



EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Peace Lab*, where children discover God's way of peace! Through learning how to resolve conflicts and figuring out ways to help others, children will learn how to be peacemakers in this VBS curriculum. The five Bible stories will lead children on an awesome adventure through the Bible, equipping them to follow Jesus as compassionate peacemakers.

The five sessions in *Peace Lab* match the interests and abilities of children ages 4–5. Each session includes:

- Gathering—Children gather and are welcomed to vacation Bible school. They will sing and give toward an offering project.
- Bible story—Children hear the Bible story.
- Responding to the Bible story—Children make connections between the Bible story and their lives.
- Activities—Children do activities that reinforce the day's theme, including working in *My Book of Stories*, doing crafts, games, activities, singing music, and more. A snack is offered at this time.
- Sending—Children gather and receive a sending blessing.

SCHEDULE

Peace Lab is designed for a 2-hour-and-15-minute vacation Bible school program, but some programs may be longer or shorter depending on the amount of time available. The Early Childhood curriculum has plenty of ideas each day, but check with the VBS director to find out how long each day will be so that you know how much material to plan. Choose activities best suited for your schedule, space, and the children attending vacation Bible school.

The *Peace Lab* curriculum for the K–5 program includes a worship session, along with a drama that illustrates the day's Bible story. Though worship and dramas are intended for older children, they are also appropriate for this age group. If you choose to attend worship with the larger group, take time later to talk about worship and the dramas to be sure the young children understand them.

ROOM ARRANGEMENT

Be flexible as you set up the meeting room space and organize a schedule. While some children can engage with stories and activities for longer periods of time, other children have shorter attention spans and will need to move around more frequently. Organize the space to accommodate the different needs and interests of the children, and to allow opportunity for movement between activities. Invite youth and adults to help you with the children, especially during snack, craft, and game times.

If space is available, set up the following areas:

- **Story area.** This space will be used during the gathering and sending times, as well as when children hear the Bible story. Place rugs or carpets on the floor; if you are able to provide a carpet square or individual cloth or towel to for each child to sit on, it will give children a contained area and limit their distractions.
- **Table area.** Tables will be used when children make crafts and when they eat snacks. If space is available, have two tables so that the same one is not used for both crafts and snacks.
- **Play area.** This area will be used for games and other movements. Some activities are suitable for outdoors, so in addition to having an indoor play area, you may want to designate an outdoor play area too.
- **Quiet time area.** You may use the story or play area spaces to provide a place for children to rest after eating their snack. Have blankets, pillows, and towels on hand to make the quiet time area comfortable.

ACTIVITIES

Peace Lab discovery ideas are suggested each day. Take time to do these simple demonstrations and allow children to help if they are able to do so. Young children will be fascinated with the results!

In addition to the *Peace Lab* discovery ideas, games, crafts, and other ideas are suggested each day as a way for children to respond to the Bible story. Numerous options are offered, and you will need to choose what you can do with the time and space available. Feel free to adapt activities to meet the needs of the leaders, children, and the allotted space. You may want to do activities as one large group, or you might break into smaller groups. Ask several youth and adults to lead the small groups. The youth and adults can also help children understand directions, and cut and glue as needed for craft projects.

Create a signal that it is time to end activities, and to indicate that it is time to gather as a group. The signal can be as simple as ringing a bell or striking a chime, or you may want to sing a song or chant words. Take time to teach the signal on Day 1, and use it as many times as needed to gather the children together. You can have children either gather in a particular space or stop what they are doing and wait for more directions.

MY BOOK OF STORIES

The student booklet, *My Book of Stories*, is an optional component of each day. It provides illustrations of the Bible stories as well as activities to help children remember the stories. If you decide to use it, make sure that each child receives a copy; have extras on hand in case there are any visitors. Send the booklets home with the children on the last day.

NAME TAGS

Name tags templates are on page 49. Make one for each child, and have extras on hand in case one is lost or there are visitors. Help children write their names on the tags, and provide crayons so that children can decorate them.

Fasten name tags to shirts with safety pins or tape. Or you may punch holes in the name tags and string them with yarn so they can hang around the children's necks.

Collect name tags at the end of each day so they can be reused throughout vacation Bible school. Send them home with the children on the last day.

SNACK AND REST TIME

Each day's session plan includes options for a snack. You may use these suggestions or plan your own snacks. Invite youth and adults to prepare and serve the snacks, and to clean up afterward. Have napkins or small plates on hand, as well as cups for juice or water. Make sure children either wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before eating.

Offer a prayer of thanks as you begin snack time.

- Your church may have a favorite spoken or sung prayer that children can learn and repeat together.
- Invite children to lead out in prayer, saying prayers they have learned at home or making up their own prayers.
- Offer a simple prayer, such as: *Dear God, thank you for vacation Bible school, where we can learn about you. Thank you for this food. Amen.*

Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

After enjoying the snack, have a quiet time when children can rest. Provide blankets, pillows, or towels so the children can rest on the floor.

MUSIC

VBS music is available on the *Peace Lab* CD, MP3 collection, and video collection. The songbook includes a lyric page, simple scores, motion instructions. The music videos demonstrate the motions and are captioned with lyrics.

Play music as children enter the room and as children leave. You can also play music softly in the background as children work on crafts, eat snacks, and work in *My Book of Stories*.

Sing songs every day so that the children become familiar with them and can learn them.

Consider purchasing bulk priced audio CDs or MP3 download cards so you can send the music home with the children and drive their parents crazy listening to them over and over!

BIBLE MEMORY

The same Bible memory verse will be said each day so that by the end of vacation Bible school, the children will know the verse. Use motions to help children learn the verse. Some are suggested below, or develop your own motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. —Matthew 5:9

Younger children may want to learn just the first part of the verse.

Blessed are the peacemakers. —Matthew 5:9

Motions

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: The Bible memory passage is from the *New Revised Standard Version*. You may use a preferred translation.

OFFERING PROJECT

We encourage you to include an offering project in your VBS that suits the needs of your parish and will provide a means of stewardship for participants.

Recipients

Here are some ideas for where money can be directed:

- If you choose to install a peace pole (see later in this guide), contributions could go toward the materials and other associated costs to make it a reality.
- Peace e Bene is an excellent organization founded by the Franciscan Friars of California to promote peace and nonviolence. Learn more at PeaceEBene.org.
- Heifer International works to alleviate poverty and build community by providing livestock and training through a “pay it forward” model. Being able to contribute one or more specific types of animals can particularly motivate kids. Learn more at Heifer.org.
- Catholic Charities USA is a remarkable organization serving those in need and advocating for justice. It also has member agencies in local dioceses. Learn more at CatholicCharitiesUSA.org.
- Catholic Relief Services is the international humanitarian agency of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Learn more at CRS.org.

The above organizations have particular campaigns and educational materials that can help you share about the work they are doing in engaging ways.

Offering visuals

Plan a visual way to recognize the amount of money contributed during VBS. Be sure to update the visual each day and point out the progress that is made. Be sure to thank children for their generosity!

Here are some ideas for an offering visual:

- Purchase a large lab beaker, or create one. Get a large glass container and use a marker to write measurements on the side. Either put the money inside the beaker so children can see it or use a colorful marker to draw lines on the beaker to represent how much money was given.
- Make a Peace wall with each letter of the word representing one day of VBS. For example, Day 1 will be *P*. Get construction paper and cut out one letter *P* for each dollar given, and attach them to the wall. Day 2 will be *E*. Cut one out for each dollar given, and attach them next to the *P*. Review at the end of VBS and compare the days.
- One way to be a peacemaker is to smile. Draw smiley faces on a bulletin board or poster board, with each face representing a certain amount of money given.

JESUS



Today's Bible experience

Matthew 5:9, 43-48

At the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his followers that peacemakers will be called children of God. Later, Jesus shared that people are to love others.

Purpose statement

Blessed are the peacemakers.

Bible memory

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

—*Matthew 5:9*

Bible background

The Bible verses for today provide a foundation for the rest of vacation Bible school. The Sermon on the Mount is familiar to Christians because it outlines things that Jesus wants to teach us. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus followed these teachings himself, giving us practical examples of how we can practice his words.

The Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes. One of them is “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). This is not a passive ideal—it is active. Making peace requires action. What does active peacemaking look like? The second part of today’s Bible memory passage—“for they will be called children of God”—gives a clue about what it means to practice peace.

Practicing peace means that we love others. We are to love those who are our friends, and we are to love those who are not our friends. We follow God’s example to love others. This is not always easy to do.

The apostle Paul took what Jesus said about peace and included the ideas in his letter to the church in Rome. The Bible memory verses for Days 2–5 begin and end with Paul’s encouragement to live a life of peace: “Live in harmony . . . live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:16, 18).

Throughout VBS, you will encounter stories of biblical characters who were active in making peace in some very practical ways. Children will learn from them, developing skills they can use to practice peace in their own settings. Encourage children to follow these examples and learn to make peace.

Advance preparation

Supplies

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Name tags (p. 49); crayons; safety pins, tape, or yarn
- ☐ *Peace Lab* music and player
- ☐ *My Book of Stories*, one per child
- ☐ Snack, juice or water, cups, napkins or small plates
- ☐ Hand sanitizer or wet wipes

Preparation

1. **Pray for the adults and children** who will participate in VBS. May they be open to learning about God's way of peace and to practicing it in their lives.
2. **Read Matthew 5:9, 43-48** and the Bible background (p. 7) to become familiar with today's story. Read the daily plan and practice telling the Bible story. If you plan to read a storybook to the children (see titles at the end of the session plan), be sure to practice reading it.
3. **Prepare items for snack** (p. 10). If you are preparing one of the snack suggestions during class, try the recipe first to iron out any difficulties. Be aware of children who may have food allergies or gluten intolerances. Have alternate foods on hand, if needed.
4. **Choose activities** from pages 10–13 and gather necessary materials and supplies. Some of the activities require advance preparation. If a craft will be made, be sure to make one in advance so that you understand the directions. It will also be a sample to show the children what they will make.
5. **Create name tags for all children.** You can use the name tag template on page 49. Have several blank name tags on hand in case you need to make a replacement or have an extra child.

