

BIBLE BEACH

LEADER GUIDE

PASSPORT
to PEACE



Bible Beach Leader Guide

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"Passport to Peace" board



WELCOME TO PASSPORT to PEACE

Passport to Peace is a one-week Vacation Bible School (VBS) curriculum designed to help children make peace a way of life. Peacemaking skills are essential for those who want to follow Jesus' way of peace. Children will be introduced to a variety of strategies for peacemaking and will practice those skills at VBS and at home.

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.

ARRIVAL (35 min) <i>Children start in small groups and then gather for worship.</i>	DESTINATIONS (90 min + snack) <i>Small groups rotate between three activity stations and have a snack.</i>	DEPARTURE (10 min) <i>Small groups debrief and then gather for worship and dismissal.</i>
Check In (10 min) (small groups) Boarding (10 min) (call to peace, songs, Peace Mission) Takeoff (15 min) (drama, peace talk, prayer)	Bible Beach (30 min) (Bible activities) Creator's Canyon (30 min) (art and science) Move-It Mountain (30 min) (active games) Snacks (15 min)	Check In (small groups) Boarding (call to peace, songs) Takeoff (blessing, dismissal)

Items you will need from the **VBS Starter Kit**:

- *Bible Beach Leader Guide*
- Bible Beach folder from the Music & Resource electronic files
- Bible Beach Area Poster
- Peacemaking Wheel Poster
- Bible Memory Poster

You will also need one *Peace Passport* student booklet for each child.

The **Music & Resource electronic files** include a folder of teaching aids to accompany the leader's guide. Each Bible Beach Leader should be given access to the relevant folder to print pages for the chosen activities. The Bible Beach folder includes the following:

- Day 2 "Food for You" Game
- Day 3 Blessing Cards
- Day 4 Wells Game
- Day 5 Accordion Booklet

Media Connections are included in each session and posted on the **Growing Up Catholic Pinterest** page for ease of use. Locate the "Passport to Peace" board (see below). The items are organized by day. Additional songs, decorating ideas, and offering-related videos are also included on Pinterest.

Get Connected!



Pinterest: Growing Up Catholic
"Passport to Peace" board
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passport-to-peace](https://pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/passport-to-peace)

WELCOME TO BIBLE BEACH!



Bible Beach is one of three 30-minute DESTINATIONS activity stations following ARRIVAL (opening worship). Each Bible Beach session includes four parts: Check In, Boarding, Destinations, and Departure. There is also a **Bible background essay** to read in preparation for leading and an **At-a-Glance Chart** to aid in planning.

CHECK IN

Each session begins with Peace with Friends (“get to know you” activities), Peace with God (prayers for children around the world), and Peace Inside (learning a strategy for experiencing inner peace).

BOARDING

Choose an option for telling the Bible story that works best for your group based on the age, interests, and attention span of the children. Following the story, Peace Talk questions will help children engage in the story and see the ways it relates to their own lives. Peace Practice uses the Peacemaking Wheel Poster to help children identify peacemaking strategies that were used in the Bible story. This section ends with Words to Live By which makes use of the Bible Memory Poster. The Words to Live By passage is taught using motions:

“You have heard (cup your hand around your ear) that it was said (cup your hands around your mouth), ‘You shall love (form heart shape with your hands) your neighbor and hate (clench your fists) your enemy. But I say to you to, Love (form a heart shape with your hands) your enemies and pray (show praying hands) for those who persecute you.”

—Matthew 5:43–44

DESTINATIONS

Choose from among three Explore activities and a list of Media Connections as time allows. Each session includes Peacemaker’s Peak, which highlights a child peacemaker from the focus continent. The peacemaker’s story is in the *Peace Passport* student booklet, and there are videos or other activities to go along with the story. Other Explore options include Creator’s Canyon (art and science), Move-It Mountain (active games), Gamer’s Gully (seated games), and Watch-It Waterfall (media activities).

DEPARTURE

Send the children to the next activity station with a prayer of blessing.



SETTING UP

Planning and Leading a Session

Use the 30-minute time frame in this basic way, modifying as needed:

- **CHECK IN:** 5–7 minutes
- **BOARDING:** 10–12 minutes
- **DESTINATIONS:** 10 minutes
- **DEPARTURE:** 2–3 minutes

The daily session plans include more activities than can be completed in 30 minutes. You may want to use a highlighter

and mark the portions of the session you will definitely use and star items you will do if there is additional time.

DESTINATIONS activities can be done as a large group or can be set up as separate stations for children to rotate through. It's recommended to have more than one activity ready. A group may move through an activity quickly due to excitement or abilities, and it will be useful to have something else to do. Keep children aware of the time, giving reminders about how much time is left for their activities.

