

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C– Epiphany 6**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**  
*Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One*

**Scripture: Jeremiah 17:5-10**

**Background**

In the Sundays after Epiphany, we will hear from a variety of prophets, each speaking to God’s relationship with the people. Although these prophets were speaking to a particular circumstance in a specific time and place, their words are helpful reminders to us today about our own relationship with God. Prophets seek to change the minds and behaviors of their audience.

**Notation for This Week** This reading is a standard, blessing and curse type saying, an oracle of judgment against Judah. Although it reads like other wisdom literature, it is written after King Josiah’s reform has failed and before the Exile. Jeremiah is warning the people to put their trust back in the Lord, and to stop thinking anything or anyone else can save them. Our approach for this class will be to build trust among the students and to explore the concept of placing our trust in God.

**Theme:** Trust in the Lord

**Before Class:** Gather a soft ball for High/Low. Choose the music. Gather supplies for the games - blindfolds, colored paper.

**Gathering:** Play a quick game of High/Low - throw a small ball, stuffed animal, or bean bag around the circle. The person throwing says either High or Low. The person catching then shares an experience from the past week. If Low, then a sad or negative experience. If High, a happy or positive one. Go until everyone has had a chance to participate. Mention that this is a safe group, where we can trust each other with our stories and experiences.

**Opening Prayer:** Loving God, we thank you for all the Highs in our lives this past week. We hand over to you all our Low moments. Help us to remember that you are always with us and we can always trust in you. Amen.

**Sing:** Seek Ye First (1982 Hymnal)

**The Story:** Jeremiah 17:5-10  
Common English Bible (CEB)

The Lord proclaims:

Cursed are those who trust in mere humans,  
who depend on human strength  
and turn their hearts from the Lord.

They will be like a desert shrub  
that doesn’t know when relief comes.

They will live in the parched places of the wilderness,  
in a barren land where no one survives.

Happy are those who trust in the Lord,  
who rely on the Lord.  
They will be like trees planted by the streams,  
whose roots reach down to the water.  
They won't fear drought when it comes;  
their leaves will remain green.  
They won't be stressed in the time of drought  
or fail to bear fruit.  
The most cunning heart—  
it's beyond help.  
Who can figure it out?  
I, the Lord, probe the heart  
and discern hidden motives,  
to give everyone what they deserve,  
the consequences of their deeds.

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### **Reflection Questions:**

- I wonder how we can trust God when we can't see God?
- I wonder when it is easy to trust and when it is more difficult?
- I wonder how we show that we trust God?

### **Activities:**

Play some group trust games together. Talk about the importance of trusting each other in these games. We can learn to trust God by practicing our trust of others.

**Willow in the Wind** - stand in a tight circle with one person in the middle. Everyone else puts up their hands at shoulder height of the person in the middle. The person in the middle, the willow, plants feet firmly in place, crosses their arms over their chest, and then leans in some direction, allowing the circle to catch them. The circle gently passes the willow around and across the circle.

**Trust Cars** - Have people pair up. The person in front has eyes closed. The person behind them "steers" them by placing their hands on the other person's shoulders. The leader calls out First Gear for walking around slowly, Second Gear for going a bit more quickly, and Third Gear for going very quickly around the room. The leader can also call out Reverse from time to time. For additional challenge, set down some colored pieces of paper as pot-holes to be avoided.

**Counting to 20** - Objective of the game is to count to 20 in a group without having more than one person saying a number at a time. However, everyone must be sitting in a circle with their eyes closed, and the order of who says what number **MUST** be random.

**Blind Card Sorting** - Take a deck of playing cards and remove the face cards (jack, queen, king). Leave the Aces to serve as 1's. Set the cards out randomly all over the room. They can be within view. Divide up into a maximum of 4 groups and assign a suit (clubs, hearts, spades, diamonds) to each group. It is ok if there are less than 4 groups. A volunteer in each group is blindfolded. Their job is to find all the cards of their assigned suit and put them in order. Their

group members must guide them to the cards and help sort them. But only the volunteer may touch the cards.

**Discuss** - Ask - when was it easy to trust your partner or the group, and when was it difficult? How did you feel as the person being trusted? What are some ways we can learn to trust each other more? How does this help us trust God?

**Optional art activity:** Decorate a large posterboard with the heading “Trust in God..and Each Other” and post pictures of the students engaged in the trust games.

**Challenge for the Week:** This week, look for opportunities to trust more and to be more trustworthy.

**Closing Prayer:** Loving God, help us to trust in you completely so that we can be like trees planted by the teams, with green leaves and fresh fruit. Amen.

**Sing:** Wade in the Water (Wonder, Love and Praise)  
Come and Follow Me (Wonder, Love and Praise)  
If You Love Me (My Heart Sings Out)

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