



## Children's Message 2020 (intended for World Communion Sunday)

*Items needed: a large photo of the Earth from space—either in poster form (for example [here](#)) or to be displayed on a screen in the sanctuary (such as the one [here](#))*

Good morning! Peace be with you (*if your congregation has adopted a social-distance practice for passing the peace like bowing or making the peace sign or some other practice, invite the children to share that sign with you now*). Today is special for a few reasons—it is the last day of ‘**A Season of Peace**’ that our denomination has been celebrating, and it is also World Communion Sunday!

I hope that you have had the chance to think about peace over the past month or so that we have been in this season. There are so many ways to experience peace—from deep in yourself personally, to within your family, this community, our nation and the whole world. Peace is one of those ideas that, if we had to define it, we might do so by saying what it ISN'T rather than what it IS. When I used an online children's dictionary, this is what came up:

- 1 : freedom or a period of freedom from public disturbance or war.
- 2 : a quiet and calm state of mind.
- 3 : agreement and harmony among people.

Did you notice that? The first of the three definitions was what it is NOT. I like the words that are used in the definitions, though—Freedom, Quiet, Calm, Harmony.

Since we are in church, it's probably a good idea to use not just a dictionary, but also a Bible to think about the meaning of peace. This comes from Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians:

*May the Lord of peace himself give you peace always in every way.*

*The Lord be with all of you. (2 Thess. 3:16)*

The Lord of Peace himself. Jesus **is** peace. So when we say ‘peace be with you,’ we are saying all of these things, perhaps: May calm be with you . . . May freedom be with you . . . May tranquility be with you . . . May the Lord Jesus be with you . . . Hmm . . . we may never again hear that beautiful greeting in the same way!

As a congregation that recognizes the importance of peace and peacemaking, we will be receiving the Peace and Global Witness offering as a way of committing ourselves as a congregation to peacemaking--not just in our world, but right here. A quarter of our offering will be used by our church to spread and share the peace of Jesus right here in our community (*name the specific project or projects if known*).

Other funds will go to help in our region and, through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, to support peacemakers and partners around the world!

Now in addition to being the end of the season of Peace, it is also World Communion Sunday (*make note of communion elements if they are visible, or any special aspects of worship or items in your sanctuary that are special for this day*). On this Sunday, Christians all around the world (*show poster/display on screen*) celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Isn't this a marvelous view of the earth? Photos like this one that show the earth from space are so beautiful—can you notice the color, the swirling clouds, the sense of beauty and tranquility and mystery in the photo? I wonder if you can notice something else. Just like the word peace is first described by what it is NOT, one thing you may notice about this picture is what is missing. Have you noticed it yet? There are NO lines! Pictures like this remind me that God made the earth one beautiful whole. It was people who added the lines—those borders between countries. And even for people who love a good map or globe, for this one day—World Communion Sunday—it feels right to look at the world without those lines as a way to remember that we all can live in freedom and harmony and peace.

*Prayer: Loving God, we are very thankful for Jesus' peace in our hearts and our world today. We are grateful that we will share the Lord's Supper as a church. We rejoice in the gifts we will share to spread peace, and we ask you help us to be peacemakers too. Amen.*

*Written by Becky D'Angelo Veitch*

*Becky is a Certified Associate Christian Educator and serves as Director of Faith Formation at Third Presbyterian Church in Rochester, NY*