

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Proper 5
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: 1 Kings 17:8-16

Background

“Ordinary Time” is upon us and the name really says it all. “Ordinary Time” is another name for the season after Pentecost when we walk through the lectionary without many holidays on the horizon and are able to experience the “ordinary” days of walking with God. The widow in today’s Old Testament lesson was certainly walking through an “ordinary” day when Elijah called upon her. Our lesson from this morning is a great reminder that ordinary days quickly become extraordinary when they are spent with faith in the Lord.

A Notation for This Week’s Scripture

Sometimes it is hard to trust that there will be enough for everyone. It is easy for many of us to identify with the widow’s plight – even if not personally. She works tirelessly to provide for her family, yet, at the end of the day it feels like she will never have enough. We are conditioned in our society to always desire more and to feel like what we have will not sustain us. The widow’s plight is different as she is in real danger of starvation. Oftentimes it takes seeing a situation like this to remind us where we stand in the world. When Elijah comes to the widow and delivers his request from God, he is asking something that sounds impossible. But as we know from the miracle of the loaves and fishes, God has the power to make abundance from scarcity for those with faith. That abundance can come from simply a shift in perception or even, as with the widow, from a physical transformation of resources.

Theme: Abundance

Before Class: Today’s lesson will include baking time so you should coordinate with others at your church to have access to the stove on Sunday morning.

Ingredients and supplies include:

- quick oats
- 1 can pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling)
- sugar
- chocolate chips (optional)
- baking sheet
- Copy of Recipe in white envelope with “ABUNDANCE” written on the front
- spatula
- measuring cups
- mixing bowl
- wooden spoon

Beginning: As soon as the children arrive divide them into groups or pairs. Give the first child who arrives the oats, the second the pumpkin, the third the sugar, and the fourth the chocolate chips. As more children arrive pair them into the groups so each ingredient “belongs” to the same number of children (if possible.) Tell the children that the ingredient they have in their group is theirs and they are the only ones who can decide what to do with it during the course of the lesson.

Opening Prayer: God of Love, you provide for us each day our daily bread. Help to sustain us with your word and grace while we travel through our lives of faith. Amen.

The Story: 1 Kings 17:8-16 – While sitting in their groups, invite one representative from each group to volunteer as a reader. When all of the readers are identified, invite those children to read the passage going around in a circle, with each of the 4 readers reading 2 verses.

Reflection Questions:

1. Who are the people in the story?
2. What were each of the people feeling?
3. If you were the widow, would you have shared your food with Elijah? Why or why not?
4. How did God show goodness in this story?
5. What do you think this story is trying to teach us?

After some time of reflection, help the children to see the connection between the trust the widow put in God and the abundance God gave in return.

Activity: Our activity today will be to make cookies together which will symbolize the bread Elijah asked the widow to provide. You will need access to your church kitchen for today's lesson. The cookie preparation and baking only takes 15 minutes so you should aim to give 25 minutes to this portion of the lesson to ensure there is conversation, baking, and eating time!

Explain to the class that the ingredients they are holding are the snack for the day. Ask them what they think the snack will be. Next, invite the groups to discuss individually how they would like to use their ingredient. After the groups have had a couple of minutes in discussion, invite them to share with the class their thoughts of how they would like to use/consume their ingredient. Next, offer that they can decide to keep the ingredient that they have or they can see what is on the paper in the envelope you have.

When the kids choose the envelope show them what is on the front. Talk about what abundance means. With relation to the story, we learn that by giving our faith to God – God can create abundance even when resources are scarce. Elijah asked the widow to share what little she had and together, God ensured they had more than enough. We, too, are called to more.

After the conversation it is time to bake!

Abundance Cookie Instructions

Ingredients

2 cups gluten free quick oats

Cinnamon (optional)

1 cup pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling)

Chocolate chips or nuts (optional)

1/3 cup sugar

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease a baking tray and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the oats, pumpkin and sugar and mix well. Add cinnamon if desired.

Using your hands, form into small balls and place on the baking tray and press each ball into a cookie shape.

Top with chocolate chips and bake for 12-15 minutes, depending on desired consistency.

Remove and allow to cool.

* These cookies don't need refrigeration and can be kept in a covered container for up to a week for optimum freshness. They freeze very well.

Getting Closure: While the children are enjoying their cookies, ask them how they feel this relates to the story of the widow and Elijah. How can they use this theory of abundance in everyday life? Are there times when they worry they won't have enough of something? How can this story help them to remember that God will provide?

Closing Prayer: God of Plenty, remind us to look with joy on the blessings of our lives and to share what we have with those who are in need. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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