

Session # 10 Psalm Twenty-Three

Overview

The text of the familiar psalm comparing God to a loving shepherd accompanies illustrations which show the world of love and fear faced by an urban African-American family.

Goal: To be familiar with one of the most famous psalms from the Bible and to celebrate the care and presence of the divine/ Spirit of Life/Love no matter who or where we are.

Principle: Be kind in all you do.

Source: The Jewish and Christian teachings.

Belief: We believe that we can make choices using love and reason

UU Identity: Practice loving kindness.

Holiday/Theme: Bible.

Supplies:

Book

Copies of Take Home Page

Supplies for the activities you chose

Décor for the room or chalice lighting altar – a Bible.

Camera for taking pictures for your own picture book

Set Up: Order a version of the poster of “Jesus and the Little Children.” Here are some sources:

1) PicturesofJesus4You.com has a nice 5”x7” multicultural picture that features Jesus with a shepherd’s crook #495 by Greg Olsen.

2) allposters.com has a “Children of the World” #805263 by David Lindsley.

3) BridgeBuilding.com has a more medieval image called “Christ and the Children” #MI579.

All of these are about \$6.00 each.

Entering Activity:

Stained glass chalice coloring page, included below.

Sharing Circle:

After the children have arrived, invite them to gather in a circle around the chalice for the story.

Chalice Lighting:

Bring out the chalice and candle, matchbook, match holder, and snuffer. Set out the chalice and the water bowl with rocks to drop in for sharing “Joys and Concerns.”

Invite the children to recite with you the following chalice lighting words:

“To this quiet place of beauty we come from busy things, pausing for a moment for the thoughts that quiet brings.”

Light the match and hold it to the candle wick.

“We light this chalice for the warmth of love, the light of truth and the energy of action.”

Invite the children to share important things that have happened in their lives, passing a talking stick, shell or rock to indicate whose turn it is to share. This would be a good session to pass around the Bible as a Talking Stick. Have each child share a joy or a concern by dropping a small polished rock into the water bowl.

Say something like: “We will now share our joys and concerns in our sharing circle.

Each of us will have a turn to speak while the rest listen. You don’t have to share, you can always say, “pass.”

After everyone has shared who wishes to, add one more rock and say, “For all the joys and concerns which remain unspoken, we add this rock.”

You may prefer to extinguish the chalice flame with the snuffer at this point.

“Though we extinguish this flame, we kindle the flame to carry in our hearts together.”

Read “**Psalm Twenty-Three.**”

UU Identity teachable moment: Ask the children for their reflections on the story. Say something like, “One of the sources of our UU religion is “Jewish and Christian teachings.” Show them the poster of the Sources. “In this book, a brother and sister live in a difficult urban neighborhood, but are able to find a message of hope in this poem, or psalm, from the Bible and with their loving family. We Unitarian Universalists celebrate our Jewish and Christian heritages which teach us that the spirit of love and kindness are real no matter who or where we are.” Describe the activities that you have prepared and invite the children to engage in them.

Activities: Choose from the following options.

1) **Take pictures for “Our Own Picture Book.”**

2) **Finish the coloring page.**

3) **Sing a song**

a. “Jesus loves the Little Children” for the tune visit

www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/j/e/jesloves.htm

for a YouTube video visit

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6Coy_urJ3s&feature=related

b. “Loves Surrounds Me” (to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me”

www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/j/e/jesuslme.htm)

Love surrounds me, this I know (*Draw circle in air with finger.*)

For my spirit tells me so. (*Pat chest over heart.*)
All of us to love belong. (*Point finger at people in the group.*)
It fills our hearts and makes us strong. (*Pat chest over heart, then fold
arms at elbows and place one fist over the other in a stack in front
of diaphragm.*)

Yes, love surrounds me, (*Draw a circle for each phrase...*)
Yes, love surrounds me,
Yes, love surrounds me,
My spirit tells me so. (*Pat chest over heart.*)

4) Folded Paper Stained Glass Window

Fold a piece of copy paper at an angle then unfold making a nice crease with your thumb. Fold and unfold again and again making a pattern in the paper. Color in each shape made out of the creases with a different colored crayon or marker.

5) Graham Cracker Bibles

2 graham crackers for each child

peanut butter (check for allergies, use a can of icing instead if necessary)

a tube of white icing

Directions: Make a graham cracker and peanut butter sandwich. Take the icing and outline the sandwich. Finally, with the tube of icing write "Bible" in the center of the top graham cracker. (If you wish to have the children make their own Bible Graham crackers, buy enough tubes of icing so each 2 children can share one tube.)

Used with permission from http://baptist-church.suite101.com/article.cfm/jesus_loves_the_little_children

6) Jesus loves the children poster or card.

Use the Bible verse from Matthew 19:14 (New International Version) "Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Copy the verses and the source boxes, see below, and cut them apart, one for each child making a card. Fold a piece of construction paper in quarters to make a card and glue the verse on the inside of the card. Invite the children to draw a picture of Jesus and lots of children from around the world on the front of the card. Add the second U.U. statement, below, about the source to the card. Use the card as a take home sheet.

Closing: Make a circle by linking hands. Say something like, "We as Unitarian Universalists (or repeat the name of your congregation) wish to learn about the Spirit of Love that is present in the stories and poems in the Bible." Sing the Do-Re-Mi Principles song. "Go in Peace."