DAILY PLAN

Gathering

1. **Play music from the *Peace Lab* collection** as background music as the children arrive.
2. **Greet children as they arrive** and welcome them to the first day of vacation Bible school! Invite them to find their name tags and decorate them with crayons. Pin or tape the name tags to clothing, or place them around children's necks if name tags are strung with yarn. Make sure adults wear name tags too.
3. **Invite children to join you to sit in a circle** on the floor. Have children introduce themselves by saying "My name is (*child's name*), and I like to eat (*name a food*)."
Have children respond to each introduction by saying "Hi, (*child's name*)."
4. **Sing together from the *Peace Lab* music collection** and songbook. Here are suggestions:
 - "Power of Peace"
 - "Peace Maker"
 - "Walking the Ways of Peace"
5. **Introduce the offering project** (p. 6) and let children know that you will collect an offering each day. Be sure they understand the offering project so that they know what they are contributing to. If you join the older children for worship, the offering will be collected there.

Bible story

1. **Gather in the story area** if you are not already there. Ask the children to think about a time when someone was nice and kind to them. You may want to offer some ideas to help children think about actions that are nice. Then ask the children to think about a time when someone was not nice to them. Ask:

Whom do you think we should love—only people who are nice and kind to us? What about people we don't know very well? What about people who aren't nice and kind to us?

Jesus had a special message for us about whom we should love. Jesus also had a special message for us about peace. His followers wrote down his message, and it is part of the Bible. Let's see what Jesus had to say about loving people.

Open your Bible to Matthew 5 and show the children where the special message is found.

2. Share the Bible story.

Jesus taught people who followed him many things about God. One day he talked about who will be blessed. When someone is blessed, it means that they have good things. Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Later, Jesus talked about how those who follow him should act. Some people say that you should love only those who are nice and kind to you, and hate those who are not nice and kind. But Jesus said something surprising. He said that’s not true! Jesus said that you should love everyone—people who are nice and kind to you and people who aren’t nice and kind!

note: Young children may have trouble sitting through the Bible story. Before responding to the Bible story, you may want to sing a quick action song such as “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” or “The Hokey-Pokey.”

Responding to the Bible story

1. **Give children time to think about the story** by asking some of the following questions. The children may share their responses or think quietly.
 - What did Jesus say about peacemakers?
 - Whom did Jesus say we should love?
 - Is it easier to love people who are nice rather than people who aren’t nice?
 - Can you think of a way to make peace?
2. **Pray.** Explain that when people talk with God, it is called praying. Demonstrate that when people pray, they sometimes fold their hands and close their eyes. Pray:

Thank you, Jesus, for telling us about peacemakers and about loving people. Help us to be peacemakers. Amen.

3. **Introduce the Bible memory verse,** Matthew 5:9. Tell children they will learn some of Jesus’ words about peacemakers. They will repeat the words each day so that they will know the words by heart and be able say them at any time.

Say the verse out loud one time. Notice with the children that this verse is what Jesus said in the Bible story! Say the verse again, and invite the children to repeat each line after you. Add motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: For very young children, you may want to shorten the memory verse to “Blessed are the peacemakers.”

Peace Lab activities

1. **Choose several activities** from pages 10–13. Include a snack and rest time, and have adults and youth on hand to help with games and crafts. If you have a small group of children, you may want to do the activities as one group. If you have a large group, however, consider dividing the children into smaller groups and having them rotate among several activities.
2. **When it is time to clean up,** ring a bell, strike a chime, or use another signal. Use the same signal every day so that children know what to expect.

Demonstrate your expectations for putting away supplies and cleaning the area. Make sure names are on projects, and put them in a safe place so that they can be taken home.

Sending

1. **Gather in the story area.** Ask the children to think about one way they can be peacemakers and help others. When they have an idea, ask them to put their finger on their nose. If there is time, ask some children to share their ideas.

Let the children know that during each day of vacation Bible school, they will hear a Bible story about someone who was a peacemaker.

2. **Give this blessing** to the children as they leave:

Bless our hearts (point to chest) and minds (point to head) so that we can find ways to make peace.

3. **Collect name tags** to use in the next session.
4. **Thank children** for spending time with you today. Tell the children you look forward to seeing them on Day 2 of vacation Bible school.

ACTIVITIES

My Book of Stories

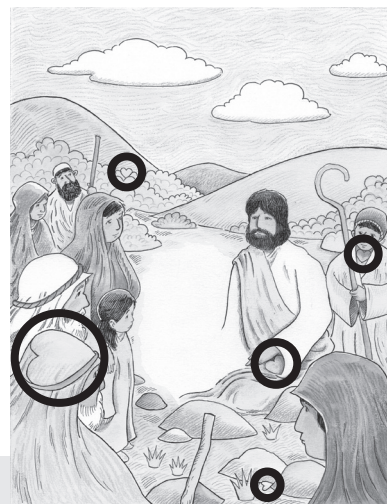
Turn to page 3 in *My Book of Stories*. Explain that hearts symbolize love. Have children find the hearts in the picture and circle them, then draw themselves next to Jesus.

Snack

Offer a snack that has two parts, such as crackers and cheese or vegetables and dip. Divide the children into two groups; give one group one part and the second group the other part. Help the children discover that they need to share with the other group in order to make their snack.

note: Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

note: Before eating, have children wash their hands, or provide hand sanitizer.



Peace Lab Discovery

Explain that discovering peace and becoming a peacemaker takes time, just like it takes scientists in a lab time to experiment and discover the best way to create what they want to create. It's not something we learn in one day, but something that we experiment with and continue learning for the rest of our lives. As we start to practice peace, we may notice that others start practicing peace too! It can spread to others.

To illustrate this, trim the bottom edge of a piece of celery, then place the celery stalk inside a clear glass with colored water. Say:

You won't see the results today, but the next time we meet, you will see the color spreading through the celery. That's how peace is—we don't always see the results right away, but they will spread, and we'll see them someday!

CRAFTS

Peace Rocks

Materials

- ☐ Rocks large enough to write on (natural stones are available at craft stores)
- ☐ Paint and paintbrushes, markers
- ☐ Paint shirts

In preparation, cover the work space with newspaper. If painting, children should wear paint shirts.

1. Give each child a clean, dry rock. Think together about designs to paint on the rocks to remind children about peace. Children may choose one and paint it on their rock, or perhaps think of an original design.
2. Allow rocks to dry. The children will take them home so they remember that peace is important—peace rocks!

Peacemaker Mirror

Materials

- ☐ Small mirrors
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Pens or markers

1. Have the children make frames for small mirrors by decorating and gluing craft sticks to a mirror. Adults and youth will need to help with gluing.
2. Have adults and youth help to write the children's names on their mirrors or frames, along with the words "I am a peacemaker."

Pictures

Materials

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Crayons

1. Invite the children to think about a time when someone was nice to them, and to draw a picture of the situation. Another option is to draw a picture of a way the children can be nice to others.
2. Allow time for children to share their scenarios with the group, if they would like to do so.

GAMES AND MOVEMENTS

Blob Tag

1. Designate one child to be It. As the children run, It will try to tag a child. The two children will then hold hands and be a larger It.
2. One by one, each child will be tagged and join hands with It (the group), becoming part of the blob.
3. Before playing, remind children to tag gently to be careful that everyone in the group is safe.

Peace Ball

Materials

- ☐ Ball

1. Have children sit in a circle so that they can roll the ball to each other.
2. Before children roll the ball to another child, they must give an example of a way to be kind to someone (part of being a peacemaker).

Peace Dig!

Materials

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whiteboard and marker | <input type="checkbox"/> Sand or oatmeal in a container |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple wooden, plastic, or magnetic letters to spell the word <i>peace</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Spoons |

In preparation, hide the letters in the container of sand or oatmeal. There should be several letters so that the word can be spelled multiple times.

1. Write the word *peace* on the whiteboard and read it to the children. Explain that all the stories they will hear in Bible school are about peace.
2. Give a spoon to each child, and have them take turns to dig in the container to find a letter. Have children dig until all the letters are found. Have them place the letters in order and spell the word *peace* several times.

Peacemaker Scramble

Materials

- ❑ Chairs or carpet squares, one per child

In preparation, place the chairs or carpet squares in a circle. As leader, you will begin the game.

1. Have the children sit on the chairs or carpet squares. As the leader, begin play by standing inside the circle and saying, “I want to be a peacemaker with everyone, especially people who are wearing something blue.”
2. Everyone who is wearing something blue must move to another seat. The leader will also look for a seat. There will be one person who does not find another seat; that person becomes the new leader.
3. The new leader says, “I want to be at peace with everyone, especially people who . . .” (like to eat pizza, play basketball, have a sister, and so on).

Pass the Peace Potato

Materials

- ❑ Chairs or carpet squares
- ❑ Potato
- ❑ *Peace Lab* CD, CD player

In preparation, place chairs or carpet squares in a circle.

1. Have the children sit in the circle and give one child the “peace” potato to start the game. The children will pass the potato around the circle.
2. Play music as the potato is passed. When the music stops, the child holding the potato will share one way to be kind (i.e., one way to be a peacemaker). After sharing, the child will sit in the middle of the circle. Those players in the circle will need to shift to accommodate the vacant seat.
3. Play continues as long as you wish. To end the game, the children who are not in the center may share a way to be a peacemaker.

BOOK LIST

note: You may want to read to children. This list offers suggestions that fit the session’s themes. You are welcome to find other books as well.

- Kerley, Barbara. *A Little Peace*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Children’s Books, 2007. Even small gestures can spread a little peace.
- Leaf, Munro, and Robert Lawson. *The Story of Ferdinand*. New York: Puffin Books, 1977. Ferdinand the bull is not like other bulls. Ferdinand is peaceful!
- Thomas, Shelley Moore. *Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace*. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman, 1998. Shows children around the world doing small things that make for peace.
- Tutu, Archbishop Desmond, and Douglas Carlton Abrams. *God’s Dream*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2010. God’s dream is that people everywhere will care and share, find peaceful solutions to conflicts, and embrace all of God’s children.



ABRAM AND LOT

Today's Bible experience

Genesis 13

Abram and Sarai and Abram's nephew Lot traveled to a new land. There was disagreement among their herders about both parties using the best land for their cattle. To solve the argument, Abram suggested that Lot choose which land would be his, and Abram would go in the other direction.

