

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Seventh Sunday of Easter
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: John 17:1-11

“I have seen the Lord!” exclaimed Mary Magdalene. At first she does not recognize who is standing beside her. When she realizes it is the risen Jesus she wants to grasp him. He holds her off and tells her to go and share what has happened: He has walked through death and has created a path for us to follow, now and on through our own death.

In these 50 days of Easter, celebrating what Jesus has done for us, we are invited to recognize Jesus standing beside us, as he did with Mary. What is he calling us to do? Perhaps we can train our eyes to look in the direction that this Jesus, standing beside us is looking. What might he be looking at? Do we dare follow where he is leading? Can we notice and honor the various ways Jesus “appears” to people?

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

That we all may be one: Okay, probably not gathered into one agreed-upon building or even one way of worship. We are all one as God’s love flows out over ALL of us. We are all one as each of us sees the face of Jesus in each person we encounter. Love is who God is, and therefore, what God does. Each of us is part of this one.

Theme: That We All May Be One

Before Class: You will need white card stock cut to the size of a driver’s license, so it will fit in a wallet, and pens in an assortment of colors. You will also need copies of the Book of Common Prayer. The suggestion is that each child designs a wallet-sized card showing they have been commissioned as a disciple of Jesus. (If all have been baptized, it could be a baptismal certificate they design themselves.)

Beginning: Tell the children that this is the last Sunday in Easter and our attention will be turned toward Pentecost and the long season after Pentecost.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, that we are all one with you. Amen.

The Story: John 17:1-11 Tell the children that this is Jesus’ Farewell Address. He is going back to be with God. It has two parts to it: Jesus telling God that he has fulfilled the commission God gave him, and Jesus’ prayer for his disciples. Tell the children to be noticing where the second part begins. Read the scripture as the children follow along.

Questions:

- What do we think Jesus means by “the hour has come — glorify your Son?” (The time has come for Jesus to leave the world where he was known mostly as a man and go back to be with God — in partnership with God.)
- What is the eternal life Jesus mentions? (To know God and to know Jesus brings us eternal life.)

- What is Jesus asking God to do in verse 5? (Bring Jesus back to be at one with God.)
- Who is Jesus referring to in verse 6? (Those that Jesus taught, primarily his disciples.)
- How is Jesus describing his disciples in verses 7 and 8? (They are ready for commencement. They have learned what Jesus was teaching them.)
- Why do you think Jesus is not talking about everyone in the world, just those he had taught? (Perhaps because it will now be the job of these disciples and all who come after them to continue the work.)
- What might Jesus be saying in verse 10? (Jesus has not created a cult where people flock after the person, but has carried out his part of the partnership he has with God.)
- What is the protection Jesus asks God for those who will go on with the work? (That they will know that they are one with God; they will not have to do the work alone.)

Option: Why do we suppose the disciples were not sad to see Jesus go, were not afraid to be without their leader, and went back to Jerusalem which was still a dangerous place for them? Ask the children if any of them have had a really good coach for sports or music, or even someone who helped them figure out a hard subject in school. Can they describe what it felt like to realize that they could do this on their own? Can they remember what it was like to try to ride a bicycle by themselves?

What other things will they need a coach to help them with that they will later be able to do by themselves? (Drive a car. Learn a new language. Figure out for whom to vote in an election. Etc.)

As we come to church and Sunday School, what are we being trained to do? (Be disciples to carry on the work these disciples began.)

The disciples were commissioned by Jesus. How do we get commissioned? (Our baptism.)

Activity: Give the children copies of the Book of Common Prayer and ask them to turn to the top of page 305. Ask someone to read the top promise. (If time permits, read all five of the “will you” questions beginning at the bottom of page 304 and continuing on the top of page 305.)

Tell the children we have certificates from our baptisms that are probably in an album or in a safe place. Since we do not tend to carry them around with us, we are going to fashion our own ID cards to put in our wallets. Give the children the cards and the pens and invite them to design a card they can carry in their wallets.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to gather in a circle. With the Prayer Book opened to page 308, say together the prayer near the bottom of the page that begins: “We receive you into the household of God.” Then invite the children to pass the peace with each other.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for this time we have had together and for your being with us as we carry out our commissions. Amen.

John 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

‘I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

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