

Lesson Plans That Work
Year B – Second Sunday After Epiphany
Gospel Lesson for All

Scripture: John 1:43-51

In the season of Epiphany, we follow Jesus' early ministry and calling of his disciples.

Note: This is the second in a four-part series on The Episcopal Church's refugee resettlement program, Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM). Today's lesson focuses on the ways in which we are called to "Come and See" where Jesus is calling his disciples to serve in the world today.

Theme: Come and See

Before: If possible, review and queue up the following videos for use in your discussion:

- Supporting Refugee Students (<https://vimeo.com/39661884>)
- To Find a Friend (<https://vimeo.com/24183069>)

If you haven't yet explored the legal definition of "refugee" or The Episcopal Church's ministry of refugee resettlement, you may want to briefly explain prior to showing the two short videos.

The Episcopal Church has been engaged in loving service and advocacy on behalf of and alongside refugees for 75 years, dating to the late 1930's, as Jews and other groups fled Nazi Europe. The international legal definition of "refugee" was codified in the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees:

[A refugee is a person who,] owing to wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Today there are more than 50 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide, the highest number since World War II. Durable solutions for refugees include return to their home country when it is safe to do so, to integrate into the country of first asylum, or resettlement to a third country. Resettlement is the option pursued when the other two solutions are not possible. Less than 1% of the global refugee population will ever be resettled. The United States is the global leader in refugee resettlement, resettling more refugees each year than all other resettlement countries, combined. In fiscal year 2015, the United States will resettle 70,000 refugees. Of this number, Episcopal Migration Ministries, one of only nine refugee resettlement agencies in the US, will resettle more than 5,000 refugees from places like Syria, Nepal, Burma, Afghanistan, Iraq, Congo, and many other countries. Episcopal Migration Ministries works through a network of affiliate partners, who, in turn, work with the local community to ensure successful resettlement and integration of new refugee neighbors. Schools, hospitals, employers,

landlords, public transportation, law enforcement, community organizations, communities of faith and Episcopal congregations are all vital partners in resettlement.

If you would like to learn more about particular groups of people The Episcopal Church and other resettlement agencies resettle, you can find up to date statistics on the status of refugees in the world using this link: <http://www.unrefugees.org/>. Finally, if you have time, research the status of refugees in your community. Use the EMM network affiliate map to identify a resource in your area: <http://bit.ly/1swkPif>.

If you have questions, feel free to email or call Allison Duvall, EMM's program manager for church relations and engagement, at (212) 716-6027 or aduvall@episcopalchurch.org. She will be happy to assist you in enriching your lesson plan with information about Episcopal Migration Ministries and refugee resettlement.

Beginning: As everyone arrives, welcome them to the room and invite them to your gathering area. As they arrive ask them about their week. Ask them if they have ever felt like they needed to help someone?

Opening Prayer: Loving God, thank you for giving us this time together and for helping us see the ways that we can be helpful, loving and kind people. Amen.

The Story: John 1:43-51

Today we hear one of the stories about how Jesus called his disciples, his friends and followers, to join him. Read John 1:43-51.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what Philip meant when he said, "Come and See."?
- I wonder if "Come and See" would make you feel curious about what is happening?
- I wonder if "Come and See" is like an invitation to join into something?

Activity:

Explain that refugees are people who had to leave their country and their home so that they could stay safe. Tell them that these families have to move somewhere totally new where they might not even speak the same language.

Watch the video, Supporting Refugee Students (<https://vimeo.com/39661884>)

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what it means to be a friend?
- I wonder what it feels like to be a new person in a new country?
- I wonder if you have ever met anyone who is new to your school?
- I wonder how you can find a way to be a friend to someone who speaks a different language?
- I wonder if inviting someone to join you - to "Come and See" something with you - might help them feel like they belong?

Activity:

For this activity you will need paper and markers or crayons.

Explain the activity by saying we are going to think about all the ways we can be a good friend to someone who is new. How can we invite them to “come and see”?

Invite the children to use the materials to show one activity or event they can invite someone new to join them in. Maybe it’s playing on the playground at school or coming to their birthday party. Maybe it’s just sitting next to a new person at lunchtime. Allow the children enough time to draw and color their artwork.

Add the people to the community you created in the first week of this series of lessons.

Closing: Instead of a traditional closing prayer, read the promises of the Baptismal Covenant inviting participants to respond with “I will, with God’s help.”

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People I will, with God’s help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God’s help.

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God’s help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God’s help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God’s help.

As they are leaving, remind participants to reflect upon their Baptismal promises over the next week.

John 1:43-51

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

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Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the refugee resettlement agency of The Episcopal Church, welcomes thousands of refugees each year from conflict zones across the globe. Working in partnership with offices and groups within the church as well as with governments, non-government organizations (NGOs), and a network of 30 affiliate offices in 26 dioceses, Episcopal Migration Ministries provides vital services for thousands of refugee families upon their arrival in the United States.

In 2015, Episcopal Migration Ministries is celebrating 75 years of refugee resettlement in The Episcopal Church through the year-long #ShareTheJourney campaign. #ShareTheJourney is a multi-media effort to educate, form, and equip Episcopalians to engage in loving service with resettled refugees and to become prophetic witnesses and advocates on behalf of refugees, asylees, migrants, and displaced persons the world over.

