

# CONVENTION AT HOME

BRING THE PEACE

WRITTEN BY MELISSA  
ATCHISON, TALASHIA KEIM  
YODER AND RENEE REIMER

**Your family can participate in MennoCon21 from home this year! In this “Convention at Home” guide, you will find five days’ worth of activities specifically designed for children and accompanied by encouraging ways for families to participate together at home. Each day’s lesson includes a Bible study element, daily ritual, outdoor engagement, craft activity, snack idea and ways to bring peace to your neighborhood. Follow along during #MennoCon21, July 6-10, or at another time that fits your schedule!**

### **BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT**

This element has multiple parts. Depending on the age of the children and the setting, the individual parts of this element may be more or less helpful. Pick and choose from the list for each day!

### **RITUAL ELEMENT**

**A Body Prayer of Peace** - The ASL sign for peace will be a repeating element. Voices Together #850 has illustrations of this sign (steps 1-3) or you can watch this [video](#). This daily ritual is cumulative: The phrase and actions for Day One are repeated on Day Two, with the addition of the second day’s phrase, actions, etc. On Day Five, all five of the phrases and actions are practiced in sequence. Actions can be discussed, depending on interest levels:

- Raising hands above our heads evokes Bible verses like Psalm 134:2, as well as the nonverbal message a young child gives to an adult when they wish to be picked up.
- Stretching arms out to our sides can remind us both of Jesus giving his life and a readiness for a hug.
- We can talk about our heart as a muscle and a center with which we come to understanding through our feelings.
- The pose of trust reminds us that waiting with patience is a piece of peace.
- The Day Five action is one of giving away that which we are excited to share.

This intro is designed for the children:

You’re invited to use this full body prayer, as you begin each day of “Convention at Home” activities. You may want to repeat each day’s prayer at the end of your activity time, too. Let your God-given imagination lead you into other body prayers that express whatever you’d like to say to God, who created your whole body as very good!

Adaptation for younger children: Learn the sign for peace, and use it in a freestyle body prayer.

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

Creation is full of peace, and it's fun to learn about peace from plants and trees and vines. Choose some sort of plant that you can visit each day. It could be a tree in your yard or a nearby park; it could be a shrub or a garden plant; it could even be something growing in a pot inside your house. One important thing to learn before you go outside is how to recognize poison ivy, so that you can leave it alone. It's safest to avoid anything with three leaves!

## CRAFT SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Playdough (recipe to make your own is included in the craft element of Day 1)
- A clear empty bottle (optional)
- Craft sticks (for mixing)
- Food coloring and/or glitter (optional)
- Band-Aids (multi-colored, if available)
- Paper
- Markers
- Pipe cleaners
- Beads
- A sturdy stick

## SNACK SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Carrots (multi-colored, if available)
- Frozen peas
- Refried beans, taco seasoning, cream cheese, sour cream, salsa, veggies (tomatoes, peppers, onions, lettuce, olives, etc.), shredded cheese, (or guacamole instead of dairy products) and tortilla chips, carrots, or celery sticks
- Tortillas, cheese, sandwich meat, (optional: lettuce, pickles, mustard and mayo) or peanut butter and jelly
- Grapes and raisins

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Each day this week you will be encouraged to find a way to bring the peace to your community. Are there places that you already know of where you could help? Are there new activities you have been wanting to try? We are spread out all over the country this year, so we have unique opportunities for peace building in our communities. Below is a list of ideas to get you started, but feel free to come up with your own ideas too!

- Go on a Blessing Box, Free Little Library, etc. scavenger hunt. Place a new item in each box.
- Visit your favorite playground, and do a little clean-up. Pick up trash and sticks, for a cleaner area to play for all.
- Locate a local food pantry in your area. Call them, and ask what they need right now. Offer to bring them some of the items they need.
- Reach out to your neighbors by drawing chalk pictures or encouraging words on your sidewalk or nearby walking trail.
- Write a letter to someone in your congregation whom you haven't seen in a while.
- Make extra clinging crosses with your playdough for others in your church or neighborhood.
- Offer to help make dinner one night this week for your family.
- Call up someone in your family, and ask them to tell you a story about their childhood.
- Use old T-shirts to make braided dog toys for your local animal shelter.

