



Junior Soldier Renewal 2024

– Leader's Notes

Theme:

God's big story and me — a story for everyone

Novelty item: White frisbee — God's love is for everyone.



God's big story and me — a story for everyone

The theme for Junior Soldier Renewal 2024, is 'God's big story and me — a story for everyone.' This year we will focus on God's love for every person.

Take time to pray for your Junior Soldiers and the other children in your corps, and to reflect on these Scriptures:



"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."

Romans 3:22, NLT

"I am writing to God's church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people. He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did for all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours."

1 Corinthians 1:2, NLT

"For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.²⁷ And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 3:26-28, NLT

"There is only one God, and Christ Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God. Jesus was truly human, and he gave himself to rescue all of us."

1 Timothy 2:5, CEV

Junior Soldier Renewal is an opportunity for Junior Soldiers to practice leadership and service in your faith community. It is also an opportunity for them to share their gifts and talents.

Share the meeting notes with your group several weeks in advance. Give them an opportunity to choose the options that will be included (they may also have other ideas about how to adapt the meeting) and how they would like to be involved.

Those who do not feel comfortable being up front, might like to be involved in other ways such as:

- Setting up the space
- Helping with the technology
- Choosing songs etc.





Optional

You will need:

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ tape
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ glue
- ☐ markers
- ☐ A range of craft supplies such as wool, scraps of fabric, cotton wool, buttons, sequins etc.

Arrange your meeting space so that everyone can sit around tables. Provide paper and craft supplies. Invite everyone to make some paper people during the meeting. Ask them to think about all the people they might see in their community and to represent as many of them as possible.

Suggested meeting lead

Call to worship/song

Introduction

Prayer

God's love is for everyone – no matter how old we are.

Song

God's love is for everyone – no matter what we've done.

Offering

God's love is for everyone – no matter what we look like.

Song

Renewal segment

Conclusion

Benediction

Introduction

Call to worship

Ask the Junior Soldiers to all stand at the front.

Have one of them read 1 Timothy 2:5. All of the Junior Soldiers can join in for the final three words – “all of us.”

*“There is only one God, and Christ Jesus
is the only one who can bring us to God.
Jesus was truly human, and he gave himself
to rescue all of us.”*

1 Timothy 2:5, CEV

Welcome to Junior Soldier Renewal 2024. Today we are going to focus on the wonderful truth that God's story of love is for everyone.





Choose one of these options then use the link below. Alternatively, you can skip straight to the link.

Option 1

You will need:

- ☐ pens
- ☐ one paper people chain per person or paper
- ☐ pencils and scissors to make the paper people

Give each person a small paper people chain (these can be purchased or easily made). Ask everyone to write the name of someone they pair up with on each figure.

Move around the room and find someone who:

- Was born in a different month
- Is wearing a different colour
- Was born in a different country
- Has a different favourite food

Repeat the questions with 'same' instead of 'different'. For example, "Find someone who was born in the **same** month.: Ask everyone to flip over their chain and write the new names on the opposite side of each figure.

Option 2

After reading each of these statements, ask everyone to look around and see who has the same or different response.

Raise your hand if:

- You like to run
- You enjoy eating ice cream
- You hate rainy days
- Your favourite food is pasta
- You don't like doing maths

Option 3

Tell the person beside you what your favourite colour is.

Imagine if the whole world was that colour. Do you think you would still like it as much?

Now tell the person beside you your favourite food. Imagine that was the only thing you could eat for the rest of your life. Do you think you would still enjoy it in a year?

Link: We need things and people that are different. They make life interesting and wonderful and rich. God created each of us to be uniquely special and each one of us is a part of his story.



God's love is for everyone — no matter how old we are

Choose people from several different age groups to answer a selection of these questions — you don't need to include all the questions. If you don't have all the generations represented in your space, then you can use the 'for everyone' questions.

For children:

- What do you like most about older people, like grandparents or older friends?
- How have stories or lessons from older people, like your parents or teachers, helped you understand things better?
- Have you ever heard people say things about kids, like "kids always do this" or "kids never do that"? Do you think those things are always true?

For teens/young adults:

- What's something cool or fun that younger kids or siblings bring to your life?
- Can you think of a time when someone older or younger than you taught you something new? What was it?

For adults:

- What are some things you think are great about how kids or teenagers see the world?
- Can you think of a time when someone younger than you taught you something new? What was it?

For everyone:

- Why do you think it's fun or nice to spend time with people who are older or younger than you?
- How do you think we can make sure everyone, no matter how old they are, feels respected and listened to?
- Do you think there are some things that all people, no matter how old they are, like to do or believe in? What are they?
- What are some ways we can have fun or help each other out with people who are older or younger than us?

No matter how young or old we are, we are each valuable and important. We can have fun together and learn from each other.

Optional activity

You will need:

- picture prompts of biblical characters of a variety of ages

The Bible contains stories of individuals from different generations whose experiences can teach us valuable lessons about faith and life.

Show picture prompts of biblical characters from various generations (e.g., Abraham, Moses, Ruth, Timothy). Ask the congregation or group what they know about them, including their age, background and significant events in their lives.





Link: Isaiah 46:3-4 (CEV) reminds us of God's promise to sustain his people from generation to generation:

"Since the day you were born, I have carried you along. I will still be the same when you are old and grey, and I will take care of you. I created you. I will carry you and always keep you safe."

