



Building a Neighborhood Together

An Intergenerational Peacemaking Project

BY VERA K. WHITE

with Hedda Sharapan

Second Edition updated by Vickie Caro Dieth



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History

This resource originally debuted in 1996 as a collaboration between the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and Family Communications, Inc. (now Fred Rogers Productions), the producers of “Mister Rogers Neighborhood.” It is based upon a “neighborhood build” that Hedda Sharapan, one of the producers, had first organized in a Presbyterian church in Birmingham, Alabama in 1973. As an “ambassador” for Fred Rogers and his Neighborhood, Ms. Sharapan subsequently conducted neighborhood builds across the country in cities, suburbs and small towns. She held



them in churches, on college campuses, in civic organizations and on community playgrounds. This curriculum was developed by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program in conjunction with Family Communications to bring this intergenerational neighborhood build experience to the congregations of the Presbyterian Church (USA). For decades and now generations this timeless resource has helped young and old alike explore the ingredients of authentic community and the qualities of genuine neighborliness.



Contributors

HEDDA SHARAPAN served with Fred Rogers Productions, and before that Family Communications, Inc., for 52 years. She currently serves as a child development consultant for the company’s award-winning PBS KIDS series *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood* and other projects. Over the years she served as Assistant Director, Assistant Producer, Associate Producer, and Director of Early Childhood Initiatives for Rogers’ non-profit production company. Hedda continues to be a highly sought-after speaker

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at conferences around the country, helping audiences reflect on Fred Rogers' messages.

VERA K. WHITE was the original writer of this resource. After a long career inspiring and supporting church planters, Vera retired and spends as much time as possible in her garden and at the pottery studio. She learned everything she knows about building neighborhoods in Mr. Rogers' own neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

FLORENCE JOHNSON served as a consultant for this resource. She is a retired public primary school teacher from Pittsburgh, a mother of three and grandmother of four. She is a former vice-moderator of Pittsburgh Presbytery and chair of the Social and Racial Justice Committee of the Synod of the Trinity.

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VICKIE CARO DIETH updated this resource for its second edition. She is a Christian educator in the PC(USA) and has served churches in Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and Georgia. She lives in Columbus, Georgia, where she is the Director of Educational Ministries at First Presbyterian Church.

CARL HORTON served as the editor for the second edition. He is the Coordinator of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and Interim Coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP). He is a teaching elder member of Mid-Kentucky Presbytery.





Before You Begin

This resource describes the process for building a neighborhood out of boxes and other everyday household supplies. It is an activity *for* all ages and all kinds of families working together. The Neighborhood Build is based on Fred Rogers' ideas about relationships, creative play, pride in making things, family communication, and community.

Building a neighborhood can be done in a little over four hours using the following schedule:

Gathering and Introduction	45 minutes
Building a Neighborhood	2 hours
Cleanup	15 minutes
Meal	30 minutes
Closure Activities	45 minutes

There are a number of ways to use this resource. Suggested schedules are provided for using this Neighborhood Build for:

- a morning program including lunch
- an afternoon and evening program including dinner
- a weekend intergenerational retreat
- a week-long intergenerational Vacation Bible School

A Neighborhood Build is also an ideal project for a multiracial, multid denominational, or multifaith community group. With certain adaptations it can be used in classrooms or community centers. One word of caution in adapting this resource is that younger children (5 to 7 years old) will need the help of older children, teenagers, or adults if you are not working in family units.

Neighborhood Building and Mister Rogers

The concept of Neighborhood Building originated with Hedda Sharapan who worked with *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. However, connecting the program with *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* may make some people mistakenly think this is a preschool activity. The people in your congregation and community may enjoy knowing that these activities originated with Family Communications, Inc. (now Fred Rogers Productions), and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, but be sure to promote it as a neighborhood build for all ages and stages of life.

Some Thoughts about “Family/Household” Groups

People will be working on the Neighborhood Build in family/household groups. As they work together, they will have experiences of cooperation, sharing, and problem-solving that can help with everyday peacemaking in their homes. A household of two can easily complete the project but may prefer to work with another small household group.

A person who participates as a “family/household of one” may choose to form a group with others or offer to work with a household that has young children. Be attentive as a leader to help all participants be included in a group.

A Neighborhood Build is for all ages. Adults with infants and toddlers may appreciate having child care available while the Neighborhood Build is going on. If they feel comfortable including their young children, they will need to give them close supervision.



Planning for a Neighborhood Build

Building a neighborhood takes preparation and requires gathering of household and throwaway materials. Make sure you begin early with your planning.

It is best to recruit a planning team and to decide on one or two people to be the overall facilitators of the event. The planning team and facilitators should read all of this material beginning to plan. There are several different leadership tasks that you can assign to the people who agree to help.

OVERALL PROGRAM FACILITATOR

The facilitator will lead the group through the introduction and help to stimulate ideas during the building time. The facilitator pays attention to time, announcing when it is time to clean up or to break for a meal, and leading the closure activities. While the building is going on, children may need some direction. The facilitator can make suggestions such as:

- working on the insides of the buildings (making curtains, wallpaper, cash register, books, paper money, furniture, telephone, and so forth.)

