

Swords into Plowshares

Grades
1-2

PEACE • ADVENT 1 • YEAR A

ISAIAH 2:1-5



1

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

Holidays can be stressful for families. Invitations to celebrations, family gatherings, and holiday programs—or even the *absence* of these things—can add stress to this season. Speaking in a peaceful tone, conducting an unhurried class, and taking time to greet families are ways to let God's peace shine through you.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Scissors
- Markers
- Clear tape

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Soft items (1 item per kid: pillow, blanket, cushion, stuffed animal, child's jacket, etc.)
- Coffee filters
- Music source

WHIRL SUPPLIES

• **WHIRL STORY BIBLES**

• **DVD**

• **WALL CHART**

• **LEAFLETS**

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Give kids coffee filters and scissors. Fold filters in half three times. To make a snowflake, cut pieces from all sides of the filter. To make a star, cut wedges from the open edge of the filter. **Snowflakes and stars are peaceful!**

Invite kids to gather near the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, season (Advent), color (blue), and icon (Advent wreath). **Advent has begun! The word Advent means "coming." In Bible times, people were waiting for God to send a savior to bring peace into the world. People were waiting for the coming of Jesus! We celebrate the coming of Jesus on Christmas. Let's count how many more days we have to wait.** Count the days until Christmas. Write the number of days inside the wedge. Invite kids to draw snowflakes or stars around the number. **Jesus is coming to bring peace into the world!**

The leader announces, and the kids repeat, the following phrases: **Jesus is coming soon. Jesus is coming soon. God's house will be a house of peace! Jesus is coming soon.**

Pass out leaflets and markers.

During Advent, we celebrate Jesus' coming. One of the things Jesus brings when he comes is peace. People talk about and experience peace in different ways. Sometimes peace means no fighting. Sometimes peace means calm feelings or a relaxed body. The peace that Jesus brings settles deep inside your heart. Discuss each of the pictures as a class. **Which pictures remind you of peace? Why? What do some of the other pictures make you think of? God wants everyone to live in peace. Jesus brings that peace to earth, and one day it will be completely here!** Collect their leaflets until Respond.

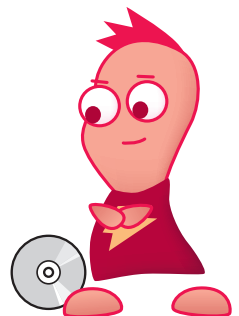
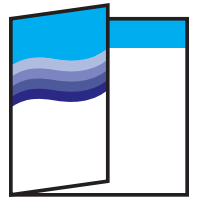
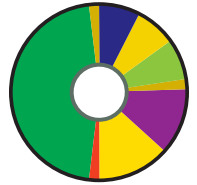
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

The kids are working on their arts and crafts today. Let's watch what happens.

View Episode 1, "Crayon Catastrophe," on the Whirl Year A Winter PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What did Otto and Ada both want?
- Do you think either Otto or Ada were right to behave the way they did? Why or why not?
- How could Otto and Ada have solved their issue in a different way?
- Have you ever seen someone have a disagreement at church? When?
- What did Pastor Donna say about people fighting and God?



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story for today! Help kids find "The Lord's Welcoming House" on page 122. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the Advent wreath in the blue circle for the Advent season. Before you read, invite kids to look for Isaiah speaking to the people, weapons and garden tools, and kids following Isaiah.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Whose words did Isaiah speak?
- What did Isaiah say the Lord was building?
- Do you think you will get to live in the Lord's house one day? Why or why not?
- What will people use their swords and spears for in the future?
- How do you think it will feel to live in a place with no fighting? Why?

Play together!

Help kids experience the difference between life's stress and God's peace.

For stress: Play some loud or fast music. Ask kids to imagine themselves in the following situations. **Show me how you act when these things happen. (The bus is coming and you're just leaving the house. You can't find your shoes. Your pet dies. You are in trouble for something you did not do.)**

For peace: Play some soft or slow music. Invite kids to grab a soft item and get comfortable. Say the following calmly and slowly. **Listen to these words. Ask God to give you peace. (You are God's child. God loves you and will always help you. God has great plans for your life. God will never leave you—ever.)**

When you feel stress, remember: you can have peace with God. God's house is a peaceful place.

BIBLE BIT

- Isaiah and Micah were contemporaries. Isaiah 2:2-4 is almost identical to Micah 4:1-3. Scholars wonder if both prophets received the same vision or if one borrowed from the other.

WATCH IT AGAIN

- What was Clara doing when Ada and Otto were quarreling? How do your actions affect those around you?

OUR CHURCH

- Churches are seen as "houses of God." Invite kids to compare features of your church with other homes: windows, ceiling height, seating, etc. **How does it feel to be in God's house?**

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 2:1-5 • Psalm 122 • Romans 13:11-14 • Matthew 24:36-44

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Direct kids' attention to the large thought bubble on the leaflet.
2. **Isaiah said that God is building a house—a house big enough for everyone! One day, we will get to live in God's house too. Let's imagine what God's house will look like.**
3. Invite the kids to draw what they imagine as you relate some concrete descriptors from the story.
 - **God's house is bigger than the tallest mountain.**
 - **Old people, young people, boys, and girls will all be there.**
 - **God will be teaching people.**
 - **Everyone will be happy!**
 - **Gardens will grow.**
 - **Weapons will be turned into garden tools.**
 - **God will solve everyone's problems.**
 - **Everyone will get along, with no fighting!**
 - **God's light will shine brightly.**
4. Create a visual of God's house by lightly taping kids' leaflets together in the shape of a mountain.
5. Invite kids to share what they drew or what they see in others' drawings. **God's house is a peaceful place. Like the Israelites, we can walk in God's peace now!**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we talked a lot about peace. Jesus came to bring God's peace. What are some things that help you feel peaceful? Allow kids to respond. **Isaiah said that God is building a *big* house. God's house is a peaceful place. But we don't have to wait. We can walk in God's peace now by trusting in Jesus!**

Pass out leaflet panels, markers, and tape.

Write the name of some place in the world that could use God's peace now. Pray for that place. Hang panels where the congregation can see them.

Send kids out.

The leader announces, and the kids repeat, the following phrases: **Jesus is coming soon. Jesus is coming soon. God's house will be a house of peace! Jesus is coming soon.**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for building a peaceful house. Help me walk in your peace now. Amen.**

Thank kids for conducting themselves peacefully. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.