Purpose statement

Peacemakers find good ways to solve problems.

Bible memory

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
—*Matthew 5:9*

Bible background

In this story, Abram and Sarai are on a journey to find a place to settle their family and livestock. They are wealthy, having accumulated silver, gold, and lots of livestock. Abram's nephew Lot is with them, and he also has livestock and tents. Their prosperity also brings conflict. The conflicts are not between Abram and Lot, however, but among those who work for them. The herders disagree over the land that will serve as pastures for their flocks.

Abram does not like the tension among the workers, so he speaks with Lot. Abram suggests that the two men no longer travel together: Lot should choose which way he will go, and then Abram will choose the opposite way.

Lot chooses the most desirable land, the plains of Jordan, which are lush and green. He settles near the city of Sodom. Abram settles in the other direction, near Canaan, in land that is rocky and hilly. Abram is gracious in allowing his nephew to choose the better land and gracious in accepting Lot's choice. Abram finds a peaceful way to solve the problem of the arguments among the herders.

Their choices affect their families and descendants for years to come. Verse 13 foreshadows that things might not go very well for Lot and his descendants in that area. Meanwhile, Canaan would become synonymous with good, desirable things.

God speaks with Abram, giving a blessing to Abram for being a peacemaker. God promises that all the land Abram can see will belong to Abram and his descendants. God also promises that Abram will have many descendants, too many to count.

Children know about conflicts. A practical example many children face is to have only one treat, such as a cookie, to share with a friend. One child breaks the cookie into two pieces, and the other child chooses which piece to eat. The conflict is settled peacefully.

Advance preparation

Supplies

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Name tags (p. 49); crayons; safety pins, tape, or yarn
- ☐ *Peace Lab* music and player
- ☐ *My Book of Stories*, one per child
- ☐ Snack, juice or water, cups, napkins or small plates
- ☐ Hand sanitizer or wet wipes
- ☐ Masking tape

Preparation

1. **Pray for the adults and children** who will participate in VBS. May they be open to learning about God's way of peace and to practicing it in their lives.
2. **Read Genesis 13** and the Bible background (p. 14) to become familiar with today's story. Read the daily plan and practice telling the Bible story. If you plan to read a storybook to the children (see titles at the end of the session plan), be sure to practice reading it.
3. **Prepare items for snack** (p. 18). If you are preparing one of the snack suggestions during class, try the recipe first to iron out any difficulties. Be aware of children who may have food allergies or gluten intolerances. Have alternate foods on hand, if needed.
4. **Choose activities** from pages 18–21 and gather necessary materials and supplies. Some of the activities require advance preparation. If a craft will be made, be sure to make one in advance so that you understand the directions. It will also be a sample to show the children what they will make.
5. **Make sure there are name tags for all children.** If you are missing a name tag or a child's name tag is damaged, create a new one using the name tag template on page 49.
6. **Create a square on the floor** in the story area using masking tape. The sides of the square should be about 3 ft / 1 m long.

DAILY PLAN

Gathering

1. **Play music from the *Peace Lab* collection** as background music as the children arrive.
2. **Greet children as they arrive** and welcome them to the second day of vacation Bible school! Help them find their name tags.
3. **Invite children to join you to sit in a circle** on the floor. Have children introduce themselves by saying "My name is (*child's name*), and I like the color (*name a color*).” Have children respond by saying "Hi, (*child's name*).”
4. **Sing together from the *Peace Lab* music collection** and songbook. Here are suggestions:
 - “Power of Peace”
 - “Peace Maker”
 - “God Is Bigger”
5. **Remind children about the offering project** (p. 6). Show them the offering visual so they can see how much money they have contributed. If you join the older children for worship, the offering will be collected there.

Bible story

1. **Gather in the story area** if you are not already there. Ask the children to think about a time when they shared something with someone. Ask:

Did the other person want to share? Is it sometimes hard to share? The last time we were together, I told you that we would hear Bible stories about peacemakers. Today's story is about someone who solved a problem by sharing. By doing so, he was a peacemaker.

Open your Bible to Genesis 13.

2. **Share the Bible story.**

(Ask two children to be Abram and Lot. They should stand inside the taped square on the floor.) Abram and his nephew Lot had herds of animals. They moved from place to place to find food and water for the animals. One time, they got to a new place where there was plenty of grass and water for the animals. Abram thanked God for such a good place.

But they had a problem. They needed more space! Now, you might not think that was such a big problem. After all, doesn't it look like our Abram and Lot have enough space? *(Point to the children inside the square.)* But you see, Abram and Lot also had people who worked for them. *(Ask two more children to stand inside the square.)* Abram and Lot had animals. *(Ask two more children to stand inside the square.)* They had flocks of birds. *(Ask two more children to stand inside the square.)* It's getting crowded, isn't it? Abram and Lot had a problem! *(Have the children return to their seats.)*

Soon Abram and Lot's workers argued over who should have the best grass for the animals. They argued over who should have the best places to set their tents. They argued over whose animals should drink the water first.

Abram had an idea. He said to Lot, "Why should our workers fight? Let's live in different areas so that there is enough land for our families." Abram invited Lot to choose first where he wanted to go. Lot looked around and saw a large flat area near the Jordan River. He thought this would be a good place for his animals and workers. He went there.

Abram went in the other direction, toward the land of Canaan. God spoke to Abram and told him to look around. All the land that he saw would belong to Abram and his family.

note: Young children may have trouble sitting through the Bible story. Before responding to the Bible story, you may want to sing a quick action song such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" or "The Hokey-Pokey."

Responding to the Bible story

1. **Give children time to think about the story** by asking some of the following questions. The children may share their responses or think quietly.
 - What was Abram and Lot's problem?
 - How did Abram solve the problem?
 - How do you think Abram felt when he told Lot he could choose first?
 - Abram was able to let Lot choose first and trust that God would make everything okay. What are some things we need to trust God about?
2. **Pray.** Explain that when people talk with God, it is called praying. Demonstrate that when people pray, they sometimes fold their hands and close their eyes. Pray:

Thank you, God, for making peacemakers like Abram. Teach us how to come up with good ways to solve problems. Amen.

3. **Ask the children if they remember any words** of the Bible memory verse. Then say the verse out loud, having the children repeat each line after you. Add motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: For very young children, you may want to shorten the memory verse to "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Peace Lab activities

1. **Choose several activities** from pages 18–21. Include a snack and rest time, and have adults and youth on hand to help with games and crafts. If you have a small group of children, you may want to do the activities as one group. If you have a large group, however, consider dividing the children into smaller groups and having them rotate among several activities.
2. **When it is time to clean up**, use the same signal as you did the last time.
Remind the children of your expectations for putting away supplies and cleaning the area. Make sure names are on projects, and put them in a safe place so that they can be taken home.

Sending

1. **Gather in the story area.** Ask children to think about one way they can be a peacemaker and share with others. When they have an idea, ask them to put their finger on their nose. If there is time, ask some children to share their ideas.
2. **Give this blessing** to the children as they leave:
Bless our hands (hold out hands) and hearts (point to chest) so that we can share with those around us.
3. **Collect name tags** to use in the next session.
4. **Thank children** for spending time with you today. Tell the children you look forward to seeing them on Day 3 of vacation Bible school.

ACTIVITIES

My Book of Stories

Turn to page 5 in *My Book of Stories*. Have children color the picture according to the numbers. How does this picture help to retell the Bible story?

Snack

Create a snack by mixing different types of foods together, such as dried fruits, cereal, chocolate chips, crackers, and other items. Talk about how a wonderful snack was made by experimenting mixing the different types of snack foods. It's a great way to show that it's good for people to share and work together, too, to make good things.

note: Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

note: Before eating, have children wash their hands, or provide hand sanitizer.

Peace Lab Discovery

Abram and Lot had a problem, and Abram came up with a way to solve it peacefully. The simple act of letting Lot choose his land made a beautiful way forward for their families.

To illustrate that simple solutions can be beautiful, mix equal parts water and Epsom salt together until the salt is dissolved. Give children paintbrushes and pieces of construction paper in dark colors. Invite them to “paint” designs on the paper with the salt water. In this simple activity, the combination of these simple ingredients will be beautiful after the paintings dry and crystals form.

CRAFTS

Sand Sculpture

Materials

- ☐ Plastic bowls and spoons
- ☐ Sand, about 1.5 C / 350 ml per child
- ☐ Liquid glue, about 1 C / 240 ml per child
- ☐ Glitter (optional)
- ☐ Squares of wax paper

1. Give each child a bowl and spoon. Pour the sand into the bowls and add about half the glue to the sand. Have children use the spoon to mix the sand; they may need to use their hands. Add more sand or glue until it is the consistency of play dough.
2. If children want glitter, stir a small spoonful into the mixture.
3. Demonstrate how to knead the dough on the wax paper.
4. The children may sculpt an object or a person from today's story.
5. Allow the sculptures to dry on the wax paper for several days.

Abram and Lot Puppets

Materials

- ☐ Paper cups, brown paper bags, tongue depressors
- ☐ Markers, crayons
- ☐ Construction paper; yarn
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Fabric and googly eyes (optional)

1. Each child will create Abram and Lot puppets using cups, bags, or tongue depressors. They will draw faces with markers or crayons, then add hair and clothing by gluing construction paper and yarn to their puppets.
2. Invite children to partner with a friend and tell each other today's Bible story. Encourage the children to take their puppets home and tell the story to their family and friends.

Good Land

Materials

- ☐ Land and field pictures
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Crayons

In preparation, gather pictures of good land and fields from all over the world. The Internet is a good source, as are magazines.

1. Show the children pictures of the land. Explain how land is used to grow food, provide food for animals, have places to build houses, have places to play, and many other important things. You may want to take a walk outside and look around to see how land is used. If you're in a rural area, perhaps you can see fields and animals. If you're in an urban area, you can see how land is used to build houses and parks.
2. Have the children draw an example of one way to use land in a way that benefits people and animals that live on it.

Crayon Rubbings

Materials

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Leaves of assorted shapes and sizes

1. Plants give animals and people food, and some plants are grown in gardens just because they are beautiful. Look together at the leaves and explain what plant or tree they are from.
2. Give each child a piece of paper. Demonstrate how to place a leaf underneath the paper and rub a crayon across it, making a crayon rubbing. Children may rub as many leaves as fills their paper.