- building a vehicle out of smaller boxes (police car, ambulance, delivery truck, and so forth)
- passing the trash can around the room to collect garbage

SUPPLY COORDINATOR

People in the congregation can collect the supplies on the list, but you will need to have one or two people in charge of coordinating, collecting, and storing supplies.

FOOD COORDINATOR

If you will be serving a meal, make sure that someone oversees planning, set up, and clean up. If you will be holding your Neighborhood Build in the morning, it is nice to offer a light breakfast of coffee, juice, muffins, or bagels as people gather.

If your Neighborhood Build will take place at a different time of the day, you may want to set up a snack table in the room where the building will take place. Offer healthy snacks such as fruit, pretzels, juice, raw vegetables, or crackers.

PAINT COORDINATOR

It is best to have one or two people who oversee the paint table on the day of the Neighborhood Build. These people may have to pour paints into containers, help mix colors, supervise paint distribution, and cleaning of brushes.



MUSIC LEADER (optional)

There are two songs, “Our Father Which Art in Heaven” can be found in the [Glory to God Hymnal #464](#), and “Peace and Quiet,” included in this resource for use during the Introduction and Closure Activities. The facilitator may want to obtain the recordings of the music or recruit a music leader to help the group learn the songs.

If you are doing a Neighborhood Build as an Inter-generational Vacation Bible School, you will have more opportunities for group singing. In that case, a music leader may be an important part of the leadership team.

LEADER FOR ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP (optional)

If you plan to include a discussion group for adults, the overall facilitator or another person can provide leadership.

Space Needed for a Neighborhood Build

It is ideal to have two separate rooms available for the program. The introduction is best scheduled in a room other than the one where the building will take place. The boxes and art supplies in the building room are so inviting that the children want to dig in right away. A smaller, carpeted room like a church school room, or meeting room that is large enough to accommodate the entire group without any extra running space is best.

The Neighborhood Build itself needs a large room such as a gymnasium or a fellowship hall. Each family/household group will need a space approximately 8-feet square for working. To protect the floors from paint, tape sturdy drop cloths to the floor with duct tape. You will need about five tables for supplies and snacks. You can work outside if weather permits, but beware of wind or rain. It is best to have an alternative space prepared in case of weather surprises.



Materials Needed for a Neighborhood Build

A. Materials Needed for Introduction

1. Name tags and markers
2. Paper and pencils
3. Whiteboard and dry-erase markers or newsprint and markers
4. Paper and crayons (optional)
5. Piano, guitar, or other musical instrument (optional)
6. Device for playing music and a speaker (optional, see page 31 for suggested musical recordings)
7. Book (optional): *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst
9. Coffee, juice, muffins, napkins, and so forth (optional)

B. Materials Needed for Building

1. Big cardboard boxes (containers for stoves, refrigerators, televisions, etc.)
You will need at least one large box for each participating group. Have a few extras because some families may want to join two boxes for a skyscraper or

a mall. Obtain boxes from stores that sell appliances, electronics, office furniture, or hardware. Call the stores first to find out when boxes might be available. Flatten for moving then put them together again with duct tape. Large boxes may also be purchased (or even donated) from moving companies. The boxes are essential for the Neighborhood Build, so start collecting early!

Adaptation: If large boxes are hard to find or too cumbersome to work with, some groups have created tabletop neighborhoods using repurposed shoe boxes or milk cartons. The build would progress much like the larger build, but on a smaller scale with adjustments on materials, tools and set up. (See “Tabletop Neighborhood” in the Additional Ideas section.)

2. Mat knives

These are the knives that hold razor blades. They are used for cutting doors, windows, and other features in the cardboard. People can share them, but it is best to have one available for each group. You may ask adults to bring their own as long as you have extras for those who don't have them. You could also recruit a few volunteers who might not otherwise participate to serve as “box cutters,” roaming from group to group as needed.

3. Tapes: duct, masking, cellophane

4. Paint brushes, sponge brushes, sponges, or a combination of these.

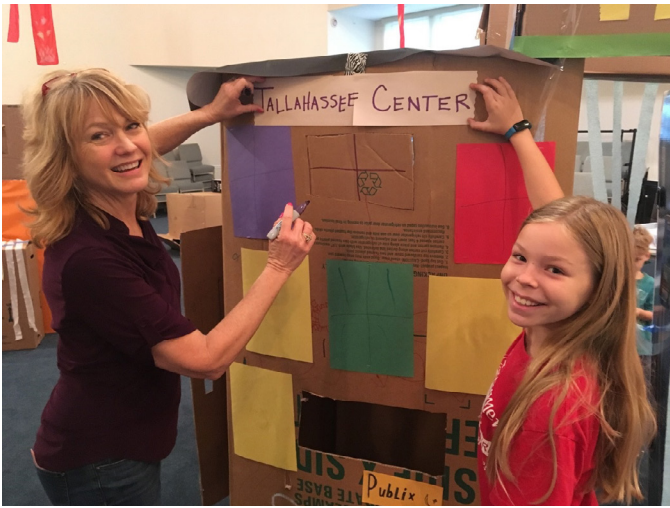
They should be 3 to 5 inches wide for painting large boxes. You will need to have at least one per person and some extras, too. You can buy packages of inexpensive sponges at a discount or grocery store and cut them to 4-inch widths. These are much cheaper than paint brushes. Sponges dipped in paint also can be used to make a brick-like effect.

