

Helping Kids Navigate Our Pluralistic World

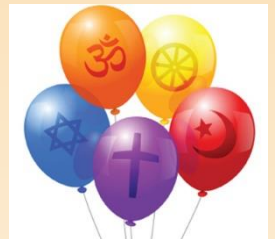
Parliament of the World's Religions

October 17-18, 2021



Rev. Vicki Garlock, Ph.D.
Founder, Faith Seeker Kids

Edwina Cowell
Founder, Spiritual Playdate



Globalization

Tourism

25 million

1.5 billion

Intermarriage

13%

27%

40%



Governments Impinging on Religious Practice

56 countries with “high” or “very high” scores

Religiously-Motivated Harassment

90% of world’s countries

1500 hate crimes in U.S. in 2019

Where Does This Leave Kids?

Heart-Centered Education

Information about World's Religions

Age-Appropriate Resources for All Ages



How Can We Do That?

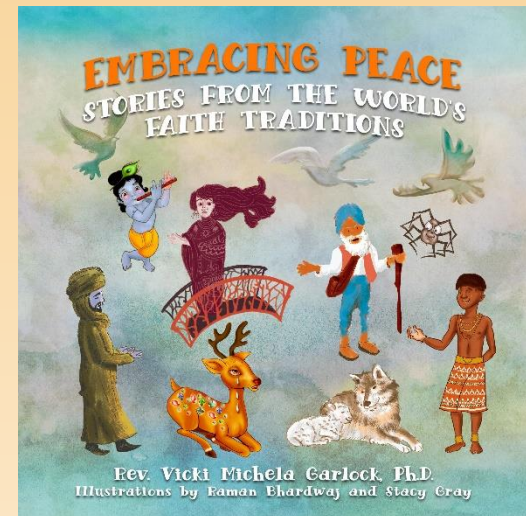
Faith Seeker Kids



Embracing Peace: Stories from the World's Faith Traditions

16 Peace-Related Stories

8 Faith Traditions



What's Included?

Front Matter

What is peace? Why story? Where stories come from?

Sub-Saharan African (Wiser-than-the King, Anansi)

Native American (Midwest and Pacific NW)

Hindu (Varaha, Krishna)

Buddhist (Jataka tales – Ruru, Quail King)

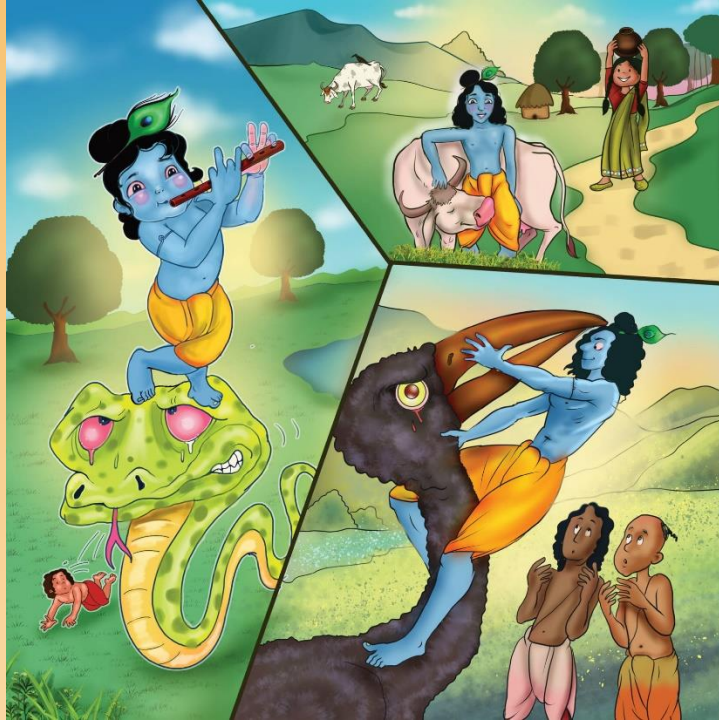
Jewish (Isaiah, Hasidic)

Christian (Jesus – Do Not Worry, Jesus Heals)

Islamic (Prophet Muhammad – Black Stone, Hudaybiyyah)

Sikh (Bhai Sud, Guru Gobind Singh)





Krishna Brings Peace to the World

Hello! It's Vishnu again! You might not recognize me because I've taken yet another form, but my job is always the same – to preserve and protect the universe. When the world is at war, which is often the case, I restore peace and harmony.

As you know, I don't appear on earth very often, but it has happened a few times over the course of my very, **very, very** long history. You've already heard about the time I appeared as a boar, but you might also remember that I've appeared as a fish, a tortoise, a human warrior, and a creature that was half-man/half-lion.

This time around, I'm a boy named Krishna.

My enemy is Kamsa {kahn-suh}, a powerful and greedy demon king. He loved to punish people when they refused to follow his commands. Even the way he became king was truly wicked. He overthrew his father, the peaceful king, Ugrasena {oo-grah-seh-nuh}, and hid him away in the dungeons!

Clearly, something needed to be done about Kamsa and his out-of-control behavior.

Do you think God ever appears to people?
If so, what does that look like? How do
you know when God is appearing?