GAMES AND MOVEMENTS

Water for Everyone Relay

Materials

- ☐ Masking tape or other line marker
- ☐ Buckets, two per team
- ☐ Cups, one per team
- ☐ Water

In preparation, use tape or another marker to mark a start line and a finish line. Fill one of the buckets in each pair with water. Space the full buckets along the start line, along with one cup per bucket. Use tape or marker to mark a “fill” line on the inside of the empty buckets, each at the same depth. Place the empty buckets on the finish line opposite the buckets on the start line.

1. Divide the children into teams of five to eight players each. Have teams line up behind their full bucket at the start line. Point out where the teams’ respective empty buckets are.
2. To begin, the first child on each team will fill the cup with water, run to the team’s empty bucket, and pour the water into it. The child will run back to the starting line, hand the cup to the next player, and go to the end of the line.
3. Play continues until the buckets at the finish line are filled. The first team to fill their bucket to the fill line is the winner.

Moving Game

1. Have children stand along on side of the playing area, and choose one child to be It to stand at the other side. Just as Abram, Sarai, and Lot had to move, the children are to move toward It.
2. As the adult leader, you will call out a movement for the children to do as they move toward It, such as hopping, crawling, going backward, patting their heads, and other ideas.
3. As the children move, call out “Stop!” Children must stop, and you will call out another movement.
4. As children almost approach It, call out “You’re not there yet!” This is a signal for all the children to run back to the starting line. It will chase them and try to tag them. If a child is tagged, they will sit along the starting line and cheer on the other players for the next round. Choose a new It each round.

Bubble Game

Materials

- ☐ *Peace Lab* music collection and player

Tell children that for Lot and Abram to get along, they each needed their own space. Explain that having our own space can make it easier to get along, because sometimes people get upset when they do not have enough space. Tell children that we are going to practice making “space bubbles.”

1. Have children spread out until they can extend their arms and not touch anyone. The children will walk around the room while you play a song from the *Peace Lab* CD.
2. Stop the music. When it is stopped, the children should freeze. Do they still have their space bubbles? Can they extend their arms and not touch anyone? Play the music several times, changing the movement from walking to hopping, galloping, dancing, and other movements.

Not Enough Space

Materials

- ❑ Three Hula-Hoops (or use tape to make circles on the ground)

1. Place one Hula-Hoop on the ground and have the children stand around its outer edge. Have five children stand inside the Hula-Hoop. Then have five more children join them. Slowly add groups of five until all the children are inside the Hula-Hoop. (If your group is too large for one Hula-Hoop, use two or more simultaneously.) Though there was a lot of empty space inside the Hula-Hoop at the beginning, it is now feeling more crowded, and children will need to think creatively to fit others inside.
2. Play again, but this time, when the Hula-Hoop gets too full, place another Hula-Hoop next to it and invite some children to step from one Hula-Hoop to another. Continue until all the children are inside the circles.

BOOK LIST

note: You may want to read to children. This list offers suggestions that fit the session's themes. You are welcome to find other books as well.

- Al Abdullah, Raina, and Kelly DiPucchio. *The Sandwich Swap*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2010. A peanut butter sandwich and a hummus sandwich threaten to separate good friends when each girl claims the other's is "yucky." After their dispute escalates, they take a risk and find a peaceful solution.
- Hills, Tad. *Duck and Goose*. New York: Schwartz and Wade Books, 2006. Duck and Goose find an "egg" and struggle to decide whose it is and how they will raise the young bird once the "egg" hatches.
- Otschi, Kathryn. *Two*. San Rafael, CA: KO Kids Books, 2014. A story about friendship, taking sides, and sharing friends.
- Williams, Karen Lynn. *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. First published 2007. Two young girls in a refugee camp develop creative strategies for sharing one pair of sandals between them.



NAOMI, RUTH, AND BOAZ

Today's Bible experience

Ruth 1–2

Ruth moved with her mother-in-law, Naomi, to Bethlehem. In order to support them, Ruth gleaned in nearby fields. Boaz, the owner of the farm, helped Ruth and Naomi by making sure grain was left for them.

Purpose statement

Peacemakers help other people.

Bible memory

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
—*Matthew 5:9*

Bible background

The book of Ruth begins with disasters. There is a famine in Bethlehem, so Elimelech and Naomi and their two sons move to the land of Moab. While they are there, the sons marry Moabite women. Then Elimelech dies. Later, the sons also die. Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem. One of her daughters-in-law, Ruth, insists she accompany Naomi.

The book of Ruth is a story of women living in a man's world, a story of relationships and love, and a story about helping those who are foreign and vulnerable in a strange land.

Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth face two problems when they arrive in Bethlehem. One is that they do not have a way to support themselves. Widows relied on family or charity for their needs, or were forced into prostitution. The second problem is that though there is now plenty of food in Bethlehem, it is still difficult to access. How are two widows who have journeyed from Moab expected to survive?

Ruth goes to the fields to glean. She gathers leftover grain that field workers have left behind. Ruth catches the eye of the owner of the farm, Boaz. Boaz is a relative of Elimelech's. When he discovers that Ruth is Naomi's daughter-in-law, Boaz tells the workers to be sure to leave some grain for Ruth. He invites Ruth to join him and his workers at mealtime, and she eats until she is full. Boaz tells the men to leave her alone. Even though Ruth is a foreign widow, she is not to be harassed while in his fields.

Ruth continues gleaning until the end of the harvest. Today's story ends there, but we know that Ruth and Boaz eventually marry. They become David's great-grandparents. (The Day 4 story is about David.)

Though the story is usually told from the perspective of Ruth, it is Boaz who acts as a hero in this narrative. Ruth is a foreigner from Moab. There are stories in the Bible of hostility between Moab and Israel (see the book of Numbers). Yet Boaz does not allow these divisions to keep him from helping

Ruth. He practices what is written in the religious laws: “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan” (Exodus 22:21-22).

Advance preparation

Supplies

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Name tags (p. 49); crayons; safety pins, tape, or yarn
- ☐ *Peace Lab* music and player
- ☐ *My Book of Stories*, one per child
- ☐ Snack, juice or water, cups, napkins or small plates
- ☐ Hand sanitizer or wet wipes

Preparation

1. **Pray for the adults and children** who will participate in VBS. May they be open to learning about God’s way of peace and to practicing it in their lives.
2. **Read Ruth 1–2** and the Bible background (p. 22) to become familiar with today’s story. Read the daily plan and practice telling the Bible story. If you plan to read a storybook to the children (see titles at the end of the session plan), be sure to practice reading it.
3. **Prepare items for snack** (p. 26). If you are preparing one of the snack suggestions during class, try the recipe first to iron out any difficulties. Be aware of children who may have food allergies or gluten intolerances. Have alternate foods on hand, if needed.
4. **Choose activities** from pages 26–29 and gather necessary materials and supplies. Some of the activities require advance preparation. If a craft will be made, be sure to make one in advance so that you understand the directions. It will also be a sample to show the children what they will make.
5. **Make sure there are name tags for all children.** If you are missing a name tag or a child’s name tag is damaged, create a new one using the name tag template on page 49.

DAILY PLAN

Gathering

1. **Play music from the *Peace Lab* collection** as background music as the children arrive.
2. **Greet the children** as they arrive and welcome them to the third day of vacation Bible school! Help them find their name tags.
3. **Invite children to join you to sit in a circle** on the floor. Send a greeting around the circle by greeting the child to your right with a high five as you say your name. Then have that child greet the child to his or her right. Continue until the child to your left has greeted you.
4. **Sing together from the *Peace Lab* music collection** and songbook. Here are suggestions:
 - “Our God Is Good”
 - “God Is Bigger”
 - “Walking the Ways of Peace”
5. **Remind children about the offering project** (p. 6). Show them the offering visual so they can see how much money they have contributed. If you join the older children for worship, the offering will be collected there.

Bible story

1. **Gather in the story area** if you are not already there. Ask the children to name a food item in their house. Where did that food come from? (*Note: Be sensitive to issues of food insecurity. Some children may not have enough to eat at home and may have varied responses. A child may respond that his or her family gets food from a food bank. Affirm the child's response.*) Explain that long ago, most people got food by harvesting it from fields and storing it until they needed it. For example, people would harvest grain and then grind it to make flour to make bread. But when people harvested, they needed to make sure they had enough grain to last the whole year until the next harvest. Ask:

What about people who did not have fields or money to buy grain?

Long ago, farmers allowed people without enough food to glean from their fields. Gleaning means that someone goes to a field after the harvest is over to pick up the grain that has been left behind. Today's story is about Boaz, someone who was a peacemaker because he helped other people. He helped two women named Ruth and Naomi.

Open your Bible to Ruth 1–2.

2. **Share the Bible story.** Tell the children that they will help you act out parts of the story.

Ruth was married to Naomi's son; she was Naomi's daughter-in-law. But then Naomi's husband died. And then Ruth's husband died too! Naomi decided to move back to where she used to live in Bethlehem. Ruth went with her. But when they arrived in Bethlehem, Naomi and Ruth did not have enough food. (*Have children put their hands on their bellies and rub them as if they are hungry.*)

Ruth asked Naomi to go to the fields and glean after the barley harvest. So Ruth went. Ruth followed behind the farm workers, picking up what they had left. (*Have children stand up and pretend to pick up grain from the ground and put it in a sack. Then ask children to sit again and listen to the story.*)

The man who owned the farm, Boaz, went to the fields. He saw Ruth. Boaz told Ruth she was welcome to glean in his fields. He told her that she could drink the water that was there for his workers. (*Have children pretend to drink a big glass of water as if they are very thirsty.*)

Ruth thanked Boaz by bowing down. (*Have children bow down.*) Boaz said, "You have helped Naomi. May God reward you for what you have done!"

