



# *Visions of Peace: Celebrating International Day of Peace*

*Theme: Peace starts within, and parents plant the seeds for inner peace as they love and teach their child. Peace is recognized in the world on the International Day of Peace, and this meeting prepares families to celebrate the day by considering their vision for a better world and by making a special family peace candle.*

## **Before the Meeting**

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### **Suggested Time Frame**

To enable all family members to participate, we recommend meeting in the evening or on the weekend. Allow two hours if you share a meal, keeping in mind that energy might dwindle towards the end if parents have young children with them. Allow an hour and a half if you do not have food.

The International Day of Peace is September 21st. Though it's most relevant to have this meeting before September 21st, it's not always possible. Feel free to conduct this particular meeting any time during the year. It is meant to raise awareness about this important date and prepare families to be ready for it, whether it is one month or five months away.

### **Set Up**

1. *Ask participants to bring a large candle for making into a family peace candle*
2. *Arrange the ritual table with a nice cloth and a peace candle set in the middle (you might prepare one ahead of time for the meeting if you so desire)*
3. *Spread out the quote cards, one per participant*
4. *Display the children's book*
5. *Prepare a worktable with the supplies for decorating candles*
6. *Post a chart with the question "What is your vision for a better, more peaceful world?"*
7. *Post another chart with the title "Actions for Peace"*
8. *Have the kids' coloring pages ready to distribute at the end of the meeting*

### **Materials**

1. *Peace One Day, by Jeremy Gilley*
2. *Spare large candles for decorating (in case a participant forgets one)*
3. *Various ribbons*
4. *Colored paper*

5. *Beads, shells, stickers, small flowers, feathers—anything with which to decorate a candle*
6. *Several bottles of glue*
7. *Several pairs of scissors*
8. *Prepare the chart with the question “What is your vision for a better, more peaceful world?”*
9. *Another chart with the title “Actions for Peace”*
10. *Tape*
11. *Markers*
12. *Quote cards with calendar printed on the back—one card per participant*
13. *Coloring pages for kids*
14. *Copies of the opening and closing prayer (one per participant)*

## **Roles Needed**

A reader for the closing prayer

## **Reference Materials** (not required but may interest you or the participants for further reading)

Learning Peace website, Naomi Drew—[www.learningpeace.com](http://www.learningpeace.com)

The International Day of Peace Website—[www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)

## **Meeting Plan—Dinner, 30 minutes**

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### **Opening Prayer, 5 minutes**

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**Facilitator:** Welcome to our meeting about peace. We are going to start with a prayer that invites us to imagine a better, more peaceful world. Let’s take a minute to find a bit of peace inside of ourselves, and then we will go around in a circle and each read one stanza. The poem is called “Imagine a World.”

### *Imagine A World*

Where governments respect the rights of all their citizens and settle disputes by the rule of law for the common good.

Where all people have food, shelter and access to medical care, and children are born into and raised by healthy families and communities.

Where literacy and education for all are accomplished facts.

Where economic practices create well-being for all stakeholders, including communities and the environment.

Where beauty, the arts, and media inspire the best in people.

Where the benefits of science and technology enhance all circles of life.

Where tolerance and appreciation of diverse religious beliefs is the rule, spiritual practice is encouraged, and reverence for life fostered.

Where the earth in all her natural beauty is treasured and its resources utilized sustainably, for this and future generations.

**ALL: This is a world at PEACE.**

**We Pray that Peace May Prevail On Earth**

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## **Information on the Theme, 5 minutes**

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**Facilitator:** Some of you may know that September 21<sup>st</sup> is the International Day of Peace, as declared by the United Nations. This day, in the words of the U.N. resolution, “. . .shall be observed as a day of global cease-fire and non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to honor a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day...”

**Facilitator:** In honor of this day, we are going to spend time considering our vision of a better, more peaceful world. After some thought and discussion, each family will make a family peace candle that reflects your vision of a better world. You can light this candle on September 21<sup>st</sup> to be in solidarity with the many groups worldwide that are also striving for peace, and/or you can light it at any other time you are in need of peace in your family. After some time spent decorating your candle, we'll talk about ways you can actively work for peace at home, in your community, and in the larger world.

**Facilitator:** In a group of 2-3 people, please consider and discuss this question:

**What is your vision of a better, more peaceful world?**

**Facilitator:** After about 10 minutes, we'll come back together and share our visions.

## **Small Group Work, 10 minutes**

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*Allow participants time to discuss their visions. After 5-10 minutes (or earlier if you sense that most participants are coming to a close) say:*

**Facilitator:** You have had time to envision a better, more peaceful world. Now, I would like you to try to summarize your vision in one or two words. For example, mine might be “human rights” or “no child abuse.” After a few minutes of trying to summarize your vision, we will switch gears and start decorating your candles to reflect your vision.

