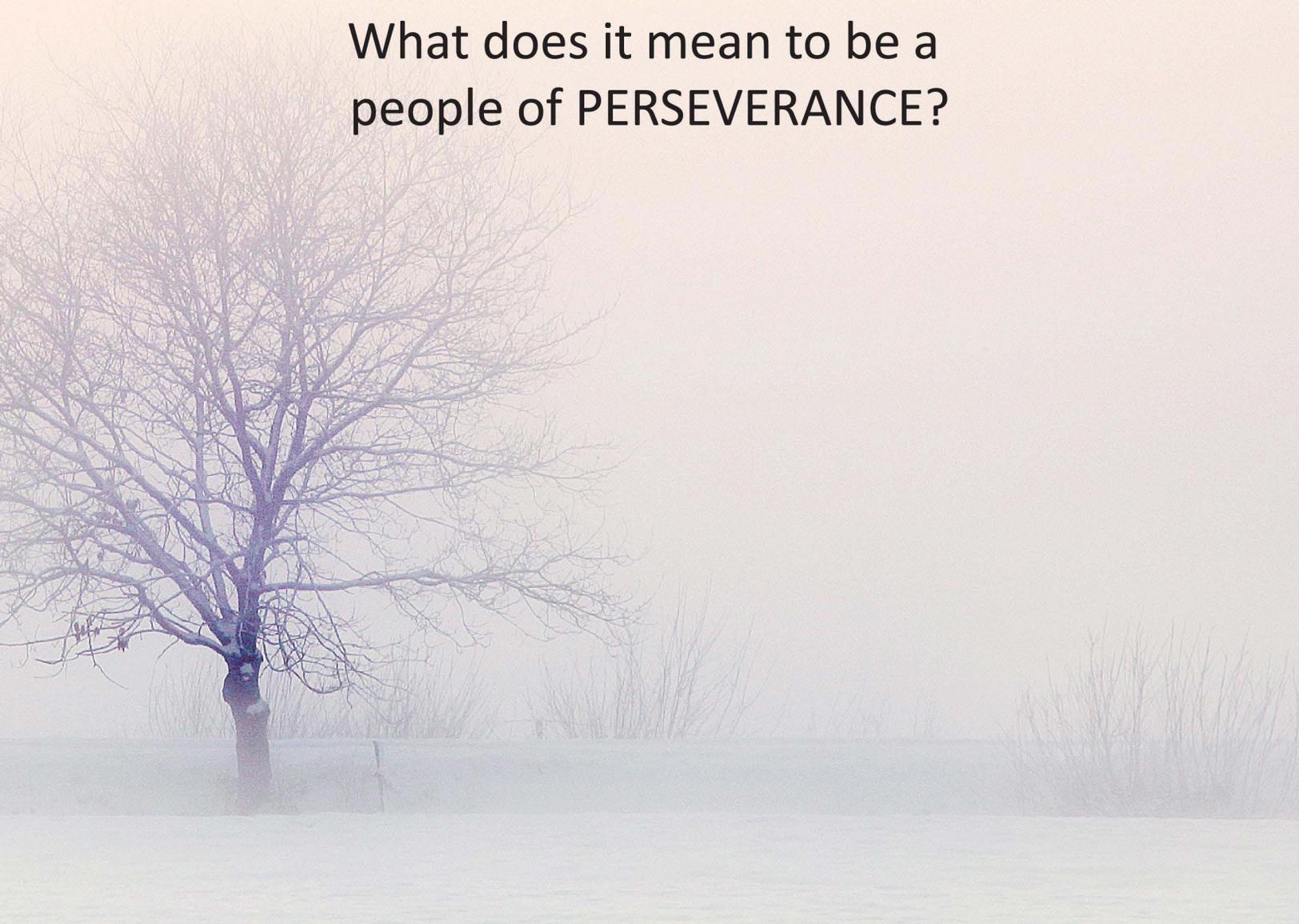




# *Soul Matters*

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What does it mean to be a  
people of PERSEVERANCE?



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# Welcome

Welcome to the Soul Matters RE Packet for February's theme of "What Does it Mean to be a People of Perseverance?"

Perseverance is a big word for children. I was struggling with the connection when one early morning it came to me: The Eensy Weensy Spider! The Little Engine that Could! I had just played and read these to my grandchildren. That little spider and train embody the understanding of perseverance more than any fancy explanation could. A great reminder about thinking through a child's lens rather than using my adult brain!

That said, I encourage leaders to use the word "perseverance" even with little ones, just a few times, to bridge the understanding between ages. Adults will be hearing about perseverance in sermons and reflecting on it in small groups. A family can use a common word now and then. Just don't make everything about words. Add in the fingerplay of the Eensy Weensy Spider to illustrate the concept, as well. Shall we tell our worship leaders about this? Can you image the whole congregation singing, playing and being inspired by that plucky spider?

February includes Valentine's Day, a sentimental journey into love. Our packet encourages you to deepen the conversation with older children and youth by reflecting on the famous Bible verse, I Corinthians 4, as a poem. "Love is patient." For the teens and young adults, there's even an opportunity to learn some Greek. One of our sources is the teaching of lovingkindness from our Christian heritage. How do we practice love with perseverance? What an important question to wrestle with!

Finally, you are invited this month to indulge in laughter as a skill for perseverance, as the Jewish people do, for Purim. Celebrated in the lunar calendar, this year Purim falls on Feb. 25. The festival includes a melodramatic play, commemorating the saving of the Jews by Queen Esther. Audiences boo the bad guy and ham up the story. For the Jewish faith, which has persevered through centuries of danger of annihilation, this time, they won. They know how important it is to laugh and celebrate.

As always, we are grateful for your love of children and family ministries. All of us - young and old - knows what it means to endure and persevere through difficult times. We also know that one can't walk that path alone. So thanks as well for your ministry of supporting and creating a community that ensures no one has to persevere alone.

*Katie, for the entire Soul Matters Team*

Katie Covey  
Soul Matters RE Resources Coordinator  
[soulmattersre@gmail.com](mailto:soulmattersre@gmail.com)

# Calendar Connections

*Click on the name on each event for more information or inspiration.*

## Interfaith:

- [Ash Wednesday](#) (Christian) - Feb. 14 (more [here](#))
- [Lent](#) (Christian) - Feb.14 - March 29 (A [humorous take](#))
- [Nirvana Day](#)/Parinirvana Day (Buddhist) - Feb. 15 (more [here](#))
- [Chinese New Year](#) (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist) - Feb. 16 -- year of the [earth dog](#) (more [here](#))
- [Purim](#) begins (Jewish) - Feb. 28 - March 1 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

## Unitarian Universalist:

- Susan B. Anthony's [Birthday](#) - Feb. 15 (more [here](#))
- Standing on the Side of Love Campaign / [30 Days of Love](#) - Jan. 16 - Feb.14

## National & Cultural:

- [African American History](#) Month (more [here](#))
- Season for [Nonviolence](#) - Jan. 30 - April 4 (more [here](#))
- [Groundhog Day](#) - Feb. 2
- [Freedom to Marry](#) Day - Feb. 12
- Mardi Gras - Feb. 13
- [St. Valentine's Day](#) - Feb. 14
- [President's Day](#) - Feb. 19
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ([NAACP is founded](#)) - Feb. 12 (1909)
- Malcolm X shot - Feb 21 (1965)
- [Trayvon Martin](#) is shot by George Zimmerman - Feb. 26 (2012)

## For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [Superbowl](#) Sunday - Feb. 4 (commercials [here](#))
- [Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk](#) Day - Feb. 11
- International [Darwin Day](#) (Darwin's Birthday) - Feb 12
- Random Acts of [Kindness Day](#) - Feb. 17 (more [here](#))

# Stories for all Ages

## **The Answer Mountain**

*From Tapestry of Faith, Toolbox, Flexibility Session*

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/toolbox/session4/109542.shtml>

Answers have always come from the enduring Answer Mountain. But the townsfolk must eventually adapt instead of trying to persevere with the same answer. Perseverance has to be flexible. Best told in suspenders and a straw hat. Make signs that say “No” and “Yes” and “Under Construction” and ask someone to hold them up.

