

3

Love Your Neighbor

LUKE 10:25–37



GOAL

Children hear the story of the good Samaritan, learning that *neighbor* means fellow human being; they practice what it means to share kindness with others.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- C** Conversation
- D** Drama
- F** Food
- G** Game
- M** Music
- NS** Nature/Science
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Loving God, you call us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Help me to model love and care for all my fellow human beings. Amen.

THIS SESSION

The commandment in Leviticus 19:18, to love your neighbor as yourself, is preceded by verses delineating ways that we are not to treat others. They are about building just relationships. *Neighbor* is not a geographic term but one that describes those you come in contact with as you go about your life, a fellow human being, and Jesus knows this when he tells his story about a fellow human being who acts justly.

THE BIBLE STORY

In Luke 10:25–37, Jesus tells a story in which the person following the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself, treating all as worthy, is one his listeners would view as the outsider. It is the Samaritan, the one considered different, who demonstrates the standard that Jesus and the commandments call for. He is the one who sees all as equal and worthy of attention, even when he himself is not viewed that way.

CONNECTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Most children learn—through teaching or osmosis—the “golden rule.” It is a fundamental concept of good moral behavior: treat others as one wants to be treated. One can begin to reason with a young child that, if they like or don’t like something, another person may feel the same. Loving your neighbor as yourself is the primary principle behind sharing and caring for all people.

SESSION PREPARATION

- “Bee Kind” (p. 28): Prepare a set of materials for each child to make a bee. For the body: cut out the center of a fluted-edge paper plate. Paint the center piece yellow. For the wings: from the fluted edges, cut four wing shapes. For the stripes: cut three strips of black construction paper. For the eyes: cut two circles from white paper and two smaller circles from black paper. Make a sample bee using the directions provided.

Depending on the options you choose:

- “Yellow and Blue” (p. 29): Obtain *Who Is My Neighbor?* by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Flyaway Books, 2019) or use the YouTube video “‘Who Is My Neighbor?’ by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Illustrated by Denise Turu” (bit.ly/FMNeighborBook, 6:36).
- “Something for Everyone Snack Mix” (p. 31): Obtain ingredients to make a sweet and salty snack mix, such as pretzels, O-shaped cereal, raisins, candy-coated chocolate pieces, salted or roasted pumpkin seeds, square-shaped corn cereal, fish-shaped crackers, honeycomb-shaped cereal. Be aware of food allergies and dietary restrictions. Make substitutions or provide alternative options.



GETTING STARTED

- Variety of dolls, stuffed animals, toy people

PLAYING WITH ALL

Greet children as they arrive and invite them into a time of free play with the different dolls, stuffed animals, and toy people you have provided. Engage them in conversation about their play. After everyone has had some time to play, gather the children in a circle with the toys. Wonder together how the toys are the same and then how they are different.



Example:
God made ladybugs.

Let's describe ladybugs.

They are small. They are red or orange and have spots. They crawl and fly.

Thank you, God, for ladybugs.

Alicia, you are made in God's image.

I like to play soccer.

Thank you, God, for Alicia.

CELEBRATING GOD'S DIVERSITY



Invite the children to respond with suggestions as prompted, highlighting God's diversity in creation and in us. Let the group know when they will respond individually and as a group. Use the following pattern:

God made (*name an item of creation, such as the moon or mountains, or a particular body of water or land form, or a particular plant or animal*).

Let's describe (*repeat the item of creation named above*).

(*Invite people to take turns describing the item of creation named above.*)

Thank you, God, for (*repeat the item of creation named above*).

(*One person at a time, lead this part of the litany.*)

(*Name*), you are made in God's image.

(*Invite the named person to say a sentence that describes something about themselves, such as "I am tall," or "I have green eyes," or "I like to draw."*)

Thank you, God, for (*name of person named above*).



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

- Prepared sample bee
- Prepared sets of materials to make a bee: one yellow circle body, four fluted wings, three strips of black construction paper, two white circles, and two smaller black circles
- Black pipe cleaners
- Glue sticks
- Tape
- Mural paper
- Markers

BEE KIND



Show the children the bee you made. Tell them that they are going to make bees to remember to "Bee Kind!" Provide each child with a set of materials to make a bee, and give them the following directions:

- To make the eyes, glue the two white circles next to each other on one side of the yellow body of the bee. Then glue the two black circles inside the white circles.
- Glue the three black strips of construction paper across the yellow body of the bee.
- Turn the yellow body of the bee over and tape two wings together on one side of the body and the other two wings together on the other side of the body. Add antennae to the head using black pipe cleaners.
- With a black marker, write your name on the yellow body of the bee.

