

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 8
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Matthew 10:40-42

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word “ordinal” which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel and Reading

Whoever welcomes you, welcomes Christ. Whoever welcomes Christ, welcomes God. Seems simple, but it is rather profound if you stop to think about it. As these words were being written, there weren’t phones or computers or even the postal service. Welcoming someone who came bearing a message meant welcoming not just the messenger, but also the one who sent the message. God sent Christ as a messenger, as one who came to show us and speak to us about God and living as people of God. For us today, what does welcoming the other look like and how do we welcome Christ into our lives? Who or what are our messengers today?

Theme: Welcoming Christ

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for each child. For the Beginning activity, you will need small cups filled with water for each child. For the Activities you will need: plain paper, construction paper, markers, art supplies, reusable plastic tumblers (like the ones that can be found at the dollar store) and permanent markers.

Beginning: Gather the children together and give them a small cup of water to drink. As they are enjoying the water, ask them if they remember a time they were welcomed as a new person into a group of people. What does it mean to be welcoming?

Opening Prayer: Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what your words mean for our lives. Guide us as we seek to welcome and be welcomed. Amen.

The Story: Matthew 10:40-42 Invite someone to read the lesson for today. If you have time, you can read it from two different translations and note how they are different.

Questions:

- I wonder what it means to welcome someone?
- I wonder what it feels like to be welcomed?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “Whoever welcomes you, welcomes me?”
- I wonder why giving a cold cup of water would be meaningful to someone whom you are welcoming?
- I wonder how we would welcome Christ if we knew he was coming?

Activity:

Invite the children to talk about what welcoming practices they know about or have experienced. (such as a cup of water when thirsty, food when hungry, welcome signs, people greeting you at a door when you arrive, inviting someone to play a game when they are being left out, etc.)

Invite them to create welcoming practices for their home and church. Help them figure out what welcoming practices they want to create by asking them questions like:

- What does welcoming the other look like?
- How do we welcome Christ into our lives?
- Who or what are our messengers today?

Possible Ideas:

- Welcome Poster: paper, markers and art supplies
- Welcome cup: Have plain plastic cups and permanent markers ready if they want to create a cup in which they would give someone a cup of cold water when they enter the house or classroom
- Welcome Sign: Have construction paper and art supplies ready if they want to create a sign for the door.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share what they created. Invite them to share how they think they might live into this vision today.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us welcome one another and to welcome you. Help us to hear and see your messengers in our midst. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 10:40-42

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple-- truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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