5. Tempera paint

It is best to use premixed tempera. Powdered paint takes time and effort to mix, and it is hard to mix to the proper consistency.

Colors? Lots! but especially red, blue, green, white, brown, black, yellow, and purple.





How much? That's always a hard question. It depends on the thickness of the paint, the size of the boxes, and choices of colors, but experience shows that a gallon will cover at least 4 stove boxes. It is best to buy extra and return what is not used.

6. Paint containers

Leftover coffee cans or plastic food containers work well. The 2 lb. coffee size fits brushes and sponges best, but 1 lb. ones will work. Again, it is good to have extras so that people can mix colors.

7. Liquid dish washing detergent

Add this to the paint to make it more washable. Just squirt some into each container and mix well with the paint.

8. Paint stirrers

9. Paper towels for hand washing and drying

10. A bucket of water with detergent for hand washing

11. Glue

12. Scissors suitable for children and for adults

13. Thick magic markers, chalk, crayons

14. Staple guns and staples, glue guns, and glue sticks

15. Sturdy dropcloths to cover the floor

16. Odds 'n' Ends

People in your congregation can help collect these items. Begin collecting about two months in advance. Here are some ideas, but don't be limited by this list:

Egg cartons

Tubes from paper towels or toilet paper

Fabric samples

Wallpaper samples or ends of rolls

Plastic flowers

Christmas decorations

Boxes of various sizes (shoe, clothing, and so forth) mailing tubes

Styrofoam packing material

Yarn scraps

Tissue paper

Carpet samples
Magazines with pictures
Streamers
Cellophane
Construction paper

Suggest to the members of your congregation and especially participants that they put a bag next to their garbage cans as a place to gather “stuff” for the Neighborhood Build.

17. Paper and pencils for each build group to write a prayer at closing
18. Bibles
19. Camera or phone with camera (optional)

You can record the event and provide each household with a photo of their work. Consider recruiting someone to serve as the event photographer.

Preparing for a Neighborhood Build

- ① In the room that you will use for the Introduction, push all the furniture against the walls. Clear the floor to allow for sitting. (Or, if you are expecting participants who are not able to sit on the floor, arrange a few chairs on the side of the circle.) Set up an easel with newsprint or a whiteboard. Arrange name tags and markers on a table near the door. If you are meeting in the morning, you may want to set up a table for breakfast snacks.
- ② In the room where the Neighborhood Build will take place, fasten dropcloths to the floor with duct tape as protection from paint spills.
- ③ Tape the appliance boxes together at the edges if they were cut apart for transport. Arrange the boxes around the room in a U formation before participants arrive.
- ④ Pour tempera paints into containers and add a squirt of detergent to each. Mix well.
- ⑤ Set up tables for supplies and materials. Use one table for paints, brushes, and sponges. On a second table set out tools for building such as mat knives, scissors, staplers, glue, and tape. Two or three additional tables are needed for the odds and ends you have collected. You may want a snack table, too.





Procedure for Building a Neighborhood

Introduction (45 minutes)

- ① As the group arrives in the room for the Introduction, ask participants to write their names in large letters on their name tags. Since it generally takes a while for families to gather, you may want to have a coloring activity available for children while they wait. A good option is the [Mr. Rogers Day coloring sheet](#), available online and also reproduced on page 24 of this document.
- ② When the whole group has arrived, explain that you will all be working together to build a neighborhood. First, you are going to help them think about what makes a neighborhood a neighborhood. Ask the people to stand together in clusters and take a quiet look around the room. Then ask everyone in the room to form a large circle holding hands. Encourage the people to stand silently for a few moments while they are holding hands. Then ask them to think quietly about how good it feels to be connected.
- ③ Explain that one of the things many people like about being part of a group is that it feels good when the whole group does something together. Explain that your group will be learning something together. Teach the hand motions to “Our Father Which Art in Heaven.” Then do the hand motions as you sing the song.
- ④ Being part of a group can give us good feelings and be fun. Sometimes, however, there can be angry feelings when we are with other people. In fact, one of Fred Rogers’ songs has these lyrics: “It’s the people you like the most who can make you feel gladdest” . . . and “it’s the people you like the most who can make you feel maddest!”

Angry feelings are a natural and normal part of families, friendships, and neighborhoods. Suggest that everyone turn to the other people in their families and say, “Sometimes I feel very angry about the things you do!” Explain that the important question is, “What can we *do* with the *mad* that we feel that doesn’t hurt someone or their feelings?”

Explain that there can also be jealous times in families and households. Have everyone turn to another member of their group and say: “Sometimes I want you all to myself.”

