Let children put several handprints, mix colors, and experiment. As children are painting, ask for their ideas about how they can use their hands to help other people. Write their words on the bottom of their papers.

**Alternate (less messy) Art Activity**

At the top of each child’s paper, write the words, *I Can Change the World*. Have children trace their hands with markers (younger children may need assistance) then color their hand tracings any colors they choose. Ask for their ideas about how they can use their hands to help other people. Write their words on the bottom of their papers.

**RESPOND**

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

**Game: Catch the World (“Hot Potato”)**

Play “Catch the World” with an inflatable globe. (Inflatable globe may be available online or in educational shops.)

Sit in a circle and pass the globe around the circle as music plays. When the music stops, whoever has the globe tells one thing his or her hands can do to help. Start the music again.

Play “With My Own Two Hands” by Jack Johnson (or have someone play a piano or other musical instrument).

**Activity: Water Filter Experiment**

**Supplies:** An empty plastic two-liter bottle, coffee filters, sand, gravel, jug with dirty water, empty pitcher or jug

In advance, cut around the bottom of a plastic two-liter bottle. Use scissors to remove about 3 in./7.5 cm. from the bottom of the bottle. (see illustration on next page)

Ask, “What do you think people need to live?” (food, water, a place to live safely, a chance to go to the doctor when they are sick) “Do all people have what they need to live? Do you remember the scripture passage ‘God weeps’? Do you remember why God felt sad?” (people are hungry, sick, treated badly, don’t have places to live)

Turn the bottle upside down and remove the cap. Place two coffee filters along the end of the bottle closest to
the mouth, which is now the bottom of your filter.

Layer sand and fine gravel into the homemade filter, making each layer about a half-inch thick. Continue alternating these layers until the bottle is two-thirds full.

Place a coffee filter on top of the sand and gravel layers. Hold the filter over the empty pitcher.

Ask, “Would you want to drink this dirty water? What would happen if you drank dirty water?”

Allow each child a turn to help slowly pour a small amount of dirty water slowly into the filter and watch as the filtered water slowly seeps out the opposite end.

Ask, “Should all children be able to have clean water to drink? How do you think God feels when children are sick because they only have dirty water to drink?” (God weeps)

**Recommended Story**

Read *For Every Child, A Better World*. Ask:

- How does God feel when children do not have enough food? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children don’t have clean water? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children don’t have a place to live? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children have to live somewhere that is dirty? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children are sick? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children can’t go to school? (God weeps)
- How does God feel when children are not safe? (God weeps)
- How does God want us to share peace and help people? (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**Snack**

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

**Rice-cake/Yogurt-globe Snack:** Give each child an unsweetened rice cake and a spoonful of blue and green yogurt. Let children use a reusable butter knife to swirl the yogurt on the rice cake to look like a globe.

**SEND**

*Explores how the lesson might be lived out*

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” Say the first part of the scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in the rest. Repeat throughout all six lessons, using less of the scripture phrase and inviting children to fill in more.

- If someone is hungry… (share your bread).
- If someone doesn’t have a place to live… (share your home).
- If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear… (share your clothes).

Encourage children to look for ways to help today and be ready to tell about them during the next lesson.

**BLESS**

*Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope*

Start a sentence prayer by saying, “God, today I will use my hands to…” Give children an opportunity to respond if they wish. End with “Amen.” Sing today’s good-bye song with motions. (If desired, repeat the song inserting each child’s name.)

**The Good-bye Song**

Oh, it’s time to wave good-bye to all my friends.
Oh, it’s time to wave good-bye to all my friends.
Oh, it’s time to wave good-bye.
Give a smile and wink my eye.
Oh, it’s time to wave good-bye to all my friends.

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Tune: “She’ll Be Coming ‘round the Mountain” (or “If You’re Happy and You Know It”)

10 minutes

10 minutes

5 minutes
Focus
Children will hear the story of Jesus asking Peter to feed his sheep, and learn how this relates to concepts taught in the previous lessons. At the end of this lesson, send forth the children with ideas of how they can help and share at home, at church, in their neighborhoods, schools, daycares, nurseries, or playgroups.

Focus Scripture
John 21:15–19

Objectives
The learners will...
• discover through scripture what it means to love Jesus and what Jesus wants them to do in response.
• participate in activities to understand that “feed my sheep” means caring about and helping people.
• recall previous lessons and concepts of how God wants them to share and help others.

Materials
• Art Activity: Black construction paper or card stock, white crayons or chalk, fragrance-free shaving cream, white glue, small bowls to mix puffy paint, paint brushes, and wiggle eyes
• OR Alternate Art Activity: Black construction paper, glue or glue sticks, cotton balls, wiggle eyes
• Construction-paper heart cutout for each child
• Snack supplies

Resources
- Bible

GATHER
Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Start by gathering the children with a greeting song and prayer.

Greeting Song: Jambo Song
Sit in a circle. Tell children that jambo comes from an African word that means “welcome.” When children hear their names, they can jump to the middle of the circle, and then sit down when the verse is over. Sing each child’s name. Encourage children to sing Jambo loudly.

Jambo [child’s name],
Jambo [child’s name]
Jambo [child’s name]
We’re glad you’re here today
Tune: “Goodnight Ladies”
Prayer
Invite children to join in a word or sentence prayer. Start by saying, “Thank you, God, for loving us and for people who love us.” Go around the circle and ask children to name one person who loves them. The teacher concludes with “Amen.”

