

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children

Pentecost (B)

New Testament: Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

BACKGROUND

We begin the season with two Feast days: Pentecost, followed by Trinity Sunday. Then we move on to the long season known as Ordinary Time, which runs through Christ the King Sunday. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others. Our theme for this lengthy season is “Blessed is the Ordinary.”

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK’S GOSPEL

The church is born at Pentecost. The promised Advocate comes and those who cowered in fear now burst forth from their prisons with a message that can be understood in any language. The message: God is for everyone and anyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. We are still unpacking this message today as we peek out from the prisons we find ourselves hiding within.

THEME

Come Holy Spirit

BEFORE CLASS

You will need sidewalk chalk (or if it is not available, simple colored chalk will do). OR If you are not going to be able to go outside and write on the sidewalk, you will need: calculator paper rolls and felt markers or crayons and tape to hang up the children's work where all can see. If you are including younger children in this lesson, be sure to read the lesson for young children. Other supplies: copies of the scripture or Bibles for each child, an electric fan, bubbles (see Younger Children Lesson Plan) and red tissue paper for flames.

BEGINNING

Greet the children and explain what is going to happen. If the young children are included, explain that the older children will prepare the story and the younger children will share their craft. If you have only older children, explain that you will tell them the story and then invite them to act it out. Tell them to be listening for words to later share with the rest of the church.

OPENING PRAYER

Thank you, God, for helping Jesus' friends not to give up. Thank you that they waited in that room – just like Jesus had told them to do – until the Holy Spirit came to them. Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to us, too. Amen.

THE STORY: ACTS 2:1-21

If the children like to read, they could read the passage. It is quite long, so you could also simply tell the story. If you have access to a computer and projector, you could show the story as told with Legos. This is a slide show with the story:

http://www.thebricktestament.com/acts_of_the_apostles/instant_fluency/ac02_01-03.html or a YouTube Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ww-0sCm0ge4>.

Or tell parts, and let the children read parts. Here is a suggested way:

Jesus' friends are huddled in the room where they had supper with Jesus. He had told them to go wait there until the Holy Spirit came and gave them the power they needed. They had no idea what to expect. It probably never occurred to them that the Holy Spirit would literally BLOW IN! A wind filled the room. And the wind filled them with excitement. They looked around at each other – so very excited that they were just sure they saw tongues of flame over each other's heads.

Then, they went racing outside to tell everyone what had happened. At first the people outside thought they were crazy – or even drunk! But then the people outside realized that they could understand these friends of Jesus – even though they did not speak their language.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder what it was like to be there on this day?
- Why were the disciples hunkered down in this room? (They were afraid they were next. Some children may remember that during the Easter season we had stories of the disciples huddling in this room when Jesus came to them.)
- What did the disciples see when the wind came rushing in? (Acts 2, verse 3)
- What did Peter say to the crowd? (Verse 21)
- I wonder what you would say or do if you were present?

ACT IT OUT

Act out this passage. You will need disciples, even one or two, and a crowd – one or two will do. Or you could do it in two parts: first all the disciples check out the flames on each other's heads, and then the crowd outside tries to figure out what is going on. Different children could learn the phrase in Spanish, French, or some other language. An electric fan might be a good prop for the wind blowing. Do the play in the classroom. Or, invite the younger children to see the play.

GETTING CLOSURE

Say again, in English, Acts 2:21: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." If you and the children will be going outside with chalk, take a Bible with you so the children can copy this verse or another part of the story on the sidewalk. People will see the verse in chalk as they leave church.

If you are not going to be able to go outside, invite the children to write the words of Acts 2:21 on strips of calculator paper and tape the strips where the adults will see them when then come out of church. Each child can make a strip – write in English, or one of the other languages if they prefer. If younger children are joining you, they could write the words "Jesus" or "Love." Then all can make bubbles.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, God, for disciples who wait for the wind of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for the Holy Spirit here with us today. Amen.