When people feel connected and cared about, they can help each other through all kinds of times.

At this point you may choose to read aloud a story about difficult feelings, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst. It is fun to make the story participatory by suggesting, “When I put my hand on my forehead, everyone say together: ‘terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.’” When reading the story aloud, place your hand on your forehead each time that phrase appears in the text. Everyone will join in.



⑤ Work in “Family/Household Groups”

Using the Family/Household Groups that have formed for the build, give each group a piece of paper and a pencil and ask them to make a list of 10 buildings that are needed in a neighborhood.

When the groups are finished compiling their lists, ask each group in turn to call out the name of one building from their list and tell why it is important. Groups with more than one child can be encouraged to make more than one suggestion, so each child who wants is able to make a contribution to the list. Some children may feel shy and can be given an opportunity to speak but not pressured to do so.

As suggestions are called out, the facilitator writes the names of the buildings on chalkboard or newsprint. Keep going until all the groups have run out of ideas or until the facilitator decides it is time to move on.

Ask each group to decide on a building to make for the neighborhood.

Notes to facilitator:

- It is okay if two groups want to make the same type of building. Communities can have more than one store, hospital, or church.
- It is okay if groups change their ideas of what they’re making as they begin to work with their boxes.
- Yes, it is okay if someone decides to make a jail. Remember that children are struggling with their own inner controls, and a jail may be a symbol of the need to control their own inner “bad guy” urges. Some children may feel secure knowing that there is a jail.

- ⑥ There are two basic rules for a Neighborhood Build, one for children and one for adults. Ask the whole group to repeat each rule after you say it:
1. **ONLY GROWNUPS USE THE KNIVES.** Ask all grownups to raise their hands so it is clear who will use knives. Some ambitious 8- to 12-year-olds want to use knives, but the mat knives can be dangerous.
 2. **ADULTS FOLLOW THE CHILDREN'S IDEAS.** Ask all children to raise their hands. Adults are there to follow the children's lead.

- ⑦ Explain the building process. When the group moves to the other room, each group will choose a box. The facilitator says how much time is available for the building and 15 minutes before cleanup will remind participants how much time is left. The children can begin by marking with a crayon or marker the doors, windows, and anything else that must be cut out. Adults will do the cutting.

Painting is next. Let the children choose the colors but have everyone join in the painting. Decorating with the odds and ends usually comes last.

Groups can design the insides as well as the outsides of their buildings. They may make vehicles and mailboxes out of smaller boxes.



Neighborhood Build (1½–2 hours)

Move with the group into the room where the Neighborhood Build will take place. About 15 minutes prior to cleanup time, remind the group it will soon be time to finish.

When work time is over, each group will clean its own work area, returning paints and supplies to the appropriate tables. At least 15–20 minutes is needed for cleanup. Leave the dropcloths in place, allowing the paint to dry.

Optional Meal (30–45 minutes)

One of the best parts of being with other families and households can be sharing a meal together. It can be enjoyable, but not necessary, to include a meal as part of your Neighborhood Build, even if it means asking participants to supply their own brown bag lunches. In any case, make sure that the meal is simple, because some children will want to carry their food into their boxes and eat there. As a grace before the meal, form a circle and sing “Our Father Which Art in Heaven” again with the motions.

Closing Activities (45 minutes)

WRITING A PRAYER

After the meal or even while they are eating, each group can write a prayer for their building, expressing what the building means for the people in the community. The prayer can be in a rhyming form or not. For their prayer, the group may want to look through the Bible to select a verse that has something to do with their particular building.

MAKING A NEIGHBORHOOD

If the paint has dried, remove the dropcloths. Have the groups help you arrange the buildings into a neighborhood. A U-shape usually works best.



TOURING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The whole group takes a tour of the neighborhood together. When the group gets to each building, the group who made it will tell about the building and read their prayer or scripture passage. When building groups have more than one child, you may want to suggest that each child tell about a different part of the building.

DISCUSSING THE EXPERIENCE

Bring the group back together in a circle. Ask:

- What was neighborly about this experience? (The facilitator may choose to mention times when they observed conflicts that the groups resolved themselves during the Neighborhood Build.)
- Some other questions you may use if you have more discussion time include:

- What buildings are missing from your neighborhood that people might need in a real neighborhood?
- What changes would you make in this neighborhood if you knew that Jesus were coming for a visit?
- How did it feel to be inside the box?
- What would happen if one of the buildings in our neighborhood burned to the ground, and it was an apartment building where many families lived?

Note to Facilitator: These questions can be sent home with the families for a further discussion of neighborhood.

SINGING “PEACE AND QUIET”

After all the noise and busy activity, it can feel good to have some peace and quiet time. Mister Rogers sometimes sang a song called “Peace and Quiet.” Teach the song and the motions, included with this material.