## **Snail Girl, A Navaho Story**

*From Tapestry of Faith, Gather the Spirit, Workshop 1*

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/gather/workshop1/activity1>

Snail girl perseveres at bringing fresh water to the people. She is slow but steady. Tell this story using sheets of blue cloth to create rippling waves. Invite children to gently move the sheets up and down across the dais as the story is told.

## **The Little Engine That Could**

*by Watty Piper (Author), Loren Long (Illustrator)*

Updated book: <https://www.amazon.com/Little-Engine-That-Could/dp/0399244670>

Video of 1930's version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TPUwrURo6M>

We include this because of the generations of people who have grown up with this book from the 1930's on. It will spark memories for all about perseverance. Use the chant, “I think I can” as a participatory mantra.

# Song for All Ages

*Hymns and songs that can be used as a Story for All Ages. Here's a way to invite the music people into multigenerational worship. Ask them to offer the Hymn for All ages with you or instead of the minister, lay leader or religious educator.*

## **One More Step STLT #168**

Perseverance is working on small parts toward a larger intention, even when the going gets difficult.

In 1986 Canadian songwriter Joyce Poley wrote One More Step for a peace rally in Vancouver. Since then, this song of commitment and action has been sung at countless rallies, churches and gatherings of conscience.

It can embody the theme of perseverance, taking one more step, singing one more song.

Rev. Kimberley DeBus notes in her blog “Far Fringe” <http://farfringe.com/stlt168-one-more-step/>

that “... the sentiment is good and righteous and motivating. It's Frederick Buechner's “There can be no peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy for you also” in song. She also suggests that the song “mostly gets played as an oom-pa-pa and not the more gentle waltz I am sure Poley anticipated.” Finally, Rev. DeBus emphasizes that it was written before our ablest sensibilities, so the song requires an introduction about including folks who aren't “stepping” for justice in our awareness, just as “Standing on the Side of Love” is in this awareness in the last year. <http://revcyn.blogspot.com/2016/06/standing-rolling-dancing-singing.html>

So the back story is one of learning and changing as we understand our world and how to be inclusive, better AND how we can persevere and sing one more song, learn one more thing as we move on the path of understanding.

# Book Recommendations

## **Rosie Revere, Engineer**

*by Andrea Beaty (Author), David Roberts (Illustrator)*

<http://amzn.to/2iGRLlr>

“Rosie may seem quiet during the day, but at night she's a brilliant inventor of gizmos and gadgets who dreams of becoming a great engineer. When her great-great-aunt Rose (Rosie the Riveter) comes for a visit and mentions her one unfinished goal--to fly--Rosie sets to work building a contraption to make her aunt's dream come true. But when her contraption doesn't fly but rather hovers for a moment and then crashes, Rosie deems the invention a failure. On the contrary, Aunt Rose insists that Rosie's contraption was a raging success. You can only truly fail, she explains, if you quit. “(PS. There are other books by this author which would be good as well.)

## **She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World**

*by Chelsea Clinton (Author), Alexandra Boiger (Illustrator)*

<http://amzn.to/2AkeAsl>

Chelsea Clinton introduces tiny feminists, mini activists and little kids who are ready to take on the world to thirteen inspirational women who never took no for an answer, and who always, inevitably and without fail, persisted.

## **Love You Forever**

*by Robert Munsch (Author), Sheila McGraw (Illustrator)*

<http://amzn.to/2zrt5O5>

Celebrate the perseverance of enduring love between a mother and son.

# Sessions

## Session 1

### Slow and steady wins the race

#### Young Children (P - K)

##### **Wonder Box**

*Place inside: a turtle, stuffed or model (or real!)*

What is in the wonder box? It is a turtle! The turtle stands for Perseverance. The turtle is steady and slow, carrying its house on its back. The theme for our congregation is "Perseverance." "What does it mean to be a people of Perseverance?" It means to be like a turtle. Take things slow, and eventually get there.

##### **Story**

###### **The Tortoise and the Hare**

*There are a variety of books about this Aesop Fable.*

Book: <http://amzn.to/2zoUyy3>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUngzUtFr7Q>

##### **Mindfulness**

Invite the children to sit quietly. Listen to the bell with me until the sound disappears. We sit quietly together and imagine that we are a slow and steady turtle. We sit with our eyes closed and feel how we take one step at a time. We can be steady and slow, slow and steady. Feel how comfortable it is not to be rushed, to go along without having to be fast. Take a deep breath and feel the turtle energy inside of you.

Ring the bell one last time.

##### **Fingerplays**

MY LITTLE TURTLE

This is my little turtle. (Make fist)

He lives alone in a shell.

He likes his little home.

He thinks it's really swell.

He pokes out his head (Poke out thumb)

When he wants to eat.

Then he pulls it back in. (Hide thumb in fist)

When he wants to sleep.

Traditional

TINY TIM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCPSIEfE9Qs>

I had a little turtle, his name was Tiny Tim.  
I put him in the bathtub, to see if he could swim.  
He drank up all the water, he ate up all the soap.  
And now he's sick in bed, with a bubble in his throat!  
(Hiccup!)

## **Arts and Crafts**

### **Turtle Crafts**

<https://artscraftsymom.com/adorable-turtle-crafts-and-activities-for-kids/>

## **Movement**

### **Be a turtle**

Invite the children to make turtle shells for themselves out of cardboard boxes or carpet squares. Crawl around the room under them.

## **Dancing Song**

Play the tune "Turtle Song" by Parry Grip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfLLKnrkU4w>

Invite the children to make up a turtle dance, perhaps using their boxes. Invite them to crawl on their four turtle legs. This is a one-hour version, so quit when you are ready!

## **Food**

Make a turtle snack using a circular cracker, like Ritz or a Rice Cracker. Use a sticky food, like frosting, sunflower seed butter, or thick hummus, and place a dab on the circular cracker. Use pretzels to make the legs and tail of a turtle.

## **“Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies)**

### **Slow Walk**

Take a walk outside with the little turtles in your room. Make sure the walk is accessible to all children. Walk very slowly and steadily like a turtle. Now try to run around like the Hare. Zip here and there, then take a rest under a tree. How is the tortoise doing? Walk like a tortoise again. Invite the children to be tortoises or hares and act out the race.

### **A real tortoise**

Connect to nature and perseverance by inviting a real tortoise to visit the group.

### **Service**

Make a turtle snack for someone in your family.