Using Peace Passport Student Booklets

The *Peace Passport* student booklet is an essential part of the session. The prayer map on pages 4–5 is used every day for Peace with God. There are several readers theaters in the booklet that are used to retell the Bible story. The story of a child peacemaker is included for each day in Peacemaker's Peak. There are also activity pages that can be done independently or in pairs.

Note that the student booklets are also used in large group worship and in Creator's Canyon, one of the other DESTINATIONS activity stations. The Small Group Leader will need to carry the booklets rather than storing them in the Bible Beach room.



Using Media Connections

Each session plan suggests a variety of books, videos, and website links 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 pre-selected videos or websites bookmarked. Monitor this area to be sure children use only the chosen materials.
- Show a video or read a book to the entire group.

Be sure to preview both books and videos to make sure they will work for the children in your group. Cue videos to avoid having children watch ads. A compiled book list is included on the **Music & Resource electronic files**. Ask a volunteer to go to the library and gather books for the entire week.

Media Connections are posted on the **Growing Up Catholic Pinterest page** for ease of use. Locate the "Passport to Peace" board. The items are organized by day. (<https://pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/passport-to-peace>)

General Supplies

Have these general supplies on hand for use throughout the week:

- Bible(s)
- Peace Passport* student booklets (one per child)
- Pencils, pens, crayons
- Paper

- Laptop or tablet with Internet connection (to watch videos)
- MP3 player (to listen to songs)

Setting Up and Decorating

It will be helpful to have two main spaces in the Bible Beach area—one section with a table and chairs so that children can complete student booklet pages and other activities and another section with an open area where children can sit on the floor or have room to move.

Hang up the Bible Beach Area Poster outside the door. Decorate the room with a beach theme. When you gather for the Bible story, children can sit on beach towels, two per towel. Put up a beach umbrella or sun cover tent over the group gathering area. Put art supplies like markers in small beach buckets. Enhance the area with beach balls, pails and shovels, tote bags, hats, sunglasses, flip flops, boogie boards, or even a surfboard if you have one! There are many ideas online for creating beach or ocean backgrounds for the wall and ceiling. Look at the Decorations section of the “Passport to Peace” Pinterest board for ideas.

To make a connection to the continent of the day, show or post photos of these unique beaches from around the world:

- **Day 1: Africa**

Watamu Beach (Kenya): This beach is part of the Malindi Marine Reserve Park. There are many coral formations, and it is a breeding ground for green and hawksbill turtles.

- **Day 2: North America**

Waipi'o Beach (Hawaii, United States): The black sand on this beach was formed when a lava flow met the ocean. The lava rock was crushed into tiny bits that later formed the black sand. There are 2,000 ft / 610 m cliffs and tropical rainforests near this beach!

Devonshire Beach (Alberta, Canada): This beach has 1,500-year-old sand dunes. There is a sandcastle building competition every year!

- **Day 3: Asia**

Pantai Merah (Pink Beach) in Komodo National Park (Indonesia): This is one of only seven beaches in the world with pink sand. Nearly 2,500 Komodo dragons live on this quiet island. There are beautiful corals, tropical fish, seagrass beds, and manta rays.

- **Day 4: Europe**

Pasjaca Beach (Croatia): The beach was created after a tunnel was constructed through the cliff that led to the sea. The rocks from the tunnel were left on the shore and in several years, the waves changed them into sand!

- **Day 5: South America**

Gardner Bay (Ecuador): This beach is known for its white sand, sky-blue water, manta rays, sea lions, turtles, and birds.

Creating a Safe, Welcoming Environment

Many behavior problems can be prevented by thorough planning, approaching children as individuals, and teaching according to developmental, emotional, and educational abilities.

- **Establish rules.** It is important to set rules, such as “Be respectful,” “Be kind,” and “Be safe.” Rules need to be simple and number no more than three. This lets children know what is and is not acceptable. Be consistent in making sure children follow the rules and determine ahead of time how you will handle misbehavior.

- **Speak calmly and respectfully.** Your tone of voice and choice of words are important when giving instructions, redirecting behavior, and communicating with individual children. This sets an example of how you want the children to interact with each other. Use children’s names when speaking to them. This shows that you know and respect them as individuals.

- **Have fun!** When you show enthusiasm for the Bible story and accompanying activities, children will be drawn into your excitement. This creates a joyful, worshipful atmosphere.

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.

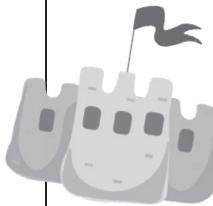
The official invites Philip into his chariot to help him understand the Isaiah passage he is reading. Philip connects Isaiah 53:7–8 to Jesus, the Lamb of God who was despised and rejected and ultimately killed.

