

EARLY CHILDHOOD

LEADER GUIDE



PASSPORT
to PEACE





Early Childhood Leader Guide

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<https://www.pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/passport-to-peace>
"Passport to Peace" board



ALL ABOARD THE PEACE EXPRESS!

Young children can grab their passports, hop on the Peace Express train, and take a ride to learn about being peacemakers! *Passport to Peace* is a one-week Vacation Bible School (VBS) curriculum that is designed to help children make peace a way of life. The curriculum begins with the story of Philip and the Ethiopian official, who listened to and learned from each other despite their differences. Jesus calls us to care for the needs of all people. Abigail acted quickly and creatively to keep everyone safe. Isaac refused to respond to conflict with violence. A Samaritan man acted as a loving neighbor to a person who had been physically harmed. Through these stories, children learn that there are many opportunities and ways to live as peacemakers. *Passport to Peace* invites children to see every person as part of God's family and every interaction as an opportunity for peacemaking.

In a world that is too often divided by race, class, ethnicity, and country of origin, *Passport to Peace* is a reminder that the love of God and the way of peace transcend all borders and divisions. All are welcome in the family of God. Led by God's Spirit, we can all participate in creating a more peaceful world.

Early Childhood Daily Schedule (2½ hours)

CHECK IN (large group; 15 min)	ALL ABOARD (large group; 35 min)	STATIONS (small groups; 30-minute activity stations)	DEPARTURE (large group; 10 min)
Peace with Friends (community-building) Peace with God (songs, prayer) Peace Inside (inner peace strategy) Offering	Bible Story Peace Talk (wondering questions) Peace Practice (Bible memory, puppets) Peace Express Student Booklets Snack (15 min)	Creator's Canyon (art and science) Move-It Mountain (active games) Discovery Desert (sensory activities)	Song Prayer Take-Home Tickets

Items you will need from the VBS Starter Kit:

- *Early Childhood Leader Guide*
- Early Childhood folder from the Music & Resource electronic files
- Early Childhood Area Poster
- Bible Memory Train Poster
- Peacemaking Wheel Poster (also sold separately)
- Example copy of *Peace Express* student booklet

The **Music & Resource electronic files** include teaching aids and materials related to Early Childhood. Each leader

should be given access to the relevant materials. They include the following:

- 7 MP3 songs
 - "Power of Peace"
 - "Peacemaker"
 - "God is Bigger"
 - "Our God is Good"
 - "Walking the Ways of Peace"
 - "Give Us Your Peace"
 - "May Your Kingdom Come"
- Music scores
- Song Motions
- Days 1–5 Peace Puppets
- Days 1–5 Peace Doves
- Days 1–5 Maps
- Day 2 Feelings Faces
- Day 2 "Clothe Me" Figure

- Day 2 "Food and Drink" Tags
- Day 3 Donkey Template
- Day 3 Story Figures
- Day 4 Story Well
- Day 5 Story Cards
- Day 5 Bandage
- Day 5 "Kindness Book" Template

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DAILY SCHEDULE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Each Early Childhood session is **2½ hours** and includes four major sections: **CHECK IN**, **ALL ABOARD**, **STATIONS**, and **DEPARTURE**. The amount of time spent as a large group can vary significantly depending on the needs of your group. The chart on page 2 provides an approximate use of time, but you will need to tailor it to your situation. You may want to start with 10–15 minutes of free play with play dough or favorite toys to ease the transition from parents and caregivers.

CHECK IN

There are four main components in Check In: Peace with Friends (“get to know you” activity), Peace with God (songs and prayer), Peace Inside (strategy for developing inner peace), and Offering.

ALL ABOARD

Children will hear an interactive retelling of the Bible story, respond to “Peace Talk” wondering questions, see a puppet skit about a modern-day peacemaking situation, learn the Bible memory verse, do activities from the *Peace Express* student booklet, and have a snack.

The Bible memory verse is Matthew 5:9. The sessions and Bible Memory Train Poster use the New Revised Standard Version, but feel free to use a different translation as desired.

