

Worship guide

Scripture texts

Ephesians 2:11-22
Luke 10:25-37
James 3:13-18

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Children's time

Tell the parable of the Good Samaritan. Consider doing this as a drama, or using a [video like the one](#) posted on YouTube.

Sermon starters

As human beings, it is our natural tendency to classify and separate ourselves from those who are different from us. That classification and separation takes all forms: gender, age, race, ethnicity, education, socio-economic, religion ... and the list goes on. These classifications can cause discomfort, fear, and even harm depending on one's location and situation. Racial violence is still a difficult subject and a painful reality for many. Refugees and immigrants seeking safe places and ways to support and protect their families are rejected and deported back to their home countries because of fear of the foreigner.

Even during Christ's time, there were societal tensions, particularly between the Jews and the Samaritans, and the Jews and the Gentiles. Yet with Christ's birth, and later during his ministry, the outcast and the foreigners also received the good news. In Ephesians 2, Paul reminds us that through Christ's blood, the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile has been destroyed, and we are all now one humanity. We are no longer strangers to each other, but now joined together spiritually, forming Christ's new humanity. For this reason, let us continue to seek justice for the oppressed, and peace and reconciliation for those in conflict, so that all may know Christ and know God's love and peace.

Take time to consider how God has called us to love and care for all people, for each one of us is a part of God's creation and Christ's new humanity. Who is the neighbor God is calling you to love and care for?

In addition, consider the video resource, *Jesus Wasn't White*, produced by Mennonite Mission Network. This video reminds us that racism is deeply rooted in our nation and impacts how we treat one another. This video might

be helpful as you prepare during the week; it could be used in the worship service, or during the Sunday school hour.

Either text, Luke 10 or Ephesians 2, can be used for the message. The key for this Sunday's message is that through Christ we are made one, a new humanity where all belong. Our response to this is to love one another and care for each other regardless of our differences.

Worship resources

Call to worship

Leader: We gather as pilgrims on a journey of faith.

People: We come seeking the cloud of your presence as we travel the way. We come seeking your pillar of fire to light our darkness.

All: Shine in our hearts, O God, with the light of your love. Make your presence known through Jesus the Christ. AMEN.

Songs from *Voices Together*:

- No. 797 "We Are People of God's Peace"
- No. 390 "In Christ There Is No East or West"
- No. 714 "Let There Be Light, Lord God"
- No. 556 "I Bind My Heart This Tide"
- No. 787 "O Day of Peace"
- No. 409 "For We Are Strangers No More"
- No. 719 "Jesus help us live in peace"
- No. 838 "The peace of the earth be with you"
- No. 388 "How can I say"

Confession/words of assurance

(Based on James 3:13-18, NRSV)

Reader 1: Who is wise and understanding among us?

Leader: Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.

Reader 2: And if we have bitter envy and selfish ambition in our hearts?

Leader: Do not be boastful and false to the truth.

Reader 1: This kind of wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.

Reader 2: *For where there is envy and selfish ambition there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.*

Leader: But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

Leader, Readers 1 & 2: And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

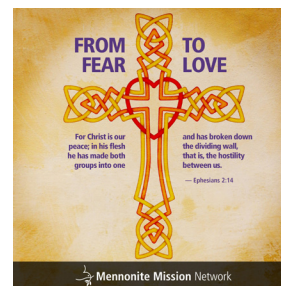
Benediction and sending song

May you seek wisdom from above so that you may make peace and show love with all you meet.

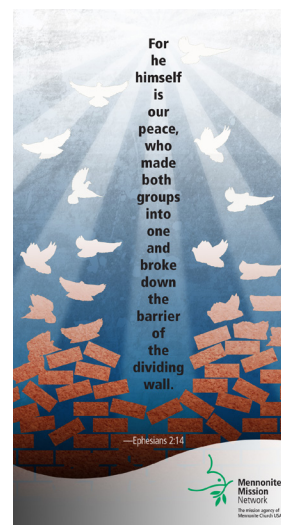
- No. 835 "Go now in peace"

Downloadable scripture graphics

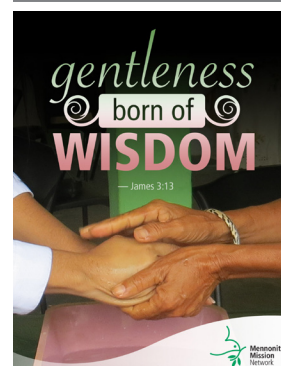
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[Ephesians 2:14](#)



[Ephesians 2:14](#)



[James 3:13](#)

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