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.
- Decorate the room with a beach theme. See ideas on page 5.
- Hang up the Bible Beach Poster, Peacemaking Wheel Poster, and the Bible Memory Poster.
- Pray for the children and adults who will participate in VBS today.
- Read through the Bible Beach session plan and decide which activities you will use. Be sure to have one *Peace Passport* student booklet for each child.
- Communicate with volunteers about their roles and tasks.

	SUPPLIES	TO DO
CHECK IN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inflatable beach ball or world ball• Permanent marker• Yellow crayons or markers• <i>Peace Passport</i> student booklets	Write the following categories on an inflatable beach ball or world ball: sport, food, holiday, game, place, animal, memory.
BOARDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peacemaking Wheel Poster• Bible Memory Poster <p>Supplies for chosen storytelling option:</p> <p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day 1 Bible Story (p. 36)• Dress up clothes• Towel or blanket• Blue sheet• Paper scroll• Large box or table <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day 1 Bible Story (p. 36)• Cookie sheet• Brown cloth or sand• Three wooden people figures• Blue fabric• Bowl of water• Strips of paper, felt, or cloth	Choose one of the options for retelling the Bible story and gather needed supplies. Practice telling the Bible story
DESTINATIONS	<p>Supplies for chosen activities:</p> <p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Peace Passport</i> student booklets• Peacemaking Wheel Poster <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internet-connected device <p>Option 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internet-connected device• Paper• Pencils or paintbrushes and paint• Clay or play dough	Preview and select Media Connections. Check books out of the library as needed. Choose activities based on the age and interests of children, the amount of time you have, and available supplies.
DEPARTURE		



SESSION PLAN

CHECK IN

Peace with Friends

Gather in a circle. Have everyone introduce themselves. Then play a “favorites” game using the prepared inflatable world ball (See At-a-Glance chart.) Call a name and toss the ball to someone. The catcher names their favorite item in the category facing them, such as a favorite food or game. Continue the game until everyone has at least one turn.

Peace with God

Have children open their *Peace Passport* student booklets to the prayer map on pages 4–5. They can trace the yellow dotted travel line and color the continent of Africa yellow.

Then use motions as you pray for the children of Africa. Say:

God, we pray for the children of Africa. Every child in Africa needs a safe home (use your hands to form a “roof”), healthy food (touch your stomach), clean water (pretend to drink), an education (open your hands like a book), and loving people (give yourself a hug) to care for their needs. May you fill every child with your peace. (Place both hands over your heart.) Amen.

Peace Inside

Tell children that one way we can experience peace on the inside is by paying attention to our breath. This is something we can do anytime and anywhere when we are feeling anxious, worried, or angry.

Invite children to sit comfortably and close their eyes for a breathing exercise. Say:

Take a deep breath through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. (Pause.) Exhale slowly through your nose. (Pause.) Take another deep breath as you think about the air filling your lungs. Hold it for two seconds. (Pause.) Exhale slowly, relaxing your shoulders as you breathe out. (Pause.) Take one more deep breath, letting your lungs fill up with life-giving air. Hold it for two seconds. (Pause.) Exhale slowly, letting go of your worries and frustrations.



Teaching Tip

Throughout the week, children will learn five strategies for experiencing inner peace during stressful or highly emotional times. While children certainly spend their days breathing, the focused breathing during Peace Inside may be new for children. Expect that some children might be silly or think it is strange. That is okay! Do not prolong it but give enough opportunity for children to understand and practice how to do it. Close your eyes and focus on doing the breathing yourself. Children respond to the modeling of adults.

BOARDING

Bible Storytelling Option 1

Read the Day 1 Bible Story from page 36 as children act out the character roles. Ask for four volunteers (angel, Philip, Ethiopian official, chariot driver) to pantomime the actions of the characters while the story is read. Provide dress up clothes, a scroll, and set up a “chariot” out of a large appliance box or a classroom table. A blue sheet could also be used for the water along the road.

Supplies:

- Day 1 Bible Story (p. 36)
- Dress up clothes
- Towel or blanket
- Blue sheet
- Paper scroll
- Large box or table

Bible Storytelling Option 2

Read the Day 1 Bible Story from page 36, adding props to a cookie sheet as you do so. Sprinkle sand on the sheet to create the wilderness setting or cover it with a brown cloth. Use felt, cloth, or paper strips to make a road. Wooden people figures can represent Philip, the Ethiopian official, and the angel. Add a blue piece of fabric on the side of the “road” as the Ethiopian official notices the water. Have a bowl of water to dip or sprinkle the Ethiopian official as you tell about the baptism.