“**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**”

—Matthew 5:9 (NRSV)

STATIONS

There are three activity stations each day. Each activity includes “Talk About It” prompts to help children connect the activity with the Bible story and their own experiences. If you have several leaders/assistants, the station activities can be done as rotations. This would mean setting up activities in different areas and having children rotate between them. A leader would need to be at each area to coordinate and supervise each activity. Alternatively, keep the whole group together. Clean up one activity before moving to the next one. If you choose this option, it’s helpful if the materials for each activity are already organized so they can be pulled out easily.

- **Creator’s Canyon Station:** Three arts-and-crafts activities are provided for each day.
- **Move-It Mountain Station:** Three active games are provided for each day and are designed to be done outside if you have adequate space and supervision. These could also be adapted for smaller indoor spaces.
- **Discovery Desert Station:** There are two sensory explorations provided for each day. One is a train station activity focused on a different country each day. There is also a list of Media Connections to use as you see fit.

DEPARTURE

Each session closes with a song and prayer. Pass out the Take-Home Tickets that are on page 13 of the *Peace Express* student booklets. These cards include at-home activities to encourage families to explore the VBS concepts together.

Each session plan also includes a **Bible background essay** to read in preparation for leading, and an **At-a-Glance Chart** to aid in planning.

SETTING UP

Inside: If space is available, set up the main room with these areas:

- **Gathering place:** This should be open floor space where children can gather in a circle for group activities and the Bible story. Provide a carpet square or hand towel for each child, which cues them where to sit throughout a large group activity.
- **Table area:** Set up tables for snack time as well as for student booklet and art activities.
- **Peace Station:** See below.
- **Train table:** See below.
- **Rotations:** If you will conduct the STATIONS activities as rotations, you could set up and decorate a Creator's Canyon Station area, a Discovery Desert Station area, and a Move-It Mountain Station area.

Outside: If possible, use an open grassy area where children can safely run and play. For safety reasons, this area should be away from the street or parking lot. Games can also be played in a gym or large empty room.

Decorating

Decorate the room using a train theme. Station signs and symbols on the wall will give it an inviting feel. Maps, posters, and photographs of various places around the world can broaden children's understanding of the world. The dollar store may carry calendars with photographs of unique places. Refer to the Decorations section of the "Peace Passport" Pinterest board. Some additional ideas include:

- Use black masking tape to make train tracks on the floor that lead from area to area.
- Make name trains for children with one letter of their names on each train car. Hang them on the wall for a train display.
- Search online for "preschool train theme printables" for items to easily print and use.
- Purchase train-themed party decorations, paper plates, tablecloths, toy train whistles, and conductor hats.
- Paint the outside of cardboard boxes and add circle "wheels" to make train cars.
- When moving from one activity to another, children can line up as the Peace Express train. Blow a wooden train whistle or make train noises to signal when it is time to move.

Discovery Desert Train Table

Every day children will have an opportunity to play with trains. Set up a table with a train set. During Discovery Desert, you will add new props to the train area as you tell children about a country, using the information on pages 46–47 in this guide. The information focuses mostly on geography, with a few

additional fun facts. The goal is to highlight both what is unique and what is similar between various places in the world. There is a suggested YouTube video each day that shows a train ride through that country or another country from that continent. The train area can be a place where children go if they arrive early or finish an activity before others.

Peace Station

Each day children will learn a simple strategy for experiencing peace when conflict or strong emotions arise. Create a Peace Station somewhere in your room—a cozy area with pillows, peace picture books, and specified supplies related to the peace strategies that are highlighted in Peace Inside each day. This would be a good place to hang up the Peacemaking Wheel Poster. If a child or pair of children are struggling, say, "Let's drive our trains to the Peace Station!" Go with the child(ren) and practice the peace strategy for the day or highlight a strategy on the poster to help them solve the problem. The strategies that children will learn are as follows:

- Day 1: Take three deep breaths.
- Day 2: Color your feelings.
- Day 3: Count to five.
- Day 4: Squeeze play dough or your fists.
- Day 5: Pray with your imagination.

