

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Second Sunday After Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: John 2:1-11

Epiphany: Shimmering glimpses of the abundance of the Kingdom of God. Perhaps we, too, noticed a star and followed it. Or maybe someone led us to the gift of faith. Now we take the Light – the Good News – out into the world. Will others see the light shimmering in us? Will they risk taking a journey into faith with us?

A notation for this week's Gospel

Jesus begins his ministry not behind a pulpit, but at a party: a wedding banquet, the most extravagant celebration a village could contain. "They feasted upon the abundance of your house; you give them drink from the river of your delight." (Psalm 36:8) And the best wine is saved for the last.

Theme: Invited to a party

Before Class: Print off enough of the scripture for today. Assemble whatever you have chosen to record the "epiphanies" the children notice. An empty gallon jug, like the ones either milk or water come in, would be a useful prop. You will need copies of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Option: As you are going through the lesson today, it might be fun to have a feast as one would have a wedding feast. If you do this, begin the feast with things like crackers and cheese and water and only give the children a little bit. Then, as the lesson continues, bring out fruit, sparkling juice, or other things that make it more festive and help make the point of saving the best for last.

Beginning: Ask the children if any of them has ever been invited to a wedding. If so, how would they describe it and the party after the wedding. If not, what would they say happens at a wedding and at the party held after the wedding?

Tell them that a wedding, in Jesus' time, was the occasion of a celebration that could go on for days. And anyone who could put on a party like this would have a batch of servants, including, a wine steward who would keep the wine flowing.

Opening Prayer: Joyous God, we thank you that parties are a part of your plan. Amen.

The Scripture: John 2: 1-11. Ask the children to volunteer to read the different parts: The narrator, Mary, Jesus, and the wine steward.

Questions:

Who states the fact that the lesser quality wine being served was running out? (Mary)

What did she do about it? (She brought it to Jesus' attention and then waited to see what he would do about it. Meanwhile she told the servants (who also knew about the wine running out) to do as Jesus told them.)

What did Jesus do about it? (It appears that at first he thought he was not to do anything, but changed his mind and told the servants to fill the 6 big jars with water.)

What did the servants do about it? (They filled the jars to the brim – with water or wine, it does not say.)

Ask the children to show, with their hands, how big a jar would be to hold 20 to 30 gallons of water. (If you brought a gallon jug, show it to the children. Together you can estimate the size of the jars.)

Why was the wine steward so surprised to taste such good wine so late in the party? (Verse 10)

If Jesus' ministry (and ours) is about changed hearts and minds, what is the message from this story? (Could it be that our inclination is to share the things of lesser quality with others saving the best for later or ourselves, while God's hope would be for us to share the best of what we have with others first and foremost?)

What other clues about Jesus does this story give us? (Honor what the children come up with. If they need help, ask them what the story says to us about celebrations, parties, having a good time together.)

Can they think of times when the best things were not the first things? What was okay about those times?

Can they think of a time when someone shared something of great worth with you? How did it make you feel?

Activity: Continue to work on your activity capturing clues about Jesus, adding insights from today's story.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to think about a couple they are fond of who are married. It could be their parents, a teacher, a member of the congregation, or even grandparents. Give the children copies of *The Book of Common Prayer* and ask them to turn to page 429 and choose one of the prayers to say together, thinking about the couple as they pray.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, thank you for weddings and parties and all the celebrations in our lives. Help us to share the best of what we have with others. Amen.

John 2:1-11

The Wedding at Cana

Narrator: On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him,

Mary: ‘They have no wine.’

Narrator: ⁴And Jesus said to her,

Jesus: ‘Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.’

Narrator: ⁵His mother said to the servants,

Mary: ‘Do whatever he tells you.’

Narrator: ⁶Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them,

Jesus: ‘Fill the jars with water.’

Narrator: And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to them,

Jesus: ‘Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.’

Narrator: So they took it. ⁹When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him,

Wine Steward: ‘Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.’

Narrator: ¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

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