

Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children. (Matthew 5:9)

Abraham and Lot – Genesis 13

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: PEACE

God called Abraham to leave his home and move his family to an unknown destination. God promised Abraham he would be the father of a great nation, built on the land he would move to. Abraham took his wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot. They were joined by Abraham's and Lot's servants and animals.

Abraham and Lot traveled a long way together. After a while, Abraham's and Lot's servants began to argue with one another. Between them, they had so many animals, the land could not support all of them. Abraham and Lot wanted to keep peace. They didn't want to fight with each other.

To ensure peace, Abraham gave Lot the choice of the two lands. Lot chose the Jordan Valley, because it was lush and green. There would be plenty of food for his animals. Without complaining, Abraham moved his animals and servants to the drier land.

As the elder, Abraham could have chosen land first. However, Abraham knew God would be with him wherever he went. Abraham loved Lot and wanted to be fair, so he allowed Lot to choose the land he wanted.

Our Unit 1 Spiritual Practice is exploring peace through justice. Explain to the children that justice means you love others by making sure they are treated fairly and equally. Abraham kept peace with Lot by letting him be the first to choose the land. Letting Lot choose first was an act of justice by Abraham that treated Lot fairly and kept peace.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Think of an injustice you have seen on the news lately. Consider one way you can peacefully address the injustice. Maybe you could write a letter to someone in authority who has the ability to make change. Pray that God will open your eyes and your heart to the injustices you see in the world. Ask God to help you speak up and speak out for peace and justice.

Come Together

Welcome to Wonder

Supplies: Class Pack—pp. 7 & 26, 9 & 24, 16 & 17; Activity Sheets—p. 3; Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD; Wonder Box; CD player; dove with an olive branch; green cloth; battery-operated candle; straws or pencils (two per child); glue or tape

Prepare Ahead: Display the Attendance Chart (Class Pack—pp. 16 & 17). Set up a Wonder Table (see p. 4) with a green cloth, battery-operated candle, and a Wonder Box (see p. 4). Display the Bible Verse and Faith Word Posters (Class Pack—pp. 7 & 26, 9 & 24). Place the dove inside the Wonder Box, and set the box on the Wonder Table. Punch out the “Making Peace” spinner for each child (Activity Sheets—p. 3).

- Play “Celebrate Wonder” (Annual Music CD) as the children arrive. Greet each child by name and show the children where to mark their attendance.
- Point to the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—pp. 9 & 24), and invite the children to wonder about what the word *peace* means.
- Help each child, as needed, assemble the “Making Peace” spinners (Activity Sheets—p. 3), following the directions on the back of the sheet.

Sing and Celebrate

Supplies: Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD, CD player, green streamers

- Tell the children there is green on the Wonder Table and green streamers because green is the color we use in church during the season of Ordinary Time.
- Play the Unit 1 song, “Make Things Right.” Let the children sing and celebrate.

Tip: For more information on Ordinary Time, go to: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-is-ordinary-time>.

Wonder Time

Share a Story

Supplies: Celebrate Wonder DVD, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, TV, DVD player

- Invite the children to join you, sitting in a circle on the floor.
- Read the story, “Abraham and Lot” (Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook—p. 26).
- Watch the Session 1 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

Wonder with Me

Supplies: Class Pack—pp. 4, 9 & 24, 14 & 19; Wonder Box; Wonder Cube; scissors; tape

Prepare Ahead: Locate a previous Wonder Cube and lay out the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat (Class Pack—pp. 14 & 19). Cut out the sheep with the word “compromise” on it (Class Pack—p. 4).

- Let the children take turns rolling the Wonder Cube. Have the children answer the question(s) about the Bible story.
- Place the Wonder Box on the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat (Class Pack—pp. 14 & 19).

SAY: Today’s faith word is *peace*.

- Show the children the “Peace” poster (Class Pack—pp. 9 & 24).

SAY: In this unit, we are using this definition for *peace*: Living together in harmony without fighting. To be calm and know God’s presence.

- Wonder together:
 - What does peace feel like to you?
- Place the sheep figure (Class Pack—p. 4) on the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat.
- Open the Wonder Box and reveal the dove.

