

Peace Cards

for



Peacemaking begins with individuals and families, then quickly moves to our communities and the world. Peace Cards provide an opportunity for families to engage in practical and real conversations about peacemaking. Designed for a multigenerational time of sharing, Peace Cards encourage the whole family to share their perspectives, life experiences, and hopes about peace in their homes, community, and the world.

Keep the cards on the table where your family eats. At mealtime, draw a card and read the statement or question out loud. Give everyone an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas and let the conversation grow into actions. Peace Cards can be used anywhere and with anyone—at dinner time or family gatherings, during fellowship meals at church, or as icebreakers for study groups or in-depth conversations on long bus rides with youth. Use one card per day during the Season of Peace and let the conversations become avenues for peacemaking.



PEACE BE WITH YOU

QUESTION: In worship, the minister says, "Peace be with you." The congregation responds, "And also with you." When we say, "Peace be with you," what do we mean?

ACTION: Do something nice for a family member or neighbor that can help them experience peace. Example: unload the dishwasher without being asked or pick flowers or vegetables from your yard and share them with a neighbor.

PRAYER: God of peace, help us to be thoughtful when we say, "Peace be with you." Help us to truly mean what we say. Help us to create peace-filled moments for those around us. Amen.



PEACE AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

QUESTION: What would our community look like if it were a place of peace and justice for all?

ACTION: Think of groups you are involved in. Is everyone welcomed, or are some people excluded? Think of ways you could change or eliminate those barriers and talk to the organization about it.

PRAYER: Holy God, you created each of us in your image and have embraced each of us with your love. That makes us all the same, all your children. Guide us in our thoughts, words, and actions that what we do, say, and think may bring justice and peace for all. Amen.



PEACE IN THE FAMILY

QUESTION: What is your role in your family? What are the good things and the not-so-good things about that role?

ACTION: Talk about ways you can adjust the roles each family member has and create a more cohesive/cooperative family. Switch roles for a day and see what you learn about each other from walking in someone else's shoes for a day.

PRAYER: God of families, you created each of us different, with different roles to fulfill in our families. Help us to appreciate each other and the things each person does for our family. Help us as family members to never take each other for granted. Amen.

3



HEALING AND PEACE

QUESTION: What does praying for peace have to do with a family member or friend being seriously ill?

ACTION: Make a card for a family member, friend, or church member who is ill.

PRAYER: God of healing, you know what we need in good times and in bad times. We lift up (name of person) and pray for peace, courage, and healing. Amen.

4



BULLYING AND PEACE

QUESTION: You are at school. You see a friend being teased by several other people. What can you do? What should you do? Why is it difficult to get involved?

ACTION: Set a timer for 30 seconds, and come up with 10 positive things you can do when you see someone being mistreated. When you encounter a situation of bullying, take a deep breath and remember that in 30 seconds you can come up with lots of choices of how to help.

PRAYER: God of bullies and the bullied, soften the hearts of those who are being mean to others. Give us courage to stand up for one another. Remind us that you are standing with us. Amen.

5



PEACE UPON THE EARTH

QUESTION: What does peacemaking have to do with the earth and environment?

ACTION: Walk around the neighborhood or go to a park and pick up trash. Recycle what you can.

PRAYER: Creator of earth and all things, help us to be careful with our waste and trash so that we are not covering up and damaging the beautiful world you have created for us to live in. Help us to step up our recycling, reusing, and reducing efforts. Open our hearts and eyes to the beauty around us. Amen.

6



TECHNOLOGY AND PEACE

QUESTION: How can technology promote peacemaking?

ACTION: Find an example of technology promoting peace on the internet and share it with a friend.

PRAYER: God of us all, we are closer than ever to people around the globe. We search and scan to find out how our neighbors around the world are doing. We are fortunate to have the gift of technology that allows us to see glimpses into the lives of those in other lands. Help us to use this technology in positive ways to learn from each other, to help each other, and to promote peace in the world. Amen.

