

**Peace Tiles Project Proposal**  
**For the Prairie Association, United Church of Christ**  
**By Nikki Kromphardt, Open Prairie in Princeton**

The Peace Tiles Project is an international project designed to help diverse groups of people share their experiences and opinions about issues. Typically, the group making Peace Tiles will spend time learning about and discussing an issue, such as the AIDS epidemic, children and warfare or poverty, before creating their Peace Tiles. A Peace Tile is a permanent collage done on a block of wood. Peace Tiles are thoughtfully created and then coated with shellac or Mod Podge to make it durable for display or travel. The finished Tile is labeled with the maker's name, location and date created. Sometimes, Peace Tiles are exchanged with others around the world, but they can just as easily be kept as mementos.

I think the Peace Tiles project could easily be adapted as a Prairie Association-wide project. Using the idea "What does my church mean to me," each interested church could hold a Peace Tiles workshop. Creating the Tiles would be enjoyable for all participants, regardless of age or artistic ability, and it would give each participant the opportunity to express what their churches mean to them in a medium other than words.

The finished Peace Tiles could be used in several ways. Each church could first display them at their own church. Churches could then swap Tiles with each other, or a large display of Tiles from all participating churches could be created. We could also initiate exchanges with other UCC churches around the country. Exchanging Peace Tiles would give us the opportunity to share our experiences while learning about the experiences of our fellow brothers and sisters in the UCC. This part of the project would take quite a bit of communication, and I would be happy to one of the people to figure out this part of the plan.

More information about Peace Tiles can be found at  
[www.mixedmedia.us/peacetiles/](http://www.mixedmedia.us/peacetiles/)

If there are any questions, I can be reached at  
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## **Peace Tiles Project Materials and Directions**

### **Materials:**

- wooden board, 6"x6"x1", one per participant
- cardstock or scrapbook paper for background of collage
- glue (regular Elmer's school glue is good)
- small paper cups
- small paint brushes
- Mod Podge (one bottle of glossy finish per 30 Tiles)
- foam brushes (1 inch width)
- sharpie markers
- collage materials, such as old magazines, wrapping paper, old greeting cards, beads, shells, feathers, other small 3D objects, etc. (these materials are brought by the participants to share with the group)
- newspapers
- sandpaper
- scissors, possibly some pinking shears if they're available

### **Directions:**

Before the workshop starts:

1. The wood, which was probably purchased in long board form, should be cut to size. It's okay if the squares are not perfectly straight, but don't use a piece of wood that is dramatically different. NOTE: A miter saw with a 10 or 11 inch blade works perfectly for cutting the wood. Also, a 6 inch wide board is actually about 5 ¾ inches wide, so the cuts need to be 5 ¾ inches, not 6 inches, to get squares.
2. Prepare the participants by discussing the topic before the workshop. This can be done in the weeks leading up to the project, and encourage people to gather meaningful collage materials to bring to the workshop

Setting up the workshop:

1. Set up the space by arranging the tables and chairs. Leave one table in the middle for the participants to deposit their collage materials.
2. Cover the tables with newspaper. Each table will need several small squares of sandpaper, several pairs of scissors, some Sharpie markers, a few bottles of glue and small paper cups and some cheap paintbrushes for any participant who wants to apply glue this way. The wood can also be laid out in advance at each place or the participants can select their own pieces.
3. Lay out the cardstock or paper on the collage material table. Spread out the collage materials to give the participants the best view of what materials they have available.

During the workshop:

1. Re-introduce the Peace Tile topic, and encourage reflection about the topic.
2. Each participant should first write his or her name, the date, the name of the church and the town/state on the back of his or her Tile. Sand down the edges.
3. Lay a paper background on the front of the Tile (suggested, but not required).
4. Use the collage materials available to create a picture that reflects how the individual feels about the topic.

After the Workshop: (this work can be done by one or more individuals)

1. Let Peace Tile dry for at least 24 hours. Cover a table with newspapers.
2. Using foam brushes, add one coat of Mod Podge to the Peace Tile. Wait one hour, then add second coat. If necessary, continue to add coats of Mod Podge waiting one hour between coats. Give each Tile two coats of Mod Podge minimum, and the ones with larger elements might need a third layer. Let dry at least 24 hours before handling.
3. Display the finished Peace Tiles. They are intended to be picked up and touched!
4. If needed, use superglue to re-attach any elements that might fall off or break off a Peace Tile

#### **Where to get the materials:**

Mod Podge can be found at most craft stores, like Hobby Lobby or Michaels.

Newspapers can be donated, and all of the collage materials should come from participants.

Sharpie markers and scissors are probably available at the church, otherwise they can easily be borrowed.

#### **Other Notes:**

Open Prairie held its Peace Tiles workshop after church one Sunday. We announced the project a few weeks in advance to prepare people and had reminders each Sunday until the event. We had a soup lunch after the service so participants didn't have to leave for lunch and then come back, and then it was a pretty easy set-up. I announced the directions (the information on the back of the Tiles, sand the edges and then have fun) and people really got into the project. Lunch and Tiles took about two hours, with maybe 45 minutes of clean-up afterwards. We decided to box up the leftover materials to pass along to the next church who was interested in holding a Peace Tiles workshop so they wouldn't have to get as many things.