## **Elementary Aged Children (1 - 5th)**

### **Reflections**

Prop: a real tortoise or a stuffed turtle or turtle figurine

The theme this month is “How are we a people of Perseverance?” Perseverance means.... what do you think? Being slow and steady, even when something gets difficult. Perseverance helps us accomplish something, like training for a race, learning to play an instrument, building a Lego creation.

Those of you who build with Legos, or other building toy, how do you use perseverance? Step by step, slowly, sometimes having to take something apart and start over, put it aside for a while, prepare for the long haul. Building with Legos is just like being a people of Perseverance.

The tortoise symbolizes perseverance. There is an Aesop’s fable about a race between a Tortoise and a Hare. So who do you expect to win? If you know don’t tell.

### **Story**

#### **The Tortoise and the Hare**

*There are a variety of books about this Aesop Fable.*

Book: <http://amzn.to/2zoUyy3>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUngzUtFr7Q>

Online: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/aesop/the\\_hare\\_the\\_tortoise.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/aesop/the_hare_the_tortoise.pdf)

### **Mindfulness**

Invite the bell or gong. Play the sea turtle video and tell the group to relax and close their eyes once they have seen the sea turtle swimming enough. Let their imaginations show them the turtle slowly swimming in the deep blue ocean. Continue the music video.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SDgg\\_t8zJ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SDgg_t8zJ0)

Remain in silence, steadiness and slowness as long as you need.... When you are ready, open your eyes and sit up, returning to this place.

Turn off the music when the group has returned. Invite the bell to close.

We find turtle energy when we need the slow steady pace and perseverance to accomplish something.

### **Craft Activity**

#### **Lego or other Building Toy**

As you build with the Legos or other toy, be aware of how you are practicing perseverance. Note how you select a certain block and place it with the others. Notice how you must build step by step. What else do you notice while you are building?

#### **Tortoise and the Hare Activities**

[https://www.scholastic.com/content/collateral\\_resources/pdf00premium/46/0439773946\\_e008.pdf](https://www.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf00premium/46/0439773946_e008.pdf)

Make a mini-book or write a letter to the Hare.

#### **Weaving Mini-Turtles**

<http://www.pinkstripeysocks.com/2016/05/turtles-using-3-sticks-gods-eye-weaving.html>

Make a mini-Turtle to remind you to persevere.

#### **For children who need an easier option**

##### **Turtle Crafts**

<https://artscraftsymom.com/adorable-turtle-crafts-and-activities-for-kids/>

## Video

### Tortoise and Hare Race Real

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7NuVjpi72c>

Invite the children to guess which real tortoise or hare will win.

### Parry Grip - Turtle Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRWAFQqQY9Y>

1-hour version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfLLKnrkU4w>

Use for extended movement or dancing, quit when you are ready! Or play while engaged in the activities of Legos or crafts.

## Song

### Ants Go Marching

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pjw2A3QU8Qg>

There's another way to capture the meaning of perseverance, and that is to remember the ants and how hard they work.

## Perseverance Games

### Hi, My Name is Joe

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session15/123710.shtml>

A cumulative game in which the children persevere to add a movement until they can't maintain all the movements..

### Perseverance Jenga

*From an idea by Joy Berry during the 2016 LREDA Fall Con*

Jenga is a block game. <http://amzn.to/2jbOxRi>

In this version, write or tape words pertaining to perseverance on each block. Play Jenga and invite the group to read the word on the block which they pull out, creating a word poem on Perseverance.

Words:

Staying power	Change	Backbone
The long haul	I think I Can	Drive
Determination	Dedication	Guts
Patience	Endurance	Pluck
Stick to it	Moxie	Purposeful
Faith	Persistence	Effort
Grit	Spunk	Concentration
Stubbornness	Stamina	

## “Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies)

### Tai Chi

A slow and steady martial art.

Invite a Tai Chi teacher in your congregation or use the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEOS2zoyQw4>

(5 minutes with optional repeat for 11 minutes)

## Service

Invite the families to join you to practice 5 minutes of Tai Chi together.

## Session 2

### Perseverance and Love (Valentines option)

#### Young Children (P - K)

#### Wonder Box

*Place inside: a Valentine*

I wonder what is in the box... (pull out the Valentine) Here is a Valentine! It is almost time for the holiday of Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day is when we say "I love you" to our family and friends. We promise to love them forever, and to be persistent in our love. That means a little love every day.

#### Story

##### I Love You

*by Todd Parr*

<http://amzn.to/2lZyln4>

##### I Will Love You Forever

*by Caroline Jayne Church (Author)*

<http://amzn.to/2zGViSj>

This tender story is a heartwarming reminder of the never-ending love between a parent and child. A sweet message to share with little ones to let them know that whoever they become and wherever they go, they are cherished.

Or a story from the Book Recommendations section.

#### Mindfulness

Say something like this:

Ring the bell. We put our hands on our hearts and feel the beating. Can you feel it? We breathe in love and breathe out peace.

Offer the following simple Metta Meditation.

May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be filled with love.

May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be filled with love.

May we be happy. May we be peaceful. May we be filled with love.

#### Songs

##### May I be Happy

*By Betsy Rose*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU\\_Vj0kytFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU_Vj0kytFo)

##### The More We Get Together

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lldmkrJXQ-E>

## **Fingerplays**

### **Valentine Poem**

5 little valentines just for you  
The first one says, "My love is true."  
The second one says, "You have my heart."  
The third one says, "Let us never part."  
The fourth one says, "Won't you please be mine?"  
The fifth one says, "'Til the end of time."

### **Mail Myself To You**

I'm gonna wrap myself in paper.  
I'm gonna dab myself with glue.  
Stick some stamps on top of my head.  
I'm gonna mail myself to you.

I'm gonna tie me up in red string,  
I'm gonna use blue ribbon too.  
I'm gonna climb up into your mailbox.  
I'm gonna mail myself to you.

## **Game**

### **Musical Circle of Hearts Game**

Cut matching pairs of hearts from an assortment of colored construction paper. Place one heart of each pair in a box. Tape the remaining hearts to the floor in a circle. Players walk on the circle of hearts to music - Betsy Rose's "May I Be Happy" [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU\\_Vj0kytFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU_Vj0kytFo) or the Beatles "All You Need is Love" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsxtImDVMig>  
When the music stops, each player must stand on one of the hearts. One heart is drawn from the box and the player standing on the matching heart gets a chance to choose a heart from the box for the next walk. Repeat as many times as your kids want to play.

## **"Sunshine" (connection with nature and our bodies)**

### **Perseverance Walk**

Are there signs of the perseverance of life in Winter for Spring yet where you live? Go outside and see if there is anything happening. Small blades of grass in a sunny corner growing? Desert flowers? Mouse tunnels in the snow? Tracks?

### **Movement Indoors**

Move your body and exercise that big heart. Can you do jumping jacks, make hearts with your fingers, make a V for Valentine's with another person? Can you make a heart out of your arms, can you make a heart with two people's arms? Can you make a V with your legs? Can you take small steps, big steps, all the steps you take to keep going, to persevere?

Continue your playlist and use the Beatles' "I wanna hold your hand" cover with Caitlin Hart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB--EqJFkvE>

## **Service**

Make a Valentine as a gift for someone who needs some love. Give them to the minister or Caring Committee to give to shut ins, or others.