Creating a Safe, Welcoming Environment

Young children thrive with consistency and predictability. They enjoy repetition and feel safe when they know what will happen next. The Early Childhood sessions are written to provide this sort of predictability and repetition from day to day. Challenges are bound to come up, especially because the children may not know each other or the leaders. Here are some ideas for responding:

- Coach children in using the Peace Inside strategies when conflicts and strong emotions arise.
- Speak calmly and respectfully. Tone of voice and word choice are important when relating to young children. You are a model for respectful, loving communication.
- Use proximity. Sit near a child who is struggling. Get down to the child's eye level.
- Respond to the needs of individuals. A child may need time alone or want to hold a stuffed animal toy from home. Small accommodations can make a big difference.

Music

Young children love music, rhythm, and movement so it's important to include songs throughout the day. There are seven songs provided in the Music & Resource electronic files. The music can be sung or simply played as background music while children are doing their activities. Song motions are on pages 48–49 of this guide and in the electronic files. There are additional song suggestions listed in Media Connections and posted on Pinterest.

- "Power of Peace"
- "Peacemaker"
- "God is Bigger"
- "Our God is Good"
- "Walking the Ways of Peace"
- "Give Us Your Peace"
- "May Your Kingdom Come"

If you wish to share the music with families, please purchase packs of Student Music CDs to send home. *The music in the electronic files cannot be duplicated.*

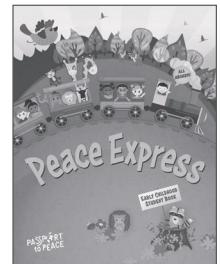
Offering

Find out from the VBS Director what the offering project is for the week. Give children a very brief overview or show some photos or an age-appropriate video of the work that the organization does. Collect the offering in a small suitcase or travel bag. Every day each child will need a Days 1–5 Peace Dove (electronic files) to place in the suitcase or bag as a symbol of loving and caring for others. These doves could be printed or copied onto different colors of paper, one color per day. You may also want to have a supply of coins available so that every child can add a coin, even if they did not bring money from home.

Snack Time

Each session has several snack options. Some are simple while others are more time-consuming. Some could be prepared with the children. Otherwise, invite youth and adults to prepare and serve the snacks. Have napkins or small plates as well as cups for juice or water. Be sure children wash their hands. Say or sing a prayer before eating together. Be aware of any food sensitivities or allergies and provide alternate foods as needed.

Peace Express Student Booklets



The *Peace Express* student booklet is used during **ALL ABOARD**. Each day includes a simple retelling of the story and a related activity.

Each *Peace Express* student booklet contains Take-Home Tickets that are sent home on Days 1–4. These quarter-page tickets contain activities to encourage children and their families to extend their learning from VBS. The tickets will be distributed at the end of each day, so remove all the cards from page 13 of each book, cut them apart, and organize them by day. The back cover of the booklet contains activities for families to do after VBS, so be sure to send the booklets home at the end of the week.

Using Media Connections

Each session includes a variety of books and online resources to extend children's understanding of the Bible story. These can be used in a variety of ways:

- Set up a book corner for children to read books independently.
- Set up a media center with a laptop or tablet that has the chosen videos or websites bookmarked. A volunteer will need to staff this area to help children view the chosen items.
- Show a video or read a book to the entire group.

Preview both books and videos and cue videos to avoid watching ads.

A Compiled Booklist is included in the Director's folder in the Music & Resource electronic files. Ask a volunteer to go to the library and gather books for the entire week.

DAY 1

CAN WE TALK?

Scripture Text:

Acts 8:4–8, 26–40

Seed of Faith:

Peacemakers listen to and learn from people who are different.

Bible Essay:

Philip the Evangelist, as he is sometimes known, is introduced in the book of Acts as one of seven Jewish deacons to oversee the distribution of food to widows in the early church. (He is not to be confused with Jesus' disciple Philip.) He goes on to preach in a city in Samaria, spreading the good news of Jesus to all he meets. Jews and Samaritans were not on good terms, to say the least. But like Jesus, Philip preaches in Samaritan towns despite the animosity that exists. Many people believe in Jesus because of Philip's ministry there, which includes teaching, miracles, healings, and even exorcisms.