Assist with writing as needed. Invite the children to glue their bees to the mural paper. Add the title, "BEE KIND!" to the mural paper. Wonder together what are different ways they can be kind to others. Write their responses on the mural paper around the bees. Wonder together who they

can be kind to. Encourage the children to think beyond family and friends. Write their responses on the mural paper. Display the mural paper in your space or in a visible space in your church.

Tell the children that they are going to hear a story today about a person who showed kindness to another, and it was kind of surprising who the person was who showed the kindness. Comment that this person understood that all people are God's children. They saw someone in need and treated them like they would want to be treated.

FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

C

Invite the children to listen to the story of “The Good Neighbor” as you read the adapted Bible story from *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* (pp. 212–13) or Resource Page 1. If you use the story Bible, cover the picture on page 213 so the children can imagine the characters. After the story, ask the following questions:

- What does this story teach us about being a neighbor?
- What do you think each character in Jesus' story looks like? Could they also look different than that? Do you think it matters what they look like or if they are tall or short, rich or poor, women or men, from this place or that place, are good at art or good at swimming?
- Who might be someone that you can show care to? Do you think it matters what they look like or if they are tall or short, rich or poor, a girl or a boy, from this place or that place, are good at art or good at swimming?

Tell the children that, when Jesus talked about a neighbor, he wasn't talking about someone who lived next door or in the same town. A neighbor was a fellow human being, someone you might meet sometime in your life. Explain that meant a neighbor could be anyone, someone like you and someone very different from you. Jesus said that we should be like the one who was a good human being and cared for another human being.

FINDING THE PRACTICE ALL AROUND US

Choose one or both options.

YELLOW AND BLUE

A D T

The story of the good Samaritan has been told in many different ways, with different people representing the characters in the story to show how people who are different from one another may be the loving neighbor. Read *Who Is My Neighbor?* by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso or show the YouTube video “Who Is My Neighbor?” by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Illustrated by Denise Turu” (bit.ly/FMNeighborBook, 6:36).

After the story, provide two sheets of paper for each child. Show them how to fold each sheet in half and half again, making four sections in each sheet of paper. Tell the children they are making their own set of puppets to

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- Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* (Flyaway Books, 2018) or Resource Page 1

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- Who Is My Neighbor?* by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Flyaway Books, 2019) or internet-connected device
 - Paper
 - Yellow and blue crayons
 - Scissors
 - Tape
 - Large craft sticks
 - Rubber bands

tell the story of blue and yellow. Invite the children to color four blue shapes, one in each section of one piece of paper. On the other piece of paper, tell them to draw three yellow shapes, one each in three of the sections. The children may add features, such as eyes, mouth, arms, and legs, if they wish, but they do not have to do so. When the children have finished coloring their shapes, have them cut out each shape. Assist with cutting as needed. Show the children how to tape a large craft stick to the back of each shape, leaving half of the craft stick extending beyond the bottom of the shape as a handle for their puppet.

Have the children assign the following characters to their color shapes (they don't have to match the colors named):

- 1 Blue friend (you may want to use the names found in the book, such as Midnight Blue)
- 1 naysayer Blue
- 2 Blue passers-by (Navy and Powder Blue)
- 1 naysayer Yellow
- 1 Yellow friend (Lemon)
- 1 Dr. Gold

Invite the children to form groups of two or three and tell the story of blue and yellow to one another using their puppets. When they are finished, wrap a rubber band around the craft stick handles of each child's set of puppets so they make take their puppets home and tell the story to their families.

- Internet-connected device (optional)
- Rhythm instruments

SINGING TOGETHER



Teach the children the following song to the tune of “Frère Jacques” as a call-and-response. Play the YouTube video “Frère Jacques (Instrumental)—Cartoon-Free, Distraction-Free” (bit.ly/FMFrereTune, 1:15) if you need the tune.

Love your neighbor,
Love your neighbor,
as yourself.
as yourself.
Show them love and kindness.
Show them love and kindness.
It's for all.
It's for all.

Once the children are familiar with the tune, invite them to play rhythm instruments as they sing. Other options to extend the activity are to have the children take turns being the “caller,” sing in unison and then as a round, add dance moves, and add movements for each line.

Sing the song several times. Encourage the children to sing this song at home, teaching it to their families.



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

KINDNESS SPREADS

C A T

Tell the children that, when we do an act of kindness, it often spreads from the person who received the kindness to them showing kindness to another person. Many people are affected by people's kindness. Show the YouTube video "Color Your World with Kindness" (bit.ly/FMColorKindness, 2:13). Wonder together:

- ✦ What are some of the ways you see people being neighbors to one another in this video?
- ✦ How can you color your world with kindness?