## **Elementary Aged Children (1 - 5th)**

### **Reflection Questions on Perseverance**

*Props: a Valentine's card*

What do you think of when you hear the word "Perseverance?" It means keeping on going even through difficulties. Here is one of the most famous verses in the Bible about love and perseverance, something we might celebrate for Valentine's Day.

Love is Patient - from a book in the New Testament of the Bible called Corinthians, Chapter 13: Verse 4. There is a real town in Greece called Corinth. This verse is from a speech given by a man named Paul who was a follower of Jesus, and who travelled through Greece spreading the word about Jesus' teachings. So the book is called Corinthians because they are the people of Corinth whom Paul was teaching.

Love is patient, love is kind.  
It does not envy, it does not boast,  
it is not proud.  
It is not rude, it is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily angered,  
it keeps no record of wrongs.  
Love does not delight in evil  
but rejoices with the truth.  
It always protects, always trusts,  
always hopes, always perseveres.

For Valentine's, we can deepen our understanding of love. Think of people you care about. Are you patient and kind with them? When you have a fight with a friend or a family member, do you keep a "record of wrongs" a grudge? By reflecting on this famous verse, we can learn more about love. When I read these verses again, find the one sentence which pops out at you for some reason. If you are comfortable, share why it popped out.

### **Story**

#### **St. Valentine**

*by Robert Sabuda (Author, Illustrator)*

Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpeWebjSCUc>

Book - <https://www.amazon.com/Saint-Valentine-Robert-Sabuda/dp/0689824297>

Or one of the Stories for All Ages or Book Recommendations.

### **Video**

#### **The Inspirational Story Of 9-Year-Old Ezra Frech**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekLpn4zKiNU>

Persevering through the challenges of a prosthetic leg.

## **Amazing Kids of Character: Perseverance**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WXL2peOPG4>

### **Mindfulness**

Invite the participants to move into a comfortable position. Ring the bell and listen until the sound can't be heard.

Ring the bell. We put our hands on our hearts and feel the beating. Can you feel it? We breathe in love and breathe out peace. Perseverance is important in meditation. Taking a moment to be peaceful and breathe is a way to persevere in a meditation practice. It is the persevering which teaches us. We take small steps each day.

If it is a good time, try extending the meditation a little longer than usual to practice persevering.

Offer the following simple Metta Meditation.

May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be filled with love.

May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be filled with love.

May we be happy. May we be peaceful. May we be filled with love.

Breathe in and out for several seconds.

Invite the bell and return.

### **Songs**

#### **May I be Happy**

*By Betsy Rose*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU\\_Vj0kytFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU_Vj0kytFo)

### **Game**

#### **Valentine's Tic Tac Toe Graham Cracker Craft and Game**

<http://www.sippycupmom.com/valentine-tic-tac-toe-snack-craft/>

### **Arts and Crafts**

#### **Send Valentine's to local community organizers**

<https://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/thirty-days-of-love-2017/>

Use the templates provided by the Thirty Days of Love program

#### **Easy Pop Up Heart Card**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVr0ETFqFgI>

Use your perseverance to make several cut out hearts and heart cards. Step by step makes the job get done..

#### **"Sunshine" (connection with nature and our bodies)**

Go outside and take a Perseverance Walk. What evidence can you find for the perseverance of life during the winter, and into the Spring? The crocus is the traditional flower of St. Valentine's Day. Can you find any little shoots of grass? Growing things in warmer climates? Something under the snow? Swelling buds on trees?

### **Service**

Make extra cards for Shut-Ins, and others who may need a reminder that they are loved. Give them to your minister or Caring Committee. Or collect addresses and mail them.

## Session 3

### Perseverance and Kindness (Random Acts of Kindness option)

#### Young Children (P - K)

#### Wonder Box

Place inside: some dot labels in a variety of colors <http://amzn.to/2ympoGc>

What is in the wonder box? Dots! These are kindness dots. Every time we are kind, we get a dot today! How can we be kind? Can you be kind right now? Here is a dot for that. We will practice being kind over and over. Each time we get a dot. That way kindness is a part of us. That is one way we are a people of perseverance. We persevere in being kind. (continue giving out the dot stickers throughout your time together)

#### Story

##### One

*By Kathryn Otoshi*

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbgsROSP0y0>

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/One-Kathryn-Otoshi/dp/0972394648>

Persevering in the face of bullying. Blue is a quiet color. Red's a hothead who likes to pick on Blue. Yellow, Orange, Green, and Purple don't like what they see, but what can they do? When no one speaks up, things get out of hand — until One comes along and shows all the colors how to stand up, stand together, and count. As budding young readers learn about numbers, counting, and primary and secondary colors, they also learn about accepting each other's differences and how it sometimes just takes one voice to make everyone count.

#### How Full is Your Bucket?

*by Tom Rath (Author), Mary Reckmeyer (Author), Maurie J. Manning (Illustrator)*

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5R6-2m\\_qHk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5R6-2m_qHk)

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/How-Full-Your-Bucket-Kids/dp/1595620273>

Follow along with Felix as he learns how easy it can be to fill the buckets of his classmates, teachers and family members. Before the day is over, you'll see how Felix learns to be a great bucket filler, and in the process, discovers that filling someone else's bucket also fills his own.

#### Mindfulness

Listen to the bell with me until the sound disappears. We close our eyes and relax. You can even lie down. Imagine we are in a kindness cloud, floating so gently. The cloud holds us warm and with love. How nice to be in a kindness cloud. Breathe quietly in and out. Share the silence together for a moment. When you are ready return to here and now from our kindness cloud, ready to be kind in all we do this morning.

## Video

### Random Acts of Kindness Song

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaHFj\\_68cKs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaHFj_68cKs)

### If You're Kind and You Know It Song

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL\\_EANcmOcl7lLh0H0KwFwcv0OT-4US3wk&time\\_continue=35&v=t4nT30s5vH0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL_EANcmOcl7lLh0H0KwFwcv0OT-4US3wk&time_continue=35&v=t4nT30s5vH0)

### Kindness Counts

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=32&v=qZ7VGLkYcMk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=32&v=qZ7VGLkYcMk)

## Fingerplays

### Where is Thumbkin?

<http://www.songsforteaching.com/fingerplays/whereisthumbkinthumbkin.htm>

Make friends.

### Be Kind

[http://ifnotyouwho.org/activities/detail/activity\\_13\\_character\\_traits](http://ifnotyouwho.org/activities/detail/activity_13_character_traits)

5 little children

Standing in a row (hold up 5 fingers)

They are kind to others

Everywhere they go. (walk hand in front of body)

I am one of the children (point to self)

Standing in a row (hold up 5 fingers)

I'll be kind to others (point to self)

Wherever I go. (walk hand in front of body)

This finger play works as a reminder to a child to be kind in any situation- without saying a word. Just walk hand in front of body to silently signal a child to remember to be kind.

## Movement

### The Farmer in the Dell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mibD5lR4Kco>

Complete each step of creating a group of friends to persevere with kindness.

## “Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies) and Service

### Birdseed Kindness

Leave some birdseed at the foot of trees and on branches to be kind to little animals and birds trying to make it, persevere, through the winter.

## **Elementary Aged Children (1 - 5th)**

### **Reflections**

Props: a fortune cookie

Perseverance and kindness go together because we use perseverance to cultivate the habit of kindness. If we practice it over and over, it will become second nature to us. What would it be like to get little messages, just like in this fortune cookie, about kindness? This message says [read the fortune.] Today, we celebrate “Random Acts of Kindness” as well as practicing perseverance and kindness.