One day an angel sends Philip out to a desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza. He meets an official traveling from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship, back to his home in Ethiopia.

The official couldn't have been more different than Philip. This respected court official is the treasurer for Candace of Ethiopia and is wealthy enough to own his own scroll of Isaiah. Socially, he is well above Philip. Most people assume that he was Gentile, but this is unclear. Regardless of whether he was Jew or Gentile, he would have been an outsider, rejected and shamed because he was a eunuch (a man who was castrated). Because of the law of Moses, the eunuch would have been refused entry into the Jerusalem temple, despite his lengthy trip from Ethiopia.

The official invites Philip into his chariot to help him understand the Isaiah passage he is reading. Philip connects Isaiah 53:7–8 to Jesus, the Lamb of God who was despised and rejected and ultimately killed.

After Philip's explanation of the Isaiah text, the two men come to some water. The Ethiopian official asks a bold question with a life-changing answer: "What is to prevent me from being baptized?" The answer? Nothing! People may have kept him out of the temple, but he could not be kept out of the kingdom of God. Rejection, shame, and alienation have no place there.

This transformative message is critical for children: nothing can keep them out! There are no barriers to becoming part of God's family. As Pope Francis continually emphasizes, all are welcome. No one should ever be turned away from Jesus! This type of radical acceptance is the foundation of peaceful relationships. When we see ourselves—and everyone else—as created in the image of God and worthy of love and welcome, then the only response is to treat everyone with dignity and honor. With a foundation of respect and acceptance, we can then learn from one another and work together to create a more peaceful world.

DAY 1 AT-A-GLANCE



Advance Preparation

- Read Acts 8:26–40 and the Bible essay for Day 1 on page 6 of this guide.
- Set up and decorate the room. Include a Peace Station. See ideas on page 4.
- Hang up the Early Childhood Area Poster, Peacemaking Wheel Poster (also sold separately), and Bible Memory Train Poster.
- Pray for the children and adults who will participate in VBS today.
- Read through the session plan and decide which activities you will use. Be sure to have one *Peace Express* student booklet for each child.
- Communicate with volunteers about their roles and tasks.
- Create a worship area where children can gather in a circle.

	SUPPLIES	TO DO
CHECK IN <i>Peace with Friends</i> <i>Peace with God</i> <i>Peace Inside</i> <i>Offering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Power of Peace" (electronic files)• MP3 player• Suitcase• Days 1–5 Peace Doves (electronic files)	<p>Learn about the VBS offering project chosen by the Director.</p> <p>Print copies of the Days 1–5 Peace Dove (electronic files), one per person.</p>
ALL ABOARD <i>Bible Story</i> <i>Peace Talk</i> <i>Peace Practice</i> <i>Peace Express</i> <i>student booklets</i> <i>Snack Time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Peace Express</i> student booklets• Bible Memory Train Poster• Days 1–5 Peace Puppets (electronic files)• Strip of brown cloth and blue cloth• Two plastic or wooden figures• Small box or plastic container• Crayons• Snack items	<p>Practice telling the Bible story.</p> <p>Prepare Days 1–5 Peace Puppets (electronic files) and practice the script from the Peace Practice section.</p> <p>Prepare the Bible Memory Train Poster</p>
STATIONS <i>Creator's Canyon</i> <i>Move-It Mountain</i> <i>Discovery Desert</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplies for chosen activities• Laptop or tablet with Internet connection	<p>Choose station activities based on the age and interests of children, the amount of time you have, and available supplies.</p> <p>Check books out of the library and preview videos.</p>
DEPARTURE <i>Song</i> <i>Prayer</i> <i>Take-Home Tickets</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day 1 Take-Home Tickets• "May Your Kingdom Come" (electronic files)• MP3 player• One-hole punch	Cut out the Day 1 Take-Home Ticket from page 13 of each <i>Peace Express</i> student booklet.