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## Day One: “The Root of Peace”

### John 1:1-18: The Word Became Flesh

#### BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT

**Put It in Context:** The writer of John wrote this “prologue” to the Gospel. A prologue is something we read before the main story. It usually helps the main story make more sense or helps us read it differently. This prologue introduces the story of Jesus’ life here on earth. It has lovely, poetic language, but it sure is confusing! It’s okay if it’s hard for you to understand what this Scripture “means.” People of every age struggle to understand it. Like all poetry, it’s meant to help us feel things, ask questions and see things differently. It’s not meant to explain everything but, instead, points us in a certain direction. Here are some prompts to guide your exploration of these verses. Choose a few that intrigue you!

#### Prompts:

- “In the beginning was the Word...” Does that phrase remind you of anything? This Scripture passage mirrors and quotes a lot of other Scriptures, and Genesis 1 is one of those Scriptures. Read Genesis 1:1-5 and John 1:1-5 and notice the similarities and differences.
- This Scripture describes Jesus as the “Word” or, in Greek, “logos.” In this passage, logos means much more than “word,” as we think of it. It’s divine (of God) wisdom and order. It’s a word that makes things happen, that can create.
- We think of time in what’s called a “linear” way. “First, I woke up, then I ate breakfast, then I went to school ...” We like to put events in order. Try to put the events in order as you read this Scripture passage. It’s a little challenging, isn’t it? This is a prologue to Jesus’ life — but it’s saying Jesus has been around since the beginning? And what is the beginning? Mind-blowing! God’s time is bigger and way more complicated than our time.
- Verse 10 says, “yet the world did not know him.” Jesus is the source of everything — of our lives — yet we don’t recognize him. This is part of the bigger story of the Bible. Humans miss the mark (we mess up!) at every point of God’s story, and each time, God sticks with us. Even though we miss the mark, Jesus came to live among us and bring peace.
- Read verse 18. It’s because of Jesus that we know God. Through Jesus, we begin to understand God.



## RITUAL ELEMENT

Day One: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**

(sign for peace) **peace is planted.**

(Take one deep breath.)

**Amen.**

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

Plants have roots, just like the root of peace that God planted in us. While we usually can't see roots, we can imagine what's happening inside them. They work like straws through which the plant sucks all its water and nutrients. Roots also hold the plant in place, so storms won't knock it over — like the way God sticks with us! Move around the plant you've chosen and picture where the roots are under the soil, living in the dark as an essential part of the plant. How might God's peace help hold us firmly in place during difficult times, and give us the spiritual food we need to grow?

## CRAFT ELEMENT

### *Playdough Storytelling*

As another way to help you understand this story and to make this word flesh, try to tell it through playdough. Ask someone to read the story to you again, while you dig your fingers into the playdough. What images come to mind? Can you create them? If you were to tell the story to someone using playdough, what would you create? You can use playdough you already have at home, or you can make your own with the recipe below. Save this playdough, as you will need it later in the week.

### *Playdough Recipe*

3 cups flour

½ cup salt

1 tablespoon alum or cream of tartar

2 cups boiling water

3 tablespoons oil

Food coloring

5-7 drops of essential oil, like lavender, peppermint, eucalyptus (optional)

In a mixing bowl, mix flour, salt and alum or cream of tartar together.

In a large measuring cup, mix boiling water, oil, food coloring and essential oil.

Ask an adult to help pour liquid mixture into dry ingredients and stir together. Knead the playdough mixture together with your hands and make sure all the ingredients are mixed together (you may need to wait a few minutes to let the playdough cool down from the boiling water).

Add flour, if needed. Keep in an airtight container.

### SNACK OF THE DAY

While you think about the “root” of peace, eat some **carrots**. Carrots are roots. If you can find multi-colored carrots at the farmer’s market or grocery, do a taste test to compare flavors. There are purple, black, red, white and yellow carrots, too. What other veggies that you enjoy are roots? How about potatoes? Beets? Parsnips? Onions?

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Pick an activity from the list, or come up with your own!



## Day Two: “Jesus is the Peace”

Luke 7:36-50: Jesus anointed by a sinful woman

### BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT

**Put It in Context:** Each Gospel tells a story similar to this one, and they all record it happening at different times in Jesus’ ministry. The writer of Luke puts the story close to the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. He has called his disciples and has given the “Sermon on the Plain” (which is a lot like the Sermon on the Mount). He has begun to heal people, and he has had some communication with John the Baptist. At this point in the Gospel, people are just beginning to get curious about Jesus. They are watching him. This story would have given them some clues as to who he was — and raised some questions. Read this story as someone who is curious about Jesus, and choose a few of the prompts to dig into as you read.

