

Peace with Justice Sunday Children's Sermon

Preparation

Gather two apples, one toy, eyeglasses or another object that could incite teasing or bullying. Place the items in a bag so that you can pull them out as you need them. You can use some or all of these items and ideas depending on the time you have and the ages of the group.

Message

Greet the children as you would typically do. Say: **This morning I brought some things to help us learn about our special Sunday today, Peace with Justice Sunday.** Pull out one apple.

Ask: **If you like apples, raise your hand. If you were hungry, would you want me to share my other apple with you?** Pull out the second apple. **What if I didn't share it? What if I decided to keep them both? How would you feel if you were hungry and saw me with my two apples? It would not feel good. I did not take an apple from you, but it would still not feel very good. How would it feel if I decided to be kind and share my other apple with you? I think we would both feel good.**

Say: **What about this toy?** Pull out the toy. Say: **What if there were two friends and one toy? Who gets the toy? Wait for responses. Why do you think that? Is there a way where the two friends can play together? When we find ways for everyone to get along and enjoy being together, we become peacemakers.**

Pull out the glasses and say: **I put these in here because I have seen people tease others or people have teased me for wearing glasses. It doesn't feel good when people make fun of us. We know that we are not supposed to tease others, but what if a friend of ours is teasing someone in front of us? Can we do something to make peace in that moment?**

When we celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday, we believe that Jesus asks us to do more than be nice. Jesus asks us to be kind. Jesus asks us to make peace in the world around us. With our friends, our neighbors, even people we have not met. We believe that Jesus calls us to have courage to be a peacemaker and to love our neighbors all the time, even when it is hard and even when we might have to do things like share what we have with a stranger or an enemy.

Closing Prayer

God of Peace, thank you that the world you created is good. Give us courage to do what Jesus asks, to live in peace with everyone in your world. Amen.

– Keri Cress, director of children and youth ministry, Hillcrest United Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee