

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Second Sunday in Easter
Intergenerational Lesson Plans

Scripture: John 20: 19-31 (*This Gospel reading of John occurs every Second Sunday of Easter. For today's session, the focus will be the beginning portion: verses 19 through 23.*)

Background

Easter is another huge gift from God, building on not only the Christmas gift of the birth of Jesus, but also on the gifts that keep coming right here and now.

The Gospel reading today follows the discovery of the resurrected Jesus by the women at the tomb. Although several disciples raced to the tomb to see for themselves, they returned to the upper room reasonably sure that they would be the next to be killed. In that room Jesus appears to them, bringing peace and, after all he has been through, continuing to teach the message of peace and forgiveness.

Preparation

A variety of activities are suggested so you can use what fits your timeframe. Some will require a bit of gathering of materials, so make a note of the supplies needed. There are notes throughout the plan, and a checklist at the end for all the supplies.

Gathering

As people arrive invite them to put their name on a nametag and decorate it if they choose. As they work, ask them to be thinking about their favorite memory of Easter Day. Hand out to the first six people who arrive the labels created for the gathering activity called, "Easter – Gift".

Supplies Needed:

Name tags (cut in the shape of eggs or with a small egg in the corner) and colored pencils, crayons, or felt markers

Easter – Gift

Show the group the boxes or containers you have assembled. (These could be boxes with tops that you purchase from a paper supply store or an assortment of boxes you gather, so the containers get sequentially larger. You could also use containers such as jars, each container slightly larger than the previous one.

Supplies needed:

An assortment of boxes or containers, each one slightly larger than the previous one; gift wrap or bright-colored tissue paper; transparent tape; and cards to identify each box. Optional: ribbon, stickers, decorations you have, paper, and pencils or pens

Create these labels for the containers, beginning with the smallest (1) and ending with the largest (6).

1. A universe, created out of absolutely nothing
2. Abraham hears there is One God — not a bunch of odd gods
3. The Ten Commandments show people the way to live
4. Passover moves people out of slavery into freedom
5. Christmas — Jesus is born — a baby — God among us
6. Easter — the Resurrection — for Jesus and also for us

In addition have one box larger than any of the others. Tell the group that this box will hold gifts we believe God is giving to us today and will be saved to the end.

If your group is small, match the appropriate slip with the right-sized box. Work together to giftwrap and decorate each gift box. If your group is sufficiently large, form groups around the people who were given the slips as they arrived, making sure to pair young children with adults. Give each group the appropriate sized boxes for the group's label and some giftwrap.

As they wrap, people can discuss how to describe the container to the group when they reassemble. When people have finished, place a table in the center of the room, ask people to bring chairs in a circle around the table. Have the smallest box placed on the table first and invite those who decorated it to describe what they noticed about that gift.

Keep adding the containers to the table, discussing each of the above six as it is added. Then, all working together, decide what to write or draw on slips of paper to describe those gifts we believe God is giving to us, to our planet through us, and to those who will come after us. Place the slips of paper in the largest box. Some examples might be: Nations choose peace over violence, no child goes to bed hungry, we figure out how to live in a more environmentally-friendly way, people want to know more about God, etc. You may want to choose a place where these containers can be on display during the Easter season in your church.

Preview: Tell the group what you have planned for this session: Beginning and ending in prayer, hearing and reflecting on today's Gospel passage with a few questions and selected activities. Let them know what time you expect to be finished and answer any questions.

Opening Prayer: (Use your own words, or these.)

Generous and Loving God, we thank you, for the gifts you continue to give us. Be with us as we explore your peace for each of us. Amen.

The Story: John 19: 19-23

Options:

Script: Read for the script found at the end of the lesson plan. You will need Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Disciples, and Thomas.

Supplies Needed:

Copies of the bible passage or script

Or you can use the following:

Many of Jesus' friends were gathered in the room where they had last been together with Jesus. They were sad and scared. Jesus had been killed.

The women rushed into the room saying: "We have seen Jesus — alive!"

Some of the disciples had gone back to the tomb but still, they were scared. Would someone come and drag them off? So they stayed in the safe room.

That evening, Jesus came and stood right there with them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then, he drew in a great big breath and breathed gently on all of them. "Receive the Holy Spirit," Jesus said. Then Jesus said: "be sure you forgive one other so your heart is undivided."

Act it Out (John 20:19-23)

If you have a small group, everyone can take a part.

Supplies Needed:

At least one copy of the passage or notes used to tell the story.

Large Group Options:

Option 1: If the group is too large, ask for volunteers to act out the passage while the rest put their heads together to ask some questions to consider when the acting is finished.

Actors will include “some” women and “some” disciples. The size of your group will determine how many of each. You will also need someone to be Jesus. Give this group a copy of the story you told, or the Bible passage that was read. Give the group time to plan their presentation and then to act it out.