7



PEACE ON THE INTERNET

QUESTION: How can technology hinder peacemaking?

ACTION: With your family members, search for websites that connect people in positive ways and withdraw from any that damage relationships or individuals. If you have friends who are mean to others online, explain why you are unfriending them.

PRAYER: Loving Creator, we don't always make good choices with the way we use our computers, cell phones, etc. Help us to be aware how technology can hurt others. Help us not to encourage or participate in destructive uses of technology and to free ourselves from those negative contacts. Give us the courage to stand up for others and use technology to promote peace. Amen.

8



PEACE AROUND THE WORLD

QUESTION: What places in the world need our prayers?

ACTION: Look in the newspaper or at the news. Find three places in the world that need prayers. As a family, write a prayer for those places or people. Pray the prayer daily for the next week.

PRAYER: God of all people, your children are hurting—help us to bring comfort. Your children are scared—help us to calm their fears. Your children are hungry—help us to provide them with nourishment. Your children are lost—help us to guide them home. Your children are in need—help us to help them find peace. Amen.

9



PEACE WHEN WE'RE WORRIED

QUESTION: What things make you worried or anxious?

ACTION: Check in with each other daily as a way of making sure worries and anxieties stay in check. If you are ever concerned about someone's well-being, ask for help from another adult, church leader, or mental health professional. You are not alone.

PRAYER: God who calm the seas and our hearts, Help us to not feel anxious or worry. When nightmares are real and scary and don't go away, let us feel your loving embrace and know that we are not alone. Let us feel the hands of others reaching out to help us. Amen.

10



FINDING PEACE

QUESTION: When someone is going through a difficult time (problems at school, work, finances, or illness), what can we do to help them find peace?

ACTION: Come up with 10 to 20 ways as a family that you can help someone find peace when they are going through a difficult time. Write down your ideas, and save the list to use when someone you care about needs comforting.

PRAYER: God who are with us in good times and in bad times, walk with us as we try to comfort our loved ones in need. Guide us so our comforting is experienced as peace-filled caring, not as judgment. Amen.

11



CHANGING THE WORLD

QUESTION: If you could do one thing to change the world, what would you do, and why?

ACTION: From the ideas shared during your Peace Card discussion, find some things your family can do to change the world—then do at least one of them.

PRAYER: Creator of all things changing, we don't always like change, or for things to be different. Yet we know that some things need to change in order for our world to be better, safer, more at peace. Help our little changes to grow and make big differences for the whole world. Amen.

12



EXCITING PEACE

QUESTION: What is your favorite ride at an amusement park, and why? How can a ride be like peacemaking?

ACTION: Go to an amusement park with your family. If you can't make it to an amusement park, just go outside and play a game of kickball or take a walk as a family. Have fun.

PRAYER: God of peace, full of intricate details, scary hills to climb, exciting twists and turns, and finally stillness and a deep breath, amusement park rides can be a lot like peacemaking. Remind us that the challenging climbs and unexpected twists and turns are an exciting part of the journey. It is a joy to be a part of the journey that brings peace to your world. Amen.

13



WORKING PEACE

QUESTION: If money and education were not a factor, what would be your dream job, and why?

ACTION: Look at the jobs people do in your community. Think about ways those jobs strengthen your neighborhood. Write a thank-you note to someone who serves your community in that capacity.

PRAYER: God of vocations and jobs, well-meaning adults, and sometimes we ourselves, always seem to ask us the same question—"What will you be when you grow up?" As we try to understand what you are calling us to be, help us to see our call as one way to serve you. Keep us mindful that all we do should praise you and build up those around us. Amen.

14



PEACE AND GIVING

QUESTION: If you had a million dollars that could only be spent on others, how would you spend it, and why?

ACTION: Talk about charitable or nonprofit organizations. As a family, pick one place that you want to give your money to. Keep a jar in a prominent place in your home to collect loose change for the next month. As a family, take the collection to the charity you chose.

