

Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Acts 10:34-43

Background

Alleluia, Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Today we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord as we emerge from the Lenten season of waiting and watching. We've walked with Jesus through the wilderness into Jerusalem and to the grave. Today we finally get to celebration our true nature: That of an Easter people!

A Notation for This Week's Scripture

During Eastertide, the Old Testament readings are replaced in the lectionary with passages from the book of Acts. Today's passage is obvious and straightforward. Peter, who has been invited to the home of a Roman Centurion, named Cornelius, to proclaim the Good News. Before our excerpt for today begins, Peter arrives at Cornelius' home and Cornelius falls to the ground, worshipping Peter. Peter tell him to get up and explains that he is only a human. Peter then asks why Cornelius has sent for him. Peter says that in the past he would not have come to speak to Cornelius and his compatriots because he would have considered Gentiles to be unclean. But God has opened Peter's eyes to see that the Gospel of Jesus is for all people in all the world. Cornelius explains that he saw in a dream that he should invite Peter to preach the Good News, so he has gathered his friends and is anxious to hear the story of Jesus. In this passage Peter literally tells the Good News of Christ Jesus from the baptism of John to the resurrection and forgiveness of sin.

Theme: Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

Before Class:

Supplies needed:

- Plain white coffee cups with the bottom of the cup cut out (one for each student)
- Markers
- Crayons
- Easter Stickers (optional)

Beginning: Today we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead! The opening call and response in church is:

Celebrant/Teacher: Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

People/Students: The Lord is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

Let's practice that a few times, with enthusiasm (!), to get in the right frame of mind. Today is a joyous day! It is the most important festival of the church and it is the basis for all we believe.

Opening Prayer: *Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for your bravery in dying for our sins and for rising to new life again. Amen.*

The Story: Acts 10: (1-33) and 34-43

Once, there was a man named Cornelius. Cornelius was a Roman Soldier. He was not a follower of Jesus. Cornelius was a good man who loved God. One night, Cornelius saw a vision of an angel in a dream. The angel spoke to Cornelius and told him to send one of his servants to get Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, to come to his house to tell him about Jesus. When Cornelius woke up he asked his most trusted servant to rush out and find Peter to come to his home.

The next day Cornelius' servants arrived at Peter's house. Peter came down to see what the servants wanted. They explained that Cornelius had a visit

from an angel of God who told Cornelius to invite Peter to come and share the Good News about Jesus. Peter accepted the invitation because an angel had also visited Peter and told him that it would be important to share the Good News about Jesus with all kinds of people.

So Peter and some of Jesus' followers went to Cornelius' house.

Cornelius had gathered his friends and family together to hear the Good News. When Peter arrived he told them:

"God loves all people. God does not care where you are from, what color you are, or what you do for a living. God just wants all the people in the world to know God loves them and for them to love God, too. To help share God's love with the world, God sent his Son, Jesus. Jesus came and was baptized by John. The Holy Spirit of God blessed Jesus. Jesus went all over the place telling everyone about God. Jesus got in trouble with the people in charge because they were scared of what Jesus was teaching. The people killed Jesus on the Cross but God raised Jesus up from the dead. Jesus came back to love us and to teach us more about God and to forgive us from all of our sins."

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder how Peter felt to share this story about Jesus.
- I wonder what it would be like to hear about Jesus for the first time.
- I wonder how we can share the story of Jesus with people.

Activity: Making Megaphones – Have you ever heard the expression "Shout it From the Rooftops?" That expression is often used when something is so exciting that people want to make sure they can shout it out and share it with as many people as possible. Jesus' resurrection is that kind of news! Jesus came to teach us about God, to draw us closer to God, and to ensure we could be with God in eternal life. That is pretty awesome! That is the kind of news we all want to share. Peter wanted to share it and he did in our story this morning.

To remind us about the exciting opportunity to share the news about God with others, we are going to make megaphones today.

Who knows what a megaphone is?

A megaphone is a cone-shaped device used to make someone's voice louder when they speak through it. A megaphone is shaped like the bell of a trumpet and when sound travels through it the bell spreads the sound out so that it can be heard better. Cheer leaders use them at football games sometimes to help the crowd hear the cheers.

Today we are going to make and decorate Good News Megaphones! You can take your megaphone home to remind you to share the Good News of Jesus with people you meet, just like Peter did in today's story.

Give each child one of the coffee cups that you've cut the bottom out of. Put out the assortment of stickers and coloring utensils and give them time to decorate their megaphones. You could encourage the use of Easter symbols since it is Easter!

Have the children learned a special song for Easter? If so, this would be a great way to practice it. After they've finished making their megaphones, encourage the class to sing their Easter song through the megaphone.

Getting Closure: Using their megaphone, go over the call and response they learned at the beginning of class:

Celebrant/Teacher: Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

People/Students: The Lord is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

Closing Prayer: *We thank you God for the gift of your son, Jesus. Amen. Alleluia!*