Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Proper 14 (B)

New Testament: John 6:35, 41-51

BACKGROUND

We continue to remember Israel's leaders and how they strived to serve God. Each had their own challenges and gifts. The need for faithful leadership continues today and we seek wisdom from how these leaders sought the welfare of their people and showed their devotion to God.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING

Those entrusted with keeping the faith are getting nervous. "Hold it," they say. "Isn't this Joseph and Mary's kid? We know them well and have watched their child, Jesus, grow up. How can he say, 'I have come down from heaven?' How are we to understand this Jesus to be the 'living bread'?" Each of us today is also on a journey into trusting this bread of life.

THEME

Living Bread

BEFORE CLASS

If you will be combining ages and including the older children, be sure to look at the Lesson Plan for Older Children. Consider offering a snack for the young children if you will not be joining the older children's class.

BEGINNING

Ask the children if any of them have a family member who lives in another town that is not close by. Ask the children how they stay in touch with that person – by phone, e-mail, photos, letters? These things help us to stay close to these people.

Tell the children that Jesus really loves the people who help him, come to listen to him, and follow him. So Jesus figures out a way to keep those people close to him. Jesus did not have e-mail; he did not even have a computer. Jesus did not have a telephone. He did not even have a mailbox. He did not even have paper! We will have a story today about what Jesus came up with to keep the people he loves close to him.

OPENING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for loving us and figuring out a way to keep us close to you. Amen.

THE Episcopal CHURCH

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. *© 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.*

THE STORY: JOHN 6:35, 41-51

Jesus is telling the people what God wants them to know. God has given Jesus a job to do and that job is to be sure everyone has the chance to come to Jesus. Anyone who chooses Jesus will belong to Jesus forever. "I am the bread of life," said Jesus. "Anyone who eats this bread will be with me forever."

ACTIVITIES

If you can go outside, define the boundaries of where you will play this game. Tell the children that each child is going to get the chance to "be" Jesus and each child will get the chance to be "chosen" by Jesus. A child, who is playing Jesus, will take another child, gently, by the arm, and walk with that child to a place you have designated (over to the door and back, for instance). Then the child that was led will be Jesus and lead the other child over and back. Keep going until each child gets to be Jesus and each child gets to be led by Jesus. If everyone has lots of energy, they can hop over to the place and back, or skip, or take two great big steps and one tiny step. If it is a hot, lazy day, they could tiptoe or walk very slowly.

Option: If you are working with the older children as well, be sure the younger ones are invited to participate in the closing activity with bread and honey outlined in the lesson plan for older children.

GETTING CLOSURE

If you are not working with the older children, close with a snack, such as sweet bread and juice.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for figuring out how to help us stay close to you all our lives. Amen.

JOHN 6:35, 41-51

35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 41 Then the Jews began to complain
about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They were
saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How
can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" 43 Jesus answered them, "Do not
complain among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who
sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets,
'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the
Father comes to me. 46 Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from
God; he has seen the Father. 47 Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I
am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50
This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51
I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live
forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

THE Episcopal CHURCH

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. © 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.