PRAYER: Holy God, what we give seems like such a little bit. Joined with the gifts of others, like fish and bread, it grows to make a difference. When we hesitate because our gift or actions seem too small, help us to remember that you can use them for something big. Amen.

15



ACTS OF PEACE

QUESTION: What do you think are the greatest needs for children, youth, and adults in our world today?

ACTION: Think of three things your family can do to address these needs. Act on your ideas. (Examples: loneliness—visit someone in a nursing home; hunger—take food to the local food bank).

PRAYER: God of action, we see the needs around us. We often know what we can do to make a difference, but we hesitate to get involved. Nudge us into action. Caring for others is a privilege and a gift. Help us to treat it that way. Amen.

16



CHALLENGING TIMES

QUESTION: Have you ever stood up for someone or assisted someone who was in a tough situation? Talk about that experience.

ACTION: As a family, act out different scenarios of how to stand up for someone in a tough situation.

PRAYER: Almighty God, create in us courageous hearts. Give us courage to stand up for one another. Give us strength to hold our ground against injustices. Guide us as we seek your will for peace in the world. Amen.

17



TRAGEDIES

QUESTION: When tragedies happen what are some things we can do for those in need?

ACTION: Talk to the person in charge of missions at your church. Find out how Presbyterian Disaster Assistance works. Ask how you can be involved, or find out about local agencies that your church supports. Schedule a day to volunteer at that agency. Set up a lemonade stand and give the proceeds to an agency helping those in crisis.

PRAYER: God of rainbows and storms, let us be the hands that reach out with gentleness and kindness to those in need. Be with all of the first responders who bring words of encouragement and hope to those in crisis. Thank you for making us people who care. Amen.

18



WHEN WE'RE AFRAID

QUESTION: What are you afraid of?

ACTION: Make a family plan for dealing with a crisis, incorporating situations that family members fear. (Example: Where will you go if a tornado warning is issued?) Purchase a fire extinguisher, make a plan of how to get out of the house in case of a fire, and have a practice drill. Calm each other's fears by creating an action plan.

PRAYER: God who comforts us when we are afraid, Sometimes we feel scared. Our minds create situations that may or may not happen. Let our preparations be a pathway to peace that calms our fears. Amen.

19



SPEAKING PEACE

QUESTION: What is the difference between bullying and teasing? Talk about examples of each.

ACTION: Make a list of ways we can make sure our words or actions are not bullying or hurtful to someone else. Talk about it with friends, and create new boundaries for how you interact.

PRAYER: God of friendships, we are all your children, yet we don't always reflect being created in your image. We don't always act loving and kind. Soften the hearts of bullies, so that their frustrations and insecurities are not taken out on others. Give those being taken advantage of or hurt a voice and a friend to stand up for them. Help us to be a good friend to others. Amen.

20



PEACE AT ALL TIMES IN ALL WAYS

QUESTION: What does "Peace at all times and in all ways" mean to you?

ACTION: Read 2 Thessalonians 3:16 from different translations of the Bible. How are the translations different? How do the different translations change your understanding of this passage? (NRSV, The Message, NIV, NASB)

PRAYER: God of peace, guide our hearts and our actions to a life that promotes peace at all times and in all ways. Let the gift of getting along with each other in every circumstance be a blanket for your children that covers the world. Amen.

21



SPEAK OUT

QUESTION: When should the church speak out about injustices and suffering?

ACTION: With chalk, write statements or prayers of peace and comfort on your driveway or sidewalk. Leave some chalk for passersby to add to the dialogue.

PRAYER: God of hope, give us courage to speak out for the voiceless when no one is paying attention. Give us endurance to continue advocating for the suffering when everyone else has forgotten. Give us the strength to stand up to injustices until they are no more. Help us to be your peacemakers. Amen.

22



PEACE AND INJUSTICE

QUESTION: When we are concerned about a terrible thing that has happened in the world, what can we as individuals do about it?

ACTION: Look up phone numbers and email addresses for your local, state, and national representatives and leaders. Keep the list in a safe place for future reference. Write a letter or make a call to voice your concern about a current issue.