#### Prompts:

- What’s a Pharisee? After the kingdom of Israel/Judah fell to foreign powers, after most of the people were put into exile, and after many returned from exile, the Pharisees emerged as a group that interpreted how the Scriptures should be lived out through actions — how people should live and worship. Simon, who was hosting Jesus, was part of this group.
- Read Luke 7:37. What was the woman’s sin? We have no idea! Whatever it was, Simon knows about it, and he judged her for it — and judged Jesus for letting her touch him. Read Luke 7:40-43. What’s Jesus’ response to Simon being so judgmental?
- Luke 7:40-42 is a parable. Jesus taught a lot in parables! Parables aren’t meant to answer questions but to spark new questions and inspire change in the way people act. Sometimes we like to make parables into fables — nice little stories with a moral lesson — but that’s not what they are! This parable is meant to help Simon see the situation differently.
- In Luke 7:44-46, Jesus contrasts Simon’s hospitality with the woman’s hospitality. In our world, this may not make a lot of sense. When guests come over, do you ask them if they want a foot bath? No! But in the time of Jesus, things like washing feet after walking on dusty roads, greeting one another with a kiss, and anointing a guest’s head with oil were all basics of hospitality. It’s like telling your guest hello, then offering them a glass of water to drink and a chair to sit in. And Simon the Pharisee apparently did none of that.
- Read Luke 6:37-38. In the Luke 7 story, Jesus did exactly what he had told others to do just a little while before! People were learning that Jesus didn’t just preach it; he lived it.



## RITUAL ELEMENT

Day One: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**

(sign for peace) **peace is planted.**

(Take one deep breath.)

**Amen.**

Day Two: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**

(arms stretched out to each side) **Jesus is**

(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take two deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

As you get to know this plant “neighbor” of yours, use your imagination to look for ways it is like Jesus. Is it pleasant to be with? The Bible says children liked being with Jesus. Is it sturdy and strong? Jesus has power that can be relied on. Is it flexible? Beautiful?

What is peaceful about this plant? All plants breathe in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen, which is what you and I need for life. What do you know about Jesus breathing out peace that is life-giving for us (check John 20:21-22)?

## CRAFT ELEMENT

### *Perfume for Jesus*

What do you think the woman's perfume that she used to anoint the feet of Jesus smelled like? What would your perfume smell like? Experiment today with a bunch of different scents, and come up with your perfect perfume for anointing. There are no instructions for this task. Just use your imagination to think of what might smell good to you! Below is a list of ideas, but you may be able to come up with more!

### *You will need:*

A clear empty bottle (optional, to save the final perfume scent)

Jars or containers for mixing

Carrier oil (olive oil, castor oil, or water)

Funnel (optional)

Craft sticks (for mixing)

Food coloring and/or glitter (optional)

Protective eyewear (glasses or goggles)

Things that smell good like:

Soap, lotion, essential oils, mint leaves, basil leaves or other herbs, tea bags or freshly made tea, old perfume, lemon or lime juice, flower petals, pine needles, orange or lemon peels, etc.

Put on your protective eyewear and spend some time mixing together different scents. Check with an adult to help find the best scents for you to use in your home. You may want to do this outside or on a covered kitchen table, as this could get messy! Be careful with the food coloring, as it might stain your clothes, hands and furniture. Once you have created your final scent, you may want to save it in a jar (with a lid!), so you can go back and smell it throughout the week. Using the funnel, add the carrier oil or water to your jar (with a lid) and then add in some of the scented mixture you created.

#### SNACK OF THE DAY

Frozen **peas** are fun to eat cold. Jesus is the peace. Eat some peas to celebrate peace! Peas are also the seed part of the plant. One time, Jesus said that God's reign is like a very small seed — smaller than a pea — that grows into a very large plant, where birds can find a home. Jesus told other great stories about seeds! Do you remember any?

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Pick an activity from the list or come up with your own!



