

Community and Living Well Together

Aim: To remember that God calls everyone to reach out to others in love and forgiveness bringing reconciliation, so that everyone can live well together as a community of God's people.

Gathering:

As everyone gathers try to display the picture of the Statue of Reconciliation in Londonderry. Invite them to think about what they think the statue might be about.

Light candle: (Say together words in bold)

Jesus said, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself'/**Help us to care for, love and forgive one another**

Ask people to comment on the statue with such questions as: I wonder what can you see in the statue? I wonder what you think it might be about? I wonder why you think it might have been created?

At this stage don't tell them anything more about the statue.

Engaging:

1. Invite 3 children to the front to help you. Give the three of them different names. As you tell the story about these 3 invite the children to show what they might be doing and then 'freeze frame'.
 - a. These 3 are playing happily together in the playground. Freeze frame.
 - b. 2 of them start to argue and fight. The other one stands back to watch. Freeze frame.
 - c. The one child feels very sad but when he/she goes to church they hear someone say, 'Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children' and they sing a song about God calling us to make friends. The child (name) knows what they must do. Freeze frame.
 - d. The next day one of the teachers (name one!) was looking out of the window at playtime – what do you think she/he saw? (You might ask the teacher you choose to say what they think they would see or invite the children to say.) The 3 children then show what was happening. Freeze frame.
2. Ask children to comment about what was going on in this story with reflections such as: I wonder what the best thing is that someone did in this story? I wonder what difference that person made to the friendship between the 3 of them?
3. Explain that there are lots of things that Jesus said that we don't often really think about in school but they are very important things. Some of them are special sayings called Beatitudes. One of those Beatitudes is this 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'. Jesus knew that people were not always going to get on well together and there would be times when people would argue and fight but he wanted his people to be

peacemakers, to bring people together again when they had fallen out. Jesus wanted people to live well together and to live as a community where people care for each other and love each other and forgive each other when they get things wrong.

Responding

Invite everyone to look at the picture of the statue again. Ask how they think this statue might link with what we have been exploring in our worship. (After receiving comments, you might explain that this statue is in a town in Northern Ireland and for many years people there were arguing and fighting each other and when all that stopped someone designed and made this statue to show that what people really wanted was to reach out to each other in forgiveness and love and to live well together)

Reflection

Take a few moments to look at the statue again. Following a time of quiet reflection use the following wondering questions:

I wonder who you could reach out to today to show forgiveness?

I wonder what you could do in our school to help us all live well together?

I wonder if there is someone you could be a friend to and show them God's love?

Sending

Invite everyone to reach out their left arm to the front and to the side to rest it on the shoulder of the person next to them. Bring arms back down and then ask everyone to repeat words after you and reach out their arm – first to the front and then to the shoulder of the person next to them.

Help us to reach out (stretch arm out to front)

In love to one another (arm on shoulder of next person)

Help us to live well together (stretch both arms in front)

As God's people (raise arms)

Resources needed:

- Picture to display of the Statue of Reconciliation in Londonderry

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