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**TIME WITH CHILDREN**

(PANICKED initially. Move to humor as the monologue progresses) OH MY GOSH! OH MY GOSH! OH MY GOSH! I completely forgot everything I needed for this lesson today. This has been a wild morning. I can’t believe I just left everything at home on my kitchen table. First, I overslept, then I spilled juice all over my new shirt, then my dog chased a squirrel around the neighborhood. \*SIGH\* It’s just been a crazy day already. Is there anything I can do to calm down and feel better? OK (insert your name), get it together. Take one deep breath. (LOOKING AT THE CHILDREN) OH, good morning, my sweet children of God. Will you take two deep breaths with me? (TAKE TWO DEEP BREATHS) Well, I do feel better now.

I wonder if anything has ever happened to make you feel stressed or panicked or nervous. I wonder if anything has happened today to make our friends at school feel panicked or our friends in our neighborhood feel stress. Or our friends on our soccer team-baseball team-theater class-dance class-etc. (list activities in which you know your children are involved). It is normal for us to feel stressed or panicked and it is also normal for us to feel peace and calm.

Sometimes I feel peace when I go to the beach (hold up picture of beach). I feel peace when I am in nature (hold up picture of nature). I also feel peace when I pray (hold up picture of praying hands).

God promised us in John 14 to leave peace with us. But not just any kind of peace, rather the peace of God. The peace of God comes from within us, as God dwells within us. And before Jesus died, he showed us how to offer peace to everyone we meet. The peace of God can make us smile and help us to stay calm in very crazy situations. And we can call on the peace of God to wash over us any time. So, any time you are feeling panicked like I was a few moments ago, take deep breaths and say, “The peace of God be with me.” If we see someone who looks like they could use the peace of God we can say, “Peace be with you.” Sometimes that person will say, “And also with you.”

Let’s look at our friends and family in the congregation (and online) this morning and offer peace. On the count of three, I want you to point out and say in a big voice, “PEACE BE WITH YOU!” OK? Then the person you pointed to will respond, “And also with you.” Ready? 1-2-3:

PEACE BE WITH YOU!

**Let us pray**

*Dear God, fill us with your peace and our family and our friends. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

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