

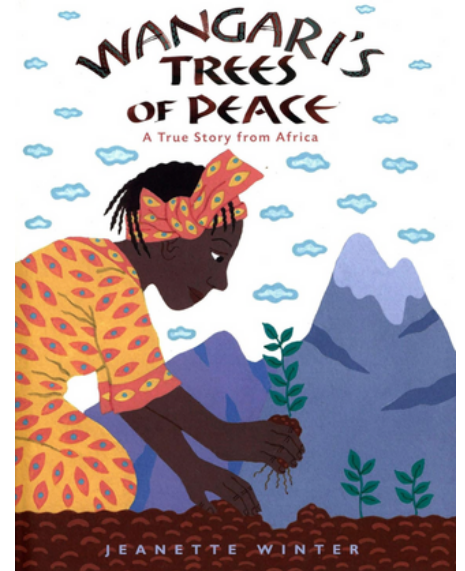
THE PRESCHOOL CONNECTION

WEST OHIO CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Wangari's Trees of Peace

Wangari Maathai was born in 1940 in Ihithe, a small village in the verdant, fertile land of Kenya. Each day she marveled at the umbrella of green trees that surrounded her village in the shadow of Mount Kenya as she walked alongside her mother to gather firewood for cooking. She talked to the birds in the trees and helped harvest the sweet potatoes, sugarcane, and maize from the rich soil. Wangari was brilliant in school and was awarded a scholarship to attend college in America. When she returned to her homeland of Kenya as a young woman, she was devastated to see that all the trees had been cut down and the land was barren. Crops were gone and women had to walk great distances to gather firewood for their survival. That's when Wangari decided that she could make a difference – one



seedling at a time. Soon Wangari began paying other women to plant and tend tree seedlings in their community to improve the soil and provide income for their families to buy food and other necessities. What began as one young woman's single effort to care for the earth quickly grew into the Green Belt Movement which is still actively working today throughout Kenya and around the world. By 2004, thirty million trees had been planted and the lives of many women and their families were changed in marvelous ways. When Wangari was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for the difference she had made in the lives of millions, she planted a Nandi flame tree at the base of Mount Kenya and said, "We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own – indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder." How can your preschoolers celebrate this story? What does it look like to create a tree in your classroom? How can you share peace one small seedling at a time? Please share your responses with us.

Peaceful & Serene vs. Loud & Noisy



Supplies: peaceful music, baking sheet, pans, or other kitchen items for your kids to use as instruments, spoon or whisk. Turn on a very peaceful song and listen to it with your kids. When the song is over invite your kids to use the kitchen items. Tell them that now they get to play their own song with their kitchen instruments. After they have finished playing their song, gather the items. Sit down and talk about which song was more peaceful. What made it peaceful? Talk about how God gives us peace so we can be calm just like the first song.

Water Table Boats

Supplies: Pool Noodle, Plastic Straws, Foam Sheet, Scissors, Hole Punch, Water Table

Instructions:

Use scissors (or a knife) to cut the pool noodle into 2-3" slices.

Cut triangles out of the foam sheet and punch a hole at the top and the bottom.

Put the straw through the two holes (to make the sail).

Cut the straw to your desired length and then poke into the pool noodle.

Fill a large bin with water in your backyard (add blue food coloring if you want) & add the boats —use your hand to create waves in the water and reenact how Jesus calmed the storm. (Mark 4:35-41) Use the Rhyme Bible or Deep Blue or Spark Bible to tell the story.



Yoga for Kids



[Free printable yoga cards here](#)

What is more peaceful than a room full of preschoolers doing yoga poses? Practice letters or animals names and sounds. There are a multitude of choices. Children can experience the peace of movement and quiet as they practice twisting their bodies into the different shapes.

Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr

Martin Luther King, Jr was a visionary leader who championed civil rights, equality, and justice for all people. This simple yet meaningful craft creates a garland of peace signs, symbolizing the harmony and unity Martin Luther King Jr. advocated for.

1. Materials Needed: Paper plates, scissors, string, markers, and hole punch.
2. Cut the center out of paper plates to create circular peace signs.
3. Use markers to decorate the peace signs with colorful designs and symbols of unity.
4. Punch holes at the top of each peace sign and thread string through the holes to make a garland.
5. Hang the garland in a classroom, at home, or at a Martin Luther King Jr. event.



Serving

On Monday, January 20 United Methodists from all over Ohio will be serving in their community. Where can you families serve in your community?

More Stuff

Singing

[Peace Like a River Here](#)



If you have ideas that would be helpful for other preschool staff members or are looking for more resources on a specific topic, please email us and we will include your ideas in future editions of The Preschool Connection.

jcarter@wocumc.org or amcarley@wocumc.org