PRAYER: God of action, help us not to be passive when bad things happen around us. Let our hands be your hands to help and comfort. Let our voice be the voice for those who can't speak for themselves. Let our outrage at injustices become a pathway to peace. Amen.

23



POWERFUL PEACE

QUESTION: In what areas of your life do you feel powerful? What positive things can you do with that power?

ACTION: Draw pictures or write a poem about the ways you feel powerful and how you plan to use that power to empower and help others.

PRAYER: Most powerful God, you give us great power, yet we don't always know how to use it for good. Guide us in ways that strengthen us when we feel powerless, and direct us along positive avenues when we feel powerful. Help us to use our gifts to empower others. Amen.

24



VIOLENCE

QUESTION: How has the misuse of guns disrupted peace in our communities and in our world?

ACTION: Look in the newspaper or watch the evening news, and count the number of times you see or hear about gun violence. We accept violence so easily in TV and movies. Make a family pact not to watch movies or play video games with gun violence.

PRAYER: God of peace, hold us accountable for leading the movement for peace and nonviolence. Turn our hearts toward you. Amen.

25



BECOMING NONVIOLENT

QUESTION: The United States has the highest gun death rate in the world. How can we promote peace in a world that is becoming desensitized to violence?

ACTION: Find out what your church, presbytery, and denomination are doing to promote nonviolence. Explore ways you can be involved. Join an ecumenical public prayer gathering at a site where gun violence has occurred.

PRAYER: God of us all, we know your heart is the first to break when your children are hurt and killed due to gun violence. Keep us from becoming numb to the violence around us. Help us to speak out against gun violence. We pray for the victims and perpetrators whose lives have been lost and ruined due to senseless acts. Amen.

26



PEACE IN EVERY NATION

QUESTION: We are connected to the world community through the news and internet. Pick a place in the world that needs help. What can you do?

ACTION: Find a globe or a world map. Close your eyes and pick a country that you will pray for this week. Find out about that country so your prayers can be more specific.

PRAYER: God of the whole world, we are all brothers and sisters because we are your children. Help us to act that way and care about each other as family members should. Amen.

27



WHAT WE EAT

QUESTION: Talk about where the food on your table came from. Trace the route the food has traveled to reach your table and all of the hands that have had a part in providing that food for you.

ACTION: Plant a garden plot with herbs or a vegetable. Share your harvest.

PRAYER: God of abundance, so many people help to provide the food we eat, and we are grateful. For farmers, factory workers, truck drivers, grocery clerks, parents, and for so many others, we are thankful. Help us to be mindful of those who provide for us and help us to provide for others. Amen.

28



A CANDLE FOR PEACE

QUESTION: Can there ever be peace in our world? Why or why not?

ACTION: Pick a night to light a candle of peace on your front steps. Talk to neighbors, friends, and internet friends and ask them to light a candle the same night. As you light the candle, pray for peace in the world.

PRAYER: God of peace, help us to be creative in finding ways to change the world and ourselves. Help us to imagine what a world of peace would be like. Guide us as we work toward that goal. Amen.

29



DIVERSITY

QUESTION: When people have different political or religious views, can they still be friends? How do we make that happen?

ACTION: Talk to a friend from a different religious background to learn more about their beliefs. Worship with them so that you can better understand. Invite them to worship with you.

PRAYER: God of diversity, we are all different, but still created in your image. Sometimes it is hard to be patient with those who don't think like us or believe the same things we do. Help us to be patient, kind, and understanding. Amen.

30



THE WORDS WE USE

QUESTION: Words are powerful. Words can be positive or cruel. In families, we sometimes let our words hurt the ones we love the most. How can we change that?

ACTION: Write a family covenant that puts boundaries on how we talk to each other. Revise the covenant as needed.

PRAYER: God of families, it isn't always easy to live together. Our homes should be the one place we feel safe and loved. Help us to treat each other with kindness, especially in our families. Amen.