Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children
Proper 17 (B)
Old Testament: Song of Solomon 2:8-13

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
We do not hear from this book of the Bible very often. It is filled with love songs, some of them erotic. This passage describes a time of renewal and issues an invitation to love. We can read this as an invitation to enjoy the Reign of God already present through loving and serving God, to experience the harmony of nature and relationships in this realm, and to explore the goodness God promises and its similarity to the land of Eden at Creation. Tradition suggests that this was written by King Solomon.

THEME
A Call to Love

BEFORE CLASS
Gather appropriate paper to use for invitations and pastels or colored pencils. Select and locate desired music.

BEGINNING
Engage the children in inviting their classmates to the circle to begin class saying, "Rise Up, name of child, and join us in the circle." Those already in the circle join in saying the invitation together with you. Talk about how it feels to be invited, to be included.

OPENING PRAYER
Loving God, we are grateful for your invitation to live a life full of love and promise. Thank you for your love. Amen.

THE STORY: SONG OF SOLOMON 2:8-13
Read verses 10-13 to the children.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder what your favorite part is?
- I wonder where we are being invited to rise up and go to?
- I wonder what the season of singing sounds like?

ACTIVITIES

Make Invitations

Make invitations to serve God using folded paper and illustrating with images found in the scripture text. Preprint the cards for this group using words like, "You're Invited" and "To Serve God" and invite them to illustrate them. Their drawings may be specific images from the text or from other signs of grace and harmony, or they may be abstract colors and shapes.

Music and Dance

Play spring-like orchestral music while they work - something like Spring from Vivaldi's Four Seasons or Appalachian Spring by Aaron Copeland or Shumann's First Symphony. Some children may enjoy creating a dance to the music with scarves.

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite the children to show their invitations and share who they plan to give them to. (If any children created a dance, they could lead the group in it now.) Remind everyone that we all are invited into living in God's realm every day. We can live in God's realm by serving God and serving others in God's name. Sing Seek Ye First (Hymnal 1982)

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, we thank you for your invitation to serve you. Help us to see and respond to the needs of others, and to seek your way every day. Amen.

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