

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



REMEMBRANCE

John 15:13 and Matthew 5:9

Please read the 'Autumn Overview' leader's notes for more info.

This month we remember those who gave their lives so we have the freedom to choose many things which affect our daily lives. We give thanks to God for those who made that sacrifice. We also remember we have all been given freedom from death because Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice and in doing so we have been given eternal life in Heaven.

In this session we will explore these themes through three symbols - the poppy, the cross and the dove. During the session the children will cut out pictures of these symbols and create their own collage of remembrance/prayer.

Each child will need:

- Colouring pens/pencils (include red) and paper
- Scissors and glue
- A print-out of the Remembrance PDF (poppy, cross and dove) – email in advance

Start It

Start the session by playing a memory game. An easy memory game via Zoom is to show the children a selection of objects laid out in front of your webcam, or a collage of pictures on the screen. Give the children a couple of minutes to memorise as many of the objects as they can (don't allow them to write notes!). Then take away the objects from view and give a set amount of time for the children to write down as many of the objects that they can remember. See who can remember the most objects correctly!

TIP - It would be good to include a poppy, a cross and a dove in the objects.

Ask everyone to make as loud a noise as possible and then, at a chosen signal, bring them to silence, to be completely quiet.

Ask the children if they know of any times in the year when we are asked to sit or stand in silence for two minutes (or sometimes one minute). Allow time for response and discussion.

Tell It

1. The Poppy

Ask: What do you know about Remembrance Day? What are we remembering on Remembrance Day? Allow time for response and discussion.

● **Say:** On Remembrance Day, 11 November, everyone in the United Kingdom and Ireland is asked to remember the sacrifices made by others during times of war. Most of the ceremonies take place on Remembrance Sunday, the second Sunday of November. On this day we take time to remember all those who lost their lives fighting in war, and we often observe a two-minute silence. Remembrance Day also allows us to take time to think about places that are still experiencing conflict today, and to join together in our shared determination to work for peace.

Show the group a poppy or a picture of poppies.

Ask: What do you know about poppies? Why are they often part of Remembrance Day?

Show either of the following two videos, dependent on the age of your group and the time you have available.

The Poppy Story (Early Years) – for ages 4-5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doalcouBKwc> – watch until 1.47

The Poppy Story (First Level up) – for ages 5 and over

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8Jv0T9eFUy> – watch until 2.49

Allow time for response and discussion following the videos if needed.

Ask the children to cut out the picture of the poppy from their sheet as you chat. Put aside the poppy until later.

2. The Cross

Show or read to the group the following Bible verse and ask the group what they think it means.

'The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them'

John 15:13 (GNT)

● **Say:** In this Bible verse Jesus tells us: 'Greater love has no one than this, that he is willing to lay down his life for his friends.' And that is exactly what Jesus did for us! His death on the cross brings us forgiveness, freedom and peace. His death can put right all the injustice of the world and in our lives and it can give us a fresh start. We have a symbol to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us: the cross.

● **Say:** On Remembrance Day when we remember people who died to give us freedom and peace, we can also think of an even bigger remembrance – God's remembrance of us and the great sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the cross.

Ask the children to cut out the cross and put aside with the poppy until later.

Sing It

Choose from the following songs to sing together about God's peace.

'My Lighthouse' by Rend Co. Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeJvKkBV6rY>

'A Song of Peace for Kids' by Jack Hartmann

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F62L1TaDIUk>

'Peace Like a River' by CJ and Friends

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6085sLXCMs>

Action It

There are lots of places around the world where there are still wars happening. Nearly one in five children live in areas affected by armed conflict and war, according to a report published last year by Save the Children (Feb 19). Talk to the children about places in the world that are at war right now – see if they can name any places. You could use a picture of a world map or a list of conflicts around the world.

This web article shows some lovely pictures of children living in areas of conflict – still playing and smiling:

<https://www.unicef.org.au/blog/stories/december-2017/where-children-play-war-zone-conflict>

● **Say:** Lots of organisation like Save the Children and UNICEF are working in areas of conflict to help support children and their families. There are also lots of organisations that work with both sides of the conflict to help bring peace.

3. The Dove

Read Matthew 5:9.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God' (NIV).

🗨 **Say:** Each of us is a child of God, which means that we are each called to be peacemakers. What do you think a 'peacemaker' is?

Allow time for response and discussion.

🗨 **Say:** A peacemaker is someone who brings together two or more people, families, or countries that have been fighting and helps them to begin living in peace, without any bickering or fighting or war. When two people get into a fight, a peacemaker can help them stop fighting and help them to be friends again.

Ask: Have you ever had to act as a peacemaker?

Allow time for response and discussion.

🗨 **Say:** Did you know that Jesus was our peacemaker? He made peace between God and us. And now we can bring the wonderful message of God's peace to the world.

Ask the children to cut out the dove, the symbol of peace. When they have cut it out ask them to use all three symbols - the poppy, the cross and the dove - to create a small collage. They can stick it down with glue and, if you have time, colour it in. As they are working on this you could ask the following 'I wonder...' questions:

I wonder:

- ➔ Which country in the world would you like to pray for peace?
- ➔ Are there situations a bit closer to home, in our own country, town or community, that are anything but peaceful?
- ➔ Are there any people you know who need peace in their lives?
- ➔ Where might you need more peace in your own life?
- ➔ Where in your life right now could you be a peacemaker? Maybe it's at home... at school... with friends... or in your town.

Ask the children to show their collages to each other.

If your church has connections abroad in an area where there is conflict or unrest, you could write a short letter together to a church in that area; it can be as simple as 'We are praying for you'.

Pray It

Ask the children to write some prayers on their collage. Some ideas:

- ➔ Near the poppy: A prayer for soldiers who are still fighting in conflicts around the world, or for families of those who have died. Pray for children living in areas of conflict and the organisations that are working to help them.
- ➔ Near the cross: Thank you to Jesus for the sacrifice that he made and that he always remembers who we are.
- ➔ Near the dove: A prayer for a situation in your own life where you need peace or can be a peacemaker, or for a place in the world that needs peace to end conflict. Pray for organisations around the world working to bring peace in areas of conflict.

There is a recognised international prayer for peace. It is written out below with some suggested simple actions to accompany the words. These should help everyone to remember it.

Lead me... from death to life,

(hands crossed over body and then hands raised above the head)

...from falsehood to truth,

(one hand close to the mouth, suggesting a malicious whisper, and then both hands with thumbs up next to the mouth suggesting the truth)

...from despair to hope.

(one hand on the forehead in despair and then the same hand shading the eyes, looking out to the future in hope)

...from fear to trust.

(two hands by the mouth expressing terror and then both hands open in front of the body expressing trust)

...from hate to love.

(one hand raised as a fist and then two hands over the heart)

...from war to peace.

(one hand shaped like a gun and then two hands linked by the thumbs, palms inward, creating a dove of peace)

Let peace fill... our heart.

(the hands still as the dove of peace near to the heart)

...our world.

(hands as the dove of peace making a small circle away from the heart)

...our universe.

(hands as a dove of peace making a much larger circle away from the body)

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.