

# WORKING WITH OTHERS

## This Lesson's Goals

- » *To find ways to walk gently over the Earth speaking to that of God in everyone and responding to that of God in everything*
- » *To encourage ourselves and others to live simply*
- » *To praise and affirm those who act in caring ways toward the Earth*
- » *To remind ourselves of the many ways we can have a positive effect on the environment*
- » *To share our discoveries with Friends, families, and community*

## Sample Agenda

Posting a simple agenda can help both the teachers and the children stay on track.

- 1. Opening:** Silent Worship, Share Quote, Song, Scripture
- 2. Activity:** Heavy Living
- 3. Small Group Activities**
- 4. Closing**
- 5. Sharing Take-Home Page**

## Opening [5-10 min.]

As you come to the final sessions of activities, find ways for the children to recall the previous lessons and all they know about Earthcare.

There may be activities from earlier chapters you wish to include here as repeats or because they were skipped then due to season, time, space, people, etc.

## Songs

Simple Gifts  
Inch by Inch, Row by Row  
When I Needed a Neighbor, Were You There?  
That Cause Can Neither Be Lost nor Stayed  
God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heaven  
The Spacious Firmament on High

## Scripture

### **Psalms 19: 1-4**

The heavens tell out the glory of God,  
the vault of heaven reveals his handiwork.  
One day speaks to another,  
night with night shares its knowledge,  
and this without speech or language  
or sound of any voice.  
Their music goes out through all the earth,  
their words reach to the end of the world.

## Heavy Living

Ask the children to give examples of activities that would typify wasteful or “heavy” living. (“Heavy” living means using much more than your share of the Earth’s resources.)

- » *How does living lightly or gently differ from heavy living?*
- » *How can technology encourage both lighter and heavier living?*
- » *How can we spread the word about the wonder of creation, our place in it, and what we must do to care for the Earth?*

## Small Group Activities

Select three or four of these activities, giving consideration to the age and size of your group.  
Useful reference books: *Planet Patrol: A Kids’ Action Guide to Earth Care* and *Kids Care!: 75 ways to make a difference for People Animals, and the Environment*.

### **1. Heavy Living Scenes [5-15]**

Review some of the examples of heavy living given in the group sharing. Add some more. Act out some Earth-damaging activities. Then ask them to act out the contrasting scene of living lightly, or ecologically in the same situation.

### **2. Letters of Thanks [10-15]**

**Materials:** Use e-mail to save paper or make post cards or note paper with leaf prints or sun prints or make marbled paper and fold your own envelopes. Pens, markers, crayons, stamps

Identify individuals or groups or businesses that have helped the environment. Internet web pages, magazines, and newspapers are good sources of information. Focus on local people. Write thank-you messages to the “good guys.” Tell them how much you appreciate their efforts.

### 3. The Nut Game [10-15]

**Materials:** Bowl with nuts for everyone

With a bowl of shelled peanuts, [allergy alert] cashews, or almonds in the center of your circle, ask each person to tell something he or she does to preserve the environment. Each person who now follows that practice gets to take and eat one nut. Play until everyone has eaten enough or the nuts are gone.

This may substitute for Snack. You may want to allow good intentions to count for getting nuts. If you have nut sensitive people choose a different small treat. •

“It were Happy  
if we studied  
Nature more in  
natural Things; and  
acted according  
to Nature; whose  
rules are few,  
plain and most  
reasonable.”  
– William Penn

### 4. Origami [15]

**Materials:** Previously used paper cut in squares. You want thin paper that holds a crease and doesn't tear easily. Old phone books, wrappings from gifts, Sunday funnies, magazine pages, foil gum wrappers, and correspondence, all can be used if flattened and cut square.

Children (especially first to third graders) need to start with larger pieces of paper and simpler forms before cranes. You may tell the story of Sadako, and learn about children's peace gardens. Or you can let the folding continue quietly as you read other books.

Ask someone with this skill to come teach you and the class how to fold origami cranes and other designs from nature. Look for designs of local or endangered species. Sending home origami napkin rings may help families convert from paper to cloth napkins.

### 5. Encouraging Others [15-30]

Using ideas from the Nut Game or Heavy Living, think of how to show people practical ways of changing their lives to make an environmental difference.