Boaz told his workers to let Ruth glean even in the areas of the field that had not yet been harvested. So Ruth gathered lots and lots of barley. (*Have children stand and pretend to lift a very heavy bag. Then ask children to sit again and listen to the story.*)

Ruth went home and showed Naomi how much barley she had. Naomi told Ruth that Boaz was a relative of theirs. Naomi and Ruth were very happy that they had food to eat. Naomi said, "Blessed be the Lord!" (*Have children wave their hands in the air to praise God.*)

note: Young children may have trouble sitting through the Bible story. Before responding to the Bible story, you may want to sing a quick action song such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" or "The Hokey-Pokey."

Responding to the Bible story

1. **Give children time to think about the story** by asking some of the following questions. The children may share their responses or think quietly.
 - Why did Ruth go to glean?
 - How did Boaz help Ruth?
 - I wonder how Boaz felt when he helped Ruth.
 - Boaz was a peacemaker because he helped Ruth and Naomi. I wonder whom we can help.
2. **Pray.** Explain that when people talk with God, it is called praying. Demonstrate that when people pray, they sometimes fold their hands and close their eyes. Pray:

Thank you, God, for peacemakers like Boaz. Teach us how to help other people. Amen.

3. **Ask the children if they remember any words** of the Bible memory verse. Then say the verse out loud, having the children repeat each line after you. Add motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: For very young children, you may want to shorten the memory verse to "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Peace Lab activities

1. **Choose several activities** from pages 26–29. Include a snack and rest time, and have adults and youth on hand to help with games and crafts. If you have a small group of children, you may want to do the activities as one group. If you have a large group, however, consider dividing the children into smaller groups and having them rotate among several activities.
2. **When it is time to clean up**, use the same signal as you did the last time.
Remind the children of your expectations for putting away supplies and cleaning the area. Make sure names are on projects, and put them in a safe place so that they can be taken home.

Sending

1. **Gather in the story area.** Ask the children to think about one way they can be a peacemaker and help others. When they have an idea, ask them to put their finger on their nose. If there is time, ask some children to share their ideas.
2. **Give this blessing** to the children as they leave:
Bless our hands (hold out hands) and hearts (point to chest) so that we can help those around us.
3. **Collect name tags** to use in the next session.
4. **Thank children** for spending time with you today. Tell the children you look forward to seeing them on Day 4 of vacation Bible school.

ACTIVITIES

My Book of Stories

Turn to page 7 in *My Book of Stories*. Have the children color the pictures that show someone helping another person.

Snack

Choose one option:

- Barley cakes. Search online for a recipe using the term “barley cakes.” Some recipes call for you to bake the cake beforehand, and some call for you to cook the cake like a donut or pancake. You can do the latter with an electric griddle in the classroom.
- Pop barley or popcorn. Be sure to use hulled barley rather than pearled barley.

note: Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

note: Before eating, have children wash their hands, or provide hand sanitizer.

Peace Lab Discovery

Explain that Boaz helped Ruth by allowing her to glean, and Ruth helped Naomi by bringing home the barley she gleaned. Things go well when we work together.

To illustrate working together, fill a glass jar halfway with water. Add a few drops of food coloring and shake the jar so that the water is colored. Add cooking oil to the jar, almost to the top. Wait until the water and oil separate and settle. Next, break an Alka-Seltzer® tablet into several pieces. Drop them into the jar one at a time into the jar and watch the bubbles rise. Say:

In this chemistry experiment, we discovered that water and oil do not mix. They don't want to work together! But when we added the Alka-Seltzer® pieces, they helped the water and oil work together to create bubbles. That's how making peace is sometimes—we need to experiment to find a way to help people work together!

CRAFTS

Hands

Materials

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plaster of paris | <input type="checkbox"/> Craft sticks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tin pie plates, one per child | <input type="checkbox"/> Pebbles, shells, buttons, and other decorative supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonstick cooking spray | |

In preparation, mix the plaster of paris.

1. Give each child a pie plate. Children should spray the pie plate with cooking spray.
2. Pour the plaster into each plate. Have the children make their handprint in the plaster, then write their name on it using a craft stick.
3. Children may decorate their handprints with the decorative supplies.
4. The prints will need to dry and can then be removed from the plates. Children will need to take them home another day.

Seed Pictures

Materials

- ☐ Seeds
- ☐ Small bowls or lids
- ☐ Construction paper
- ☐ Glue sticks

In preparation, cover the work space with newspaper. Put seeds in small dishes and set them at different places around the table.

1. Give each child a sheet of paper and a glue stick. Demonstrate how to use the glue stick to draw lines and designs on the paper.
2. Add seeds to the lines to glue them to the paper. Let the children know that these grains are similar to what people gleaned from the fields.

Friendship Art (soup)

Materials

- ☐ Half-pint or pint / quarter-litre or half-litre jars with lids
- ☐ Plates or other flat containers, one for each kind of bean, grain, or pasta
- ☐ Spoons
- ☐ Variety of dried beans, grains, and pasta (such as northern beans, split peas, lentils, black beans, pinto beans, lima beans, pearled barley, pasta)
- ☐ String or twine
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Soup direction note cards, one per jar
- ☐ Hole punch

In preparation, pour beans, grains, and pastas onto plates, one kind per plate. Place several spoons on each plate. Precut string into pieces long enough to be tied around a jar and make a bow. Print directions for making the soup on the note cards:

- Soak beans overnight; drain.
- In a pan, combine one can of tomato soup and 6 cups / 1.4 L of water.
- Add seasonings such as salt, pepper, and herbs.
- Simmer 30 minutes. Enjoy!
- Make a hole in the corner of each note card and pull a string through it.

1. Explain that each child will get to be like a chemist and create a new invention in a jar. It will be an edible invention, because it can be used to make delicious soup! Demonstrate how to use the spoons to place the beans and pastas in a jar, making beautiful layers.
2. After their jar is filled, children can tie a string around it to make a bow, making sure that the cooking directions are attached to the string.
3. Encourage children to make a card to give along with the friendship jar and give the jar to a neighbor, family member, or friend.

Helping Pictures

Materials

- ☐ Peacemaker sheets (p. 46)
- ☐ Crayons

1. As a group, think about ways children can be peacemakers and help other people.
2. Give each child a peacemaker sheet copied from page 46 and have them draw a way they can help someone. If there is time, children may share their drawings with each other.

GAMES AND MOVEMENTS

Retell the Bible Story

Materials

- ❑ Small items such as buttons, stickers, pieces of candy, stones

In preparation, scatter the items around the playing area. You may want to do this when the children are not watching so that you can hide some pieces.

1. Choose one child to be Ruth. Show an example of what the other children will find, then allow them to collect what they can. Ruth will not join in.
2. After the children are finished, Ruth will see if there are any items that have been left for her to gather.
3. Do this again, this time having children leave items for Ruth, just as Boaz asked his workers to do so.
4. Ask: which time did Ruth have to work harder? Which time did Ruth get more items?
5. If using stickers or candy, be sure to send some home with the children.

Charades

Materials

- ❑ Cards with ideas written on them about ways we can help others (e.g., helping a friend who fell down, sweeping the floor, picking up trash, sharing a snack)

Ask a child to pick a card. Quietly read what it says to the child, then have the child silently act out the idea. Other children will guess what the helping action is.

Peace Tag

In preparation, set boundaries for play.

1. Choose one child to be It. Everyone else will spread throughout the playing area.
2. After counting to 10, It will try to tag another child. Players must freeze if they are tagged. To be unfrozen, another player must give the frozen player a high five and say the word *peace*.
3. Play continues as long as desired. Children may take turns being It.

Peace Bubbles

Materials

- ❑ Bubble solution in large containers
- ❑ Bubble-blowing objects

In preparation, purchase bubble solution or find recipes online. Gather an assortment of bubble-blowing objects, such as plastic rings, circles of wire (wire hangers can work), straws, pipe cleaners bent into circles, slotted spoons, and other items. Set the bubble solution containers in a large space outside, and place bubble-blowing objects around each container.

1. Have children blow bubbles, using bubble blowers of various sizes to see how large and how small the bubbles can be.
2. Some children may blow bubbles while others chase and catch them. Then switch activities.

Variation: Have children sit at tables and give each child a plastic plate and a straw. Pour a small amount of bubble solution on each plate, and have children blow through their straws to make bubbles.

BOOK LIST

note: You may want to read to the children. This list offers suggestions that fit the session's themes. You are welcome to find other books as well.

- Lyon, George Ella, and Stephanie Anderson. *You and Me and Home Sweet Home*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2009. A young girl's church family comes together to help her and her mother build a house—a permanent home.
- Rockliff, Mara. *My Heart Will Not Sit Down*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012. During the Great Depression, a young girl in Cameroon inspires her village to help feed starving people in New York City.
- Williams, Vera. *A Chair for My Mother*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2007. Neighbors and relatives help replace what a girl's family lost in a house fire—except a comfortable chair for her hardworking mother. The girl, Mama, and Grandma save their coins until they can shop for a beautiful new chair.
- Woodson, Jacqueline. *Each Kindness*. New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2012. Chloe and her friends ridicule a new girl's shabby clothing, ignore her overtures of friendship, and refuse to play with her. By the time Chloe realizes how unkind she has been, it is too late to make things right.

4

JONATHAN, MICHAL, AND DAVID

Today's Bible experience

1 Samuel (18) 19–20

King Saul was increasingly jealous of David. Saul's son Jonathan and his daughter Michal, who was also David's wife, tried to talk their father out of harming David because they believed it was the right thing to do.

Purpose statement

Peacemakers speak up for what is right.

Bible memory

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
—*Matthew 5:9*

Bible background

Sometimes it's hard to speak up for what is right. There's a lot of drama in today's story, yet what is striking throughout it is that the siblings Jonathan and Michal practice peace by saying the right thing, even when it is difficult.

David is just a shepherd when he is anointed to one day be king. His actions against Goliath help Israel defeat the Philistines. David goes on to win more battles, and his popularity soars. As this happens, King Saul becomes hostile toward David.

This puts Saul's children in a difficult position. Saul's son Jonathan is David's close friend, and Jonathan loves David "as his own soul" (1 Samuel 18:1). Saul's daughter Michal marries David. It is Jonathan and Michal who work to keep David safe when Saul threatens him.

Saul decides to kill David, and Jonathan is devastated. He is so distressed that he finds the courage to speak with Saul about it, reminding Saul that David has done many good things for Israel. Jonathan asks Saul, "Why then will you sin against an innocent person by killing David without cause?" (1 Samuel 19:5). Saul relents, and David is safe.

