



Thomas Starr King

WE ARE FAIR AND KIND TO OTHERS.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ALPHABET

Please read the Introduction before using this Plan.

K k Letter K introduces Thomas Starr King, the concept of kindness, and care of the church.

MATERIALS: Construction paper with hole punched in top, yarn for necklace
3x5" cards for kindness activity to take home
Snacks—Kisses (chocolate)

GETTING STARTED:

Welcome. After each person says his or her name, the group responds, "Welcome, (name)." For a child who is attending for the first time this year, add name to the letters that have been posted and to the attendance sheet, and make a nametag during or after the session. Leave an empty chair for someone who is not present or for someone who has not joined the group yet.

The Letter of the Day:

- Talk about the Letter.
- Give the Letter necklace to a person with that initial.
- Talk about the things that the children have brought for the Letter, and/or Letter grab bag.

SPECIAL PERSON: Thomas Starr King (Dec. 17, 1824- March 4, 1864) (He is sometimes referred to by his full name, and sometimes by "Starr.")

Starr was so excited! It was Sunday morning, his favorite day of the week! He got a little earlier than usual. He got dressed a little faster than usual. He ate his breakfast, and then said to his mother and father, "Is it time yet? Is it time yet?" And his mother would say, "No, it isn't time yet." Every few minutes, he would ask again. When his mother said that it would be ten minutes, he put on his coat, because it was winter. Then he put on his hat and his mittens, and he stood by the front door. Finally, his mother said that it was time.

He opened the door, rushed out, and ran from his house to the church next door. He lived in the parsonage, a home for a minister. His father was a minister. Starr opened the church

doors. He ran all the way up the stairs from the first floor to the second floor. Then he opened the door to the belfry -- the place where the bell was. Do you know what he did? He grabbed the rope on the bell, and he yanked it with both hands. The bell in the church steeple went "ding, dong." Starr, who was very small, got lifted up by the rope. Then he would swing, up and down, as the rope moved when the bell turned. Then he'd laugh. Sunday mornings were wonderful. As he rang the bell, people would open their doors and come to church.

When Starr grew up, he became a Unitarian and then a Universalist minister. On Sundays he taught each child to ring the bell to call people to church -- how to pull the rope, and to swing with the rope.

Thomas Starr King became famous because he convinced California to stay in the Union, and not become a separate country. There are mountains named after him in California and New Hampshire. There are statues of him in the Rotunda of the Capital in Washington, D.C., and in the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco (created by Daniel Chester French, see F).

But no matter how famous he became, he never forgot the joy and wonder of ringing the church bell.

AFFIRMATION: *We are fair and kind to others.* Talk about kindness, as Thomas Starr King was kind to the children who rang the bell. What have the participants done that was kind this week? Or what has someone else done for them? Make, or have each child make a card with a kind action on it for children to take home as a reminder this week.

Who opens the church on Sunday mornings? Is there someone special, like a sexton or janitor? Who gets to your church first, and what do they do to get the church ready for everyone. Who gets the room ready for the group?

Is there a bell in the church? If so, where and how is it used? Possibly use a bell as an opening for the sessions that follow, remembering Thomas Starr King, and ring the bell when someone in the group does a kind thing.

THE LETTER **K** IN THE CHURCH

Kitchen: Is there a kitchen in the church. Who uses it? If possible, have the children make something in kitchen, like simple cookies that do not require baking. This can be a contribution toward Fellowship time.

A-B-C

Animals: Kangaroo, koala, and kitten (separate from cat)

'Be kind to Kitty.' One person is in the center of the circle, pretending to be a kitten by sleeping, washing its face, purring. Each child has a turn to do something nice for Kitty, like pretend to give it food, patting the head gently, talking to Kitty. If the child is kind, Kitty purrs; if the child is not kind, Kitty meows loudly.

Body (add to Body Picture): knee

Calendar:

- Note the date of the session and any special events for the day, including birthdays.
- Note items beginning with that letter
- Note events between today and the next session.

CLOSING: Gather around the Special Place where the things related to the letter have been placed. " We give thanks for the Letter K We have shared and learned about special people and animals and ourselves and our church. May we leave in love and peace. Next week we will meet again. Our letter will be ____ and our leader(s) will be _____." Make sure that people take home things that need to

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Starr King School for the Ministry article called "Thomas Starr King - The Preacher who Saved

California's Soul," *Real West Magazine*.

Apostle of Liberty: Starr King in California, Arnold Crompton, Beacon Press in 1950

"Thomas Starr King: The Man Behind the Legend" written by Arnold Crompton taken from the book by the same author, *Unitarianism on the Pacific Coast - The First Sixty Years*, Beacon Press 1957. (Also booklet published by Starr King School for the Ministry, (2441 Le Conte Ave. Berkeley, CA 94709 (phone: 510-845-6232; fax 510-845-6273), published in 1974 by the school as a part of the celebration of the anniversary of King's birth in 1824.

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