

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 24
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8a

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Distilling the message of being faithful, Jesus seeks a way to teach his disciples: Do not give up! Do not lose hope! Perhaps Jesus, knowing the scope of God's abundance says, to himself, "Ah, here it is: a story about a stubborn judge and a woman who does not give up hope."

Theme: Pray Hopefully and Constantly

Before Class: If the children are keeping journals, the first activity suggested in this lesson would be a good journal activity. If they are not, bring paper and pencils. You will need copies of the scripture for today or enough Bibles for each child to be able to read along.

Beginning: Tell the children to keep in mind, as we read the story today, that women had no rights in Jesus' time. We can listen to the story Jesus told his disciples and see if we can figure out why he told them that story.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, help us to hear what you have put in this story for us, here, today. Open our ears to hear your word. Amen.

The Story: Luke 18:1-8a Invite children to read the passage for today. You can have one read the whole thing, or invite them to each read one sentence.

Questions:

- I wonder what surprised you about our reading today? I wonder what questions may have come up for you?
- I wonder why the woman kept going back to the judge? (Remember that women had no rights. Perhaps she was desperate or perhaps she was courageous, but she did not give up.)
- I wonder what the woman might have needed? (Perhaps her opponent was someone trying to take her house away from her. Perhaps it was a lawsuit. What do you think it might be?)
- I wonder what this story tells us about being persistent? (Sounds like Jesus is telling us to keep on praying when we need something.)

Activity: Invite the children to brainstorm with you the types of things we want to hold in our prayers. Some things may be thank you prayers for someone's getting well after having been sick, for a class at school getting easier, for families and friends, for example. Then we can think

about things we really need, not just want, but really need: a broken arm getting well, a subject in school we are having trouble with and need to understand better, for example. For help, you can use the categories of prayer found in the Book of Common Prayer on page 383.

The Universal Church, its members, and its mission
The Nation and all in authority
The welfare of the world
The concerns of the local community
Those who suffer and those in any trouble
The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate)

Give the children a bit of time and adequate privacy to write at least one thing they want to be praying for in the next weeks. Tell them to either write it in their journals, or write it on the piece of paper you provide so they can take that piece of paper with them and keep referring to it at home.

Getting Closure: Gather in a circle. Tell the children you are going to tell them of something you had been praying for that you see God's help having come to you. Then ask the children if any of them have had an experience they want to share of something they had needed and then saw they were getting.

If you have time, you can invite the children to offer prayers in each of the six categories above. After a child names something, invite the group to say, "Lord, hear our prayer."

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for helping us remember to bring what we need to you. As we pray, give us a sense of your presence, and remind us that we are always with you and you are always with us. Amen.

Luke 18:1-8a

18Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ²He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." ⁴For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming." ' ⁶And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

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