



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: Psalm 34: 11–14

Theme: What is peace and what is your part in it?

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

The book of Psalms is known as the 'Hymnbook of the Second Temple'. People in Jesus' time would have been familiar with Psalms and they were often read and sung in worship. (When you see the word *Selah* introducing a psalm, it was often indicates offering a musical or reflective interlude.)

Many of the Psalms (73 of the 150) are attributed to David – this was King David, the second king of Israel. Many of the psalms are titled with events in the life of David. This one is headed: '*Of David, where he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.*' Psalms often deal with the struggles human beings have and so makes them appealing to many.

In Psalm 34, the author offers words of adoration to God, and then recalls times of fear, to which God responded. The writer says that trusting in God brings blessing. The section we are looking at gives instructions on good living.

We are now in the second week of 'Fruits of the Spirit'. Having focused on Love last week, this week we are looking at Peace.

We will consider what peace means (in a variety of contexts), including how it is more than just the absence of war; and what it means to seek peace. Peacemaking requires action and involves more than just talking about peace. We will explore what peace is and how we all have a part in bringing, seeking, and being peacemakers.

There may be triggers for your group as we will also explore the word 'evil'. This may particularly affect asylum-seeking children, children who do not have settled homes, and those who are overly criticised.

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend,

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family.

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

Amen

Active game – Hide and seek peace

This game links to the idea in the passage of seeking peace. A simple game of hide and seek where children hunt for pictures of peace.

You will need lots of different pictures of peace and some that are not peace related. Assorted pictures can be found on free sites such as

<https://unsplash.com/s/illustrations/peace>

<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/peace>

Hide the pictures around the room.

Explain to the children that they need to find the pictures that they think are about peace and bring them together. Do not collect the ones that are not peace related.

Keep them in a pile and we will use them in the Explore section.

Quieter game – Passing whispers

Choose someone in your group to create something positive to whisper to the person next to them. Then the message gets passed around the circle, whispered from one person to another. At the end, the last person openly says what was whispered to them and you can compare their message to the message at the start. Play the game again but this time switch the positive message you start with to something negative, explaining that the message needs to end up as a positive one by the end of the line. This game teaches us how to be patient and wait for God's message and answers to reach us. It also teaches us about honesty and not spreading lies and gossip but instead encouraging peace.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

For this story we recommend using The Voice

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2034%3A%2011%20-%2014&version=VOICE>

Where can I find the story online?

Under-fives: A simple video that shows the passage and then removes words to enable the group to memorise and recite it – have fun. By We Are the Clay

<https://youtu.be/GAJeK-CtbDQ?si=0oaIMAd78WC6GJOM>

Five-to-elevens: A simple video that shows the passage and then removes words to enable the group to memorise and recite it – have fun. By We Are the Clay

<https://youtu.be/GAJeK-CtbDQ?si=0oaIMAd78WC6GJOM>

Songs to support the story

Under-fives: Peace Like a River, by Listener Kids

<https://youtu.be/7it5W1FVtTs?si=cMK9pwTty8Ok1g-A>

Five-to-elevens: Peace Prayer, by The Schools Musicals Company

https://youtu.be/u1kiWq_dc8o?si=SIbUnfQTwZJKeLYM

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

Begin by gathering the pictures from the hide and seek peace game (add more pictures if you wish). Spread them out in the middle of the group so all can see the images.

Explain that these are the images you all chose as images of Peace. I wonder why you choose these images. Why are these images of peace?

Receive some responses.

What other images might you put into this mix? What is missing?

TASK: I wonder if we could put the images into groups. Invite the group to decide how to group the photos/images together. You might need to give them support; for example, images that are about individual peace, and those that are about global peace.

Encourage the children to all be involved and keep swapping the images around as you chat about the different types of peace.

The passage tells us we need to be part of creating peace as well as seeking it out. I wonder how we do this.

The group might want to create their own pictures to add to the collection, either drawing them, using pictures from magazines/newspapers, or even using a printable camera.

Perhaps the group might want to use their images to create a giant poster, celebrating peace and encouraging others to be peacemakers.

Use the questions at the end of the session plan to chat about the passage further.

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way, as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable, consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



The Peace Book by Todd Parr. Published by Little, Brown Young readers
Oct. 2017.
ISBN 10: 0316510777

This is a reading of the book by the author.

<https://youtu.be/ehfuuVdKidI?si=6s4ZpONMmEvqEiwl>

Peace is making new friends.

Peace is helping your neighbour.

Peace is a growing a garden.

Peace is having enough pizza in the world for everyone.

What else is peace about?

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- How does having the Holy Spirit in your life make you a peacemaker and why?
- How do you seek peace?

Wondering: ways to reflect on the theme

- I wonder who the peacemakers are in your life
- I wonder how we take care of things we say
- What are the symbols for peace that we think of?