CHECK IN

Peace with Friends

Welcome children and gather in a large circle. Lead the group in a train gathering chant, saying each child's name in the middle section.

Chugga, chugga, choo, choo, (rub hands back and forth together)
up the railroad track. (Move forward in circle.)
Chugga, chugga, choo, choo, (rub hands back and forth together)
then we come right back. (Move backward in circle.)

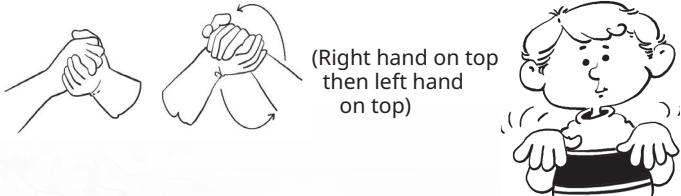
(Clap a steady beat.) First we go to _____ (name)'s house, and then we go to _____ (name)'s house. Then we go to _____ (name)'s house, and then we come right back.

(Repeat the first section after naming all the children.)

Peace with God

Sing "Power of Peace" (electronic files) with the motions. Talk about neighbors the children have, such as people who live next to them or in the same town. What do they like to do with their neighbors or friends?

Lead the children in a prayer using motions. Use American Sign Language (ASL) for the word *peace*. Refer to the drawings here or go to handspeak.com to watch a video of sign



**God, thank you for our neighbors
who live close** (hands by heart)
and far away. (Stretch arms out to the sides.)
Help us see our neighbors (use hands to form "binoculars" by eyes)
and love our neighbors (hug yourself)
so we can make peace (ASL for "peace") **in our world. Amen.**

Peace Inside

Every day children will learn one way to feel more peaceful inside. Begin by saying,

Sometimes I feel sad or angry inside. When I feel that way, sometimes I take three slow, deep breaths. This helps me feel more peaceful inside. Let's try that together.

Have children take a deep breath, hold it for one or two seconds, and then breathe out. Repeat the action three times.

Offering

Tell the children about the organization you are supporting and how it helps neighbors in their community or around the world. Open a small suitcase or travel bag. Give each child a Days 1–5 Peace Dove (electronic files). Children can put money donations and a Days 1–5 Peace Dove in the suitcase or bag. Thank children for caring and sharing.

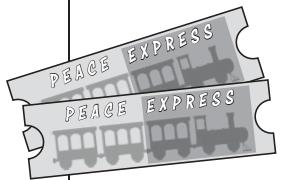
Teaching Tips

Not all children will bring money for the offering. Providing the Days 1–5 Peace Dove allows everyone to contribute, even if it is not a financial gift. The dove is a way that children can show they care for others.

If conflicts or strong emotions arise during the session, lead the involved children to the Peace Station (see page 4). Coach them in using the Peace Inside strategy for the day or highlight another strategy from the Peacemaking Wheel Poster. For today, have each person take three slow breaths before speaking about the problem.



ALL ABOARD



Prepare

Lay a strip of brown cloth or paper on the floor to make a road. Lay a strip of blue cloth or paper at one end to make a river. Place a person figure (plastic toy figure or wooden figure) in a small box or plastic container (chariot). The container should be large enough so a second figure can be placed inside it. Keep the “chariot” out of sight. Have one other figure (Philip) ready. As you tell the story, move the figures so that they will end at the blue cloth.

Bible Story

Philip (*hold up the Philip story figure*) went to the city of Samaria. “I have good news!” he told the people. “Jesus is God’s son and Jesus loves you!” When the people heard this good news, they were filled with joy!

One day an angel said to Philip, “Go to the wilderness road.” Philip did what the angel said. (*Move Philip next to the road.*)

Along came a chariot. (*Slide the chariot toward the road.*) A very important man was in the chariot. He was in charge of all the money for the queen of his country, Ethiopia. The man was reading from the scroll of Isaiah.