From the day we are born, we are a part of God's story of love. When we are old and grey, God continues to faithfully include us in his story. Throughout every stage of our lives, God cares for us.

God's love is for everyone — no matter what we have done

Optional

You will need:

- a timer
- \$10 note or another item that people might want.)

Show everyone a \$10 note (or another item that several people might want to have).

I have \$10 and I'm going to give it away. Does anyone think they should get this \$10?

Choose a few people and tell them that they will have 20 seconds each to explain why they should get the \$10. Set a timer and give each of them a turn. At the end, ask everyone to vote on who is the most deserving. Present the prize to the winner.

Who do you think deserves God's love?

Let's take a look at the story of Zacchaeus.

Ask a Junior Soldier to read the story from Luke 19:1-10.

Zacchaeus had heard about Jesus and he was curious to know more. But he didn't think he deserved to talk with Jesus. He thought Jesus would not want to know him. Zacchaeus knew that he hadn't been behaving very nicely. He knew that he was a greedy cheat!

Jesus' friends also thought that Jesus was too good for a greedy cheat like Zacchaeus. They did not think that Zacchaeus deserved to be loved by Jesus.

But Jesus wanted all of the people to see that his love is for everyone.

Zacchaeus was not being very kind. But we all have times when we behave badly or unkindly. God's love is for everyone. When Zacchaeus spent time with Jesus, it changed him. He became kinder and more generous. He tried to make it up to the people that he had hurt. When we spend time with Jesus it makes us better people too.

God's love is for everyone — not just the people who we think deserve it.



God's love is for everyone — no matter what we look like

You will need:

- some wrapped lollies — be aware of food allergies.

Explain that you have some lollies. Choose some groups of people based on random criteria and give them each a lolly. For example:

- Anyone who is over 70 can have a lolly
- Anyone who is wearing something red can have a lolly
- Anyone who has black hair can have a lolly
- Who did not get a lolly? Do you think that was fair?

In our world some people get treated better than others. But God's love is not like that.

Galatians 3:28 (CEV) tells us that, *"Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman."*

And Acts 10:34-35 says: *"... nothing could be plainer: God plays no favourites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from — if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open."*

God's story of love is for everyone, no matter what we look like.

Renewal segment

You will need:

- Renewal certificates
- Pens

Ask a Junior Soldier to present this short message.

God's love is for everyone

Introduction:

God's love is for everyone! Picture this: Jesus, back in the day, doing things God's way and loving everyone, no matter what. Let's look at what that means for us today.

Jesus, the radical:

In a way, Jesus was like the ultimate radical, right? He didn't care about what society said was cool or not. He hung out with the outsiders, the misfits, and even those labelled as 'sinners'. Jesus showed us that love knows no boundaries — it's for everyone, no exceptions.

What it means for us:

Now, fast forward to today. We're surrounded by all sorts of people — different backgrounds, beliefs, you name it. But guess what? God's love still applies to each one of them. That means we've got some serious love-spreading to do!



In our families, schools and communities, we've got opportunities everywhere to show God's love in action. It's about remembering that we are all made in the image of God, seeing past the surface stuff and treating everyone with respect and kindness, just like Jesus did.

Putting love into action:

So, how do we make this happen in our everyday lives? Well, it starts with a little attitude adjustment. We can ditch the judgment and embrace acceptance. That means reaching out to the lonely, speaking up for the underdogs, and standing against injustice wherever we see it.

And hey, it might get a little uncomfortable sometimes. But you know what? That's when exciting things happen — when we step out of our comfort zones and show the world what God's love is all about. As a Junior Soldier, I promised to help others to follow Jesus and showing his love to everyone is a great place to start. By showing Jesus' love in my thoughts, words, and deeds I am spreading God's love to everyone I meet.

Wrapping it up:

As we wrap things up, remember this: God's love is big enough for everyone. No matter who you are or where you come from, you are part of God's big, diverse family. So, let's go out there and spread the news that God's love is for everyone.

Invite the Junior Soldiers to come forward with their Big Buds.

Ask the Junior Soldiers to recite the promise together.

Junior Soldier Promise

I know that Jesus is my Saviour from sin. I have asked him to forgive my sins, and I will trust him to keep me good.

By his help, I will be his loving and obedient child, and will help others to follow him.

I promise to pray, to read my Bible and to lead a life that is clean in thought, word and deed.

I will not use anything that may injure my body or my mind, including harmful drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Invite the Junior Soldiers to sign their promise cards and ask the Big Buds to pray with their Junior Soldiers.

Option 1

Play this video from [Crossroads](#).

Option 2

God's story is a story of love and it is for everyone. It's a story for people of all ages and nationalities. It is a story for people who already love him and for those who don't. It is a story for those who are kind and for those who are unkind. We can be part of God's story of love and share it with everyone.

"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are" (Romans 3:22, NLT).

Ask one of the Junior Soldiers to read 1 Timothy 2:5 again. This time, ask everyone to join in on the last three words, "all of us".

Pray for the Junior Soldiers then ask a Junior Soldier to pray the closing prayer.

Closing prayer:

Dear God, thanks for being the ultimate example of love. Help us to follow in Jesus' footsteps and show that same love to everyone we meet. Give us the courage to be bold, the empathy to understand, and the grace to forgive. In Jesus' name, Amen.

