Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children
Advent 2 (B)
Old Testament: Isaiah 40:1-11

BACKGROUND
Today we continue our Advent journey. Advent is a time when we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. During Advent, we reflect on the hope, peace, and joy that come with the birth of Christ. We prepare ourselves for the coming of the light that will help bring God's kingdom to earth.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
Today's scripture comes from the book of Isaiah. Many times we associate Isaiah's prophecies with the coming of the Messiah. In fact, the imagery of Isaiah 40 has inspired the creation of many different artistic and cultural works. However, it's important for us to remember that these words were written to God's people long before they knew the Messiah would ever come. Isaiah's words of comfort and peace were written to God's people while they were facing the destruction and pain that came from the Babylonian exile.

THEME
Prepare the Way

BEFORE CLASS
Read the story in Isaiah 40:1-11 prior to the start of class. Take special note of what words, phrases, or images stand out to you as you read. You will need Bibles, a large banner of paper or posterboard, and crayons or markers to tell the story. Gather and prep materials for your chosen activities.

BEGINNING
Light the first and second candles on your class Advent wreath. What season of the church year are we in? Why are we lighting candles on the Advent wreath?

OPENING PRAYER
Mighty God, you sent prophets to help prepare the way for your coming. Be present with us as we learn more about what they say and do. Amen.

THE STORY: ISAIAH 40:1-11
Help students look up Isaiah 40:1-11 in a Bible. Invite students to gather around a large banner of paper or poster board. Ask for a volunteer to read verses one and two. Then, invite students to draw or color an image on the banner that represents

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what they just read. Then, ask for another volunteer to read verses 3-5, and invite students to draw and color again. Finally, ask another volunteer to read 6-11, and invite everyone to draw and color one last time. After reading the story, invite students to share their drawings with the class, as they feel comfortable doing so.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder why Isaiah would tell the people of God this lesson. What do you think?
- I wonder what Isaiah means by saying, "Prepare the way of the Lord?" What do you think?
- According to Isaiah, who should the people of God put their trust in? Why do you think Isaiah would tell them this?
- Who are some of the voices that help you prepare your heart for God's coming? How do they help you prepare the way for Jesus?

ACTIVITIES

Option 1

Play students the song "Ev'ry Valley" from Handel's Messiah. After you listen to the song, make a list of similarities and differences you find between the song and the story.

Option 2

Make reminders of Isaiah 40:3. Give each student a sheet of construction paper and some paint. Invite them to paint a picture that illustrates the verse. Then, while the paint is wet, cover it with sand.

Option 3

Before class, create Bible verse scramble cards for every group of 2-3 students. Write the words of Isaiah 40:4 on index cards (one word per card). Instruct students to split into pairs or small groups and work together to unscramble the Bible verse.

GETTING CLOSURE

Gather around your class Advent wreath. What are some ways we can prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus at Christmas?

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, you send your Son to live among us at Christmas. Help us prepare our hearts for his coming. Amen.

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