Give children card-stock copies of Resource Page 2 and watercolor paints. Show them how to wet the first person in the line with a paintbrush and water. Starting with the wet person, tell the children to add one color of paint, just dabbing it onto the wet paper. Encourage them to watch how the paint spreads. Then have the children get the next person wet with water and add another color of paint next to the first one. Tell them to wait a moment to see how the colors blend. Have them keep adding water and then paint to each person in the line as they spread kindness. Set aside the pictures to dry or use a hair dryer. If using a hair dryer, be careful not to blow the watery paint in all directions, or do so, because then kindness is spreading everywhere!

- Internet-connected device
- Card-stock copies of Resource Page 2
- Watercolor painting supplies
- Hair dryer(s)

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE SNACK MIX

F X

Play a quick game of "Would You Rather," pointing to one side of the room for one choice and the other side of the room for the other choice. Have the children move to whichever side fits with their preference. Use the following prompts: Would you rather . . .

- ✦ fly like a bird or swim like a fish?
- ✦ go to the beach or go to the mountains?
- ✦ play sports or paint a picture?
- ✦ play outdoors in the summer or play outdoors in the winter?
- ✦ eat fruits or eat vegetables?
- ✦ have a salty snack or have a sweet snack?

Have the children reflect on the game and note if there were any questions where everyone had the same answer. Comment that, even though people have many similarities, people have many differences too, and it is good to honor those differences because it honors who we are as individuals.

Tell the children that they are going to make a snack mix that might make everyone happy because it has something for everyone: sweet and salty! Put each ingredient you have obtained in separate bowls. Give each child a ziplock plastic bag and invite them to use the spoons or measuring cups provided to take a spoonful or scoop of the ingredients they would like to make a snack mix.

- Ingredients to make a sweet and salty snack mix, such as pretzels, O-shaped cereal, raisins, candy-coated chocolate pieces, salted or roasted pumpkin seeds, square-shaped corn cereal, fish-shaped crackers, honeycomb-shaped cereal
- Bowls
- Large spoons and/or measuring cups
- Ziplock plastic bags



Be aware of food allergies and dietary restrictions. Make substitutions or provide alternative options.

You might want to set designated quantities for some ingredients, such as one spoonful of candy-coated chocolate pieces so that someone doesn't take a measuring cup full! If there are leftover ingredients, children could go back and add to their bags.

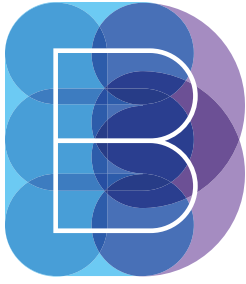
As the children enjoy their snack mix, invite them to tell stories about their favorite meals and see what similarities and differences there are.



FOLLOWING JESUS

Gather the children in a circle. Invite them to repeat after you as you pray:

God of every human being, /
help me be a good human being, /
showing love and care, /
for everyone I meet, /
no matter if they: /
are yellow or blue, /
are tall or short, /
from here or from there, /
or like to sing or like to build. /
May I love all your human beings /
because you love all your human beings. /
Amen.



BIBLE STORY

BASED ON LUKE 10:25–37

Do you know your neighbors? They can be people next door, down the street, or across town. Jesus told a story about what it means to be a good neighbor, even to people you don't know. In the time of Jesus, the Samaritans and Jews did not like each other at all. Jesus was a Jew, and one day he told this story about a Samaritan and what happened to him.

Wherever Jesus went, people came to listen to his teaching and to ask questions. One day a lawyer came to Jesus with an important question. "Teacher," he said, "the law says that we must love our neighbor the way we love ourselves."

"That's right," Jesus replied.

"Who is my neighbor?" asked the religious teacher.

Jesus answered the question with a story, "One day a traveler was walking down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Suddenly, robbers attacked him and stole all his money. They ran away, leaving him lying in a heap on the side of the road. He was badly hurt and needed help.

"After a while, he heard someone coming. It was a priest. *Thank goodness, the traveler thought, I'm saved!*

"But the priest was afraid that robbers would hurt him too. He crossed to the other side of the road, looked the other way, and kept on going.

"Later, the injured man heard someone else coming. This time it was a Levite, also a religious leader. Finally, he thought, *Surely this one will stop and help.*

"But the Levite was also afraid of robbers. He crossed to the other side of the road, looked the other way, and hurried by.

"A third time the injured man heard someone coming. This time it was someone coming from Samaria on the way to Jerusalem. *Oh no, the traveler thought, It's someone from Samaria. He will never help me.*

"But the Samaritan man did stop. He bandaged the hurt man and lifted him onto his donkey. He took him to an inn. He gave the innkeeper money to look after the traveler until he was well."

Jesus asked, "Who was a neighbor to the traveler attacked by robbers?"

"The one who was kind to him; the one who stayed with him and helped him," the lawyer replied.

"Go and be that kind of neighbor," said Jesus.¹

1. "The Good Neighbor," *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), 212–13.