### **Story**

#### **The Stonecutter**

*A Japanese folktale*

<https://folkrealmstudies.weebly.com/japanese-folktales-the-stonecutter.html>

What does it mean to be useful and kind? A man learns the important things for living a good life.

#### **How Full is Your Bucket?**

*by Tom Rath (Author), Mary Reckmeyer (Author), Maurie J. Manning (Illustrator)*

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5R6-2m\\_qHk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5R6-2m_qHk)

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/How-Full-Your-Bucket-Kids/dp/1595620273>

Follow along with Felix as he learns how easy it can be to fill the buckets of his classmates, teachers and family members. Before the day is over, you’ll see how Felix learns to be a great bucket filler, and in the process, discovers that filling someone else’s bucket also fills his own.

### **Video**

#### **Being Kind**

*The music video that circles the world.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJhZ64BvvFU>

Kindness is all we can leave behind.

#### **Kindhearted Hand**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=49&v=r8RpTN\\_DfhU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=49&v=r8RpTN_DfhU)

Reach out!

### **Mindfulness**

#### **The Jewel - Sending Friendly wishes to a Friend**

<https://annakaharris.com/mindfulness-for-children/>

Play the MP3 to yourself, and then lead a meditation in your own words.

### **Craft Activity**

#### **Make a Paper Bucket**

<http://www.bucketfillers101.com/pdfs/PaperBucket.pdf>

It takes small steps all day long to fill your bucket. That’s perseverance. Make a bucket to collect kindnesses.

#### **Great Job Index Cards**

<http://www.bucketfillers101.com/pdfs/GreatJobCards.pdf>

### **Bucket Filling Notes**

<http://www.bucketfillers101.com/pdfs/BucketfillingNotes1Color.pdf>

6 to a page, little notes to slip in other's buckets.

### **Friendship Chain**

*From Kindness in the Classroom, Random Acts of Kindness. Register for free and get the downloadable sessions. This one in 4th Grade, Unit 1.*

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

Create a paper chain of friends.

### **Games**

*Games allow us to practice kindness with little steps each day, in order to persevere against bullying and meanness.*

#### **Mother May I?**

<https://www.grandparents.com/grandkids/activities-games-and-crafts/mother-may-i>

*Celebrate, perseverance and the small steps each person takes to reach a bigger goal.*

Other steps: Scissors step- jump while crossing your feet, then jump while uncrossing them was one step  
Banana step-laying down with feet at current spot, marking where the top of your head was, and getting up there for new spot.

Bunny step - a hop

#### **Ice Cube Challenge**

*From Kindness in the Classroom, Random Acts of Kindness. Register for free and get the downloadable sessions. This one in 2nd Grade, Unit 4.*

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

Freeze a penny in an ice cube to experience what persistence means.

#### **Feelings Game**

*From Kindness in the Classroom, Random Acts of Kindness. Register for free and get the downloadable sessions. This one in 3rd Grade, Unit 3.*

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

Act out different emotions using feelings statements.

#### **Caring Role Plays**

*From Kindness in the Classroom, Random Acts of Kindness. Register for free and get the downloadable sessions. This one in 3rd Grade, Unit 1.*

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

Practice ways to be kind.

#### **Kindness Bingo**

*From Kindness in the Classroom, Random Acts of Kindness. Register for free and get the downloadable sessions. This one in Kindergarten Grade, Unit 1.*

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

Great color photos to print and hide around the room about kindness.

## **“Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies)**

What if 100,000 people picked up one piece of litter every day? Join the litter project. [Litterproject.com](http://Litterproject.com)

The door to happiness opens outward. – Soren Kierkegaard

Before anything else, “just do it.” That is, to pick up a piece of litter each day. If you tell people about your daily habit, you will surely inspire at least a few more supporters. Persevere.

Over 60% of the people who hear about this will find themselves picking up trash within a few weeks.

The idea is simple and catchy... and works!

## **Service**

### **Tech Time**

Offer a Tech Time to help those not facile with a Smartphone or a computer. Teach them how to take small steps to persevere and learn how to use their technology. You will have to persevere through the many confusions which non-tech people hold. I.e. how to use the “home” button on a Smartphone seems intuitive, yet this essential function may be a mystery to a non-tech person. Or “swiping” may be a very difficult concept to grasp. Persevere in learning and teaching.

## Session 4

### Perseverance and Laughter (Purim Options)

#### Young Children (P - K)

*Embody the spirit of perseverance for young children with the Eensy Weensy Spider.*

#### **Wonder Box**

*Place inside: a spider figurine, puppet, or stuffed toy, or a picture of a spider.*

What is in the Wonder Box today? A little spider! This little spider is a hard worker. She weaves a web to catch her food. She is perseverant. We imagine how hard the spider works to make the beautiful web. She works and works. This is called perseverance. Imagine that little spider and how proud she is of her web. We can work hard like the little spider. When we work hard, we can make wonderful things happen, too!

#### **Story**

##### **The Very Busy Spider**

*by Eric Carle*

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfL0g-XRxnA>

Book: <http://amzn.to/2zxMkDY>

Early one morning a little spider spins her web on a fence post. One by one, the animals of the nearby farm try to distract her, yet the busy little spider keeps diligently at her work. When she is done, she is able to show everyone that not only is her creation quite beautiful, it is also quite useful!

#### **Mindfulness**

Invite the children to sit and listen to the sound of a bell, a gong, or singing bowl until it disappears. Say something like this:

“We let go of our busy things. We sit so still. We invite the sound of the bell. We listen until the sound is gone. We breathe in and know that we can work hard. We feel strong. We breathe out and feel peace. Breathe in, work hard. Feel strong. Breathe out, peace.” Sit with me for a few more breaths.

Ring the bell to signal an end to the mindfulness.

#### **Fingerplay and Song**

Spiders are not insects,  
Spiders have eight legs,  
Spiders have four pair of eyes,  
Spiders hatch from eggs.

Spider webs are sticky,  
Spiders weave them tight,  
Spiders spin that silky string,  
Spiders weave webs right!

### **The Eensy Weensy Spider Fingerplay**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bne3lx\\_tJL8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bne3lx_tJL8)

What better way to embody perseverance!

### **Video**

#### **Shiny Orb Weaver Weaving a Web (3 min.)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kn83aC7NjSc>

Watch this large screen

### **Movement (connection with nature and our bodies)**

#### **Move like a Spider**

Invite children to move like the very busy spider and make a web. Try giving them yarn as web silk.

#### **Tape Spider Web Maze on Floor**

<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2011/10/spider-web-gross-motor-activity.html>

#### **Eensy Weensy Spider Water Play**

Use a water play table or plastic storage box and fill with warm water. Add something that acts like a gutter and some small plastic spiders. What can the children do with it?

### **Arts and Crafts**

#### **Popsicle Stick Puppets for the story**

<http://www.makinglearningfun.com/themepages/SpiderVeryBusyPopsicleStickPuppets.htm>

#### **Yarn Web Silk**

Invite the children to make a web out of yarn, gluing the yarn to paper.

### **Sunshine (connection to Nature and our Bodies)**

Go outside and look for webs if there are any yet. Turn over some rocks and see if there are egg sacs. Remind the children to be kind and to leave the web and sacs where they are.

