

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C—Advent 1
Lesson Plans for Older Children
RCL Old Testament Readings—Track One

Scripture: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Background: Today we begin the season of Advent, the four weeks that prepare us for Christmas. Advent means “coming” and the One who is coming is the Messiah, Jesus. We remember and celebrate Jesus’ birth and we make ourselves ready for the time that Jesus will come again, when God will make all things new. The stories we hear in this season are from the prophets who bring messages of great hope and deep joy as we wait and watch and wonder.

A Notation for This Week’s Reading: God promises to restore a kingdom in Israel.

Theme: God promises Justice and Goodness

Before Class: Each child will need a sheet of drawing paper, a brown marker, and a black pen. The group will need inkpads in bright colors and wipes.

Beginning: Prepare your gathering/prayer space with a cloth of blue or purple, whichever color your church uses in Advent. For the four weeks of Advent and two weeks of Christmas, you will need an Advent wreath and a Christ Candle, or four votive candles and a pillar candle, matches and a candlesnuffer. A chime is helpful to mark transitions but not necessary.

Opening Prayer: Invite a child to read the opening prayer.

Holy God, let the light of this Advent candle remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. May this light glow in us, kindling our love for you, sparking our imaginations, and making us burn with a desire to do your work in this world. Amen.

The Story: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Ask a child to read the passage, or ask each child to read a sentence. After a moment of silence, invite them to name a word, phrase or image from the text that stood out to them. Pause, then read the entire passage aloud again.

Soon I will make good on the promises I made to you. When I do, a branch will grow on David’s family tree. This Branch will stand for justice and goodness in the land.

Jerusalem will be safe from harm.

We will call this Branch: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why we hear this story in Advent?
- I wonder if this reminds you of another story from the Bible? (Isaiah 11:1)

- I wonder what this branch could really be?
- “*Soon I will make good on the promises I made to you,*” says God. What promises has God made to us? What promises have we made to God?

Activity: Ask the children to draw a tree with several limbs and branches on their paper. Remind them that the prophet Jeremiah says that this branch on David’s family tree stands for justice and goodness. Invite them to think about what the branches of their personal tree stand for. What have their parents and grandparents, guardians and teachers, shown them that are important attributes? Have them make fingerprint leaves for their tree, and write the attributes they stand for in ink at the base of the tree or as a border around the page.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share their trees and attributes with the rest of the group.

Closing Prayer: God of love, you sent your prophets to show us the way of truth. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, teach us to follow him so that we can be a part of bringing your kingdom of justice and goodness to earth. Amen.

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