If you have a large group, give the “audience” a copy of the passage with the following questions: (Invite the group to come up with more questions.)

Where were the disciples when they saw Jesus?

What does it feel like when people are angry with us?

What is it like when we know someone is not angry at us anymore?

When the actors are ready, have the passage acted out. When they have finished, ask everyone if they have any wonderings that occurred to them as they participated in or watched the acting out.

Option 2: If you have a large group, split them into smaller groups and give them the task of acting out the passage differently. One will act it out normally, while the other groups can: do a modern-day take on it, act it out silently, act it out backwards, act it out as if they had never heard of Jesus...etc. Be creative with the ideas you give each group.

When everyone has had an opportunity to plan their skit, invite them back together to put on the show for one another.

Hands

Jesus showed his hands to the disciples as a way of identifying himself to them. We know this was to show the marks of crucifixion, but I wonder what else the disciples may have seen? What story do our hands tell about us? Are there scars on them? Marker for a craft project? Are they big or small? Soft or rough?

Supplies needed:

Paper and markers

Each of you will be given a piece of paper. Find a partner to help you trace one of both of your hands. Once your hands have been traced, make them into a representation of you. If your hands could identify you to someone else, what would they look like? You can draw, write, try to make them look as real as possible, be creative. (Note: you may want to do a few ahead of time to give them some ideas. Do one with all words that describe you. Maybe another with pictures that describe you. Maybe one with a scar or painted fingernails or dirty fingernails)

Give the participants time to create their hands and then have them get into groups of 4 or 5 and share what they came up with.

Peace Cards

Give a 3x5 card to each person. They can draw a peace symbol, dove, or another symbol for peace, glue one that you have provided (see the end of the lesson for some peace symbols), or decorate the card in any way they choose. Ask the group to be remembering when, in our church service, we hear the words: “Peace be with you,” as they each make a “Peace Card.”

Supplies needed:

3 x 5 cards, peace symbols, scissors, felt markers

Ask them to write on the card:

Peace be with you.

Children too young to copy the words can get a partner to help them or you can have some cards with the words already written on them. Then ask each person to find one other person and exchange cards, saying, as they do: “Peace be with you.” Keep going until each person has had a chance to greet several other people, exchanging the peace card each time. When everyone has a card someone else has made, tell them they can take the cards home with them to remember that we have offered peace to each other.

Closing Activity

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Tell them to take a big breath and hold it as long as they can. Then slowly exhale the air. Do this a couple of times. Then, ask them to imagine, as they take in breath, they are breathing in the peace that Jesus gives us. Then as they breathe out, we are sharing that peace with each other. Do this a few more times.

Peace bubbles

Another fun and interactive way to do this activity would be to give everyone a small container of bubbles and as they exhale they can create peace bubbles to share with one another.

Supplies needed:

Bubbles

Closing Prayer (Use this prayer, or your own.)

Thank you, God, for sending Jesus to show us the way. Thank you for the peace Jesus brings and that we can share that peace with each other. Amen.”

Supplies Needed:

Name tags (cut in the shape of eggs or with a small egg in the corner)

colored pencils

crayons

markers

scissors

An assortment of boxes or containers, each one slightly larger than the previous one

gift wrap or bright-colored tissue paper

transparent tape

cards to identify each box

paper

Copies of the bible passage or script

At least one copy of the passage or notes used to tell the story.

3 x 5 cards

peace symbols

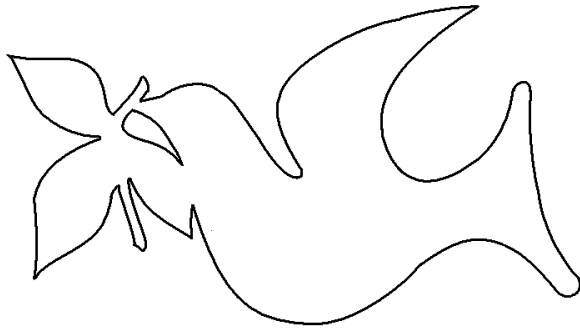
Optional:

Ribbon

Stickers

Other decorating materials

bubbles



John 20: 19-31

Narrator 1: When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

Jesus: ‘Peace be with you.’

Narrator 2: After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again,

Jesus: ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’

Narrator 1: When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,

Jesus: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’

Narrator 2: But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him,

Disciples: ‘We have seen the Lord.’

Narrator 1: But he said to them,

Thomas: ‘Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.’

Narrator 2: A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

Jesus: ‘Peace be with you.’

Narrator 1: Then he said to Thomas,

Jesus: ‘Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.’

Narrator 1: Thomas answered him,

Thomas: ‘My Lord and my God!’

Narrator 2: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.’

Narrator 1: Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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