

# Swords into Plowshares

Grades  
**5-6**

**PEACE • ADVENT 1 • YEAR A**

**ISAIAH 2:1-5**



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## What's happening in this story?

The mountain of the Lord's house is a recurring image in Isaiah. There's a mountain rising above other surrounding hills and mountains. The Lord and the Lord's people are on it. All peoples are being gathered to this mountain. Teachings will flow from the Lord, through the people, to the nations. Israel will be a light to the nations, especially through the teachings of peace, *shalom* (a sense of God's wholeness, well-being, and peace), reconciliation between warring nations, and a shift away from the technologies of warfare and toward working the land. It's a gorgeous, inviting vision.

## What does this story mean for kids?

For both younger and older kids, the content of this story can be quite abstract, but the actual concepts are not out of their reach. Understanding that God wants us to come to God's house (a place to be with God and gather with others) and to learn about God's teachings is accessible and important. However, while the concept of peace may be obvious to adults and adolescents, an explanation of swords, plowshares, spears, and pruning hooks will be needed for younger kids.

## What is the Lectionary Connection?

Being instructed in the ways of God teaches people to move from harming one another toward peace. Biblically, peace always means more than the absence of conflict; it is the presence of being whole, or at ease with who and what you are.

## AGE LEVEL TIP

Kids this age are familiar with situations that are not peaceful—both from a personal perspective at school and at home, and more broadly, based on information gleaned from the news or conversations between adults. Create an atmosphere of peace in your classroom by being kind and respectful.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Mural paper
- Permanent marker
- Markers
- Pens

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- None

**WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL NRSV BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART • LEAFLETS**

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

As kids arrive, invite them to make a group peace poster. Provide one large piece of mural paper and markers and ask them to create a poster promoting peace in their world.

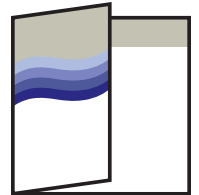
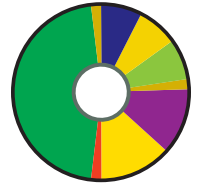
## Invite kids to look at the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, church season, color, and icon. **Today is the first Sunday in the new church year. It is also the first Sunday of Advent, the time when we prepare for Christmas.** Ask kids to talk about the things they do with their families to get ready for Christmas. **Our theme today is Peace, and often, the first Sunday in Advent is known as "Peace Sunday."** Ask someone to draw a peace sign on today's date with the permanent marker.

Gather in a circle and ask kids to name situations at school or in the community that need peace. Teach the American Sign Language sign for peace (you can find it online) and close the conversation with it.

## Pass out leaflets and pens.

As a group, work through the Advent trivia quiz together to learn more about Advent.



1. What does the word *Advent* mean? (coming)
2. How many Sundays are in Advent? (four)
3. When does Advent start? (four Sundays before Christmas Day)
4. What is the color for Advent? (blue or purple)
5. What do Christians do during Advent? (prepare for the coming of Jesus)

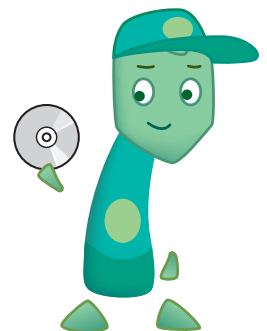
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

**Have you ever had a fight with someone that lasted a long time, and afterwards you didn't remember what you were fighting about? Watch the video to see what happens when the Whirl kids argue.**

View Episode 1, "Advent Entrenched," on the Whirl Year A Winter Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Have you ever gotten into an argument that got out of control? What happened?
- Are you more likely to work for peace or continue an argument until you win?
- Who was the peacemaker in this story? How did she get Ruby and Leo to stop fighting?
- Which of the Whirl characters in this video are you most like? Why?
- What might happen if the things we use to fight with were used to make playgrounds instead?



## Pass out Whirl NRSV Bibles and help kids find Isaiah 2:1-5.

Do the Advent 1 Preview Activity together on page 783 and compare responses.

**Isaiah was a prophet in Judah during a difficult time for God's people. Isaiah continually reminded people to follow God and described what their world would be like if they did.**



Read Isaiah 2:1-5 in this creative way together: Do a choral reading with the entire group as you walk around your classroom—or even outside, if possible. First, explain: **People heard the words of Isaiah long before they read them because in Isaiah's day, not many people could read. Read the passage slowly and deliberately in order to take it all in.** Isaiah is describing what peace is like in God's kingdom—very important words to hear.

## Ask these questions after you read the story:

- When have you experienced real peace?
- What would it be like if there were no wars or conflict of any kind?
- Describe what you think it means to walk in the light of the Lord.
- How can we make peace with people?
- Do you have questions about this story?

### BIBLE BIT

- Isaiah is a book of prophecy filled with rich imagery and metaphors. Read the introduction to Isaiah on page 780 of the Whirl NRSV Bible to learn more about this famous prophet.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

- Pay attention to how you feel when the argument between Ruby and Leo escalates. If you were Mimi or Gabe, would you have done anything differently?

### OUR CHURCH

- Ask a pastor or member of the church staff to tell you about how your congregation works for peace in the world. Together, figure out ways fifth and sixth graders can be involved.

# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out pens.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. **All of us can follow God and work for peace. Sometimes the best way to do that is to get to know the people around us better. Today we will play Peace Bingo to learn new things about each other.**
2. **Spend the next five minutes talking with all the people in this room to learn more about them. Your job is to find someone who matches the description for each box and write their name in the box.**
3. Ideally, kids will write a different name in each of the boxes, but if the group is small, encourage them to fill as many boxes as they can with different names.
4. After five minutes, gather and go through each square to find out who in your group matches the description. If nobody does, ask the group to think about their friends and family and write the name of someone they know who fits in the open spot.
5. **Isaiah's prophecy reminds us that in God's kingdom, there is peace. Weapons are made into tools that till the soil. Nations stop fighting, and there is no more war.**
6. **How might getting to know people better help us bring peace?**
7. **How can you get to know the people you encounter every day just a little bit better? How might you learn and grow by doing this?**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

**God's kingdom is a peace-filled place. There is no more war. What are some ways kids can work for peace at school? At home? At church?** Invite kids to share their thoughts about today's lesson. Take time to hear kids' responses.

## Return to the leaflet panels.

**Write a prayer for peace in our world on the leaflet. Place it on the inside of your front door as a reminder to work and pray for peace each day during Advent.**

## Send kids out.

Gather in a circle and invite everyone to share God's peace with each other in the same way you do in worship. Then close with the ASL sign for peace.

Pray together: **God, help us wait for your coming during this Advent season. Help us bring peace to our world every day. Amen.**

Thank kids for coming today. Encourage them to work for peace wherever they are. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.