The angel said to Philip, “Go get into that chariot.” So Philip ran up to the chariot. (*Move Philip next to the chariot.*) Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

The man said, “How can I understand it unless someone explains it to me? Come and sit beside me. Tell me what it means.” (*Place Philip in the chariot.*)

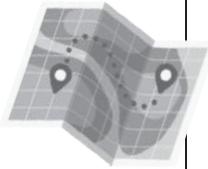
So Philip climbed into the chariot and looked at what the man was reading. “These words are good news!” Philip told him. “Jesus is God’s son and Jesus loves you.”

When the man heard this good news, he was filled with joy. As they rode along, they came to a river. (*Move the chariot next to the blue cloth.*) “Look, here is water!” the man said. “Will you baptize me?” They got out of the chariot and Philip baptized him. (*Place the figures on the blue cloth.*) Then the man happily went on his way. (*Place the man back in the chariot and move it out of sight.*)

Peace Talk

Wondering questions help children imagine themselves in the story. Young children are very concrete thinkers, so it’s helpful to draw their attention to various tangible story elements to build understanding.

- Imagine going from place to place telling people about Jesus.
- I wonder how the man felt when Philip helped him understand the words in the scroll.
- Imagine going down into the water of the river to be baptized.
- I wonder who helps you learn about Jesus.
- Who could you tell about Jesus’ love?



ALL ABOARD

Peace Practice

Display the Bible Memory Train Poster. Read through the verse starting with the train engine and ending with the caboose, pointing to each word as you go. Have the children repeat each word after you.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
—Matthew 5:9 (NRSV)

Read this script and use the Days 1–5 Peace Puppets in the electronic files to help children solve a modern-day situation in a peaceful way.

Narrator: _____ (name of puppet A) and _____ (name of puppet B) got to church early today. They wanted to see who was coming.

Puppet A: Oh look! There's my friend Damien.

Puppet B: And I see Miranda.

Puppet A: Wait. Who is that? Look over there. I've never seen that girl before.

Puppet B: Do you think we should go talk to her?

Puppet A: I don't know. Look—her shoes are all muddy, and I don't think she combed her hair today. Maybe she came to the wrong place.

Narrator: Children, what could our puppet friends do?

(Help children name a wide range of possibilities, including those that might be hurtful. Talk about how the new girl might feel depending on the responses. For instance, they could stay away from the new girl, but she might feel sad. Or they could talk to her and tell her to clean up her shoes and comb her hair. The girl might feel embarrassed or hurt. They could ask her questions and find out what she likes to do. The girl might feel happy and welcome.)

Peace Express Student Booklets

Read the story poem on page 2. On page 3, children can follow the paths to show what happened in today's Bible story.

Snack Time

Have children wash their hands and gather at the table. Choose one or two children to pass out paper towels or plates and cups. Say a short prayer before eating.

Option 1: Have an “eat on the go” snack with items that would be easy to eat while traveling, such as individual packages of crackers, cookies, or small baggies with carrot sticks or apple slices.

Option 2: Make popcorn in a popcorn machine so children can watch the kernels pop. Popcorn is often served as part of a traditional “coffee ceremony” at the end of a meal in Ethiopia. As children eat their snack, the leader can show them where Ethiopia is on a map of Africa.



CREATOR'S CANYON STATION

When transitioning to an activity, have the children line up to form the Peace Express Train and circle the area a few times, blowing a whistle or making a train noise as the signal to start and stop.

Good News Scrolls

Cut strips of craft paper, approximately 4 in x 20 in / 10 cm x 50 cm. Give each child one strip of paper to decorate with markers, stickers, and other available art supplies. Some children may want to write letters or words to represent a “good news” message. Or the leader could write the child’s idea of good news on the paper. The child can decorate one or both sides. Once the artwork is complete, tape or glue two large craft sticks, one on each short end of the paper. Roll the paper around the craft sticks until the sticks meet in the middle to form the scroll. Secure with yarn or ribbon. Be sure the child’s name is on the outside.

Talk About It

Philip told the Ethiopian man about Jesus as they read the words from the scroll. These words were good news about the love of God. The man was so excited to follow Jesus that he wanted to be baptized right away. What kinds of things make you really excited?