Or

Stay indoors and play with ropes as webs. Can they jump over the rope? Can they roll up in it? Can they follow a long rope as a path? Can they each hold onto the rope and play Follow the Leader?

### **Service**

Invite the children to set up the Crèche on a table so that the congregation can enjoy it after the service.

## **Elementary Aged Children (1 - 5th)**

*The Jewish holiday of Purim is a crazy, fun celebration of the perseverance of a Jewish Queen in saving her people from annihilation. There is a spirit of liveliness and fun on Purim that is unparalleled on the Jewish calendar. There is usually a melodramatic play telling the story of Esther, Haman, and Mordecai. There are noise makers and costumes. Laughter is a skill for perseverance.*

### **Reflections**

Props: a costume or costume hat. A variety of shakers and noise makers.

When do we wear costumes? For Halloween, or if we put on a play. The festival of Purim, a Jewish Holiday, is celebrated at the in late winter/early spring and includes costumes and a play. This year, it happens on Feb. 25. The people dress up to tell the story of Queen Esther and how she persevered over a bad situation to save her people from being executed. It took perseverance and courage to face possible execution herself for disobeying a royal decree.

It is the custom to boo and hiss and make noise when the bad guy is mentioned. His name is Haman. Let's practice. The advisor to the king was named...."Haman!" [boo and hiss]. The Jews have a lot of fun when they put on their play. In addition, they remember the perseverance of Queen Esther and her Uncle Mordecai in saving their people. It is a story of justice, of the good guys winning out in the end. We UU's can celebrate the importance of persevering, taking steps to a larger goal, even when times get difficult.

### **Story**

#### **The Story of Queen Esther**

*by Jenny Koralek (Author), Grizelda Holderness (Illustrator)*

<https://www.amazon.com/Story-Queen-Esther-Jenny-Koralek/dp/080285348X>

The ancient story of Queen Esther has been told for generations as an example of wisdom and great perseverance. Her bravery is still commemorated each year in the Jewish festival of Purim.

Video of story with children in costumes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZe6PdH7Oas>

### **Mindfulness**

#### **Laughter Meditation**

*Adapted from <http://bit.ly/2Az4c1k>*

1 minutes: Stand with your feet hip-width apart and stretch your arms high above your head. Rock your body side-to-side from your torso, then bend over and touch your hands to your feet. Next, massage your jaw and yawn at least two times to loosen your mouth and relax the muscles in your jaw.

3 minutes: Find a comfortable position to sit or stand. Start by slightly smiling and then begin laughing without too much effort. Move to deep belly laughs. (Hint: try different types of laughs to encourage your true laugh to come through. Even if it begins as a forced feeling, most people find the forced laughter catalyzes authentic laughter in no time.)

1 minute: Sit or lie on the floor in stillness and silence. Be mindful of what comes up for you—how your body feels, emotions that present themselves, and thoughts that arise. (Optional: share what comes up)

### **Video**

#### **About Purim**

[http://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/1466094/jewish/Purim-Is-Awesome.htm](http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/1466094/jewish/Purim-Is-Awesome.htm)

## Theatre

### Purim Shpiel (play)

<https://joyfuljewish.wordpress.com/2011/03/08/the-purim-story-for-small-children/>

The Jews offer plays with costumes and melodrama at Purim. The audience is encouraged to boo and hiss at the bad guy, Haman, and cheer for Mordecai and Queen Esther. Offer your own play!

## Craft Activity

### Purim Crafts

[http://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/361573/jewish/Coloring-Crafts.htm](http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/361573/jewish/Coloring-Crafts.htm)

## “Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies)/ Movement

Laughter allows us to persevere in the face of difficulties. Try a few of these movements from the Laughter Yoga Movement, either indoors or out.

From <https://www.active.com/health/articles/20-laughter-yoga-exercises?page=1>

5 Laughter Yoga Exercises For Children

Baby Laughter: One person must demonstrate how a baby laughs (take turns!). Everybody else must then do the same things.

Favorite Animal Laughter: Laugh and behave the way your favorite animal or pet would behave if it was very happy to see you.

Chicken Laughter: Imagine you are a chicken. First lay 3 eggs in 3 laughs, then laugh with lots of excitement in your voice as you go tell the world about it.

Jumping Frog: Squat down, hands on the floor between your knees. Jump once saying "ha", then a second time saying, "ha ha", a third time saying, "ha ha ha", then jump in fast succession laughing a lot.

Laughter Vowels: Let's learn the laughter vowels! Let's start with "A" as in "hat": Aaaaa ha ha ha ha ha".

Next is "E" as in "hen": Eeeee he he he he he. Next is "I" a in "hiccup": liiii hi hi hi hi hi. Next is "O" as in

"Otto": Ooooo ho ho ho ho ho. Last is "U" as in "soup": Uuuuu hu hu hu hu hu.

## Games

### Mother May I?

<https://www.grandparents.com/grandkids/activities-games-and-crafts/mother-may-i>

*Celebrate perseverance and the small steps each person takes to reach a bigger goal.*

Other steps: Scissors step- jump while crossing your feet, then jump while uncrossing them was one step

Banana step-laying down with feet at current spot, marking where the top of your head was, and getting up there for new spot.

Bunny step - a hop

## Service

Offer your play to another group!

# Chapel

*Here's a format for a Children's Chapel or Circle Time. Mix and match the components to fit your program. We recommend some type of ritual that is the same most every Sunday, to create comfort and memories even with discontinuous attendance. Post the words on the wall so that guests and newcomers can join in. When you offer Multigenerational services, offer these same words as a whole community of children, youth and adults.*

## **Welcome Centerpiece**

Choose a color for a cloth, a chalice, an offering box, a way of sharing Joys and Sorrows (candles or rocks in water). red candles for valentine's love?

## **Entering**

Invite the singing bowl. (Ring the bowl)

"To this quiet place of beauty, we come from busy things  
Pausing for a moment for the thoughts that quiet brings."

## **Music**

Play the video to set the mood for the Chapel.

### **Acts of Kindness**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBI2TVtI>

Watch how each person's act of kindness, gives a little love and gets a little love in a circle.

## **Song**

### **Make New Friends**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AABQt7M0SG0>

Sing to celebrate enduring friendships that persevere.

## **Chalice Lighting**

"We light this chalice for the warmth of love, the light of truth and the energy of action." (or your own congregation's words)

## **Offering (optional)**

"We drop our coins in. We get back pride, to help other people feels good inside."

## **Sharing of Joys and Concerns**

"We listen to each other, it is a holy act

To share our joys and sorrows, with grace it flows on back."

You may always say, "Pass."

If you wish to share, say your name, then light a candle or drop a rock in the water for your joy or concern.

"For all the joys and concerns which remain unspoken, we light this candle/add this rock."

## **Meditation on Perseverance**

Move into a comfortable position and close your eyes if you are comfortable.

Relax your toes, your calves, your knees, your hips, your torso, your shoulders. Feel the tension in your fingers and hands be released. Feel your elbows and biceps relax. Take a deep breath and feel your lungs move deeply and slowly. Move your tongue from the top of your mouth, relax your jaw, and ears, and eyebrows.

Imagine yourself as a mountain, steady and secure. This is the mountain of Perseverance. As you breathe in, the mountain is secure, and is solid. When you breath out, the mountain is peaceful, and beauty surrounds you.

