

Children's Feature:

Gardening for Peace



Learning objective: to help children see that God wants us all to live in peace, and that working in the fields, producing food and feeding those who are hungry and empowering communities is part of that vision of peace.

Materials: small gardening tools (trowel, small shovel or rake, gardening gloves), a small planting pot with some soil in it, some seeds (beans or small vegetable); a small basket or container of vegetables (including baby carrot or snap peas, something the children can munch on), small watering can with a little water.

Scripture: Micah 4:1-5: The story: God's vision of peace for all, where no one is hungry

[Hold up trowel, shovel, rake, other tools. Let the children examine the tools, hold them, turn them over]

Then say, "What are these tools for?"
[Wait for a few answers]

Say, "That's right, these are for gardening or helping us grow things, like this," *[hold up the small basket or container of vegetables]*, "We can use these tools to help us grow vegetables and other healthy things to eat. Sometimes we share this food with our friends and neighbours and maybe even with people we don't know, who are hungry."

Ask, "Are any of you hungry?" *[Wait for answers]*. Say "I thought so. Here you go," *[Hand a small number of children some of the vegetables and say,]* "Here, can you share these with the others?" *[When everyone has some say]* "Go ahead, you can eat them."

Ask, "Did you know that there are families who do not have enough food because they live in a place where people are fighting? Have you ever seen people fighting or arguing?" *[wait for some responses.]* "We sometimes see children arguing on the playground, we might see adults arguing too. When there is a big fight or a war, many people suffer, and one thing that makes

it even harder is when they don't have enough food to eat. This makes God's heart sad because **God has a dream; that we could all live in peace with everything we need.**"

Say, "In God's dream, instead of weapons for fighting or for war, God sees us holding these kinds of tools." *[Point at or hold up the gardening tools]*

Ask, "Do you want to help me use these tools to plant more food?" *[Take the small pot with the soil, have one or two children dig a hole in the soil; have one or two children plant a seed; have another child fill the hole back in, using the tools; have another child, wearing gloves, pat down the place where the seed was planted; then finally, another child water the plant.]*

OPTIONAL Say, "Now we can watch it grow, together!" *[Put the pot in a place where the children gather, and they can watch it grow together over this year].*

Say, "God's dream is just like this. That we use our tools to help grow food and that we share with others, and so everyone has enough to eat, and no one is hungry. That is what peace looks like!"

Close in prayer, thanking God for the vision of peace and food for all, asking for courage that all of the children, and the adults too, can take part in God's great vision, using our gifts and our tools to build peace together, and to empower others as we grow enough food for everyone.