But not for long. Saul's anger continues to grow. He sends soldiers to David's house to kill him. Michal understands the grave danger David is in. She does what is right and helps David escape through a window.

Saul again makes plans to kill David. Jonathan and David develop a secret code. David will hide in a field and Jonathan will go there to shoot arrows. If Jonathan shoots his arrow far, it will mean that David needs to leave. Jonathan has another conversation with Saul and speaks up for David. But in the end, Jonathan has to shoot his arrow far. David leaves, and the two friends never see each other again.

The violence and murderous schemes in this story can be disconcerting. We don't want children to think that Saul's action and schemes are okay. They are not—and they should not be glorified in any retellings of the story. Instead,

the emphasis should be that despite Saul's jealous anger, Jonathan and Michal found the courage to do and say what is right.

Advance preparation

Supplies

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Name tags (p. 49); crayons; safety pins, tape, or yarn
- ☐ *Peace Lab* music and player
- ☐ *My Book of Stories*, one per child
- ☐ Snack, juice or water, cups, napkins or small plates
- ☐ Hand sanitizer or wet wipes

Preparation

1. **Pray for the adults and children** who will participate in VBS. May they be open to learning about God's way of peace and to practicing it in their lives.
2. **Read 1 Samuel (18) 19–20** and the Bible background (p. 30) to become familiar with today's story. Read the daily plan and practice telling the Bible story. If you plan to read a storybook to the children (see titles at the end of the session plan), be sure to practice reading it.
3. **Prepare items for snack** (p. 34). If you are preparing one of the snack suggestions during class, try the recipe first to iron out any difficulties. Be aware of children who may have food allergies or gluten intolerances. Have alternate foods on hand, if needed.
4. **Choose activities** from pages 34–37 and gather necessary materials and supplies. Some of the activities require advance preparation. If a craft will be made, be sure to make one in advance so that you understand the directions. It will also be a sample to show the children what they will make.
5. **Make sure there are name tags for all children.** If you are missing a name tag or a child's name tag is damaged, create a new one using the name tag template on page 49.

DAILY PLAN

Gathering

1. **Play music from the *Peace Lab* collection** as background music as the children arrive.
2. **Greet children** as they arrive and welcome them to the fourth day of vacation Bible school! Help them find their name tags.
3. **Invite children to join you to sit in a circle** on the floor. Send a greeting around the circle by greeting the child to your right with a high five as you say your name. Then have that child greet the child to his or her right. Continue until the child to your left has greeted you.
Or, try this—tell children that many of the people in our Bible stories spoke a language called Hebrew. Explain that the word for peace in Hebrew is *shalom*, and that people also use *shalom* as a greeting in Hebrew. Have children greet each other by saying “Shalom.”
4. **Sing together from the *Peace Lab* music collection** and songbook. Here are suggestions:
 - “Power of Peace”
 - “Our God Is Good”
 - “Go Make a Difference”
5. **Remind children about the offering project** (p. 6). Show them the offering visual so they can see how much money they have contributed. If you join the older children for worship, the offering will be collected there.

Bible story

1. **Gather in the story area** if you are not already there. Ask the children if they have ever seen something that was not fair. Allow time for children to share examples. (Children may have difficulty understanding the difference between not getting their way and something not being fair. Help them to offer examples of things not being fair.) Say:

The Bible story we will hear today is about two people who spoke up when something wasn't fair. They wanted to make a bad situation better.

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel (18) 19–20.

2. **Share the Bible story.**

Long after Abram lived and long after Ruth lived, there was a king of Israel named Saul. King Saul had a young man named David living in his palace. David helped Saul in many battles against Israel's enemies. David became friends with Saul's son Jonathan. And David even married Saul's daughter Michal.

But Saul got jealous of David. He thought people liked David more than they liked him! Saul had a horrible idea. He decided to kill David.

When Saul told his son Jonathan about his plan, Jonathan ran and warned David. David was able to run away and hide in a safe place. Then Jonathan spoke to his father. He said, "Don't hurt David. He's a good person." Because Jonathan was brave, Saul decided to not kill David. David stopped hiding and returned to the palace.

But then Saul got jealous again. This time, it was Michal, David's wife, who learned that Saul wanted to harm David. She warned David and helped him to escape from the palace, even though it made her father angry.

Both Jonathan and Michal knew that Saul was not treating David fairly. They spoke up and acted for what was right.

note: Young children may have trouble sitting through the Bible story. Before responding to the Bible story, you may want to sing a quick action song such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" or "The Hokey-Pokey."

Responding to the Bible story

1. **Give children time to think about the story** by asking some of the following questions. The children may share their responses or think quietly.
 - I wonder how Jonathan and Michal felt when they heard that their father wanted to harm David.
 - How did Jonathan and Michal save David?
 - Do you think it was easy for Jonathan and Michal to speak and act for what was right? Why do you think they did it?
2. **Pray.** Explain that when people talk with God, it is called praying. Demonstrate that when people pray, they sometimes fold their hands and close their eyes. Pray:

Dear God, sometimes things happen that are not fair. Help us to be brave and to know when we need to speak up and when we need to ask for help. Amen.

3. **Ask the children if they remember any words** of the Bible memory verse. Then say the verse out loud, having the children repeat each line after you. Add motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: For very young children, you may want to shorten the memory verse to "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Peace Lab activities

1. **Choose several activities** from pages 34–37. Include a snack and rest time, and have adults and youth on hand to help with games and crafts. If you have a small group of children, you may want to do the activities as one group. If you have a large group, however, consider dividing the children into smaller groups and having them rotate among several activities.
2. **When it is time to clean up**, use the same signal as you did the last time.
Remind the children of your expectations for putting away supplies and cleaning the area. Make sure names are on projects, and put them in a safe place so that they can be taken home.

Sending

1. **Gather in the story area.** Ask the children to think about one way that they can be a peacemaker and speak up for what is right. When they have an idea, ask them to put their finger on their nose. If there is time, ask some children to share their ideas.
2. **Give this blessing** to the children as they leave:
Bless our minds (point to head) *and voices* (cup hands around mouth) *so that we can speak up for what is right.*
3. **Collect name tags** to use in the next session.
4. **Thank children** for spending time with you today. Tell the children you look forward to seeing them on Day 5 of vacation Bible school.

ACTIVITIES

My Book of Stories

Turn to page 9 in *My Book of Stories*. Have children do the dot to dot and then color the page.

Snack

When David had to quickly leave the palace, he would have had to eat food that he could carry with him. Offer an easy-to-carry snack such as granola bars, cheese sticks, or apple slices. Talk about what it would have been like to have to run away to be safe.

note: Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

note: Before eating, have children wash their hands, or provide hand sanitizer.

Peace Lab Discovery

In today's story, Jonathan and Michal spoke up for David. There are many ways to communicate with each other. Invite the children to make simple telephones to talk to each other.

You will need two plastic cups for each telephone and a long piece of cotton string or fishing wire (a length of 10–20 ft / 3–6 m works well). Use a needle to thread string through the bottoms of each cup, then knot the string inside the cups. Pair children and have them stand apart from each other, as far away as the length of the string. Have them talk with each other at that distance. Can they hear each other? Then, have them speak into their cups, keeping the string taut. Can they hear each other? Say:

This is a fun way to speak to each other. There are many ways to communicate, and many ways to speak up for each other.

CRAFTS

Peace Chain

Materials

- ☐ Strips of construction paper
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Tape or stapler

1. Have children decorate strips of colored paper with their names and designs.
2. Have adults help children use tape or a stapler to fasten the strips into a chain.
3. Point out that each section of the chain is small, but that when the sections work together, they become something large—a peace chain. That's like us. We're small, but when we work together, we can accomplish big things.

Sidewalk Chalk

Materials

- ☐ Sidewalk chalk
- ☐ Sidewalk

1. Talk together about ways Jonathan, Michal, and David were good lab partners. How do partners work together to show each other kindness?
2. Go outside and allow children to make colorful designs as they write and draw ways people can be friends with each other.

Spaghetti Peace

Materials

- ☐ Spaghetti noodles, cooked and cooled
- ☐ Wax paper
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Glitter
- ☐ Small bowls

In preparation, cook and cool the spaghetti. Put glue into small bowls. Cut or tear the wax paper so that each child has a piece that is the size of a sheet of paper. Write the word *peace* on a whiteboard or paper so that children can see it.

1. Have the children dip a noodle into glue, then place it on the wax paper. Invite them to dip five noodles and make the letters in the word *peace*.
2. Children may sprinkle glitter on top of the spaghetti letters.
3. Allow spaghetti to dry overnight, then carefully pull the noodles off the wax paper. If children want to hang them up, attach string to the papers.

Megaphones

Materials

- ☐ Megaphone template (p. 47)
- ☐ Markers, crayons, stickers
- ☐ Construction paper or card stock
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Scissors

In preparation, create megaphone patterns using the template on page 47.

1. Have each child select a sheet of construction paper and trace around a megaphone pattern, then cut it out.
2. Invite children to decorate their megaphone using markers, crayons, and stickers.
3. Show the children how to tape the paper over the flap to create a megaphone. Invite children to turn to their neighbor and say words of encouragement, or the Bible memory verse, through their megaphones.

Optional: Create a cheer about peace, and use the megaphones to say the cheer.

GAMES AND MOVEMENTS

Hide-and-Seek

1. Choose one child to be It. Help It count to 10 as the other children hide.
2. It will try to find the other children. After all are found, choose a new It.
3. Remind children that David had to hide from Saul.

Hiding David

Materials

- ☐ Small toy representing David (Lego, action figure, clay, etc.)
- ☐ Crown for Saul (optional)

1. Invite the children to sit in a circle, and show them the toy figure that represents David. Explain that you will choose one person to leave the circle, and this person will be Saul. If you have a crown, give it to Saul to wear.
2. When Saul leaves the circle, David will be passed around the circle until Saul says, “I am looking for David.” Both the child holding David and the other children in the circle will hold their hands in such a way that it looks as if any of them could be holding David.
3. Saul will join the circle and try to guess who has David. When there is an incorrect guess, the chosen person will stand up and say, “I am Jonathan [or Michal] and I am speaking up for David. David is not here.”
4. Saul gets five chances to find David. If David is found, that person becomes Saul. If David is not found, a new Saul will be chosen. The game continues.