Remain in this place of Perseverance and beauty for ten breaths. Then I will invite the bell.

Ring the bell.

Return slowly to this room, to your body, open your eyes when you are ready. Carry the light of Perseverance with you this month!

## **Story, optional**

Use one of the recommended stories/songs For All Ages, or a book from the book recommendations.

## **Songs, redux**

### **Extinguishing the Chalice**

We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth,  
and the energy of action into our hearts  
Back into the world of do and say  
Carry it forward into the dawning day.  
Go Now in Peace, Amen.

*Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.*

# Add Ons

*Resources to expand or deepen your programming. For those who have a longer program, a second hour or a Wednesday Family Night.*

## **Interfaith:**

- Purim begins (Jewish) - Feb. 28 - March 1
  - [http://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/354749/jewish/Purim.htm](http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/354749/jewish/Purim.htm)
  - [http://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/2880014/jewish/Purim-The-Lot.htm](http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/2880014/jewish/Purim-The-Lot.htm)
  - <https://www.akhlah.com/jewish-holidays/purim/>

## **Unitarian Universalist:**

- Standing on the Side of Love Campaign / 30 Days of Love - Jan. 16 - Feb.14
- <https://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/thirty-days-of-love-2017/>

## **National & Cultural:**

- St. Valentine's Day - Feb 14
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdKZepHMFWE>
  - <http://www.primarygames.com/holidays/valentines/history.php>

## **For Fun and On the Fringe:**

- Random Acts of Kindness Day - Feb. 17
  - <https://www.coffeecupsandcrayons.com/100-acts-kindness-kids/>
  - <http://redtri.com/random-acts-of-kindness-just-because/>
  - <http://www.mathematicshed.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/12572836/rakminion.pdf>

## Resources For General Theme Exploration:

### Slow and Steady

#### 12 Books that Teach Kids About Perseverance

<https://selfsufficientkids.com/childrens-books-perseverance/>

#### Perseverance and Grit

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/social-and-emotional-development/news/resilience-and-perseverance/perseverance-and-grit-can-be-taught>

#### What is perseverance for kids?

<https://talkingtreebooks.com/definition/what-is-perseverance.html>

#### Does Teaching Kids to “Get Gritty” Help Them Get Ahead?

<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/03/17/290089998/does-teaching-kids-to-get-gritty-help-them-get-ahead>

### Perseverance and Love

#### I Corinthians

<https://www.bible.com/bible/1359/1CO.13.icb>

### Perseverance and Kindness

#### 19 Multicultural Books on Kindness and Empathy

<http://coloursofus.com/19-multicultural-childrens-books-teaching-kindness-empathy/>

#### Random Acts of Kindness Printable Cards

<https://web.kidsactivitiesblog.com/108631/printable-random-acts-kindness-cards>

#### Kind Kid’s Club

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-videos/2-kind-kids-club>

### Perseverance and Laughter

#### Children Can Learn Laughter Yoga in 2 min.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qm1Z5rD9V4E>

#### Guidelines for Laughter Yoga with Children

<https://laughteryoga.org/guidelines-for-laughter-exercises-with-children/>

#### Laughter Meditation

<http://kidsrelaxation.com/?cat=16>

# Youth and Young Adult

Here are a variety of components for use in your Middle School/Sr High/Young Adult Groups. In addition, check out:

- *the Stories for All Ages section*
- *this month's Soul Matters Small Group Packet (after all, isn't Youth Group a Small Group Ministry?!)*
- *an adult worship service on "Being A People of Perseverance"*

## Reflection

### A Little Greek for Valentine's Day

*Indulge in a reflection I Corinthians, the most famous verse on love in the Bible for Valentine's Day.*

<https://rainshine.wordpress.com/2016/02/06/what-does-it-mean-that-love-is-patient/>

Look up the most famous verse on love in the New Testament. I Corinthians 13:4

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast,

it is not proud.

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking,

it is not easily angered,

it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil

but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts,

always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

You have probably heard the expression before: They "have a short fuse". When that is spoken about someone, it means that it doesn't take much to get them upset. Say a word, and they get angry. Do something, and they quickly get offended. We say they "have a short fuse." Well, the Bible tells us in I Corinthians that love is the opposite of that. Love has a "macro thumia"; it has a "long fuse", if you will! In fact, that wouldn't be a bad translation of this phrase: "love has a long fuse." It is not easily angered or upset.

Now we need to remember that in Biblical Greek, this is a verb: "makrothumei." We have translated it in English as if it were an adjective: "love is patient", because we don't really have a verbal form of "patient." But just remember, in Greek, this is a verb: we might translate it something like, "love long-fuses". The King James' "Love suffers long" is actually one of the better translations of this verse.

And it "suffers long" and is "long-fused" towards people. In studying this word this past week, I was struck by how similar this word "patience" is in meaning to "perseverance." They have some similar qualities. But "patience", "makrothumia", is almost always used regarding people, not just circumstances. You can persevere through circumstances, but you are patient with people – because you love them. Love is patient.

So when we get to the root of "being patient", we see that it involves a commitment of all one's

life/essence, emotions, will, and thoughts. This is the kind of gut-wrenching, life-giving “patience” that God does to all people, and that we must, therefore, show one another. Love, it would seem, does nothing half-heartedly.

## Videos

### Music: Blueprint "Persevere"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cujPOWS68nM>

The only true failure is not to try.. I'm talking about hard work.

### For Random Acts of Kindness, Feb. 17

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBI2TVtI>

Give a little love, get a little love...

### Love Never Fails (based on I Corinthians)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQ6YJkVHf48>

From a Christian singer, with universal meaning.

### Come and Go With Me to That Land/One More Step

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7BcKuxQwu0>

Our own UU musicians meld two justice songs.

### Actions Speak Louder Motivational Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCOEuE25MU4>

Make decisions to take small steps every day.

## Arts and Crafts

### Send Valentine's to local community organizers

<https://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/thirty-days-of-love-2017/>

Use the templates provided by the Thirty Days of Love program

### The Empathy Symbol

<https://empathysymbol.com/>

Think the heart is too common? Add this symbol to Valentine's, your arm as a temporary tattoo, to a poster.

## Skits and Theatre

### Practicing No Motion

*From the Divine Theater and Dance Fahs Fellowship Project by Matt Davis*

<https://divinetheateranddance.com/2015/04/11/practicing-no-motion/>

Practice stillness in everyday movements, to understand what it is like to take small mindful steps for perseverance.

## Mindfulness

### Perseverance

A gentle perseverance allows meditation to be practiced through hard and easy times. It is key to letting mindfulness practice sink deep into the marrow of our bones. Try a longer meditation than usual after listening to this Zen story:

A horse suddenly came galloping quickly down the road. It seemed as though the man had somewhere important to go. Another man, who was standing alongside the road, shouted, "Where are you going?" and the man on the horse replied, "I don't know! Ask the horse!"

Breathe in and out for a longer time than usual. You may wish to set a timer.

When all have returned from the meditation time, reflect on how it went, how it felt to go longer.

Reflection: This is a short but well-known Zen story with a powerful meaning behind it. The horse symbolizes our habit energy. The story explains the way we usually live, at the mercy of our old habit energies which have been established not by our intentional actions, but by our surroundings and mindless activity.

