Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Proper 15 (B)
New Testament: John 6:51-58

BACKGROUND
During this "Ordinary Time" our lives may well include exceptionally un-ordinary events, such as births and deaths. 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.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
Nutritionists will assure us that we are what we eat. Jesus, long before nutritionists, told us that we become what we eat. And so Jesus invites us to become one with him by eating his flesh and by drinking his blood. Our task is to trust that "whoever eats this bread will live forever."

THEME
We Become What We Eat

BEFORE CLASS
If you are working with older children as well as young children, be sure to look at the Lesson Plan for Older Children.

BEGINNING
Tell the children we are going to play a game using our imagination. Explain that imagining something means thinking about something we cannot see. Ask the children to imagine the things that you list.
I wonder what you think a dog looks like.
I wonder what you imagine a bird looks like.
I wonder how you picture a star shining in the night.
I wonder what you think an apple tastes like.
I wonder how it feels to pet a soft fluffy dog or a furry kitten.
I wonder how it feels to hold a smooth rock.
I wonder what it feels like to splash around in water.

OPENING PRAYER
Thank you, God, for giving us minds that can imagine things we cannot see. Amen.

THE Episcopal CHURCH

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THE STORY: JOHN 6:51-58

Jesus is talking to the people who come to hear him, and he tells them things that are very hard for them to understand. He tells the people they need to eat his body and drink his blood, and then they will have "life" in him. And if they do this, they will be in Jesus and Jesus will be in them. Jesus says that people who eat this bread will live forever. The people had to work hard to imagine the things Jesus was saying to them.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder why Solomon asked for wisdom?
- I wonder what else he could have asked for?
- I wonder what you would ask for?
- What would you ask for if you were King of Israel?

ACTIVITIES

Tell the children that you are imagining something they would see in church. Have them ask yes-no questions to try to figure out what it is. For example: "Is it bigger than I am?" If they are having trouble, you could give them hints or help them think of questions. You might start by imagining the altar, then the wafers or bread, or the chalice of wine. The object is for the children to figure it out, so be generous with clues. Then see if a child wants to think up something for the others to guess.

Option: If you can go outside, before you go, ask the children to imagine what they might see once they are outside. Make a list of the things they suggest, then go outside and see how many things on the list you can find together. If the older children are with you, the younger children could work with an older child on the scavenger hunt the older children are assigned in their lesson plan.

GETTING CLOSURE

Suggest that the children sit in a circle with space between them. Tell them to imagine Jesus sitting in the middle of the circle. What things would we want to say to Jesus? If they are not sure, you could begin by thanking Jesus for the time you had together, and thank Jesus for imagining a way to stay close to us and keep us close to him.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for giving us your body in the bread and your blood in the wine so that we can be with you and you with us. Amen.

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JOHN 6:51-58

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." 52 The
Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to
eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of
Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Those who eat my flesh and drink
my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; 55 for my flesh is true
food and my blood is true drink. 56 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in
me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father,
so whoever eats me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from
heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this
bread will live forever."

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