David and Saul

1. Children will sit in a circle, and one person is chosen to be Jonathan.
2. Jonathan will walk around the circle, lightly tapping each child on the head, saying either “David” or “Saul.”
3. When Jonathan says, “Saul,” that child will get up and chase Jonathan. The goal is for Jonathan to get back to Saul’s spot before being tagged. If Jonathan is tagged, that child will sit in the middle of the circle. If Jonathan makes it back to the original space in time, Saul will sit in the middle of the circle.
4. A new Jonathan is chosen and the game continues. Play until there are six to eight children sitting in the circle.

Hula-Hoop Toss

Materials

- ☐ Hula-Hoop
- ☐ String or rope
- ☐ Two chairs
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Bean bags or balls

In preparation, use string or rope to suspend the Hula-Hoop between the two chairs. Another idea is to hang the Hula-Hoop from the ceiling or a ladder, forgoing the two chairs. If you have a large group and want to divide into smaller groups for this activity, suspend one Hula-Hoop per group. Use the tape to create a line for children to stand behind several paces away from the hoop.

1. Have children stand behind the tape and take turns tossing the bean bags through the Hula-Hoop. Those who are not tossing the bean bags should cheer for those who are tossing.
2. Explain that taking turns and cheering for each other are good ways to practice being peacemakers.

BOOK LIST

note: You may want to read to children. This list offers suggestions that fit the session's themes. You are welcome to find other books as well.

- Engle, Margarita. *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. A young Chinese African Cuban girl works to break through the traditional Cuban taboo that prohibits drummers from being female, and eventually becomes a world-famous musician.
- Otsoshi, Kathryn. *One*. Berkeley, CA: K O Kids Books, 2008. A simple yet profound book about the power of one voice standing up to a bully and eventually uniting the bully with those he has intimidated.
- Verdick, Elizabeth. *Words Are Not for Hurting*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 2004. This book teaches children the importance of careful and intentional use of their words. It includes tips for parents and teachers.



MARY AND MARTHA

Today's Bible experience

Luke 10:38-42

Martha was upset because her sister, Mary, sat and listened to Jesus rather than help with tasks around the house. Martha asked Jesus for help in solving the conflict between her and Mary and received a different response than she expected.

Purpose statement

Peacemakers ask for help to resolve conflicts.

Bible memory

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
—*Matthew 5:9*

Bible background

This well-known story about Mary and Martha is unique to the book of Luke. The story is of a sibling rivalry that has cultural implications. We infer from reading about Martha's many tasks that she wants to prepare a meal for Jesus, a usual hosting responsibility for women in her day and culture. Mary, however, chooses to ignore social boundaries and instead does what men of her day do—visit, talk, listen, and learn.

At first glance, it seems that this story does not fit a peacemaking theme. We usually hear this story as an example of following Jesus—it's important to stop our usual tasks and spend time with God, listening, learning, and growing in faith.

Yet a second look shows that conflict lies at the very heart of the story. Martha believes she is doing what is expected of her and that Mary is not. How does Martha handle this? She asks for help! Her tone suggests that Jesus would agree with her—after all, women should be helping with preparations.

Sometimes conflicts are larger than what we can handle on our own. Sometimes we need to ask for advice and help in solving a situation. This is what Martha does.

Jesus' response does not necessarily help Martha. Instead, he agrees with Mary. It is time for Martha to stop working so that she can sit and talk with him. This is the better part. This goes against cultural expectations of the day; unfortunately, we do not know the outcome of the story. Did Martha stop her work and sit with Jesus and Mary? Or did Mary begin to assist Martha in the preparations?

This story about siblings is one that many children will relate to. They might think of their own siblings, cousins, or friends with whom they sometimes have disagreements. When the disagreements get too large for them, children will run to an adult for help, saying something like, "Mom! Dad! Make him stop teasing me!" (or whatever the offense may be). The frequency of this may sometimes annoy adults, but it's important for children to recognize that sometimes it is good to ask someone else for help in finding a solution that works for everyone.

Advance preparation

Supplies

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Name tags (p. 49); crayons; safety pins, tape, or yarn
- ☐ *Peace Lab* music and player
- ☐ *My Book of Stories*, one per child
- ☐ Snack, juice or water, cups, napkins or small plates
- ☐ Hand sanitizer or wet wipes

Preparation

1. **Pray for the adults and children** who will participate in VBS. May they be open to learning about God's way of peace and to practicing it in their lives.
2. **Read Luke 10:38-42** and the Bible background (p. 38) to become familiar with today's story. Read the daily plan and practice telling the Bible story. If you plan to read a storybook to the children (see titles at the end of the session plan), be sure to practice reading it.
3. **Prepare items for snack** (p. 42). If you are preparing one of the snack suggestions during class, try the recipe first to iron out any difficulties. Be aware of children who may have food allergies or gluten intolerances. Have alternate foods on hand, if needed.
4. **Choose activities from pages 42–45** and gather necessary materials and supplies. Some of the activities require advance preparation. If a craft will be made, be sure to make one in advance so that you understand the directions. It will also be a sample to show the children what they will make.
5. **Make sure there are name tags for all children.** If you are missing a name tag or a child's name tag is damaged, create a new one using the name tag template on page 49.

DAILY PLAN

Gathering

1. **Play music from the *Peace Lab* collection** as background music as the children arrive.
2. **Greet the children** as they arrive and welcome them to the last day of vacation Bible school! Help them find their name tags.
3. **Invite children to join you to sit in a circle** on the floor. Send a greeting around the circle by greeting the child to your right with a high five as you say your name. Then have that child greet the child to his or her right. Continue until the child to your left has greeted you.
Or, try this—tell children that many of the people in our Bible stories spoke a language called Hebrew. Explain that the word for peace in Hebrew is *shalom*, and that people also use shalom as a greeting in Hebrew. Have children greet each other by saying “Shalom.”
4. **Sing together from the *Peace Lab* music collection** and songbook. Here are suggestions:
 - “Peace Maker”
 - “Our God is Good”
 - “Go Make a Difference”
5. **Remind children about the offering project** (p. 6). Show them the offering visual so they can see how much money has been contributed during VBS. If you join the older children for worship, the offering will be collected there.

Bible story

1. **Gather in the story area** if you are not already there. Ask the children if they have ever fought with a brother, sister, cousin, or friend. Ask:

How did you solve your problem and stop fighting? Who helped you to solve your problems?

Sometimes our problems are too big for us to solve by ourselves. When this happens, we need to ask for help. The same thing happens to scientists and inventors in their labs. Sometimes they need to ask for help to get different ideas. Today we are going to learn about a time when Jesus helped to solve a problem.

2. **Share the Bible story.**

Jesus was visiting his friends Martha and Mary. Martha and Mary were sisters. They were very happy to see Jesus! Martha got very busy cooking, and cooking, and cooking some more. She wanted to make a feast to welcome Jesus! Martha got busy cleaning, and cleaning, and cleaning some more. She wanted to welcome Jesus with a clean house. Meanwhile, Mary sat near Jesus to listen to what he was saying. She wanted to learn as much as she could from Jesus.

Martha noticed that she was working all by herself. She got mad at her sister. Why wasn't Mary helping her? Why should she do all the work on her own? Martha went to Jesus and said, "Don't you care about me? Mary has left me to do all the work by myself. Tell her to come and help me!" Martha had a problem, and she wanted Jesus to solve it.

But Jesus had a different idea. "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. You run from task to task. But there is only one thing you need to do. Mary has chosen to stay and listen to me. I will not make her stop listening."

note: Young children may have trouble sitting through the Bible story. Before responding to the Bible story, you may want to sing a quick action song such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" or "The Hokey-Pokey."

Responding to the Bible story

1. **Give children time to think about the story** by asking some of the following questions. The children may share their responses or think quietly.
 - What did Martha do when Jesus came? What did Mary do when Jesus came?
 - Why was Martha mad?
 - Why did Martha ask Jesus for help? How do you think she wanted Jesus to solve the problem?
 - How did Jesus solve the problem? What do you think happened next?

2. **Pray.** Explain that when people talk with God, it is called praying. Demonstrate that when people pray, they sometimes fold their hands and close their eyes. Pray:

Dear Jesus, sometimes we have problems. Sometimes the problems are so big we can't solve them ourselves. Help us to remember to ask help for when we need it. Amen.

3. **Ask the children if they remember any words** of the Bible memory verse. Then say the verse out loud, having the children repeat each line after you. Add motions.

Blessed are the peacemakers (*arms outspread*)
for they will be called (*cup hands around mouth*)
children (*point to self*)
of God. (*point up*)

note: For very young children, you may want to shorten the memory verse to "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Peace Lab activities

1. **Choose several activities** from pages 42–45. Include a snack and rest time, and have adults and youth on hand to help with games and crafts. If you have a small group of children, you may want to do the activities as one group. If you have a large group, however, consider dividing the children into smaller groups and having them rotate among several activities.
2. **When it is time to clean up**, use the same signal as you did the last time.
Remind the children of your expectations for putting away supplies and cleaning the area. Make sure names are on projects, and put them in a safe place so that they can be taken home.

note: Make sure that *My Book of Stories*, name tags, and all the craft projects are sent home today, the last day of VBS.

Sending

1. **Gather in the story area.** Ask the children to think about a time when they might need to ask for help in solving a problem. When they have an idea in mind, ask them to put their finger on their nose. If there is time, ask some children to share their ideas.
2. **Give this blessing** to the children as they leave:
Bless our ears (point to ears) and our mouths (point to mouths) so that we can ask for help to solve problems.
3. **Thank children** for spending time with you at vacation Bible school. Encourage children to keep being peacemakers even after Bible school is over.

ACTIVITIES

My Book of Stories

Turn to page 11 in *My Book of Stories*. Help children find their way through the simple maze to sit with Jesus. They may color the pictures.