WONDER: Why is there a dove in the Wonder Box? What does a dove have to do with peace?

Experience Wonder

Problem-solving Cube (Discussion)

Supplies: Activity Sheets—page 5, tape or glue

Prepare Ahead: Punch out a Problem-solving Cube and fold along each dotted line for each child. Tape or glue each cube together.

- Present the children with a problem between friends, such as: Your friend wants the same toy as you. What do you do?

SAY: In the Bible story today, Abraham compromised with Lot, and let him be first to choose the land. *Compromise* is a word on the sheep on our Wonder Story Mat. It is a big word that means everyone has to give some of what they want to keep peace.

- Let each child roll the cube. Take turns reading the solution on each child’s cube.

WONDER: Do you think that (*name a solution*) will work? What other solution could you try? What is another way Abraham could have kept peace with Lot?

Tip: Make an extra cube to keep in the Peaceful Place for this unit.

Fairness (Game)

Supplies: two sets of different-colored stickers, suckers

- Place one color sticker on half the children (Team A), and the other color sticker on the other half (Team B).
- Assign one child to be “IT,” and play a game of tag. When a child is tagged, that child must sit down. When everyone has been tagged, tell the children to gather in a group with their team.
- Give two suckers to all the children on Team A, but no suckers to Team B. Tell them not to open the suckers.

SAY: Some of you have suckers, and some of you don’t.

ASK: Do you think it’s fair that one team has two suckers and the other doesn’t have any? What can we do so that everyone is treated fairly and equally?

SAY: When we make sure everyone is treated fairly and equally, we are performing an act of justice. *Justice* means to treat everyone the same and make sure they have what they need. When you do acts of justice, like making sure everyone gets a sucker, you keep peace with one another.

- Invite each child on Team A to share one of their suckers with a player on Team B.

WONDER: How did it feel when your team didn’t get a sucker and the other team did? How did it feel to share one of the suckers you got with the other team?

Peace Dove (Art)

Supplies: white construction paper, crayons or markers, white feathers, glue

- Give each child a piece of white construction paper.
- Help each child draw a hand on the paper. Make sure there is space between the thumb (which will be the head) and the other fingers (which will be the body).

SAY: The dove is often used as a symbol of peace in the Bible. A symbol reminds of us something. A dove can remind us of peace.

- Have each child draw a face on the dove and decorate the body.

WONDER: Why do you think the dove is a symbol of peace?

Peaceful Place

Supplies: Leader Guide—pp. 12, 91; one Problem-solving Cube (Activity Sheets—p. 5); Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook; suggested book: “The Peace Book” by Todd Parr; soft sheep and doves; two baskets; sharing items (such as new/old socks, new/used pencils, and broken/new jewelry); crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy “Sharing Peace” Journal Page (Leader Guide—p. 12) and the Unit 1 Faith Word coloring sheet (Leader Guide—p. 91) for each child.

- Let the children separate sharing items into the two baskets—one basket for items that are new and nice to share, and one for old items that are not nice to share.
- Give each child a copy of the “Sharing Peace” Journal Page (Leader Guide—p. 12), and have the children draw how they share peace with others.

Tip: All of the supplies/activities suggested for the Peaceful Place are optional. Pick and choose what you want or add your own ideas.

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice—Exploring Peace Through Justice

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 89, optional: Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book

SAY: A spiritual practice is something we do to help us connect to God. This week we have talked about Abraham and Lot. We also talked about justice, and how important it is to keep peace by making sure everyone is treated fairly.

- Guide the children through a spiritual practice:
 - Close your eyes and think of a time you were not treated fairly. You can say it out loud or you can say it silently to yourself.
 - Tell yourself that when you see someone else treated unfairly, you will try to help that person.

PRAY: Repeat after me: “God, help me to see the people not treated fairly. Help me to be a peacemaker and speak up for them. Amen.”

- Bless the children before they leave. Touch each child as you say this blessing: “May God bless you as a person of peace and fairness. Go now in peace.”
- Send home a photocopy of the Celebration Chart (Leader Guide—p. 89) for each child.
- Encourage the children to use the Celebration Chart and to read the *Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book* together at home with their family.

**CELEBRATE
WONDER** "Sharing Peace" Journal Page