## Day Three: “Feel the Peace”

**Mark 5:21-43: A girl restored to life and a woman healed**

### **BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT**

**Put It in Context:** In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus jumped right into ministry. After John the Baptist baptizes him and after spending 40 days in the wilderness, he quickly began to call disciples and heal people. He began to teach, mostly in parables. In the story right before our story today, Jesus casted demons out of a man and into pigs. He had become known as a healer, a miracle worker. Word about him had spread, and that leads us to today’s story.

### **Prompts:**

- Jesus healed two people in this story. Read the story carefully. Maybe you want to mark it in scenes, so you can follow it.
- Read verse 26. Because of purity laws (rituals that included being separated during bleeding and cleansing baths after bleeding), this woman wouldn’t have been able to be a full member of her community for 12 years. Think of how strange it has been to be separated from each other during this pandemic — and now imagine being the only one separated, and having it last for 12 years. How do you think this woman felt? What do you think she wanted and needed from Jesus?
- What does it mean that Jesus felt the “power go forth from him”? Imagine what that might have felt or looked like. What would this story look like as a graphic novel?
- This woman had courage. She was considered unclean, but she went into a crowd and touched Jesus. She didn’t run off when she was healed, and even though she was afraid, she told him “the whole truth” (verse 33). Imagine her emotions — and imagine how it felt to have Jesus talk to her the way he did in verse 34.
- It took so long for Jesus to get to Jairus’s house that the little girl died. But Jesus worked another miracle. Imagine this scene, with the weeping people and the little girl getting up and walking around. The bleeding woman was restored to community and her body was renewed, and the little girl was restored to her family and her life renewed.
- Notice the number of years the woman had been bleeding and the age of the little girl. Twelve is a significant number in the Bible. You may remember it appearing in the 12 tribes of Israel or the 12 apostles. Twelve is a number that represents the whole Israelite people. Wonder: Why is this number part of the story? What might it mean?

## RITUAL ELEMENT

Day One: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(sign for peace) **peace is planted.**

(Take one deep breath.)

**Amen.**

Day Two: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(arms stretched out to each side) **Jesus is**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take two deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Three: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(place hands on heart) **we feel**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take three deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

Some plants don't mind being gently handled. Is your plant strong enough for you to carefully touch its leaves, or its stem or trunk? You can explore the textures of your friendly plant, even with your eyes. Do you notice patterns or shiny places or fuzzy parts? What does it feel like to you? Now recall a time when you were at peace with yourself or others. What did that feel like? Warm, cozy, bright? Stand or sit right next to your plant friend and take a deep, deep breath. Do you feel peaceful?

## CRAFT ELEMENT

### *Band-Aid Art*

What do you need when you are hurt? One of the first things that come to mind is often Band-Aids! Today, create some healing art with Band-Aids and markers. Think of some things that bring you joy when you are hurt or sad. Can you create them with Band-Aids?

### *You will need:*

Band-Aids (multi-colored, if available, or use markers to color Band-Aids)

Paper

Markers

### SNACK OF THE DAY

**Layered dip** can symbolize the layers of healing that Jesus offers.

Start by stirring seasoning into refried beans, either a package of taco seasoning or a bit of chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper (use however much seasoning tastes good to you). Spread the beans on a platter or big bowl.

In another bowl, mix together cream cheese and sour cream (use a small ratio that looks good to you), then add a layer of this mixture on top of the bean mixture. Here is where you could use guacamole instead of a dairy product.

On top of that, spread your favorite salsa, and then, add a layer of chopped veggies: tomatoes, peppers, onions, lettuce, olives — whatever kinds you have and like the best.

Top with shredded cheese, and share it with someone, using chips or carrot and celery sticks to dip.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Pick an activity from the list or come up with your own!



## Day Four: “Trust the Peace”

Luke 4:16-20: “To set the burdened free”

### BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT

**Put It in Context:** The writer of the book of Luke takes us on a journey with Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. Jesus has grown up and is about 30 years old, and his cousin, John, has been preaching and preparing the way. Jesus came to John at the Jordan River to get baptized, and at his baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, and a voice from heaven said, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22). Then the Spirit led him into the wilderness, where he fasted (didn’t eat) and was “tempted by the devil” (Luke 4:2). After this encounter, Jesus was “filled by the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14), and he returned to Galilee (a region), specifically to Nazareth. That’s his hometown! Jesus went on a journey of baptism and fasting and temptation, then he came back home, ready to begin his ministry. In this story, we get an idea of what Jesus was all about.