Snack

Serve a snack that might have been served by Martha, such as hummus and pita bread, raisins or grapes, or cheese and bread. While eating the snack, talk about the work Martha would have had to do to make a feast for Jesus. Imagine why Martha might have been mad at Mary.

note: Be aware of children with gluten intolerance or nut or other allergies. Have alternative foods on hand if necessary.

note: Before eating, have children wash their hands, or provide hand sanitizer.

Peace Lab Discovery

Martha asked for Jesus' help in today's Bible story. Even though we don't know the ending of the story, we know that things often go better when we ask for what we need. And when we find the people and the resources to help us, we can accomplish our tasks.

To illustrate finding what we need and working together, put ½ cup / 120 ml vinegar into a plastic bottle. Use a spoon or funnel to pour baking soda into a balloon until it is about a quarter full. Carefully stretch the balloon over the neck of the bottle so that none of the baking soda spills. Then, quickly but gently sprinkle the baking soda from the balloon into the bottle. What happens? Say:

For this demonstration, we needed a few things: a bottle, vinegar, baking soda, and a balloon.

When we combined these things, we could easily see that they worked together! And asking for what we need, and working together, are ways to make peace.

CRAFTS

Peace Mosaics

Materials

- ☐ Peace sheet template (p. 48)
- ☐ Small squares of tissue paper in different colors, separated by color
- ☐ Glue stick

1. Give each child a peace sheet copied from page 48. However, give each child paper squares in only one color. Talk about how everyone needs to ask each other for help in order to complete their mosaics.
2. You may need to demonstrate how to use the glue stick to rub glue on the paper, then press the squares inside the letters to create a colorful mosaic.

Crayon Art

Materials

- ☐ Wax paper
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Crayon sharpeners
- ☐ Craft paper
- ☐ Iron
- ☐ Ironing board or towel
- ☐ Hole punch
- ☐ Yarn

1. Give each child a sheet of wax paper. Children should fold their sheet in half, and then open it.
2. Demonstrate how to use a sharpener to create crayon shavings that are sprinkled over half of the wax paper. Children may use several colors of crayons to make more colorful designs.
3. After the children are finished adding crayon shavings, have them fold the other half of the wax paper over the shavings.
4. Have an adult place a piece of craft paper on top of the wax paper, then iron on medium heat until the shavings melt.
5. After the wax paper cools, help the children punch a hole in the top of their creation and string a piece of yarn through it so that it can be hung up.
6. As the children look at each other's creation, explain that all the beautiful colors worked together to create beautiful pictures! This can be like peace—when people work together to be peacemakers, they can do beautiful things.

Peace Mural

Materials

- ☐ Long sheet of newsprint
- ☐ Crayons

1. Explain that you will all work together to create a peace mural to hang in the room. Working together is one way to be a peacemaker.
2. Think together about what could go on a peace mural, or simply give ideas to the children, such as to include the word *peace* in colorful designs and to draw scenes showing children helping each other.
3. Have the children draw ideas on the paper. After they are finished, hang the mural up in the room. If you have a closing program for families and friends, be sure to have the mural on display.

Fingerprint Pictures

Materials

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Stamp pads in assorted colors
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Fine-tip markers

1. Give each child a piece of paper. Children may share stamp pads.
2. Demonstrate how to press a finger on a stamp pad, then on a piece of paper. Fingerprints will be the faces of characters in today's Bible story, and after they dry, children may add eyes, noses, and mouths to the prints.
3. Children will draw clothes and other items on their pictures to retell today's Bible story. They may share their pictures with each other and take them home to share with their families as well.

GAMES AND MOVEMENTS

Group Juggling

Materials

- ☐ Inflated balloons

1. Have the children stand in a circle. Allow time for the children to hit a balloon into the air.
2. After everyone has had some practice, challenge the children to work together to see how long they can keep the balloon in the air. If you have a large group or the children need an extra challenge, give them two or three balloons to keep up in the air. Remind the children that working together is one way to be a peacemaker.

Web of Yarn

Materials

- ☐ Ball of yarn

1. Invite the children to sit in a circle. The leader holds the end of the yarn and rolls the ball of yarn to someone in the circle. The leader then says to one who caught the yarn, "I need help to play this game. Will you please help me?"
2. That child then holds on to the yarn and rolls the ball to someone else. The child repeats, "I need help to play this game. Will you please help me?"
3. The game continues until the ball of yarn has been rolled to each child and it returns to the leader. Look at the web that was created because everyone helped each other!

Story Tray

Materials

- ☐ Assortment of small household objects that may have been used in today's Bible story, such as a cup, plate, fork, napkin, dish towel, salt shaker, and other items
- ☐ Tray
- ☐ Cloth

In preparation, place the objects on the tray, and cover them the cloth.

1. Show the children the cloth-covered tray and explain that you will uncover it for a few seconds. When you do, they are to look at the objects that may have been used in today's Bible story.
2. Uncover the tray for about 10 seconds, then place the cloth over it again. Turn your back to the children and remove one object. Be sure that they cannot see which object has been removed.
3. Show the tray to the children again. Do they know which object was removed? Repeat until all the objects are removed from the tray.

Find the Cups

Materials

- ❑ Plastic cups (or plates), one or more per child

In preparation, hide plastic cups around the playing area.

1. Divide the children into at least two teams. Designate one child on each team to be It. It will remain at the same location while the game is being played.
2. When you give a signal, the children will look for the cups. As children find cups, they will take them to the It for their team. It will keep all the cups in the pile.
3. After all the cups have been found, count together how many cups each team has.
4. Martha probably had to gather cups when she wanted to prepare food for Jesus. What other tasks might Martha have done? Take time to think about this, and then have children act out tasks for each other.

BOOK LIST

note: You may want to read to children. This list offers suggestions that fit the session's themes. You are welcome to find other books as well.

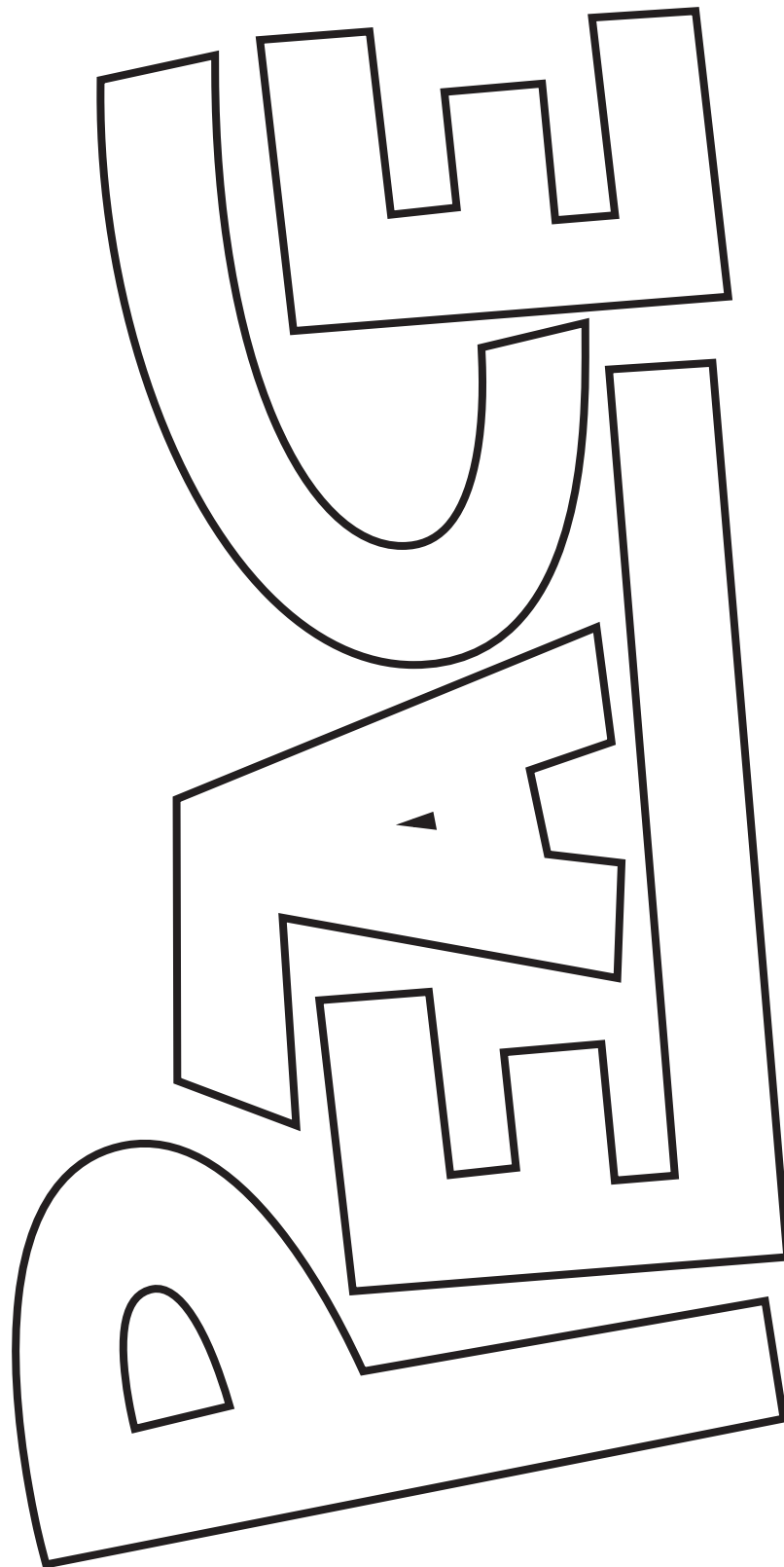
- Cronin, Doreen. *Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2000. When the cows reach an impasse in their ultimatum to the farmer, they enlist the help of the duck to negotiate a peaceful solution.
- Daywalt, Drew. *The Day the Crayons Quit*. New York: Philomel Books, 2013. Duncan's crayons are unhappy with him and he needs to find a way to make them happy and finish his drawing. A story about different perspectives.
- Lovell, Patty. *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2001. Advice from Molly Lou's grandmother helps her deal with children who ridicule her.

DAY 3 REPRODUCIBLE

PEACEMAKERS HELP OTHERS BY

Overlap this flap and tape, glue, or staple in place.

DAY 5 REPRODUCIBLE



NAME TAG REPRODUCIBLE



NAME



NAME



NAME



NAME



NAME



NAME