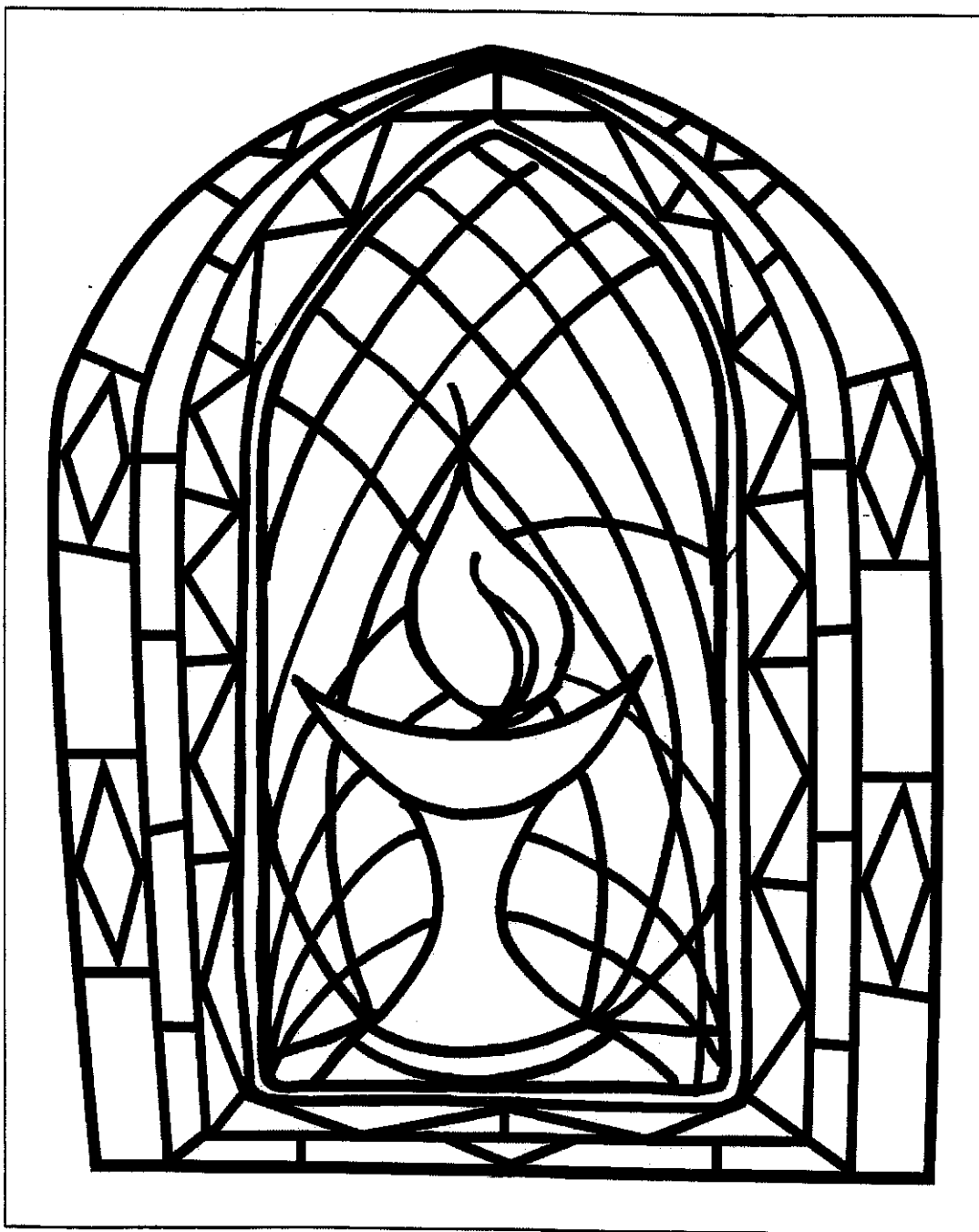
Background for Teachers:

One U.U. congregant recounted to me how much she was comforted by the picture of Jesus with little children that she saw in her Sunday School each Sunday. It represents the loving kindness that we U.U.'s wish to support as part of the heritage from our Christian brothers and sisters. I want to honor that feeling and suggest that for this session you find a poster of Jesus with the children to add to your R.E. program. Here are some sources:

- 1) PicturesofJesus4You.com has a nice 5"x7" multicultural picture that features Jesus with a shepherd's crook #495 by Greg Olsen.
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Stained Glass window template by artist Judy Campbell, from "UU and Me" Magazine, March 1998, vol.1, no. 4. Used with permission from Church of the Larger Fellowship.



Bible verse for Card Activity
Picture Book U.U.
By Kate Tweedie Covey
www.uure.com

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U.U. Source for Card Activity
Picture Book U.U. Identity
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www.uure.com

One of the sources of our U.U.
Living Tradition is:
The spirit of love as described in the
Bible.

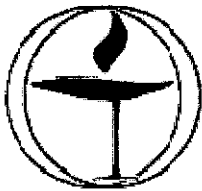
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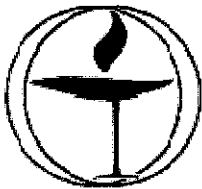


Picture Book U.U. Identity: Psalm Twenty-Three

Take Home Page

Today we read, **Psalm Twenty-Three** by Tim Ladwig. The text of the familiar psalm comparing God to a loving shepherd accompanies illustrations which show the world of love and fear faced by an urban African-American family.

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