Additional Ideas

If you choose to spread this activity over more than one session, you can add some additional activities such as the following:

Scavenger Hunt

Give each family a scavenger hunt list. Send them out into the neighborhood or the church to look for items such as the ones listed below. (It is fun to make up your own list reflecting what can be found in your neighborhood especially during the season you are doing it.) Each item is to be used in the building they are making. When you

have completed the scavenger hunt, return to the room where the building is taking place, and have families incorporate their found items into their buildings:

- stone that feels good in your hand
- something colorful in nature
- something broken
- chewing gum wrapper
- penny
- piece of litter
- something someone else gives you
- a forked stick

Sending Mail

Have each group make a mailbox by decorating a shoe box and placing it in front of their building. After the tour, encourage people to leave mail for each other in their mailboxes. Provide small slips of paper and pencils. In their notes people may tell what they liked about each building.

Scrapbook of the Event

Some families will want to take their buildings home with them, but for many this will be impractical. Instead invite the participants to create scrapbooks of the experience to take home. Include a photo of the group with their building, a copy of the prayer they have written, a list of all the buildings in the neighborhood, the mail received in their mailbox, and copies of the completed worksheets.

This is an activity that could be completed by the children while their parents have their own wrap-up session if there is adequate adult supervision. You will need:

- construction paper
- crayons
- notebook paper
- paper fasteners or stapler
- photos (taken and printed on site)
- copies of Worksheets 1 and 2

Constructing a Church Building

The whole group can work together to construct a church building for your neighborhood when you are finished with the rest of the neighborhood. If you plan to do

this, announce it to the group ahead of time and suggest that, instead of one group choosing to build a church, all will work together on it later.

Discuss what rooms are needed in a church. You can suggest using several boxes, representing different parts of a church, so that many groups can work on the project at the same time and then join the boxes when they are finished.

Each group can choose to work on a different part of the church such as the pews, stained glass window, garden or courtyard, Bibles, hymnals, bell tower, sign, and so forth. Then all the pieces can be connected.

You may provide Post-it Notes and encourage people to write messages, quotations, or Bible passages about peace or neighborhood on them and use them to shingle the roof of the church building. If you can leave the church set up until the entire congregation gathers following worship or for an all-church event, invite members of the congregation to add shingles to the roof.

Tabletop Neighborhood

Some groups may not have the space for building with large appliance boxes. Why not try building a neighborhood on a smaller scale? Some church groups have built their neighborhoods on tabletops using smaller boxes such as shoe boxes, paper milk cartons, or other containers for the buildings. Groups can work at different tables and then assemble the neighborhood from the finished buildings.

One advantage of this kind of Neighborhood Build is that it is possible to leave it up for a longer period of time for people to enjoy since it doesn't take up so much space. If the buildings are taped securely, you may be able to move your neighborhood to a care facility or preschool to share with others.

Stories from Other Neighborhoods

Use one or both of the included stories that actually happened to people who were involved in Neighborhood Builds like the one you have experienced. Read aloud each of the stories and participate in the activities.

Discussion Group for Adults

Parents, teachers, grandparents, and guardians who participate in the Neighborhood Build may enjoy talking to other adults about the challenges of parenting and about the ways they can take their experience here into their everyday life. If you

can provide childcare or separate activities for the children, interested adults can get together to talk.

QUESTIONS FOR ADULT DISCUSSION GROUPS

Before the Neighborhood Build

1. Describe a time your family/household enjoyed doing something together.
2. What made these times go well?
3. What are some things you like about your own neighborhood?
4. What are some things that are missing in your experience of neighborhood?

After the Neighborhood Build

1. What “neighborly” things did you observe in your own group as you participated in the Neighborhood Build?
2. How was the neighborhood you built like your own neighborhood? How was it different?
3. How was this experience different from other group experiences you have had?
4. What can you take from this experience to your everyday life?
5. What did Isaiah mean by “a little child shall lead them?” (Isaiah 11:6) How did you feel about following the leadership of children in this activity?
6. What did you learn *about* children through this experience? What did you learn *from* children? What did children learn *from* and *about* you?
7. What helped the children to work so hard and focus on the task?
8. How can you help to create that same kind of situation at home or in other times and places with children?
9. What are some real projects at home that children can become involved in?
10. How can you help to build a sense of community in your household, your church, or your neighborhood?

Note to Facilitator: you can't cover this many questions in one session. Choose two or three to use at one time. You may wish to send home a copy of this list of questions for adults to think about when they get home or for use in other meetings of this group.



Resources

Stories of Neighborhood Building

SUE'S STORY

On Thursday Sue went into an appliance shop to collect some refrigerator boxes for a Neighborhood Build at her church that weekend. The manager of the store was quite glad to let her have them. He helped her cut them apart and load them into the back of her van. Sue was all packed up and ready to go when a man came running up to the van shouting angrily, “Those are my boxes!”

Mike was a man who regularly made the rounds of each appliance and grocery store in town, collecting cardboard to sell to the recycling center. That was how he made a living for his family. He was distressed to find that someone else was walking off with his boxes.

Activities

1. After reading the story, divide the participants into several small groups (approximately 4–8 people in each group, depending on the size of the larger group). Have each group try to think of a possible ending for the story and prepare to act it out for the rest of the participants.
2. After each group has done its role play for the larger group, ask the following questions:
 - What could you have done if you had been in Sue’s situation?
 - What would you like to say to Mike?