3



Long ago, a voice from the heavens warned that Kamsa would eventually be killed by his sister's son. That's why I had to be born as a little boy.

Kamsa did everything he could to prevent my birth, but with a little help from the other heavenly deities, I arrived – the eighth child of my mother. Since my mother was Kamsa's sister, I was in the perfect position to defeat Kamsa and fulfill the prophecy.

As it turned out, I was a very handsome and charming young lad. The other boys admired me for my strength and cleverness, and all the girls thought I was adorable. We were cowherds, which meant we spent our

days working with the cows in the pastures. In our spare time, we engaged in a fair bit of mischief.

Many Hindu artists show both Vishnu and Krishna with blue-colored skin. Can you guess what that might mean? Can you think of any other things in nature that are blue?

For example, we all loved the taste of butter. Sometimes, we would even run through the village and steal it for a tasty snack. If I got caught, I would put on my cute face. Even my mother couldn't punish me then!

Butter is Krishna's favorite food.
What's your favorite food?

4

became clear that either Kamsa would kill me or I would kill him. Too bad Kamsa didn't know that Krishna was really I, the great Lord Vishnu, in disguise. And gods like me are not so easily killed.

Do you like the color of your skin? Or would you like to have skin of a different color?

The sky and the ocean are often blue. They are both so big it's hard to know where they begin and end! Some say Vishnu is colored blue to remind us that he also has no beginning and no end.

Interestingly, when it came time for us to battle, Kamsa didn't even try to defeat me himself. Instead, he turned to his squad of demon friends. The first demon arrived when I was just an infant, but I sucked the life right out of her, and she was dead in no time.

Several years later, Kamsa called on the demon Vatsasura {vahn-sah-sir-uh}. By then, I was old enough to work in the fields with my brother and our friends.

Vatsasura took advantage of this by turning himself into a calf and joining our herd. This was especially tricky since calves are usually good-natured and sweet.

"I will behave like a charming calf, running and playing with all the other calves," Vatsasura thought to himself. "Then, when Krishna tries to pet me, I will stomp him to smithereens!"



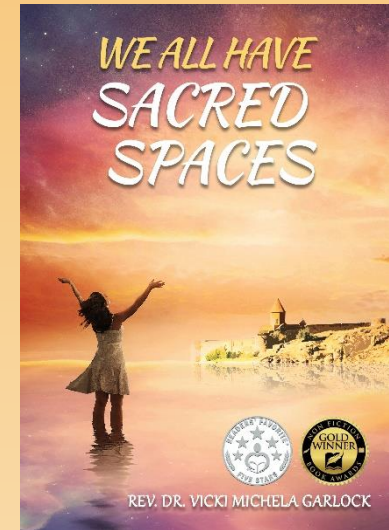
5

Other Resources

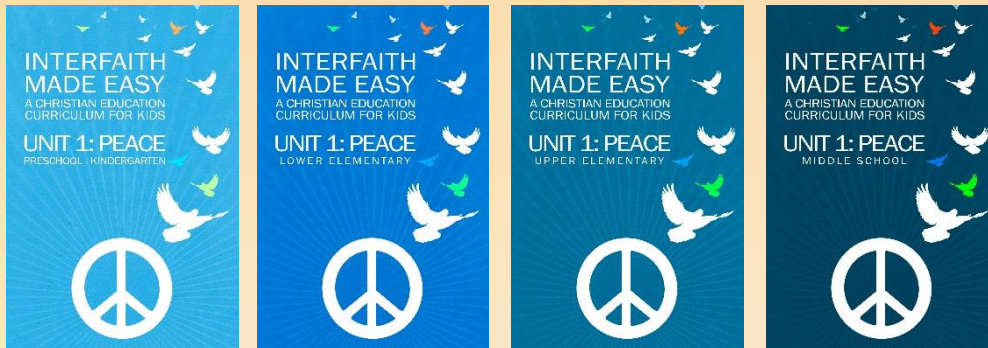
We All Have Sacred Spaces

Indigenous, Hindu, Buddhist,
Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and Sikh

Tomorrow 10AM EDT



Interfaith Made Easy: Unit #1 Peace



Countervailing Extremism
Tomorrow 1:45PM EDT

Faith Seeker Kids Products

[Embracing Peace: Stories from the World's Faith Traditions](#)

(Eaton Press, 2021). 16 peace stories from 8 faith traditions.

[We All Have Sacred Spaces](#) (Eaton Press, 2020). Worship spaces – exterior and interior – from 7 faith traditions.

- 2021 Bronze Independent Publisher/"IPPY" Award, Multicultural Non-Fiction Juvenile/YA
- 2020 Gold Winner, Nonfiction Authors Association
- 2020 Finalist, Best Book Awards, Kids' Non-Fiction and Kids' Religious categories
- Five-Star Review, Readers' Favorites

[Interfaith Made Easy: Unit #1 Peace](#) (Possibilities Publishing, 2018-2019)

- 4 Volumes for 4 age groups (Preschool-Kind., Lower Elem., Upper Elem., Middle School)
- 15 lesson plans in each volume (age-appropriate prompts, story, craft, activity)
- Available in digital and hardcopy formats
- No advance training needed. Learn along with the kids!
- Includes suggestions for opening and closing rituals, community service projects, and more!