### Prompts:

- The Holy Spirit is very active in this story — and in the stories of Jesus’ baptism and time in the wilderness that lead up to this point. Sometimes we hear that the Holy Spirit first made an appearance at Pentecost, but obviously, the spirit of God was around long before that time!
- Jesus went to the synagogue. There were a lot of synagogues in Galilee (we know this, because of the remains of many synagogues have been found there by archaeologists). A synagogue was a gathering place for the people of God. While the temple was fancy and had a lot of rituals that had to be done by priests, synagogues were simpler and more flexible. People of any gender could participate in worship and discussion at the synagogues. Think of it as part community center, part worship space. When Jesus went to the synagogue, he was going to the heart of his home community.
- Jesus stood up to read (verse 16). Most people did not know how to read, so people who could read did so aloud, so that everyone could hear the Scriptures.
- Not all synagogues owned scrolls of the prophets. Maybe this one was wealthy enough to have its own, or maybe it was on loan from another synagogue.
- Jesus read Isaiah 62:1-2. Look it up and read it. Read the whole chapter if you’re intrigued. The passage is referring to the year of Jubilee. Every 49 years, the people of God were supposed to essentially hit a reset button. Land that had been lost was returned, slaves were set free, debts were forgiven and prisoners were released. If you keep reading to Luke 4:21, Jesus says that this Scripture has been fulfilled. What do you think he might have meant by that?



- Imagine this scene in different ways. Slow and deliberate Jesus, fast-moving Jesus, mischievous Jesus ...

## RITUAL ELEMENT

Day One: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(sign for peace) **peace is planted.**

(Take one deep breath.)

**Amen.**

Day Two: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(arms stretched out to each side) **Jesus is**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take two deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Three: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(place hands on heart) **we feel**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take three deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Four: (with hands raised) **By God's strength,**  
(arms resting by sides, palms of hands open wide) **we trust**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take four deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

While you're hanging out with your plant friend today, picture the water and nutrients that the roots have sucked up, traveling through the stem (or trunk) of the plant. When those necessary ingredients arrive at the leaves, a miracle happens! The plant can combine them with sunshine and turn them into food! This is called photosynthesis — you can look this up [here](#) and learn more about this amazing process, if you want to. Gaze at your plant's leaves now. Even though you can't see what's happening inside them at a microscopic level, can you believe it is happening, just as God designed it to happen? Can you trust that God's peace is growing in you and others? Where do you see signs of this peace?

## CRAFT ELEMENT

### *Clinging Prayer Cross*

Right now, it is more difficult for us to gather and worship and pray in person with groups of people. But we can still find creative ways to pray with and for our community. The Clinging Cross, designed by Jane Davis, is specially designed to fit in your hand. Today, make a clinging prayer cross from the playdough you made on the first day. Form the clay with your hands so that it fits in your hand. Clinging crosses are often slanted (rather than straight up and down and side to side), so that people can physically cling to the cross while they pray. Think about how you would squeeze the cross in your palm and how that would shape it. Once you have found the perfect shape for the cross to fit your hand, you can bake it, so that it stays in its original shape.

### *Baking instructions:*

Ask an adult to help you preheat the oven to 200 degrees and follow the following instructions. Place wax paper on a cookie sheet, and place the clinging prayer cross on the wax paper. Using an oven mitt, put the pan in the preheated oven for five minutes. Gently touch the clinging cross with a toothpick, if it seems soft, put it back in the oven for a few more minutes.

## SNACK OF THE DAY

Use your imagination to pretend these **tortilla roll-ups** are scrolls, like the one Jesus read from.

Start with any kind of tortilla, lay down some type of cheese, slices of meat if you have them, some lettuce, pickles, maybe mustard or mayo, and any other foods you like (like peanut butter and jelly). Let the ingredients represent good news for the poor, freedom and vision — the ideas that make for the peace that Jesus read and proclaimed. Roll it up and eat it. (In two places in the Bible — Ezekiel 3 and Revelation 10 — people eat scrolls!)

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Pick an activity from the list or come up with your own!