HEDDA'S STORY

A blind man came to a Neighborhood Build one time. His name was Charles. He listened carefully to the introduction and the instructions. Hedda was the facilitator of the program. She took Charles by the arm and walked around the room with him so he could feel a few of the boxes.

“I want a big, long box,” Charles said.

Hedda took him over to a refrigerator box lying on its side.

“This is a good one,” he said, feeling its size and dimensions.

“Do you want me to cut out doors and windows?” asked Hedda.

“Oh, no!” said Charles adamantly. “Don’t do that! Let me show you what I want to do.”

He sat down in the open end of his box, facing into it. His body blocked the entrance. He took a small ball out of his pocket and began rolling and lightly tossing it against the back of the box and then feeling around for it as it rolled back to him.

“When I was a boy, I couldn’t play ball. Do you know how hard it is to play ball when you are blind?” he asked later.

“After I throw it or roll it, I never know where the ball has gone. In the box it comes right back to me.”

Activities

1. After hearing the story, let the children take turns playing ball in the extra boxes. Some children may want to wear blindfolds.
2. Distribute some musical instruments such as tambourines, kazoos, or oatmeal container drums for the children to experiment with how sounds are different inside the boxes.
3. Have family groups wonder together:
 - How could we create a safe and welcoming place for someone like Charles at the Neighborhood Build?
 - How could someone like Charles help us at the Neighborhood Build?



WORKSHEET 1

Reflections on the Neighborhood Build

1. What was the best thing about the Neighborhood Build?
2. What was the hardest thing?
3. What did you do to help someone?
4. What did someone do to help you?
5. When did you laugh or smile?
6. When did you feel angry, frustrated, or disappointed?
7. What helped you at those difficult times?
8. What did you contribute to make your neighborhood a peaceful place?

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WORKSHEET 2

What's In Your Neighborhood?

What are the buildings in your Neighborhood Build?

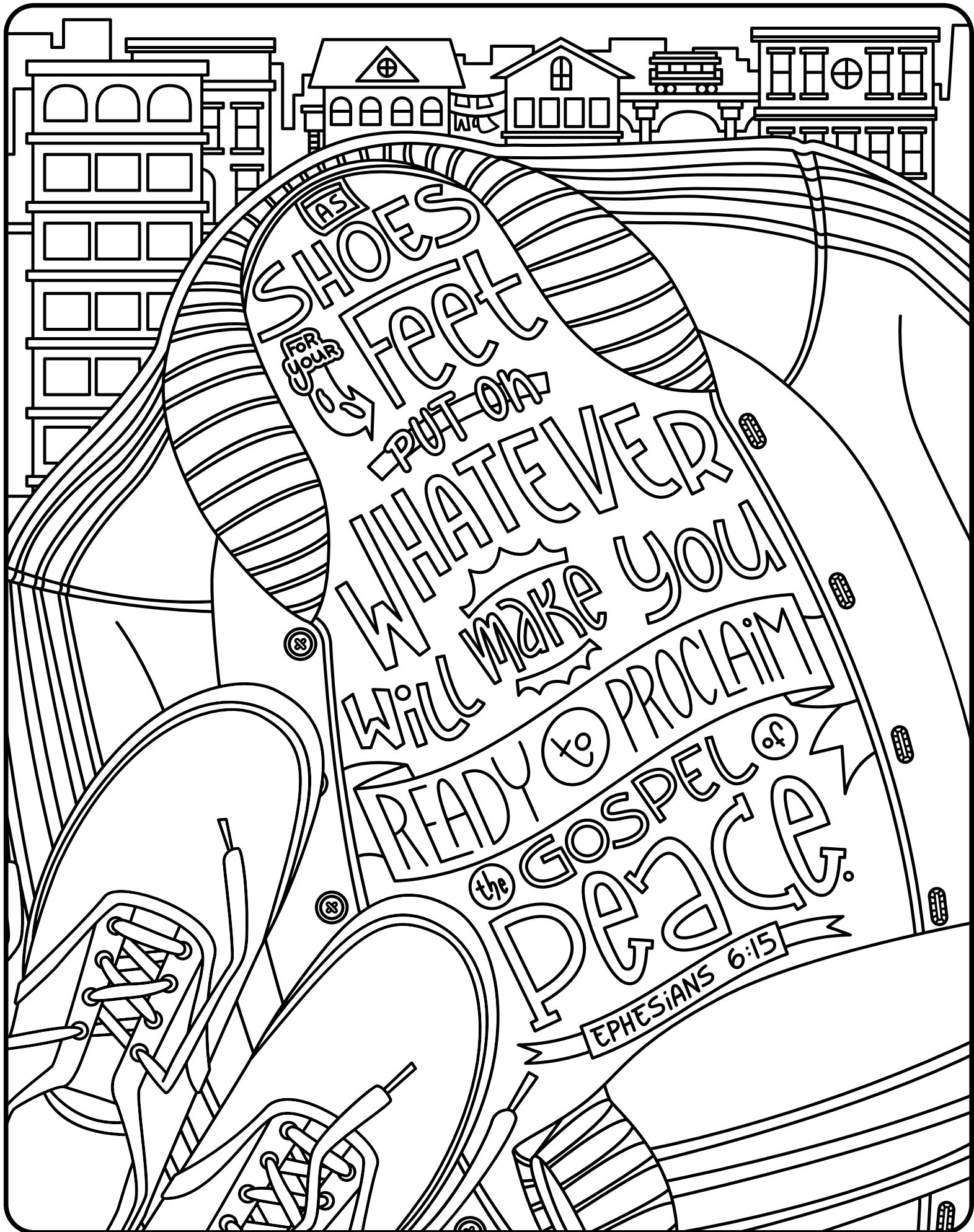
Who were the people who built each one?