## **Large Group Activity and Sharing, 25 minutes**

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**Facilitator:** Now comes the active part. We are going to spend time as a family capturing your vision of peace in a special candle. Please use any of the supplies on the worktable to make your candle, and include your children if they are old enough. When you're done I'll invite you to explain your candle and how it captures your vision of a better, more peaceful world.

*After about 20 minutes of time to decorate say:*

**Facilitator:** Let's reconvene as a large group to share our visions and candles. Let's name our visions aloud to the whole group. I'll begin. Mine is \_\_\_\_\_ and my candle is decorated like this because \_\_\_\_\_.

*After everyone has shared:*

These visions are wonderful—and our world will be a better place as we work to make them a reality! Let's talk about that now. What are some action steps we can take for peace? Consider inner peace, peace in the family, peace among our neighbors and co-workers, and peace in our communities and world. I'll write down the ideas you have and email them to you later this month.

*Encourage older children to participate! Their ideas are valuable. Chart participants' responses on the chart paper.*

## **Children's Story, 5 minutes**

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The book *Peace One Day* by Jeremy Gilley tells the story of how the International Day of Peace came into being. It is meant for children ages seven and up, but the illustrations of kids throughout the world are compelling discussion starters for even younger children. This story is also inspiring because it's a true account of how one person really can make a big difference.

## **Closing Prayer/Ritual, 15 minutes**

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**Facilitator:** In our closing ritual we are going to combine our voices to make our closing prayer of peace. Please make a circle with your candle. \_\_\_\_\_ will read the bolded parts of the prayer, and we'll go around in a circle to say our shortened visions of peace. So when it's your turn, simply say the few words that summarize your vision of a better world. I'll begin.

*Candles may be lit if young children are kept safely away from the flames.*

### **Our Visions of Peace Prayer**

Reader: Creator God,

As parents we have brought new life into this world with great courage and hope.

As families, we strive to spark a flame of peace in our children's hearts.

But our world is in need of your ever-lasting peace.

We envision a world with:

\_\_\_\_\_ *(facilitator shares his/her vision first, then indicates to participants to continue by saying their visions)*

Reader: Give us the strength, wisdom, and determination to make these visions a reality.

**ALL: Amen!**

**Facilitator:** Before you go, please take a peace quote card from the table to keep. On the back is a calendar of peace-related days throughout the year. The website at the bottom provides further information and activities to celebrate each of these days. There are also some pages to color that have peace messages. Please take some for your kids and their friends.

# *Visions of Peace*

## *Resources & Handouts*

**You will need one copy of each of the following:**

- 1. One quote card per participant**

**You will need multiple copies of each of the following based on your number of participants:**

- 1. Opening Prayer & Closing Prayer**
- 2. Coloring pages for kids**

## Opening Prayer—*Imagine A World*

Where governments respect the rights of all their citizens and settle disputes by the rule of law for the common good.

Where all people have food, shelter and access to medical care, and children are born into and raised by healthy families and communities.

Where literacy and education for all are accomplished facts.

Where economic practices create well-being for all stakeholders, including communities and the environment.

Where beauty, the arts, and media inspire the best in people.

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## Closing Prayer—Our Visions of Peace Prayer

Reader: Creator God,

As parents we have brought new life into this world with great courage and hope.

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But our world is in need of your ever-lasting peace.

We envision a world with:

\_\_\_\_\_ (*facilitator shares his/her vision first, then indicates to participants to continue by saying their visions*)

Reader: Give us the strength, wisdom, and determination to make these visions a reality.

**ALL: Amen!**



"Peace can only last  
where human rights  
are respected, where  
the people are fed,  
and where individuals  
and nations are free."  
-- The Dalai Lama

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"It isn't enough  
to talk about peace;  
one must believe in it.  
And it isn't enough  
to believe in it;  
one must work at it."  
-- Eleanor Roosevelt

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## **Culture of Peace Days**