Supplies:

- Day 1 Bible Story (p. 36)
- Cookie sheet
- Brown cloth or sand
- Three wooden people figures
- Blue fabric
- Bowl of water
- Strips of paper, felt or cloth



BOARDING

Peace Talk

Ask several questions about the Bible story and its connection to children's lives. Allow time between each question for children to think and respond.

- I wonder how Philip felt as he talked to a stranger about Jesus.
- I wonder how the Ethiopian official felt when a stranger came up to his chariot.
- Who could you talk to if you had a question about something in the Bible?
- Think about the ways that Philip and the Ethiopian official were different from each other (different countries, jobs, ethnicity). In what ways might their differences have helped or hurt their conversation?
- Tell about a time you played with or talked to someone who was really different than you. What was that like?
- Imagine telling a friend or family member about Jesus. Now imagine telling someone you just met about Jesus. How would that be different?

Peace Practice

Look at the Peacemaking Wheel Poster together. Have children look for strategies that were used in today's story. Highlight the following strategies, particularly for younger children who may not read well yet: *respect everyone, offer to help, talk and listen, and make new friends*. How would this story have been different if Philip or the Ethiopian had made different choices?

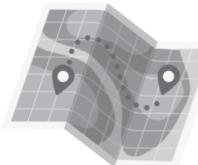
Words to Remember

Read the passage on the Bible Memory Poster. Pass around the inflatable world ball from Peace with Friends. The person holding the ball can tell a short story of being kind to a neighbor or friend. Then say the verse again with motions.

"You have heard (cup your hand around your ear) that it was said (cup your hands around your mouth), 'You shall love (form heart shape with your hands) your neighbor and hate (clench your fists) your enemy' But I say to you, Love (form a heart shape with your hands) your enemies and pray (show praying hands) for those who persecute you."

—Matthew 5:43–44

DESTINATIONS



Peacemaker's Peak

Today's youth peacemaker is Elisante Daniel Lulu from Tanzania. Read his story together on page 3 of the *Peace Passport* student booklets. Talk about the ways that Elisante worked to make peace. What peace strategies did Elisante use? Refer to the Peacemaking Wheel Poster for ideas, such as talk and listen, make new friends, respect everyone, eat together, speak up for what is right, consider the feelings and needs of others, express your feelings and needs, surprise someone with kindness, say "stop." When have the children done something similar?

Supplies

- Peace Passport* student booklets
- Peacemaking Wheel Poster

Watch-It Waterfall

Watch the video "Nana Malaya: Funga Alafia" by The Kennedy Center. Join in to learn the song and dance of welcome. Alaafia (ah-la-ah-fee-ah) is a greeting that means "peace." To greet someone at the door, a person in Nigeria might say, "Àlàáfià fún onílé yí" which means "peace be unto the residents of this house." The people in the home would respond by saying, "Àlàáfià fún o," which means "peace be unto you."

Supplies

- Internet-connected device

Creator's Canyon

While chariots had originally been used for war, they later were used for peaceful, fun activities, such as traveling, games, and races. The Ethiopian official used his chariot to make a long trip from Ethiopia to Israel. Search online for images of a first-century chariot. Draw, paint or create a chariot using clay or play dough.

Supplies

- Internet-connected device
- Paper
- Pencils or paintbrushes and paint
- Clay or play dough

Media Connections

- *Making Waves: Fifty Stories about Sharing Love and Changing the World* by Judy Clemens
- "Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8" by Steve Thomason (YouTube)
- "Nana Malaya: Funga Alafia" by The Kennedy Center (YouTube)
- "Beat of Your Love" by Watoto Children's Choir (YouTube)
- "Philip Archives" - Printable lesson activities about Philip from SundaySchoolZone
- "Love Your Enemies" by Kris10 Cartoons (YouTube)
- *From the Heart of Africa: A Book of Wisdom* collected by Eric Walters
- *My Name Is Sangoel* by Karen Williams and Khadra Mohammed (Sudanese American)

- "Peace is Flowing Like a River" by Laura Huval (YouTube)
- "Give Us your Peace / Danos Tu Paz" by Sarah Hart and Jesse Manibusan (YouTube)
- "Prayer of St. Francis" with lyrics by Sebastian Temple of South Africa (YouTube)
- *Children Just Like Me: A New Celebration of Children Around the World* by DK
- *Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story of Africa* by Jeannette Winter or "Wangari's Trees of Peace" read by Kelley Randall (YouTube)
- *A World Together* by Sonia Manzano
- *Goal!* by Mina Javaherbin (South Africa)
- *Sing to the Moon* by Nansubuga Nagadya Isdahl
- *Bintou's Braids* by Sylvianne Diouf
- *The Best Beekeeper of Lalibela: A Tale from Africa* by Cristina Kessler

DEPARTURE

Gather children and pray:

God, help us to be peacemakers who listen to and learn from people who are different from us. Amen.