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Symbols of peace (a dove, a heart, a peace symbol etc) – talk to the children about what peace is.
- Glasses – put the glasses on and talk to the children about how we can seek peace, by being good friends or stopping fights, or making new friends.
- Some noisy musical instruments – shake the instruments to make lots of noise (be aware of children who may not like noise and maybe have some noise cancelling headphones for them). Talk about how the quiet after the noise can be a type of peace.
- A globe, or soft ball – talk to the children about some of the places where there is no peace and say a short prayer for peace.
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity – Peace Pledge Prayers

Use a simple outline of a dove, or use the template provided. Have some ink pads or use felt pens and invite everyone to place their fingerprint on the dove as our pledge for peace in the world. After you have done this, pass the candle as an act of prayer for peace.



Candle Prayer

What you need:

large battery-operated candles (suggested one between six)

What you do:

Sit in a small circle or around a table in groups of (roughly) six (the bigger the group, the longer the prayer time will be!).

Explain that each child is going to be praying for the person next to them.

They will each take it in turns to pray and while they pray they will hold the lit candle.

Check that everyone knows each other's names – maybe get them to say their names once sat in the circle or write their name on a piece of paper in front of them.

We are going to be praying for the person next to us. We are going to do this aloud or silently (however you feel most comfortable) while holding the candle. There are no special words to say, but here are some ideas of things you may like to pray for:

(If helpful you could write some prayer prompt cards; you know your group best.)

Thank you to God for loving this person.

Thank you to God for something special about them.

Thank you to God that they are here in the group this week.

And then maybe something about helping them at school or study, blessing them as a new week begins, helping them if they feel worried or sad, asking God's blessing on them and people they love.

You can end your prayer (spoken or silent) with the word “Amen” as this shows your prayer has ended and then the next person will be ready to take the candle from you.

Once everyone has prayed, the candle is turned off.

Spoken prayer

Deep peace of the running wave to you.

Deep peace of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of the gentle night to you.

Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.

Deep peace of Christ, of Christ the light of the world to you.

Deep peace of Christ to you.

You can also find a Makaton version of the peace here:

<https://youtu.be/omGQ4ppk7Gk?si=0cGiftpPbKrAqv45>

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

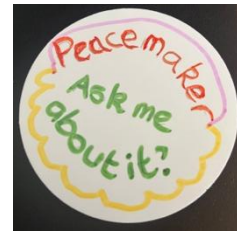
With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage the children to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Peace badges

You will need:

- pieces of card or fabric in various shapes and sizes
- safety pins
- or use a badge maker if you have one



What you do:

Encourage the children to consider what they want to say on their badges. "I'm a peacemaker, ask me about it"; "How have you brought peace this week?" or simply "Peace; peacemaker".

The badges could have a dove, a heart, or the peace symbol on them.

Once they have made their badge, encourage them to make more to give to their friends.

Once the badges are completed, tape on a safety pin on the back if using card. If using fabric, pin the badge on the clothing using the pin, in a place that helps it to be seen well.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

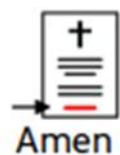
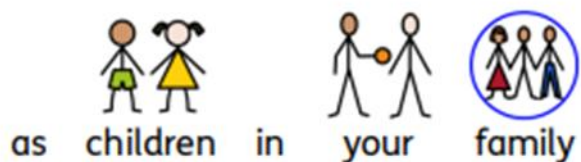
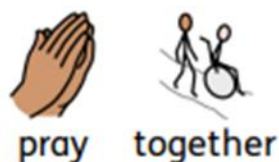
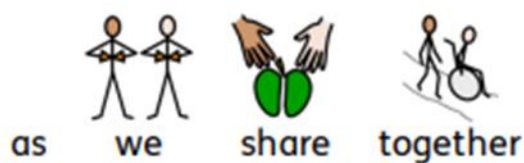
- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you when they see peace around them.
- Could you do something peaceful this week?

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Peace** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk**

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Goodness**





 The Lord's Prayer



 Our Father, who art
 
 in
 
 heaven,
 
 hallowed be
 
 thy
 
 name.


 Thy
 
 kingdom
 
 come,
 
 thy
 
 will
 
 be done






 on
 
 earth
 
 as it is
 
 in
 
 heaven.


 Give
 
 us
 
 this day
 
 our
 
 daily
 
 bread


 and
 
 forgive
 
 us
 
 our
 
 sins
 As
 
 we
 
 forgive
 
 those
 
 who
 
 sin
 
 against
 
 us


 Lead
 
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 into
 
 temptation
 
 but
 
 deliver
 
 us
 
 from
 
 evil


 For
 
 thine
 
 is the
 
 kingdom,
 
 the
 
 power
 
 and
 
 the
 
 glory


 For ever
 
 and
 
 ever
 
 . Amen