**One Day In Peace - January 1**

**Freedom Day - February 1**

**Women's Day - March 8**

**Earth Day - April 22**

**Diversity Day - May 21**

**Interfaith Day - June 22**

**CoOp Day - July 7**

**No-Nukes Day - August 6**

**Peace Day - September 21**

**End Hunger Day - October 16**

**Tolerance Day - November 16**

**Human Rights Day- December 10**

**From [www.cultureofpeace.org/calendar.htm](http://www.cultureofpeace.org/calendar.htm)**

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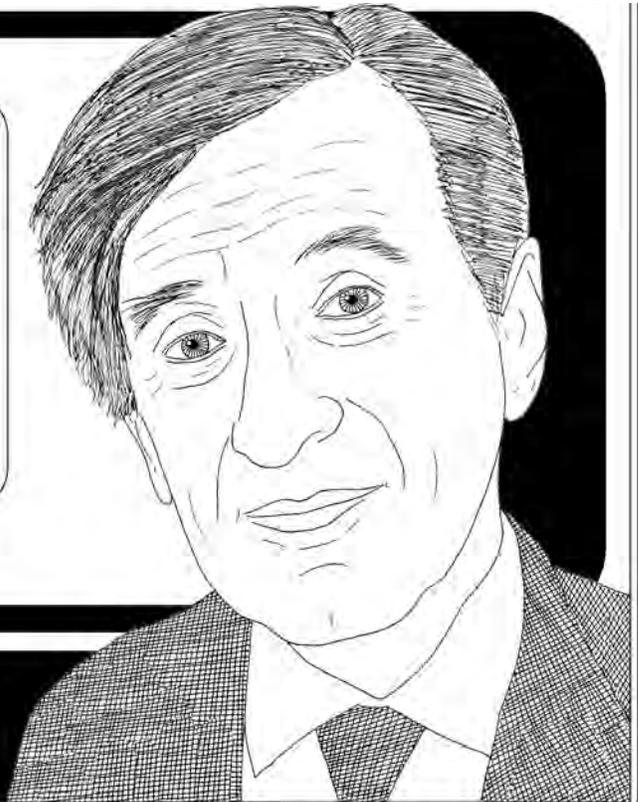
**Tolerance Day - November 16**

**Human Rights Day- December 10**

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"Peace  
is our gift  
to each other."  
-- Elie Wiesel

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"One little person,  
giving all of her time to peace,  
makes news.  
Many people,  
giving some of their time,  
can make history."  
-- Peace Pilgrim

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"I do not want the peace  
which passeth understanding.  
I want the understanding  
which bringeth peace."  
-- Helen Keller

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"When the power of love  
overcomes the love  
of power  
the world will know peace."  
-- Jimi Hendrix

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"So we must fix our vision  
not merely on the  
negative expulsion of war,  
but upon the positive  
affirmation of peace."  
-- Martin Luther King, Jr.

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"All works of love  
are works of peace."  
-- Mother Teresa