Supplies

- Paper
- Large craft sticks / tongue depressors
- Glue or tape
- Yarn or ribbon
- Markers
- Stickers

Friendship Beads

Divide out several different colors of pony beads into bowls. Bend up the tip of a chenille stem so that the beads won’t fall off. Children will add beads at the opposite end. Leave enough room at the end to bend the chenille stem around the child’s wrist to make a bracelet. Then ask them to make a bracelet to give away to someone. Some children may enjoy the challenge of making a color pattern with the beads (red, blue, red, blue or yellow, green, orange, yellow, green, orange). They could also try to make the two bracelets identical.

Talk About It

When we love people the way Jesus taught us to, we can make friends wherever we go. What kind of things do you like to do with your friends?

Supplies

- Pony beads in various colors
- Chenille stems (pipe cleaners)

Ethiopian Bean Art

Give each child a small ball of white air-dry clay and help them flatten it. Use cookie cutters to cut out a shape. Press coffee beans from Ethiopia into the clay shape to make a design. Write each child’s name on a paper plate and have the children place their clay creation on the plate as soon as they are finished. Allow the clay to dry overnight.

Talk About It

Many of the food and drinks we enjoy come from our neighbors all around the world. Philip talked to a man from Ethiopia in our story. These coffee beans were grown in Ethiopia, a country on the continent of Africa. What’s your favorite food? Do you know where it comes from?

Supplies

- White air-dry clay
- Coffee beans from Ethiopia
- Cookie cutters

MOVE-IT MOUNTAIN STATION

When transitioning to an activity, have the children line up to form the Peace Express Train and circle the area a few times, blowing a whistle or making a train noise as the signal to start and stop.

Listen, Learn, Go!

Ask the children to gather in the center of the room. Give the children two clues about an object in the room. For example, "This has numbers and is shaped like a circle." Children can move near the object when they think they know what it is. Give more clues as needed. "It helps us know what time it is." Have everyone return to the middle and repeat the action with a new object. If you play this game outside, be sure that you choose items that are close to where the group is standing so that children do not run too far.

Talk About It

It was important to listen carefully to the clues to figure out what object to move to. Philip was willing to listen to the man from Ethiopia to help him. He was trying to understand what was written in the scrolls. Who helps you learn new things?

Different and the Same

Place two cones of different colors on the ground. They should be far enough away that the children have room to move between them but close enough that anyone standing near them can hear the leader's voice. Give directions using the prompts listed below. For example, "If you like cats better, move to the red cone, if you like dogs better, move to the blue cone." Pause to let the children run to the cone of their choice.

Different/Same Prompts

- Cats or dogs
- Night or day
- Snow or rain
- Hugs or kisses
- Apples or bananas
- Summer or winter
- Lions or tigers
- Sand or water

Talk About It

God created us to be different, just like the many wonderful and different things in creation. What have you learned about your friends from this game?

Supplies

- Two cones of different colors

Media Connections

- *National Geographic Readers: Trains* by Amy Shields
- *God's Dream* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu
- "Philip Archives" - Printable lesson activities about Philip from SundaySchoolZone
- *The Quiet Book* by Deborah Underwood

- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt De La Peña
- "I've Got Peace in My Fingers" by Susan Salidor (YouTube)
- "Ni Hao Jambo, Hola" by Liz Buchanan (YouTube)
- "Nana Malaya: Funga Alafia" by The Kennedy Center (YouTube)
- "Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8" by SteveThomason (YouTube)

Train Stop and Go

For this activity, the leader serves as the stationmaster, telling the trains to stop and go using a red (stop) or green (go) flag or handkerchief. The children are the trains and line up facing the leader. If possible, mark off straight lines in front of each child to give them a train "track." When the leader holds up the green sign the children move forward like a train, by shuffling their feet as fast as they can. When the stationmaster holds up the red flag, everyone must freeze. If they keep moving while the red flag is out they have to return to the start of the track. Keep going until the first train reaches the stationmaster. **Tip:** The game can work with red and green construction paper if flags or handkerchiefs aren't available.

