

PEACE WORKSHOP

An SCM Workshop

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

The aim of this SCM workshop is to help people come to a clearer understanding of what peace is and how we can be peacemakers in our own lives and in the world. The workshop will take about 70 minutes.

You'll need some large sheets of paper, string, small pieces of paper, pens, Bibles to share and lots of space.

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Sitting in a circle, remove one of the chairs and ask that person to stand in the middle. The person in the middle should call out a statement that might apply to some people in the group. The statements can be, but don't have to be, related to the workshop theme e.g. all those who can speak at least two languages, all those who enjoy arguing or all those who have attended a peace vigil. If the statement applies to you then you get up and try to find a free chair. If you get stuck in the middle it is your turn to come up with a statement. Do this a few times and be prepared to help people out if they can't think of something to say.

ASK THE QUESTION(S) (25 MINUTES)

Peace is something which most people wish for but which is difficult to define. Historically it has been defined as the absence of war but working for peace involves more than the rejection of violence. To be peacemakers we need to understand what we mean by peace.

Ask people to get into small groups of 3-5. Their challenge is to think of as many words as possible which we associate with peace and peacemaking beginning with the letters P, E, A, C, E, M, A, K, E, R Ask them to write the words on 'post its' or small pieces of paper in marker pens (one on each piece of paper).

There are a few ideas below if people get stuck.

P: positive change, personal development, prayer

E: emotion, empathy

A: action for change, alternatives, awareness, absence (of war)

C: community, conflict (resolution), cooperation, compassion, Christianity

E: equity, equality, education

M: mediation, mentoring, meditation
A: art, activism, advocacy
K: kindness, kingdom of God, knowledge
E: environment, ecology, eternity
R: relationships, righteousness, reconciliation

After about 5 minutes bring the whole group back together and ask each group to share the words they thought of. There could be a prize for the group with the most words.

Next make three circles one inside the other on the floor either with string or drawn on a large sheet of paper. Explain that the inner circle represents 'inner peace', the middle circle 'peace in our community' and the outer circle 'peace in the world community'. Ask people to take one post it/piece of paper and place it where they feel it fits into the circles. There are no right or wrong answers and some will be both or all three! Feel free to add any extra words that don't start with PEACE.

EXPLORE THE ISSUE(S) (15 MINUTES)

You will need a bit of space for this activity.

At one end of the room display the word agree, and at the other, disagree.

Explain that you will read out a number of statements and people need to stand somewhere along the opinion line depending on how far they agree or disagree with the statement.

Peace is the absence of war
Conflict always leads to violence
There have always been wars and there always will be
Jesus was a pacifist
Some wars are necessary to prevent a greater evil
There can be no peace without justice
Peace starts with ourselves

Ask people to explain why they have stood where they have and tell them they are allowed to move if they change their mind having heard other people's thoughts.

INVITE THE RESPONSE (15 MINUTES)

Split into 4 groups and ask each group to read one of the following passages and think about the following questions.

Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 12:9-21, James 3:13-18, Matthew 5: 1-12.

- 1) What kind of peace (inner, community or world) does the passage relate to?
- 2) As Christians, what does the passage suggest we need to do to be peacemakers?

After 15 minutes, invite the groups to share their thoughts with the wider group.

CLOSING THE SESSION (5 MINUTES)

Have a time of prayer which involves commitment. You might like to play some quiet music and light some candles. Give each person a coloured strip of paper and invite them to write or draw on it a commitment they want to make to peace – whether inner, community or world. Place a stapler or some glue in the middle of the room and invite people to come and join their pieces of paper together into a paper chain.

Finish by reading John 14: 27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

FUTURE DISCUSSIONS AND MORE RESOURCES

If your group is interested in exploring this theme further, then you could try some of these topics for further discussions or invite a speaker. Get in touch with the SCM office if you need any help or resources (scm@movement.org.uk).

- *Invite a speaker from Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation or Campaign Against Arms Trade*
- *Bible study on Jesus and nonviolence*
- *Invite someone who has been involved in mediation or reconciliation to share their story or experience*
- *Should Britain have nuclear weapons? Discuss*
- *Hold a prayer vigil for a current conflict*

- *The Journey Toward Reconciliation by John Paul Lederach*

Jesus and Nonviolence by Walter Wink

Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace by Perry Yoder

Study War No More: Arms company links to UK Universities. Report available from www.studywarnomore.org.uk

Peace vigil kit: <http://www.quaker.org.uk/peace-vigil-guide>

Called to be Peacemakers: a resource available from <http://www.for.org.uk/c2bp>

<http://www.peaceschool.org.uk> For individuals interested in exploring peacemaking