



2024 | CHILDREN'S TIME SEPTEMBER 8-OCTOBER 6

Preparation:

Before worship, gather supplies:

- a can or bag of green peas (or a drawing/picture of them)
- a puzzle piece
- information about local use of the PGW offering

Gathering

Use your own words to say and do something like this:

WELCOME FRIENDS! Today we are going to do something that lots of followers of Jesus do all over the world when they come to worship. We are going to pass the peace, and I need your help.

LET'S PASS THE PEAS (*Hand the peas to a child next to you and encourage them to pass the peas around.*)

I'm not sure why we are doing that in worship. Can you think why followers of Jesus might pass peas around? (*Wonder with them — reasons both possible and silly — in case people are hungry, to thank God for food, etc. If someone suggests that you have it wrong, agree.*) I think you are right. This isn't what passing the peace means.

LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN. Let's pass the piece. (*Hold up the puzzle piece, then hand it to the child next to you to pass around.*) Is that better? We can pass the piece of a puzzle around. Why might we do that as followers of Jesus? (*Wonder about reasons both possible and silly — because we want to solve puzzles together, because we each have a piece and part to play, etc. Again, agree if someone says you have it wrong.*) I think you are right. This isn't what passing the peace means.

It must be some other kind of peace that followers of Jesus pass around. What do you think? (*Allow for a variety of answers. If your congregation has a regular time for passing the peace in worship, children might mention it.*)

Jesus talked about peace, and he showed people what peace looks like. And when he met with his friends after his death and resurrection, he didn't say, "Hey, how are you?" Or "Great to see you again." He said, "Peace be with you." Then he sent his disciples out to share that peace and good news with the world.

All across the world, when followers of Jesus gather for worship like we are here, they share many things. They share songs, prayers, offerings, stories about Jesus. They share their time and their talents, their gifts and their

service. They share communion. They share their faith. And they share the peace of Christ. Not green peas or a piece of a puzzle — but the peace that Jesus shares. Sometimes that looks like people standing up and shaking hands or hugging and saying, “Good morning.” Sometimes that looks like people saying something like, “The peace of Christ be with you,” and others saying, “And also with you.” *(If your congregation has a ritual for passing the peace of Christ, mention it here.)*

If your church is collecting the Peace & Global Witness Offering today, say something like this:

Today we are receiving a special offering called the Peace & Global Witness Offering. It helps share the peace of Christ, not just here in our worship service, but in neighborhoods like ours and across the world, in small and large ways. Some will be shared across the world in places where peace is especially needed. Some of it helps with projects like ... *(share a project funded in your congregation or in your region through the PGW offering).*

pass the peace
active vs. passive
across the world?

Invent a new way to pass the peace

Pass the piece
Pass the peas
Pass the peace
Pass the peace of Christ

PASS THE PEACE/PULSE

Pass the Peace Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Unity means recognizing that our wellness and success are interconnected. This activity will help students experience a sense of closeness with other students.

Form a circle and hold hands. The object of the game is to silently pass a pulse from person to person so that the pulse gets all the way through the group. When you receive a squeeze on one side, you will then squeeze the person's hand on your other side. Don't add any extra pulses!

- First, the instructor will do a single pulse in one direction and wait for it to get all the way around.
- Then the instructor will send a double pulse in the opposite direction and wait for it to get all the way around.
- Then the instructor will send a pulse in both directions at the same time.
- For an extra challenge, the instructor can send two different pulses in opposite directions.

Note: Allow students to take a deep breath and a quiet moment. Remind students that this class is a time to practice the Principles of Peace.

Share about when you felt an overwhelming sense of peace or calm and why that peace was significant or special.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you think is a good definition of “peace”?
2. If the whole world were peaceful, what would it look like?
3. What does it feel like for you to experience peace?

WRAP-UP

Tell the children that in today’s Scripture from the book of John, Jesus shared with his disciples what they would expect in the coming days. Jesus told the disciples about the Holy Spirit, who would come and be their advocate and teacher going forward. Explain to the children that the reason the Holy Spirit is coming is because of God’s love for us and God’s desire to help us. Share with the children that Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you.” Show the children today’s illustration and wonder together about the expressions on the disciples’ faces. Would this statement from Jesus be confusing, delightful or something else? Jesus went on to say this was not an ordinary peace that we might think of, but the peace of Christ, which is beyond any kind of peace we can imagine and comes from the immense love Jesus has for the world. One definition of peace is “wholeness, wellness when all your needs — physical, emotional, spiritual, etc. — are met.” Tell the children we must remember that working for peace means doing hard things, having hard conversations that seek repair and making sure everyone’s needs are met. Wonder together what Jesus meant when he said, “My peace.” Explore ways we can work toward that peace. If your congregation practices this, share with the children about passing the peace of Christ in a worship service. Tell them this practice is supposed to help us remember Christ’s peace, be mindful of receiving that peace and experience the peace of Christ in community with one another. As a practice, have the children stand and say to one another, “The peace of Christ be with you,” “And also with you.” They can shake hands or high-five or fist-bump if they want to. Then invite them to pray with you.

PRAYER

*Dear God,
thank you for sending the Holy Spirit
to help us and teach us.
Help us understand the peace of Christ
and share it with one another.
Amen.*



QUESTIONS?

Feel free to contact us at
800-728-7228, ext. 5047
or email special.offerings@pcusa.org
pcusa.org/oghs/resources