

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 5
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 7:11-17

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Luke focuses on the powerful gentleness of Jesus. A young man is about to be buried. Jesus knows the devastation this man's death will bring to the man's widowed mother. A stunned crowd watches as Jesus gives the now obviously alive son back to his mother.

Theme: Unexpected healing

Before: Young children can usually deal with the fact that some people die, and some people get better and do not die, and they deal with it with less stress than older children – or adults. Be open to whatever the children offer, especially if any have recently experienced death personally, whether it be a grandparent, someone much younger, or even a pet.

You will need paper and art supplies for the response time.

Beginning: Tell the children we have a story today about a man that Jesus kept from dying.

Praying: Thank you, God, that you love each and every one of us. Amen.

The Story: Jesus and his friends are walking into a town. A whole lot of people are in the street. The people are there because a man has just died. The man's mother and all his friends are crying. This made Jesus very sad. Jesus could see that the man's mother needed help. So Jesus decided to make the man come back to life. Jesus said to the man: "Young man, I tell you: get up!" And he did. Now the man's mother was not crying. She was hugging her son, smiling, and telling others about Jesus' healing of her son.

Activity: Act out the Story

Let the children take turns playing the parts of the man who had died and comes back to life, his mother who goes from very sad to very happy, and Jesus who tells the man to get up. The rest of the children can be the crowd that goes from being very sad to very happy.

Activity: Wondering

I wonder if any of you have ever been sick? What did it feel like when you got better?
I wonder how the man felt when he was healed?

I wonder how the mother told others about what Jesus had done?

I wonder how you might tell others about being healed or being made better by Jesus' love?

Activity: Draw the story

Give the children paper and art supplies and invite them to respond to the story by creating a picture about the story, Jesus, love, or healing.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share the picture they have made.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for your healing and love. Amen.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 5
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 7:11-17

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

Luke focuses on the powerful gentleness of Jesus. A young man is about to be buried. Jesus knows the devastation this man’s death will bring to the man’s widowed mother. A stunned crowd watches as Jesus gives the now obviously alive son back to his mother.

Theme: Unexpected healing

Before Class: Be thinking of examples in your community of healings that have happened: perhaps a story that was in the news, an example from your own church, or a story from your life you are comfortable sharing. You could also invite the children to think of times that they have been healed from an illness.

You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for the children. You will also need paper, markers, and any other art supplies you may want for the “Healing Happens” activity.

Beginning: Tell the children that we have lots of stories in the Bible of Jesus healing people, but today’s is different.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for your great compassion and for the miracle of healing. Be with us as we explore your word and call to us. Amen.

The Story: Luke 7: 11 – 17 You can invite one child to read the whole story, or invite children to read the different voices of the crowd, narrator, and Jesus. There is a script below.

Questions:

The death of a person we love is always sad but what made the death of this young man such a particular hardship for his mother? (In that time in history, widows were particularly poor and vulnerable. Once the son was gone, not only was she alone and sad, her only source of food and housing was gone. She was alone.)

Does anyone know why she could not just go out and get a job? (Women were considered property of men. No one would have given her a “job.”)

In verse 13 we read “Jesus had compassion for her.” How would we define “compassion?” (The definition would include being able to really understand how the person feels and what that person needs.)

What did Jesus do? (Verse 14b)

What was the reaction of the crowd? (Verse 16)

Activity: Ask the children to share times they know of healings: a family member who was sick or injured and got well; a story of a rescue that was in the news. Allow time for all those who have a story to be able to tell it.

Option: Healing Happens

Provide the art supplies you have brought and invite the children to either:

- 1) work together creating a banner; or
- 2) work individually where each child makes their own bumper sticker type slogan on the theme of “Healing Happens.” The children can choose how to illustrate the slogan.

Getting Closure: Gather the children in a circle. Ask if anyone had an idea while they were working on the slogan that they want to share. Then tell the children to sit quietly for a moment to be grateful for the healings we have noticed.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for showing us your compassion, healing, and love. As we go in to the world, may we continue to see your healing presence among us. Amen.

Luke 7: 11 – 17

Narrator: Soon afterwards Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her,

Jesus: 'Do not weep.'

Narrator: ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said,

Jesus: 'Young man, I say to you, rise!'

Narrator: ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying,

Crowd: 'A great prophet has risen among us!' 'God has looked favorably on his people!'

Narrator: ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 5
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: Luke 7:11-17

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Luke focuses on the powerful gentleness of Jesus. A young man is about to be buried. Jesus knows the devastation this man's death will bring to the man's widowed mother. A stunned crowd watches as Jesus gives the now obviously alive son back to his mother.

Theme: Unexpected healing

Before Class: You will need copies of the Bible or copies of the scripture passage. If you would like to have the group read from more than one translation, make sure and have either Bibles or copies of different translations on hand.

Beginning: If it seems appropriate offer something like this to the group: "Some of us may have had the experience of holding a deathly ill person in our arms and then knowing that blessed relief when he or she turned the corner and begin to get well. Let's remember that gratitude as we look at today's passage."

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for your great compassion and for the miracle of healing. Be with us as we explore your word and call to us. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 7: 11 – 17. Invite a volunteer to read. If you choose, you could have a few different translations and have different volunteers each read from a different translation.

Questions:

What stood out for you in today's reading? What caught you by surprise? (Allow time for response.)

The death of a child is always an indescribable tragedy, but what made this death even more devastating? (The man is young and is the widow's only son. She has no other source of support than this son.)

What is Jesus' response to this event in verse 13? How would we define "compassion?" (Not only being able to identify with the person's distress, but empowered to do something about it.)

What does Jesus do? (Verses 14-15)

Jesus heals many people in the gospels, but can anyone remember other times he raised a person who was dead? (Luke 8:49-56; John 11:1-44)

What was the response of the people who witnessed the healing of this man? (Verse 16)

Luke says that “fear” seized all of them. If we do not think they were suddenly afraid, what do we think this means? (“Awe” is a good paraphrase. Also the powerful conviction that God was with them.)

Option: Speculating on results of Jesus healing

Tell the group that we do not, of course, know why Jesus chose to heal this young man. The compassion of Jesus is obviously one reason. What might have been some of the other outcomes Jesus could have anticipated? (People who witnessed this healing were now grounded in their faith in Jesus; the testimony of the witnesses would bring others into believing; the inevitable confrontation with those who were invested in their own power structures was now in motion; the dawning belief that God cares for individual people; the accessibility of God to each of us, etc.)

Getting Closure: Discuss how we manage the apparent disconnect between believing that “with God all things are possible” and the times we have earnestly prayed for healing in a person and the person did not get well. What if healing sometimes means dying? What would our world be like if God DID intercede in every potential danger in the world? Where would God then stop? What would become of our freedom?

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for showing us your compassion, healing, and love. As we go in to the world, may you continue to see your healing presence among us. Amen.

Luke 7: 11 – 17

11 Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’ ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, ‘Young man, I say to you, rise!’ ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, ‘A great prophet has risen among us!’ and ‘God has looked favorably on his people!’ ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

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