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Peace Prevail



May Peace Prevail On Earth

Peace Day - September 21

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Peace Prevail



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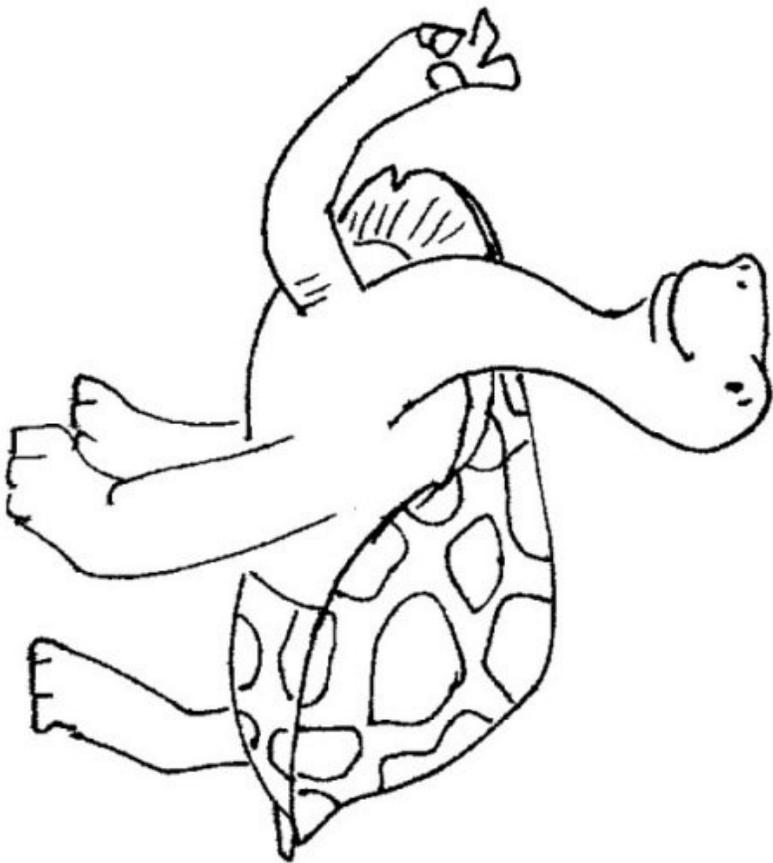
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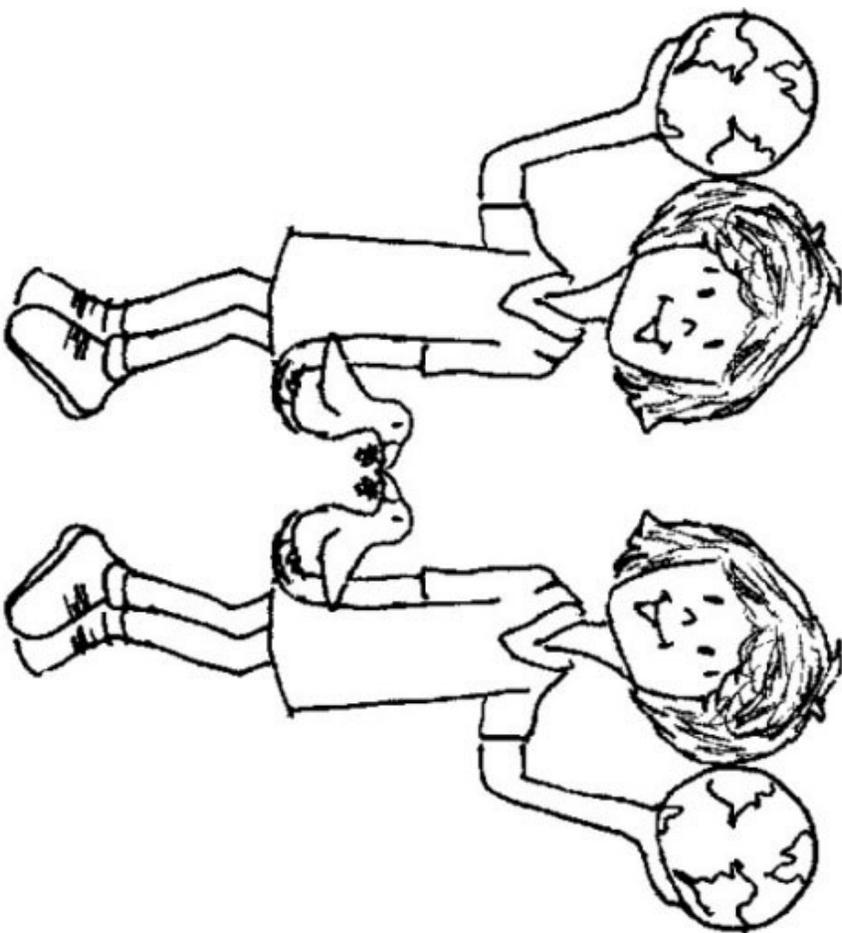
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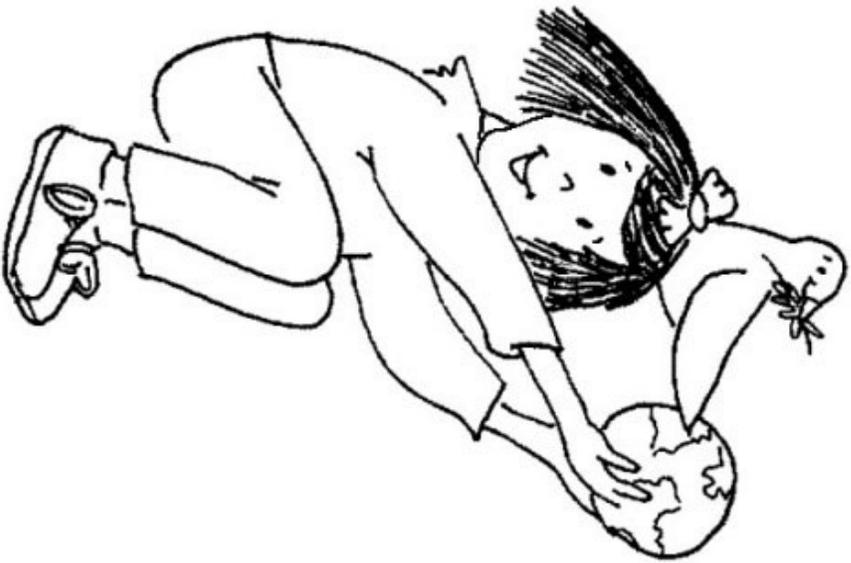
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# Peace Prevail



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Peace Day - September 21

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# May Peace Prevail On Earth



Peace Day - September 21

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