

Sanctuary First

June 2012

Theme Summary

My Peace...

The scripture focus for this Sanctuary First is John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. let not your heart be troubled and do not be afraid."

The wider context of that text is Jesus' interweaving description of love as seen in the Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit, with the invitation to share in the hospitality of God's love (John 14:15-27) and to express that in loving one another.

We use sections from "The Shack", read on a professional audio track, to stimulate reflection on our images of God and the peace that comes from being embraced in God's love.

Setting the Scene

Setting the Scene of welcome into the hospitality of God

- gentle instrumental music in the background and some aromatic candles burning.
- Seats in a circle to the right of the chancel in front of the lectern.

In the other half of the sanctuary area, mark out with tape and candles the triquetra, the Celtic symbol of the Trinity with the overlapping elliptical shapes.

The Communion Table is set with Bread and Wine, three candles and the image of the famous icon of the Trinity by Rublev - welcoming us into the hospitality of God.

Set colourful cushions around the area where people may sit or relax - create a comfortable space.

Item	Notes
PRESENTER:	Explain the "heart and soul" theme for the series and how we are focusing on texts which live in the heart and so can be passed from one generation to another. We are sharing in God's cause to share his love with the world.
VIDEO:	"Do You Hear the People Sing"
PRAYER:	Prayer of Presence and Peace (see attached)
MUSIC:	Calm me Lord, as you calm the storm (Margaret Rizza)
PRESENTER:	<p>"The Shack" is a popular novel which, in recent years has given people some fresh insights into the nature of God.</p> <p>In line with our overall theme of passing on the faith to the next generation The Shack was written for the author's children.</p> <p>"This story was written for my children: Chad - the Gentle Deep Nicholas - the Tender Explorer Andrew - the Kind hearted Affection Amy - the Joyful Knower Alexandra (Lexi) - the Shining Power Matthew - the Becoming Wonder</p> <p>And dedicated first To Kim, my Beloved, thank you for saving my life</p> <p>And second to '...all us stumblers who believe Love rules. Stand up and let it shine."</p> <p>We invite people to get into a comfortable position to listen to part of the story - using the cushions on the floor if you prefer.</p> <p>Once people are comfortable, explain that the author (Mack) has experienced a deep tragedy in his life. He is going in search of God, and finds himself at the door of a Shack.....</p>
AUDIO TRACK:	The Shack - part one (<i>Mack's first encounter</i>)

Item	Notes
DISCUSSION GROUPS:	<p>What images of God were offered in the story?</p> <p>How did you react to them? What was helpful? What was off-putting? Why?</p> <p>What is your dominant image of God? What does that mean for your relationship with God?</p> <p>[It may be helpful to offer people a sheet of some Biblical images of God (see attached sheet).</p> <p>Alternatively, you may prefer to let people speak more freely out of their own experience and imaginations.</p>
SONG:	CH4 771 (If you believe and I believe) or CH4 760 (Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo)
AUDIO TRACK:	The Shack - part two (something has gone wrong in the kitchen... something is broken...)
BIBLE READING:	John 14:15-27
REFLECTION SPACES:	<p>Jesus is inviting us to join in the relationship with the Trinity - from the earliest centuries compared to a dance (Greek: perichoresis), like the interweaving of a ceilidh dance that can include everyone, old or young.</p> <p>1. Spend time walking round the Triquetra in silence imagining the Father Son and Spirit in a dance. Realise that you are walking in the love of God. Listen to the Trinity inviting you to join in. What happens? Where do you dance to?</p> <p>2. Use the paper and pens to draw your own image of the Trinity - and where you fit in. e.g. think of the trinity as a triangle, and we were like a square on one side, or another triangle within it or.....</p> <p>3. If you are meeting to talk, share with each other who is your favourite member of the Trinity. Why is that? What is your relationship with that member of the Trinity? How do you fit into God's purposes?</p> <p>Indicate that we will gather from our different activities when we hear the words of the Taize song "Eat this bread, drink this cup".....</p>

Item	Notes
SONG:	<p>CH4 661 - Taize song "Eat this bread, drink this cup" Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.</p>
COMMUNION:	<p>Whatever liturgy is followed, we suggest instead of bread and wine being offered by one person or handed round from person to person, you invite individuals to take a piece of bread and offer it to a person on whom you want to pray Christ's peace and say: "The peace of Christ be with you."</p> <p>The common cup(s) can then be shared in a circle as sign that we are all united in the one cup through the blood of Christ.</p>
BLESSING:	<p>(This Jewish song can be sung in a circle doing a simple weaving sideways step)</p> <p>Note: L'hitra'ot ="until seeing each other"</p> <p>Shalom chaverim Shalom, chaverim, Shalom, shalom; L'hitra'ot, L'hitra'ot, Shalom, shalom.</p> <p>Shalom, o my friends, Shalom, o my friends, Shalom, shalom; Till we meet again, Till we meet again, Shalom, shalom.</p>

Prayer for Presence and Peace

(Two voices and three candles)

Voice 1 In the name of God the Father,
 running to welcome us as we hesitate
 throwing around us the everlasting arms of love
 celebrating our presence here.
 God our Father, You are here.
 (A candle is lit while Voice 2 speaks.)

Voice 2 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
 I do not give as the world gives.
 Do not let your heart be troubled
 and do not be afraid.

Voice 1 In the name of God the Son,
 eating and laughing
 healing and forgiving
 dying and rising.
 Jesus, Son of God, You are here.
 (A candle is lit while Voice 2 speaks.)

Voice 2 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
 I do not give as the world gives.
 Do not let your heart be troubled
 and do not be afraid.

Voice 1 In the name of God the Spirit,
 Life-Giving Breath of God
 Coming like a Gentle Dove or Wild Wind
 Around us, between us and within us.
 Holy Spirit of God, You are here.
 (A candle is lit while Voice 2 speaks.)

Voice 2 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
 I do not give as the world gives.
 Do not let your heart be troubled
 and do not be afraid.

Voice 1 God of peace,
 known as Father
 revealed in the Son
 experienced by the Spirit,
 we welcome You among us. AMEN

Biblical Images of God

Creator	Hovering Spirit	Companion	Visiting Stranger	Listener		
Promise-maker	Promise-keeper	Wrestler	Communicator	Provider		
Fellow-traveller	Guide	King	Rock	Son	Dove	
Law-giver	Blessor	Curser	Whisperer	Saviour	Deliverer	
Leaping like a Gazelle	Gathering like a mother hen		Protecting like a mother eagle			
Lover	Husband	Potter	Father	Shepherd	Farmer	
Judge	Shield	Fortress	Redeemer	Fire	Spirit	Holy
Destroying	Inviting	Waiting	Coming	Singing	Consuming Fire	
More generous than a father		More faithful than a mother				

1. Circle the images that are most helpful for you. Why?

2. Underline the images that you find most difficult. Why?

3. Note any other Biblical images of God that you find helpful.