Draw pictures to remind yourself of each building.

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SHOES
FOR YOUR
FEET

PUT ON
WHATEVER
YOU WILL
MAKE YOU

READY TO PROCLAIM
the GOSPEL of

DANCE
EPHESIANS 6:15

Suggested Formats for a Neighborhood Build

ONE-DAY EVENT: MORNING, INCLUDING LUNCH

9:00–9:45	Gathering and Introduction
9:45–11:45	Neighborhood Build
11:45–12:00	Cleanup
12:00–12:30	Lunch
12:30–1:15	Closure Activities

ONE-DAY EVENT: AFTERNOON–EVENING, INCLUDING DINNER

2:30–3:15	Gathering and Introduction
3:15–5:15	Neighborhood Build
5:15–5:30	Cleanup
5:30–6:15	Dinner
6:15–7:00	Closure Activities

WEEKEND INTERGENERATIONAL RETREAT (FRIDAY EVENING–SUNDAY AFTERNOON)

Friday evening

7:00–7:45	Introduction, parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
7:45–8:15	Begin the Neighborhood Build
8:45–9:30	Cleanup, snack, and free time
9:30	Bedtime for young children
10:00	Discussion Group for adults (page 18, choose from questions 1–4)

Saturday

8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:45–9:00	Morning Devotions
9:00–9:15	Introduction, parts 5 and 6
9:15–11:15	Neighborhood Build
11:15–11:30	Cleanup
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:00–3:00	Free Time (naps for young children)
3:00–3:45	Scavenger Hunt (page 16)
3:45–4:30	Building a Church (page 17)
5:00	Worship
6:00	Dinner
7:30–8:15	Closure Activities (page 15)
8:15–9:00	Scrapbook of the Event (page 17)
9:00–9:30	Snacks and Free Time

Sunday

8:00–9:00	Breakfast
9:00–9:45	Worship
10:00–10:30	Sending Mail (page 17)
10:30–11:00	Stories from Other Neighborhoods (page 18) with child care for preschoolers
11:00–12:00	Cleanup. If possible, pack buildings to take home or to put on display at the church.
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:00	Head for home

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Suggested Formats for a Neighborhood Build *(continued)*

INTERGENERATIONAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (FIVE EVENINGS, 6:00–9:00 PM)

Each evening will begin with a shared supper. Suggestions for suppers:

Monday	Covered dish
Tuesday	Pizza (have it delivered!)
Wednesday	Hot dogs, potato salad, and cookies
Thursday	Soup, salad, and sandwiches
Friday	Sloppy Joes

It might be a good idea to offer vegetarian or low-fat alternatives sometimes. As a general rule, you will want to keep the food and cleanup simple.

Every day

6:00–6:45	Gathering, supper, and cleanup
6:45–7:00	Singing and devotions for all ages

Use the songs included with this resource as well as traditional Vacation Bible School songs, motions, rhythm instruments, and humorous lyrics, as well as biblical messages.

At the close of each evening, it is good to assemble the entire group in the sanctuary for chapel for 10–15 minutes of closing devotions which may consist of a prayer, scripture reading, reflections on the evening’s experience, and singing. You will want to close each evening by singing “Our Father Which Art in Heaven” with the motions.

Monday

7:00–7:30	Introduction
7:30–8:35	Begin the Neighborhood Building
8:35–8:50	Cleanup
8:50–9:00	Closing devotions

Tuesday

7:00–8:30	Neighborhood Building, continued, some may be ready to focus on the insides of buildings
8:30–8:50	Cleanup
8:50–9:00	Closing devotions

Wednesday

7:00–7:45	Scavenger Hunt (page 16)
7:45–8:30	Constructing a Church Building (page 17)
8:30–8:50	Cleanup
8:50–9:00	Closing devotions

Thursday

7:00–7:20	Writing prayers and selecting Bible passages (from Closing Activities (page 15)
7:20–8:10	Making a Neighborhood and Touring the Neighborhood (from Closing Activities, page 15) and Sending Mail (page 17)
8:10–8:45	Recreation for children Discussion Group for Adults (page 18, choose from questions 5–15)
8:45–9:00	Closing Devotions

Friday

7:00–7:15	Discussing the Experience from Closing Activities (page 15)
7:15–8:00	Create a Scrapbook of the Event (page 17)
8:00–8:45	Recreation for young children (or children may play inside their buildings while others participate in the Stories of Neighborhood Building activity) Stories from Other Neighborhoods for older children and adults (page 18)
8:45–9:00	Closing devotions

Motions to Our Father, Which Art in Heaven

Our Father

Move right hand up high as if clasping the hand of someone big and strong.