## Day Five: “Bring the Peace”

### John 15:1-17: The Vine and the Branches

#### BIBLE STUDY ELEMENT

**Put It in Context:** Remember back on our first day, when we read “In the beginning was the Word ...”? It was poetry, beautiful and confusing, making us ask questions and inspiring our imaginations. Today’s Scripture also comes from the book of John. And again, it’s poetic and beautiful and a little confusing.

Today’s story happens during what many of us know as the “last supper.” Jesus has had a few years of traveling, teaching, healing and showing God’s way of love. In this story, he had gone to Jerusalem, where he ate a Passover meal with his friends, all while knowing that this would be the night the soldiers would come for him. He had washed the disciples’ feet, and he shared the bread and wine with them. He had sent Judas Iscariot away to “do what he is going to do” (John 13:27). He began to have a conversation with the disciples, responding to their questions, telling them that the Holy Spirit would be with them and teach them. Today’s story is part of this conversation with the disciples.

#### Prompts:

- This story is often seen as a parable. Jesus often taught with parables. Parables are stories that are meant to help us dig deeper into who God is and who we are. They answer some questions and make us ask more questions. What questions does this story answer for you? What questions does it make you ask?
- Remember that Jesus had just washed the disciples’ feet, then read this story again. What stands out to you?
- Vineyards and pruning vines were things Jesus’ disciples would have understood well. Understanding grape-growing helps this story make a lot more sense! Do a deep dive into learning about growing grapes with [this resource](#), or you can watch a [video here](#).
  - Branches are part of the vine and are supported by the vine. Healthy branches produce fruit, but unhealthy branches wither and die — and get pruned off.
  - Is Jesus saying that he’s actually a vine? No! This is what’s called a “metaphor.” A metaphor uses something we can easily understand to explain something that’s harder to understand.
- Read verse 7. Does Jesus mean that God is like a vending machine, and we can just ask for whatever we want, and we’ll get it? Not really ... Jesus is more likely saying that God will give us what we need to be able to bear fruit — or to join God’s work in the world.

- Jesus is prepares his friends to continue the work he had begun. Read the passage and notice the things he reminded them to do, attitudes he reminded them to have, so that they can “bear fruit” and continue his way of love.

## RITUAL ELEMENT

Day One: (with hands raised) **By God’s strength,**  
(sign for peace) **peace is planted.**

(Take one deep breath.)

**Amen.**

Day Two: (with hands raised) **By God’s strength,**  
(arms stretched out to each side) **Jesus is**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take two deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Three: (with hands raised) **By God’s strength,**  
(place hands on heart) **we feel**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take three deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Four: (with hands raised) **By God’s strength,**  
(arms resting by sides, palms of hands open wide) **we trust**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take four deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

Day Five: (with hands raised) **By God’s strength,**  
(swoop arms from up high around and out in front, ending with palms up) **we bring**  
(sign for peace) **the peace.**

(Take five deep breaths.)

**Amen.**

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ELEMENT

You and this plant have spent a lot of time together this week, like friends do, and hopefully you have discovered peace in this experience. Wouldn’t you like to share that with someone else? You could draw or take a picture of your plant friend; you could write a poem or song about it; you could write a report about this plant. And then, share what you have done with someone else, someone who needs some peace in their life. We all do! God made this plant. God made you. Now, you can bring the peace you found here to someone who needs God’s peace.

## CRAFT ELEMENT

### *Garden Branch Art*

Can you create a vine-like branch to place in your garden, yard, houseplant, or next to a window to remember today's story? As you make this creation, think about what your vines are doing. Where are they going? What do they need to support one another?

#### *You will need:*

Pipe cleaners

Beads

A sturdy stick

Start by wrapping the ends of some pipe cleaners around your sturdy stick. Be sure to leave enough room on the stick, so that you can stick it into the ground. Slide beads onto the pipe cleaners and fold the ends of the pipe cleaners in so the beads do not fall off. Find a place to "plant" your branch, where you will see it every day!

## SNACK OF THE DAY

Bringing the peace is bearing the "fruit" that spreads Jesus' peace to all through our lives. We bear good fruit when we stay connected to Jesus, who is like a vine. **Grapes** grow on vines. As you eat some grapes, have fun pulling them off their stems and recognizing that these parts of the grape were connected to the vine. You could also eat some **raisins**, which are dried grapes, "fruit that will last!"

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT

Pick an activity from the list or come up with your own!