The horse is pulling us along, making us run here and there and hurry everywhere and we don't even know why. If you stopped to ask yourself from time to time why exactly you're running around so much, sometimes you might have an answer, but it's never a very good one. You're just used to it, it's how we're taught to live. Meditation teaches us to persevere with intention, not just practicing habits like a runaway horse.

## Games

### Random Acts of Kindness (Feb. 17) Pick a number

Pick a number between 1 and 50, then visit the Random Acts of Kindness website to read the corresponding action to do.

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/the-kindness-blog/2943-50-kindness-ideas-for-random-acts-of-kindness-day>

### Deep Fun games adapted for the theme of "Perseverance"

<https://www.uua.org/youth/library/adults-ministry/deepfun/45594.shtml>

#### Perseverance Life Line

Have each person draw a vertical line down the middle of their page. At the bottom of the line write "0" and your birth date, at the top write the age you expect to live to, and a date that many years in the future. On the line indicate the age you are now and what you're doing now. Write in what you would like to be doing five years from now, ten years from now. Group members can share goals and discuss one other's hopes for the future. What steps do you need to take to persevere? You may want to talk about what problems are blocking their achievement, and let the group help each other come up with solutions.

Variation: Make the time lines only from birth to the present. Have each person remember pivotal moments in their lives and mark them on the lines.

#### Perseverance Teapot

Choose a person to leave of the room. The remaining group chooses a verb. When the person returns to the room, the group must replace that verb with "teapot," or another chosen word, when they speak. The person tries to discover the meaning of "teapot" by asking members of the group questions like, "Do you teapot a lot?" or, "What does it feel like to teapot?" Whoever

reveals the verb in her answer to the question gets to be the next person to leave the room. Persevere and figure out the answer!

### **The Pie of Life**

Ask the group to draw a large circle on a piece of paper. Tell the group that the circle they just drew represents a day in their life. Ask the group to cut slices of the pie to represent the amount of time they spend doing different things. Example: the amount of time you sleep on a typical day, at school, daydreaming, with friends, alone. Have them label their slices. After the group has finished slicing their life pies, have them share with the group (if they are comfortable). Give each person time to talk about one or more of their slices. How much time are they spending each day to reach a goal? I.e. 2 hours a day at soccer practice to train for the season.

## **Movies with a theme of perseverance**

### **Forrest Gump, rated PG13**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0109830/>

JFK, LBJ, Vietnam, Watergate, and other history unfold through the perspective of an Alabama man with an IQ of 75.

### **Princess Bride, PG**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0093779/>

While home sick in bed, a young boy's grandfather reads him a story called The Princess Bride. A cult classic.

### **Queen of Katwe, rated PG**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4341582/>

A Ugandan girl sees her world rapidly change after being introduced to the game of chess.

### **The Martian, rated PG13**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3659388/>

An astronaut becomes stranded on Mars after his team assume him dead, and must rely on his ingenuity to find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive.

## **Service (as in service to others)**

### **Tech Time**

Offer a Tech Time to help those not facile with a Smartphone, Social Media, or even a computer. Teach them how to take small steps to persevere and learn how to use their technology. You will have to persevere through the many confusions which non-tech people hold. I.e. how to use the “home” button on a Smartphone seems intuitive, yet this essential function may be a mystery to a non-tech person. Or “swiping” may be a very difficult concept to grasp. Persevere in learning and teaching.

### **“Sunshine” (connection with nature and our bodies)**

What if 100,000 people picked up one piece of litter every day? Join the litter project. [Litterproject.com](http://litterproject.com)

The door to happiness opens outward. – Soren Kierkegaard

Before anything else, I suggest to “just do it.” That is, to pick up a piece of litter each day. If you tell people about your daily habit, you will surely inspire at least a few more supporters. Persevere.

Over 60% of the people who hear about this will find themselves picking up trash within a few weeks.

The idea is simple and catchy... and works!

# Family and Parent Resources

*These resources support parents as they try to live out and engage our themes with their children. We can ask “What does it mean to be a parent of Perseverance” or “What does it mean to be a family of Perseverance?” As you use these resources to engage these questions, keep in mind some additional ways to use them with other parents or your church community:*

- *Reflect with those in your family.*
- *Share and discuss them with other parents or another family.*
- *Use them in a Parent Circle that meets on Sunday afternoon or mid-week.*

## **Apps**

### **Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame Street**

*Smartphone App using Sesame Street characters to help young children keep calm and carry on - persevere in the face of difficulties.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yu0YEii4FkQ>

### **Best Apps for Children**

<https://www.common sense media.org/guide/best-first-kids-apps>

Apps can turn your smartphone or tablet into a learning tool, an entertainment system, or a way to dig up almost anything you want to know. This guide makes finding the best apps for the task (and your kids' needs) easy. Detailed reviews and suggestions. Children already persevere while playing online, so find some good ones.

## **Webinar**

### **How to Encourage Your Child to Take on Challenges and Develop a “Growth Mindset”**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=23&v=gshJzvx0Mt0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=23&v=gshJzvx0Mt0)

Research shows that young children who are willing to take on challenges are more successful in school and life. But how can you encourage your child to develop this important skill?

## **Articles**

### **How to Teach Kids Perseverance and Goal-Setting**

<http://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/style/how-to-teach-kids-perseverance-goal-setting/>

To encourage perseverance, teach preteens how to set goals and work to meet them.

### **12 Tips To Raise a Persistent Child**

<http://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/emotional-intelligence/persistence>

Suggestions to support parents with effective ways to encourage their child in going after what they want.

## **Movies for families about perseverance**

### **Homeward Bound, rated G**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0107131/>

Three pets escape from a California ranch to find their owners in San Francisco.

**Finding Nemo, rated G**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0266543/>

After his son is captured in the Great Barrier Reef and taken to Sydney, a timid clownfish sets out on a journey to bring him home.

**Wall-E, rated G**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/>

In the distant future, a small waste-collecting robot inadvertently embarks on a space journey that will ultimately decide the fate of mankind.

**Eagle Huntress, rated G (recommended for 8+ yrs. old)**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3882074/>

Thirteen-year-old Aisholpan trains to become the first female in twelve generations of her Kazakh family to become an eagle huntress.

**One Night With the King (PG)**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0430431/>

The story of Purim, celebrated at the end of February, and Queen Esther.

## **Additional Resources from Katie Covey**

*Katie creates curriculum distinct from Soul Matters. You can learn more about all she offers at [www.uure.com](http://www.uure.com). If you have purchased her curriculum, here are sessions from it that relate to the theme of Perseverance.*

### **Elementary ages**

#### **From [Spirit of Adventure](#):**

Session #32 - PT Barnum

#### **From [Picture Book UU](#):**

Session #21 - The Keeping Quilt

Session #22 - St. Valentine

Session #33 - Love You Forever

#### **From [Picture Book Bible Tales](#)**

Session #12 - The Wisdom Bird; a Tale of Solomon and Sheba

#### **From [Picture Book World Religions](#)**

Session #6 - The Hundredth Name

### **Youth**

#### **From [Lodestone, Magnetize Your Middle School](#)**

*UU Unit*

Session #UU6 - Genesis and Evolution

## Opportunities for Support & Connection

Join the Soul Matters RE Leaders' Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/545202255591601/>

Encourage your teachers and parents  
to join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>



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