Ask, “How did you help someone yesterday?”

ENGAGE
Invites exploration and interaction

Scripture Story: Do You Love Me?
(paraphrased from John 21:15–19 NRSV)

Open your Bible so children will recognize the stories are from scripture. Find suggested questions throughout the reading of the scripture passage to help children understand the words. Listen to their ideas and involve them in the story or text.

Jesus and some of his followers were having breakfast on the beach. Jesus took a loaf of bread and broke it, and gave it to his friends; and he gave them some fish.

“Do you remember stories we heard in the other lessons where Jesus broke a loaf of bread to share with people?” (the long walk story, feeding more than 4,000 people)

“Where do you eat breakfast? What do you like to eat for breakfast?”

After breakfast, Jesus asked one of his followers named Simon Peter, “Simon, do you love me?” Simon Peter answered Jesus, “Yes, Jesus, you know I love you.”

“Who do you love? How do you know you love them?”

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Feed my lambs.

Jesus asked this a second time, “Simon, do you love me?” He answered Jesus again, “Yes, Jesus, you know I love you.” Jesus told him, “Take care of my sheep.”

Jesus asked him a third time, “Simon, do you love me?” Simon Peter felt sad because he thought maybe Jesus didn’t believe him that he loved him. He told Jesus again, “Yes, Jesus, you know I love you.”

“Have you ever felt like someone didn’t love you? Why did you feel that way?”

Jesus said to him again, “Feed my sheep.” Then he said, “Follow me.”

“Whom did Jesus want Simon Peter to feed and take care of?” (Jesus wants us to help take care of his sheep, which are all of the people.)

“How does Jesus want us to help take care of people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

Game: Sheep Tag (Freeze Tag)
Jesus wants us to help take care of his sheep, which are all of the people. Who takes care of real sheep and keeps them safe? (a shepherd). Sometimes sheep wander off and the shepherd has to find them and take care of them.

Select one child to be the shepherd and help keep the sheep safe. The children (sheep) run or walk around the room (depending on the room size) or children can play the game outside. When the shepherd touches a child, he or she is safe (frozen) and being taken care of by the shepherd. When all the sheep are safe, choose another shepherd. Allow all children who want a turn to be the shepherd.

Art Activity: Puffy-paint Handprint Sheep
Have children trace their hands on construction paper with white crayon or chalk. Younger children may need help tracing their hands. Paint the sheep hands with puffy paint (mix equal parts fragrance-free shaving cream and white glue). Add wiggle eyes.

Alternate Art Activity
Have children trace their hands as above. Glue on cotton balls and wiggle eyes.

Ask, “How can we help take care of Jesus’ sheep (people)?” Write children’s ideas on their papers with a white crayon or chalk.

RESPOND
Takes the learners from hearing to doing

Activity: Feed-my-sheep Hearts
Prior to class, hide the hearts around the classroom in easy-to-find places. Invite children to look around the room to find the hearts with their names on it. Have them bring the hearts back to the circle.

When all the children have returned, ask each child:
How can we show the love of Jesus? Who are Jesus’ sheep you can help? (people in their family, church, neighborhood, schools, or daycares). Write the names on the hearts.

**Song**

Sing “I Just Wanna Be a Sheep” as a call-and-repeat song—chorus, verse 5, chorus. Teacher sings the first phrase, children repeat it.

**Optional Story**

Before reading the book *We Share* by Monica Bradford, ask children, “What does it mean to share? Our church’s name is Community of Christ. We want to share love and peace with all people.”

Throughout the story, ask children for ideas about what the following words mean:

- **creation** (the world God made)
- **actions** (what we do, how we treat others)
- **community** (people we are with at school, church, and home)
- **sacred story** (the scriptures, the stories of our lives)
- **relationship** (knowing someone)
- **diversity** (being different from other people)

Emphasize the words on the last page of the book, “We share this…and so much more.”

Ask, “What does God want us to share to have peace and take care of all people?” (If someone is hungry, share your bread. If someone doesn’t have a place to live, share your home. If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear, share your clothes.)

**Snack Suggestion**

Ask if a child (or children) would like to say a prayer thanking God for our snack. (If no one offers, say a brief prayer of thanks for bread to share.)

**Bagel Sheep**

Give each child one-half of a whole-grain bagel and a small amount of spreadable cream cheese. Let children spread the cream cheese on the bagel with a reusable table knife. Use raisins to give the sheep ears, eyes, nose, and mouth.

**SEND**

*Explores how the lesson might be lived out*

Ask, “Does anyone remember what God wants us to do to help people?” Say the first part of the scripture phrase, and encourage children to fill in the rest.

If someone is hungry,… (share your bread).

If someone doesn’t have a place to live,… (share your home).

If someone doesn’t have clothes to wear,… (share your clothes).

Encourage children to look for ways to share at home after they leave. Ask for ideas about people in their families, church, neighborhoods, schools, daycares, nurseries, or playgroups who might be sick or sad or need someone to care about them.

**BLESS**

*Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope*

Start a sentence prayer by saying, “I will share at home by…” Give each child an opportunity to respond if he or she wishes. End with “Amen.” Sing today’s good-bye song (public domain).

“This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine
Let it shine; let it shine; let it shine.

Time to say good-bye; I’m gonna let it shine
Time to say good-bye; I’m gonna let it shine
Time to say good-bye; I’m gonna let it shine
All the time, all the time, all the time.