

Maps for the Journey of Faith and Peacemaking

Rachel Pedersen

Note to Facilitators

For a one-hour session, this study works best with a group of approximately ten participants. In a larger group, consider asking the participants to share their maps in small groups or in dyads.

Purpose

- Participants will be nurtured for their peacemaking journey as they:
 - explore the idea of faith and peacemaking as a journey;
 - remember God's presence on their journey;
 - consider where their journey has led them; and
 - look forward to next steps on their journey.

Materials

- Bible
- newsprint
- marker
- one large piece of paper (11" x 17" or larger) for each person
- markers, crayons, pens
- (Optional) additional art supplies such as feathers, pipe cleaners, stickers, finger paints
- (Optional) a variety of maps

Opening Prayer (3 minutes)

Open with prayer. Tell the participants that during this study, they will reflect on the image of faith as a journey. Note that faith is not something to be held once and for all. Faith involves doubt. Sometimes it runs strong; sometimes it trembles. Faith is best understood not as a product but as a process—a journey following Jesus and seeking to live for him.

Biblical Travelers (10 minutes)

Remind the participants that journeys played a significant role in the lives and faith of many characters in the Bible. Invite the participants to name people from the Bible who went on journeys. Write the names on newsprint. Ask the participants to discuss:

- What do you notice about these people and their stories?
- How are their stories similar? How do they differ?
- What do their stories tell us about the image of faith as a journey?
- What do we get from their stories?
- How can we use it?

Mapping Our Journeys (40 minutes)

Remind the participants that as we think about journeys, we may think about maps. Maps come in a number of forms and fill a variety of functions. Show the examples of maps if you have them. Some maps center around one object with "x" even marking the spot at times. Some maps show the way from here to there. Some maps show borders between political entities. Some maps show the topography of a region. Some maps require keys to

understand. Some are done to scale; others are out of proportion. Some cover wide areas; others are narrowly focused.

Tell the participants that today they have the opportunity to be mapmakers. Give each participant a large piece of paper. Provide access to the various drawing supplies.

Invite the participants to make a map that describes them—a map that tells who they are and that shows the person's journey following Jesus as a peacemaker to this point in his or her life. Note that each person is free to draw the type of map that helps express who he or she is. One map might show the various places where the person lived. Another might show areas of concern to the mapmaker, e.g. my grandchildren live Iowa, I live in California, I worked in mission in Bosnia, and my church works closely with a congregation in Kenya. Another might focus on the mapmaker's relationship to specific issues of peace and justice and the different ways in which the person worked on those issues at different times. Tell the participants that they will be invited to share their maps and tell about their journeys. Note that this is neither a mapmaking nor an art project. It is a tool for telling stories of faith and peacemaking. Create boldly!

Allow 15 minutes for people to make their maps. After the participants have finished, allow all the participants to simply look at one another's maps. Then invite the participants to share their maps and tell as much of their story as they wish. Make sure each participant has the opportunity to share. This may involve telling the participants how much time each one has to speak.

After the participants have shared, discuss the following questions:

- What did you notice during the process of making your map?
- What did you notice during the process of sharing your map?
- What role did God play on your journey?
- What did you get that will help you as your journey continues?
- How might you use it?

Note to Facilitator: Depending on the time frame and the number of participants, the participants may share their maps with one other person, in the whole group, or in small groups. The discussion may also take place between two individuals, in the whole group, or in small groups,

Closing Prayer (2 minutes)

Remind the participants that the journey of faith may be challenging and painful at times, but God is trustworthy. God is faithful. God will not abandon us. God is with us—not to make everything go the way we think that we would like life to be—but to provide for our needs—to care for us—to see us through. God who has brought us thus far along our journey will go the rest of the way with us—until our journey ends and we are welcomed home.

Thank the participants for sharing their maps.

Close with prayer.

About This Resource

Rachel Pedersen is a student at Princeton Theological Seminary. She served as the seminar intern in the Presbyterian United Nations Office from 2004-05. W. Mark Koenig, Associate for Resources and Publications served as editor for this study.

Resources for the Journey from the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

Print Resources

Selected Resources

Call (800) 524-2612 or go online at www.pcusa.org/marketplace to order.

Commitment to Peacemaking (free)

English—PDS: 70-270-03-024

Spanish—PDS: 70-270-05-006

Korean—PDS: 70-270-05-011

Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling—The 1980

foundational document that called for the establishment of a church wide peacemaking emphasis.

PDS: OGA-88-047; \$1.50.

Peace Knows No Season

What is peace? What is peacemaking? What do peacemakers do? How do we respond to God's call to live as peacemakers? This intergenerational study explores these and related questions through Bible study, activities, prayer, song, a recurring story/poem, and more. PDS: 70-270-05-036; \$5.00.

Steps Along the Way: Living as Peacemakers in a Violent World

Following Jesus, we grow in understanding and faith and we grow in acting on our understanding and faith. The study explores a variety of issues of violence and steps we as peacemakers might take in responding to that violence. PDS: 70-720-03-011; 3.00

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