Talk About It

Philip followed God's directions so he could share the good news with the man from Ethiopia and make a new friend. What directions do you follow? Why are those directions important?

Supplies

- Red and green flags or handkerchiefs

- "Geoffs Rail View: Addis Ababa to Nazret Ethiopia 4k Timelapse" (YouTube)
- "Prayer of St. Francis" with lyrics by Sebastian Temple of South Africa (YouTube)
- *Not So Fast Songololo* by Niki Daly (South Africa)
- *Listen to Our World* by Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson
- *Trains Picture Book: 100 Beautiful Images of Locomotives* by Kampelstone

DISCOVERY DESERT STATION

When transitioning to an activity, have the children line up to form the Peace Express Train and circle the area a few times, blowing a whistle or making a train noise as the signal to start and stop.

Let's Take a Trip

Philip traveled to many places to tell the good news about Jesus. Use the props for travel play.

Set out suitcases, backpacks, maps, and dress-up clothes. Children may “travel” to places where family members live, vacation spots, or simply to the store, school, or library. Affirm all their trip plans and destinations.

Talk About It

Talk about different ways that people travel, such as train, plane, car, boat, bicycle, and walking.

As children play, talk together about summer trips or local places like parks or play grounds that children enjoy visiting. Who do they enjoy traveling with? How do they get there? How is their travel different from that of Philip and the Ethiopian man?

Supplies

- Suitcases
- Backpacks
- Maps
- Dress-up clothes

Discovery Train Station:

Ethiopia

Invite children to gather around the train set. Tell the children,

God made wonderful places all around the world. Today we're going to learn about the country of Ethiopia, which is in Africa.

Show the children the Day 1 Map of Ethiopia (electronic files). Add the following items to the train station as you read the Day 1 Ethiopia Facts on page 46 of this guide:

- Blocks piled high for the capital city of Addis Ababa
- Brown or green fabric for landscape
- Long blue ribbons for rivers
- Paper cone shapes for mountains and volcanoes

Allow children to play with the train set and props and imagine traveling in

Ethiopia. As the time is ending, have children open the *Peace Express* student booklet to the inside back cover. Place a sticker on Africa, which is yellow.

Option: Watch “Geoffs Rail View: Addis Ababa to Nazret Ethiopia 4k Timelapse” on YouTube to see some countryside in Ethiopia. Compare the scenery to your region. Another option is to search online to show photographs of lakes, deserts, mountains, and other landforms in Ethiopia.

Supplies

- Day 1 Map of Ethiopia (electronic files)
- Day 1 Ethiopia Facts (p. 46)
- Peace Express* Student Booklets
- Stickers
- Table with a train set
- Blocks
- Brown cloth
- Cone-shaped paper “mountains”
- Blue ribbon
- Internet-connected device (optional)

DEPARTURE



Gather the children in a circle. Sing “May Your Kingdom Come” from the electronic files. Song motions are on pages 48–49 of this guide. Pray:

God, thank you for this time of listening and learning about friends. Help us to love everyone the way you love them. Help us make peace in our world. Amen.

Give each child the Day 1 Take-Home Ticket from their *Peace Express* student booklet. The card contains activities for children and families to do together. Hole punch the children’s tickets as they leave, as a reminder for them to do the activities to spread peace. Remind the children that they are part of the Peace Express Train, sharing peace wherever they go.

Day 1-5 *Peace Puppets*

Glue this page to card stock then cut out the puppet and the party hat. Laminate or cover the puppet and hat with clear packing tape for durability. Tape the puppet to a large craft stick or ruler. When specified in the guide, affix the party hat to the puppet using removable putty adhesive.



Day 1-5 *Peace Puppets*

Glue this page to card stock then cut out the puppet and the bucket. Laminate or cover the puppet and bucket with clear packing tape for durability. Tape the puppet to a large craft stick or ruler. When specified in the guide, use the bucket with the two puppets.



Day 1 Map: *Ethiopia*

Print the map for use in the Discovery Desert Station.