A play or skit could be rehearsed and presented to friends and families. It could be video-taped. Use it for the closing today.

Invite the children to make posters, bumper stickers, or banners which might interest magazines such as Owl, Ranger Rick, or BeFriending Creation. Submit several.

## 6. Witness Discussion [5-10]

Collect information from newspapers, magazines, or the Internet about people such as Wangari Maathai in Kenya, Jack Ross, a Canadian Quaker, or Diane Wilson [see Nobody Particular] who have put their lives or reputations “on the line” for environmental causes.

Is there a local activist you can invite to your class? Is there a young Friend or local high school student who has chosen a public witness relevant to your community. Discuss the issues and principles, the methods employed, and the results.

Consider which issues might move your group to action and what form of action your witness might take. Are there any actions currently happening that your group or community could join in or show its support of?

Is Earthcare recognized as a testimony in your Yearly Meeting? If so, lead a discussion with your group. What recommendations would your children make to them? How might these recommendations be shared? An Epistle and/or a presentation at your Annual Sessions?

## 7. The Earth Charter [10-15]

The Earth Charter is an important international statement that embodies many values and principles held by Friends. Print out a copy of the Charter to read the principles (perhaps not every subsection) with the children. Projects could include having a child or a pair of children make an illustration for each item and create an exhibit, singing the Charter and then endorsing it officially online.

- » *Helpful resources here: <[earthcharter.org/discover](http://earthcharter.org/discover)>*
- » *Raffi song about the Earth Charter <[youtube.com/watch?v=3rexBvopdC4](http://youtube.com/watch?v=3rexBvopdC4)>*
- » *<[www.littleearthcharter.org/LEC\\_home.html](http://www.littleearthcharter.org/LEC_home.html)>*
- » *There are action steps for youth activities also available here: <[earthcharter.org/youth](http://earthcharter.org/youth)>*

## 8. Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice [10-15]

Share the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice from Page 6. This Call was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the Friends World Committee on Consultation World Consultation on Global Change which was held in 2010 and 2011.

Ask for reactions and responses to the text. How might we respond to the call? Invite the children to write their own call for peace and ecojustice. Share with your meeting.

## 9. Earth Saints/Heroes [10-15]

Remember that heroes for the Earth are not just modern-day activists. Find biographies and read aloud about one or more Earth Saints. Here's a list to start with:

Rachael Carson  
Teresa of Avila  
Wallace Stegner  
Walt Whitman  
John Muir  
Loren Eilsey  
Bill McKibben

Aldo Leopold  
E. F. Schumacher  
Henry David Thoreau  
Wangari Maathai  
Diane Wilson  
Al Gore  
Bertha Cáceres

### Closing [10]

If this is your last class, gather everyone around the site of one of the children's projects after rise of Meeting: The bird feeder or wind chimes they put up, the tree they planted, the recycling bins they set up, and their special plot or garden or planter box.

Especially invite all the teachers and others who helped with this program, the folks who joined you on field trips, etc. [A public relations opportunity for First Day School!]

- » *Thank people who helped the children learn about Earthcare.*
- » *Ask the children to present something from the program: a skit, pictures, a movement circle, etc. to show how Earthcare can improve their lives or something they learned.*
- » *Take this opportunity to summarize the activities you have done in the past weeks. Recall your favorite ones.*
- » *Underscore how our care for the Earth is related to our love of the Creator and the creation, and that we are called to walk gently over the Earth, answering that of God in everything.*
- » *Close with worship.*

Thanks, Friends!

# The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice

*The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the FWCC World Consultation on Global Change which was held in 2010 and 2011. It is being circulated with the Conference Epistle.*

In past times God's Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, "As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me". We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children's heritage

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

- » *We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.*
- » *We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?" (Job 38:4)*
- » *We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.*
- » *We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.*
- » *We dedicate ourselves to let the living waters flow through us – where we live, regionally, and in wider world fellowship. We dedicate ourselves to building the peace that passeth all understanding, to the repair of the world, opening our lives to the Light to guide us in each small step.*

Bwana asifiwe. A pu Dios Awqui. Gracias Jesús. Jubilé. Salaam aleikum. Migwetch.  
 Tikkun olam. Alleluia!