(Movement symbolizes: God is a parent of us all.)



which art in heaven

Raise left hand, also. Reach upward with both hands, fingers outstretched.

(Movement symbolizes: Heaven is thought of as being above.)



hallowed be Thy name

Bring hands downward into prayer position, palm to palm, in front of you.

(Movement symbolizes: Hallowed means holy.)



Thy kingdom come

Raise outstretched hands high above your head in a V.

(Movement symbolizes: God's kingdom is everywhere.)



Thy will be done

Bring hands downward, crossing your arms across your chest. Bow your head.

(Movement symbolizes: God's kingdom will come to us.)



on earth

Point both hands downward toward the earth with arms straight and fingers outstretched.

(Movement symbolizes: The earth is under our feet.)



as it is in heaven

Swoop both hands high above your head.

(Movement symbolizes: We think of heaven as high above us.)



Give us this day our daily bread

Pretend to hold a piece of bread between thumb and forefinger; bring hand to mouth several times in time to music.



and forgive us all our debts

Pretend to wash hands.



as we forgive our debtors

Pretend to wash hands of the person beside you.



and lead us not into temptation

Cover eyes with both hands.



but deliver us from evil

Cover your mouth with both hands.

(Movement symbolizes: We ask God to help us not say anything that will hurt another person.)



for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gesture downward toward the earth with both hands open. Then raise both hands upward toward heaven. Then gesture outward toward everyone in a circle.



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Peace and Quiet

Peace and Quiet

Fred Rogers

G Gdim G G Em

Peace and Qui - et, Peace, peace, peace. Peace and Qui - et,

4 A7 Am D7 G G+ C

4 Peace, peace, peace. Peace and Qui - et, Peace, Peace, peace. We

7 G Am G C Am D D7 G G7

7 all want peace. We all want peace.

10 C Cm G

Peace

With palms open, cross your arms across your chest.

(Note: We chose to use the sign for "rest" because it is easier in this song to shift to the next sign.)



Quiet

Move your hands outward uncrossing them, opening fingers, palms facing forward, until arms are stretched out straight in front of you.



We all want

Your index, middle, and ring fingers of both hands curl inward toward the palm. The thumb and little finger are open like wings. With palms facing down, move both arms together in a clockwise circle parallel to the floor, ending with hands in front of your chest.



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Resource List

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

1 Corinthians 12
Isaiah 65:17–25
Luke 10:25–37
John 13:1–20
Psalm 28:3
Nehemiah 2:17–18
Isaiah 11:6
Matthew 25:34–36

STORIES FOR ALL AGES

Grant, Jennifer. *Maybe I Can Love My Neighbor Too*. Minneapolis: Beaming Books, 2019.
Hill, Elizabeth. *Evan’s Corner*. New York: Viking Children’s Books, 1991.
Levine, Amy-Jill, and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, et al. *Who Is My Neighbor?* Louisville: Flyaway Books, 2019.
McLerran, Alice. *Roxaboxen*. New York: Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Books, 1991.
Rogers, Fred. *Making Friends*. New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1987.
Viorst, Judith. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. New York: Antheneum, Aladdin Books, 1972.

RESOURCES FOR ADULTS

McGinnis, James. *Helping Families Care*. Bloomington, Indiana: Meyer Stone, 1989.
McGinnis, James and Kathleen. *Parenting for Peace and Justice: 10 Years Later*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990.
Rogers, Fred with Barry Head. *How Families Grow*. Pittsburgh: Family Communications, 1988.
Rogers, Fred and Barry Head. *Mister Rogers Talks with Parents*. New York: Berkley Books, 1983.
Rogers, Fred. *You Are Special*. New York: Viking, 1994.

OTHER PC(USA) RELATED RESOURCES:

[Mister Rogers Coloring Pages available in various sizes](#)

[Mister Rogers Resources including a Free Intergenerational Curriculum](#)

[Peacemaking in the Family by Mister Rogers](#)

[Neighboring Sunday](#)

[Peace Cards](#)

[Walking in God's Path of Peace: Intergenerational Worship](#)

[A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood: Mr. Rogers Day Resource Roadmap](#)

[Jesus, Teach us to Be Neighbors \(Hymn\), sheet music](#)

[Also see \[www.pcusa.org/mrogers\]\(http://www.pcusa.org/mrogers\)](#)

MUSICAL RESOURCES:

["Jesus, Teach Us to Be Neighbors" \(Hymn\), recording](#)

"Our Father Which Art in Heaven" (Hymn #464), Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation: 2013

["Our Father Which Art in Heaven", audio recording](#)

"Peace and Quiet," Fred Rogers, *Bedtime*, Family Communications: 1992



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